

Memorial Day 1963: The Other Gettysburg Address

On Memorial Day, just before the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, then Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson had these words to say. By the Fall of that year he would be President, after JFK's assassination.

On this hallowed ground, heroic deeds were performed and eloquent words were spoken a century ago.

We, the living, have not forgotten--and the world will never forget--the deeds or the words of Gettysburg. We honor them now as we join on this Memorial Day of 1963 in a prayer for permanent peace of the world and fulfilment of our hopes for universal freedom and justice. We are called to honor our own words of reverent prayer with resolution in the deeds we must perform to preserve peace and the hope of freedom.

We keep a vigil of peace around the world. Until the world knows no aggressors, until the arms of tyranny have been laid down, until freedom has risen up in every land, we shall maintain our vigil to make sure our sons who died on foreign fields shall not have died in vain. As we maintain the vigil of peace, we must remember that justice is a vigil, too--a vigil we must keep in our own streets and schools and among the lives of all our people--so that those who died here on their native soil shall not have died in vain.

One hundred years ago, the slave was freed. One hundred years later, the Negro remains in bondage to the color of his skin. The Negro today asks justice.

We do not answer him--we do not answer those who lie beneath this soil--when we reply to the Negro by asking, "Patience."

It is empty to plead that the solution to the dilemmas of the present rests on the hands of the clock. The solution is in our hands. Unless we are willing to yield up our destiny of greatness among the civilizations of history, Americans--white and Negro together--must be about the business of resolving the challenge which confronts us now.

Our nation found its soul in honor on these fields of Gettysburg one hundred years ago. We must not lose that soul in dishonor now on the fields of hate.

To ask for patience from the Negro is to ask him to give more of what he has already given enough. But to fail to ask of him--and of all Americans--perseverance within the processes of a free and responsible society would be to fail to ask what the national interest requires of all its citizens.

The law cannot save those who deny it but neither can the law serve any who do not use it. The history of injustice and inequality is a history of disuse of the law. Law has not failed--and is not failing. We as a nation have failed ourselves by not trusting the law and by not using the law to gain sooner the ends of justice which law alone serves.

If the white over-estimates what he has done for the Negro without the law, the Negro may under-estimate what he is doing and can do for himself with the law.

If it is empty to ask Negro or white for patience, it is not empty--it is merely honest--to ask perseverance. Men may build barricades--and others may hurl themselves against those barricades--but what would happen at the barricades would yield no answers. The answers will only be wrought by our perseverance together. It is deceit to promise more as it would be cowardice to demand less.

In this hour, it is not our respective races which are at stake--it is our nation. Let those who care for their country come forward, North and South, white and Negro, to lead the way through this moment of challenge and decision.

The Negro says, "Now." Others say, "Never." The voice of responsible Americans--the voice of those who died here and the great man who spoke here--their voices say, "Together." There is no other way.

Until justice is blind to color, until education is unaware of race, until opportunity is unconcerned with the color of men's skins, emancipation will be a proclamation but not a fact. To the extent that the proclamation of emancipation is not fulfilled in fact, to that extent we shall have fallen short of assuring freedom to the free.

Ask yourself why do this questions and problems still go unanswered and unfulfilled after almost 57 plus years?

Memorial Day 2021, All in the Rain



The photograph that sums up Memorial Day 2021.

Memorial Day has always been a moving time for me since the time of my childhood. My great uncle, my grandfathers, my father and his cousins all had served in the military. We boy scouts would march from the American Legion Hall 1276, up James St. in Syracuse, NY, to the small granite monument several blocks away. There we would hear remarks meant to comfort those who had gathered and then we walk home. It was not until I served in the Navy that I really understood. It is not just a time to remember those who fell but the scars on those who served, the causes or lack of causes they fought for and all that was lost to the nation.

On May 30, 2021 the Brothers of the Willard Camp 154 SUVCW once again gathered to mourn the dead, think of the scars and bolster a nation at Albany Rural and Oakwood Cemeteries. - RPK



Memorial Day 2021, a sea of flags in Oakwood.

A poem in the GAR National Memorial Day Book, 1870 from a ceremony conducted in 1869 by Hon. D.H. Winfield, Jackson Post No. 37 at Goshen, N.Y.

“There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing, had I such to give,
But when I stood beneath that fresh green tree,
Which, living, waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits ad fertile promise, and the spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turned from all she brought to those she could not bring.”

Submitted by
Jerome Orton, Department of NY Historian, SUVCW



Because of weather the Willard Brothers gathered at the Oakwood Cemetery's Chapel in Troy, NY.

New Grave St. Agnes



Kelly Grimaldi presides over the dedication of Private James Conner's grave stone.

The little things we do to "Keep Green the Memory:" On May 19, 2021 Brothers of Willard Camp helped with the dedication of a grave stone for Private James Conners at St. Agnes Cemetery in Menands. Others at the event included the 125th NYRA, LaSalle Institute cadets, Patriot Riders and St. Gregory School students.

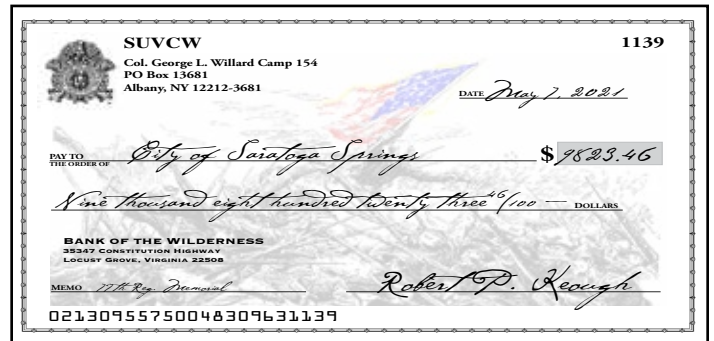


Students from St. Gregory School place the finishing touches on Private Conner's new grave stone.



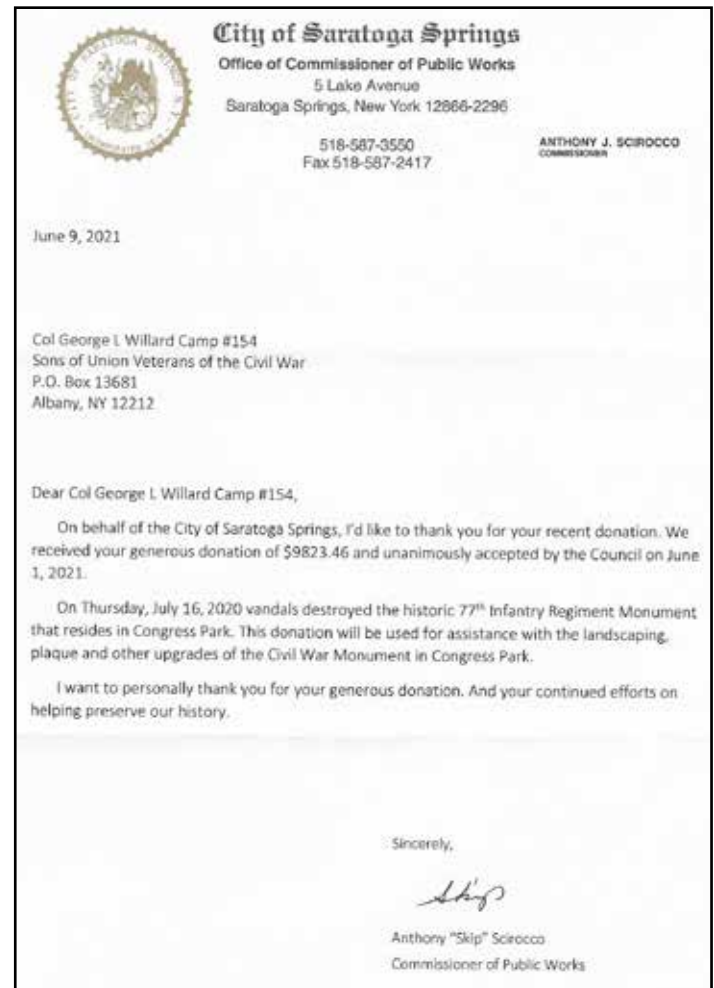
Brothers McGuire and Swartwout fold the flag with the LaSale Institute color guard in the background.

Funds for 77th Monument



The Col. George L. Willard Camp's check for \$9823.46 to the City of Saratoga Springs, NY.

All Brothers of the Col. George L. Willard Camp 154, led by Brothers Ray LeMay III, PDC and David Dziewulski, PCC, helped raise \$9823.46 for the 77th NYVI Regiment's monument in Saratoga Springs, NY. The monument had been vandalized on July 16, 2020 by a person or persons unknown. The executive committee of the New York State Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee, in part made up of Camp members, gave an additional \$5000.00 to the project. These monies will go a long way for the repair, up-dates, security and future maintenance of the monument.

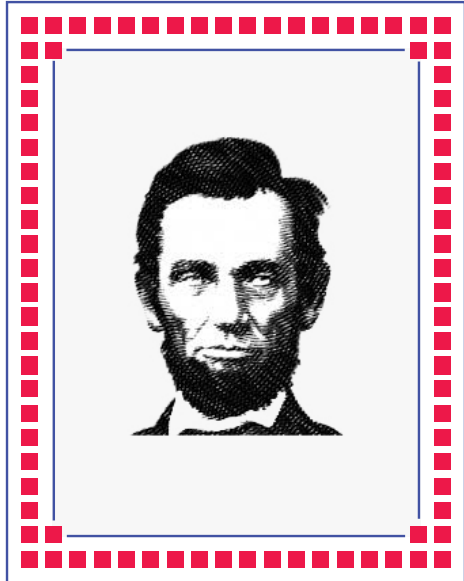


Letter from the City of Saratoga Springs, NY.

Lincoln Awards Luncheon

LINCOLN LUNCHEON

Brown's Brewing Co. Troy, NY



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Col. George L. Willard Camp 154

Noon, June 19, 2021

The Willard Brothers gathered for the 8th Lincoln Luncheon and awards ceremony on June 19th at Brown's Brewing Co. in Troy, NY. Members and guests enjoyed a fine lunch and good fellowship while Legion of Merit awards were given out. It was particularly enjoyable because last year's luncheon was cancelled because of Covid-19. This event has become a highlight of the Camp's year. We are already looking forward to next year.



Brothers at the event pose for a group photograph.



The Sons of
Union Veterans
of the Civil War

"Keeping Green The Memory"

Camp Officers

Col. George L. Willard Camp # 154

Camp Commander Richard Straight
Senior Vice Commander Vince Jockimo
Junior Vice Commander John Swartwout
Secretary Leo McGuire
Treasurer Robert Keough
Camp Council David Dziewulski
Camp Council Brian Castler
Camp Council Paul Cooney
Chaplain. Tom Maggs
Patriotic Instructor Paul Cooney
Guide Chris White
Guard Peter Swano
Color Bearer Francis Rogler
Graves Registration.
Monument Officer David Dziewulski
Eagle Scout Coordinator. Brian Castler
Guidon Editor Robert Keough

Coming Events

July	23	Grant Remembrance Event
	31	Thomas Grave Rededication
August	21	MOH Marker Albany Rural
Sept	4	Camp Meeting

The Guidon is the official newsletter of the Col. George L. Willard Camp #154, SUVCW. It is published four times a year. The editor may be reached at: rpkeough@aol.com.

Brothers Visit These Sites:

Col. George L. Willard Camp #154
<http://www.gwillard154.org/>
SUVCW Department of NY
<http://suvchw.org/ny/deptny.htm>
SUVCW National Headquarters
<http://www.suvchw.org/>