



PVT. LUCIUS L. MITCHELL CAMP 4

February 2017

Camp Communicator

Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War



A Message From the Commander

Don't get me wrong, it is nice to work on a large project with many people involved and after spending a lot of time and effort getting the project accomplished. Some projects call for all that. But with a group like L. L. Mitchell Camp 4 we often find that individual or small group projects often work best. Unfortunately most of us live far apart, our schedules are difficult to coordinate and we have few meeting places that are conducive to getting things done.

So let me make this clear, don't hold back. Please discuss any ideas you have for the betterment of the camp and our mission to keep the honored memory of our Civil War Comrades green with me or at our meetings. We have some members that may be very helpful with suggestions and other help. Currently with the Wreaths Across America program there are many smaller projects that you might be able to help with. The more involved, the merrier. It is a great feeling to see progress made as we did a few days ago in the Anthony Frazier Gravestone project. Just ask Ron McCracken about that at our next meeting.

Mike Urell, L. L. Mitchell Camp 4 Commander

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Next Camp Meeting

SATURDAY February 4, 2017
1 PM

St. Cloud Community Center
716 Indiana Avenue
St. Cloud, FL 34769

January 7th Camp Meeting Minutes

Cmdr. Urell opened the meeting at 1 PM. Chaplain McCracken gave the opening Prayer. Cmdr. Urell led the camp in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Cmdr. Urell called for a Roll Call of the Officers of the Camp.

- Cmdr. Urell Present
- Svcmdr Landry Excused
- Jvcmdr Iliff Excused
- Sec./Treas. Whitlam Present
- Chaplain McCracken Present
- Patriotic Instructor Heiple Present

Total of 8 camp members in attendance.

Cmdr. Urell suspended the reading of the Minutes.

Cmdr. Urell called for the Treasurer's report: Treasurer Whitlam gave the report. Brother Williams made a motion to accept the report and Brother Heiple seconded it. The Treasurers Report was accepted as reported.

Department Senior Vice Commander David Palmer was welcomed as a guest of the Camp for the purpose of swearing in new officers for the year.

Old Business

Brother James Ward suggested that funds (\$200) that had been earmarked for a memorial bench by the department a few years ago and were not used be used for the St. Cloud Memorial Hall Florida State Historical Marker. After discussion it was decided to present the idea to Department Commander Reeves.

Plans our moving ahead on the Anthony Frazier project according to project coordinator and Camp Chaplain Ron McCracken. a meeting with all parties has been arranged for later this month and hopes are to stake out the graveyard with fencing and the dignified placement of the tombstone to follow.

The Wreaths Across America Project acquired about 35 wreaths for our Comrades buried in Mount Peace Cemetery in St. Cloud but we need to get much more active in this area.

Brother Aric Bruggeworth will be putting our web pages on Facebook and access will be varied at least at first.

Brother and Cmdr. Urell looked into stickers for recruitment brochures wit a name and address to reply to and reported the price was not prohibitive but the amount printed was more than needed. After some discussion, it was decided that further investigation would be made.

Hard copies of last month's web page publication "The Communicator" were distributed and the camp all agreed about what a fine publication it was. Cmdr. Urell again exhorted others to make their own contributions.

New Business

Initiation of new officers. Please see new list of officers above in this publication.

Further discussion was held on including Mt. Peace Cemetery as part of the Wreaths Across America Project. The Civil War tombstones need a good cleaning and Cmdr. Urell said he would be in contact with the Cemetery Sexton about camp 4 getting permission to apply D-2 to clean the stones. The expenses for the cleaner would be borne by the monies raised by the sale of the wreaths.

Camp 4 Will participate in Merritt Island event "The Last Naval Battle of the Revolutionary War" this March.

General Order #22 will be added to our by-laws after discussion at Department Encampment on February 18th.

The ROTC and Eagle Scout Awards will be administered by Cmdr. Urell this year and we can expect to get very busy in a few months.

Brothers in Need

Sec. Clair Whitlam

Closing Ceremonies

Closing Prayer -Chaplain McCracken



Officers 2016 - 2017

CampCommander:MichaelUrell

SVC: Connie Landry

JVC: Timothy Iliff

Secretary : Clair D.

"Skip" Whitlam

Treasurer : Clair D.

"Skip" Whitlam

Council 1:RonnieG.McCracken

Council 2: Roger L. Heiple

Council 3: James G. Ward

PatrioticInstructor:RogerHeiple

Chaplain:RonnieG.McCracken

Graves & Memorials : Ron-
nie G. McCracken

Historian: unseated

Eagle Scout Coordina-
tor. : Unassigned

Signals Officer: Clair
D. "Skip" Whitlam

JROTC contact: Michael Urell

Guide: Pending

Editor

Steve Williams

swilliams16@cfl.rr.com

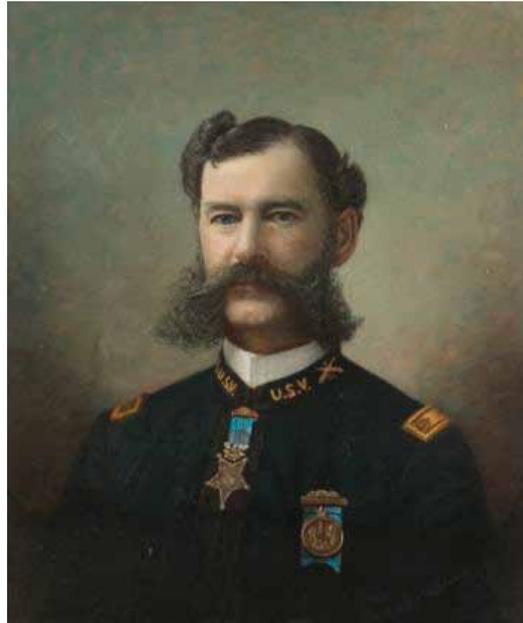


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What Gettysburg Meant To Its Veterans

How a National Park Service lecture helped me learn more about my Great-Uncle



At left is a painting that was done of my Great-Uncle around 1902. His name is Michael Emmet Urell and he came from Ireland to the United States in 1853 when he was about 9 years old. He went to Brooklyn, New York public schools and loved to play baseball. He joined the 2nd New York Militia shortly after the attack on Fort Sumter and served in the Army of the Potomac until May of 1864. You see pinned to his uniform the Medal of Honor and one other medal. I know what that medal was but I never gave too much thought as to why he chose to display it. After watching a YouTube video by National Park Ranger Christopher Gwinn entitled “What Gettysburg Meant to its Veterans” I feel I now understand.

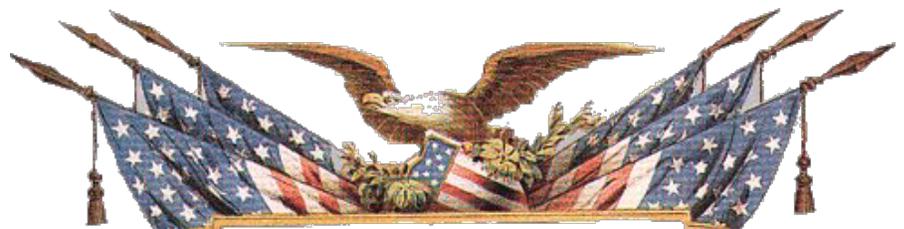
erans” I feel I now understand.

First let me highly recommend the above-mentioned lectures on YouTube. I am aware of the rigors of becoming a National Park Ranger at Gettysburg. I know they know their subject matter. Also, after watching about six different Gettysburg lectures I am very impressed by the camera work, illustrations and, if videotaped on the battlefield, the beauty of the area. If you are interested in the Civil War and in particular Gettysburg you would be hard pressed to be entertained better.

But back to my primary focus. That is a New York State Gettysburg Veteran Medal. As Ranger Gwinn explained in his lecture, as time went by the Union Veterans thought more and more about the importance of the battle as a turning point in the war. The war preserved the Union and kept faith with the American Revolution. As time went on the ending of slavery was added as another great accomplishment. The Battle of Waterloo and Marathon were comparable to Gettysburg; all were turning points in history.

So, I look at this picture differently now. He is telling me about the great pride he had in being part of this great battle. I take pride in keeping the memory of him “green”.

By Michael Urell



Civil War Time line

February in the Civil War



1861 - **Feb 1** Texas Convention votes for Secession. **Feb 4** Convention of Seceded states meets in Montgomery Alabama. Electoral vote for President was: Abraham Lincoln - 180, John C Breckinridge - 72, John Bell - 39, Stephen A Douglas - 12. **Feb 8** Confederate Constitution Adopted. **Feb 9** Jefferson Davis elected as Provisional President of the Confederacy, Alexander Stephens named Vice-President. **Feb 13** Results of election made official - Lincoln elected. **Feb 18** Jefferson Davis Inaugurated President of Confederacy. **Feb 23** President-elect Lincoln arrives in Washington.



1862 - Various Skirmishes throughout the month **Feb 3**. President Lincoln declined the offer of War Elephants from the King of Siam. **Feb 6** Surrender of Ft Henry, Tennessee. **Feb 8** Battle of Roanoke Isl., NC. **Feb 13-16** Attack on and eventual surrender of Ft Donelson on Tennessee river. Victory by US Grant. **Feb 20** Willie Lincoln Dies. **Feb 21** Engagement at Valverde, NM. **Feb 22** Jefferson Davis Inaugurated President of Confederate States of America. **Feb 25** Union troops under Gen Don Carlos Buell occupy Nashville.



1863 - **Feb 2-13** Union gunboats prepare for Vicksburg campaign. **Feb 16** U.S. Senate passed the Conscription Act. **Feb 22** At Sacramento CA Ground broken for Central Pacific railroad. **Feb 24** Arizona Territory organized out of New Mexico Territory. **Feb 26** The Cherokee Indian National Council repealed its ordinance of secession, abolished slavery, and vigorously proclaimed for the Union.



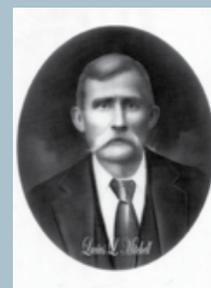
.1864 - **Feb 1** President Lincoln under the conscription act ordered the draft of 500,000 men on March 10 for 3 years or duration of war. **Feb 3** Sherman's Meridian MS campaign begins. **Feb 7** Jacksonville FL occupied by Maj Gen Gilmore. **Feb 9** The largest escape of the war was accomplished by 109 Federal Officers (59 reached Federal lines, 48 recaptured and 2 drowned) from Libby Prison in Richmond VA. Led by Col Thomas E Rose of PA. **Feb 14** Federals capture Meridian MS. **Feb 17** Confederate Submarine sinks *U.S.S. Housatonic* off Charleston SC. **Feb 20** Battle of Olustee or Ocean Pond FL. **Feb 22** Federals defeated by Forrest at Okolona MS. **Feb 24** Gen Braxton Bragg named chief of staff for Armies of the Confederacy despite his conflicts with other generals. **Feb 27** Federal prisoners begin arriving at camp near Americus GA - Later known as Andersonville. **Feb 29** Lincoln approved the congressional act reviving the grade of Lt. General - With Grant in mind.



Meeting Schedule

Our meeting schedule is six consecutive months between November through April meeting on the first Saturday of every month except in January, then we will meet on the second Saturday. At 1:00 PM.

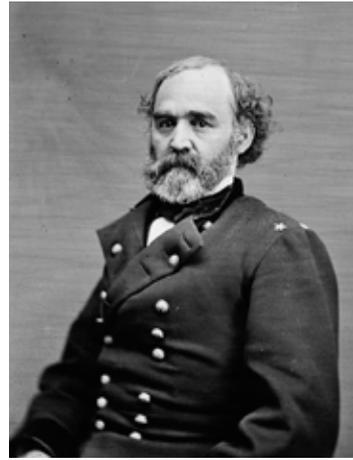
Community Center - 702 Indiana Ave in St. Cloud.





1865 - **Feb 1** Carolina Campaign in full Operation/Sherman begins march into SC. **Feb 3** Hampton Roads Conference between Lincoln and Seward/Alexander Stephens, John Campbell, R M Hunter. **Feb 5 - 7** Battle of Hatcher's Run VA. **Feb 6** Lee named Commander of Confederate Armies. **Feb 17** Federals capture Columbia SC, city in Flames, Charleston SC evacuated by Confederates. **Feb 22** Fall of Wilmington NC; Joseph Johnston restored to command. **Feb 27** Sheridan begins Shenandoah Valley campaign.

Source: *The Civil War Day by Day, An Almanac 1861-1865*, E B Long, 1971, Doubleday. Source: *The Civil War Day by Day, An Almanac 1861-1865*, E B Long, 1971, Doubleday.



that spanned the Cabin John Creek. From 1853 to 1859 he was involved in the building of the wings and the dome of the Capitol building.

All of this working around Washington D. C. And being dependent on monies and support from Congress led him to have contact with many characters of the day. Senator Jefferson Davis was generally a supporter of him. Secretary of War Floyd under James Buchanan was not. Floyd and Meigs area of conflict was that Meigs was

very honest and

Floyd was not. At one point just before the war this conflict led to Meigs being given orders to be sent to the Tortugas for a few months until the resignation of Floyd for corruption and a new administration under Lincoln came in.

Lincoln and Secretary of State Seward sent Meigs and Lieutenant David D Porter to Fort Pickens in Florida to fortify the Fort and as a result it remained in Union hands throughout the war. Returning from that mission Meigs was promoted to Quartermaster General of the Union Army.

So the table is set for you and I hope I have whetted your appetite. You will be amazed at the materials and logistics necessary to supply the Union Army. A smart, honest and able man was necessary and Montgomery Meigs was that man.

And, oh yes, Meigs always had an eye for new weaponry. The building of Arlington National Cemetery was largely his doing and his loathing of the traitor Robert E. Lee is made clear. Visit section one at the cemetery and that will be more clearly spelled out for you.

The book is well written and many parts of Meig's life and the history of our country are covered. His further accomplishments went into the 1890s. You will want to read more about Himalayas the events of those days.

Book Report

The Quartermaster Montgomery Meigs Lincoln's General Master Builder of the Union Army

Robert O'Harrow, Jr.

Reviewed by Michael Urell

Here's a book I enjoyed and recommend to you.

The lifetime accomplishments of Montgomery Meigs (1816-1892) make this 2016 book by Washington Post reporter Robert O'Harrow, Jr. a great read. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton stated that without the efforts of Quartermaster General Meigs the Civil War may have been lost or at least greatly imperiled. This was a great accomplishment for anyone's lifetime but there were so many more.

The Meigs family way back was Puritans who settled in the New Haven, Connecticut area in the 1630's. Many members of the family were high achievers and attended the best universities. The family had close ties with the military and Montgomery, with a keen interest in engineering, entered West Point at age 16. He graduated 5th out of an 1836 class of 49. He soon began to work on Army Corps of Engineers projects including helping build Fort Mifflin on the Delaware River and Fort Wayne on the Detroit River. It is interesting to note that he also worked with then Lieutenant Robert E. Lee on improving navigation on the Mississippi River.

His favorite pre-war project was helping build the Washington Aqueduct which brought water into Washington D. C. From the Potomac River. He was particularly proud of the Union Arch Bridge which was a clever engineering feat

Washington Aqueduct

The Washington Aqueduct is an aqueduct that provides the public water supply system serving Washington, D.C., and parts of its suburbs. One of the first major aqueduct projects in the United States, the Aqueduct was commissioned by Congress in 1852, and construction began in 1853 under the supervision of Montgomery C. Meigs and the US Army Corps of Engineers (which still owns and operates the system). Portions of the Aqueduct went online on January 3, 1859, and the full pipeline began operating in 1864. The system has been in continuous use ever since. It is listed as a National Historic Landmark, and the Union Arch Bridge within the system is listed as a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark.

Upcoming Events

National

Lincoln Tomb Observance April 14 & 15, 2017. President Abraham Lincoln Hotel & Conference Center, Springfield IL 217-544-8800.

Department

Annual Department Encampment February 18th, 2017; St. Cloud Senior Center 3101 17th Street, St. Cloud, Florida 34769, Cypress Room 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM



The SVR roots date back to 1881 with the "Cadet Corps" of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) – the largest Union Veterans organization which formed in 1866 after the Civil War. The members of the GAR encouraged the formation of their sons as the SUVCW in 1881. These units eventually became known as the Sons of Veterans Reserve, when the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War moved toward a more patriotic and educational organization in design.

Many of the Sons of Union Veterans Camps (local organizations) formed reserve military units which volunteered their services during the Spanish – American War, World War I, and with the National Guard. Just prior to World War I, over 5,000 men wore the blue uniform of the SVR. As late as the 1930's, several states regarded their local SVR units as a military training component. Since World War II, the SVR has evolved into a ceremonial and commemorative organization. In 1962, the National Military Department was created by the SUVCW and consolidated the SVR units under national regulations and command. Since 1962, there have been five SUVCW Brothers that have held the SVR rank of Brigadier General and have had the honor to serve as the Commanding Officer of the SVR.

Department Officers 2015-2016

Commander: Charles S Reeves, PCC - E-mail reevesoldfarm@msn.com

Senior Vice Commander: James G Ward, PDC - E-mail nacheson1@att.net

Junior Vice Commander: David Palmer, PCC - E-mail Davplm6@aol.com

Secretary: Clair D Whitlam, PDC - E-mail clairwhitlam@gmail.com

Treasurer: Clair D Whitlam, PDC - E-mail clairwhitlam@gmail.com

Councilor #1: Harvey K. Linscott, PDC

Councilor # 2: John M. Vaughn, PDC

Councilor # 3: James G. Ward, PDC

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the members of Lucius L Mitchell Camp of activities and events related to the mission of the SUVCW and its interests.

If you wish to place a civil war article or SUVCW item please submit to the Editor at swilliams16@cfl.rr.com

The Editor reserves the right to censor and/or edit all material submitted for publication to the Camp Communicator newsletter without notice to the submitter.



Sutler Links

Link to list of vendors for any items to fill out your uniform and re-enactor accessories.

<http://www.fighting69th.org/sutler.html>

<http://www.ccsutlery.com/>

<http://www.crescentcity-sutler.com/index.html>

Camp Website

Be sure and visit our NEW Camp Website at <http://www.c4dofsuvcw.org/officers.html>. There is a page with a complete Calendar of Events that is updated regularly. Check back often for news of changes in time or place!

2017 Lincoln Tomb Ceremony and Form

All are invited to participate in the 61th Annual Lincoln Tomb Ceremony, sponsored by the SUVCW and MOLLUS, commemorating the 152nd Anniversary of President Lincoln's death. It will be held at the Lincoln Tomb in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, IL at 10 AM on Saturday, April 15, 2017.

Headquarters Hotel: President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, 701 E. Adams St., Springfield, IL 62701. The room rate is \$98.00 for single/quad. A 10% dining discount at Lindsay's Restaurant is included. Call 1-866-788-1860 for reservations and mention "Sons of Union Veterans". Reserve your room by March 25, 2017. After this, the remaining blocked rooms will be released.

Wreaths may be ordered from local Springfield florists. Instruct the florist to have the wreath delivered c/o the Lincoln Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, by 9 AM on Saturday, April 15th.

Luncheon will be held at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel at 12:30PM. The luncheon program is yet to be determined. Luncheon cost is \$30 per person.

For event info, go to the SUVCW web site (suvchw.org) or contact Robert Petrovic at: rpetro7776@aol.com or 636-274-4567. Form Link - <http://www.suvchw.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Annual-Lincoln-Tomb-Ceremony-2017.pdf>



National Graves Registration Database UPDATE and Instructions

Due to attacks from hackers against the SUVCW Graves Database you are most likely aware of restrictions that have been placed on the database to ensure it is online and of use to anyone who wishes to use it as it was designed to be used. Below are three sets of guidelines that have been introduced to the database.

1. Public Use: Anyone with or without an account may research using the database, yes, they must have a surname and they are limited to 20 results for each search. www.suvcwdb.org

2. User Account: A user account that was in service prior to 01 August 2016 is still in service, the login in page is located at www.user.suvcwdb.org – for those who didn't have a user account prior to 01 August 2016 they may still request a user account but must do so through a direct request to the office of the National Graves Registration Officer (NGRO). A user account doesn't require the surname and searches can be made to view as many as 100 results at a time, some are authorized to view all the results in one search field at one time.

3. Admin Account: A admin account is still only authorized and created by the National Graves Registration Officer, no other Brother in the order has the right to a Administration Account by virtue of his office, with the exception of the National Graves Committee Members and the National Graves Registration Officer (NGRO). All other Admin Accounts must be earned and maintained via the guidelines of the NGRO as authorized by the Commander-in-Chief. Admin Account holders may make edits to existing records, delete existing records and approve/disapprove new submissions after they have been confirmed/unconfirmed. Types of people who may be considered for a Administration Account are National Aides to the National Committee on Graves Registration, Department Graves Registration Officers, Certified Cemetery Project Managers and others as deemed by the NGRO. Login information will be given to the account holder at the time they are granted an account.

In Fraternity, Charity, & Loyalty

Bruce D. Frail, PDC National Graves Registration Officer Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



ANTHONY FRAZIER

GROUPS KEEP MEMORY GREEN OF SORRENTO/MT. PLYMOUTH VET

It is a more than 2 year old story that may be coming to a happy ending for members of two local groups. The East Lake Historical Society of Sorrento/Mt. Plymouth and the Sons of Union Veterans of St. Cloud, Florida with the cooperation and physical help of Paul Lammardo, biologist of Wekiva Rivers Basin State Parks have found and staked out an approximate location for the old Calvary Cemetery. It took extensive research by the community which included personal testimonies and old aerial photographs. As you may be able to see from the photos the headstone is military and shows that Private Anthony Frazier was in the 21st United States Colored Infantry. Much more has been researched about his early life as a slave, his service in the Civil War and his life as a landowner and respected citizen of the Sorrento area until his death in 1910.



Montgomery Cunningham Meigs (; May 3, 1816 – January 2, 1892) was a career United States Army officer and civil engineer, who served as Quartermaster General of the U.S. Army during and after the American Civil War. Despite his Southern birth, Meigs strongly opposed secession and remained loyal to the Union; his record as Quartermaster General was regarded as outstanding, both in effectiveness and in ethical probity, and Secretary of State William H. Seward viewed it as a key factor in Union victory.

While the Confederacy never had enough supplies and it kept getting worse, the Union forces typically had enough food, supplies, ammunition and weapons. The Union supply system, even as it penetrated deeper into the South, maintained its efficiency. Historians credit the achievements to Meigs. Union quartermasters were responsible for most of the \$3 billion spent for the war. They operated out of sixteen major depots, which formed the basis of the system of procurement and supply throughout the war. As the war expanded, operation of these depots became much more complex, with an overlapping and interweaving relationship between the army and government operated factories, private factories, and numerous middlemen. The purchase of goods and services through contracts supervised by the quartermasters accounted for most of federal military expenditures, apart from the wages of the soldiers. The quartermasters supervised their own soldiers, and cooperated closely with state officials, manufacturers and wholesalers trying to sell directly to the army; and representatives of civilian workers looking for higher pay at government factories. The complex system was closely monitored by congressmen anxious to ensure that their districts won their share of contracts.

Exactly how the tombstone was moved about 100 feet from the graveyard will probably always be a mystery. Much more important is that shortly it will properly installed in an upright position, thereby restoring dignity and honor to a former neighbor and Union soldier.

Pictured above prominently is Ron McCracken of the L. L. Mitchell Camp, local area citizens and members of the East Lake Historical Society. From Heaven Anthony thanks you. From Earth we thank him.

Libby Prison Escape

The Libby Prison Escape at Richmond, Virginia in February 1864 saw over 100 Union prisoners-of-war escape from captivity. It was one of the most successful prison breaks of the American Civil War.

Led by Colonel Thomas E. Rose of the 77th Pennsylvania Infantry, the prisoners started tunnelling in a rat-infested zone which the Confederate guards were reluctant to enter. The tunnel emerged in a vacant lot beside a warehouse, from where the escapees could walk out through the gate without arousing suspicion. Since the prison was believed to be escape-proof, there was less vigilance by the authorities than in other camps, and the alarm was not raised for nearly twelve hours. Over half the prisoners were able to reach Union lines, helped by their familiarity with the terrain after serving in McClellan's Peninsular Campaign of 1862.

Libby Prison encompassed an entire city block in Richmond. To the north lay Cary Street, connecting the prison area to the rest of the city. On the south side ran the James River. The prison itself stood three stories above ground with a basement exposed on the river side. Confederate soldiers whitewashed the outer walls to make lurking prisoners instantly recognizable.

The first floor of Libby Prison housed the various offices of the Confederate guard unit; the second and third floors were partitioned as inmate holding areas. The basement of the

prison was divided into three sections. The western end was a storage cellar, the middle section was a carpenter's shop used by civilians, and the eastern end was an abandoned kitchen. This kitchen in the eastern section was once used by Union inmates, but an infestation of rats and constant flooding compelled the Confederates to close it off. The abandoned area became known as "Rat Hell."

Though most of the prisoners (and guards alike) did what they could to avoid Rat Hell, a handful of Union officers schemed to break in. By removing a stove on the first floor and chipping their way into the adjoining chimney, the officers constructed a cramped but effective passage for access to the eastern basement. Once access between the two floors was established, the officers set about plans to tunnel their way out.

The floor of Rat Hell was covered in two feet of straw. This straw was a bane and a blessing for the officers. On one hand, it provided a perfect hiding place for the dirt excavated from the tunnel. Captain I. N. Johnston, who spent more time in Rat Hell than any other Union officer, commented, "I have been asked a thousand times how we contrived to hide such a quantity of earth as the digging of a tunnel of that size would dislodge. [On the floor] we made a wide and deep opening...in this the loose dirt was closely packed, and then nicely covered with straw." By such means, the Union officers were able to conceal all signs of the tunnel that might tip off civilians and wandering sentries. The straw in Rat Hell also provided a convenient hiding place for workers during the day.

One man was chosen to secrete all signs of the tunnel while the digging party scrambled up to the first floor. He would then remain buried in the straw for the remainder of the day until the next relief arrived at dusk. Johnston wrote, "...There was a large quantity [of straw] there, and but for which our undertaking must have been discovered nearly as soon as begun." As helpful as the straw might have been, it was nevertheless the main reason for the nickname, Rat Hell. Lt. Charles H. Moran, a recaptured officer from Libby, wrote, "No tongue can tell...how the poor fellow[s] passed among the squealing rats,—enduring the sickening air, the deathly chill, the horrible interminable darkness."

Major A. G. Hamilton, a leading founder of the escape party, pointed to the dilemma of the rats: "The only difficulties experienced [were lack of proper tools] and the unpleasant feature of having to hear hundreds of rats squeal all the time, while they ran over the diggers almost without a sign of fear." Colonel Thomas E. Rose, the leader of the escape, addressed the double-edged lack of light in Rat Hell: "The profound darkness caused some...to become bewildered when they attempted to move about. I sometimes had to feel all over the cellar to gather up the men that were lost." Despite the difficulties, the dark repugnant atmosphere of Rat Hell offered the most effective cover. "On rare occasions, guards entered the large basement rooms. 'This was, however, so uninviting a place, that the Confederates made this visit as brief as nominal compliance with their orders permitted.'"

Colonel Rose and Major Hamilton led the escape efforts. Rose, wounded at the Battle of Chickamauga, arrived at the prison on October 1, 1863. From the moment he stepped



in the door, he was bent on escape. While exploring the darker regions of Rat Hell, he happened upon Hamilton, who was also searching for a proper tunneling point. Soon fast friends, the two worked toward the successful escape in February. Contemporarily, Libby prisoners showered Rose with admiration and credit for the escape's success.

Rose and Hamilton worked tirelessly together to bring about the escape. Rose thought of breaking into the basement from the chimney, while Hamilton engineered the passage. Rose toiled feverishly in the tunnel and organized digging teams while Hamilton worked out the logistics and invented contraptions for removing dirt and supplying oxygen to the tunnel. Various setbacks plagued the tunneling effort but as Lieutenant Moran recorded, "the undaunted Rose, aided by Hamilton, [always] persuaded the men to another effort, and soon the knives and toy saws were at work again with vigor." Lieutenant Colonel Federico Fernández Cavada, a prisoner at Libby, wrote, "To Colonel Rose is chiefly due the credit [for the escape]... Animated by an unflinching earnestness of purpose, unwearied perseverance, and no ordinary engineering abilities, he organized ... working parties [which] he conducted every night [in] the cellars of the prison." "[Rose] was the acknowledged leader of the tunnel party, the acknowledged projector of the tunnel," maintained Hamilton, "and it was through his good sense, energy, and management ... that the escape was a success."

Despite his work in planning the escape, Rose was captured before reaching Federal lines. Minutes from an advancing Union front at Williamsburg, he was ambushed by Confederate pickets and wrestled back to Libby Prison. Though placed in solitary confinement, the Confederates felt Rose's presence at Libby now presented a danger. Given the chance, they gladly traded the famed escapist for a Confederate colonel on April 30, 1864. Rose returned to his unit, the 77th Pennsylvania Infantry, and fought through to the end of the war.

