



# SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



# NEWSLETTER

Henderson, Minnesota 56044 Ph: (507)248-3434

MARCH 2012

Volume 17, Issue 1



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## SCHS ANNUAL MEETING

**WHEN; Sunday April 15, 2012**

**12:00 - 3:00**

**WHERE; Sibley County Courthouse Annex Basement**

**MENU; Buffet—Roast Beef, Meat Balls, Au Gratin Potatoes, Vegetables, Creamy Fruit Salad and beverage.**

**Served on China dishes! ...no paper plates stuff for us**

**Tip included Free Parking**

**COST: \$15.00 per person**

**PROGRAM;**

**DIGGING FOR YOUR ROOTS**

## Calendar of Events

**Check our website for 2011 programs. The next issues of the newsletter will have the programs listed**

- April 15 12:00 PM Annual Meeting. Digging For Your Roots Program, at the Courthouse in Gaylord
- See next newsletter for upcoming programs, or website
- **NOTE NEW STARTING TIMES—7PM**
- If you have suggestions or comments on upcoming events ... Contact Judy Loewe 507-248-3345 **Calendar Subject to Change.**



## The Prez Sez

by Jerome Petersen

What a great story the letters tell in the feature article! How lucky we were to have Mr. Naggatz transcribe them many years ago, and then to contact us and share them. Again it makes our newsletter bloated but the story has a beginning, middle and end and should be read in sequence. Doing some research on Ancestry we found the descendants of the Giltner family living in Renville County in the early 1900s. It is good timing with this being the 150 years anniversary of the Civil War. Glen Kiecker sent us a link to some fantastic photos from that era; <http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2012/02/the-civil-war-part-1-the-places/100241/> Mr. Giltner (whose letters we printed) was at some of these places.

The SCHS crew is getting displays ready for the spring opening. One of the features will be fashions from the last 150 years. SCHS has a collection of clothing that will be

displayed on mannequins throughout the museum; weddings, band concert and a school marm.

Just a few short weeks ago Harriet Traxler pointed out a website from Washington County featuring country schools. She suggested we take on a project like that. It was in agreement that it would have lots of possibilities. We started with a couple brainstorming sessions and came up with lots of ideas. In the early 1950s almost all the Sibley County rural schools were closed as consolidation proceeded. There are many who have gone to these schools and most have some interesting stories. And they are all senior citizens. Arlene Busse tells this story of her husband experiences; Bob tells of the need to have a plug of chewing tobacco along when going from Dist. #13 over to the Larson-Marmorine farm to get water for the fountain in the school [we have that fountain in the mu-

(Continued on page 12)



## Civil War Letters

### of Henry Patterson Giltner

#### From New Auburn

"I am a high school history teacher/football coach in Pensacola, FL. My original roots are back in Minnesota and North Dakota. I attended college of Science, Valley City, ND. State U. & St. Cloud State.

I had a friend that had letters from a homesteader from New Auburn to his family back home (he unfortunately was conscripted in the last years of the war.)

My friend gave me permission to transcribe the letters, which I did, word for word as they were written. I have used them in my history classes for some time, as 1<sup>st</sup> source material. Since this is the sesquicentennial of the start of the Civil War, it dawned on me that the good Minnesotans of your area might like to read them. . . . when I transcribed them in '75-'76, they were in terrible shape. No doubt I could have misinterpreted some things. I have lost track of my friend, but I seriously doubt the originals are still in existence today, at least in any condition to be useful.

*Brad Naggatz*

#### H.P. GILTNER, CIVIL WAR LETTERS TIMELINE:

1. 12/12/1864 - Fort Snelling, St. Paul, MN.
2. Undated.
3. 12/16/64 - Ft. Snelling, St. Paul, MN.
4. Undated.
5. 12/21/64 - La Crosse, WI (to his father).
6. 12/24/64 - Louisville, KY (via Milwaukee, WI & Chicago, IL).
7. 12/26/64 - Indianapolis, IN.
8. 12/30/64 - Governors Isle, NY.
9. 1/20/1865 - Savannah, GA.
10. Undated.
11. Undated.
12. 1/25/65 - Beaufort, SC.
13. Undated (Columbia, SC area).
14. 3/1/65 - Hyetville, NC.
15. 3/28/65 - Goldsboro, NC.

16. 3/29/65 - Paper captured at Columbia S. C.
17. 4/17/65 - Raleigh, NC.
18. 4/22/65 - Raleigh, NC.
19. 5/11/65 - Manchester, NC.
20. 5/30/65 - Washington, DC.
21. 6/5/65 - Louisville, KY.
22. 6/24/65 - Louisville, KY (letter from Chaplain).
23. 6/26/65 - Louisville, KY (letter from a friend).
24. 6/27/65 - Louisville, KY (letter from Chaplain).
25. 6/27/65 - Louisville, KY (letter from Commanding Officer).
26. 7/18/65 - St. Peter, MN.

We are grateful to donor Brad Naggatz for the gift of these transcribed letters. He had a difficult task and probably had to guess at some words. For clarity we have made minor deletions and added a few explanatory words in brackets

(1) Dec. 12, 1864

Fort Snelling, St. Paul, MN.

Dear Lucy,

I am in and dressed [inducted and in uniform] in a pretty good shape. As to my feelings I can say nothing. They seem as though they were all cut throats here and it is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. For example, when I reached this place (a sort of rendezvous) I was met by a man that would mark my things. The price was only 5.00. He was very indignant when I told him I would not have them marked. I sent home the pants, cap and two coats by the bearer.

...I will send a power of attorney soon. I think that a substitute can't be got short of 500. [\$300 to \$500 was usual] I understand that I can get into the heavy artillery. I won't write anymore at present, I have only 30 minutes. I received a letter from Hiram. I think it is in my pocket. Kisses to all and love by the barrel. Keep a stiff upper lip.

H. P. Giltner

(2-undated)

Dear Lucy,

I think I may get use to this thing. This shows me how very dear my family are to me. My time is for only 1 year. It would cost too much to have a substitute. If my life is spared which is not certain, or if I stay home I would like to have some compensation for our misfortune.

Lucy, I have written to Hiram. Your cousin would like to hear from you. I saw their son, who has served his 3 years without a day's sickness or a scratch.

I want to close with love to you all and kisses to the babies. Keep a stiff upper lip. Write immediately direct to Fort Snelling, Rendezvous, Draft Service.

I have not cried a tear, I wish you would not cry. Yours affectionate husband and papa.

Henry P. Giltner

(3) Dec. 16, 1864

Ft. Snelling, St. Paul, MN

Dear Lucy,

I am well and comfortable and would be happy if I knew that you were. I was examined yesterday the second time. In answer to my slight inability he answered we can fix that. Said that my legs were good. Thought he could march if he had such a pair.

We have about 50 men here but none of them show a familiar face. There are no moneyed men here, but there substitutes of Indians, neighbors and boys (Chippewas-3), (negroes-6). We are in what is called the Bullpen of about 5 acres enclosed with in the high wall with a board fence which situated upon the high bank of the river. It is a pleasant looking place. More men have just come in. I think they average about 5 a day.



I cannot get any positive answer as to where they will put me. They ask where I would rather go and I tell them in the heavy artillery. We are subject to orders from Washington and when our number is sufficient we will have marching orders and for that reason we can not get a furlough. If I could I would come home and help do up some chores. I think of you so often it causes a strange sad feeling which I cannot describe. But we must be thankful that we are no worse situated than we are. Some have left home with no one but wife and small children to take care of stock and things and wife sick (or expected to be) and no near neighbors.

I am going to write a letter for a man by the name of Allen Nott, lives a little east from Hutchinson. He was drafted in another county. There is about 10 per day detailed for extra duty. I bathed yesterday. We answer to our names at roll call three times a day. We are not allowed outside the pen but daytimes we can go around inside where we wish to. There is a guard in the house which keeps fire.

I am sorry I did not send home my best stockings to father. I drew two pair, two pair drawers, 1 pair pants, 1 blouse, 1 dress coat, 1 overcoat, 1 blanket, tin cup, plate, knife and fork which dishes we keep in our haversacks. I went to meeting and Sunday school. Write your answer direct to me at Fort Snelling Conscript.

Dearest borrow no trouble for me. I can take care of myself with the best of them. It is very probable that there will be another draft in the spring and it is proper that the frontier countys should be exempted which cannot be done with out some steps being taken by the supervisors of the people by setting forth the situation and circumstances and petition to head of the Provost Marshall office. There has several countys done so and been exempt. When the town authorities do not take hold the people have. I was told so by a man in the Marshalls office. I hope that steps will be immediately taken to prevent anyone from being drafted from our town for a man that is drafted must go to the war or furnish a substitute. A substitute must be a perfect man but they take anything that is drafted. (Excuse mistakes)

My little boys, how I would like to come see you. What a pleasure it would be to me to help your dear mother take care of you, to dress you in the morning and put you to bed at night and kiss your little cheeks but your dear good mother will kiss you for me. But I am afraid your poor mother will have to do. Hale, there is a great deal of very naughty talk here and some good men who sing hymns and some men play cards for money and drink whiskey. But they are a set of men I think that have no little children at home who they love as your papa does you. Photographs are 4.00 per dozen or 6 for 3.00. A degreotype for 1.00 with out case.

H.P. Giltner

(4 undated) New Auburn

Sibley County, MN

I tried to send you a paper but did not get time to put it in the office. I had a pretty little book from Hale but it is all messed now.

Dear Lucy

Dont borrow any trouble about me. I think I have contacted a number of friends already. I don't scuffle, drink, gamble or swear as there is enough others to do that here. I think that it would be best to send to St. Paul and have a certificate from the Provost Marshall that I was drafted to send to the land office. You understand you may get a clue where to direct mail to me by then for I am probably assigned to my regiment there.

My respects to inquiring friends. 3 women just entered with mush, sausage, cakes, pies. Father, there was no plow at Joneses. He would have some in the spring. He wants 4 yokes and bows.

My love to you Lucy

H.P. Giltner

(5)Dec. 21, 1864

LaCrosse, Wisc.

Father, this needs 1.00 stamps in case of real estate or .50 cents in the money case. I am well. We 42 conscripts start the first 'cons' for the South.

H. P. Giltner

(6)Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>

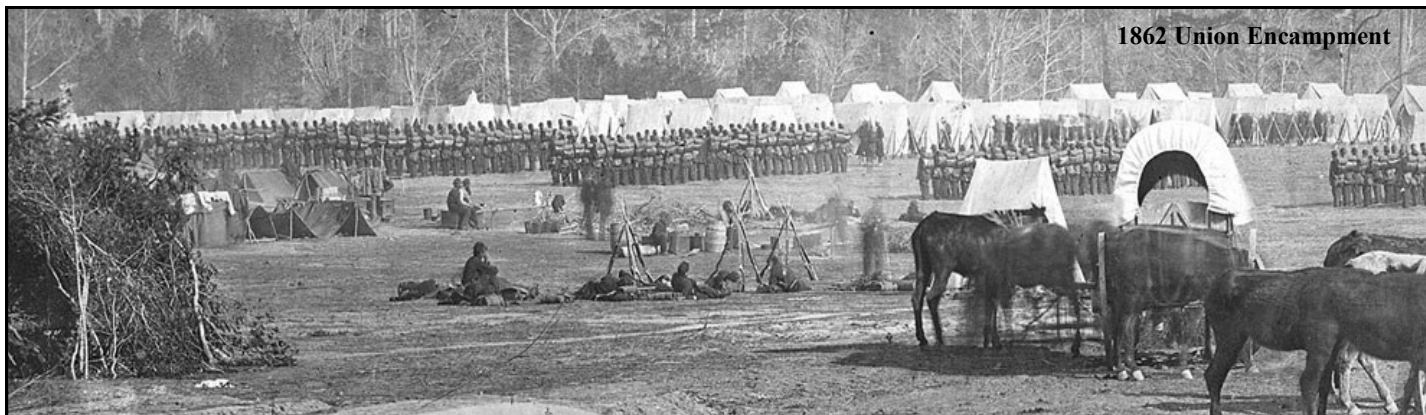
Louisville, Ky.

Dear Lucy,

We started from Ft. Snelling on last Tuesday and have traveled night and day by stage and rail. I sent you a power of attorney from La Crosse. I have more than 5.00 now and my haversack is full, my shirts are clean. I have seen 1 battlement. There are many here. There were 40 of us of when we started, one deserted. We are within 12 hours of Nashville, but we hear rumors that we may be sent to Sherman via New York.

This city is strange. Mules, negroes, store coats and wide track wagons and nothing like a farmers rig in the street we came through.

There was good sleighing in Milwaukee, Chicago and there is about as much snow here as at home. I cant tell much about the country though yesterday I saw much beech timber, plenty corn-fields and a little tame hay, but not much stock and scarce any







small grain. Fields turned up but not deep, exhibiting yellow looking soil. Wagon wheels literally covered with mud.

There seems to have been heavy rains, the river is much swollen and the land covered with water for many miles. Apparently hard land with out drainage. I would like to see you all. I dream of you often. If I could know that you had the house warm and father had the hay I would feel better.

Love to all and kisses.

From your dear husband to Grant and Hale

(7)Dec. 26, 1864

Indianapolis

Dear Lucy,

We have been to Louisville Kentucky where we received orders to turn back. We start this evening for New York thence across the ocean to Sherman's division. Would you not like to have a ride with me. I am afraid it will not be very pleasant for there are about 100 of us which will be apt to be jammed in close quarters. We started from Jacksonville, situated on this side of the river, at 9 pm, came about 30 miles when a lumber car next to the tender which been running with the nigh wheel upon the off side, swept out the bridge, letting 3 empty freight cars into the stream, smash killing none, hurt slightly one, the passenger being several cars behind. Many did not know that anything had happened. I did not wake up in the morning. We marched about 13 miles, halted at Semore until about two this morning.

We arrived here about 7, marched about 1 mile to the soldiers home where we found breakfast nearly ready for us, bread, meat, coffee. After dinner, paper and envelopes were distributed, gratis to all who wish to write.

It is rainy weather. It has rained some for 3 days not hard. It is a fine country around here, timber mostly beech, some very fine oak, poplar and chestnut but I like Minnesota best yet.

Father, I have written before but for fear you have not received I repeat and wish that there be immediately steps to exempt our frontier County or town from the next draft. It will protect imigrants.

Lee is ordered to revise the militia roll, it seems from the present aspect of affairs that such steps are unnecessary but I would hate to risk it for I would be liable to the draft when out the service 6 months. There are men here who have been discharged from the service on account of disability and have tried to enlist afterwards and have been rejected, then drafted and accepted.

Dear Lucy, I have written to S. Chanley. You will see that I will not be able to hear from you until I get to my regiment which will be some time. I am very sorry you may guess. My health holds good for me. I've had some cold but I am better now. I expect to be sea sick but that may make me more healthy in the end.

Hale my boy I wish I could come home tonight and see you and Grant and mommy. I think of you when I sleep and dream of being at home and kissing you and Grant and mommy. You must be a good boy and love Mother and Gramp.

H.P. Giltner

(8)December 30<sup>th</sup>, 1864

Govenors Island, New York

Dear Lucy,

I reached here yesterday safe and sound. We arrived in New York City about noon, were marched around the city about 2 hours then took dinner at the barracks then got on board the ferry for this place.

I saw some wonderful things in the shape of guns about 14 feet long and 4 feet through at the back with a bore which I attempted to crawl in at but my shoulders were too broad by 2 and 3 inches. I expect that we go away from here Monday at 9 O'clock. I cannot write you anything that will interest you but as I cant hear from you in some time yet I will write to you out of spite and I may not be situated so that I can write you every week but I will try to do the best I can.

I cannot compare New York City to anything that I have yet seen, Glencoe and New Auburn not excepted. Instead of mules and drays loaded with coal, fine horses, omnibuses and first class carriages filled with well dressed people, fill the street jam full. In short it was a great sight for me.

There are a number of Johnny Rebs here, that is Reb prisoners. They seem to be anxious to get back to fight for Jeff. I don't blame them much for they, the officers that run the commissary draw rations for so many men and I don't believe that two thirds of them are issued. News seems to be flattering in regard to the war but I don't expect that there will be much done until I get there.

I don't think of anything. The weather is fine. It freezes a little. I would not begrudge a good deal to know that you had the house fixed warm and comfortable. I sincerely hope you are all well. Kiss one another for me. My chance for writing is poor. Except my love. H.P. Giltner

(9)Jan. 20<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Savannah Georgia

Dear Lucy and all,

I am well. I stand soldiering quite well, much better than I expected. I am in Co. A and B is next.

I have seen Champ Shilling. He is sick in hospital. Andy Oracio, Chas. Dresser, Wm. Harris. Chs. Goodrich and Jos. Armes seemed to be very glad to see me. The mail just brought me letters from you and you cant begin to guess how glad it made me. I could not find any fault with it but it did bring the first tears to my eyes that has dared to be seen since I have been in the service., cuz I thought you would probably have to save the hay. I hope Hale and Heck agree. Well as for the rest of you, you can take care of yourselves. I thank you for your kindness in offering me butter but it is impossible to receive it for we started day before yesterday on a march northward, crossed the Savannah River one branch of it, when the Rebs cut the levy above and let the water down upon us in great quantity so that the road was under water and then was obliged to abandon the thing and turn back. It commenced raining in the afternoon and it has not quit yet. We expect to march in the morning so camp rumors say but we dont think much of that news as our march which lasted for 2 days over roads that was nearly impassable. We went about 5 miles at night. I got into an old rice mill with plenty of straw. In the morning I found some rice with the hull on it. Looks much like barley. Using an old kettle for a mortar, pounded it out. I also got about a peck of beans, small, black, taste much like peas, white beans are called Yankee beans here. We have had beef once since I have been here. The rest of



time pork generally very good. We draw 3 days rations at a time. We have flour sometimes, mix it with some water and bake it something like a pancake but they arent very good. I like the hard tack better. We also have tea, coffee, rice, sugar, sometimes beans. The rations are rather short for us green horns but we havent suffered any yet.

Dear I supposed that I had written you of the kindness of your cousins whole family. I went to Sabath school and to a meeting with your cousin. He also went to the Provost Marshall with a where I wished to go. He also visited me the next day while in prison as I called it. I expected to go back there when I came away. I wish you would write the cousins family and say goodbye from me.

Dear Lucy - I am of your opinion as far as my morals are considered. I dont think that I shall be any worse when I come home than I now am. This company A which I am in claimed to be the most moral Co. that can be found. There is no card playing and but little swearing in it. One month ago today this town was evacuated by the Rebs. 3 weeks tomorrow since I came here. I think without doubt that we move tomorrow. Hale, I dont want you to let Ma cry while papa is gone. I will come back as soon as I can.

My respects to friends and love to you

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(10)

Lucy you may read this to yourself until some later period. I will commence by saying that they have good meetings every day here with a pretty good attendance. They also had old fashioned temperance meeting with a new fashioned medal or rather two of them about the size of half a dollar with the pledge on it. One is just the temperance pledge. The other is called the medal of honor. I have one of the latter. It says that I promise not to buy drink, sell or give intoxicating liquors while I live, from all tobacco also abstain and never take God's name in vain. Dear Lucy is this not unexpected to you but I have not broken the pledges yet for I have not had it but a few hours but I will do the best I can.

I cannot think that you have or will borrow any trouble about me that I shall become a worse man than I was before I left your society which I esteem so much and am in the society of those who I can do little about or they for me. I have received a testament with the intention of reading it for some good purpose. The Chaplain gave me a talking to this morning and I told him that I would see him again. I mean to try to be better if I can but I wont make any harsh promises.

I think this may interest you on the account of our boys but you must not put your hopes very high for I have not had that great change which is necessary to make us happy. You will excuse me for writing this to you but if you could see how wicked some men were here and how many there is of that class you might possibly fear that I might be one among them although I hope that you have never seen anything in me to excite such fears. If you have entertained any such fears they are groundless. Kiss my boys for me.

From your Patterson

to my dear wife Lucy

Photographs cost 2.00 each here. I will send you one as soon as I get a chance.

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(11) Savannah

Dear Lucy,

It is now evening. I have been off on fatigue duty today cleaning houses, hotels and boarding houses, converting them into hospitals. It is rumored that Savannah has been burned or a share of it by the dislocated citizens setting fire to the arsenal. This has been a very pleasant day and I hope you have enjoyed yourself well. There are nothing else but nigs in this town but they are a better looking people than I had expected to see. I saw many of them well dressed as any ladies I have seen. Address-

Henry P. Giltner, Co. A - 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment Minn. Vol., 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade 3<sup>rd</sup> Div. 15<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, Savannah.

Lucy it seems that day before yesterday a soldier or guard, rather a guard shot a citizen and in retaliation a citizen sat fire to a storehouse of cotton. The fire spread and filled the arsenal which made a terrific explosion throwing shells in every direction. Burned 4 blacks and killed 14 men. I can think of no more at present. I have written a letter for my mess mate today. The wind has changed and blows the smoke in the tent.

Good night dear ones. Keep a stiff upper lip till I come. Kiss the babys for me. I will look for a name for Grant.

Henry P. Giltner to Lucy

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(12) Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Beaufort S.C.

Dear Lucy and family

It is Sunday morning and it is cold. That is it is not so cold as it is where you are but it froze some last night and my fingers are some cold writin in camp. Since my last letter it has been fair weather and last Monday we had marching orders so we shipped at Savannah. We were on the boat 24 hours. The most of the time aground. I saw many Rebel forts and their burned ships, unfinished torpedoes etc.

We landed here at 2:00 in the afternoon and marched 3 miles out of town and encamped and stayed until yesterday morn when we came back to do provost duty which consists in guarding the gov. property in town and unloading boats etc. I can stand all such soldiering as we have had yet. Old soldiers complain much of the campaign we had over the river and voyage from N.Y. but I can live that like rolling off a log and in short my bowels are all right every since I have been here. Horatio Vaughn was sick when he started our last march but got well and hearty by marching and several others in the same way. They generally like to march. Write me Wm. Bozers address.

We had marching orders last night to start out at 7:00 this morning but it was countermanned before bed time. Our mules have not yet arrived. We will go when they come. I think to operate against Charleston by cutting railroad or something else. I don't think we would fight much for a country as this, sandy and low, tho there may be wealth here after all. Tell father if he will come down this evening and bring some butter and stuff to season it with when the tide runs out I will go down about 18 rods and gather some oysters and he can fill his shirt with fresh oyster soup. Oysters can be bought for 20 cents per quart. I had some for supper last night and beans and tack and tea and pork. This morn I dreamed of having some of your nice bisquits last nite so I am not suffering for food you can see. ...when the boys asked me how I liked soldiering, I told them better than I expected but still I liked my wife better. If it was not for being deprived of your cooking I would be happy. It is a life of idleness or nearly so.

You may keep my old letters so when I get home I can refresh my



memory and tell you what they put me in mind of. The church bell is now ringing but I have not seen many white people in town, but nigs lots of them. One nig told me yesterday, God almighty me, I never saw so much people in my life. Why just de horse and de wagon is nuf to scare de rabbits to death all alone. I feel very sorry for you up in that cold country. How does father stand it in this cold weather. I slept first rate last nite with 3 woolen blankets and an oil blanket over us and an oil blanket under us and my coat, my pants under my head. This bed was made upon red cedar bows. I have two partners, we have a kettle for boiling beans, rice and meat and a frying pan. Then each of us have a coffee pot. Generally made by putting a boil to an oyster can which holds yet a tin cup, plate, knife fork and spoon. Each of us have a wool blanket, a rubber blanket and a dog tent. The tent is some like a cotton sheet, a little short so it is really square with buttons and button holes on three sides so they can be buttoned together in any number. Generally each man carries his own property which is reduced to the lowest possible weight.

Does Grant walk? I would like to hear from them in particular. I just have enough for this now.

Love and kisses by the barrel

H. P. Giltner

(13 partial letter with the remainder lost)

Columbia, SC area

We don't seem to expect to have a fight with the Rebels. They seem to be so afraid of Shermans army that they wont stand at all. It seems to me that that if they could or would not stand at Columbia they probably wont. Such a nice place and so here naturally to get at, but an old Negro told me when dey seed da Shermans men coming dey just get raedy for to go away, gorry mighty so many men and so many mules, why de Rebs couldn't do nothing. Dey burned de bridge, gorry mighty, I tell them there was dat, ye see I is an aged gentleman and could observe truly I told dem dey need not burn de bridge, Sherman got he own bridge. There was strong fortification which it only took the advance of our army to carry at the first charge with the loss of three men. We took three guns at that place and how many at the arsenal I dont know only that there were 2 regiments at work two days breaking up new muskets destroying all kinds of munitions of war and in the evening blew up the magazine. In several places before we got there the Rebs made slight stands at convenient places where we was obliged to cross swamps and swollen creeks where I would think that I could whip ten men, our skirmish line would route them and make them skaddle. Almost everyman is in the army and what is not is detailed. Left in a town called Cherow there was a lot of old men who had been conscripted for the occasion but were found to be of no use and were furloughed.

(14) March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1865

(30 days from Beaufort, camped near Dunches Creek which is very much swollen. Preparing to cross)

Dear Lucy,

I am well except a cold. I stand the march bully. I rec. 1 letter from you since I started on this trip. I am sorry that I could not have answered it ere this but it will be a long time ere this reaches you. It is rumored that we shall open communication.

North Carolina, 2 or 3 miles from Hyetville.

Dear Lucy,

I am not so well this morning. I have the diarrhea a little but not bad. I am afraid that you will be very anxious to see this before you get this but you can console yourself for there is about 150,000 men who have not written home for this time but have been marching 43 days thru the heart of Carolina, burning and destroying stores and property dwellings, mills etc. The army took about 5 different roads and in parallel directions and lived off the country pretty much. Our regiment started with one barrel of pork and it has not been opened yet. And we havent had any hard bread for about 20 days. You will judge from this how Sherman feeds his army. This is English paper captured at Columbia. Borrow no trouble about me for I cant tell you when I can write to you again. But I think some of the army is getting very ragged and some without shoes. You can tell John that I am called a new recruit. And if there is any difference made between us and volunteers it is in our favor for I have not stood guard but 3 hours since I have been in the service and it is never mentioned here in division.

3 months of my time is up now and some hope that we may be discharged before our limit for we think that one more raid like this will whip the rebellion out. All the people that we have seen are whipped now. They say it is only the leaders who wish to continue the war, but they have suffered enough already. One woman at the railroad station told me she wished that one side or the other would whip the other by breakfast.

(15) March 28<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Goldsborough

Dear Lucy,

I have just received two letters from you which gave me much pleasure as it does to hear that you are all well. I have got over my cold and cough but have the dysentery some but am able for duty. Since I wrote you last I have had excellent luck. The luck to have the piles [hemorrhoids] the Dr. sent me with about 50 others in the supply train while the rest of the army made a forced march through the swamps, mud, rain and storm.

They had a heavy fight though our Corps was not in it except the 1<sup>st</sup> Division and then only as skirmishes. We are encamped a mile out of town on a railroad in an elevated position. We are throwing up breastworks all around. I have heard that Sherman has promised the men 60 days rest, plenty hard tack and clothing. I wish you could come and make me a visit. I would feed you our hardtack, coffee and bacon. You mightn't have sugar in it but milk I only had some twice and once it was sour. The nights are pretty cold but the peach and cherry trees are all in beautiful array. I wish that you could see them. I would rather eat them when they are ripe. Fruit is the scarecest thing in this country. They are cheaper the farther north you go. Apples sell as high as 10 cents apiece.

I am glad you have got you a dress. I am afraid that if John goes away Kate will rather take the shine off of you. Hale, Papa was so glad to get a letter from you. I think you are a very nice boy. I will send you something nice as soon as I come across it.

Father if you are to be the only man left you will be a monarch. I think you would be very busy if you had a lot of these niggers that are following the army and some of the horses and mules





that was condemned shot. The other day I hitched up one mule that was condemned before a buggy and found and loaded our household stuff in and found her to be kind of smart and strong but thin and sore backed. If it warnt so far from home you could do well to follow the army a month or two. I think you had better hold onto the timber. This country is destined to be almost entirely dependent and Minnesota is to be speedily filled. It would astonish you to see the negroes leaving the massa and going wid de yank. 9700 were sent down the river from Fayetteville and whites innumerable.

...There seems to be no mistake about it. Sherman is a great man. The Rebs are afraid of him and our men respect him. The Rebs say he is not in danger of hell for he can out flank the devil. Our men say of him Old Billy is all right, he knows just what he is about and it is amusing to see with what confidence every man speaks in regard our ability to whip the Rebs.

The cars bring in heavy loads of hardtack and clothing every day. All the men are putting up their shebangs to live in as fast as possible. I have one of the best most finished.

Lucy I am sorry that father is sick for you have enough to do without having to feed the stock. You must write all about the weather. It is warm here. There has been 2 or 3 frosts here since I have been here. The flies are around some. Have you received the money from government? I keep 5.00 yet but I would not have it if I had spent it for there is lots of chance. 2.00 for a small frying pan, 2.00 for a 4 quart tin pail. They drill us some now a days. I have worked one day on the breastworks.

Tell John that this regiment is not full yet but it claims never to have been whipped yet but has no one killed and taken prisoner, a wonder even to their own.

I dont think it much account to raise a bounty but I think that if a move was made that the frontier Counties might be exempted from the draft by a petition approved by the Provost Marshall to Washington other countys on the frontier have been exempted and so can that. Well Lucy I guess it is bed time and what I want most now is some sweet kisses from my family.

To you Lucy

Henry P. Giltner

---

(16)March 29<sup>th</sup>

(this paper was captured at Columbia S.C.)

Dear Lucy

I just received your very welcome letters of the 3<sup>rd</sup> which gave me such pleasure. I have written you that I was well treated here. The thing is not mentioned here. Tell Kate that I think that those who enlist just before the draft are considered a little cowardly and it is supposed that if they ran out of fear once they will again when the Rebs shoot. Sherman has gone to Washington. You may send me some St. Paul papers. We dont hear much about what is going on in the world. I have a new pair of pants and I have been killing grey backs [body lice]. I washed two shirts and my old pants which I mean to patch here while I stay in camp and I washed shirts for the other boys for which I get 10 cents apiece. I have the only kettle, tub, pail and washboard in this company and mean to do all the washing I can when not on duty. I have a lot engaged. I haven't seen a good piece of cake in the south. There is nothing to be bought in this town as yet but I expect there soon will be plenty. I want a comb. I dont think there has been a louse in my head since I have been away. My head is

smooth and free of those scabs. It is warm. Keep a stiff upper lip.

My time one third gone. A thousand kisses to you and babys. I am glad Hale has pretty mittens.

Excuse bad writing, from your Patterson.

Ha, I dont telegraph to anyone. ...We tear down all the telegraph wires, burn all railroad bridges and tear up the track. How do you get along you poor grass widow. I must see hard times, I must get a furlough... Ha Ha

---

(17)April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Raleigh, N. C.

Dear Lucy

My health still remains first rate and like everybody else my spirits are buoyant with the prospects of the speedy return of peace. It seems to be the public opinion that we shall get home the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, but I have set the time still sooner. I want to get there by the middle of June to cut hay etc. I see in this mornings paper printed in this town, that the editor thinks that both armys will be discharged and sent home within 30 days. I hope it may be so. We left Goldsboro on the 10<sup>th</sup> and marched into this town on the 14<sup>th</sup> from the south by music and in good order. Marched up to the state house thronged with people. With a cessation flag still upon it but the stars and stripes also waved in triumph with a white flag underneath. As yet communications is not open but we expect mail everyday. The Johnnys left in such a hurry that they only had time to burn one railroad bridge which will soon be replaced. The 15<sup>th</sup> it rained. We moved at 5 in the morn about 2 miles, was halted, stacked arms, the quartermaster went back and brought two days rations. We had one more, 3 soon after that. We were ordered to about face and march back to our camps we had left, which is a very pleasant country and place. The land is more rolling than usual and not so sandy. A clay subsoil. They can raise wheat here. The reason why we turned back we do not know. But suppose that it is not necessary to go any further. We were in pursuit of Johnsons Army which was in flight saying he would surrender to Sherman, but a dispatch came into camp that Johnson had sent a dispatch to General Howard that he would surrender under the same terms that Lee had to Grant. Noon-I have received orders to have letters ready by 3:00 O'clock. Some regiments have received mail. The Rebs are deserting in great numbers. I will try to send you an old paper and a new one too if I can find the wax. Here is a man just returned saying that he has been working for the Confederacy ever since the war commenced and that he could hardly support himself. He got 7.00 per day and board himself. Had to pay 7.50 for 1 lb. of pork and other things in proportion and he has a family of wife, 4 boys, 1 girl. He like many others of this country cant read but he is very anxious that his children should have an education. He offered to give his girl to a soldier, wished him to take and educate her. It would grieve you to hear them talk so hopelessly. They are invariably out of food and clothing.

You cant tell how nice the trees looked along this last march in the woods. The dogwood was in full bloom, the orchards were more than handsome but the fruit is said to be all seedlings and not like the large mellow apples that came from the north in barrels. You will see by the paper that I send you that they were not wholly independent of the north but had to use our butter, cheese etc., etc. There comes often rumors in camp that the Chipewa Indians have broken out but as I have not seen it in the paper nor you have not mentioned them I think it originated in camp and a deal that we were going home immediately to fight them. Well Lucy I would like to see how you get along raising bull calves or steers. I should say I will send



you a song to sing.

Hale, how do you do? I would like to see you. You must be a great large boy. Large enough to pick up chips for your mother or help your grandfather work in the garden. You must be a good boy. Papa thinks he will be home soon to see and to kiss his little boys and Mama. I will send you some melon seeds to plant and raise melon to eat.

Your papa.

Dear Lucy I think of no more at present with that same affection that has always bound me to you I sign myself.

Your Patterson

(18) April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1865

In camp near Raliegh, N. C.

Dear Lucy,

I am still in good health and have great hopes of soon seeing home and its endearments. Rumor says that we shall start for home next week for we have got the Rebels whipped and peace is nearly concluded we hope. Now you need not flatter yourself too much that you are certain to meet your old man for there is so many slips between the cup and lip that it would be just like them to not let us off for months, but I think that we have got them so well whipped that the paper business can be done in our own way without delay. It is the opinion of most that we shall have 150 miles to march and maybe more which seem to be dreaded by most. I cant find those papers that I intended to send you. I also had a few melon seeds and I have lost them. I will try to write you again before we start. I received a letter from mother. I will enclose it.

If the 15<sup>th</sup> Corps starts north as soon as I hope it will I shall not receive an answer to this. We are not paid yet. If you wish to write to me again, I think you may direct to Washington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brig. 3<sup>rd</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> A.C. I am afraid John will get home first with the most money, kiss the babys again. Mothers letter puts me in mind of the woman whose husband tried to stop her from saying, crack a louse, by drowning her, but when she could no more speak, she held up her hands above water and made the motion of killing the insect between her thumb nails. Mother will visit.

My dear Lucy and children, please accept my love.

H.P. Giltner

I will send the comb to Hale. I am afraid it will get lost if I keep it.

Father, I am quite wide awake to speculation in mares. If we could raise a few dollars that you could come down to St. Louis or Louisville in preparation and gather up at from 5 to 25 per head a half dozen mares that would make us teams and stock. I think others would send by you and this lighten travel expenses. Charles Dresser says he will hire money for that purpose. But I wont pass in debt, I would sooner sell cows or land or go without which maybe the best in the long run as I have got house and all to build, material is coming down and prices but I don't know if it is worthwhile to make any calculations, you can think about it.

Pat

(19) May 11<sup>th</sup>, 1865

In camp near Manchester, N. C.

Dear Lucy,

I have no news for you at all but we laid here yesterday and may

a day or two longer. When we move again we go to Alexandria, there the army will be disbanded and the different regiments sent to there different states and discharged. Oh wont that be a meaningful day for me. How I do long to be with you my little family, I can form no idea how long it will take to do this work. It will depend some on whose town comes first which comes home first.

We started from Raliegh the 28<sup>th</sup>. I reached Petersburg the 7<sup>th</sup> found it to be a very fine city with very extensive works around it with evidence that the Rebs had none too many men. It shows signs of war and devastation and in the county also. I sure expect a letter from you to day I received one just before I left Raleigh. It gave me much pleasure to hear from you. I now am enjoying the best of health, which I acknowledge, to be one of the greatest of blessings. Lucy, I wish you could meet me at St. Paul at your cuz's. I think it would be very pleasant and you might pick out me what you wanted me to wear, but I expect such a thing would be impractical. I am real cheese hungry and I want you to make one on purpose for me pretty soon so it will be a little seasoned before I get there. It will take about a week to march to Washington, then I expect we will be detained there about two weeks and probably be paid off at Washington. Then I think two weeks more had ought to see our house or very near there. You cannot form any idea of the extent of this army. If you could see the number of men I have seen you would not think it strange that the draft had taken so many of your acquaintances. I have a miserable place to write. Mail has come, no news for me. I can think of nothing more at present that can interest you. I want you to kiss those boys of mine that I love so well. I shall expect to call on your cuz at St. Paul, if I can but I dont know that we will be allowed to go about the city. I will look for a letter there and at Fort Snelling. If father wants me to pick out a plow let me know. If he wants anything pertaining to haying day, stacking fork or rope, give the size sections to grass scythe etc.

To my Lucy

From your Patterson

Lucy if you will have some good potatoes mashed up with cream in them why then \_\_oh nothing, I thought I would kinda like some.

I believe that Ogilvie is ahead. The 14<sup>th</sup> was sent out this morning so I heard.

(20) May 30<sup>th</sup>

[fragment of a letter]...at a sanitary commision camp who are doing work for the army. It is but a few rods from our regiment which is 3 miles east from the capital Washington.

Dear Lucy

I have neglected writing for several days because I was in hope that I might answer your letter in person sooner than by mail but it is like waiting for dead mens shoes to wait for military matters.

There are signs that we may have to march to Baltimore though we dont know. My health is so good that I had like to have forgotten to mention it to you. The latest notion is favorable to getting home. Some of our Corps are mustered out and our officers, 1<sup>st</sup> Division are leaving base.

There was a sad accident or tragedy happened here yesterday. Two soldiers who had bunked together a long time, went to town together drank together, returned and quarreled and one shot the other. It is supposed that he will die from the shot.

Dear I dont remember whether I have acknowleged the receipt of your very pretty picture, the combs and I could not tell you how

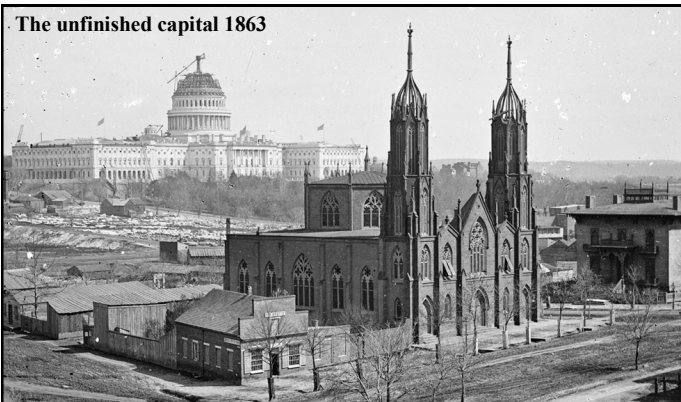




much good it did me to see the pictures I loved so well. I look at them often I will assure you. I am sorry that you could not have Grants. Although there have not been any orders issued yet which warrants my discharge soon yet I think that drafted men will not be kept long in the service in time of peace. I suppose that we shall be paid off here and discharged here but I wish that we could go right to Fort Snelling before we got a cent. I think it would be best.

The Grand review of the army. It was the most grand sight I ever witnessed or expect to see. You have heard of it in the papers, but it did not tell you that I played up that day and did not march in the ranks all day without dinner but assumed the command of myself and went across lots and was enabled to see to a better advantage than I otherwise would have had.

Yet I am anxious to go to the patent office and the capital and Smithsonian Institute which is said to be very interesting but I dont know whether I can get a pass or not. I have had the pleasure of seeing Mount Vernon, the house and resting place of the father of our country. It was very beautiful. If I was able I would buy the place and live there in preference to my home-stead. Dear Lucy why is it that Kate has so much trouble to find someone to bring Will home when she knows that mother is east and that she could bring him as well or better than any-



one else and the 25.00 that she offered you would go some way towards getting them both to their places.

I suppose that this is not in time, for you will have thought of this or some better plan before this will reach you. It is said to be in the papers this morning that the U.S. Army will be mustered out after the first of June. Henry P. Giltner to Lucy

(21)June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Louisville Kentucky

Dear Lucy

I am well have nothing to write you but I suppose you will be glad to get a letter just for the name of it. You can tell as much about when I will be home as I can. I heard last night that all the one year men was going to be sent home. I hope so, some say that we shall be kept in the service yet with the veterans. I dont believe it. Our division was sent through here in advance of Shermans army. This is General Shermans headquarters when he is going to discharge the western army, but I cant tell anything about when I shall come home but I hope that it shant be long dont you.

We started from Washington the last of May and arrived here yesterday. We came to Parkersville on the cars, then we

embarked on the Champlain and had one of the pleasantest days I ever had. The weather nice and scenery is beautiful. Also the Alleghany mountains. Oh how I wish you could have seen it. It was so different from our prairie. We have not yet been paid off yet and if we come home soon I hope we wont till we get to Ft. Snelling for the men are peaceable but they wont be if they get paid. They wanted the pay masters to be here yesterday to pay them. One year men are discharged now and I hope that we shall soon follow. I went into a speculation yesterday. The boat tied up to wait for the fog and caught a young crow and sold it for 1.00 to the boat cook. I have always intended to send you my picture but I havent been able to get it.

Yours forever

Patterson

My little boys I want you to be good and I will come home as quick as I can and I will play with you and bring you some play things or a nice book. I will keep writing till I am discharged then I may hope to get home. Did you ever know me to write one thing over so often. Kisses and kisses and love by the bag.

From Daddy

(22)June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1865

In camp near Louisville Kentucky

To Mrs. Lucy Giltner

Dear Madam:

I have just returned from a visit to Brown Hospital where I am sorry to tell you your husband is very sick. He has been there some 10 days. I do not know whether you have heard from him during the time or not. His disease is chronic diahrea. I am very sorry to discourage you in the least, yet I confess I am fearful he will not recover. I will say he is comfortable, has a good bed to lie on and all being done for him that can be.

I spent a half hour with him this morning and shall go to see him again soon. Pray for your husband Mrs. Giltner and be resigned to the Divine will. As I took his testament to read to him he showed me your picture and that of his little son.

Yours Respect..

C.V. Savidge Chaplain 4<sup>th</sup> Minn.

(23)June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1865

A camp near Louisville Kentucky

Dear friend Lucy,

It is with the deepest sorrow that I now take this opportunity to inform you of Patterson's death. He died yesterday the 25<sup>th</sup> at twelve O'clock in Brown's Hospital. I got there about 2 hours before he died. When I spoke to him he reached out his hand and smiled. His disease was chronic diarrhea. He was sent there on the 14<sup>th</sup> the doctor told me that for the last few days he gave him his special attention. He has the name of being a good doctor and I think he has done all he could. It does seem as though your cup of sorrow is filled to overflowing and pray God to sustain you in this greatest of earthly bereavements. I cant find words to express my sorrow. The nurse that took care of him told me that he had become very much attached to Patterson, that he was always so happy and cheerful. I got his testament and your and Hales pictures which I will either send by mail or keep until I come home as you may direct. I think we will be home before long if God spares my life. The Chaplain will send you a list of the articles he left. They consist of his knapsack, haversack, canteen, woolen blanket, 2 shirts and his wallet with 12.00 in money,



(Continued from page 9)

besides some little ration. He will be buried today but I can not get away or I would go over. He was dressed in his military suit. I do not know as if I can give you anything more of interest.

From your sincere friend

Wellsley Oglivie

To Lucy Giltner

(24) June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1865

In camp near Louisville Kentucky

Dear Mrs. Giltner

My dear friend it is with deep regret that I have to inform you of the death of your dear husband. I conversed and prayed with him on Saturday and I have reason to believe that he gave his heart to the savior. I hoped to see him again but when I went back on Monday he was buried. He died on Sunday about 12:00. I inquired about his affects and found that they were all cared for and are subject to your order. The surgeon told me he had written to you. I feel to sympathize with you. May God bless you and support you under your bereavement. His last thoughts were of you. As I took his testament to read to him he showed me your likeness and that of his little boy. I trust you will meet him in that land where separations never take place. He had not received his pay. By making application to the adjutant General of the State Mr. John Peller of St. Paul you can get it without any expense.

Yours in Christ

C.V. Savidge

Chap. Minn. 4<sup>th</sup>

(25) June 27<sup>th</sup>, 1865

Camp near Louisville Ky.

Dear Sir:

We have received reliable information from the Hospital in Louisville that H. P. Giltner died on the morning of the 24<sup>th</sup> of June. He was a member of Co. A, 4<sup>th</sup> Minnesota V, V, I. Joined the regiment at Beaufort S. C. and has been a good and faithful soldier.

If you will please inform his family of his death you will receive the thanks of your friend.

C. O. of G. T.

Geo. E. Sly

(26) July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1865

St. Peter Minn.

Mrs. Giltner

Respected Madam

I have to inform you that the commissioner has cancelled the Homestead entry of your late husband H.P. Giltner and at same time instructs the office here to permit you to enter the same tract under the Homestead Act in your own name if you wish to do so.

I trust this decision will under the circumstances be quite satisfactory to you. You will be allowed a reasonable time, say 30 days or more to come in and make your application for the land. You

will be required to pay the same amount of fees as though the land had never been entered, viz. 15.00.

I shall be out of town until next week but the business can be done in my absence just as well. If you prefer to come down immediately. Please remember my kind regards to your family.

I am very respectfully, your obedient servant.

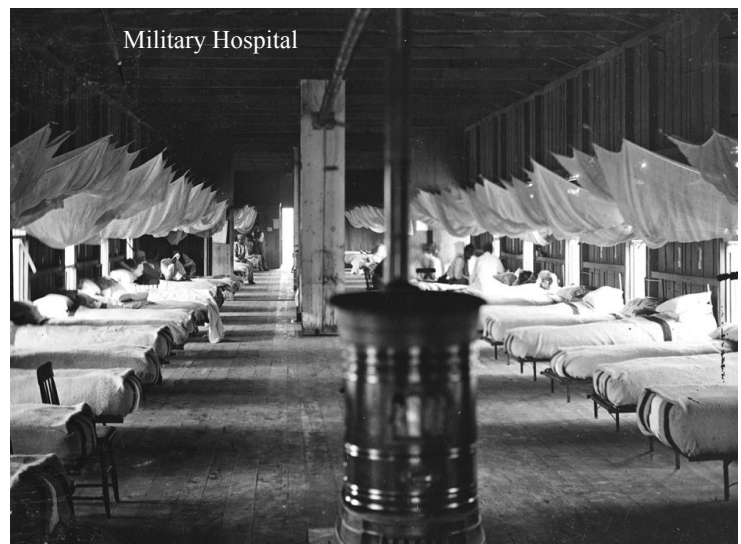
C. T. Brown

A sad ending to this young soldier's story; he was on his way home only to fall victim to infection

*"Civil War conditions created a perfect environment for dysentery and diarrhea to thrive. Men lived in crowded together; ate poor diets of fried meat, bread, and coffee; used the same pan to cook their meal that they used to wash up, and went to the latrine upstream from their camp. Bowel disorders were the most prevalent illnesses on both sides of the Civil War and they killed more men than battle."* (source Atlas Edition, Civil War Cards)

Lucy did not file on their land claim in 1865 as the Land Office agent invited her to do in the last letter in the series. The 1870 census for Sumter Township of McLeod County, shows her and the boys living with her in-laws. Her occupation was listed as teacher.

Her life changed again as the 1880 census shows her as house-keeper in her widowed father's home in Kentucky. Her sons probably remained in Minnesota. The 1895 census shows both Grant and Hale married with children, living in the Hector area of Renville County. Perhaps it was one of their descendants from whom the letters of H.P. Giltner came to Brad Haggatz who gave copies to the Sibley County Historical Society.





## ANNUAL MEETING INFORMATION AND RESERVATION

**PLEASE SEND YOUR RESERVATIONS TO;**

**JEROME PETERSEN**

**PO BOX 25**

**GIBBON MN 55335-0025**

**MAKE YOUR CHECK TO;**

**SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**OR JUST SCHS**

**THE COST IS \$15 PER PERSON**

**PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS**

**BY APRIL 9, 2011**



### SIBLEY COUNTY SENIOR EXPO

**Arlington Community Center**

**Tuesday, April 17**

#### **Program:**

- **Healthy Nutrition for Seniors**
- **Chair Aerobics**
- ***Digging for Your Roots***
- **Music of the Ages**
- **The Looney Lutherans**

*Featured afternoon entertainment*

Doors will not open until 8:45 a.m.

Door Prizes—Must be present to win

**All advance tickets are \$6.00**

**Tickets at the door are \$7.00**

**Tickets are available until March 30<sup>th</sup>**

(Ticket availability can be found on event flyers)

**Free blood pressure checks  
available**

**Free glucose testing availa-  
ble from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**Displays!**

**Crafts!**

**Door Prizes!**

# Thanks!

Kind thanks to the following for their monetary gifts; Francis and Marie Thum, Thrivent Financial, Charles Meyer (memorial for Jean Von Echen and Marie Kramer (memorial for Jim Ludowese). Sometimes we get a gift after our newsletter is assembled and then it will be noted in the next newsletter.

### REQUEST FOR INFO

A summer visitor at the museum, Dale Dechenne from St. John, WA, has researched his Steinke ancestors in Sibley County. He has all "the facts" but would like "stories" for his family history project. If anyone has information about the life and times of William Steinke, Kelso Township 1866 to 1886 or of his daughters Hulda, Therese or Augusta, he would be interested. Samuel and Theodore Steinke are also of interest to him. Phone 507-648-3651 or email to dalcardechenne@gmail.com





(Continued from page 1)

seum]. The horses belonging to August Marmorine would prevent boys from using the pump until they were given a bite of the plug. Do you have a story for us? Steve Briggs has started a page on our website devoted to country schools and adds photos as he sees fit. The webpage is below;  
[http://sibleycountyhistoricalmuseum.com/Sibley\\_County\\_Schools\\_of\\_the\\_Past.html](http://sibleycountyhistoricalmuseum.com/Sibley_County_Schools_of_the_Past.html)

Or you can visit our website and click Sibley County Schools of the Past. I sent an email to several people notifying them of our coming project and got responses back right away.

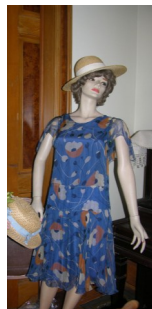
Millie Johnson and Dorothy Peterson have been working on making indexes for various towns centennial books that do not have them. Millie writes down every name that is on every page in each book. Who else would have that kind of patience? Then Dorothy puts it all in an Excel file, alphabetize the very long list, then check it over again for errors. They should be worth \$100, but we would sell you one for \$5. These are the towns: Gibbon and Winthrop, plus alien places; Blakely, Carver, Norseland and Plato.

Gloria Sinell has been one of the Gaylord people working on getting the Gaylord Park on the National Register of Historical Places. They now have succeeded in getting that designation. We will have more information in upcoming newsletters.

Lowell Nagel, professional, is working on removing the patched together cabinet in the old bathroom. We are storing our cleaning supplies in the closet of the new addition and will use the space for shelving to store newspapers. The old bathroom was the Gun Room when the Poehlers lived in the house. The entry was from the stair landing. After Lowell dismantled the cabinet he discovered the old wainscoting, an opening to the

basement stairs and a stained glass window. We discovered it is hard to get a photo of Lowell.

We are hoping to get a good turnout for our annual meeting. Come join us!



SCHS BOARD; Millie Johnson, Ray Meyer, Sharon Shimota, Dorothy Peterson, Rommie Petersen  
 Marie Main, Sharon Haggemiller, Dwight Grabitske, RuthAnn Buck, Judy Loewe, Mary Petersen





You are invited to a wonderful musical program

**Sunday, May 6, 2 p.m.**

**"An Afternoon with Alice"**

**At the Minnesota New Country School**

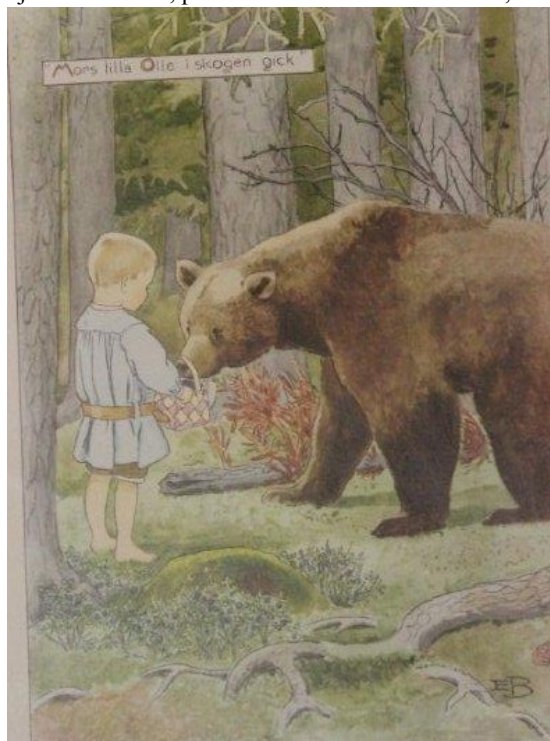
**Located on the east end of main street of Henderson on highway Minnesota #19 . (There is a parking lot on north side.)**

Scandinavian musician Ross Sutter collaborates with Swedish-born Annette Safverblad to create a program based on the songs of Alice Tegner, a much-loved Swedish songwriter most active in the middle of the twentieth century. Sutter and Safverblad rehearse with a group of Swedish speaking children during the months of March and April at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis and then do performances; singing, dancing and acting out the songs in Swedish and English. Children work on their own costumes and this year will also create puppets to add another dimension to the show. The group is especially excited to bring the show to the Sibley County area because one of the songs that they perform, *Mors Lille Olle I Skogen Gick* (*Mother's Little Olle Went Into the Woods*), was inspired by a boy who later moved to and grew up in Sibley county.

John Erickson never knew that his experience as a young boy, befriending and feeding lingonberries to a bear in the woods, would inspire Alice Tegner many years later to write the song that every child growing up in Sweden now learns. In 1981, a Swedish television producer came to Gaylord to interview descendants of John Erickson's neighbors, in particular Alma Wold Bonderson. He planned to make a documentary film about the man who inspired *Mors Lille Olle I Skogen Gick*.

*Here is the content from the Gaylord Hub newspaper from 1982 concerning this story:*

In 1867 John and Elea Erickson came to Section 25 of Alfsborg Township, where the Wolds were their closest neighbors. Timber for both homes was hauled from Henderson. When John was a little boy in Sweden, he had wandered away and was found by his worried mother feeding lingonberries to a bear and playing with her cubs. Her screaming caused the bears to run off, only to have the boy ask why she frightened his friends away. The incident was reported in a newspaper, giving rise to a local legend which later came to the attention of a folk song writer. Alice Tegner's song, , *Mors Lille Olle I Skogen Gick*, still popular in Sweden, caused Bjorn Fontander, producer for Swedish television, to search for the



origin of the legend. A letter with Gaylord on the return address, mailed to Mrs. Erickson's parents before her death in

1901, brought Fontander to the county recorder's office, the County Historical Society, and to Alma Wold Bonderson of Gaylord. Her knowledge and pictures of the family and neighbors of her great-grandparents during the days of settlement encouraged him to return to Gaylord in September, 1981, with a television camera crew to add to a documentary film about the pioneer who never knew he was to become famous in his homeland.

The Ericksons had eight children who attended school District 47 in Sibley Township, and there are scattered descendants living elsewhere. Erickson also was a cream hauler for the Thoele Creamery before his death in 1887.

Coffee, lemonade and treats will be served after the performance. A donation will be appreciated. This program is made possible by a "Round Up Grant" from Minnesota Valley Electric.

*Sponsors for the event are Sibley County Historical Society and the Joseph R Brown Heritage Society*

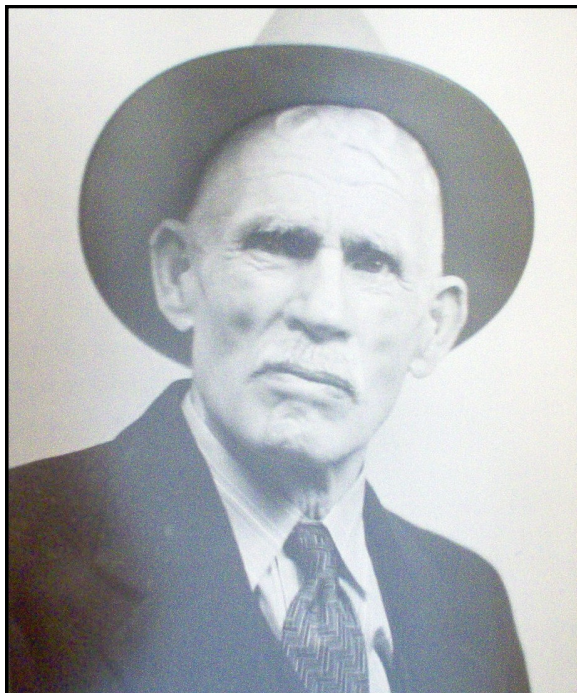






**William Connolly**  
2008 Cowboy Hall of Fame  
Medora, North Dakota  
Pre-1940 Ranching Division

William Connolly was born in 1861 on his family's homestead near Henderson, MN. At age 16, he was employed by the Northern Pacific Railroad as it pro-



gressed through Dakota Territory.

He headed for Montana and lived in the Moccasin Mountains on the Judith River, cutting railroad ties and cordwood for the NPRR.

Connolly and Charles Russell were fellow ranch hands on the 2Dot Wilson Ranch. He was with Russell the day he got the inspiration for the painting "The Day They Shot the Grizzly".

After a stint in the hay-cutting business on a US Army contract at Fort Benton, he'd had enough of Montana. He shipped his wagons and mowers by boat and trailed his horses overland to a ranch site in the Killdeer Mountains. In 1886, he purchased a ranch from Bill McCorey and moved to the site where his great-grandson now lives.

Connolly traveled to Bismarck in 1890, conferred with the Governor and Secretary of State and returned to Dunn County with the first registered cattle brand in the state of North Dakota, the 2 Bar. Prior to this, counties had been registering brands.

In the 1890's, he and Wilse Richards had registered Hereford bulls shipped from Chicago to Killdeer, and they became the foundation of the cattle empire. Connolly also bred English thoroughbred studs with Percheron mares and sold the draft crosses in the Red River Valley and Iowa.

Connolly and his wife, Catherine, raised a family of four children after their marriage in 1900. He didn't resist the arrival of the homesteaders, but somewhat ironically did fight the encroachment of the railroads, as he believed the railroads would eventually leave, and the little towns would not long survive.

The robust and rugged gentleman was helpful to other settlers, allowing them to get fresh spring water from his well. The water was free, and his generosity impressed his new neighbors.

Connolly was appointed the first county commissioner of Dunn County and was instrumental in establishing the Connolly School District #3 and the Bank of Killdeer. He was a charter member of the Western North Dakota Stockmen's Assn. and the fifth North Dakotan to be inducted into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. He died at his ranch in the spring of 1946.



The round ups were hard work, but also fun. Besides the seasoned cowboys, friends from surrounding communities would come to help work the cattle and brand the calves. These are just a few of the cowboys and cowgirls who worked together on Killdeer area round ups – Bill Connolly, Two Bar; Vic Christensen, Figure Four; George Binek; Ag Kennedy, T-U; Harold Loras, Rafter L; Jim Connolly, AHA; Bill Davidson, Long-S; Jim McCartin, Seven X; O'Neil's Privy; Lettie Uhlman Kellogg, U-Lazy-E; George "Bud" Perry, YK; and Bert Croff, Crown.

Osborn's Studio Photo/American State Bank

Thanks to Don and Gail Nuessmeier for submitting this article. They discovered this information about a Sibley County Native while traveling in ND





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## Membership Form

I would like to become a member of the Sibley County Historical Society.

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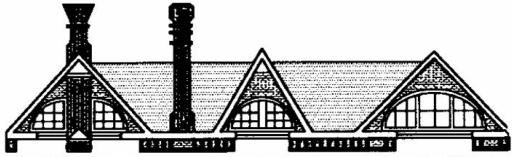
**Check your due date on the mailing label.** Membership dues are as stated on the form. Please use it to renew your subscription or pass it along to anyone who is interested.



Regular meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of the month, March thru November at the museum in Henderson. The public is invited. The museum is open to the public for tours on Sundays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. June thru October and by appointment.

Send articles, announcements, photos and comments to the SCHS Newsletter, P.O. Box 407, Henderson, MN 56044 or Email: [schs1@frontiernet.net](mailto:schs1@frontiernet.net)





## SIBLEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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## COUNTRY SCHOOL PROJECT

Country School – ah, the memories! Ask people about their memories of country school and you will hear lots of interesting stories. And that's what we are counting on happening when the Sibley County Historical Society launches its new project "Remembering Country Schools". Plans are already in the making for a series of visits with groups of interested individuals that are willing to share memories and pictures of those "good old days."

Here's your chance to help capture these memories for the younger generation who did not have that "opportunity".

Here's what we are looking for:

- Pictures of old school buildings
- Pictures of students
- Lists of students and teachers
- Old school records and other memorabilia
- Pictures of present day school buildings
- Interviews with country school students and teachers

If you have memories you would like to share please contact the Sibley County Historical Society:

by phone at : 507-248 3434

by e-mail at: [schs1940@hotmail.com](mailto:schs1940@hotmail.com)

But if you are uneasy about giving us information, give us the name of your friend or relative who you would like to volunteer them as a source for us. Or maybe you have other suggestions to make our project a success.

