

# Historical Journal

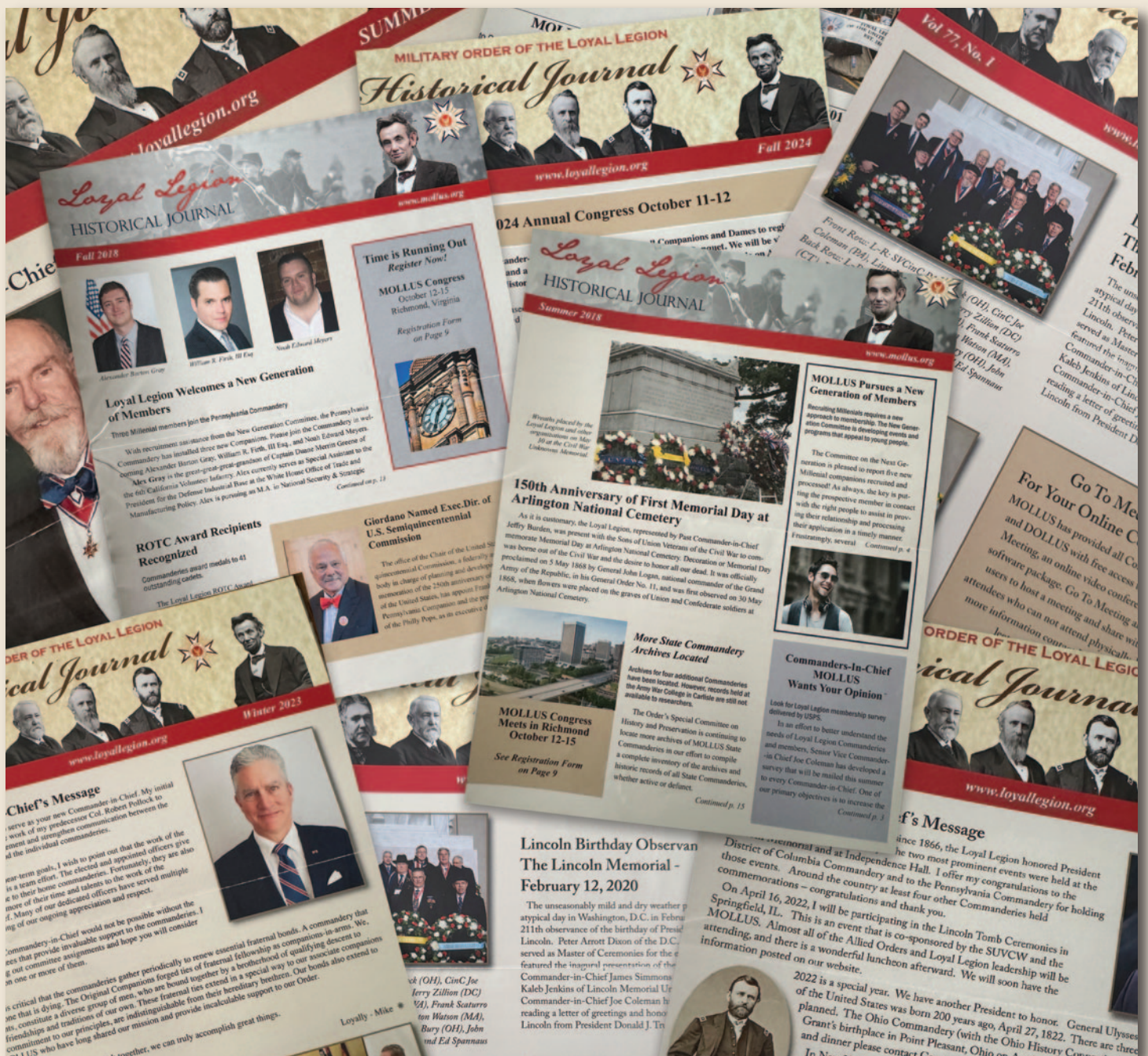


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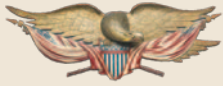
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Fall 2025

## The Journey of the MOLLUS Journal







## Trustee Report August 2025



The Memorial Fund has benefitted from increased support in the last few years. This support comes both from those making annual tax-deductible cash gifts; and also from Companions, and other friends of the Order, who have remembered the Memorial Fund in their wills and trusts.

Another smart way both to help the Memorial Fund, and to realize a valuable tax benefit for yourself, is through the current gift of appreciated stock. The present value of the stock is your tax-deductible gift — thereby achieving your charitable goal — and you avoid incurring the capital gain tax due if the stock were sold. Please contact Trustee Jeffry Burden at richburd6165@yahoo.com for more information on this strategy.

Loyally, The Trustees of the Loyal Legion Memorial Fund

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Asst.Quartermaster, US Volunteers 1917

**Matthew Ian Conrad 22978 VA**  
William Henry Harrison Hazelton, Co K  
2ndLT 142 Regiment New York Volunteer Infantry

#### ASSOCIATES COMPANIONS

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# LOYAL LEGION HISTORICAL JOURNAL

VOL. 82, NO. 3

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*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](mailto: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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# Noble Warrior: Major Charles De Rudio, Companion No. 08150

By Jeffry Burden

Charles Camillo De Rudio's story reads like pure fiction. Born a son of nobility, he became a fervent revolutionary and would-be assassin; survived a shipwreck, imprisonment on Devil's Island, Civil War combat and the 7th Cavalry's debacle at Little Big Horn; and ended up serving his adopted country in uniform for more than thirty years.

The path of Charles (born Carlo Camillo DiRudio) started quietly. He was born to the Count and Countess DiRudio in 1832 in Belluno, Italy, then controlled by the Austrian Empire. He attended an Austrian military academy in Milan, but at age 15 joined with Giuseppe Garibaldi and other Italian patriots in trying to establish a unified Italian nation. French President Louis Napoleon ordered his troops to the fight, and helped crush the attempt. Charles eventually fled for the United States. His vessel was shipwrecked near Spain; he and other survivors made their way to England. There he married Eliza Booth (eventually having six children), and waited for the opportunity to re-ignite revolutionary fires.

Working with another Italian expatriate, Felice Orsini, and two others, Charles plotted to assassinate their old nemesis Louis Napoleon (by then Emperor Louis Napoleon III) in Paris in January 1858 by throwing bombs at Louis' carriage. They failed (though causing many other casualties). Orsini was beheaded; but Charles, thanks in large part to his wife's interventions, was spared the guillotine and sent to Devil's Island, the infamous French penal colony. He endured horrific conditions there for most of a year before he and several others stole a boat and sailed to British Guiana. He returned to his wife in London, anglicized his name, and proved a popular lecturer, but decided his future lay elsewhere. He sailed for New York in early 1864.

Charles took action in the fight against human bondage. Failing to receive an officers' commission, he enlisted in mid-1864 as a Private in the 79th New York Infantry, then in action near Petersburg. (He used his bounty money to send for his wife and children.) He was commissioned a few months later as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 2nd United States Colored Troops, and served in Florida until 1866. He wanted to continue his Army service. Despite a personal manner perceived by some as haughty and boastful, and despite the Army's awareness of his violent revolutionary past, he was commissioned in 1869 a 2nd Lieutenant in the 7th U.S. Cavalry.

He was not popular with his commanding officer, Lt. Col. George A. Custer. To Custer, Charles was an inferior officer, "a confirmed grumbler, and asserting to his own confession a natural conspirator..." Other in the regiment viewed him more kindly, and as historian Charles K. Mills notes, "He did not shirk duty assignments and, above all else, he patently knew what he was doing at the head of the column of enlisted men." As Custer prepared to move against Native encampments in 1876, he replaced Charles (over Charles' protests) as commanding officer of Company "E" with Lt. Algernon Smith, a favorite of Custer's. Custer reassigned Charles to Company "A", which served on June 25th at the Battle of Little Big Horn as part of a detached battalion under Maj. Marcus Reno.



*De Rudio, about 1880*



This reassignment by Custer, motivated in part by dislike of Charles, saved Charles' life. Custer and virtually all the men with him (including the favored Algernon Smith) died. Reno's battalion retreated across the Little Bighorn River in the face of overwhelming numbers of Hunkpapa and Oglala warriors. However, Charles lost his horse at the riverbank and was left behind with another soldier.

Attempting to hide, Charles at one point saw mounted men approach, with one rider wearing a buckskin coat and white hat. As he wrote in a letter dated July 5, 1876: "I recognized him as Captain Tom Custer.... With this conviction I stepped out on the bank and called...'Tom, don't leave us here!'.... My call was answered by an infernal yell and a discharge of 300 or 400 shots. I then discovered my mistake and found the savages were clad in clothes and mounted on horses which they had captured from our men." Charles and his companion, through stealthy movements and a few well-aimed shots, were able to avoid capture and death. They spent thirty-six hours along the riverbank before escaping across the river.

In the months afterward, Charles commanded the re-constituted Company "E" during the New Perce War of 1877. He eventually was promoted Captain, and served in the Dakota Territory, New Mexico and Texas before retiring in 1896 while stationed in San Diego. There he joined the Loyal Legion's California Commandery as Companion No. 08150. (In recognition of his Civil War service, he was promoted Major on the retired list in 1904.) This warrior of noble birth, a fiery advocate of freedom, died in Pasadena, California in 1910, and was buried at San Francisco National Cemetery. \*



*De Rudio, about 1895, with G.A.R. and Loyal Legion Insignia*

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*Sources:*

*Ladenheim, Jules C.: Alien Horseman: An Italian Shavetail with Custer (2003).*

*Marino, Cesare: Dal Piave at Little Bighorn (1996).*

*Connell, Evan S.: Son of the Morning Star: Custer and The Little Big Horn (1985).*

*"Lieutenant Charles DeRudio's Letter", New York Herald, July 30, 1876.*

# George Randolph Dyer - Insignia 06457

By Adam Gaines - Insignia 22470 Michigan

George Randolph Dyer was born on June 3, 1813 to Daniel and Susannah (Olin) Dyer at Clarendon, Vermont. In his youth, he was educated at Rutland Academy in Vermont.

At the age of 21, he decided to seek fortune in the west. All alone he drove a horse Vermont to Wisconsin. In 1835, he explored the shores of Lake Michigan in a birch bark canoe. He became so impressed by Milwaukee and Chicago that he bought properties in both cities.

In 1841, he married Miss Elizabeth Howe Kimball in Elgin, Illinois. Now that he was married and preferring the pastoral life. He sold all of his properties in Milwaukee and Chicago. After he sold these properties, he bought a farm and settled in Plainfield, Will Co., Illinois.

Upon settling in Plainfield, he became a very prominent citizen and extremely well-liked. He was a staunch abolitionist and became a member of the Republican Party. He became so respected of a citizen, that in 1856 he was elected Sheriff of Will County. In addition to being sheriff, he also kept a station of the Underground Railroad. As a sheriff, abolitionist, and member of the Republican Party, he became personal friends with Obidiah Lovejoy, and none other than Abraham Lincoln.



In May of 1860, Dyer travelled to Chicago as a member of the Republican National Convention. It was at this event, that Dyer was one of the nominators of his good friend, Abraham Lincoln for the Republican nomination for President.

On October 31, 1861, with the Civil War raging. Now-President Abraham Lincoln appointed his good friend, George Dyer a Captain and Assistant Quartermaster. He was most likely appointed to a non-combat role due to his age. Now-Captain Dyer was assigned to be an Assistant Quartermaster at the Army Post at Pilot Knob, Missouri. At Pilot Knob, he served as a faithful, honest, and efficient officer. Doing his duty with the utmost zeal and furthering the Union cause with all of his energy. He served there for the duration of the war. With the war winding, Captain Dyer submitted his resignation on May 19, 1865. His resignation was accepted and he was honorably discharged.

After his discharge, he returned to his farm and spent a few years there. Afterwards, he removed to Joliet, Illinois and engaged in the hardware business. In 1870, he retired from active work. After the passing of his wife in 1881, Dyer relocated to Kansas City, Missouri to live with his son, Daniel. This was most likely due to infirmity.

On May 23, 1888, former Captain Dyer applied for membership in the Illinois Commandery of MOLLUS. On October 11, 1888, he was elected a Companion of the First Class and was assigned Insignia No. 6457. Unfortunately, George Randolph Dyer passed away in Kansas City at 12:30 pm on July 13, 1895 of liver and kidney disease. His funeral was held at the home of his son-in-law, Mr. A.A. Whiting. His burial took place in Joliet, Illinois under the charge of the Loyal Legion.

Captain Dyer was succeeded in the Loyal Legion by his son, Daniel Burns Dyer. \*



## Virginia Commandery News

Memorial Day 2025 saw members of the Loyal Legion, and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, gather with several dozen citizens at Cold Harbor National Cemetery. Attendees decorated the grave of every soldier there with donated flowers.

The Commandery arranged for a government marker to be placed in July at the grave of Original Companion Warrington D. Roath, U.S. Navy. Roath's grave in Riverside Cemetery in Asheville, N.C. had been unmarked since his death in 1919. The Loyal Legion Memorial Fund is now assisting Companions and others with the costs of placing government-issue markers at unmarked Original Companion graves.



*Cold Harbor National Cemetery attendees decorate graves.*



*Cold Harbor National Cemetery.*



*Grave of Original Companion Warrington D. Roath, U.S. Navy.*



*Members placing the marker at Roath's grave in Riverside Cemetery in Asheville, N.C.*



## Virginia Commandery News (continued)

The Commandery presented the ROTC Medal of Merit this year to five cadets at four Army ROTC battalions. The freshman and sophomore cadets honored for “Academic Achievement and Demonstrated Leadership Potential” included:



*Taylor Arrington, from Thompson Station, Tenn. and Johana Navarro, from Lexington Park, Md. — University of Richmond “Spider Battalion”*



*Blaine Anderson, from Leesburg, Va. — East Tennessee State University “Buccaneer Battalion”*



*Seth Greene, from Terrace Park, Ohio — University of Tennessee-Chattanooga “Mocs Battalion”*



*Ashley Bennett, from Fairfax, S.C. — the Virginia Women’s Institute for Leadership at Mary Baldwin University*



# Badges and Insignia Of The Order

By Paul Davis - Insignia 22554



Like many fraternal societies, The Military Order Of The Loyal Legion Of The United States, MOLLUS, has its insignia and badges as well. MOLLUS marks its beginning from April 15, 1865 when a group of Union Officers gathered in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania with their purpose being to form an Honor Guard for Lincoln's funeral. These former officers wore a badge of crepe on the left arm for a period of 30 days as a token of respect for their deceased Commander-In-Chief.

On or about May 31, 1865, a meeting was held to establish an organization to perpetuate the memories and associations thus, the beginning of the Loyal Legion. The Coat of Arms, badge, seal and mottos were designed by Colonel Samuel B.W. Mitchell.

The MOLLUS membership badge is different from any other such badges as at that time both the obverse and reverse sides of the badge are fully enameled as described:

**On the Obverse:** A cross, of eight points, gold, cantoned with rays of gold, forming a star its long diameter one and three-tenths inches, its short diameter eight-tenths of an inch. The cross enameled, azure, charged with a smaller cross on like proportions, enameled white and edged with gold. In the center thereof, within a circle four tenths of an inch in diameter, enameled gules, and the National Eagle displayed in gold. and Two Sabers in Saltire.

**On the Circle:** gold one-tenth of an inch wide, in relieve, the motto "*LEX REGIT ARMA TUENTUR*".

**On the Reverse:** the star as above. In the center thereof, within a circle four-tenths of an inch in diameter, enameled gules, two sabers in saltire, their points in base; surmounted by a fasces palewise, ensigned with the Phrygian Cap; environed in chief with an arch of 13 stars; in base, a wreath of laurel; all gold.

**On the Circle:** gold, one-tenth of an inch wide, in relieve, the legend.M.O., "*Loyal Legion, US MDCCCLXV*". A small gold ring is between the ribbon and pendant engraved with the membership owner's insignia number.



*Obverse*



*Reverse*

## Badges and Insignia Of The Order (continued)



*Neck Ribbon*



*ROTC Gold & Silver Merit of the Order*



*Blue Ribbon*



*Minatures*



*Blue Center Ribbon*



# James Vernor 4714 Michigan Commandery

By Paul Davis - Insignia 22554



James Vernor was born in Albany, New York in 1843. As a child he moved with his parents to Detroit, Michigan. As a young man in 1858, he got a job at the Higby and Stern's drug store, where, as an apprentice he learned the business and became a pharmacist. When the Civil War broke out, he enlisted as a Hospital Steward in the 4th Michigan Cavalry. He proved so adept at military science that he was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant and served to the end of the war. His unit, the 4th Michigan Cavalry was in a number of engagements during the Civil War and is credited with capturing Confederate President Jefferson Davis as he attempted to escape. Lieutenant Vernor was discharged in 1865 as the war ended. He returned to Detroit where he resumed his occupation as a pharmacist.

Prior to his leaving for military service in 1862, James had been experimenting with various flavored waters and drinks to serve at the soda fountain in his drugstore on Woodward Ave. in Detroit. The legend is that he had left a wooden keg filled with his latest fizz water formula stored in the basement of the pharmacy. When James returned from the War he opened the keg and discovered that the contents had turned into what is now called ginger ale. Most Historians credit James Vernor as the inventor of soda pop or Ginger Ale. His trade expanded at such a rate that he soon

abandoned his drug store and went into the manufacturing Ginger Ale on a full-time basis. He was also very proud of holding his Michigan Pharmacy License #1 as long as he lived.

The Vernor Family sold their interests to an investment group in 1966. Several other owners have included, Consumer Products America, United Brands, A&W Beverages, and Cadbury Schwepps. Today Vernor's Ginger Ale is still available. The current owners and bottlers of Vermor Products is the Dr. Pepper Snapple Group.

(Author's Note) For full-disclosure there are some parties that challenge Vernor's claim that he invented Ginger Ale.





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