

Historical Journal

Vol 79, No. 4

www.loyallegion.org

WINTER 2022

Commander-in-Chief's Message

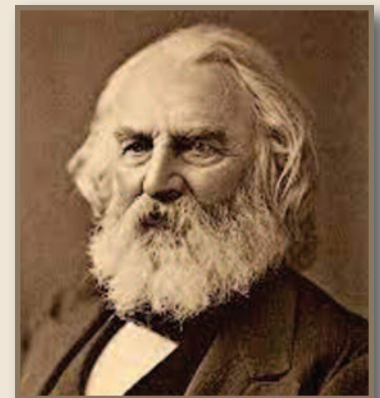
Christmas Bells

Before proceeding with this column, I would like to congratulate the Dames of the Loyal Legion of the United States for electing and installing their new officers in October. National President Jan Davis; SVP Laurie Moore; JVP Judy Hritsko; Treasurer Florence Stanley PNP; Recorder Ann Schaeffer PNP; Registrar Veronica Victor; and Chaplain Cathy Harris. The Companions of MOLLUS look forward to working with you to achieve our mutual objectives.

In October 1998 PCinC Robert Girard Carroon penned an article about his 5th cousin 3x removed — Second Lieutenant Charles Appleton Longfellow (Original Companion Insignia No. 1476) which was published in the Loyal Legion Historical Journal. The article can be accessed at this website: <https://suvcw.org/mollus/art005.htm>.

2 LT Longfellow was seriously wounded on November 27, 1863 and eventually was hospitalized in Washington DC, where his father, the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, joined him in early December. On Christmas Day 1863, while caring for his son, the elder Longfellow wrote a poem "Christmas Bells" which we know today in its musical format of "I heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

This edition of the Journal should be arriving during Advent 2022. It is appropriate to republish the original poem, written for and about an Original Companion, here.



*I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
Then from each black, accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound*

*The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"
Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."*



Loyal Legion Memorial Fund 2022 Appeal



The work of the Loyal Legion Memorial Fund is varied — supporting worthy historical organizations, helping underwrite commemorative events, and publishing this Journal that keeps you in touch with our Order and provides insights into the Civil War. The Fund depends greatly on the generous support of Companions to continue its work.

To expand that work even further, we seek to increase the relatively low number of our Companions — less than five percent of the membership in recent years — who make an annual gift. The enclosed envelope helps enable your tax-deductible gift this year and makes the Fund even more effective. Or, you can give securely online through the PayPal link on our website home page (Loyal Legion.org). In whatever amount you chose to participate, we thank you for your support.

The Trustees of the Loyal Legion Memorial Fund *
* * *

Welcome New Members

HEREDITARY COMPANIONS

John Christopher Long, 22863, KS
1LT William Green, Battery D, 1st MI Light Artillery

Howard Guilford Black, Jr., 22864, CT
1LT Elbridge Guilford, Co A, 1st Mass. Heavy Artillery

Conrad Dare Klotzbach, 22865 PA
1LT Charles Whiteside, Co. H 16th NY Heavy Artillery

Christopher Michael Whelan, 22866, PA
BVT CAPT Thomas Doeblor, 14th Infantry USA

Thomas Wayne Frank, 22867, PA
BG Royal Thaxter Frank USA

David Brian Ermine, 22868, PA
CAPT Abraham Ellis Strickle USA Commissary

Robert Jacob McNelley, 22869, PA
LTC Charles Whitaker, 28th Wisconsin Infantry

Jeffrey Alexandar Morrow, 22871, OH
1 LT Andrew J. Kline, Co. H, 72nd OVI

Stuart Alan Whitehead, 22872, VA
1 LT Enoch F. Jackman Co. C 6th USCT

Joseph James Boyce, 22873, PA
LTC John W. Nields, 104th PA Infantry

Robert Guy Erwin, 22874, PA
CAPT Charles K. Erwin, Co. E, 45th Illinois

Jacob Ronald McNelly, 22875, PA
LTC Charles Whitaker, 28th Wisconsin Infantry

Tennyson Joseph Lader, 22876, PA
BVT BG William W.H Davis, 104th PA Vol. Inf.

John Robert Harman III, 22877, VA
ADM David G. Farragut, USN

ASSOCIATE COMPANIONS

Peter Bahuk Jr. A363, VA.



The Pennsylvania Commandery is selling MOLLUS grave markers.
The marker also includes a mounting rod.

Cost is \$55.00 Plus Shipping

To Order Contact: David Forbes at:
forbze16@gmail.com



LOYAL LEGION
HISTORICAL JOURNAL

VOL. 79, NO. 4

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Council-in-Chief (Vacant)

The Loyal Legion Historical Journal is a quarterly publication published by the Memorial Fund of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, which was founded on April 15, 1865. Pertinent materials will be welcomed by members and the public. Articles and news should be submitted to Paul Davis at pdmarcomm@aol.com. Content must be formatted in Microsoft Word and submitted electronically. High resolution photographs and art work (300 DPI JPEG or TIFF files) at the finished size to be published should be submitted and accompanied by a description and/or caption.

Submission Deadlines:

Submission deadlines are NO LATER THAN February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1.

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MOLLUS Congress 2022



Time To Lawyer Up: Left To Right: Jeffrey Burden, John Schneider, Tom Kistler, Don Shaw



MOLLUS Commander In Chief Robert Pollock



Left To Right: Ann Schaeffer, Past DOLLUS President, Judy Hritisko Junior Vice President, Jan Davis, DOLLUS President, Cathy Harris Chaplain, Jill Viens



Joe Coleman, John Moore, Adam Gaines, John Moore, Tom Kistler, Don Shaw, Peter Hritsko, Paul Davis, Rob Pollock, John Schneider, Jeffrey Burden



Left To Right: Dick Denney, Peter Hritsko, Rob Pollock, John Schneider



John Moore, John Schneider, John Moore



Left to Right: Tom Kistler, Jeffry Burden, Adam Gaines, Dick Denney, John Moore, Cathy Harris, Rob Pollock, Peter Hritsko, Paul Davis, Jan Davis, John Schneider, John Moore, Don Shaw, Joe Coleman, Ann Schaeffer, Judy Hritko, Jill Viens (Photo By Kathy Coleman)



Back Row: L to R: Joe Coleman, John Moore, John Moore, Tom Kistler, Rob Pollock, John Schneider, Jeffry Burden Front Row: L to R: Adam Gaines, Don Shaw, Ann Shaeffer, Judy Hritsko, Paul Davis, Jan Davis, Cathy Harris, Jill Viens (Photo By Kathy Coleman)



CIC Pollock Presents Dougherty Thompson Cup, Joe Coleman Left, CIC Pollock center Tom Kistler Right



CIC Rob Pollock & DOLLUS President Jan Davis



Box Lunches served at GAR Hall and Museum



Congress Banquet Participants

Gettysburg 2022 Remembered



DOLLUS Officers 2022-2024



Dames,

It is my honor to serve our organization the Dames of the Loyal Legion of the United States for the 2022-2024 term. I thank you for your support in electing me as your next National President. It is with great pride that I accept this responsibility and will do my best to accomplish the duties and goals of this position. I look forward to working cooperatively with the Dames you have chosen to serve you as your Executive Board. We also look forward to our continued success with our relationship with our companions of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States. Let us all renew our desire to be a part of this organization and to continue to honor those who serve this country. *



Executive Board 2022-2024

Jan Davis, National President
Laurie Moore, Senior Vice President
Judy Hritsko, Junior Vice President
Florence Stanley PNP, Treasurer
Ann Schaeffer PNP, Recorder

Veronica Victor, Registrar
Cathy Harris, Chaplain
Sheri O'Connell, Historian
Ellen Higgins PNP, Webmaster



2022 DOLLUS Officers Left to Right: Jan Davis - President; Judy Hritsko - Junior Vice President; Ann Schaeffer - Recorder PNP; Cathy Harris - Chaplain.

To Capture a President: Bvt. Brig. Gen. Victor Vifquain, Insignia 08522 (NE) By: Jeffry C. Burden, Insignia 22116 (VA)

The story seems too bizarre to be believed: three men, two former Union officers of French birth and a French viscount, bluff their way through Confederate lines and end up in Richmond with plans to kidnap Confederate President Jefferson Davis. Yet this tale of intrigue was but one daring episode in the life of Companion Victor Vifquain.

Vifquain was born in Belgium in 1836 to French parents. His father was a cavalry officer under Napoleon Bonaparte, and later a leading engineer. Victor, after visiting the United States as a teenager, attended the Belgian military academy. He served only briefly before returning to America, marrying a woman he had met on his first visit, and settling in Nebraska.

In July 1861, Vifquain showed his devotion to his adopted country by enlisting as a private (soon promoted to 1st Lieutenant and Adjutant) in the 53rd New York Infantry, which consisted largely of French, or American French-speaking, soldiers. He and his friends Capt. Alfred Cipriani and Lt. Armond Duclos served well, but the Regiment was afflicted with discipline and gambling problems. The 53rd was disbanded in early March 1862, leaving Vifquain, Cipriani and Duclos embarrassed and itching for action.

Together the three, and a recent acquaintance, Viscount Maurice de Beaumont (a cousin of Confederate Gen. Prince Camille de Polignac), hatched a daring plan: travel through the Rebel lines to Richmond, commandeer Jefferson Davis's boat while Davis traveled down the James River to Norfolk on an inspection tour, then continue just past that city to Union-held Fortress Monroe.

They would assume the guise of adventuring French citizens, merely observing life in the wartime South while traveling to visit Gen. de Polignac. (Interestingly, Richmond newspaper accounts from the time state that Vifquain and the others offered their services to the Confederate military; Vifquain apparently never claimed such a story was part of their ruse.) As extra security, de Beaumont carried a personal letter of introduction from the French minister in Washington to the French minister in Richmond.

In a memoir written late in life, Vifquain wrote of the plot (referring to his group in the third person): "Bold undertaking to be sure. They were fully aware of the danger of such an expedition, and indeed had little confidence in the success of their scheme; but they were bent on the 'frolic'...no matter the consequences....They were well armed and had good pistols and trust swords at their belts and plenty of money in their pockets."

They set out from Washington on March 30 1862. In Manassas, Duclos accidentally shot himself in the hand and had to turn back. The other three continued south, avoiding Confederate pickets and purchasing horses from a suspicious farmer (as Vifquain described him, "a most intense Rebel".) Accosted by Confederate pickets near Fredericksburg, the three were taken to that city and briefly held there. The farmer from whom they had obtained their horses showed up and claimed the horses had been stolen.

After much initial suspicion, the three men's aristocratic bearing, and de Beaumont's letter of introduction, convinced the Confederate officer in charge to send them to Richmond for further investigation. There, the Provost-Marshal, Gen. John Winder, questioned the men before giving them the run of the city. They eventually lodged quite amiably with a Confederate officer, and socialized with dignitaries including Secretary of State Judah Benjamin.



Vifquain, about 1900, wearing his Medal of Honor.

Military developments, however, intervened. Major Gen. George McClellan's advancing troops forced the evacuation of Norfolk. The kidnap scheme had been foiled by events beyond the three men's control, and they laid plans to leave Richmond. They first rode west, under the cover story they were heading to Nashville, but instead (after several more close calls) entered the Shenandoah Valley and moved north to Union lines and safety — less than two months after leaving on their mission.

In many ways, Vifquain's fascinating story was just beginning. In June 1862, with a letter of introduction from Secretary of War Edwin Stanton in hand, Vifquain went to Illinois and offered his services. Governor Richard Yates was impressed by the young veteran and made him adjutant of the newly-formed 97th Illinois Infantry. Vifquain showed himself an able officer during Gen. Ulysses Grant's Vicksburg Campaign of 1862-63 and earned promotion to Major. He led troops at Port Gibson, Champion Hill and elsewhere with notable courage under fire.

Vifquain served thereafter with distinction in Louisiana and Alabama. On April 9 1865, by then Lieutenant-Colonel of the 97th, he received orders to lead that regiment against the formidable defenses of Fort Blakely, near Mobile. In hand-to-hand fighting, Vifquain and his men stormed Redoubt No. 4, raised the flag of the 97th on its parapet, and captured three Confederate flags. Vifquain himself used his sword to cut the lines holding aloft the divisional headquarters flag of Confederate Maj. Gen. Samuel French.

For capture of that flag, and for the outstanding bravery in the overall attack, Vifquain received the Medal of Honor on June 8 1865, and was brevetted brigadier-general.

The 97th Illinois was mustered out in August 1865. Vifquain's adventures continued. He traveled to Ireland briefly in 1867 to serve in the Fenian resistance to British rule. Back home in Nebraska, with a wife and three children, he worked as a land surveyor, pathfinder, and newspaper publisher. He helped establish the town of Orleans. Active in Democratic politics, he ran unsuccessfully for Congress. In 1886, President Grover Cleveland named him an American consulate officer in Colombia, where he negotiated trade disputes, and he later also held diplomatic posts in Panama.

Vifquain joined the Loyal Legion in 1891 as Companion No. 08522. His military days, however, were not yet done. In July 1898, at age 62, Vifquain was commissioned in the 3rd Nebraska Regiment and made plans to serve in the Spanish-American War. He arrived too late for action, but was there to witness the lowering of the Spanish flag at Havana Harbor.

The struggles of the years eventually took their toll on the aging freedom fighter, but his triumphs were not forgotten. After his death on January 7 1904, Vifquain's horse, with empty saddle and boots reversed in stirrups, led a large throng in procession to his grave in Lincoln's Calvary Cemetery. *



Vifquain's government marker in Calvary Cemetery, Lincoln.



Vifquain and the 97th Illinois captured Redoubt "No. 4", shown on the map (left).

Sources:

- Vifquain, Victor, The 1862 Plot to Kidnap Jefferson Davis (Smith and Tucker, eds.), 1998.*
- Morton, J. Sterling, Illustrated History of Nebraska (1907).*
- History of Nebraska, <https://history.nebraska.gov/publications/vifquain-victor>*
- Richmond Daily Dispatch and Richmond Whig, April and May 1862, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>*

ANNOUNCEMENT

2023 Lincoln Birthday Events In Washington, DC

February 11-12, (Saturday/Sunday) 2023

Banquet in Celebration of President Abraham Lincoln's 214th Birthday.

Your hosts: The District of Columbia Military Order of the Loyal Legion and Dames of the Loyal Legion

Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial sponsored by the Lincoln Birthday National Commemorative Committee. We invite you to register early!

HOTEL RESERVATIONS –SHERATON SUITES OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA

801 N. Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Last Day to Book: Tuesday, January 10, 2023

To book a room call: (1)-888-236-2427 (Please identify yourself with MOLLUS 2023 For Group Rate)

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria under MOLLUS, "Military Order of the Loyal Legion". Rooms available: King Bed or 2 double beds (all are mini-suites) - \$155 plus tax per night. Complementary shuttle to National Airport and the Airport Metro. Parking is available for a fee for those staying at or attending events at the hotel. Room rates will be honored for three days (Feb. 10-13, 2023). Call Sheraton Suites to extend additional days.

Saturday, February 11, 2023

Lincoln Birthday Dinner

Ballroom at Sheraton Suites Old Town Alexandria

(Black Tie, Business Suit, or Uniform with decorations for Gentlemen; evening wear for Ladies). See registration form for menu selections. Cost is \$110.00 per person, inclusive of tax & tips.

Guest Speaker: David J. Kent, author of a new book, *Lincoln: The Fire of Genius: How Abraham Lincoln's Commitment to Science and Technology Helped Modernize America*

Sunday, February 12, 2023

Ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial

in Celebration of President Abraham Lincoln's Birthday

Arrive at Lincoln Memorial by 10:30 am, program starts at 10:45 am with Musical Prelude.

Presentation of the James A. Simmons History Scholarship Award to an outstanding undergraduate student at Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee.

Wreath laying by government officials, distinguished guests, and hereditary and patriotic societies

NOTE: Parking is extremely limited near the Memorial. Attendees should plan on using taxis, Uber, Lyft or leaving extra time to find parking near the Memorial.

**Lincoln Birthday National
Commemorative Committee Luncheon
Sunday, February 12, 2023**

COST: \$55.00 per person inclusive of tax & tips.

12:30 pm – LUNCH BUFFET: (Sandwiches with hot soup, cookie, and hot and cold beverages)

PLACE: Sheraton Suites Alexandria Old Town, 801 N. St. Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA

RESERVATIONS: See reservation form on page 3. Reservations to be received no later than January 31.

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY RESERVATIONS. Guests are welcome.

Important: After cutoff date, if planning to attend, please contact John Moore at 571-455-8669.

LINCOLN BIRTHDAY EVENTS - 2023 REGISTRATION FORM

Saturday, February 11, 2023

Saturday night banquet includes:

- () FISH - Pan seared Mahi Mahi with onion & bacon crust, topped with lemon thyme butter, on bed of sautéed spinach served with roasted potatoes
- () BEEF - Braised Beef Short Ribs & Cheddar Mashed Potatoes
- () VEGETARIAN (Chef's selection)

PRICE PER PERSON INCLUSIVE: \$110.00 No. _____ **BANQUET TOTAL \$** _____

Name: _____ **Tel.#** _____ **Email** _____

(Please Print) Must have names of members & guests – If different for each event, please indicate.

Guests _____

(Make check payable to DC MOLLUS—PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY RESERVATION)

RESERVATION FORM FOR LBNCC LUNCHEON

Sunday, February 12, 2023

Make SEPARATE Check Payable to “DC MOLLUS”. Note LBNCC Luncheon on memo line.

Luncheon is \$55.00 per person inclusive. (Please list guests). No. _____ x \$55.00 = \$ _____

Name: _____ **Tel.#** _____ **Email** _____

Guests: _____ () Check if Allied Order.

TOTAL AMOUNT LUNCHEON CHECK ENCLOSED: \$ _____

SEND TO: JOHN MOORE, Commander, DC MOLLUS

Address: 306 Mashie Drive, SE, Vienna, VA 22180

Email: jumeau@verizon.net

Phone: 571-455-8669

Peter Dixon: 703-549-7428 or 703-862-2811 (Joan) Chairman, LBNCC



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Hereditary Replacement Ribbon (Large Medal)	\$20	_____	_____
Hereditary Replacement Ribbon	\$20	_____	_____
Officer Neck Ribbon	\$32	_____	_____
Rosettes (Hereditary, Associate, or Honorary)	\$9	_____	_____
Officer Rosette (Indicate State or National)	\$24	_____	_____
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Blazer Patch	\$20	_____	_____
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MOLLUS Cuff Links (Vermeil)	\$100	_____	_____
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MOLLUS Name Badge (shipping incl.)	\$22	_____	_____
Bow Tie	\$22	_____	_____
NEW! Cummerbund	\$25	_____	_____
Combo Offer When Purchased Together: Bow Tie & Cummerbund	\$45	_____	_____

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Email _____

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 Up to \$10 = \$5
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 \$51 to \$100 = \$10
 \$101 or more = \$14
 TOTAL \$ _____

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 *When ordering the Hereditary 17"x19" Hereditary Certificate, the worksheet is MANDATORY. Please download and complete the Worksheet located at:
<http://suvcw.org/mollus/resources/certorder.pdf>