



# THE SHARPSHOOTER



Official Newsletter of the  
Robert Finch Camp No. 14 – Traverse City  
Department of Michigan  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

2015 & 2017 Marshall Hope Award – Most Outstanding Camp Newsletter of the Order

Summer & Fall 2017  
Vol. 4 Issue 2

Camp Officers 2017

Commander:  
Theo. Mattis  
tedmattis@charter.net

Sr. Vice Commander:  
Jno. Lantzer  
john.lantzer@now.com

Jr. Vice Commander:  
Jos. Conger  
K2rider@chartermi.net

Secretary:  
Dale Aurand, LM, PDC  
daurand321@yahoo.com

Treasurer:  
Pat. Lints  
patlints@yahoo.com

Patriotic Instructor:  
H.G. Smith  
docsmith99@yahoo.com

Chaplain:  
Jno. Lantzer  
john.lantzer@nov.com

Camp Council:  
Geo. Goodrich, PCC  
Gc\_Goodrich@yahoo.com

Wm. Skillman, PCC  
skillmans@aol.com

Jan White, PCC  
stocktrac@charter.net

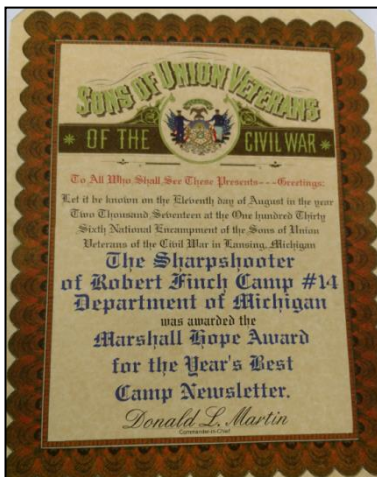
Color Bearer:  
Mic. Kolbusz  
mkolbusz@gtchd.org

Guide:  
Christ. Skillman  
cms007@aquinas.edu

Guard:  
Walker Schwander  
kokopellschwander@yahoo.com

## The Sharpshooter Wins the 2017 Marshall Hope Award

At the 2017 National Encampment held in Lansing, Robert Finch Camp No. 14 took home the Marshall Hope Award for the best Camp newsletter in the entire SUVCW. Commander-in-Chief Don Martin presented the award to the Camp in front of the entire National Encampment. In the three years that The Sharpshooter has been published, it has received the Marshall Hope Award twice.



Above L-R: Marshall Hope Award; CC Ted Mattis with the Award at the National Encampment

## PCC David Smith Elected Department Commander

On 06 May 2017 at the Department Encampment in Lansing, the Department of Michigan elected David S. Smith of Robert Finch Camp No. 14 as the Department Commander for the 2017-2018 term. He is the second Brother from Camp No. 14 to be elected to the Department's highest office since the Camp moved to Traverse City. In addition to Smith serving as Department Commander, Camp Commander Ted Mattis was appointed to the office of Department Guard. Congratulations Brothers!

## Camp No. 14 at the National Encampment

Robert Finch Camp No. 14 was well represented at the 2017 National Encampment hosted by the Department of Michigan in Lansing. Brothers that attended and/or served as Delegates include: DC David Smith, PDC Dale Aurand, PDC Paul Davis, CC Ted Mattis, PCC George Goodrich, and Br. Don Hinkley. PDC Paul Davis held the important position of Co-Chair of the 2017 National Encampment Executive Host Committee. The Encampment was well attended - reportedly the largest attended in over 20 years. Additionally, the Department of Michigan had around 55 members that registered to attend - this has not happened by a Department in probably over 40 years!



Above: Dept. Commander Smith gives greetings and introductions at the Allied Orders and guest at the 2017 National Encampment Banquet

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# 2017 Camp 14 Meeting and Event Schedule

Camp Officers 2017  
continued

Guard:  
Noah Lints  
awerdehoff@live.com

Military & Veteran Affairs  
Officer:  
Calvin Murphy  
calvinm@kalnet.net

Signals Officer/Webmaster:  
Jan White, PCC  
stocktrac@charter.net

Boy Scout Coordinator:  
Jeff Morse, PCC  
inlandfirechief@gmail.com

Historian:  
Geo. Goodrich, PCC  
Gc\_Goodrich@yahoo.com

Graves Registration Officer:  
Jno. Sawyer  
sawyerc@gmail.com

War Memorials Officer:  
Scott Schwander  
kokopellschwander@yahoo.com

Quartermaster:  
Theo. Mattis, CC  
tedmattis@charter.net

The **Sharpshooter** Editor  
David Smith, PCC, DC  
wyattsmagnus@gmail.com

19 July

G.W. Seger Grave Dedication Ceremony  
7PM - Greenwood Cemetery, Petoskey, MI

August 10 - 13

National Encampment (hosted by Dept. of MI)  
Radisson, Lansing, MI

November 04

Camp Meeting  
2018 Officer Elections  
Elks Lodge #323, Traverse City, MI

November 11

Veterans Day  
Veterans Memorial Park, Traverse City, MI  
Elks Lodge #323, Traverse City, MI

Note: Additional meetings for May and September are TBD. Also, note that the March and November meetings are not the second weekend of the month. More events will be announced in the future.

## Historic Artillery Competition at Camp Grayling

On 22 July, several members of Camp No. 14 and family attended the historic cannon competition at Camp Grayling's Range 35. A find day of camaraderie, meeting new friends with a shared interest in the Civil War, and pleasant weather were on tap.



# Follow-up to Why? The Sharpshooter Q&A

Response from Gary Gibson, PDC - Dept. GAR Records Officer

**Question:** Why does the Department of Michigan use a crescent moon and star insignia to represent itself? It is often seen on the kepis and forage caps of Brothers of the Department. Where did it come from previously?

**Answer:** In the earliest years of the Sons, 1881 - 1900, the entire concept of the Sons of Veterans was not only to assist the members of the GAR, and remember them when they were gone, but also to be a standing army in case of a national emergency. Each camp was uniformed, trained and usually armed as infantry, artillery or cavalry. (The original camps in Traverse City and Muskegon were actually naval units.) Camps were commanded by a captain, not a commander. The Division (Department) Commander was commissioned a Colonel. The military aspect of the Sons took center stage during the Spanish-American War.

When each division was chartered, they were to be instructed to select a corps badge or some type of insignia as their own. By 1887, all departments had adopted a corps badge. The Michigan Division selected the 7th Corps crescent and star. These badges were worn on top of the kepi to show what department the brother belonged to. After 1904, when the SUVCW became a civilian fraternal order, with a military component (The Sons of Veterans Reserve), the use of the corps badges faded out. About 1995 the 7th Corps badge was re-adopted by the Department by a vote of the Encampment. We have used it ever since as the official "cap mark", to show a bit of "esprit de corps" among the brothers of Michigan. (No pun intended)

Not surprisingly, Pennsylvania adopted the keystone. The Department of New York adopted the 5th Corps badge, and has always presented the Past Department Commander's badge to the recipient with a silver top pin bar with the brothers name engraved, and the 5th Corps badge as a dangle. Some of the other departments, like Illinois and Florida, have also re-adopted their respective corps badges, although have not used it to the extent that Michigan has.

## National Encampment *continued*



**Left (L-R):** Br. Hinkley, PDC Aurand, CC Mattis, and PCC Goodrich (missing: DC Smith and PDC Davis)

**Below:** Sons of Confederate Veterans Commander-in-Chief Thos. V. Strain and Dept. Commander David Smith

**Left:** 2017 National Encampment Delegate Badge

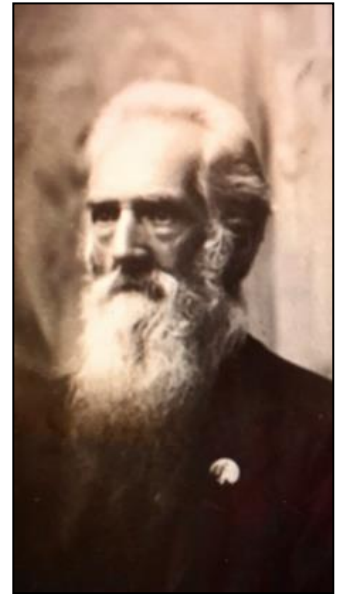
**Below:** DC Smith presenting SUVCW Commander-in-Chief Don Martin a gift on behalf of the Dept. of Michigan



# Cpl. George Washington Seger Ceremony

## *Honoring one of the Iron Brigade*

On 19 July 2017, Camp No. 14 performed a twilight grave dedication ceremony at Petoskey's Greenwood Cemetery for George Washington Seger. Comrade Seger was a member of Co. D, 24<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry, the "Iron Brigade" or "that damn black hat brigade" as they were known. In honor of GW Seger, the rifle detail all wore those infamous black Hardee hats, with another placed at his grave. George Washington Seger is the G-G Grandfather of Michigan's very own rock and roll music legend, Bob Seger.



George Washington Seger

**Cpl. George Washington Seger Grave Dedication - L-R:** CC Ted Mattis, AP Lisa Smith, BAA Bugler Thelma Paul, DC David Smith, Camp Guard Walker Schwander, CWMO Scott Schwander, CSVC & Chaplain John Lantzer, PCC Jeff Morse, Br. Doug Hulbert, CJVC Joseph Conger, PDC Dale Aurand, Br. Thom Duvernay, PCC Bill Skillman, and Br. Jim Morse, Sr.

**BIO:** George Washington Seger was born 01 May 1832 in Redford, Wayne County, Michigan. Mr. Seger enlisted in Company D, 24th Michigan Infantry "The Iron Brigade" as a Corporal on 02 August 1862 in Dearborn at age 30. During his service he was suffered sunstroke and was wounded. He mustered out in Detroit on 30 June 1865.

He was a member of the Novelty Works and Saw Mill Company, Harbor Springs (MI), and is one of the pioneers of the village. In 1874 he removed to Harbor Springs from Reed City. He is a carpenter and millwright by trade and had charge of the operation of the operation of the Novelty Works, in which he was a partner. G.W. Seger was a founder and assistant superintendent of a Sabbath-school organization of Methodist persuasion in the area.

Comrade Seger was Officer of the Guard and a charter member of the I. B. Richardson GAR Post 13 when it was established in 11 May 1880. George Washington Seger passed away on his birthday, 01 May 1913 in Cheboygan County, Michigan.

### ***GW Seger's Injury information provided by Jane Cardinal:***

While on march towards Gettysburg, from Fredericksburg, in June of 1863 George Washington was temporarily disabled by heatstroke. Over 300 men from the army of the Potomac died from heat stroke during this march. As a result Seger was spared from the fighting at Gettysburg that claimed eight out of ten of his comrades during their heroic defense at McPherson's Ridge on the first day. Corporal Seger recovered and rejoined the regiment to participate in Lt. Gen. Grant's Overland and Petersburg Campaigns. Later in Virginia, August of 1864, the Iron Brigade (now part of the 5th Army Corps) moved out of their entrenchments outside of Petersburg to tear up the railroad tracks at Weldon, Virginia. The mission was to cut the railroad lines to Petersburg and Richmond therefore depriving the Confederate Army from desperately needed supplies. During this action, Cpl. Seger was wounded taking eight gunshot wounds to the chest. He was taken from the battlefield by horse-drawn ambulance then by railroad train to Harewood Hospital in Washington D.C. where he spent the next ten months recovering from his wounds. He returned to service March 4, 1865. The speculation is that the wounds were the result of a buck and ball discharge.

# Gold Star Mothers Monument Ceremony



Above (L-R): CC Ted Mattis, PDC Paul Davis, PDC Dale Aurand, CSVC John Lantzer, GRO John Sawyer, DC David Smith, and Br. Richard Schafer. Missing from photo: MVAO Calvin Murphy and CJVC Joseph Conger.

In Traverse City's Grand Traverse Area Veterans Memorial Park, a new memorial statue was unveiled to the public during the Gold Star Mothers and Families Ceremony on Sunday, 24 September 2017. The new monument is the first one of its type in all of Michigan. Brothers from the Camp served along with other area Veterans groups for the Color Guard of the event.

Camp 14's Military and Veteran Affairs Officer Calvin Murphy worked heavily on this project in planning and fundraising. Much appreciation is extended to Brother Murphy for all of his hard work and passion for our Veterans.



# Camp No. 14 Members in Action



**Above:** GRO John Lantzer representing Camp No. 14 in Leelanau County during Memorial Day.



**Above:** Br. Jim Morse, Sr. placing flags on Veterans' graves in Almira Township for Memorial Day - an effort that has been done in the Morse family for many decades.



**Above (L-R):** CC Mattis, PDC Aurand, DC Smith, and CJVC Conger at the Flag Day event at the Elks Lodge No. 323 in Traverse City.



**Above (L-R):** Joe Conger and John Sawyer with Ray Weiss and Erwin Kowalski on Pacific side of the WW II monument in DC. Brother Conger and Brother Sawyer were chaperones on the latest Mid-Michigan Honor Flight.



**Above (L-R):** APL Smith, Sr. L. Jones, DC Smith, Sr. D. Downey, CC Mattis, PAP D. Roush, and PDC Aurand at Grand Traverse Area Veteran Memorial Park in Traverse City on Memorial Day.

# Camp No. 14 Initiates 3 New Brothers



**Above (L-R):** Richard Schafer, David Purkiss, CC Ted Mattis, Trevor Mattis, and CSVC & Chaplain John Lantzer

At the September meeting, three new Brothers were initiated per the ritual by Camp Commander Ted Mattis, and Chaplain John Lantzer. Brothers Richard Schafer, David Purkiss, and Trevor Mattis were heartily welcomed by the Camp.

It was particularly special for Camp Commander Mattis as he was able to initiate his Grandson, preserving another generation of his family in the SUVCW.

# CWMO Schwander Receives Distinguished Volunteer Award

CWMO Scott Schwander was awarded the Distinguished Volunteer Award at the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Essence of Emmet award banquet in Petoskey on 27 September 2017. The awards are given to those that have helped to preserve and highlight Emmet County's historical importance. Brother Schwander received this coveted award for his work in restoring the headstones of Veterans of Company K, 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Sharpshooters. 42 of the 140 men of Company K were from Cross Village. Brother Scott located and restored headstones of these men of the area. He also worked on repairing and repainting GAR flag holders at their gravesites, along with leaving gifts of herbs and songs from his flute.

CWMO Schwander is the Great-Great Grandson of Marcus Ke-Ne-We-Wego-Shik Otto, a Veteran of Company K.

**Right:** CWMO Scott Schwander receiving the Essence of Emmet Distinguished Volunteer Award from Phil Porter, Director of Mackinac State Historic Parks.



## GAR Flag Holder Restoration Project & Cemetery Clean-Up Marches Ahead

Brother Scott Schwander, the Civil War Memorials Officer and Brother John Sawyer of Robert Finch Camp No. 14 has been highly active in Camp 14's area working on Civil War Memorials, gravestones, and GAR flag holders. These efforts have included significant research, cleaning, and repairs, along with the submission of applications for unmarked Veterans' graves. Brother Schwander tackled Oakwood Cemetery in Traverse City, cleaning around 300 Civil War Veterans' headstones (Government and private) this year. His grand total for the year is over 400 Civil War Veterans' headstones in the area.

Brother Schwander has worked with GRO John Sawyer in repairs and refurbishment of the GAR flag holders at many of these graves. Currently, they have partnered with the welding program at Northwestern Michigan College in repairing GAR flag holders where possible, or reconfiguring them so that they can be used again. PCC Jeff Morse has been helpful in establishing this relationship with NMC. After the GAR markers are structurally repaired, they are repainted. This work is preventing the flag holders from falling into complete disrepair, and reestablishing their luster next to the headstone where they were installed. The final step is to place the flag holders with the exact Veterans' graves (as documented in the process).

The following links are to media stories that discuss some of the aforementioned efforts that have been completed, doing the good work of the Order:

<http://upnorthlive.com/news/local/nmc-students-create-unusual-bond-with-civil-war-veterans>

[https://www.nmc.edu/about/nmc-stories/success-stories/students-take-on-restoration.html?utm\\_source=NMC+Now+Community+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=459a1f8a0d-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2017\\_10\\_10&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a3fd701e6e-459a1f8a0d-119933365](https://www.nmc.edu/about/nmc-stories/success-stories/students-take-on-restoration.html?utm_source=NMC+Now+Community+Newsletter&utm_campaign=459a1f8a0d-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_10_10&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a3fd701e6e-459a1f8a0d-119933365)



**Above (pics 1-3):** (1) Documented and tagged GAR markers being delivered to NMC. (2 & 3) The finished product - cleaned headstones, and restored GAR flag holders.

## Camp No. 14 Brothers Participate in Department Event on Mackinac Island

Camp No. 14 Brothers were busy the next weekend after the National Encampment attending or participating in the Mackinac Island Civil War Monument Dedication on 19 August 2017. The Department of Michigan conducted the 1917 GAR Monument Dedication Ceremony. Department Commander David Smith led the ceremony with CSVC John Lantzer serving as the ceremony Chaplain. Additional Camp No. 14 Brothers that attended or participated include: CC Ted Mattis, PDC Dale Aurand, PCC Jeff Morse, and Br. David Ramsey. Also performing was honorary Camp No. 14 member and ceremony regular BAA Bugler Thelma Paul. The event had Brothers participating from over 10 Camps across the Department - from the Upper Peninsula to Jackson, and from Traverse City to Bay City.



**Above:** DC Smith, PCC Morse, PDC Aurand, and CC Mattis



**Above:** Br. Ramsey & CC Mattis look on before the ceremony



**Above:** DC Smith and CSVC & Chaplain Lantzer perform the 1917 GAR Monument Dedication Ceremony

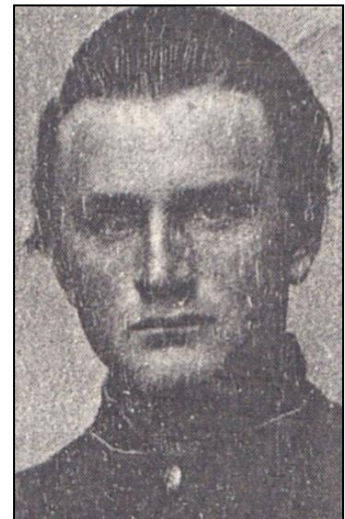
## Zina D. Ransom, Co. C, 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Sharpshooters – Cross Village Legend

*Submitted by Jane Cardinal with additional information by CWMO Scott Schwander*

In December 1862, Zina was nineteen when he mustered into Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Sharpshooters. He lived in Hillsdale, Michigan which was very enthusiastic about entry into the war. The enlistment papers describe him as 5'9", blue eyed, and a farmer. He was reported missing in action near Petersburg on June 17th, 1864. War records show him confined at the horrific Andersonville, Ga. prison for the duration which amounted to some eight months. He was paroled at Savannah and admitted to the camp hospital. He had served 2 years and 5 months. There were no disabilities noted. However, they would emerge later.

His story is not clear for this section of his life but we understand he found he was not able to sustain the rigors of farm labor and became a railway station agent. He marries Louise Caldwell and has three sons, Warren Adelbert, Sherman and Chauncey. The 1880 divorce decree cites Louise with extreme cruelty and other unnamed causes. Unusual for us in the present, is that the document of the time commits the custodial parent, Zina, to care for his sons until they reach the age of 14 yrs. He is living in Alma and during that year makes a declaration to the War Office for an Invalid Pension. Captain Meigs supports his claim of rheumatism from exposure at Andersonville where he also states he contracted heart disease.

Zina takes his boys north to Cross Village where his father, Martin and brother Charles have taken up residence. He becomes a charter member of the new Geo. Washington GAR Post No. 106, the smallest in the state. He holds the offices of Post Commander, Senior Vice Commander and one other that is unreadable. Charles Ransom marries Elizabeth Etawnacawmego. They have four children Susie, Ida, Nancy and Fred. Susie marries into the local Kruskie family. 1882 Zina remarries at 38. (Betsy) Marie Atwood and Zina are married in Zina's fathers residence his brother Charles witnessing. The Atwoods are a prominent business and farming family in the village. It's interesting to note that the Atwood's built the hotel in 1903 that ultimately caused the village to nearly burn to the ground in 1918. *continued on Page 9*





# Zina D. Ransom, Co. C, 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Sharpshooters – Cross Village Legend - *continued*

*Submitted by Jane Cardinal with additional information by CWMO Scott Schwander*

1899 Zina's son Warren, who has become a fine photographer, and his wife have divorced and she, Mary Elizabeth gives custody of their two children, to Zina and Marie. They are Clyde 12, and Jack, 5. 1900 On September 28th the news announces that Zina and Wm. Shaw have opened a market in a "fine new building with a large meat room as cool as ice can make it." In that same year Zina buys a two story frame house that had been that of the Lorenzo Bouvee family, owner of the huge lumber facility below the bluff (Bouvee-Kelsey). He, his wife and daughter were killed in their buggy by an oncoming train in New York. In every way Zina strove to lead an honorable life in this community both in public service and business. We were lucky to find so much about him as so many family records were destroyed in the 1918 fire.

**Right:** Zina Ransom's meat market in Cross Village. Zina Ransom in front. William Shaw, a postal carrier is in the sleigh. His wife, Regina Odemin Shaw is in the upstairs window. Regina is Br. Schwander's Great-Grand Aunt.



**Left:** Birch bark picture frame with quill work made by Anna Odemin (Great-Grand Aunt of Br. Schwander), and owned by Zina Ransom and then his descendants. Eventually, the 125-150 year old frame came into the possession of Jane Cardinal, who recognized it to be Anna Odemin's fine work by the color pattern. Jane being skilled in the art of quill work, restored it. She gave it to Brother Schwander, thus completing a circle within his family. The picture that Brother Schwander placed in this beautiful frame is of Chief Ahgosa, who settled both Old Mission, and the New Mission now known as Omena, Michigan.



**Above:** Zina Ransom's final resting place. The headstone cleaned, and the flag holder restored by CWMO Schwander



**Above:** Mr and Mrs Ransom are in the living room of their home. Mother-in-law, Mrs. Atwood and the two adopted children present. On the wall, are the marriage photos of Zina and his 2nd wife, Maria.



**Commander's Corner**  
Ted Mattis, CC

Brothers of Camp #14,

The year of 2017 is closing fast and there are projects on going that we need to keep on the burner lest we forget and they fall by the wayside. Our Graves Registration Officer, John Sawyer and our Memorials Officer Scott Schwander have been doing a fine job keeping us moving in their respective areas though the results of their labors will be more obvious in the future. There will be a list at the end of this missive which is in no way complete as the list is ever growing. We cannot say our work will ever be completed as there is always a little more to do. We are the maintainers of history and artifacts of the American Civil War.

I am saddened by the display by our professional athletes in regards to the National Anthem, The Pledge of Allegiance, and our National Flag. These are the symbols of our guaranteed right to free speech and peaceful protest. There are respectful ways to protest other than disrespecting our National Symbols while accepting a large paycheck. This is an insult to anyone who buys a ticket, pays their cable bill, or supports a sponsor who condones this arrogant behavior. Think about this the next time you make a purchase. Ask yourself how many of these protestors have worn one of our country's uniforms and put their life on the line for our freedoms. To read the complete U.S. Flag code go to [www.suvcw.org/flag.htm](http://www.suvcw.org/flag.htm) this code is officially endorsed by the SUVCW and its members. I urge everyone to be familiar with it and put it into practice. If we don't stand up for our flag etc. we diminish our rights and freedoms. President Harry Truman said the buck stops here. Where does the buck stop for you?

On a more cheerful note, we have elections coming at the November meeting. If you would like to serve in an office, please me by phone or e-mail and we can talk. You can always urge another member to step who you feel would do a good job for the camp to step forward. I am also looking for a Chaplain to take the load off John Lantzer who has done a fine job in the position in addition to his SVC duties. Everyone who is a member of camp #14 should assume an officer position and more at some time in their career in the SUVCW. That is part of being a member in any camp and you should look on it as an honor to lead in what ever capacity you are elected or appointed to.



## MVAO Calvin Murphy's Big Leap over Charlevoix from 10,000 ft.

Brother Murphy jumped out of a perfectly good airplane this summer, and he loved every minute of it. He has confirmed that he is ready to do it again soon!





# Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9

## Sister Lisa re-elected to Department Council and receives the Bridget Award

### 2017 Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 Officers

President:	Lisa Smith, Dept. Council
Vice President:	Dorothy Roush, PAP
Secretary:	OPEN
Treasurer:	Mary Rose, PAP
Pat. Instructor:	Debra Downey
Council #1:	Jane Prebble
Council #2:	Dorothy Roush, PAP
Council #3:	Darlene Hinkley
Co-Chaplain:	Darlene Hinkley
Co-Chaplain:	Lorraine Jones
Historian:	OPEN
Press Corr.:	Lisa Smith, AP, Dept. Coun.
Girl Scout Comm.	Emily Breaugh, PAP, Chair

On 06 May 2017, Frances Finch's own Auxiliary President Lisa Smith received the Bridget Award from the Department of Michigan at the 2017 Department Encampment in Lansing.

The award is given in recognition of a Sister that promotes and works diligently on behalf of the interests of the Department of Michigan, ASUVCW.



Above: AP Lisa Smith with the 2017 Bridget Award

## 2017 Frances Finch Auxiliary Sisters at the National Encampment



Above (L-R): AP Lisa Smith, NP Ramona Greenwalt, and Chaplain Darlene Hinkley at the 2017 National Encampment in Lansing, Michigan.

## Linwood Cemetery Memorial Day Weekend Friday Service



Above (L-R): PAP Dorothy Roush, Aux. Counselor Dale Aurand, PDC, and AP Lisa Smith, attended the Linwood Cemetery Memorial Day Weekend Friday Service in Long Lake Township this year.

# The Sharpshooter

Official Newsletter of the Oldest Camp in the Department of Michigan.



# Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9

## Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 mourns Sister Mary Emerson Lautner

Mary Elizabeth Lautner, 95 of Traverse City, passed away March 22, 2017, in the presence of her loving children. Mary was born at home on February 2, 1922 to the late Arthur and Pearl (Buell) Emerson in Garfield Township. She married the love of her life, Ralph Joseph Lautner, December 23, 1941 and together raised 5 beautiful children, Gerard, Sharon, Dennis, Beth and Bruce, who like their parents became compassionate, loving, responsible and civic minded adults, each in their own way making a significant contribution to family and society, locally and nationally.

A convert to Catholicism, Mary was a woman of deep faith and her actions expressed the Beatitudes. Her early years were dedicated to her husband, nurturing her children and maintaining her home. She was lovingly referred to as the “farmer’s wife.” During that time she made significant sacrifices in order to meet the needs of her family. After her last child entered kindergarten, Mary took a position with the Traverse City Area School system, working as a secretary until she retired. She was a member of the Michigan Education Association, the National Education Association and the Michigan Association of Retired School Personnel.



She has always been self sufficient and fiercely independent. At her age, she retained her driver’s license and could be seen, when the situation warranted, driving her red car short distances. She often would seek advice from her adult children regarding a matter she deemed important. After getting their views, she would make her own decision, which was often contrary to the suggestions offered, at times causing great consternation.

Mary was a staunch Democrat and a member of the “Michigan Democratic Party.” She was a person of great integrity, anything deemed illegal or quasi illegal, would cause great distress, leading her to take a stand and speak out against what she perceived was wrong. As a result, she garnered great respect from others within her own family and the community. She was invited to serve on the Garfield Township Planning Commission, and many believed it was because of her honesty and concern for the welfare of others. It was well known in the family that Mary (and her husband Ralph) had an abiding love for their children and grandchildren, never hesitating to help physically and financially to alleviate any problem they were facing. The same was also true when it came to the needs of the community, for example, the land contribution to NMC, which allowed for the creation of the J.H. Rogers Observatory.

She had a keen sense of justice and would go to the mat in an attempt to right a wrong. One example, is when she learned her grandfather, after serving a 3 year tour of duty, plus an additional three months in the Civil War, returned home without proper notification to his commanding officer and was classified a deserter. When Mary discovered this, she set out to correct the error, clearing her grandfather of any wrongdoing whereupon, he was awarded an honorable discharge many years after his death.

In honor of her grandfather’s memory, Mary became a member of the “Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. “ In memory of her husband Ralph’s service in WWII, Mary became a member of the “Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary.”

Mary was an environmentalist to her core. Throughout her life she remained deeply concerned for the natural world and all that it had to offer in respect to nurturing and maintaining all life, including human life. She maintained a strong interest in the Grand Traverse Conservancy and water shed. She delighted in the flowers, shrubs, berry bushes and trees growing around her home which provided her with a variety of birds and wildlife. Inside her home resided a very important pet, Miss Ivy, a kitty who kept her company in the later years of her life. She interacted on a daily basis with another pet named Tess, a black lab mix, belonging to her son Dennis. Mary had a special place in her heart for this animal and showered the animal with treats and lots of gentle pats. The relationship she had with these two creatures, Miss Ivy and Tess conveyed her love and interest in all creatures large and small, with the exception of the wild turkeys that were a daily nuisance.



# Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9

## Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 mourns Sister Mary Emerson Lautner

Another attribute, was her determination and competitive spirit. This was most visible when playing in the Euchre tournaments or playing at home with family and friends. She was astute and very adept at this game and men eagerly welcomed her to their table to play cards, even into her recent years. She attended the competitive games of her children and grandchildren and took great delight in their accomplishments. She loved watching the Detroit Tiger games. In her early years, she loved to dance and was active in the square and round dancing club. At the Grange hall, Mary's mother played the piano and her father played the fiddle as she and her husband (against his will) participated in this weekly activity. Mary also had an uncanny facility for words and phone numbers and considered by the family to be a "walking Univac". She entered spelling contests when young and worked crossword puzzles throughout her life. She would frequently meet her son Gerard on line and join with him and a couple of others for a game of bridge. Her family viewed her as the keeper of knowledge and relied on her ability when it came to family, local and national historical facts. She was a member of the "Traverse Area Historical Society."

Truly, Mary was the matriarch of her family and throughout the years she maintained a strong relationship with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She with the support of her husband, Ralph, opened their home to 4 exchange students: Baji Cadiz, Nury Bruzzone, Christian and Hendrick DeMello. She is well known to family and friends for her delightful sense of humor, a hearty laugh and love for telling or being told a good joke. Two weeks ago, after sharing a meal with family and friends, Mary remarked, "I have had a good life - rich in love and wonderful memories."

Mary is survived by her children; Sharon (Alan) Buell, Dennis (Ann Drury), Bethalee Alpers, Bruce (Deborah Bruss) and daughter-in-law Anne (Mlsna). She is also survived by 14 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, 1 great great grandchild and countless nieces, nephews and friends. She is preceded in death by her husband, both her parents, her son Gerard and her brother Harold Emerson.

## William C. Emerson

I never saw my paternal grandfather. He died in 1897 at the age of 58, which was 25 years before I was born. I am intensely interested in the part of his life that took place during the Civil War. So I began a search of historical records to try and find out about his service in the War. Here are the facts that are known from family records:

William Campbell Emerson was born on February 26, 1839 in Bangor, Maine. At the age of 22 he joined the Army at Marshall, Michigan. He signed up on April 22, 1861 and was mustered into service on May 1, 1861 for a three month enlistment. He was assigned to Company I, 1st Michigan Volunteer Infantry. This unit was sent to Washington, D.C. and the first action was to cross the Potomac and take possession of Alexandria, Virginia on May 24, 1861. Its first serious battle was at Manassas, Virginia, the Battle of Bull Run where the 1st proved its mettle, but losing heavily in killed, wounded and missing. He was honorably discharged on August 7, 1861.

He then re-enlisted on July 1, 1862 and was mustered into service on August 16, 1862, assigned as a Sergeant in Captain Thayer's Company, which subsequently became Co. K, 17th Infantry, later to be assigned to the 1st Corps under General Burnside. This enlistment was for a three year period. It is not known why he decided to re-enlist, perhaps a bonus, or the guarantee of the rating of Sergeant, or maybe just patriotism... Now at this point, I want to mention that grandfather had very little schooling. I was told that he couldn't read nor write. My thoughts about this are that it is entirely possible that he believed he was enlisting for another three month period, which was the explanation that his family believed, when he was given a dishonorable discharge.



# Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9

## Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 mourns Sister Mary Emerson Lautner

After his re-enlistment, the 17th Infantry was sent by train to serve in the Maryland Campaign, which pitted the North against the South with General McClellan as Commander of the Union forces and General Lee commanding the Rebels. The 17th Michigan Infantry and the 45th Pennsylvanians were assigned to General Burnside. The 17th had been assigned to this General for only two weeks, and the 45th had joined them just before they met the enemy at Fox's Gap on South Mountain. This was the first time they had experienced combat, and the fighting was hand to hand at times. The Union forces had just taken cover behind a split rail fence and were face to face with the Rebels who had the protection of a stone wall. The Yankees rushed across the intervening field, shouting loudly and surprising the enemy. The frightened Rebels withdrew into the forest and the Yankees from Michigan and Pennsylvania were proud of the way they had met the test of combat. However, losses of killed and wounded were 266.

My grandfather was part of a regiment named "The Stonewall Regiment", and I was told this was because he was over six feet tall, as were all the men in this group. In reading about the terrain where much of the fighting took place, I found that there were many stone walls surrounding small farms in the area. Many battles took place with troops taking cover behind these walls. So it raises a little doubt in my mind that perhaps the Stonewall Regiment was so named because they had defended a stone wall or overcame one.

General McClellan chose the 1st Corps under General Hooker to spearhead the main attack on the Rebel left when the Battle of Antietam began. The 1st Corps positioned themselves for a coordinated attack against both Confederate flanks when the 9th Corps under General Reno was slow in arriving. John Gibbon's Brigade from the 1st Corps was ordered to march up the National Road to attack Turner's Gap head on. General Hooker's 1st Corps was ordered to cross the Antietam, at Upper Bridge near the Pry Mill and take position opposite the Confederate left flank. He was told he could call for reinforcements from the 2nd and 12th Corps, under General Sumner's command. General Hooker warned General McClellan that the Rebels would eat him up if the 1st Corps was left alone without support, so McClellan ordered the 12th Corps to cross the Antietam late that night to back Hooker up, with the 2nd Corps to follow early the next morning. General McClellan had about 75,000 troops of all arms and services at his command, and 19,000 more in Pleasant Valley, four hours marching time away. This total included all auxiliary forces of cooks, teamsters, as well as the injured and the stragglers. The effective strength was about 71,500 with 300 pieces of artillery.

General Hooker's 1st Corps and General Mansfield's 12th Corps were positioned for the initial attack of the enemy's left, led by General John Pope's ill-fated Army of Virginia. The 9th Corps under General Burnside against the Rebel right flank, had not seen combat before South Mountain. If General Lee took the offensive, the trusted veterans of the 1st, 12th, and 5th Corps and the Cavalry would be the last line of defense.

On September 17, Fighting Joe Hooker's 1st Corps opened the Battle of Antietam, riding on his white horse and leading his men who all fought with "true grit". They were in the West Woods near the Antietam River, and very hard fighting took place. At about 1:00 P.M. a quiet came over the fighting fields and the moans and screams of thousands of wounded men were heard. Both sides were trying to catch a second wind before renewing the battle. It was a warm, sunny day. The 1st Corps were holding their ground and waiting for replacements. General Hooker was wounded that day on the front lines as the 1st Corps was dispersed and routed. The Battle of Antietam was only 7 hours old, and 18,500 men were either dead, wounded or missing, Rebels and Yankees included. General Lee withdrew his forces after Antietam, and the Yankees secured the area.



# Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9

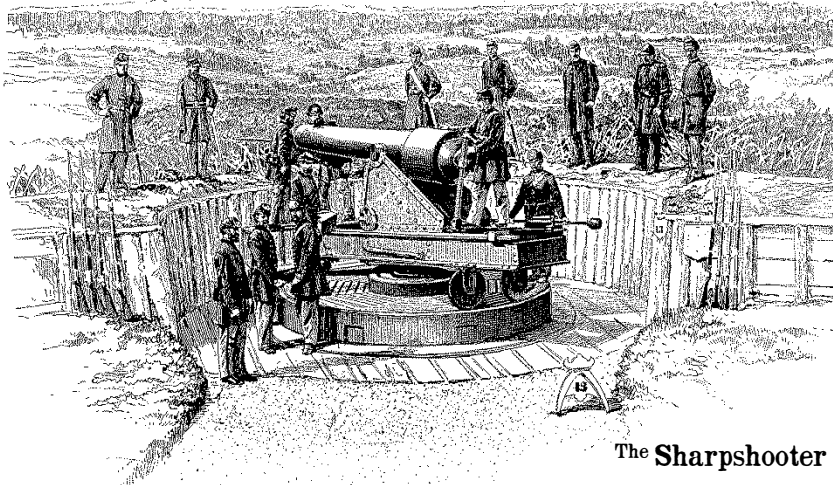
## Frances Finch Auxiliary No. 9 mourns Sister Mary Emerson Lautner

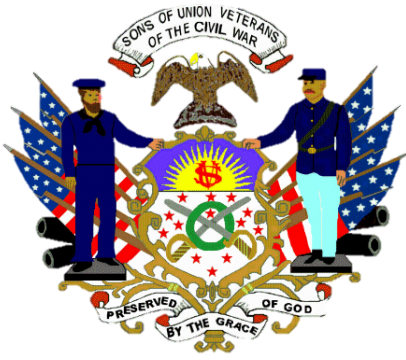
On November 4 General McClellan was ordered to follow General Lee into Virginia, but President Lincoln became unhappy with the speed of his advance, so Lincoln ordered McClellan to be replaced by General Burnside. On November 7 General Burnside accepted, and at that time General McClellan was told he was being relieved of his duties. Morale among the men was very low at this turn of events. A lot of criticizing and judging took place, with some of the men taking their anger out in drinking. Others just wanted to go home. Some wanted to march on Washington in reprisal. When General McClellan got on the train after speaking for the last time to his troops, some soldiers uncoupled the car from the train in protest. But he made a speech to his men asking their pledge to stand by General Burnside as they had stood by him, and all would be well. The car was then re-coupled to the train and it pulled away, leaving his soldiers sadly bidding goodbye to their beloved leader.

The morale of the soldiers was low after General McClellan left on November 11. On November 15, just three months to the day after he had enlisted, grandfather was captured by the enemy at Waterloo, Virginia and was taken to Libby Prison in Richmond, Virginia. He was paroled, or exchanged for a Rebel prisoner on December 12, 1862. He was then briefly hospitalized at an Army hospital in Pittsburgh. Upon leaving the hospital he returned (I was told he walked) to Marshall, Michigan instead of reporting to Camp Chase in Ohio. He was not aware that a proclamation had been issued at headquarters that all soldiers were compelled to return for discharge or be listed as a deserter. As a result, he never received any pay for the three months of service. His explanation for leaving was that he believed that his three month enlistment was completed. He had been keeping a count of the time he served by making a notch each day on his belt, according to some of his children's recollections.

After the deadly fighting that he had taken part in, and the very fact that he survived while so many of his comrades had perished, Grandfather quite possibly could have had battle fatigue. His health was not good after he came home. He died relatively early, and I was told his stomach was weakened from the food he was given while in prison. Some of his children tried to get the government to reconsider and wipe his slate clean, but to no avail. They tried to get a pension for Grandmother as his widow, but this too was denied. The Army considered Grandfather a deserter.

As the daughter of his youngest son, I would like him to know that I think that I understand his position, and am proud of his contributions toward winning the Civil War. In my mind he is not a deserter. If he had wanted to desert, he would have done so during some of the battles in which he took part. As it was, he saw it through during the heat of the battles and only left after the Army had finished the campaign in which they were involved.





Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
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