



# HARDSCRABBLE

Newsletter of Ulysses S. Grant Camp #68, St. Louis, MO



Vol. 2016, Issue #2 – May 2016

## Commander's Corner



*I hope your summer is starting out well. Memorial Day went fairly well. Thanks again to Brother Carl Wattenberg for the funds for the horse at the event, and to PCinC Don Palmer for our presentation. It seemed like the audience was larger this year. As far as changes I would like to see within our camp is the return of a formal initiation along with issuing of member certificates. I look forward to the rest of the year and events we have planned. I thank each and everyone of you for being a member of this camp. If you have any ideas or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me. This is your camp. God Bless each of you and I hope to see you soon.*

*Mark Coplin*  
Commander

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## Editor's Note....

For your educational enrichment, we have the second in the series of articles on the GAR in St. Louis, and an article on why we celebrate Flag Day. Hope everyone has a great summer!

*John Palmer*  
Council Member & Editor



## Wreaths Presented at 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Lincoln Tomb Observance

Members of U.S. Grant Camp #68 attended the 60<sup>th</sup> annual Lincoln Tomb observance on April 16 at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, IL. Grant Camp attendees included Camp Commander Mark Coplin, Council Member John Palmer, PCinC Don Palmer, PDC Bob Petrovic, Missouri Department Commander Marty Aubuchon, and PDC John Avery.

Mark Coplin presented the wreath for U.S. Grant Camp #68. Also presenting wreaths were Department Commander Marty Aubuchon representing the Department of Missouri, PDC John Avery representing Co. A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Missouri Infantry, SVR, and PCinC Don Palmer representing the Central Region Association.



Missouri Department Members

The event included speeches by SUCVW and MOLLUS leadership, including SUCVW Commander-in-Chief Gene Mortorff. The event also included musical interludes provided by the 33<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Volunteer

Regiment Band. Wreaths were presented by a large number of Allied Order organizations. Camp Commander



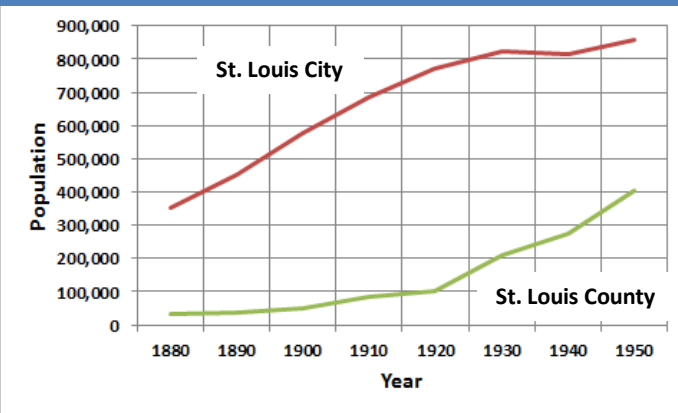
Presentation of Wreaths at Lincoln's Tomb



## The Grand Army of the Republic in St. Louis County – Three Stars

In the previous issue of Hardscrabble, we took a look at the Grand Army of the Republic and how it impacted the city of St. Louis, notable members and records that still exist from St. Louis posts. In this issue, we are taking a similar approach, only this time, focusing on St. Louis County. But before we look at the St. Louis County posts, we need to take a step back and look at the population history of both St. Louis city and St. Louis county.

In the Federal Census taken in 1870 and years prior, the population of St. Louis city and St. Louis county were reported as one. In fact, in 1870, the population of the St. Louis+ was reported as 351,189. But on August 22, 1876, St. Louis city and St. Louis county officially separated, and the census taken every decade thereafter reported the populations separately. The population of each over the bulk of the GAR span of existence in Missouri is shown below.



As can be seen, for the time frame shown, the St. Louis city population far exceeded the county population. This fact becomes important in understanding the major difference in number of Posts between the two. Some time between 1920 and 1930, the two populations begin to converge. After 1950, the St. Louis city population began its steady decline still in process today. Shortly after 1960, the populations of city and county reached equivalency. The divergent paths continued and in 2010, the county population has grown to nearly 1 million, with the city population dropping to just over 300,000.

Records at the Missouri Historical Society Archives show that the Missouri Department of the GAR existed from 1883 to 1943. During this period, there were 3 posts

located in St. Louis county. These posts, along with availability of records, are shown in the table below.

Post Number	Post Name	Post Location	Records Availability
152	D.N. Keeler	Melrose	Yes
227	Col. Almstaedt	Fenton	Yes
233	Thomas J. Brouster	Clayton	Yes

The following are some interesting facts about these posts obtained from surviving records.

### D.N. Keeler Post No. 152 (Melrose)

The Keeler Post was chartered in 1884 and was named after Pvt. Daniel N. Keeler, who served in the 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry, was wounded at Fort Donelson and was medically discharged at Jefferson Barracks. He died of complications from his wounds at age 37 in 1874 and is buried in Allenton, MO. His ornate grave stone was custom made by his army comrade Robert Allen. The Keeler Post was established in the community of Melrose, now called Glencoe. The post met in the Kreienkamp Store, now the home of the Martin family, located at 19160 Melrose Rd. The Kreienkamp Store was established in 1855 and served the community into the 1970s. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2000. It is one of the very few remaining structures still standing in Missouri where the GAR conducted meetings. In addition to the Keeler Post, the Kreienkamp Store served as the meeting location for the

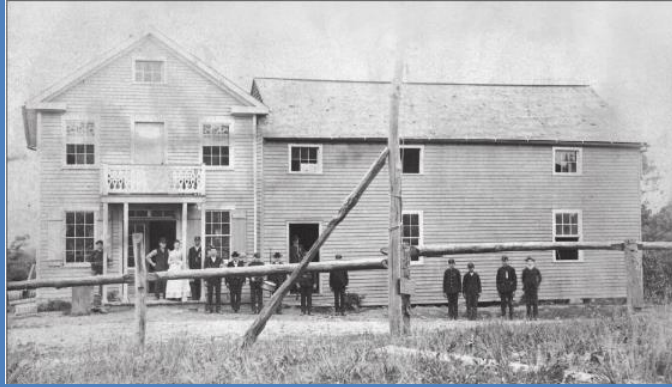


The Kreienkamp Store – Home of D.N. Keeler Post 152



## The Grand Army of the Republic in St. Louis County – Three Stars

local Sons of Veterans Camp, Robert C. Allen Camp No. 65, established in the early 1890s. The Keeler Post apparently existed until 1918, when the last set of minutes were recorded.



**D.N. Keeler Post 152 and Allen Camp 65 Members (c. 1890)**

A lot of the Post memorabilia was stored in the attic of the Kreienkamp Store after the Post folded. Unfortunately, most of it was put up for auction before the Kreienkamp Store was sold in the late 1990s. Fortunately, however, all of the records from the Post were obtained by a descendant of one of the Post commanders. Copies of the meeting logs, member applications, rosters and old photographs were provided to U.S. Grant Camp #68.

In 2001, Grant Camp #68 held a Camp meeting at the Kreienkamp Store, marking the first time in over 80 years that the GAR or an Allied Orders organization held a meeting there. Also in 2001, Grant Camp #68 dedicated a marker placed at the Kreienkamp Store in honor of D.N. Keeler Post No. 152.



**Marker Dedicated in 2001 in Honor of D.N. Keeler Post 152**

### Col. Almstaedt Post No. 227 (Fenton)

Very little information exists from Col. Almstaedt Post 227. Research into the origins of the name came up empty. The assumption was that Col. Almstaedt was a local commander with significant accomplishments during the war, but that could not be verified. Some information was located at the Missouri Historical Society Archives in St. Louis, including the surrendered charter from 1898.

### Thomas J. Brouster Post No. 233 (Clayton)

Very little information exists from Thomas J. Brouster Post 233. In researching the post name, a Thomas Brouster was found to have enlisted in the 1<sup>st</sup> Missouri Militia in 1862, but no other information was available. A number of post records still exist in the GAR collection located at the Missouri Historical Society archives, including a descriptive book on the post covering 1896-1924, a book of minutes, and a cash book.

So now the question is why were there so many more GAR Posts in St. Louis City (11) vs. St. Louis County (3)? For the answer, let's go back to the discussion on population. We can't think in terms of today's population. During the primary growth period of the GAR (between 1880 and 1900), the St. Louis County population was about 10% of that of St. Louis City. Even then, the bulk of the county population was still in close proximity to the city. As shown in the map below, the Keeler and Almstaedt Posts were formed in the outlying south and west areas of the county where travel to city locations was time prohibitive.



Given the lack of post representation in North county, it can be assumed that veterans in this area were members of city posts. For the population at that time, this post distribution appeared to be sufficient. When the population in the county began to explode in the 1920s and 1930s, the GAR was in serious decline and no new posts were needed.



## Highlights from 2016 Missouri Department Encampment

The 21<sup>st</sup> annual Missouri Department Encampment (since the Department was re-chartered in 1996) was held on June 4 at the Drury Inn in Fenton, MO. A total of 20 brothers representing eight Missouri Camps (one in Arkansas) were in attendance. In addition, National Council of Administration member Don Shaw from Michigan represented the National organization at the Encampment.

As far as key business, there was significant discussion on the Department by-laws, and a proposed amendment to remove the Awards section from the by-laws was approved by vote of the Encampment. On the Vicksburg Monument program, a recommendation to hold the re-dedication ceremony over Memorial Day weekend pending approval by Vicksburg NMP was approved. A Supplemental Membership process improvement plan was presented and it was decided to submit to the National organization as a resolution for the National Encampment. Also discussed was membership and it was noted that there were 9 internet applications submitted to National and referred to Missouri. Two of these were subsequently referred to the Grant Camp.

The following resolution was brought forward by the Grant Camp for the Department to consider:

“ Resolution from the Grant Camp for the National organization to expand approved preservation efforts relative to Civil War battlefields and historic sites and establish a formal historic preservation program, including its own fund, with the purpose of providing annual contributions to national, state and local governments. The purposed would be (1) support battlefields and other Civil War historic sites, (2) increase the percentage of contributions considered charitable by the IRS, and (3) address a key initiative under the Vision 2020 plan.

A motion was made in support of this resolution and it was passed by vote of the Encampment. It will be forwarded to the National organization for consideration at the National Encampment in August.

In October 2015, a pilot program to select a 2016 outstanding JROTC cadet from Camp nominations was approved. Cadet Anthony Krantz from Van Horn High School Army JROTC unit in Independence was selected as the outstanding JROTC cadet for 2016. A

recommendation to continue this program in 2017 was approved by the Encampment.

A number of Department awards were presented by Department Commander Marty Aubuchon. The following were awarded to the Grant Camp and/or a member of the Grant Camp:

- “ Grant Camp #68 was presented with the James B. Eads award for outstanding Camp. The Grant Camp was one of two Camps to receive this award. PCinC Don Palmer received the award on behalf of the Camp.
- “ Grant Camp Commander Mark Coplin was presented with the Department Meritorious Service award for his outstanding support of Department activities over a significant period of time, including the recent Vicksburg Monument project.



**Awards Presented: (L) Outstanding JROTC, (C) Certificate of Appreciation to Walt Busch, (R) Eads and MS Awards to Grant Camp Commander Mark Coplin (Later Date)**

As a last order of business, elections for the 2016-2017 administrative year were held. Randal Burd from the McCormick Camp was elected Department Commander. Grant Camp Secretary/Treasurer Walt Busch was re-elected Department Secretary.



**National Council Member Don Shaw Installing Officers**

## Upcoming Events....

- ~ Jun 13 . Camp Meeting at Frailey's Grill
- ~ Jun 18 . Lineage Society Fair at St. Louis County Library (Main Branch)
- ~ Jul 11 . Camp Meeting at Frailey's Grill
- ~ Jul 23 . Grant Remembrance Program at U.S. Grant National Historic Site
- ~ Aug 12 . 56<sup>th</sup> USCT Ceremony at Jefferson Barracks
- ~ Aug 11-13 . 135<sup>th</sup> National Encampment at Lincoln Hotel, Springfield, IL
- ~ Sep 12 . Camp Meeting at Frailey's Grill



## Camp Mourns Passing of Brother John Soucy

It is our sad duty to report the passing of Brother John C. Soucy, Jr., MD. He passed away on May 10 at the age of 81. He joined the Grant Camp in 2012 and attended several meetings. He also attended events as a member of Co. A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Missouri Infantry, SVR. John was a graduate of Cathedral High School in Belleville, IL, the University of Notre Dame and the St. Louis University School of Medicine. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Sons of the American Revolution. In addition to his membership in the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, he was also a Civil War re-enactor.

Memorial contributions may be made to the John C. Soucy, Jr., MD Scholarship Fund at the St. Louis University School of Medicine.

Camp Commander Mark Coplin issued an order for Camp members to drape badges for a period of 30 days and Department Commander Marty Aubuchon issued Department Order No. 8 for all Department members to drape their badges for a period of seven days.



## U.S. Grant Camp #68 2016 Officers

Commander .	Mark Coplin
Senior Vice Commander .	Mike Hudson
Junior Vice Commander .	Bob Aubuchon
Secretary/Treasurer .	Walter Busch
Council -	John Palmer
Council -	John Avery
Council -	Bob Petrovic
Patriotic Instructor -	Martin Aubuchon
Chaplain -	Fr. Vincent Heier

### Membership Inquiries?

Please contact Junior Vice Commander Bob Aubuchon at [baubpowder1@gmail.com](mailto:baubpowder1@gmail.com).

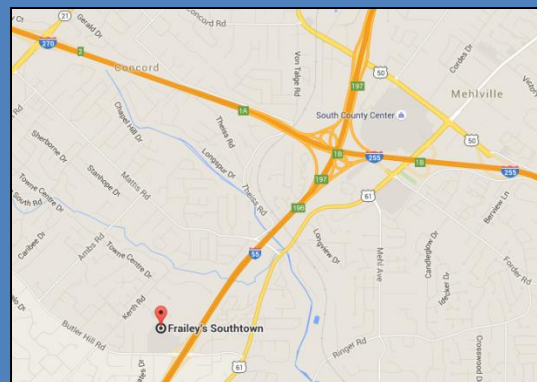


## U.S. Grant Camp #68 Meeting Information

Meeting Dates: 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month  
(no meeting in August)

Meeting Time: 7:00 pm (many members gather for dinner prior to meeting at 6:00 pm)

Meeting Location: Frailey's Southtown Grill  
4329 Butler Hill Rd.  
St. Louis, MO





## *The G.A.R. Remembered on Memorial Day at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery*

On May 30, members of the Grant Camp gathered at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery to participate in Memorial Day activities. Prior to the main program coordinated by the Inter-Veterans Memorial Day Committee, Camp members in uniform marched in the procession to the old flag circle where the main program was held. Like last year, the procession of veterans and patriotic organizations was relatively short.

At the conclusion of the main program, a follow-on program was held in the Old Post sections of the cemetery to commemorate the earliest Memorial Day programs held at Jefferson Barracks. Programs that included participation from both Union and Confederate Civil War veterans.

Members of U.S. Grant Camp #68 of the SUVCW and Sterling Price Camp #145 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, teamed up to honor the 12,000 Union and over 1,000 Confederate veterans buried there. In the Union section, Grant Camp Commander Mark Coplin

coordinated a program that included a historical overview by PCinC Don Palmer that focused on the G.A.R in honor of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their founding. The program also included musket and artillery salutes and playing of Taps. A similar program was conducted in the Confederate section by Sterling Price Camp members Jim England and Ray Cobb. The Civil War-focused program was well attended by visitors to the cemetery.



**Memorial Day Program at Jefferson Barracks**



## *News from the Auxiliary*

**Julia Dent Grant Auxiliary #68, St. Louis, MO**



PAP Cher Petrovic attended the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Lincoln Tomb Observance in Springfield, IL on April 16. But she was not there to participate in the program as she was on official business as a photographer for the SUVCW. The SUVCW enlisted Sister Petrovic's photographic services as the designated photographer was unable to attend the event.

Auxiliary President Deb Aubuchon and PAP Cher Petrovic attended the 21<sup>st</sup> Missouri Department Encampment at the Drury Inn in Fenton, MO on June 4 and presented greetings on behalf of the Julia Dent Grant Auxiliary. They also welcomed National Council Member

Don Shaw, the National representative attending the Encampment, to the St. Louis area. In addition, President Aubuchon, Vice President Sandy Walther and Chaplain Sarah Palmer attended the fellowship dinner at Bandana's on Friday night before the Encampment.



**President Deb Aubuchon (L) and PAP Cher Petrovic (R) Presenting Greetings at Department Encampment**