

THE UNION INFORMER

Monthly Newsletter of the Indian Nations Camp No. 3
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
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National Officers for 2018. Note Brother Pierson seated third from right. (Photo from SUVCW website.)

October Camp Meeting – Joint Meeting with SCV

Our next camp meeting came rather soon: October 9th. We met jointly with the Col. Daniel N. McIntosh Camp #1378 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. The joint event was held in their regular meeting location, the Ash Room, at the Hardesty Regional Library, 8316 E. 93rd Street. Perhaps owing to rainy weather, there was a light turnout for both camps.

The program was presented by former OK Division Cdr. of the SCV, Kenneth Cook. Ken has presented a program to our camp in the past. His talk was titled, "Why the Indian Tribes Allied with the Confederacy."

September Camp Meeting Battle of Antietam

General McClellan with his Army of the Potomac consisting of about 87,000 men met General Robert E. Lee with 55,000 men of the Army of Northern Virginia in eastern Maryland for one of the great battles of the Civil War on September 17, 1862.

It was the single bloodiest day in American military history with 7,650 Americans killed. (Although, deaths from the Galveston hurricane of 1900 are significantly higher.) The bloodiest *battle* in American history was Gettysburg, but its 46,000 casualties occurred over a three day period.

McClellan, criticized for being overcautious, never committed his full force, while Lee maneuvered his forces in such a way as to have the greatest impact. In so doing, he was able to fight the Union army as an equal.

Lee's battle plans had been found by Union soldiers before the battle, and given to McClellan. However, the Union commander failed to act on them for 18 hours. Along with the battle plan, it outlined General Lee's intention to split his forces for the encounter, a very bold and risky move against superior numbers.

Gen. McClellan's forces numbered about 87,000 compared to Gen. Lee's of 38,000, giving the Union more than a 2 to 1 advantage as the battle began.

The first shots were fired by Union Gen. Hooker at dawn on September 17 as he attacked down the Hagerstown Turnpike toward the Dunker Church. This ground was held by Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson in a strong defensive position. An artillery duel ensued causing heavy casualties on both sides.

Fighting broke out in the cornfield as infantry units clashed at close range amid the terrible noise. Other units now became engaged as the battle raged, and the cornfield became a bloody stalemate. Rifle butts and bayonets were employed due to the close range of the enemy. Confederate re-enforcements arrived at 7 a.m. following a night march from Harpers Ferry, 17 miles away.

Hood's division bore the brunt of the fighting to defend the cornfield against the Union's Iron Brigade and paid a heavy price – 60% casualties. When asked where his division was, Hood replied, "Dead on the field."

Hooker's men had also paid heavily, but without achieving their objective. It was estimated that the cornfield (about 250 yards by 400 yards) changed hands no fewer than 15 times that morning.

Half of Union General Mansfield's XII Corp was raw recruits. While he had been in the Army for 40 years, he had never commanded soldiers in combat. He was concerned that his men might bolt under fire. Therefore, he bunched them into ranks 10 men deep, rather than the usual two, and marched them into battle. They presented an excellent artillery target: "almost as good as a barn."

Mansfield was shot in the chest and died the next day. A Confederate sharpshooter spotted Hooker's

conspicuous white horse and shot the General in the foot, causing him to be replaced by Meade.

The sunken road was another Confederate strong point that was hotly contested, but eventually lost because of the loss of commanders and a misconstrued order. One unit thought it was ordered to withdraw, and the others followed.

The fighting continued in the cornfield and in the east and west woods with the Federal forces pushing the Confederates southward toward Sharpsburg. During the afternoon fighting raged beside the turnpike running alongside Antietam Creek and at Burnside Bridge. The Union crossed several times only to be thrown back by the Confederates under heavy fire. Several attempts were made to cross and hold the bridge, but they all failed. The Federals attempted to cross at other points to execute a flanking movement, but found the resistance to be overwhelming.

Confederate Gen. A.P. Hill arrived at the fighting at Burnside's Bridge at 2 p.m. with 3,000 fresh troops who had just made a 17 mile march from Harpers Ferry. McClellan claimed that, except for one battery, he had nothing more to give when his generals pleaded for more troops and guns. Actually, he had two fresh corps in reserve that he was holding to counter the fierce counterattack he thought Lee would launch against him. It never came. Always cautious, he thought he was greatly outnumbered.

The battle was over by 5:30 p.m. The next morning, Lee's army prepared to defend against a Federal assault that never came. He continued to skirmish with the Federals throughout the 18th while withdrawing.

An improvised truce was arranged to enable both sides to recover and exchange their wounded. Lee's forces began withdrawing across the Potomac that evening to return to Virginia. Confederate dead were left on the battlefield for the north to bury. McClellan did not choose to pursue Lee, much to the chagrin of Pres. Lincoln.

Five generals were killed at Antietam:
Union:

Maj. Gen. Joseph A. Mansfield
Maj. Gen. Israel B. Richardson
Brig. Gen. Isaac P. Rodman

Confederate:

Brig. Gen. Lawrence O. Branch
Brig. Gen. William E. Stark
Brig. Gen. George B. Anderson (died later)

In the end, Antietam would go down as the bloodiest day in American history with 21,717 combined casualties. Of the 7,650 killed they are as follows: Union – 2,108; Confederate – 1546, but afterward an additional 1910 Union and 1550 Confederates would die of their wounds. An additional 531 soldiers listed as missing were later confirmed to be dead.



Ken Cook speaks at the joint SUVCW/ SCV meeting on October 9th.

November Camp Meeting

Cdr. Rusk has obtained the meeting room at the Kaiser Library for a late November camp meeting. He has designated November 29th as the date for it. Normally, we don't meet in the month of November, because of the conflict of our 4th Thursday meeting date with the Thanksgiving holiday. Instead, we've been meeting the first Thursday in December. However, this year we met early in September, followed by a meeting just two weeks later. That would make our next scheduled meeting almost two months later if we were to adhere to our established meeting dates.

Therefore, we will meet a bit earlier. The last week in November has been selected with no meeting to be held in December. The month of December is a

contentious month typically with lots of family events scheduled.

Camp Business Conducted this Month

On the premise that *The Union Informer* represents our best consistent record of camp events, Cdr. Rusk has requested that a piece be added to the newsletter each month to document the business conducted at the past camp meeting. Therefore, this will become a regular feature of the newsletter.

- Remembrance Day ceremony will be conducted at the GAR Monument in Rose Hill Cemetery. Other local Allied Orders are to be invited.
- Departing from our topical discussions - A speaker will be invited to present a program at our November/December meeting (program by either a camp member or outside speaker).
- The prospect of a joint recruiting table staffed by the Indian Nations Camp and D. N. McIntosh Camp (SCV) has been pursued for a local gun show. Brother Crowe is willing to provide soldier research facilities at the table for our camp. Other staffing will be required. The SCV has agreed to join with us to staff the recruiting table. Two of their members have been designated to work with us on this effort presently targeted for early next year at one of the lesser gun shows.
- An inventory of camp equipment will be conducted before year end.
- The camp By-Laws will be revised to conform with National Requirements regarding the organization's new 501 3 (c) status. The change will be patterned after other camp's revisions.

A few camp members went to the Kaiser Library for the September camp meeting, forgetting that the location had been changed. We apologize for that inconvenience, but encourage members to please check their e-mail or the newsletter for the correct location until we can secure a location for an extended time.

National Encampment 2019

According to the current SUVCW website:

http://www.suvcw.org/?page_id=2791

“The Department of Ohio, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War invites you to the Buckeye State for the 138th Annual Encampment of the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic to be held in Independence, OH on August 8 – August 11, 2019. Information will be posted here as it is made available.”

We had been told that the Encampment site for next year would be Branson, MO., but evidently that is not correct. Too bad, because that would have been an easy location for members in our area to attend.



Brother Brian C. Pierson administers an oath of office at the 2017 OK Department Encampment as representative of the SUVCW Commander-in-Chief

Brother Pierson Elected JVC-in-C

At the 2018 National Encampment in August, one of our Oklahoma Brothers, Brian C. Pierson, was elected Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief. Congratulations Brother Pierson!

Brian has visited the Indian Nations Camp in the past and made presentations to us, as well as advising us on recruiting steps to take to increase our membership. He is always helpful, and his energetic leadership has been

evident in many Department activities. We're lucky to have him among us.

Normally, national officers progress up the chain of command each year. If that persists, we can expect to see Brian in the Commander-in-Chief post in 2020! He is a resident of Shawnee, OK.



Camp Calendar

November 12 Veterans Day Parade –Downtown
November 17 Remembrance Day – Rose Hill Cem.
November 22 Thanksgiving Holiday
November 29 Camp Meeting – Kaiser Library
December 25 Christmas Holiday
January 24 Camp Meeting – Kaiser Library

Remembrance Day



The SVR, military branch of the SUVCW, parades in Gettysburg, during the Remembrance Day activities. (Photo from the internet.)

On November 17, we will hold our annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the GAR Monument in Rose Hill Cemetery in Tulsa. It will be conducted by Brother Joe Fears, our Patriotic Instructor, who is making arrangements for it now. Please make every effort to attend, along with your family and friends, to honor America's Civil War soldiers.

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