



Camp Douglas News

Committed to the Preservation of Chicago History



Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation

Chicago, Illinois

Spring 2014

Volume 5, Issue 1

Project Phases:

Awareness and Support:
2010-2014

Site Location and Site
Planning: 2012-2014

Archaeological Investigation:
2012-2013

Virtual Camp Douglas: 2013

Construction: 2014-2015

Scheduled Events

The Camp Douglas Restoration
Foundation

Presentations Scheduled

April 4, 2014-7:30 pm Northern
Illinois CWRT- Arlington Heights
Memorial Library

April 26, 2014-12:00 noon Rog-
ers Park Public Library, 6907 N
Clark Street, Chicago

May 2, 2014- 8:45 am Civil War
Surgeons-National Convention-
Weston Hotel, Itasca, IL

May 20, 2014-7:00 pm Carroll
University, Waukesha, WI

July 27-28-All Day, Sweet En-
campment, Lombard, IL

Participation in Shows

March 29, 2014, Chicago Civil
War Show, Wheaton, IL

May 3-4, 2014 Ohio Civil War
Show, Mansfield, OH

Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation—Latest News

2014 Archaeological Excavation Planned

The Foundation is planning a continuation of the archaeological excavation conducted in October 2013 at Pershing East Magnet School. Dr. Michael Gregory, De Paul University, will again lead the project. Coordination is now being done to conduct the investigation late this spring. Our goal is to, again, include the students of Pershing East in the project.

The site for the 2014 excavation is planned immediately to the east of the 2013 site. Dr. Gregory and the Foundation are attempting to better locate the prisoner barracks believed to have been in this area. Using drawings and maps, we hope to be able to investigate areas around the location of the former barracks, especially possible garbage pits.

Volunteers will be welcome to participate. When dates have been confirmed, those who have subscribed to the mailing list on the homepage of our web site, campdouglas.org, will be notified.

Sign up today!

New Book on Camp Douglas to be Written

David Keller, Managing Director, Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation is writing a new book on Camp Douglas. With the encouragement and generous support of Theodore Karamanski, *Rally 'Round the Flag*, and George Levy, *To Die In Chicago*, it is anticipated that the book will be published in late 2014 or early 2015. Dr. Karamanski and Mr. Levy are acknowledged experts in Chicago during the Civil War and Camp Douglas.

The book will include a history of POWs in America, and an analysis of the causes for conditions at Camp Douglas. Daily camp life will be presented from the perspective of Confederate prisoners through their diaries, journals, and letters.

Special thanks the Foundation's supporter and Chicago icon, Rick Kogan, for his encouragement and introduction to the publishing community in Chicago.

MJ Grinstead, who edits *Camp Douglas News*, has volunteered to provide editorial assistance for the project.

Calumet Lake Marina to be Named for Civil War Hero

In July, 1861, a merchant schooner, *S.J. Waring* bound for Montivideo from Sandy Hook, NJ, carrying passengers and cargo, was boarded by sailors from the crew of the rebel ship *Jeff Davis*. The men took control of the ship and commanded for the Confederate States of America.

The invaders ordered the ship's captain Smith to take down the Stars and Stripes and declared that everything was now the property of the South.

One of the *Waring's* crew was a Negro steward and cook named William Tillman. He knew that his fate would most likely be to be sold into bondage. For Tillman this was an ominous situation. In conjunction with some of the original crew members left aboard, a plot was hatched that would take place while the invading crew were sleeping.

Because his duties on the ship gave him access and opportunity to move about the vessel, it was possible for him to sneak into where the rebel crew members were sleeping. Armed with a heavy club, he struck fatal or near fatal blows to the heads of the sleeping Confederates. When others awoke, Tillman overcome their leader and took control of the

Waring and set sail for New York.

The voyage home was interrupted by a severe storm that required help from the captured rebel crew. Tillman ordered them to work to get the ship safely back to port or face the possibility of being shot to death. They complied.

Tillman was celebrated in the New York newspapers as a hero and was given a sizable reward. There was another attempt on a Union vessel by the *Jeff Davis* a few weeks later. This attempt was foiled by a black steward named Jacob Garrick who notified a Union gunboat that was in the vicinity.

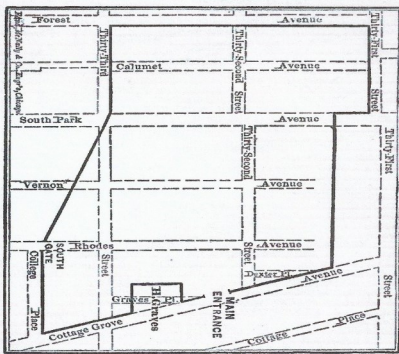
Because of the heroism exhibited by Tillman, Garrick, and other sailors and crewmembers, Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Wells opened up enlistment in the Navy for colored men in September, 1861.

Prologue, a community-based educational organization is restoring a marina located on Chicago's far-south side at the Calumet River. The marina is to be used as a maritime training facility and an alternative high school. The William Tillman Marine Science and Technology Academy is scheduled to open in Fall 2014.

This story provided by Bernard Turner, Director, CRDF

Camp Douglas Restoration
Foundation
Chicago, Illinois
www.campdouglas.org

David L. Keller, Managing Director
1368 N. Mohawk 2S
Chicago, IL 60610
Tel: 312-751-1693
Mobile: 312-859-1940
dkeller@campdouglas.org



CAMP DOUGLAS, 1864-5.

Map prepared by William Bross for a paper read before the Chicago Historical Society, June 18, 1878

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What to Do with POW's

On July 13, 1861, Union Major General George B. McClelland, later to be named General in Chief of the Union Army, after the battle at Rich Mountain in western Virginia, requested guidance on handling Confederate captives. He wrote: "Have received from [Lieutenant Colonel] Pegram [Confederate Commander] proposition for surrender with his officers and remnant of his command, say 600 men. Have accepted surrender agreeing to treat them with the kindness due prisoners of war, but stating that it was not in my power to relieve them from ally liability incurred by taking arms against the United States. They are said to be extremely penitent and determined never again to take arms against the General Government. I shall have nearly 900 or 1,000 prisoners to take care of when Pegram comes in. The question is an embarrassing one. Please give me immediate instructions by telegraph as to the disposition to be made of officers and men taken prisoners of war."

The US Adjutant General Responded: "In compliance with a resolution of the House of Representatives the Secretary of War directs that officers report to tell office the names and residences of all prisoners that may be hereafter taken and released upon their oath of allegiance to the United States. In like manner officers will report the names and residences of all prisoners who have been taken and released upon their oath of allegiance to tile United States Previous to this date."

This was the first announcement on the handling of captives by the Union. At this time incarceration in prison camps was not contemplated.

Source: *Official Records of the War of Rebellion*, Series II Volume III, page 9

Recollections-Letters, Diaries and Journals

Editor's Note: This section is devoted to letters, diaries, and journals of Civil War veterans. Often considered the best source of contemporaneous information on the war, readers must be cautioned that this material represents individual experiences and feelings. Letters often reflected what the writer thought the recipient wanted to hear. In addition, many of the journals were written well after the war and include the frailties of age and time. Grammatical and spelling errors have not been corrected in quotes

Robert Bagby, Confederate prisoner and nurse in the prison hospital, often reported on death and illness in the camp.



The fear of smallpox and a lack of understanding often resulted in smallpox sufferers being treated with little respect and compassion. Often they were isolated from others and forced to share blankets and clothing of other smallpox infected prisoners. Bagby did not have the same concerns as many others

"February 1, 1864. As usual, I was awakened at 4 o'clock to assist in my turn. The morning was cloudy and blustery. The wind was considerable. Soon after I got up one man died by the name of Royal Jennings, a Tennessee conscript. He seemed to be a man of no energy. His brother was in there complaining some. We thought he did not pay the respect to his brother he might after days of sorrow. It turned very cold, commenced snowing but soon quit. The wind blowing very hard and the clouds soon formed. I have never seen it blow so much harder than it did. It seemed they were bringing the dead to the dead house from every direction from the frozen road. I went to take to the dead house and help in one wagon. One Federal among them. I assumed they were dying five a day. Soon that day an old gentleman by the name of Johannes Johnson who had been very sick and became concerned that he was going to die making me to write down a few words in regard to some of his own business lest he succumbed to[o] easy and went to sleep. About dinner doctor came in and pronounced the disease to be small pox and ordered him sent to the pox hospital expressly for the said cases. This worried the boys some. I did not feel much afraid of it. It kept very cold and wind as hard as I as ever seen."

Curtis Burke, prisoner and member of Morgan's Raiders wrote of camp life and his opinion of Union soldiers

"Friday July 22d, 1864. Weather pleasant. We are having very light breakfasts and not much heavier dinners. I bought a lot of note paper at the sutler at the rate of 40 cents per quire. Some of the men with permission gave our leaky roof a fresh coat of pitch. The following is a notice copied from the Chicago Tribune: A Washington dispatch says that Capt. A. H. De Land and Lieut. Moses A. Powell 1st Michigan sharpshooters, arrived here on the 15th under guard from Gen. Grant's army, under sentence of court martial for cowardice in the face of the enemy. The sentence cashiered both, with the loss of all pay and allowances due them, and ordered their shoulder straps and buttons to be cut off in the presence of the troops. Capt. De Land goes to the Dry Fortgas. Such is the fate of the men who assisted in tieing (sic) up prisoners by their thumbs to extract secrets, **or** supposed secrets last fall in this camp. We all say Amen."

Morgan's Raider's Low Death Rate

Morgan's Raiders were captured at Buffington Island, OH in July 1863. Between 2,000 and 3,000 men arrived at Camp Douglas in August 1863.



At this time, the parole and exchange of prisoners had been suspended and the only way out of Camp Douglas was death or signing the Oath of Allegiance. Morgan's men refused to consider signing the oath and were singularly uncooperative with prison officials. They made continuing attempts to escape, cooperated only with other Morgan's Raiders, and generally made life difficult for their guards.

Ironically, they had a death rate of between 5% and 8% compared to 12% to 15% for all prisoners at Camp Douglas.

Being captured in the summer and in better physical shape than other prisoners contributed to this lower death rate. In addition, many Raider's had family in Union controlled areas allowing them to receive mail, packages, and money. This provided them with opportunities to purchase goods, improving their lives.

Another major factor was their attitude to keep together and to support each other. Those with money and extra food shared, and they all kept faith in their fellow Raiders.

Their action, and esprit de corps undoubtedly reduced their death rate.

Their actions were a prime example of what was expected of American soldiers, as outlined in the "Code of Conduct" by President Eisenhower in 1955.