Scrapbook of clippings

James A. Hard
James A. Hard (right), Rochester's only surviving Civil War veteran, cut his 100th birthday cake with Comrade Henry Lilly, of Gates, looking on as 103 candles flickered.

From "Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County · Historic Scrapbooks Collection"

GAR Veteran Feted on End Of His First Hundred Years

James A. Hard, one of Monroe County's five remaining Civil War veterans, last night completed 100 years of life by taking in stride a celebration in his honor.

The veteran, surrounded in four generations of his family, and more than 300 members of veterans' organizations, twirled his cane and smiled as he heard himself praised by speakers. His home is at 21 Rosalind St.

Slight and bent now, "Comrade" Hard admitted at the close of the ceremonies he was "a wee bit tired." But that may have been from attendance at a picnic in Mendon Ponds Park Monday.

Great-Grandson Wires

His only regret was that his great-grandson, James Ekston, who has accompanied him on past GAR events, couldn't be here for the birthday party, culminating in cutting of a cake surrounded by 103 candles. The great-grandson, in service at Camp Claiborne, La., sent a telegram that gladdened his heart. "That was from Jim," he remarked to his granddaughter, Mrs. Lola Ekston, the youth's mother.

Seated at the speaker's table with Hard were two of the five remaining Boys in Blue in Monroe County, Henry Lilly of Gates and Frank Russel of Scottsville.

Gifts, mainly cigars, which Hard "chain" smokes, came from every veterans' organization in the county. The cake was the gift of the Abraham Lincoln Association, sponsor of the party, as were 103 roses. A flagstaff, with an eagle top, came from the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans.
103 Candles Wait Last 'Boy in Blue'

There'll be no contemporaries to wish him well, but James A. Hard, Rochester's only living Civil War veteran, can expect a lot of enthusiastic help from succeeding generations in blowing out his 103 birthday candles Saturday night. According to his daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, with whom he lives at 31 Roseland, Hard is quite evidently looking forward to the public reception that is being arranged for him Saturday in Hotel Seneca by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. He also indicates that he'll be glad for any help he can get in blowing out the five wicks and three candles on the huge birthday cake that will be presented to him.

Although he has no particular desire to dance himself, he thinks it'll be a lot of fun to watch the younger folk take advantage of the music that will be provided at the party, he says.

With his last buddy of Civil War days laid to rest last year, Hard no longer spends time reminiscing about the "old days." That, he says, doesn't cramp his style any, for he considers these days much too exciting to spend time thinking about the past, anyhow.

He's particularly interested in the military careers of his two great-grandsons who are carrying on the fight for liberty in which he took part so many years ago.

Although he hopes for the war to end soon, he speaks with a great deal of pride about the members of his family as well as the other young boys who are taking part in the struggle. They're true sons of America, he says.

Among his most prized birthday greetings was a letter from Gov. Thomas E. Dewey advising him that: "On behalf of the people of New York I can assure you that your splendid record and the sacrifices you made for the preservation of our country are warmly cherished and appreciated."

The letter was read to the party by Edward G. Bartell, president of the Abraham Lincoln Association, who was master of ceremonies.

At the red, white and blue-bedecked birthday gifts piled up and overflowed the top of the piano, Hard beamed in appreciation and seemed to grow 10 years younger. He was already looking forward to today when he would sit down with scissors and notebook and open them. He insists on complete records of all presents he receives.

Favorite gift of the former Union soldier is cigars. Last year he received 2600 of them, but the supply didn't quite hold out until this birthday. Although the smokes remained uncut until now, they looked like a bumper crop. One of the highlights of the entertainment, in the opinion of the veteran, was the singing of "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground" by Mrs. June Green Gedgel, a yearly ritual at his birthday party.

Retains Sense of Humor

Retaining his sense of humor as he forges into his second century, Hard last night had ready answers for all occasions. When the president of a veterans' chapter said: "We hope we'll all meet you here again next year," he replied, "I'll try and be here." Hard keeps well posted on the news by listening to the radio, and spends much time telephoning and catching up on his correspondence by dictating to a granddaughter, Mrs. Elizabeth of East Henrietta. He lives with a daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, 31 Roseland St.

Hard has two great-grandsons in this war: Pvt. James Bakton of Henrietta, who spent 28 months with the Medical Corps in the Mediterranean war theater and is now stationed in South Carolina, and CPL. Donald Nelson of Victor, awaiting shipment overseas with the Air Force.

Monroe's Lone '61 Veteran

Feted on His 103rd Birthday

Civil War veteran James A. Hard sat, cane in hand, in his rocking chair in Hotel Seneca last night—the first to arrive at his own 103rd birthday party.

"He wouldn't wait to get here," his daughter said. "He has been as excited as a little boy."

The cigar-smoking warson, only remaining Civil War veteran in Monroe County, was greeted by nearly 100 old friends and representatives of veteran organizations at the party, which was sponsored for the Sons of Union Veterans.

Failing eyesight prevented him from seeing most of his well-wishers, but Hard shook hands vigorously with each one and took pleasure in kissing all the ladies who paid their respects. Not the least of his admirers were three grammar school age children who arrived at the party with a group of entertainers. The youngsters gazed at Hard from afar and asked many times if he was "really" in the Civil War. They were inspired with awe when they were allowed to shake hands with the veteran and receive a grandfatherly kiss.

The late Frank Russell of Scottsville, who last year was one of two Civil War veterans in the county, died Aug. 16 at the age of 96. He had escorted Hard to his place of honor at his 102nd birthday party.

Born in Victor, Hard was the son of a Western New York pioneer, Alanson Pratt Hard, a grandson of an early native, Martha Frost Hard. His father drove stage out of Rochester to Mt. Morris and Canandaigua before 1835. Hard fought in both Civil Wars at Mill Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, South Mountain, and Antietam.

He is one of 19 veterans of the war between the States remaining to New York State. He maintains, "I feel fine, am in perfect health, eat everything, and sleep like a baby."
Comrade James Hard Closest in Poll on European War

By ARCH MERRILL

"JAPAN will be licked by June of 1946." No one has seen the beginning and the end of more wars than any other living Rochesterian. And the man who, after careful reflection, uttered the prediction, has established himself as considerable a V-E Day prophet as any in town.

He is James A. Hard, Western New York's surviving veteran of the Civil War, who will be 104 years old on July 13.

BACK in March, 1944, I asked 20 recently Rochesterians this question:

"When, in your opinion, will the war in Europe end?"

The answers ranged from an ultra optimistic July 1, 1944, to an overly pessimistic Jan. 1, 1947. The list of these interogated was rather imposing one. It contained the names of the city's mayor, a congressman, several public officials, the directors of the city's library, Museum and School of Science and Art, a judge, several lawyers, two former Congressmen, the veterans of four wars and other civic leaders.

The one who came the nearest to the actual V-E Day was James A. Hard, who, over the telephone in March, 1944, said in a firm voice: "June 1, 1945."

He hit the date within 23 days. As everybody knows, official V-E Day was May 8.

The runner-up in the guessing contest was Comrade Hard himself. He closed: "It was only a guess."

I told him that several other men, called at 2121 South Street, the southwestern rim of the city, where for years he has made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Alberts Wilson.

Mrs. Wilson ushered me upstairs and pointed to a door, saying: "He's in there. Walk right in. He's always glad to see people."

"Somehow, a feeling of peace came over me, I was in the presence of History. It was like seeing the Pilgrim's Hall, the original copy of the Constitution under glass in the Congressional Library; the lanterns that grace the tower of Boston's Old North Church the night that Paul Revere rode; the patriarchal figure of Abraham Lincoln beside the Potomac; the first covered wagon to cross the Rockies."

There was nothing formidable about the trim and elderly old soldier, but in his eyes, the southern windows whence the bright afternoon sunshine poured in, the best of the few sunny days of the current so-called spring, "He was not merely the Grand Old Man of Rochester, not merely the last Boy In Blue, not merely a man whose great age alone sets him apart."

"He was much, much more than that. He personified 103 years of the life of the Republic, the epic of America's burgeoning from raw, new land to the greatest power on earth."

When James A. Hard was born in Victor on July 15, 1841, there were only 26 stars in the flag. Mthilgan was the last state that had been admitted to the Union. John Tyler was president and the slavery issue was agitating the Congress. People were humming a new and liltting Irish tune, "Rattleth Manusm." Indians and buffalo roamed the plains of the Wild West. Only a few hundred souls dwelt in California. Some of them beside Sultn Creek and its yet undiscovered gold.

Rochester, only seven years an incorporated city, had but 20,000 inhabitants and that year established its first free school—on the site of the present Education Building in Brighton."

"Only four years before, the first clumsy train had rammed over the tracks of the Rochester & Tonawanda Railroad from the Flour City to Batavia."

SINCE then James Hard has seen the coming of the telegraph, the telephone, electricity, paved roads, the automobile, the airplane and the radio.

"Of all these marvels, which is the greatest?" I asked him.

He motioned to the radio on the table beside him.

"It brings me voices and events across thousands of miles." he said.

Hard has followed the fortunes of this war with the keenest interest. His great grandson, James E. Cockran of Henrietta whom Rochesterians will remember as the young escort of the veteran at peace-time patriotic gatherings, recently was honorably discharged after long service in North Africa and Italy. A grandson, East Orange, N.J., served in World War I and for eight months in this war.

When all the "soldiers" of the family get together, they have a lot to talk about.

"So we sung the chorus, From Atlanta to the sea. While we were marching through Georgia."

"Where were you, Mr. Hard, when you heard of Lee's surrender in 1865?"

"I was at Atlanta with the railroad corps of Sherman's Army. We maintained the transporation and supply lines for the march to the sea."

The veteran does not remember much about the War with Mexico. When that conflict came in 1846, he was only five years old. He does recall a veteran of that war who, through his pension of $12 a month, was able to spend most of his time sitting on the porch of a hotel in Windsor; Broome County, Young Jim Hard at the time thought that was "a mighty fine thing."

He was running a new stall at Jordan in April, 1853, when the Rebels fired on Fort Sumter. He lied to the nearest recruiting office and signed up with the 22d Volunteers. He fought with the blue ranks at bloody Antietam, at Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg, before he was transferred to the Transportation Division.

"Chicks he pulled down Lincoln's hand. He recited the War President, with a high hat and on horseback, reviewing 20,000 troops at Bailey's Crossroads, near Washing-

Co. Lincoln's beard so long they almost touched the ground. He should have had a higher horse."

In 1867, he revisited the field of Antietam. The next year he was at the reunion of the Blue and Gray at Gettysburg.

That same year he took his first airplane flight.

What a wealth of memories belongs to this remarkable old man!

"How many comrades of the Grand Army are left, Mr. Hard?"

The old soldier indicated a little button on the table. It was that of "the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic." It listed the officers. There were more officers than there were veterans left to fill them. Some had to fill two posts. It was a pathetic finding.

For in the whole department, there remained only six old men, all of the original Grand Army, and Lincoln's call is still.

Comrade Hard feels that he is the oldest. He is the only GAR member left in Western New York. The others live the farthest part of the state.

In the entire nation, according to a survey made in February, there are only 74 names on the rolls of the Grand Army — and probably some of them have answered the last roll call.

In the last few years he has heard taps sounded over the graves of his comrades: "I'm too old," he says. "Some comrades—Joseph Bauer, Henry Lilly, John A. Ross, Frank Bissell, Frank Van Alstyne."

He is the last of a gallant company.

"EVERY single move fought on Main Street has changed since I came to Rochester 60 years ago, Everything is changed.

Where he now lives was a farm on the outskirts of the town. At 1850 Rochester had a population of only 18.

Hard worked for a time as a carpenter, on the Pennsylvania Railroad between Rochester and Olean. Then he went into the contracting business for himself and built many homes for the growing city. For 20 years he was a pension attorney with offices in the old Reynolds Arcade.

He is the first local commander of the Union Veteran's Union, a now extinct organization that came as a rival of the GAR. He has been state commander of the GAR. Many honors have come to him.

And he reminded me with a touch of pride of the 1919 Memorial Day Parade when he was the Grand Marshal of the Memorial Day Parade again this year, you know.

"Three times during his lifetime, Mr. Hard has been to the capital of the peace of the world, with attended ceremony.

"What should we do with Ger-

"I don't think the world is war-weary."
104th Birthday Party Arranged For J. A. Hard

Mr. Hard, a World War I veteran, will celebrate his 104th birthday this Thursday, July 15, at Hotel Seneca. The event, which will include a program of dancing, will go to the Handsome Veterans Building Fund.

Picnic Slated For James A. Hard

A birthday picnic will be given in honor of James A. Hard, Monroe County's only surviving Civil War veteran, at Canfield Woods, Menon Pond Park, July 18, Picket Fence. The picnic will include a program of dancing.

ANOTHER BIRTHDAY—ANOTHER SMOKE

Now 104, Monroe County's last Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, puffs to light his cigar as his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Elston Sr. of Henrietta, holds the match at birthday party. Part of his 104 candles are shown in the picture.
Party-Minded on 104th Birthday

Civil War Veteran at 104
Boasts of ‘Girl Friends’

“I’M JUST a boy now—all the ladies are my girl friends!”

James A. Hard, Monroe County’s last surviving Civil War veteran, who is celebrating his 104th birthday today, smiled roguishly at the thought of the feminine attention he’s still capable of commanding.

Birthdays bring a deluge of mementos from the ladies to the past department commander of the state GAR, who is one of 19 Civil War veterans in the state now (living.)

“Last year I received 178 cards,” he chuckled, “and over half of them were signed ‘your girl friend.’ The ladies of the Marshall Relief Corps gave me a party the day before yesterday, and another crowd of ladies from the Daughters of the Civil War Veterans called on me and brought me cigars and candy.” He waved a hand proudly toward a table full of gifts.

His daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, with whom he lives at 33 Rochester, spoke up.

“T’ve younger than I am, even if T’m only 72,” she remarked. "I was the one who wouldn’t go up in an airplane with him.”

Her father, the son of a stagecoach driver, shifted a state of approach in his voice. “I was all set to fly down to Miami,” he said, “I like to fly. But my daughter was scared. She wouldn’t go.”

Guessed Nazi Collapses

Hard, who has two great-grandsons and a grandson in the present war, is an avid news fan and follows the latest war developments eagerly. He guessed the German collapse within less than 30 months of the actual date, and now is wagering on the Japs folding up next June.

When his daughter slyly twitted him with liking to listen to radio "soap operas," the while-haired veteran drew himself erect.

“Oh go on,” he said. "You know those are just to fill in time." His daughter winked.

James A. Hard (top), Monroe County’s last surviving veteran of the Civil War, finds satisfaction in his cigar and radio on his 104th birthday today. Fred E. Colwell (below), past departmental commander of the Sons of Union Veterans, affixes 104 candles to a huge birthday cake which will be presented to Comrade Hard at a reception tonight in Hotel Seneca.

For 35 years Hard was a pension attorney in the Reynolds Arcade Building. Active for years in the GAR, he has held every state office possible in the organization. Rochesterians have seen him riding in state as grand marshal of many a Memorial Day parade.

Hard will be feted by Sons of Union Veterans tonight at a reception in the Seneca, to which he is looking forward as eagerly as a six-year-old.
Stork Brings New Laurels to Hard

The stork last night added to the long list of laurels of James A. Hard, lone surviving Monroe County veteran of the Civil War and one of the few in the state, by making him a great-great-grandfather. Hard is state commander of the GAR.

First representative of the fifth living generation of Hard's family is James P. Eksten Jr., who was born last night in Geneseo Hospital to Mr. and Mrs. James P. Eksten of 77 East Blvd. Hard, who is 104, has three grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren.

Fifth Generation
In Hard Family

James A. Hard, lone surviving Monroe County veteran of the Civil War, yesterday was "prouder than Punch" over the newest of his laurels. He is now a great-great-grandfather.

James P. Eksten Jr., first representative of the fifth generation of Hard's, was born Tuesday night in Geneseo Hospital to Mr. and Mrs. James P. Eksten of 77 East Blvd. The State Commander of the GAR, who is 104, has three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

James A. Hard
Pleads
for Comrades

The Times-Union JUN 3 1945

A LETTER has just been read to me which was printed in The Times-Union of May 29. This was written by the son of a former comrade of mine and referred to the use of Washington Square for a mass meeting and the monument as a speakers' base.

I helped pay for this monument and to me it is a sacred reminder of my comrades. To know that wires and loud speakers have been attached to the statues of these men who fought to make possible such a place as our beautiful city, is very painful to their last comrade in Monroe county.

It would please me to know that the city administration will take steps to see that this monument is kept for the placing of wreaths in memory of those who have gone on and the steps as a resting place for tired people and not as a speakers' platform.

JAMES A. HARD
Commander of New York State
Grand Army of the Republic, Rochester.

Civil War Veteran Invited to Dinner

The Times-Union JUN 28 1945

James A. Hard, Monroe County's lone surviving Civil War veteran, will be honored by Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans, at a dinner in the Seneca Hotel July 15. It will be Hard's 105th birthday, and a cake with 105 candles is planned.

Hard is commander of the New York State Department, Grand Army of the Republic. The dinner will be open to the public.

Reception Stated
For James Hard's
105th Birthday

The Times-Union JUL 1 1945

The 105th birthday of James A. Hard, state commander of the GAR, will be celebrated Monday evening at a reception in the Seneca to be given by the Monroe County Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

The affair, at which County Commander James H. Wiese will preside, will feature the annual birthday cake, to be decorated with 105 candles, and plentiful supplies of the veteran's favorite cigars and tobacco.

The reception which will be open to the public, will not include a program but will afford an opportunity to offer congratulations to the county's last surviving Civil War veteran.

James A. Hard, 104 years old and Monroe County's lone surviving veteran of the Civil War, is shown as he fondled his great-great-grandson.

James Peter Eksten Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. James P. Eksten Sr., 77 East Blvd. Hard, who will be 105 July 14, resides at 103 Rutgers St.
He Never Thought He’d Live Past 75, Says James A. Hard, Who Hits 105 Today

SUV Will Give Party Tonight for Still Lively Veteran

By TED KLEE

Even James A. Hard can’t tell you how to reach 105 and still look forward to enjoying it.

“It’s wonderful the way I’m standing it,” chuckled Monroe County’s only surviving Civil War veteran and one of only a half dozen left in the state.

The hardy, keen-minded, firm-voiced man, on whose square shoulders the long years rest so gently, yesterday knocked the ashes from his pipe—one of the four he keeps going during the day—reached into a handy bureau drawer for a cigar, cut the end off meticulously with a penknife, touched off a long, old-fashioned match by a scratch of his thumbnail, applied it unerringly to the end of his favorite smoke, and leaned back contentedly in an easy chair in his room at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Party for Him Tonight

Today is his 105th birthday and he’s looking forward with keen relish to attending the birthday party Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, has arranged for him tonight in Hotel Seneca.

Last year, he said, referring to the party which has become an annual affair, “I told the boys this is getting to be a habit. But they told me as long as I furnish the cake.”

He smiled and added, “And I’m going to stick around as long as I can.”

There was a momentary pause as the old fellow puffed contentedly and seemed lost in meditation.

“You know it’s funny,” he continued, “when I was in my 40s I thought I would be an old man when I was 75 and never expected to live past that age. But I still feel perfectly well physically. I enjoy my meals and I sleep like a log. I did when I was 70. I haven’t an ache or a pain—except a catch once in a while in my right leg.”

Shows Little Change

And as the years roll on past the century mark the grand old man shows little change for the worse. For years his eyesight has been failing, but he has become so accustomed to his impaired vision that he can’t recognize your features—and his hearing is slightly impaired—you have to raise your voice to be heard by him. His radio brings him the news and musical entertainment and his friends call frequently and keep him supplied with smoking materials.

The subject of his smoking habits—he consumes anywhere from four to six cigars daily in between meals—brought another chuckle from the old timer.

“I haven’t had to buy any tobacco in five years,” he said. “On my last birthday alone I got 20 boxes of cigars and 12 pounds of pipe tobacco.”

In contrast with many old folks, the centenarian keeps up with the news and issues of the day, mentally moving along with the progress of the era and smiles at the so-called good old days when he came to Rochester.

“I’ve seen lots of improvements in Rochester in the last 70 years,” he recounted. “It looked like a country village when I first came here. Why there was only one store in town with plate glass windows.”

And what does he think of the atomic bomb?

“It’s quite an institution,” he commented. “And in time it’s going to control the world.”

“Don’t you think it does that right now?” he was asked.

“Well, yes,” he returned, “but it’s going to be improved.”

Then he concluded with firm conviction: “There’s no end to improvement in this country.”

JAMES A. HARD

... as he posed for D&C photographer yesterday

Hard Fed By 300 as He Reaches 105

The Grand Old Man of the Grand Army took on all comers last night.

James A. Hard, state department commander of the GAR, greeted more than 300 well wishers who jammed the Red Room of Hotel Seneca to wish him well on his 105th birthday, and realized he would have to keep on getting older because—"I’m going to keep this going as long as I can.”

He obviously was referring to the warm reception and the abundance of gifts, including his favorite cigars and tobacco that will keep him going for another year.

Message from Dewey

Highlight of the reception was a letter from Governor Dewey in which the chief executive expressed him “warm greetings” and added: "It is eminently fitting that the Sons of Union Veterans of Rochester would pay tribute to Commander Hard and the entire state is glad and proud that he continues to add to his remarkable saga. What he and his comrades did— their suffering and their sacrifice—are the presentation of the Union will never be forgotten. Veterans of four wars were represented at the reception, which was arranged by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans.

Dignitaries Attend

Among the dignitaries were Fred E. Howe, department commander, "SUV, and Mrs. Howe, of Niagara Falls; Mrs. Wilhelmine Taggart, department president, "SUV Auxiliary, Rochester; Miss Olinda Smith, department president, Ladies of the GAR, Rochester; Miss Helen Hoag, department president, Daughters of Union Veterans, Syracuse, and William E. Kelley, department vice-commander, "SUV, Rochester.

Hard is the second oldest surviving Civil War veteran in the nation, the Veteran Bureau reported in Washington. Oldest is Francis Megan, Tuscon, Ark., who is 107.

Among the messages received last night was a long distance telephone call from Robert M. Round of Ripton, VT, past national commander, GAR, and close friend of the Rochester veteran.
It's more candles than cake—even one of this size—when Civil War Veteran James A. Hard has a birthday. There are 105 candles this year, and bake shop owners Alice Shults of 19 Cornell St. and Barbara Neves of 340 Meigs St. are shown as they begin the job of placing them. Cake is gift from Sons of Union Veterans.

Party Getting to Be a Habit, Says Comrade Jim Hard

Comrade Jim Hard is "stepping out" tonight to celebrate his 105th birthday.

The Civil War veteran has planned a quiet day at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., with his pipes, his cigars and his radio, but come evening he will get out the old blue uniform of the Civil War days and head for Hotel Seneca, where he will be feted by Monroe County Council of the Sons of Union Veterans.

Thus at 105, Comrade Hard has more youth than he did when he was in his 40s, which was back in 1860, years before there were automobiles, motion pictures or electric lighting. At that time, Hard who was a pension attorney, figures they'd be sounding taps for him when he was 75 years old at the latest. Now he's 50 years beyond his 75th milestone.

Except for dimming eyesight and slightly impaired hearing, the combative enjoys a normal life and closely follows events of the world. "The atom bomb," he says, "is quite an institution," and he forecasts that "in time it's going to control the world."

Hard has no tile, he says, and his only ache is an occasional catch in his right leg. His appetite? Fine. And he sleeps just as well as he did when he was 20.

Whenever he goes downtown, which he does fairly often, he says he's always impressed with the improvement Rochester has undergone since he first came here 75 years ago. At that time, he recalls, the community looked like a country village and there was only one store in town with plate glass windows.

What's Comrade Hard's recipe for old age? He says "I haven't any. If I did, I probably wouldn't be here now."
Hale at 105

We're as young as we feel, we are told.
Certainly James A. Hard doesn't feel 105, as ordinary humans judge feelings and ages.
Rochester's oldest and now most distinguished Civil War veteran was 105 yesterday.
He was 20 when the war broke out; 40 years ago he guessed he wouldn't live past 75.
But he's already 30 years past that milestone and says he feels fine.
He hasn't any recipe for long life. Said he probably wouldn't be here now if he had.
He just kept on living, doing the duties he had to do, and, we judge, taking life as it came.
We judge he hasn't done too much worrying, in recent years at least.
And his interests and patriotic activity suggest that his aged years have not been useless.
Few of us will reach his advanced age, but most of us can profit by his sensible philosophy.
For this, as much as for his many years, he deserves the salute that his birthday brought.

RONICLE, MONDAY, MAY 26, 1947

Comrade Hard Right Perky Preparing for Parade at 105

Feeling right perky in spite of his nearly 106 years, James Albert Hard, oldest of the 97 surviving Civil War veterans in the United States, is looking forward to his annual appearance in Rochester's Memorial Day parade Friday.

Hard is grand marshal of the parade again this year and riding with him in an open car will be two great-granddaughters, Sgt. James P. Ecksten of Rochester, and Staff Sgt. Donald Nelson of Victor, both veterans of World War II.

"Never felt better in my life," Hard told Mrs. Adam Gilliland, 111 Rutgers St., with whom he resided for several years, in a conversation Saturday in which he asked her to accompany him and his granddaughter, of Aurora, Ill., who was born Oct. 4, 1926, and Albert Ray of Hilton, for the annual GAR convention, which is being held this summer.

Although walking tires him, registration list were born in 1845 and hearty and he smokes six cigars a day, Hard, who will be 106 on July 5, is now reading at 31 Portage Ave., who will be 106 on July 5.

BER 29, 1946

Veteran, 105, Greets Party At Dinner

The 105-year-old veteran of the Civil War rose slowly to his feet and faced the audience.
"It takes me an hour to get dressed," he said, "but I'm very glad to be here." James A. Hard, department commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, thus addressed the 150 guests at a testimonial dinner to Mrs. Wilhelmina Taggart, auxiliary department president of the Sons of Union Veterans, and her staff, and to Com. Fred E. Howe of Niagara Falls, of the Sons of Union Veterans, and his staff, last night at the Hotel Seneca.
"I hope you continue in your good work now and in the years to come," the centenarian concluded.

Other speakers at the dinner included Vtcmajor Frank E. Van Lare; Mrs. Nettie C. Gardner, past department president of Auxiliary 1, Neil D. Cranmer of Elmira, national commander-in-chief of the SVU, Miss Josephine Parkhurst of Pulaski, department president of the Women's Relief Corp; Miss Helen Hoag, department president of the Daughters of Union Veterans, and Miss Olivine M. Smith, department president of the Ladies of the GAR.

Music was provided by James R. Kavanagh, Miss Amber Bailey and Miss Hazel Feist. Mrs. Ann Hoyt, president of Auxiliary 1A, was toastmistress and Mrs. Alice M. Walter, general chairman. The dinner, which was followed by dancing, was sponsored by Auxiliaries 1A, an 420 of the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans.
Comrade James A. Hard, the country's oldest living veteran of the Civil War, brushes off his service hat so he will look his best in tomorrow's Memorial Day parade. He will be grand marshal. Comrade Hard will be 106 years old on July 15. (Parade details, Page 1-A.)

**Hard Gets Tribute In Congress Talk**

Tribute to Rochester's 106-year-old "grand old man." Civil War veteran James A. Hard, was paid in Congress yesterday by Representative Gordon Canfield, New York Republican.

Canfield emphasized Rochester's unique position as the home of the oldest of the nation's surviving Civil War veterans.

The tribute to Hard came as Canfield placed in the Congressional Record a speech delivered in Rochester on Memorial Day weekend by Representative B. Keating.

Memorial Day parade. He will be grand marshal. Comrade Hard will be 106 years old on July 15. (Parade details, Page 1-A.)
Ages of 10 Youngsters Total Commander Hard's

James A. Hard, Rochester's 105-year-old Civil War veteran, yesterday was reelected commander of the New York State Department, Grand Army of the Republic, by casting one vote for himself, only GAR member at Lake Placid encampment. Here he poses with 10 members of summer figure skating school there whose total ages equal his to the year. The three-day encampment ended today.

D. & C. JUL 8 1947
Group to Honor Hard
On Vet's 106 Birthday
Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, will conduct their sixth annual public reception for Commander James A. Hard, GAR veteran, at 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 15, at Hotel Seneca. The affair will mark the 106th birthday of Monroe County's oldest veteran, "Rufus Hard.

106 Candles
Set for Vet's
July 15 Fete

One hundred and six candles will glitter on a birthday cake in Rochester on July 15.

The occasion will be the 106th birthday of James A. Hard, Monroe County's only surviving Civil War veteran and the oldest in the nation. Hard will be honored at a reception sponsored by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans.

The reception, set for 8 p.m., will be held in the ballrooms of the Hotel Seneca, Department SUV Commander William E. Kelly of Rochester and SUV officials from all over the state are expected to attend, according to County Commander John Stamber. Stamber said invitations are being sent to the officials of all veterans' organizations in the county.

D. & C. JUL 22 1947
ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CH

Veteran Hard, 106, Goes for Helicopter Ride

"When you get to be 106 you don't scare easily." That is what James A. Hard said yesterday when he stepped out of the Gannett Newspapers helicopter after a 10-minute flight over Rochester.

The Grand Army of the Republic member who started his 107th year July 15 was taken on the ride as a belated birthday gift from the Times-Union.

"I wasn't a bit scared," Hard said, but he admitted the noise bothered him a little. The old soldier has twice been up in other types of planes, but this was his first experience in a helicopter.

During the trip he showed particular interest in the rotator overhead and throughout the trip shouted questions about the plane at Pilot Bill Cruickshank. The flight was made from Municipal Airport.

Oldest Veteran

Recentlly I saw a piece in Time where the Minnesota GAR at its last encampment gave up their charter. I sent a clipping of Mr. Hard and the 10 children it took to make 106 years. I have received a letter from Marion G. Jewell, who is secretary of the GAR in St. Paul, Minn. She writes that Charles A. Hooper of Virginia, Minn., was 109 last April 3, born in 1838. I write this as it may interest you to know that Mr. Hard is not the oldest of the Boys in Blue.

WALTER LOWENTHAL
Rochester

Editorial note: The proper claim is that Mr. Hard is the oldest New York State veteran.
One-Man GAR ‘Camp’
Calls Centenarian Hard

By HOWARD C. HOSMER

JAMES A. HARD, Rochester’s cigar-smoking lone eagle of the Grand Army of the Republic, will open a one-man encampment Thursday at Lake Placid.

One of two GAR veterans surviving in the state, Hard, as state commander, will be chairman, delegate, sergeant-at-arms, secretary and everything else at his one-man meeting, the annual state GAR encampment. His sole surviving GAR companion, Robert Rodwell of Ripley, phoned him the other day that his physician would not permit him to make the trip. One other veteran, not a GAR member, also survives in the state.

Natve of Victor

Hard was born in Victor, moved with his parents to Winder, Broome County, as a boy, and was a resident of Freyville when he enlisted in the Union Army at Dryden in the war between the States. He was in military service 26 months and at the close of the war worked for the government on railroad in Atlanta, Ga.

He stayed in the railroad business until he came to Rochester; 62 years ago. He did carpenter work for two or three years and was employed by Monroe County for five years, meanwhile studying law in his spare time. In 1895, he opened a law office in the Reynolds Arcade and maintained it for 32 years until his retirement.

Hard maintains a keen interest in national and world affairs and has never lost his love for the Army of the United States. “We should have a strong army and keep it strong,” he said today. “We should pass the universal military training bill to make this so. We will need a strong army because of Russia.”

Russia is a menace to this country. We will have war with the Russians before many years.”

Hard was 12 years old when Russia went to war against England, Turkey, France and Sardinia in the Crimea. Since then he has seen the deterioration of imperial Russia, her defeat by Germany in the first World War, watched the Russian revolution, the growth of Communion and the nation’s emergence as a first-rate military power.

“We must keep America strong,” he repeated, puffing on his cigar.

Tomorrow he will rise early, bundle up against cool morning air and begin his long motor trip north, still brimming with the spirit of the Boys in Blue, determined to make his one-man encampment a pleasant duty.

I SMOKE TOO MUCH!
D. C. Jul 15 1947
Keep A-Bomb
Hard Advises;
He’s 106 Today

“PREJUSE I’d live to be an old man if I didn’t smoke so much.”

So spoke James A. Hard, New York State’s oldest surviving Civil War Veteran, yesterday on the eve of his 106th birthday today.

The quick-witted veteran of Antietam, Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg touched a match to one of his five pipes, pushed back in the small rocking chair and said:

“I start the day off with a pipe and manage to keep it going most of the time. Cigars are still my favorite but I’ve cut down to three a day, one after each meal.”

HARD, who will be feted at a public reception tonight in the Hotel Benesca, reported he was feeling better than in the last few years.

“I still have my good days and bad days. There seems to be less of the bad days now,” he said.

Monroe County’s only surviving member of the new defunct Union Veterans Union, one-time rival of the Grand Army of the Republic, forecasts a war with Russia within 5 years. And when it comes, Hard wants America “to have plenty of those bombs we used on Japan to wipe out Russia.”

The native of Victor is looking forward to tonight’s reception, sponsored by the Sons of Union Veterans. Yesterday he sorted over the more than 50 birthday cards he already had received and told reporters of gifts of tobacco and money he had received.

Hard, who recently returned from a one-man state GAR convention in Lake Placid where he renamed himself state GAR commander, announced he will attend the national GAR encampment next month in Cleveland.

“It’s been a wonderful 106 years,” he remarked, “and I want to live just as many more years as I can. You see, I like living.”

Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County - Historic Scrapbooks Collection
"Celebrating' 4th--At 105!

Hard Takes It in Stride
---Helicopter Ride at 106

James A. Hard sits quietly in the helicopter cockpit as Pilot Bill Cruickshank readies the controls for a takeoff.

The Times-Union today gave 106-year-old James A. Hard a belated birthday gift—a ride in the Gannett Newspapers helicopter.

"It was different from anything I ever experienced in my life," the Grand Army of the Republic member, who embarked on his 107th year July 15, admitted as the two-seater craft was brought lightly to the earth.

He protested that he was not a bit scared on the 10-minute ride over Rochester, but that the noise bothered him a little.

"When you get to be 106," he said, "you don't scare easily."

"The old soldier, who twice has been up in other type planes, was placid as his ear rolled into Pass Airways, where the helicopter is kept. Accompanying him were William Butler of The Times-Union and Democrat and Chronicle promotion staff and Mrs. Cora Dieter, 61 Portsmouth Ter., with whom he lives.

Not a Bit Excited

He said he was awefully glad to get a chance to ride in the new type plane but wasn't a bit excited.

Mrs. Dieter revealed, however, that his thoughts had been on the plane ride ever since last Wednesday when he learned he was to take the trip and that he had constantly pined her with questions about the craft.

Taking away his cigar, he stepped with surprising agility and a little help into the plane's coupe.

As the craft took off, he showed particular interest in the rotor overhead, and throughout the trip shouted questions about the plane's mechanics at Pilot Bill Cruickshank.

When he again reached the ground he admitted the ride was "easy" and he wished everybody..."
GAR Veteran Launches Attack on Candles

Planked (left) by Wilbur E. Kelly, state commander, Sons of Union Veterans, and John Bamber, commander, Monroe County Council, JHV James A. Hard attempts to blow out candles on 106th birthday cake at party in his honor at Seneca.

Hard Looks Forward To Birthday Number 107

There were cigars and tobacco and a cake with 106 candles. There were relatives, friends and other wellwishers and veterans of three wars. There were greetings from city, county and state. And that’s how James A. Hard celebrated his 106th birthday last night at the Seneca.

The party, sponsored by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, honored the nation’s oldest GAR veteran and the commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Today, a little weary from the festivities, he rested quietly at his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter. and looked forward to Birthday No. 107.

Last night’s party brought together with a common purpose representatives of the Gold Star Mothers, the Sons of Union Veterans and its auxiliary, the Women’s Relief Corps, Ladies of the GAR and Daughters of the GAR.

There were visitors from Victor, where Commander Hard was born, from Ilion, Niagara Falls, Albany, Poughkeepsie, Henrietta, Lt. Gov. Joe H. Hanley sent greetings and Vicemayor Frank E. Van Lare brought Rochester’s official congratulations. Rep. Kenneth B. Keating sent greetings from Washington and the Rt. Rev. Msgr. George V. Burns, department chaplain of the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans, brought departmental congratulations.

John H. Bamber, council county commander, presided.

JULY 15, 1947

HAPPY BIRTHDAY—COMRADE HARD

James A. Hard, New York State’s oldest surviving Civil War veteran, sorts over the more than 50 birthday cards he has received in honor of his 106th birthday today.
TRIBUTE TO A 'GRAND OLD MAN'

Mrs. Florence Bowman, at left, and Mrs. Anna Brown of Gold Star Mothers present a floral piece to Civil War Veteran James A. Hard, who was feted on his 100th birthday.

Hard Starts on Long Trek
To Next Birthday (No. 107)

On to Number 107!
With the same spirit that carried him through the battles of Antietam, Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg, James A. Hard, New York State's oldest veteran of the War between the States, looked ahead to 1948 after being honored on his 100th milestone at a reception in his honor last night in Hotel Seneca.

The tenacious state commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, admitted it will be a little longer haul to reach Number 107 because 1948 is Leap Year and February will come up with 29 days.

The Hotel Seneca reception was staged in honor of Hard by Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and it attracted veterans of three other wars and allied groups. The Gold Star Mothers were out in force, as were the Sons of Union Veterans. Its auxiliary, the Women's Relief Corps, Ladies of the GAR, Daughters of the GAR, and friends. The Gold Star Mothers presented a floral wreath with the numeral "100" on it.

Relatives Attend

Up from Ithaca came Fred Hard and Herman Brockway, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Stephon of Buffalo, and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Howe and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Barry of Niagara Falls were there. Also Miss Josephine Case, GAR secretary, from Albany and Mrs. Josephine Farley of Pulaski.

Victor, birthplace of the veteran, was well represented by relatives, including Mrs. Royce Nolan, a granddaughter; Donald and Albert Nolan, great-grandsons and two great granddaughters, Mrs. Dorothy Racionowski and Mrs. Velma Pittenger and a great-great-granddaughter, Kathy Pittenger.

Another granddaughter present was Mrs. Carl Eksten of Henrietta and a great-grandson, James Eksten.

Everybody cut a piece of the huge birthday cake well adorned with candles. It was provided by the Sons of Union Veterans, who claimed there were 106 candles on it although nobody counted them.

Hanley Sends Greetings

Both Gov. Thomas E. Dewey and Mayor Samuel B. Dickert were represented by pickhitters. Vice-mayor Frank E. Van Lare brought greetings from the Mayor while Lt. Gov. Joe R. Hanley, an acting Governor, sent congratulations by mail as did Representative Kenneth R. Kentling.
Birthday Greetings Surround Venerable Vet

Surrounded by his favorite cigars, greeting cards, flowers and other reminders of his 106th birthday, which fell today, James A. Hard, oldest Civil War veteran in the state, quietly observed the day at his home. Tonight he will be guest of honor at a public reception in Hotel Seneca.

Born Hungry 106 Years Ago Today, Says Hard

By MARIE POWELL

"One hundred and six years ago today at five minutes before 12 noon I came into this world and I was very hungry," said James A. Hard this morning. "My mother told me I was hungry," he continued with a smile.

Rochester's grand old man and the nation's oldest GAR survivor of the Civil War was busy smoking a cigar and reading some of his birthday greeting cards but be grandly posed for photographs and talked to the reporter about his life.

His principal immediate interest was a birthday party, to which the public is invited, to be held at the Hotel Seneca tonight, from 8 to 11 o'clock under sponsorship of the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans. He wondered if ice cream would be party fare.

Likens Cake, Ice Cream

He likes people and he likes birthday cake and ice cream, so he was looking forward to a fine time and wondering just how early he should start getting into his "dress-up uniform."

Some 150 to 200 greeting cards from all over the nation arrive each year from friends he has met at conventions. He takes a deep interest in each card.

Teens came to his eyes as he spoke again of his mother and told of the time, as a boy of seven, when he was taken to spend a vacation with an uncle and got so homesick he was sick and did nothing but cry.

"I told them I wanted to go home and be with my mother," he said "and they took me right home. I was never so glad to see anyone in my life," he reminisced.

Shook Hands with Lincoln

Again he told the story of meeting Abraham Lincoln and of the tremendous kindness of the man. "It was at a White House reception," he declared. "I was in the Army then and I shook hands with Lincoln, his wife and his son. Bobby. They were all grand people and Lincoln was one of the most wonderful men I have ever met," the veteran said.

With the fringe of soft-white hair and an amazing lack of wrinkles, the gracious GAR commander looks belles his age. He wears a beard and strength gives his falling vision but otherwise he follows much the same way of life that has been his for many years.

Cigar smoking remains one of his favorite pastimes and at least three cigars a day are the rule. An occasional pipe of tobacco and graham cracker nibbling between meals are other means of passing the time.

Well used to the vagaries of Rochester's weather — he was born in near-by Victor — the veteran of the battles of Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville prefers summer heat to winter cold and was thriving in today's humid warmth.
Hard Given Honor Post
In War Dead Rite Plans

James A. Hard, 105, Monroe County's sole surviving Civil War veteran, will be honorary chairman of the countywide tribute to World War II dead at ceremonies on arrival of the remains of the first county veteran from overseas.

Edward E. Cogswell, chairman of the county observance, made the announcement yesterday at a meeting of commanders of county units of national veterans' organizations in the offices of County Manager Clarence A. Smith in the Court House. C. T. Smith will be assistant to the chairman, Cogswell announced.

The date for the observance will depend upon the arrival of the body from overseas. Cogswell explained the first shipment from the Pacific Theater is expected in San Francisco Oct. 10 and the first from Europe is due in New York Oct. 25. It will not be known until after those dates whether any area servicemen are included.

Smith, a veteran of both World Wars, now a New York State veterans' counselor, was in charge of the observance upon the return of the first Overseas dead after World War I.

City plans for the observance, including a procession and a public tribute in a central location, will be speeded so all will be in readiness for the first arrival. To emphasize the community nature of the affair, only the American flag will be flown.

City Council joined with the Board of Supervisors in sanctioning the observance last night, under terms of a resolution offered by Vice Mayor Frank E. VanLare and unanimously adopted. It authorized City Manager Louis E. Cartwright to co-operate with Cogswell and make available such city services as are needed.

The county in August directed County Manager Smith to appoint a chairman and to enlist the cooperation of every town and village in the program. Cogswell yesterday requested the commanders to submit names for appointment to committees, a move designed to give them co-ordinations and the observance the broadest possible community representation.

The first arrivals will be the symbols of the tribute of residents of cities, towns and villages to all the heroes of World War II. The only public ceremony will be after the arrival of the first body.

D & C SEP 10 1947

James A. Hard (right) greets Abraham Lincoln Hite on the 8th anniversary of the delivery of the Gettysburg Address.

![Photo of James A. Hard with Abraham Lincoln Hite](image)

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James A. Hard (right) greets Abraham Lincoln Hite on the 8th anniversary of the delivery of the Gettysburg Address.

![Photo of James A. Hard with Abraham Lincoln Hite](image)
Veteran at 106 Plans to Honor Lincoln

Hard Gets into Mood At Double-Barreled Celebration

"I wouldn't miss it for the world." James A. Hard, 106-year-old Civil War veteran, fingered the GAR ribbon on his coat and mentally adjusted his old campaign hat as he looked forward to today's Lincoln Day dinner in Hotel Seneca.

Hard, one of the nation's few surviving Civil War veterans, hasn't been feeling exactly perky in recent months, but he's sure he's fully capable of another outing—particularly this one.

At special ceremonies in his home yesterday he took part in a double-barreled celebration.

He presented a ballot box to the Women's Relief Corps organization which bears his name. And in return, the James A. Hard Women's Relief Corps, GAR auxiliary, presented a United States flag to the Susan B. Anthony Memorial Inc.

Chairman Gets Flag

The flag was given by Mrs. Milga P. Schermerhorn, past president of the Relief Corps, Department of New York, Mrs. George Howard, chairman of the board of trustees of the Anthony memorial, accepted the flag which will be placed in the memorial, 17 Madison St.

Also participating in the ceremonies was Miss Mary C. Lehman, president of the Relief Corps, and Mrs. G. Hughes, past national senior vice-president of the Women's Relief Corps.

"It is fitting," Mrs. Howard said, "that the flag be in the Anthony Memorial. Like Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony was an emancipator. Lincoln freed the slaves—and she freed women. And at the same time, she freed men from their wrong ideas about women."

Doctor to Get Ribbon

The Army Commendation Ribbon will be conferred upon Dr. Montgomery E. Leary, 827 Main St. E. at tonight's dinner, the 26th annual affair of the Abraham Lincoln Association. Representative Kenneth R. Keating will make the presentation. A veteran of World War 1, Dr. Leary was military surgeon for Army units stationed here in World War 2.

All public and parochial schools will remain in session on the holiday but banks will be closed, as will state, county and city offices and the courts. Federal offices will remain open under the rule that only general holidays are observed by U. S. employees.

Rochester's Eightieth

Interest in Rochester today centers in the parade and ceremonies in memorial of our soldier dead. The city is distinguished among all cities of the land as the home of the oldest of the surviving veterans of the Civil War.

Health and other conditions permitting, Commander James A. Hard will be conspicuous in the parade, the 80th such pageant, if our figures are correct, since the close of the Civil War.

* * *

We do not know whether Commander Hard has participated in all the Memorial Day parades in this city, but he has as one of the thousands of young men been in the large majority of them, first who stepped briskly along in the '70s and '80s, then as one of the older men whose thinning ranks distinguished the parades of the next two decades, then as one of the aging men who were the chief objects of interest in later years.

Today Mr. Hard is one of only three surviving Civil War veterans of this state, one of the 52 reported on the rolls of the GAR throughout the nation. As recently as 1930 some 69,000 were living of the 2,213,000 who served in the Union forces.

The first Memorial Day was proclaimed in May, 1868, by Major General Logan, commander of the national GAR, as a day for decorating the graves of Union veterans. Until 1882 the day was called Decoration Day, as it still is in some places, but in 1882 the GAR formally christianized it Memorial Day and broadened it to include memorials to all war dead of all our wars.

Fashions in Memorial Day parades have changed, with the changing personnel of the marchers. Horses once were an essential feature of the parade; they ambled along in solid formations curbside as the head of the line. Then came the bluecoated Civil War veterans, then the companies of schoolboy marchers, each in its distinctive uniform, each proudly trying to outshine the others.

Today there are other, possibly more colorful features, but the old schoolboy marchers are missed.
Hard, at 106, Honor Guest
Of Lincoln Group Dinner

A 106-year-old man who shook the hand of the Great
Emancipator led the applause last night in Hotel Seneca when
two principal speakers at the 26th annual dinner of the Abra-
ham Lincoln Association cited proof that the American way of
life is the finest ever devised by the mind of man.

Guest of honor, seated at the
speakers’ table with national and
state leaders of the patriotic or-
ganizations comprising the assoca-
tion, was James A. Hard, state
commander of the Grand Army of
the Republic and Monroe County’s
last surviving Civil War veteran.

Hard, who will be 107 on July 15,
was presented a replica of a cast
of the hand of Lincoln, the original of which, made in 1860, is in Wash-
ington. The memento was sent for
Hard by Mrs. Mary B. Forbes of
Milford, Mass., a collector of Lin-
colniana, in return for an auto-
graphed picture of Rochester’s grand old man.

Hard Accounts Meeting

Hard responded briefly, recount-
ing his meeting the Civil War Pres-
ident at a White House reception
when the stripping Hard was wait-
ing for his uniform early in the
War between the States, following
his enlistment. The venerable vet-
ner drew chuckles when he re-
called Lincoln observed, “You look
like you’d make a good soldier if
you’d enlist.”

Chief speakers at the dinner were
Thomas J. Conner, principal of
Scottsville High School, and Repre-
sentative Kranish E. Keating who,
in the role of brigadier general also
performed a second function which
he described as “the most pleasant
military duty in which I have ever
been assigned.”

General Keating conferred on
Col. Montgomery E. Leary, Roch-
ester physician, the Army Com-
memoration Ribbon and citation, by
direction of the Secretary of the
Army, for meritorious service as
contract surgeon for the U. S. Army
from June, 1943, to May, 1945.

‘Outstanding Devotion’

In reading the citation and pin-
ing the ribbon on Colonel Leary,
who in World War I commanded a
base hospital at Camp Jackson,
E. C. General Keating said, “Never
was this mark of distinction more
appropriately conferred on one who
served beyond the call of duty.”

The citation stated Colonel Leary
“demonstrated outstanding devotion to
duty and loyalty” in providing medical treat-
ment and attention to personnel at military installations in
Rochester and vicinity during
World War 2.

Members of a committee of 20
prominent Rochesterians headed by
Mayor Samuel B. Dickier, who
were instrumental in obtaining the
citation for Dr. Leary, were among
the more than 200 persons at the
dinner. Mayor Dickier presented
the citations of the city.

VETERANS OF THREE WARS

Headliners at the Lincoln Day dinner were,
from left, Dr. Montgomery E. Leary, veteran
of World War I, who was awarded the Army
Commendation Ribbon; Rep. Kenneth B.
Keating, a World War 2 soldier; and James
A. Hard, 106, Civil War veteran.

Hard Nears 107; Oldest Among
Union Survivors

JAMES A. HARD of 31 Port-
mouth Ter., who will be 107
next July 15, is the oldest of 63
known survivors of the Civil
War who wore the Union Blue.

Rolls of the Veterans Admin-
istration show that the youngest
Union veteran of the War be-
tween the States is 97-year-old
James Crum of Chicago. No
records are kept by the govern-
ment of Confederate veterans,
but their number is estimated
to be slightly under that of the
men who served in the Union
Army.

Three survivors are listed for
New York State. Hard, Henry
Norton, 104, of Troy, and Rob-
ert M. Rownd, 103, of Hipsly.
Grand Marshal Designates Aides

James A. Hard, 106, state commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, is shown yesterday as he signed orders designating his aides for Rochester’s Memorial Day parade, of which he will again be grand marshal. With him are veterans of three wars. They are (from left) Henry E. Norton, Spanish-American War; Richard J. Toole, World War 1, and Col. Alfred H. Doud, World War 2, commanding officer of National Guard units, marshal’s chief of staff.

Daughters of Union Vets Honor Hard, 106, ‘In Absentia’ at Fete


The occasion was the 36th Anniversary banquet of Clara Barton Tent, Daughters of Union Veterans, held at the Normandie Hotel. Although Rochester’s “rugged old man” was unable to be present because he was resting up after serving as grand marshal of the Memorial Day parade the day before, he was the guest of honor, “in absentia.”

The Rev. William A. Hallock, a past department commander of Sons of Union Veterans, was guest speaker. Other guests included William E. Kelly, state commander of the Sons of Union Veterans; Mrs. Molly Edwards, past president of Clara Barton Tent; Miss Bertha Utley, past department president; and other state and local officers. Mrs. Leonard V. Gugel, president of the tent, was honorary chairman, and Mrs. George Hoyt was general chairman.
GAR Vet ‘Feels Fine,’ Keeps Abreast of World Events

By BILL BEENY

"How does it feel to be 107 years old?"

"Well, not much different than it does to be 106." James A. Hard, with a smile in his voice, leaned back in his rocking chair and fingered the stack of greeting cards he has received for his 107th birthday today.

"It gets so one birthday looks pretty much like another when you've had as many as I have."

"And I expect to have a good many more. There's no reason why I shouldn't. I'm in good health. I feel fine. Why shouldn't I?"

There's no answer for that one to a man who has seen five scores and seven years slide by.

The grand old man of the Grand Army expects "more cards." Last year he received about 300—"I guess I'll get that many this year before my birthday is over."

He does all right in the cigar department too. "I got enough last year to carry me through. Right now I've got eight cigars left—just enough to take me past my birthday." He smokes "three or four" a day.

Predicts Dewey Election

As for current affairs, even at 107, Hard keeps abreast of things. The election?

"It looks like Dewey. I don't see how it can go any other way."

The foreign situation?

"These Russians are bad medicine. I predicted right after World War I that we'd have to fight them within five years. I still think that's right. They want to rule the world—and we can't let them."

I don't see how a war with the Russians can be avoided.

The weather?

"It's been hot, yes, but it hasn't bothered me any. Guess some of the young folks worry more about the weather than I do. Worry never did anyone any good—about anything."

Hard, who likes to "dunk" three or four Graham crackers at every meal, isn't concerned about a birthday cake today—"I'll settle for a piece of breast."

His birthday meal will consist of roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, asparagus salad, peas, tea, cottage pudding.

WELL, NOW—WASN'T THAT NICE?

No one in Rochester can count up years of life as James A. Hard can today. One of two surviving veterans of '63 in the state, he is reading greeting cards for 107th birthday.

There was one touch of nostalgia yesterday, when the photographer prepared to take his picture, the former state commander of the Grand Army of the Republic and Monroe County's last surviving Civil War veteran said:

"Let's take this one without my campaign hat. Seems like I haven't had a picture taken in years without that hat."

The hat was put aside—just as was the State GAR only a month ago when Hard formally disbanded.

Sons of Veterans Plan Fete

For Hard on 107th Birthday

James A. Hard, Monroe County's sole surviving Civil War veteran, will be honored at a reception sponsored by Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, on his 107th birthday, July 15.

The reception, which is public, will be in Hotel Seneca. Custom of the annual reception was established on Hard's 100th birthday. Robert M. Rownd of Ripley, only other surviving Civil War veteran in the state, has been invited. Rownd is 104.

A short program honoring Hard will precede the reception. William E. Kelly, county commander, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, will preside.
Cigar Stock Interests Hard
More than 107th Birthday

Time's great-grandfather clock ticked off birthday number 107 for James A. Hard today, but reaching such an astonishing age didn't especially interest him.

"I feel pretty good," he said, "and after you get to a hundred, birthdays aren't much different."

What Rochester's sole surviving Civil War veteran was interested in, however, was his dwindling cigar supply. He was hoping his birthday gifts would include his favorite, large-sized aromatic cigars.

With surprising agility Hard bent over and pulled open a drawer of the bureau which stood beside his favorite chair in his home at 31 Portsmouth Terrace. He drew out a cigar box and flipped back its lid.

"I'm down to four left," he said. "They'll do me today, but if I don't get more, I'll have to switch to my pipe for a while."

Smoking means a good deal to the last of the city's boys in blue. "When I smoke," he said, "my memories are running back to years ago. I think of the parties I went to and the girls I used to go and see. Just smoking and thinking of the pleasures it had—that's what I like most now."

The white-haired veteran told how he had had his first smoke 101 years ago. He related how his father, in response to repeated requests, filled a pipe for him and told him to "take some long puffs."

The young Hard did—and got to stick his mother stayed up all night nursing him.

"That was the only time I ever saw my mother really mad at my father," Hard said.

But afterwards he learned to cope with tobacco—and it helps to fill out his quiet days with their long memories.

He need have no fears for his cigar supply—he'll receive a good supply this evening at the birthday dinner to be given in his honor at the Seneca by Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans. At the dinner he'll be making use of another present, a new hearing device given him by Michael E. Cerame.

Comrade James A. Hard serenely puffs on his pipe as he notes his low supply of cigars on his 107th birthday.

Grandpa's Children's Hour

Rochester's sole surviving Civil War veteran was interested in a gift or two, too. Besides his cigar box, he was expecting a large picture of his grandson, Jimmie, and a box of Dunhills, his favorite brand.

Jimmie, 10 months old, delivered the box of Dunhills yesterday. When asked if he felt the age of 107, Grandpa said "I feel fine except for my age."

But he had no complaint about the large picture of his grandson which was mailed him. "I've had pictures of him for years," Grandpa said, "and never cared much for them."

A Hint of Late-Night Cigars

There was a hint of late-night cigars in the story of the birthday party for Hard. He mentioned that he had been up until 1 a.m., smoking and talking to the guests who gathered at home for his birthday celebration.

"I've always been an early riser," he said, "but I've been up late today."

The birthday cake, which was made by his wife, was decorated with white icing and a silver medallion with the inscription "107." The candles were blue and red, arranged in pairs.
James A. Hard hopes to relive one of the earliest experiences of his boyhood Friday by attending the Mills Brothers Circus. Monroe County's long surviving Civil War veteran readily consented today to be the guest of the Lt. W. Kirk Otis Post of Veterans of Foreign Wars at the circus performance Friday. The invitation was extended by A. E. Bricker and the Rev. William A. Hofflich as representatives of the VFW sponsors of the Rochester appearance of the circus.

"It must be close on to 100 years ago since I first saw a circus," the 107-year-old veteran told his visitors. "I've seen many of them since, and I think it would be pleasant to see at least one more."

The VFW will devote its share of the proceeds of the performance to a fund for a new post clubhouse.

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**WHAT A GRANDFATHER!**

Great-Great-Grandfather James A. Hard, the 107-year-old head of the defunct State GAR, entertained on his birthday yesterday. The descendants present included Peter Ecksten, 2; Royce Racinowski, 8 months; Kathleen Fittenger, all swed by the size of the cake.

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**Grand Old Veteran Honored**

*By MARVIN NEEDLEMAN*

"It looks like a campfire!"

James A. Hard chuckled dryly as he regarded the flaming array of 107 candles that surrounded his birthday cake last night at a public reception at the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans.

Leaning forward from his seat on the speaker's rostrum, Rochester's lone surviving Civil War veteran and one of the last two in the state, blew gently at the flickering candles with the breastless assistance of three of his great-grandchildren.

"Just as smoky, too," he muttered as the 107 candles sputtered out in a blush haze.

The birthday cake, frosted in red, white and blue with Hard's name spelled out and the numeral "107" beneath, was presented toward the end of an hour-long reception in which the white-haired veteran greeted individually and received the congratulations of several hundred persons in the ballroom.

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**Hard Reminded of Campfire By His 107 Birthday Candles**

*By MARVIN NEEDLEMAN*

"I have been thinking," said Hard, as he looked around the room filled with his wellwishers, "that I have arrived at the age when I ought to retire. Most men retire at the age of 89—and I am long past that time. But since I have made so many good friends, I think I will continue to hang on a little mite longer."

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**Great-Great Grandchildren**

Included among those with whom he chatted were his daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson of Rochester, three grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, three great-great-grandchildren and one nephew.

"Oldest" visitor to greet him was the Rev. William A. Haughton, 81, retired Presbyterian minister.

The youngest birthday wellwisher was arm- and Royce Racinowski, 8 months, of Victor, a great-great-grandchild.

Is it true that the first hundred years are the hardest? Between handshakes, Hard answered that time-honored puzzler, saying: "I can't say. Come around when I've passed the second hundred and I'll let you know."

**Praised by Mayor**

As he listened to William E. Kelly, county commander, Monroe County Council, and Mayor DiNoia praised him and eulogized the memory of his departed comrades, Hard's face took on a withdrawn look and he bowed his head over gnarled hands that grasped the walking cane resting between his feet.

He cupped an ear to listen to the singing of his favorite song, "Tenling on the Old Camp Ground." Afterward, with evident relief, he submitted to the birthday kisses of women who trooped forward to greet him with gifts of various veterans' organizations. The groups represented were: Women's Relief Corps, Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic, Daughters of Union...
Hard Becomes Oldest Living GAR Veteran

James A. Hard of Rochester, 107-year-old Civil War veteran, is the oldest living member of the Union forces.

Misa Cora Gillis of Albany, national secretary of the Grand Army of the Republic, last night said that the recent death of a Midwestern veteran, a few months older than Hard, makes the Rochester veteran one of the oldest surviving Boy in Blue.

James A. HARD
Commander Hard, 21 Portsmouth Ter., was 107 on July 15, a month after he disclosed to the State Department of the GAR as one of its two surviving members.

Mayor Praises Hard, 107, For Devoted GAR Leadership

PRAISE for the "devoted leadership in the Grand Army of the Republic and for his conscientious citizenship" came yesterday to James A. Hard, 107, from Mayor Dicker.

The oldest GAR veteran and the last commander of the Department of New York, GAR, will be flown to the national encampment of the GAR at Grand Rapids, Mich., next Sunday. The trip will be made in the Gannett Newspapers plane as guest of The Times-Union.

In a letter addressed to Hard, Mayor Dicker stated: "We are proud that Commander Hard, the oldest Civil War veteran in the United States, is in good health and that he was prompt to accept an invitation from the Rochester Times-Union to provide swift transportation."

CEREMONIES: at Rochester Airport: will be at 10 a.m., with Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, at the microphone. The program will be recorded for rebroadcasting by WHEC.

Phone Call from Hard, 107, Brightens Up Blue Monday

By WILLIAM J. SIGLER

It wasn't exactly a "Blue Monday" but there were plenty of monotonous loose ends to be gathered.

Bright and unusual spot of the day to us was the thrill of answering the telephone and hearing the voice of 107-year-old James A. Hard.

The oldest GAR veteran called the writer yesterday.

"Good morning," was his greeting in a firm voice. "Do we travel on standard time or daylight saving time?"

And we answered, "Travel will be on eastern; standard time."

All of which means that, come Sunday, Hard, the last commander of the Department of New York, will depart from Rochester Airport at 10:00 a.m. for Grand Rapids, Mich., to attend the National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. He will be guest of the Rochester Times-Union and traveling in the Gannett Newspapers airplane.

A parade will form at Plymouth and Brooks Avenue and start for the airport at 9:45 a.m.

Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, will master of ceremonies at a program at the airport at 10.

Mayor Dicker, members of the Council and Sheriff Albert W. Skinner will extend greetings.

Representatives of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Rochester Chapter, Disabled American Veterans, will participate.

Michigan Hails Hard

Governor Writes to Veteran

KIM SIGLER, governor of Michigan, in a letter to 107-year-old Hard, expressed his gratitude to the Rochester veteran.

Hard, will be flown in a Gannett Newspapers plane to Grand Rapids, Sunday, to attend sessions of the National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic. He will be guest of The Times-Union on the trip.

"On behalf of the citizens of Michigan," Gov. Sigler wrote, "it is a pleasure to welcome you to our state on the occasion of the National Encampment of the GAR."

"It is a distinct honor to have you and your party visit us. The Governor offers all of us an opportunity to rekindle our love for the principles of liberty, equality, justice and, of course, unity.

"I am pleased that The Rochester Times-Union has made a committee for you and hope you enjoy your stay in Michigan enjoyable."

With the assurance of Mayor Dicker, a program has been arranged at the Rochester Airport beginning at 10 a.m. At Big Times-Union newscaster, will master of ceremonies.

Hard will be escorted to the airport by the National Guard and Naval Militia in a parade, starting from Plymouth Ave. and Brooks at 9:45 a.m.

Falls Man Gets Term

Harace T. McGinley, 55, of Niagara Falls, was sentenced to six months in Monroe County Penitentiary today in City Court when he pleaded guilty of pelty larceny. He admitted receiving $15 from Nettie B. Glaves, 84, of the 1213 Gladys St., Sept. 12, in payment for auto repair work which he never did. A second charge of petit larceny was dismissed.
Truman Wire Hails Hard
On Eve of Trip to GAR

President Truman yesterday congratulated James A. Hard, Monroe County’s only surviving Civil War veteran, for “the youthful vigor” which enables him to attend the National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic.

One-hundred-seven-year-old Comrade Hard will leave tomorrow morning aboard the Gannett News paper train to attend the meeting in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

In a telegram to Hard, President Truman said:

“Dear Mr. Hard: Please accept my warm congratulations on the youthful vigor which enables you at 107 years of age to attend the National Encampment of the GAR at Grand Rapids. I wish you much pleasure on the trip and a safe return. Harry S. Truman.”

Hard will be the guest of The Times-Union. He will be escorted by a parade forming at Plymouth Ave. S. and Brooks Ave. Hard’s morning report, included in the parade, will be members of the National Guard and Naval Reserve.

Before boarding the plane a ceremony will be held with Army Times-Union newscaster, as master of ceremonies. Taking part will be representatives of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Rochester Chamber, Disabled American Veterans.

J.A. Hard, 107-Year-Old Civil War Veteran,
In Hospital, Condition Fair

Condition of James A. Hard, 107-year-old Civil War veteran, last night in General Hospital was listed “fair.”

Hospital physicians said a cold he had for several days developed into pneumonia.

The oldest member of the Grand Army of the Republic in the United States was taken by ambulance from his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., at 2 p.m. yesterday. His physician said he had recommended hospitalization of Mr. Hard so that the patient could receive oxygen and penicillin treatment.

For his advanced years, Mr. Hard has been in good condition up to Monday.

James Hard
Stricken by Pneumonia

James A. Hard, 107-year-old Civil War veteran, was taken to General Hospital in serious condition at 2 p.m. today when a cold he had has for several days developed into pneumonia.

The last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic was taken to the hospital by ambulance from his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Mr. Hard has had untiring nursing care for several years, but his cold did not require attendance of a physician until pneumonia developed today. The attending physician recommended hospitalization so the patient could receive oxygen and penicillin treatment.

The physician said that he “was not too hopeful.”

Mr. Hard had been in his normally good condition for his advanced years up to Monday. Even when his cold became apparent, there was no indication his condition would become serious.

Hard Says Rebel Reunion
Would Be Happy Ending

The nation’s oldest veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic hopes for a reunion with the men he fought in the Civil War.

That hope was expressed today by James A. Hard of Rochester, 107, last commander of the New York State GAR.

The reunion of the few remaining veterans of the Blue and the Grey Armies was proposed by the Sons of Union Veterans last week at the 82nd encampment of the GAR at Grand Rapids, Mich. The suggestion was submitted to the Confederate veterans Tuesday at their encampment now in session at Montgomery, Ala. They tabled the suggestion.

“When the war was on we did our best to beat the rebels,” Hard said, “but that’s long past; we should be friends now.”

The proposed reunion recalled to Mr. Hard his meeting with Confederate veterans at the 75th anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg on the famous battlefield 10 years ago.

“I remember talking to one of the Rebels at the Gettysburg reunion,” said Hard, “He was a great big fellow. We recalled the war days and had a good time joking about the things we used to do. We even had our picture taken together.”

“That will be our last chance to do that next year, which will mark the final encampment of the GAR.

“That will be our last chance to get together with the Reb,” Hard mused, “It would be a happy ending.”

The reunion was favored at the Confederate encampment, but the ages of the veterans caused considerable doubt as to whether the meeting would be possible.

Hard Named
GOP’s Oldest

The nation’s oldest Republican voter.

This is the newest title to be won by 107-year-old James A. Hard, Monroe County’s sole surviving Civil War veteran, last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic, and oldest surviving GAR member in the country.

News of the new honor came to Rochester’s Grand Old Man yesterday in General Hospital where he was reported slightly improved from a pneumonia attack. It was relayed by Cecil E. Dickson, chief of The Gannett News Service in Washington, in his report that Hard had won a nationwide contest.
'Amazing' James A. Hard Sits Up
In Hospital and Smokes a Cigar

By JERRY GILLOON

THE amazing Mr. Hard, they call him at General Hospital.

Doctors and nurses stared incredulously at the 107-year-old Civil War veteran today as he sat in a chair in his hospital room, casually smoking a big cigar, less than 48 hours after they said they were "not too hopeful" of his recovery from pneumonia.

"His recuperative powers are nothing short of amazing," commented the house physician as James A. Hard, the nation's oldest veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic, jested with nurses while posing for the photographer. "His..."
All spruced up to go home from General Hospital, 107-year-old James A. Hard had a shave yesterday. Only 12 days after an attack of pneumonia, he was recovered and in best of spirits.

Feels Almost as Young As Usual After Hospital Siege

James A. Hard was out of the hospital and back in his own bed at 31 Portsmouth Ter. last night, feeling almost as young as usual for his 107 years.

"Nothing like your own bed," he remarked as he settled down with his late afternoon smoke after the trip from General Hospital.

When he ate his supper, a hearty one, he added: "Everything tastes better at home."

The last commander of the now defunct New York State Grand Army of the Republic is still a little weak from his pneumonia attack, according to his nurse, Mrs. Earl L. Dieter, but "he is coming out of it very well." He's in good spirits, she added.

Before the commander left the hospital yesterday he bade goodbye to all the nurses, whom he had openly admired for their good looks, as well as for the good care he had received. When he entered the hospital 13 days ago his physician had doubts that at his age he could survive the illness. A couple of days later the amazing patient was sitting up and smoking a cigar.

Homeward bound after his remarkable recovery from pneumonia, James A. Hard, Rochester's 107-year-old Civil War veteran, today bade a cheerful goodbye to Mrs. Pearl Burrow (above), one of his nurses at General Hospital.

Commander Hard is the nation's oldest comrade of the Grand Army of the Republic.

George Edmund (above), ambulance driver, took Hard home to 31 Portsmouth Ter.

The hospital medical staff repeated its expressions of amazement at the history-making complete recovery of the veteran. When he entered the hospital 12 days ago, his doctor stated that he "was not too hopeful" for Hard's recovery, because of the veteran's age.

Hard took home with him some 120 cards and letters from well wishers in five Eastern states.
New York State's last surviving Grand Army veteran, James v. Hard, today will celebrate his 108th birthday and last night he was getting the attention of a hero from his great-grandchildren. From left, helping Hard with his favorite sport, "lighting up," are Peter, Julie Ann and Larry Eksten. There will be party at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter.
JAMES A. HARD

James A. Hard, 107-year-old Civil War veteran, hospitalized with pneumonia yesterday for the third time within five months, was reported in "dangerous condition" last night.

General Hospital officials said Hard, was placed on the danger list because of his advanced age, although his general condition was fair. He was admitted to the hospital early yesterday morning.

Monroe County's last surviving member of the Grand Army of the Republic and the oldest in the nation was taken to the hospital last Fall. He recovered in time to vote in the national election. Last Dec. 30 he again was hospitalized, but remained for only a few days before returning to his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

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James A. Hard Stricken Again with Pneumonia

James A. Hard, 107-year-old veteran of the Civil War, marshaled his waning reserves of strength today for another battle with illness.

Monroe County's last surviving GAR member was admitted to General Hospital at 1:10 a.m. today for the third time within five months.

The diagnosis, as before, was pneumonia.

Because of his advanced age, Hard was immediately placed on the hospital danger list, although his general condition was listed as fair.

Hard was hospitalized with pneumonia last Fall but recovered in time to vote in the national elections. Last Dec. 30 he was again hospitalized with a recurrence of the disease but remained for only several days before returning to his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter.
Day Evening, June 30, 1949

Hard Determined to Fly To Last GAR Session

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, Commander James A. Hard of Rochester, today declared his determination to fly to the final National Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic in August at the age of 108.

He will fly to the 83rd National Encampment at Indianapolis on Aug. 28 aboard The Gazette Newspapers plane as guest of The Times-Union.

"I've attended many a National Encampment and I'll be there to answer the last roll call," Commander Hard told his friend and encampment companion of a year ago, William F. Butler of "The Times-Union" promotion department.

"I'm going to keep you to your promise to fly me out to Indianapolis," Hard told the newspaperman with a smile. He referred to the invitation offer at the conclusion of the 1948 encampment in Grand Rapids, Mich.

The last commander of the New York State Department of the GAR, Comrade Hard flew to the Grand Rapids encampment aboard The Gazette Newspapers 15-place twin-motor Lockheed. On his return flight, he said he hoped to make the trip to the 1949 encampment the same way.

Commander Hard was one of six veterans who decided last year that the 1949 National Encampment would write the final chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic. Two of the veterans who made that decision have died since.

The Veterans Administration now lists only 24 surviving veterans of the Civil War on its pension roster. Hard holds the record as the oldest Civil War veteran in the nation. He will observe his 106th birthday July 15.

Comrade Hard was advanced to the top of the VA seniority list by the death of George Carroll of Clifton, who was 111 years old.

Commander Hard said he has "pretty well recovered" from his attack of pneumonia of several months ago. He said the Indianapolis Encampment is the one thing he is looking forward to.

James A. Hard Plans another plane trip.

Hard Planed in Union Jul 6, 1949

Open House

Because of impaired health, Comrade James A. Hard, oldest surviving Civil War veteran, will limit celebration of his 106th birthday July 15 to an open house in his home at 81 Portsmouth Ter.

The celebration, sponsored by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans, will be held from 4 to 6 p.m.

Bertrand Goodbread, county commander of the STV, said the party at Hard's home replaces more elaborate celebrations of former years at the advice of the veteran's physician. Hard has been kept close to his bed in the last year because of two attacks of pneumonia.

Goodbread said the usual birthday remembrances to Comrade Hard of cigars, tobacco and pipes will be accepted, as well as flowers. There have been the usual tokens from auxiliaries of the veteran groups.

Hard Interviewed On Radio Show

James A. Hard, at 106 the nation's oldest surviving GAR veteran, yesterday took to the airways via the American Broadcasting Company's "Get Together" program. It was heard in this area over Station WARC.

Hard, who had been interviewed by telephone earlier in the week, said in the special recording that he fully plans to attend the GAR's final encampment next month at Indianapolis. Hard said he will introduce a resolution for both the Union and Confederate veterans of the Civil War to hold a united encampment. He was interviewed in the broadcast by D.B.E. Jul 1 1949

Grand Marshall - Comrade James A. Hard was grand marshal in fact as well as in name of Rochester's Memorial Day parade.

Despite his 107 years, the last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic, signed every order delegating authority for the organization of the parade. He likewise conferred on the various details of the demonstration with his principal aide, T.L. Jan. 4 1947.

The morning of the parade Commander Hard grandly donned his GAR uniform and led the marchers contentedly lolling in an auto.

He repeatedly waved in response to cheers of spectators. He took his place of honor in the reviewing stand long enough to inspect the initial military units, and declared he was "mighty proud of them!"

Back at his home in Portsmouth Ter, Commander Hard sat in his big easy chair in solitary remembrance. For half an hour his strong but low voice was heard in song of long ago.

He smoked another cigar and talked of his plans to attend the final grand encampment of the GAR in Indianapolis next August, before taking his afternoon nap.

Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County · Historic Scrapbooks Collection
New York State's last surviving Grand Army veteran, James A. Hard, today will celebrate his 108th birthday and last night he was getting the attention of a hero from his great-grandchildren. From left, helping Hard with his favorite sport, "lighting up," are Peter, Julia Ann and Larry Eisten. There will be party at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

**Cigar Stock Only Worry**

The bands of Time's great grandfather clock today swept round to James A. Hard's 108th birthday, but the nation's oldest GAR member last night was unexcited about his accumulated years.

Interviewed in his memmory-stocked room at 31 Portsmouth Ter, three of his great-great grandchildren and his granddaughter clustered about his chair, Rochester's sole surviving Boy in Blue allowed that 108 isn't such an astonishing age.

"I feel pretty good," he said, and after you get to be my age, birthdays aren't much different. I've had so many of them, it's getting to be a habit."

Carefully unwrapping another cigar, Hard leaned contentedly back in his armchair and did some deflecting. How does it feel to be 108? "I'll have to live some yet to find that out," he smiled, "but I don't feel much different now than I ever did."

*Jim Hard's 108 Today:*
'On Top of World', Says Hard, 108 Years Young Today

By JERRY GILLOON

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, is "right on top of the world" today as he celebrates his 108th birthday.

That's exactly what a Times-Union reporter in Arm, clears this morning:

"It doesn't seem to make any great difference to me whether I'm 108 or 18," he added after thanking the caller for his birthday greetings.

He admitted he was a bit excited about the birthday party that the Sons of Union Veterans were to give him from 4 to 6 o'clock this afternoon at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

When a nurse entered his room with his breakfast tray about 7 o'clock this morning, the last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic was singing "She Went to the Funeral Just for the Ride."

In jovial mood he greeted the nurse. "Well, Mommy, I'm in fine form this morning."

Laying down his pre-breakfast pipeful of tobacco he made a wry face as the nurse handed him a vitamin pill and jokingly complained, "Do I have to swallow this big cow-pil?"

Commander Hard whirled away the morning hours listening to a companion read some of the 200 greeting cards from friends and well wishers in 28 states, and putting away at an occasional cigar.

Nearby were unopened gift packages of cigars and a large bouquet of red roses, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gannett.

Hears Record of Interview

He also listened to a radio interview to be broadcast on an ABC national hookup tomorrow morning. In the interview, to be heard over Rochester's WJOE, as part of the 10-11 a.m. "Get Together" program, Commander Hard repeated his determination to attend the final national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic at Indianapolis, Ind., Aug. 28. He told that he will fly to the session in The Gannett Newspapers twin-motored airplane as guest of The Times-Union.

Commander Hard intends to introduce a resolution at the Indianapolis encampment repeating his proposal that Union and Confederate veterans of the Civil War have a united encampment next year.

Commander Hard's parting shot in his conversation with the reporter was "I'm feeling as well that I think maybe I'm getting younger."

James Hard, 108 Tomorrow, Plans to Smoke as Usual

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, will begin his 109th year tomorrow with little change in his cigar-smoking routine.

Patriotic groups and other friends will present him a birthday cake.

That is his projected airplane flight to the last national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic at Indianapolis. He is to fly to the encampment in The Gannett Newspapers big twin-engined plane as guest of The Times-Union, duplicating his flight aboard the same plane last year to the national encampment at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Jim Hard admits that he gets tired "a little more" than he used to, but his schedule for tomorrow calls for getting up and dressing himself about 6:30 a.m.; breakfast of cereal, toast, coffee, and graham crackers, and then an after-breakfast pipeful of tobacco while he listens to the news broadcast. Then comes reading of the 200 or more birthday cards from all over the country while he puts on his pipe.

The cooling of a glass of milk, an unopened bottle of apple cider, and some beef or ham followed by a piece of toast and black bread is his usual breakfast.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran now lives at home with his daughter, Mrs. Forouzan Powers, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Late this afternoon he will give a small luncheon party at his home to his friends and associates.

James Hard's birthday luncheon tray is proof that at 108 he has no lack of appetite. It holds ground beef, potatoes, lima beans, bread, butter, salad, peaches, milk and tea.
BIRTHDAYS FOR BOTH—104 YEARS APART

James A. Hard, who celebrated his 108th birthday yesterday, meets Donald McNamara, who was 4 yesterday. Donnie is son of Paul McNamara, County American Legion commander.

Nurse Nina Foote looks on. Hard and younger are sharing piece of birthday cake on hand a 'party' in Hard's honor.

The band struck up "Dixie" in the midst of James A. Hard's 108th birthday party yesterday afternoon. The nation's oldest attending ear in its direction.

Hallelujah

Comrade Hard at 108

Cocks an Ear to 'Dixie'

The band struck up "Dixie" in the midst of James A. Hard's 108th birthday party yesterday afternoon. The nation's oldest attending ear in its direction.

He turned in his chair to his regular nurse, Mrs. George Foote, standing beside him, and jokingly quipped: "I know they'd play that reekin' tune with you around here," Nurse Foote, who calls Baltimore, Md., her home town, has long been dubbed "Rebel" by the venerable Comrade Hard.

Such was the humorous mood of Rochester's lone surviving Boy in Blue yesterday as he cut into his red, white and blue birthday cake and whisked out the five score and eight candles that glittered about its perimeter.

After a full century and some of living, Jim Hard, seated in the comfort of his home at 31 Portmouth Ter., surrounded by friends, relatives and well-wishing patriotic group representatives, had good cause for his fine spirits.

Dandies Youngster

When Paul E. McNamara, county commander of the American Legion, showed up with his 4-year-old son Donald in tow, Comrade Hard dandled the youngster on his knee, put his arm around the tot affectionately. It turned out to be Donald's birthday, too. The cake was brought forth and after singing a hearty piece with the boy, Jim Hard sent the youngster on his way with a cheery: "Come back again next year, sonny, and have some more cake."

Greeted by Man 102

Vicemayor Frank E. VanLare brought the greetings of the city to the veteran as well as a stock of cigars.

When the crowd surrounding Hard had somewhat dwindled, up stepped the county's second oldest man, Edward VanDuyne, 105, of 66 James St. Said VanDuyne: "General, I want to wish you many more happy birthdays... I'm 105 myself."

Said Comrade Hard, puffing hard on a large cigar clamped in an amber-colored holder: "That about puts you in my class."

"Holy Cow," apostrophized VanDuyne and retreated to hear the 54th Regiment Band playing lustily on the lawn outside the house.

Prior to the ceremony, Hard presented a plaque to 20 members of the Monroe County Council, United Spanish War Veterans. The plaque, accepted by Albert E. McLeary, past county commander of the organization, bears the gavel. State GAR encampments from 1869 until the final state encampment in Rochester last year.

Purpose of Presentation

In presenting the gavel, Hard said: "I am presenting this gavel to the United Spanish War Veterans and when they cease to exist, it will be turned over to the next oldest period war veterans. The plaque will be housed in the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences."

In all, it was a busy day for James A. Hard, 105. But at the end of it he arose from his chair and insisted on walking up the stairs to his room with only the helping hand of a nurse for assistance.

Last night, Jim Hard sat again in his upstairs room, puffing another cigar, reflecting. The crowds were gone, the excitement over. Said Jim Hard: "I'm feeling so well that I think maybe I'm getting younger."
Only 364 Days to Hard's 109th Birthday
Times Union Jul 16 1949

Commander James A. Hard today looked ahead to his next birthday—his 109th.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, surrounded by mounds of greeting cards, telegrams and gifts received at his 108th birthday party yesterday, drawled, "The way I feel this morning, I expect to be around for another party next year."

More than 200 persons attended the party at which the Sons of Union Veterans, United Spanish War Veterans, Legionnaires and other patriotic groups, friends, and city officials paid tribute to the last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic.

One solemn note marked the event. Turning over to delegates of Monroe County Spanish War Veterans the gavel which sounded the opening and closing of GAR state encampments for many years, Hard said:

"I am presenting this gavel to the United Spanish War Veterans, and when they cease to be, it will be turned over to the next oldest period of war veterans."

The gavel was mounted on a plaque which eventually will be preserved in the Museum.

Commander Hard returned to his customary lighter mood soon after, when he was presented with a huge birthday cake, framed in 108 candles, and posed for photographers with a group of Spanish War Veterans and Sons of Union Veterans.

‘No Stamp Issue for Confederates’—Hard

Now that the Yankees are going to have a special commemorative stamp, the Confederates went one, too. James A. Hard, Rochester's 108-year-old Civil War veteran, doesn't think they should have it.

Senator Stevens (D. Miss.) wrote the Post Office Department today requesting that a special postage stamp be issued commemorating reunion of Confederate veterans in Little Rock, Ark., next month. The department already has made arrangements to issue a stamp commemorating the final encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic in Indianapolis, Aug. 29.

Hard, who is being flown to the encampment by The Times-Union at his request, considered the Confederate stamp request and gave his disapproval in a firm voice. "No," he said, "I don't think the Confederates should have a special stamp. They have never shown any gratitude for what the North has done for them since the war." (Civil War).

The old veteran did not elaborate on this comment. He did, however, express the opinion that "it would be all right" if the survivors of the Confederates armies wanted to hold a joint reunion with the men who wore the Union Blue.

At his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., relatives said Comrade Hard is in excellent condition and is eagerly looking forward to his trip to Indianapolis. The encampment will run from Aug. 28 to Sept. 1. He is likely to be one of only three Grand Army men attending the Bird and final encampment. Others are Joseph Clove, 150, of Pontiac, Mich., the only surviving Negro of the group, and Theodore Penland, 100, of Portland, Ore., the national commander-in-chief.

The United Press reported a fourth veteran, Charles L. Chappel, 102, of Long Beach, Calif., was injured last Saturday when he fell out of a tree while trying to harvest his peach crop. He is in a naval hospital fighting to escape pneumonia and his condition is reported "fair." Another veteran who now seems likely to miss the encampment is Hiram B. Gale, 102, of Seattle, Wash. Gale has been ill recently.
Civic Sendoff to GAR Session Set for Hard

MILITARY veterans and civic groups will join in tribute to James A. Hard, when the nation's oldest Civil War soldier, 108, departs for the final encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic a week from tomorrow.

Last commander of the New York State Department of the GAR, Comrade Hard will make the 550-mile flight to the Indianapolis encampment aboard The Gannett Newspapers twin-turbojet plane as guest of The Times-Union.

Although the encampment is still a week off, Comrade Hard has made all but last-minute preparations for the journey. After appearing at the reunion with the few remaining veterans able to attend, he made his most cherished hope. Since returning from last year's GAR encampment at Grand Rapids, Mich., aboard the same plane, Hard has repeatedly expressed determination to take part in the final encampment.

The "bon voyage" ceremony will be held at Rochester Airport at 11 a.m., Sunday, Aug. 28.

Preceding the ceremony, a guard of honor will assemble at Main St. W. and S. Pitchug St. at 10:30 a.m. to escort the venerable veteran to the airport. The escort will consist of National Guardsmen, Voltaire 108 of the 40 & 8 with its colorful locomotive, Rochester police and sheriff's deputies.

The formation will proceed along Main St. to Plymouth Ave. E., south on Plymouth to Elmwood Ave., and from there to the Airport. Harry J. Gaynor, municipal public service director, will be parade marshal.

At 11 a.m., Times-Union newscaster, will be master of ceremonies of the farewell ceremony, which will be recorded by WHEC for subsequent broadcast.

Taking part in the program, arranged by William F. Butler of The Times-Union promotion staff and one of Hard's flight companions, will be Vice-mayor Van Lare, Chairman Gordon Howe of the Monroe County Board of Supervisors; Fred A. Glover, business manager of The Times-Union; veterans groups and their affiliates, and other civic societies.

Color guards of Monroe County American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars will present the flag.

The nation's oldest member of the Grand Army of the Republic will board a Gannett Newspapers plane at noon today and head for his last official reunion with the boys in blue.

Only five of his former comrades will be on hand—the sole representatives able to attend the third and final encampment of an organization that once numbered more than 400,000 persons.

With his brushed blue uniform packed neatly in his suitcase, 108-year-old James A. Hard yesterday was looking forward to the occasion but admitted he felt sorry to see the once-powerful organization drawing its history to a close.

While certain members of the GAR have urged continuance of the organization with annual meetings, Hard said "it was best" that this year's encampment should be the last. "The affairs of the organization should be settled while the few remaining veterans are able to dispose of any issues."

Favors Reunion with Rebs

He still declares, however, that he would be in favor of a final get-together of the GAR with Confederate veterans—a proposal that was cooly greeted at last year's convention. He pointed out that the organization will continue to exist as long as a single member survives, as prescribed in the GAR by-laws.

Before departing for Indianapolis, where the initial GAR meeting was held in November, 1866, Hard will receive "bon voyage" wishes from a detachment of National Guardsmen, Legionnaires, police and sheriff's deputies. They will escort the aged veteran from Main St. W. and S. Pitchug St. at 10:30 a.m. today to the Rochester Airport, where he will be greeted by delegations from patriotic, veteran and civic groups. He will board the plane after a final salute from color guards of the city and military groups. Ceremonies at the airport will be recorded for broadcast over WHEC at 2:30 p.m.

As the only representative of New York State to attend the GAR encampment, Hard received the best wishes of Governor Dewey in a letter which referred to him as a symbol of "the undying patriotism of the Empire State."

Airport Ceremonies

Ceremonies at the local airport today will include brief messages from Vice-mayor Frank E. Van Lare, Chairman Gordon Howe of the Board of Supervisors, and Fred A. Glover, business manager of The Times-Union. The Rev. William Hallock, state chaplain of the Sons of Union Veterans, will give the benediction.

Among the veteran groups slated to pay tribute to Hard prior to his departure are the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, National Guard, Sons of Union Veterans, Rochester Lodge of Masons, the Eagles and Moose.
Hard Ready for Last Camp

BY JERRY GILLOON

New York State's lone representative to the historic final encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, 108-year-old James A. Hard of Rochester, today clarified his views on the proposed disbanding of the GAR.

"This year's encampment should be the last and the affairs of the organization should be settled while the few remaining veterans are able to dispose of any issues," the last commander of the New York State Department of the GAR declared at his home in Portsmouth Twp. on the eve of his flight to the 81st encampment in Indianapolis.

GAR STILL LIVES

He maintained, however, that the GAR as an organization cannot cease to exist while a single member survives. That is prescribed in the by-laws of the organization, he pointed out.

Hard will be the guest of The Times-Union on the 550-mile flight from Rochester Airport to Indianapolis aboard a Gannett Newspapers plane tomorrow.

Hard was described today as a symbol of the "undying patriotism of the Empire State." The term was applied in a letter from Gov. Dewey expressing his good wishes and those of the people of the state to the venerable veteran.

ONLY SIX TO ATTEND

Dewey likewise expressed his "congratulations to The Gannett Newspapers for their fine spirit in transporting you to and from the Indianapolis encampment."

He will be one of six veterans enroute for the final encampment which begins tomorrow and ends Wednesday night with a parade in which each veteran will ride separately. Although there will be only a half-dozen GAR members, some 2,500 representatives of affiliated organizations will hold their conventions at the same headquarters.

The veterans will be present at the opening of the sale of the commemorative stamp honoring the GAR at its final encampment in the city where the first encampment was held 82 years ago.

DEPARTURE CEREMONY

Historically, the most significant event of the encampment will be a single brief business session in which the GAR will bid adieu officially on Wednesday.

A detachment of National Guardsmen, Legionaries, police and sheriff's deputies will escort Hard from Main St. W. and Pitts St. N. to Rochester Airport at 10:30 tomorrow.

At the field he will be greeted by delegations from patriotic, veterans and civic groups amid the playing of Civil War tunes.

The groups assembled so honoring him are the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, National Guard, Sons of Union Veterans, Rochester Lodge of Masons, the Eagles, and Moose.

Color guards of the city and military groups also will take part in the departure ceremony, of which At Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, will be master of ceremonies. Hard is the oldest Mason in the country as well as the oldest veteran.

Brief messages will be given by Verrymen Frank E. Van Lare, Chairman Gordon Howe of the Board of Supervisors, and Fred A. Glover, business manager of The Times-Union.

 Benediction will be given by Rev. William A. Hallock, state chaplain of the Sons of Union Veterans, immediately before the departure of the plane about noon.

The ceremony will be recorded and broadcast over WHEC at 2:30 p.m. Sunday.
Hard, 108, Says He's Ready
For Hop to Last GAR Camp

Happily anticipating the renewal of friendships with a few Civil War comrades, James A. Hard today declared he's "all set" for his flight to the last encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The nation's oldest veteran soldier at the age of 108, Hard will be feted by military and civic groups just before he takes off from Rochester airport at noon Sunday for the 82d and final GAR reunion at Indianapolis. He will make the flight aboard The Gannett Newspapers twin-motorized plane and pilot of The Times-Union.

Presaging a long list of encampment activities, the Rochester veteran, last commander of the New York State Department of the GAR, has received scores of letters and cards from well-wishers in many states expressing the hope that he will enjoy the final hearing of Civil War veterans.

Commander Hard will escort the airport Sunday morning by National Guard units, officers of the 40 & 8, other veteran groups and Rochester police and deputy sheriffs. The escort will meet Hard and his companions at Main St. W. and S. Pittsburgh St. at 10:30 a.m.

Arriving at the airport, the party will be greeted by delegations of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, the National Guard, Sons of Union Veterans, Ladies of the GAR and allied groups, the Eagles, Moose and Rochester Landmark Masons.

A program of Civil War music will initiate the "bronze" ceremony at which Al Rigis, Times-Union newscaster, will be master of ceremonies. The program will be recorded for broadcast over WHEC at 2:00 p.m.

Commander Hard will board the plane shortly before noon and will arrive in Indianapolis at 2:40 p.m.

Comrade Hard is attending here as a guest of The Times-Union.

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Indianapolis—(AP)—Six Union Army veterans were in town yesterday, looking game enough to change their minds about this being their last encampment.

Like most convention delegations, some of the aged veterans didn't even bother to go to the memorial service that opened the Grand Army of the Republic encampment.

Charles L. Chappel, the 102-year-old sentinel vicecommander from Long Beach, Calif., ate a hearty meal instead.

"This is supposed to be the last encampment," he told hotel lobby well-wishers, referring to the decision made at the encampment in Grand Rapids, Mich., last year.

"Some of them said they aren't going again, but they are," he said with a twinkle of the eye.

'Last' for Commander

Commander-in-Chief Theodore A. Penland, 100, of Vancouver, Wash., said when he arrived Saturday that this is definitely the last meeting. That would give him the commander's post for the rest of his life.

Mrs. Lillian M. Gardner, of Los Angeles, secretary of the California-Nevada GAR Department, told Chappel that Los Angeles once a month for a "post meeting," although no other veteran ever gets there.

Gray-bearded Robert Barrett, 102,

A CITY'S TRIBUTE TO AN OLD SOLDIER . . .

James Hard, 108-year-old Civil War veteran, receives one of his many well-wishers, Charles A. Heinsler of the Sons of Union Veterans, prior to departure yesterday for final GAR encampment in Indianapolis. His granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Ecksten, right, holds a gift presented to the aged commander while Nurse Shirley Basom looks on. Other pictures and story on Page 10.
Mission Accomplished, Hard Heads Home
after Final GAR Encampment

By JERRY GILLOON
Times-Union Staff Writer

Indiansapolis — The Grand Army of the Republic, reduced to a thin blue line of six aged men, marched off into the mist of history here today.

Present in the ranks, a gallant figure despite the shortcomings of age, was James A. Hard, Rochester's 108-year-old ex-infantryman who had fulfilled a last ambition by attending the 83rd and final encampment of the GAR.

Tenderly he had sat in his wheelchair as flags were sounded at the last campfire of the Grand Army last night. He said nothing. If his thoughts were on the Virginia campsites of the Army of the Potomac with which he fought nearly 90 years ago, he kept them to himself.

Nor did he say anything as he was wheeled off to his hotel room after the bugle echoed and died amid the last sentence of the history of the GAR as an active organization was written.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Today, mission accomplished, Hard headed homeward to Rochester.

He was unusually quiet, although unusually alert, as he was driven by the Red Cross Motor Corps to the Indianapolis airport to board the Gannett Newspapers plane for the return journey. His and his fellow guests of the Rochester Times-Unions were to arrive home this afternoon.

A hundred thousand persons cheered as the six Grand Army men, each in a separate car, moved through the streets of downtown Indianapolis in the final parade of the Union soldiers. Parading with them were members of organizations affiliated with the GAR, as well as veterans of later wars, and Indiana National Guardsmen.

Hard's sole companion in the parade was his nurse, Mrs. Shirley Bason of Henrietta, who has scarcely left his side since he left Rochester Sunday.

RESPONS TO CHEERS

Hard responded to the cheers

and applause of the spectators along the line of march with long, slow salutes of his Grand Army campaign hat.

As he was the oldest veteran here, his car was given a place of honor following that of the National Commander, 161-year-old Theodore Penland of Vancouver, Wash.; Joseph Cloves, 165, the lone Negro veteran, of Pontiac, Mich.; Robert Barrett, 162, of Princeton, Ky., and Albert Wallouen, 162, of Dubuque, Ia., were in cars following Hard's.

The hour-long parade was led by the United States Marine Corps Band.

Soon after the parade, Hard and his fellow veterans reassembled for the traditional campfire ceremony, which marked the final meeting of the Grand Army.

GREET CONFEDERATES

The encampment was formally ended yesterday morning at the official meeting of the veterans. All present officers were continued in their positions by unanimous vote. Hard proposed that the GAR and the Confederate Veterans have a joint reunion in Washington next year. A majority of the veterans doubted they would be able to attend, so all agreed to the Rochesterian's motion that a message be sent to the Confederates' encampment at Little Rock, Ark., next month, extending best wishes to their former battlefield foes.

To carry out his proposal of a year ago that the GAR complete its business while its members are competent to do so, Hard also made a resolution for final disposition of the Grand Army's possessions. Again his comrades agreed. The GAR flags and medals were assigned to the Smithsonian Institution and its record to the Library of Congress. The Grand Army will continue on paper, however, until the last veteran dies. In addition to the GAR men present at the final encampment, there are 10 others still alive.

"Maybe we'll all be forgotten now," Hard observed today, just before boarding the plane. "And maybe that's the way it should be. We've finished our task."
James Hard’s Condition

Good Hospital Reports

Running true to his amazing form, 108-year-old James A. Hard was reported in very good condition today in General Hospital.

Photo below shows him with his nurse, Miss Beth Green.

The nation’s oldest Civil War veteran, Hard entered the hospital yesterday afternoon for treatment for a moderately severe cold contracted last Thursday. He had been coughing frequently and was somewhat exhausted.

Despite his cold, Hard was singing “Sweet Adeline” when a nurse brought him his breakfast this morning.

The veteran probably will remain in the hospital until the end of the week as a precautionary measure, his doctor said. This is his fourth visit to the hospital in about a year and a half. He was there for a week up to Apr. 2 of last year when his rapid recovery from pneumonia was described by physicians as amazing.

Hard Returns Home From Hospital Stay

Commander James A. Hard, 108, oldest living Union veteran of the civil war in the United States, was back home again yesterday at 31 Portsmouth Ter., after a week in General Hospital.

Hard, who is also the state’s sole living member of the GAR, was taken to the hospital for treatment of a cold.

James Hard to Get Guard Certificate

The State Legion of Guardsmen’s certificate of recognition will be awarded to James A. Hard, 108, the nation’s oldest Civil War veteran, at a ceremony at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., at 10 a. m. Saturday.

The certificate states that presentation to the last commander of the New York State Grand Army of the Republic in recognition of meritorious service to his country in time of peace and war. The presentation will be made by Richard W. Nersinger, Sr., a past commander of the Thomas J. Griffin Post of the Legion of Guardsmen, of which Hard was an honorary member a few years ago.

Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, and John E. Gascoyne, junior vicecommander of the Legion, also will take part in the ceremony.

Hard Honored

By Guardsmen

Presentation of a “certificate of recognition” was made yesterday to James A. Hard, oldest living Civil War veteran, by the State Legion of Guardsmen.

Richard W. Nersinger, a past commander of the Thomas J. Griffin Post of the Guardmen, gave Hard the certificate. Hard told Nersinger he was pleased that the Guardmen are interested in him. The ceremony took place at Hard’s home at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Nersinger said the certificate mentioned Hard’s service to his country. Hard was an honorary member of the Guardmen a few years ago.

Witnesing the presentation were Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, and John E. Gascoyne, junior vicecommander of the Guardmen.
Guardi\, to Honor Hard

The State Legion of Guardsmen will honor James A. Hard, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, Saturday by presenting to him the Legion's "certificate of recognition."

The certificate states that the presentation to the 108-year-old last commander of the New York State Grand Army of the Republic is in recognition of meritorious service to his country in time of peace and war.

The presentation will be made by Richard W. Nersinger Sr., past commander of the Thomas J. Griffin Post of the Legion of Guardsmen, of which Hard was made an honorary member a few years ago. Also taking part in the presentation at Hard's home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., at 10 a.m.

Rochester Times-Union, Saturday Evening, March 18, 1950

Guardi\, Honor Hard

Saturday Evening, March 18, 1950

Hard to Attend

James A. Hard, oldest surviving member of the Grand Army of the Republic, will be guest of honor at the 82nd annual memorial service sponsored by the Veterans Memorial and Executive Council in Masonic Auditorium Sunday.

A message from the 108-year-old veteran will be read by Edward G. Hartell, a member of the Sons of Union Veterans.

Principal speaker will be the Rev. William Schifferli, chaplain for the Confederate Army to 25, according to the Associated Press. On the subject will be "Victory or Defeat?" Union side only 16 men remain alive of the 1,000 in 1860. The Rev. William A. Hallock, youngest of the Union veterans

HONORING JAMES A. HARD, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, at his home in Portsmouth Ter. today were John E. Gascoyne (seated) and Richard W. Nersinger (standing), representing the St. Croix Legion of Guardsmen. Hard was given the Guardsmen's "certificate of recognition." Nersinger is past commander of the Thomas J. Griffin Post of the group and Gascoyne is junior vice commander.
Comrade Hard Has a Busy Day
As Memorial Parade Marshal

At opposite ends of the nation, the celebration of Memorial Day lingers today in the minds of two veterans of the Civil War whose thoughts go back to the first observance — 108-year-old James A. Hard of Rochester and Douglas Story, 105, of Los Angeles.

It was a happy and busy day for the aged veterans. Comrade Hard, the nation's oldest military veteran, proudly carried out his role as grand marshal of the Rochester parade, and reminisced this morning in song, a song of years ago that ends with the line "And Willie came home."

Comrade Story took part in two ceremonies in honor of the nation's war dead, traveling 36 miles before his return home at the end of the day's exercises. First, he was guest of honor at the service in the Veterans Administration Cemetery at Los Angeles, and later he was presented to admiring throngs at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum.

The last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic, Comrade Hard commented this morning that "I don't think I ever enjoyed a parade more."

His enjoyment was no less real because he could not see the marching units. The sound of the bands playing such familiar Civil War airs as "Tenting Tonight" brought back the sight of many such parades in years gone by.

Riding in a car in the parade, Comrade Hard waved to the crowds along the line of march as they greeted him with long and loud cheers. He returned the salute of the parade military units as he reviewed the marchers from his car in Broad Street opposite the City Hall.

Commander Hard was quite proud of the fact that he walked down the stairs of his home and along the walk to the car that bore him in the parade.

"Maybe I'll do the same thing again next year," the indomitable soldier suggested as he puffed his after-breakfast cigar.

James Hard to Get Army, Navy Badge

James A. Hard, 108, the oldest living Civil War veteran, will be presented the Life Membership Badge of the Monroe County Council, Army and Navy Union, tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. at his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

The committee in charge of the presentation are: Ralph R. Clausen, county commander; Samuel Marcusfield, county paymaster, and Norman Senecal, commander of Grand Lodge.

Hard Joins Masonic Post

Rochester Post of Masonic War Veterans, now being organized, has taken as its number 1 member James A. Hard, oldest living Civil War veteran.

Hard, New York's only GAR member and said to be the oldest Mason in the world, is 108. He was the first signer of the Masonic charter giving it the distinction of being the only one in the state with a Civil War veteran on its rolls.

Second name on the post charter is that of James Ekser, veteran of World War 2 and Hard's great-grandson. Lance H. Thompson is directing the organization of the new group. The signature of 15 Masonic veterans is necessary before the group can apply to the New York State Grand Lodge for its charter.

Hard Again Life Member

James A. Hard, 108-year-old Civil War veteran, collected another life membership badge yesterday. This one is in the Monroe County Council of the Army and Navy Union. The badge was presented to Hard by Ralph R. Clausen, commander of the union. The citation accompanying the badge reads: "He is given in recognition of being an outstanding veteran and the oldest living member of the Army and Navy Union."

The ceremony took place at Hard's home at 31 Portsmouth Ter. Participating in the presentation were Samuel Marcusfield, county paymaster, and Norman Senecal, commander of Michael Tressy Garrison 3206.
James Hard’s Story

Time Flies, Even if You Live
To Be 109 Years Old

JIMMY TOMPKINS, 10, (center) and Geoffrey Palmer, 11, neighbors of James A. Hard, listen as he recalls Civil War experiences.

By JAMES A. HARD

As Told to Andrew Wolfe

I was born July 15, 1841, in Victor, N. Y. That seems a long time ago; I suppose, but time goes real quickly, even if you live as long as I have.

My father was Alanson Pratt Hard, who lived in Rochester before it became a city in 1834. And my mother was Martha Frost Hard, who was born in Rochester.

My father was a stage driver in those days. He used to drive the stage to Mt. Morris and to Canandaigua. When I was just a couple of years old, he gave up driving stage and went in Albany on the canal. Then he bought a farm at Windsor, That's in York State down near Binghamton.

LIFE WAS HARDER

That was where I grew up. Life was much harder in those days than it is now, but we had a lot of fun. There were three brothers besides me and five sisters in the family. I was next to oldest, one of my sisters being older than me.

James A. Hard, the sturdy little Rochesterian who is the nation's oldest surviving Civil War veteran, will reach his 109th birthday July 15. He isn't quite as active as he used to be, but he swears his health is good and says he enjoys a good cigar as much or more than he did 80 or 90 years ago. His memory is as clear as a bell, and his sense of humor as keen as ever. He's taken a few afternoons recently to tell Andrew Wolfe of The Times-Union staff of the story of his life. His reminiscences of the great crisis when North battled South have particular meaning at a time when the nation again stands close to war. Today, in his firm article, Hard tells the story of his boyhood.

We used to all help with the farm work. I think I started when I was about 5 years old. It wasn't a big farm, but there was always plenty to do. We had about eight or 10 cows.

I was 6 when I first went to school. I can remember very clearly the first day I went. My mother dressed me up one day without telling me why. I asked her and she said, 'Son, you're going to go to school to learn your ABCs.'

ALWAYS WORK

I well remember the teacher that taught us. He took quite an interest in me and he used to let me sit up on his lap while he taught the class. But I never did go to school full time. There was always work to do on the farm, and my father used to send us to help out the neighbors when they needed us.

We had a great deal of enjoyment, although things weren't as easy as they are for the children today.

In the Winter the Susquehanna River down there used to freeze over for 7 or 8 miles. We all had skates which we fastened on our boots, and we'd go on parties. We'd takeunchained, and eat them around campfires.

DRIVE TO DANCES

In the Summer there were dances in the towns, and we used to drive to them with my sisters. My dad had a pump car in put in our house. My sisters used to play it. They were right fine singers.

To show how things have changed, we used to think it was a wonderful celebration if we got a doughnut and a stick of candy and a few nuts of some kind.

Our favorite holiday was the Fourth of July. When I was 13, my brother and I walked to Binghamton, which was about 14 miles from home. They had advertised a big Fourth celebration.

My brother and I got up at 3 a.m. on the Fourth and ate breakfast. We went outside and the ground was white with frost. My father gave us each a shining (12?) cent piece and we started hoofing it to Binghamton.

SAW PARADE

We got to Binghamton about 9 a.m. and we were so hungry we each bought a great big gingerbread cookie for three cents. Well, we stayed all day, window-gawking and seeing the sights. There was a firemen's parade, which was the best thing of all. About 7 p.m., after the fireworks, we started home, but we only got about six miles when we went into a barn and took a snooze.

We didn't wake up 'til the middle of the next morning. Then we went home. It was the most wonderful time boys ever had.

I quit school when I was 16. I only learned arithmetic, reading, writing and spelling in school. Schools weren't so good then as they are now, but I think we grew up more quickly and were more independent than boys and girls today.

NEXT: Hard tells how he enlisted in the U. S. Army in 1861 and how he met President Lincoln at the White House.
LINCOLN HAD A WONDERFUL FOR ROOKIE NOT YET IN UNIFORM - PART II J.A.H.

By James A. Hard
As Told To Andrew Wolfe

I enlisted in the Army April 18, 1861. I was working at a sawmill at Jordan- that's down near Syracuse. One day a lot of fellows came by in a wagon. They were making a lot of noise, and they stopped at the mill. When I asked them what all the racket was about, they told me the President had issued a call for volunteers and that they were going to enlist. Well, I joined them, and we all went down to Dryden in Tompkins County and enlisted in the 32ed New York Volunteers for two years. The company stayed there in Dryden for a few weeks. We didn't have any uniforms, but we did what drilling we could.

Then we got on the (railroad) cars and went down to Staten Island and then to Washington. We rode in freight cars. It was hot and sticky in the day, and cold at night.

MET LINCOLN

/We stayed in Washington for several weeks. It was then that I met President Lincoln for the first time; It was in May, 1861, at a reception in the Blue Room in the White House.

I shook hands with Mr. Lincoln and Mrs. Lincoln and little Bobby Lincoln. We hadn't got our uniforms yet, and Mr. Lincoln said, "Son, you look as if you'd make a good soldier. Why don't you join up?"

I explained to him I was in the army, and I don't remember what he said, but he gave me a smile I always remembered. Whenever he spoke to anyone he had a wonderful smile.

And he gave me a handshake with a grip that nearly crushed my hand. I thought his hand was as big as a ham- it took mine right out of sight.

COLONEL SHOT

I remember looking around the White House. There was a guard in every room, but they let me see all I wanted because I had a military pass.

In June, I think it was, a rebel shot one of our colonels in Alexandria. The colonel's name was Hillworth. They were afraid there might be riots in Alexandria as there were a lot of Secesh (Secessionists or Confederate sympathizers) living there, so we were sent over to keep things in hand. We stayed all through June and July, until just before the battle of Bull Run.

We lived in big tents which had eight or ten bunks in them. The weather was pretty good and we didn't have such a bad time. That was before the fighting started.

ATE SALT HORSE

Our food was mostly hard tack, coffee, beans, rice and meat. They told us the meat was salt beef of salt pork, but we called it salt horse. I knew the ribs in the meat weren't beef or pork ribs.

I can still taste the beans we had. They were big white beans. A lot of the time they weren't cooked so good and they were tough, I can tell you. When we wanted something good to eat or some tobacco, we'd go to the sutlers. They used to have wagons for or shacks near the camps to sell things.

I got passes now and then and I used to go into Washington. I got to know that city very well. It was quite exciting with a lot of soldiers around and a lot of goings on.

STRONG DISCIPLINE

The discipline in camp was pretty strong, a lot more than it is in armies nowadays. They used to punish deserters by hanging them by their thumbs or making them ride barrels.

The only time that I got punished was one day when the order sergeant was imposing on me, I said something to him.

Well, I got sent to the guardhouse. The guard said to go out and pick up a rail and march around with it on my shoulder. I picked up the smallest
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I could find, but the guard picked up a heavin' one and said, "Here, you, I'll trade you.""

I had to carry the rail around until the officer of the day came along. He said the sergeant was wrong, but that I shouldn't have talked back to hi. Then he sent me back to my quarters.

(turn up for end)
James Hard's Story

Bull Run My First Real 'Battle';
Women Dressed as 'f for a Party

I had some pretty close calls. One bullet went through my coat, but didn't scratch me. I was pretty scared, but the captain says keep on fighting. I think I was pretty lucky, but, of course, if I'd been with my own regiment there wouldn't have been much longer after the battle was over. We didn't know what was going to happen. We heard a lot of Rebels go by not more than a couple of hundred yards off. They sort of staggered and past and we wanted to tackle them, but the officers said keep in line. Everybody said that the Rebels were licked and we could have won the war then if Gen McClellan had done the right thing. I don't know he always liked McClellan. He was good to his men.

Next: Hard helps pull an army out of the mud.

From next pg. article 4

Lowell's Valley

LINCOLN VISITS

Gen. George B. McClellan

Bull Run was the first battle of the war. My regiment—the 32d New York Volunteers—was camped at Alexandria, Va., just across the Potomac River from Washington in June and July of 1861. About the middle of July we heard there were a lot of the Rebels nearby, and we started getting ready for a battle. We marched out south of Alexandria's couple of times and got into skirmishes at Blackburn's Ford and some other little town whose name I can't remember.

The skirmishes didn't amount to much. As near as I can recall, one of them was at night. We just fired a couple of shots, and that was all it amounted to. There was only one fellow in our regiment who got wounded, and it didn't seem the war would be too bad.

I never was really scared until Bull Run. It was a bright sunny day and very hot. A tremendous lot of people from Washington drove out to see what the battle was going to be like, and there were gis, hics, and every kind of carriage you could think of.

PLENTY OF SPECTATORS

Women even came along too, dressed up in bright dresses as if they were going to a party. My regiment wasn't in the first part of the battle. We did sort of good duty and kept the civilians from going to the battlefield.

One fellow came along who said he was a Congressman from Rochester and had a right to go see what was going on. He got very angry, but we had orders and we wouldn't let him through. We could hear a lot of firing, and we got pretty excited, although we didn't know what was going on. We didn't get into the battle until the end, after the Rebels had beaten our story.

We went in as sort of a start guard. I can remember our company, Company E, was in the position of honor on the flank. We were charged by the Rebel Black Horse Cavallery, and I can tell you I was scared then.

LINES HELD

They didn't break our lines, and pulled off right away. I don't think we had anyone hurt, but there were a lot of the dead and wounded around, and we learned what war was like.

Toward evening we pulled out and started on the way back to Alexandria. You've never seen such mess as there was on that road. The road was full of stragglers and wounded and the people who came out from Washington to see the fight. You could hardly move there was such a press of people. Broken wagons and carriages smashed mules, food boxes, and very sort of litter was all over the place. Our colonel decided the regiment couldn't get through, and he gave orders that every man was to get back to quarters in Alexandria as fast as he could.

OFFICERS DRUNK

I can remember walking back along the road and looking into a hotel where there was a bunch of officers sitting around a table with a lot of bottles on it. They looked drunk. I always remember because it was said that General McClellan was drunk at the time of the battle, and he couldn't keep up when we started to turn in "company front."

I always thought that if our army had done what was expected of it at Bull Run, they could have conquered and maybe ended the war right there.

We spent most of the morning and fall around Alexandria. We drilled and built a fort or two. There was a couple of skirmishes, but they didn't amount to anything. We still thought we could end the war pretty quick.

I remember digging ditches six foot deep and eight foot wide in front of the forts. We filled them with water when we could.

SAY LINCOLN AGAIN

Bailey's Crossroads was nearby—and that's where I saw President Lincoln the second time. It was in the Fall, I think. Gen. McClellan was our general then. He was reorganizing our Army.

The President came down, and we had a great review for him. They saw a hundred thousand men tock.

I think Lincoln rode a real small pony, and I can remember his long legs hanging down on his feet almost touched the ground.

He was a very comical-looking man, but how the boys cheered for him.

Our regiment didn't get into any battles that Fall. We worked hard in camp. Sometimes it was pretty monotonous, but I had good friends in our company and we didn't have such a bad time.

Our colonel was a perfect gentleman and everybody liked him, but we had a major, whom everybody hated. He was overbearing and thought he was the world and a soldier didn't amount to anything. One day at a parade one of the boys felt the stick and he couldn't keep up when we started to turn in "company front."

This major came up and hit him over the shoulder and said, "Get up there, you dirty "E." We always hated him after that.

One of the things that happened through the war was that one of the men in the regiment murdered one of the camp followers for her money. They caught him after a day or two. He was convicted and sentenced to be hanged. The whole regiment would stand around in the afternoon to watch him hang. It was a decribable duty.
James Hard’s Story

How I Inadvertently Was Pushed Into Bloodiest Battle of War

BATTLE FOG and Union batteries on the field of Antietam, Md., are shown in this shot, one of the earliest and most famous of all war action photos. Coliasce and horses wait at left, while at right batteries are lining toward Confederate lines. This photo comes from the George Eastman House set of the 12-volume Photographic History of the Civil War.

ANTITAM BRIDGE. scene of some of the bloodiest fighting in the battle of Antietam, is shown in this photo from the George Eastman House collection. It was taken shortly after the battle.

James A. Hard, oldest living survivor of the Civil War, will mark his 93rd birthday this Sunday. The doughty old soldier has been telling the story of his life to Andrew Wolfe of The Times-Union staff. This is the fourth article of his story.

By JAMES A. HARD
As told to Andrew Wolfe

The Winter of 1861 my regiment was in camp near Alexandria, Va.

As I remember it, the weather wasn’t too cold, and we didn’t have to do too much drilling. I used to go visit some cousins who lived on a farm just a little north of Washington. We had very good times together.

When I got there, I was sick and went into the hospital. One day the ward master told me the governor of New York State was sending for all the badly wounded and sick men. The ward master said, “Hard, you want to go home.”

I said yes and he said: “You eat a plug of Navy tobacco and you’ll feel so sick they’ll send you home.” I did and how sick I was that night.

The next day the inspectors came. They didn’t stay anything. But at noon I was put on the deck of a big ocean steamer. We landed in New York after a rough trip, and then I went home to Windsor by train.

40-DAY LEAVE

I was home 40 days, and it was the only leave I had when I was in the Army. How I did enjoy the food my mother made! But after a while I got homesick for the boys in my company. Father said, “Why don’t you stay home, son?”

But I wanted to go again. I’d been away so long that they put me in the guardhouse at Fort Hamilton when I reported. But after a few days I was back with my regiment—just in time for the battle of Gaines Mill and Malvern Hill. They were hard battles, but after that I didn’t do anything until Lee and the Rebels marched into Maryland.

We marched through Frederick City and I remember seeing Barbies Frischke. It was just like in the green. (“Barbies! Barbies!”)

Christmas that year didn’t amount to much. We had our regular dug-out meal and there wasn’t much celebration.

The only present I got was a box of candy and sugar cookies my mother sent to me.

Gen. McClellan did a lot to get the army in shape, and we started out in April to capture Richmond. We went down the Potomac on riverboats, and then started to work our way up the Peninsula. The Peninsula lies between the York and James rivers east of Richmond.

TOUGHEST BATTLE

We got into our toughest battle at West Point (also known as Elkhorn Landing) at the head of the York River. It wasn’t a very big battle, but my regiment lost more men there than in any battle.

The Rebels had just evacuated Yorktown when they attacked us. We got pushed back a ways and then we took our stand. It was in this battle that our captain whom we liked very much, was killed. His name was Capt. Sylvester Brown.

I was standing almost elbow to elbow with him when a shot came along and almost tore his shoulder off. He never said another word. He was covered with his blood and when one of the other officers came up, he thought I was wounded, too.

SENT TO FORTRESS

So he told me to go along with Capt. Brown’s body to Fortress Monroe and go to the hospital there. Fortress Monroe was at the end of the Peninsula.

I was sick, but I sure was glad the war was over. I sure was glad I wasn’t killed.

The war wasn’t over that way. But it was over for me.

And I’m glad it’s over.
James Hard's Story

My Regiment Got a Commendation
For Pulling Army Out of the Mud

STAYED AND WAITED
The Rebels were on a ridge that runs maybe a mile south of the river. Our corps (Gen. Franklin's VI Corps) got into the thick of things there. We just stayed on the flat between the river and the ridge waiting for orders.

Our artillery was back across the river and firing over our heads at the Rebels. And the Rebel artillery was firing back. It was lucky, but they kept firing beyond us all day.

On both sides of us there was an awful lot of firing, but the smoke obscured across and we couldn't see what was happening. Afterward we heard a lot of our boys had taken an awful luck trying to go up that ridge.

A LUXURY—ButTER
We lost that battle, and after a while we went up near Alexandria where we spent the Winter. That was my second Winter with the Army. It wasn't too cold, but once we did have about three inches of snow. Some of the boys made sleighs out of barrel staves and anything else they could find, and had a lot of fun riding about.

I remember getting a package of cattails from my mother that Winter. There was cake and cookies and bread, but the best thing in it was a jar of butter. That was something we never did get in the army.

The war had been going on nearly two years then, but as I recall no one was very discouraged in our corps. We'd lost some of the battles, but we were sure we were going to win. A lot of people thought our recruits weren't as good as the Rebels.

We did a lot of drilling that Winter, and when the fighting started in the Spring we thought we were pretty good. A lot of the time we did firing practice.

We were supposed to load and fire as quickly as possible, but with the old muzzle-loaders it took time. At the start of a battle, the order was always for everybody to fire at once, and after that it was load at will and fire.

NEVER SAW SHOT
Our cartridges had powder and ball in them. You'd bite off the end of the cartridge and then ram it down the muzzle. Things got awful confused with everyone firing. You never saw where your shot went. I never knew if I killed anyone. I've always hoped I never did.

Our last battle, although we didn't know it then, was at Mayre's Heights and Salem Church. It was all part of the Battle of Chancellorsville in May of 1863.

The funny part of Mayre's Heights was that it took place on the same ridge as the Battle of Fredericksburg. The Rebels were up on the ridge again, and we crossed the river to attack them. We got across, but there was a lot of artillery fire from the heights.

We were out on the flat in front of the hill. Our officers ordered us to lay down and keep our heads close to the ground. We were there side by side, as close as though we were marching in ranks.

It really happened a day or so before the battle. A lot of the army had come down the Potomac on boats and disembarked at Aquia Creek. But there had been a lot of rain and hundreds of wagons and guns got stuck in the mud.

The teamsters would whip up the horses, but the horses would just sink in up to their knees.

TAKE HOLD AND PULL
They called for our regiment. We'd tie ropes onto the wagons, and then 100 or so men would take hold of the rope and pull. We did a real good job, and got all the wagons and guns clear of the soft spots near the creek.

The general thought that was marvelous, and he wanted the quartermaster to give up a ration of whisky. That was the only time in the war my regiment got a whisky ration, but it was such terrible stuff I couldn't drink it. I gave my ration to a sergeant who would drink anything.

As near as I can recall, the day of the Battle of Fredericksburg was cold and reasonably clear although there wasn't much sunshine. It was in December, 1862. We turned out early, and the first of my regiment crossed the Rappahannock River in boats before it was daylight.

The pontoons men took us across, and there were about 20 men in each boat. We were all afraid of being attacked before we landed, but when we landed there was no Rebels in sight.

James Hard, oldest living veteran of the Civil War, is telling the story of his life to Andrew Wolfe of The Times-Union staff. Although he will observe his 109th birthday Sunday, his memory is still keen and accurate. This is the fifth article of the James Hard story.
BURIED MY HEAD

I remember trying to make as little of myself as possible, and I practically buried my head in the dirt of the field where we were.

The order was to keep our heads down, but one soldier about 20 feet from where I was wanted to see what was going on. He lifted up his head and shoulders, and a ball came along and took his head right off. I was awfully glad I kept my head down.

Some of the other regiments drove the rebels off the top of the hill, and the rest of us followed after. I remember we stacked our knapsacks at the top of the hill and chased the Rebels out into the country. We got awfully tired from running after them. Afterwards we came back and got our knapsacks.

NEXT: The regiment is mustered out, and Hard joins the Transportation Corps.

James Hard’s Story

Brave Men and Fine Comrades
Separate as Regiment Breaks Up

NASHVILLE STATION at Nashville, Tenn., a familiar scene to James A. Hard in last year of the Civil War, is shown in this photo from the Eastman House historical collections.

COMFEDERATE PRISONERS wait at the railroad station in Chattanooga, Tenn., for shipment to prison in the North. In today’s article Comrade Hard recalls seeing prisoner groups like this in the South. Engaged in railroad work, he was frequently in Chattanooga.

By JAMES A. HARD
As told to Andrew Wolfe

My regiment was mustered out of the Army June 3, 1863, in New York City. That was more than 87 years ago, but I recall it very clearly.

There wasn’t much of a celebration because everyone was so anxious to get home or get on with what they were going to do. The most of them I never did see again, but I remember them well. They were brave men and fine comrades.
A good number reenlisted in the Army, but most went home. I didn't go home, but hurried right down to Washington to get a job with the transportation corps of the War Department. A friend of mine from Windsor, N. Y., A. Ray Hotchkiss, was the assistant superintendent of the railroad construction work. I'd seen him frequently during the Winter when my regiment was at Alexandria, and he said he'd get a good job for me. My first duty was to go up to York State and hire men. I came up to Elmira and made my headquarters at a hotel.

I hired 50 men as carpenters at $5 a day and board, but when they got down to Virginia they had to do anything that was necessary. I took them back down there, and we began to help build the railroads for Gen. Grant's army.

YOUTH IN TEARS

There was one young fellow with us who got real homesick. When he sat down at supper one night all he had was bread and some molasses. About a quarter of an inch thick in his tin plate. Tears came into his eyes. Afterwards he came to me and asked if I'd lend him $5 to get home. I finally gave him the money, and he gave me a note. He was an honest boy, and I soon got a check for $50.

We had to work very hard building the railroads for the Army. I think every day there is to do on a railroad except drive an engine—and I did drive them about in the switch yards now and then.

Our work was mostly what engineers do for the Army nowadays. We had to rebuild a lot of railroad bridges that the Rebels destroyed. We worked in Virginia in the Fall of 1863, and later on we went into Tennessee and Georgia. We got pretty close to the fighting several times, but I never was in another battle.

SHIPPED PRISONERS

The railroads helped move supplies and we also shipped a lot of Rebel prisoners North. I can remember how dirty and discouraged the prisoners were as they waited around the station. People always said a lot of the Rebels were forced to join their army, and I believe it.

The hardest job we ever did was to build a big trestle over the Chattahoochee River down near Atlanta. We didn't have any lumber, of course, so we had to chop down trees, strip them and build the bridge out of them. There were about 100 men working, and we built up that big trestle in just a couple of days.

I was at the siege of Nashville, too. That was just before Christmas, 1864, and the Rebel Gen. Hood made his raid and was all set to capture the city. My boss came to me and says, "Hard, I want to give you 50 colored men to dig ditches in front of the fort." He gave me the 50 men. They all had picks and shovels, and we went out and dug the ditches.

Well, the Army gave Hood a licking and that was the end of the raid.

NEGROES FRIENDLY

Afterwards I spent a good deal of time in Georgia, but I was traveling about most of the time. The Sekels (Sececssists or Confederates) weren't very friendly to what they used to call the Yankees. None of the girls would go to the soldier dances. But the colored people were friendly. Some of the little colored boys used to come to dance for us. How they could dance! Afterward we'd give them money.

I quit the government service just before the end of the war, and I was working for a railroad at Laneboro in Susquehanna County in Pennsylvania when Lincoln was shot. I remember I was stripping a big pine tree to make a flagpole, when a fellow came running out of the telegraph office and yelled the President was shot.

But work ended and there was no more work that day. The people were sad, but mostly they wanted to catch the — that did the deed.

The war ended just then. People were glad the Union had been saved, but they didn't forget the war was real quick. Most every town had lost a lot of boys, and it was sad to see them go home.

LONEST BEST FRIEND

I lost a best friend. His name was George Sound and he was the son of a minister. He was a nice young fellow, about my age, and very well educated. We had great times together before the war. He became a sergeant, but he got wounded and died of infection. I've always missed him.

During the war all of us planned what we were going to do when it was all over. A lot of the things we planned never came true.

I was just about to turn 24, and I was ambitious like a lot of the others. So I decided to go West as do what I could to better myself.

NEXT: Hard talks of his experiences in the West and his later life.
James Hard's Story

‘Times Have Changed a Lot - -
But Country Is Better Than Ever’

PART OF ROCHESTER as it appeared when James A. Hard first came to the city is shown in this old print. He recalls how Main St. looked in 1882 in today’s article.

By JAMES A. HARD

As told to Andrew Wolfe

I went out West after the Civil War to make my fortune if I could. I was out there about four years, and I spent most of the time in Iowa and Nebraska.

I didn’t make a great deal of money, but it was enjoyable and exciting. They were building the railroads to California, and the Indians were very angry.

Most of the time I worked for the railroads, doing construction work, just like I’d done for the army during the war. But I also did some carpenter work. I can remember helping build a Catholic church at a little town that I think was called Strawberries Point.

I was married only once. I got married the first time. My wife’s name was Lodiola Davis and I first saw her on Buffalo. That was in 1868, and the next year we came back East.

HELPED BUILD JAIL

We went first to Erie, where I hired out as a carpenter. They were building a new jail down there, and the superintendent took quite a notion to me. While the building was going on I wouldn’t have had to do any work if I hadn’t wanted to. The superintendent just told me to keep out of sight of the commissioners.

After the jail was built the superintendent wanted me to stay on and work at the jail, but I didn’t stay long enough to work at the jail.

I was married again in 1881 in Nebraska. We got married on the same day, and the next year we went back East.

OLD FRIENDS GONE

I closed my office in 1927 so I could look after her, and she died in 1929. My daughter died last year, but I have three grandchildren who are wonderful to me and seven great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

There’s nobody left now of the people I grew up with and were my friends a long time ago. My father and mother are dead, and so are all my brothers and sisters.

I feel just as good as I did 50 years ago. I haven’t the strength I did but I eat hearty and I don’t have any pains that amount to anything. I enjoy a good cigar as much as ever, and I think I must have smoked 12,000 since I was 100.

CONT. ON FOLLOWING PAGE
James A. Hard, oldest surviving veteran of the Civil War, puffs a stogie as he considers plans for his 109th birthday today.

**Nation's Oldest War Veteran**

**Hard Marks 109th Year, Baffled by Korea Fight**

By PAT BARRY

To the nation's oldest of the "old soldiers," the war in Korea is very far away. But that's as it should be.

James A. Hard, who today has attained the astonishing age of 109, has seen this nation prepare for war six times.

When he was a small child, the U.S. fought against Mexico. As a handsome young man he went to war with the Union Army, fighting to keep his country unified and performing the soldier's duties for which he is best remembered by his countrymen. He watched the Spanish-American War, and two World Wars develop; he fought and subsided into what purported to be peace.
Oldest veteran of any war in United States, James A. Hard is pictured with his birthday cake at his 109th celebration yesterday. At left is Fred Colwell, secretary-treasurer of the Sons of Union Veterans. Others from left are Bertrand Goodbread, SUV county commander, and the Rev. William A. Hallock, county SUV chaplain. Two hundred attended.

Hard Grateful for Sunshiny 109th Birthday, Sees No Reason Why He Shouldn’t Mark 110th

"Especially I want to thank God for such a beautiful day for my birthday.

James A. Hard had reached his 109th birthday yesterday, and after a long life of glory, he still humbly grateful for a sunny day.

The Civil War veteran—oldest soldier in the U. S.—sat in state yesterday as a military band played triumphant marches, scores of people pressed gifts and good wishes upon him, and many of the frankly curious among his 200 callers stared reverently at the man who had lived so many years.

Friends bearing presents of cigars, candy, handkerchiefs and ties, began to pour into the room at 31 Portsmith Ter., where Hard lives, at 4 p. m. yesterday. Alert as ever, and at his dignified best, he greeted them all, recalling quickly the names of a multitude of distant relations and descendants and officials of veteran groups.

In the lapel of his neat dark suit, Hard wore one of his favorite gifts of the day—a modest bouquet of yellow pansies picked for him by his 6-year-old great-great-granddaughter, Julie Eksten.

Near him on a table reposed a giant birthday cake with 109 red, white and blue candles, presented by the Sons of Union Veterans who conducted the birthday reception. Near him also were heaps of telegrams and cards offering congratulations, including a message from Governor Dewey who declared that the Empire State was proud of him.

On the lawn outside his home, the fellow's favorite marches in the spirited style Hard had heard the same regiments band play in Civil War days. Under the baton of Floyd C. King, the band, which was organized in 1864, played the familiar "Happy Birthday," as well.
For 109th Time -- 'Happy Birthday'

SITTING IN his favorite easy chair, James A. Hard reflects in his smile the hundreds of good wishes contained in greeting cards from all over the country. They were sent for his 109th birthday today, Rochester's oldest citizen and the nation's oldest veteran, survivor of the Civil War. Commander Hard was greeted by veterans of other wars at a party this afternoon at 31 Portsmouth Terr., where he makes his home. During the reception, arranged by the Veterans of Union Veterans, the 54th Regiment Band played the venerable gentleman's favorite marching tunes.

Mr. Hard's reaction to today's celebration: "I'd just as soon have a birthday every day."

Hard Biography Praised

Editor, The Times-Union:

This Letter is to congratulate two wide-awake members of your staff, Andrew Wolfe and Joe Durnherr, for the wonderful articles and pictures of that grand old gentleman and soldier, James A. Hard. Being a son of a Civil War veteran—my father, George Lowenthal, was a very close friend of Mr. Hard—I am sure that many sons and daughters of other veterans also are pleased to read the Hard life story.

In conclusion, if there are more articles please space them like the first two on Friday and Saturday so they can be saved better.

WALTER LOWENTHAL.
Rochester.
More Honor for Hard

James A. Hard hopes to attend the Runkle Boston encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans in Boston this weekend, said that his health was at that time. He said, however, that he received an official invitation from the district. Mrs. Eksten said the Runkle Boston encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans will be held in June in Boston, where he lives.

The Grand Army of the Republic accepted the Boston invitation, he had to turn down another trip—to Los Angeles where the Daughters of Union Veterans, Ladies of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Women's Relief Corps will hold a joint meeting in September. The trip would be too long, despite the fact that he would travel by plane, Mrs. Eksten explained.

James A. Hard, who at the age of 108 is the oldest surviving veteran of the Civil War in the nation, is shown as he received a life membership badge in the Army and Navy Union last night from Samuel Marcusfield, county paymaster and union member. In background are Ralph R. Clausen (left), union commander, and Vernon Seagar, commander of Michael Treggy Garrison. The ceremony took place at Hard's residence, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Hard Plans to Go To SUV Session

A Civil War victory march of the Northern forces, will be played for the nation's oldest living Union Army veteran on his 109th birthday, tomorrow.

James A. Hard, vicecommander of the Grand Army of the Republic and one of the few surviving veterans of the Civil War, will be feted by members of the city's veteran groups at a birthday reception from 4 to 6 p.m. in the nursing home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., where he lives.

High point of the celebrations sponsored by the Sons of Union Veterans as in past years, will be a concert by the 54th Regimental Band under direction of Floyd C. King.

Among Hard's requests which will be played is "Marching Through Georgia," traditional song of the Yankee troops.

Other favorites of Hard, which will be heard at the party, are "The Girl I Left Behind Me," "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground" and "Old Folks at Home." The music will be provided by the American Federation of Musicians and the Rochester Music Association through a special fund.

Legion Votes

A resolution congratulating James A. Hard on his 109th birthday which the Civil War veteran marked Saturday, was passed unanimously Saturday at the concluding session of a three-day convention of the Seventh District, American Legion at Henrietta by Mrs. Golds W. Rowley, Rochester.

The official birthday "card" will be issued from district adjutant headquarters in Penn Yan and probably will be given to Bruce Percy, newly elected district commander, to present to Hard personally.

More than 400 delegates approved the nominating committee's slate which besides Percy of 144 Palmerston Rd., Brighton, include vice-commander Edgar Allen, Dansville; service officer, John Reihetiner, Geneva, and sergeant-at-arms, Pat Land, Six, Painted Post.

George Wilson, Geneva, past district commander, was chosen Seventh District candidate for state commander.

Although the vicecommander of the Grand Army of the Republic accepted the Boston invitation, he had to turn down another trip—to Los Angeles where the Daughters of Union Veterans, Ladies of the Sons of the American Revolution and the Women's Relief Corps will hold a joint meeting in September. The trip would be too long, despite the fact that he would travel by plane, Mrs. Eksten explained.

Legion Votes

Union Encampment in Boston

Memories of a lobster dinner some 40 years ago moved 108-year-old James A. Hard to accept an invitation yesterday to attend the Boston encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans to be held the week of Aug. 20.

The nation's oldest living veteran of the Civil War was invited by SUV Commander-in-chief John H. Runkle to attend the encampment when the two met in Rochester during the state encampment in June.

Yesterday, Hard received his official invitation, and instructed his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl E. Eksten Sr. of Henrietta, to write that he would like to attend.

"I've been to Boston many times," he said at the nursing home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., where he lives, "and I can't pass up the chance to go once more." I haven't eaten Boston seafood since I went to the SUV encampment there 35 or 40 years ago.

Hard's trip to Boston, of course, depends on his health when the time comes around for his departure. But if he's as well then as he is now, Mrs. Eksten said, he'll be there.

Hard, 109 Tomorrow, to Hear Regimental Band Serenade

Besides the concert, Hard will be presented a giant birthday cake, with a full court of cakes. He is expected to receive the usual big supply of cigars as well. This is the 10th birthday celebration conducted by the SUV for Hard, according to Bertrand Goodbread, chairman of the affair.
One More GAR Reunion
Urged by Hard, Others

The mists of time, like battle fog, swirl closer, but the Grand Army of the Republic doesn’t flinch. A year ago today, James A. Hard of Rochester and five other Boys in Blue met in Indianapolis for the 83rd and last encampment of the GAR. Today, although their average age is nearly 105, five survivors still are going strong.

Hard, puffing away at a cigar in his quarters at 32 Portsmouth Terr., said he still hopes the GAR can have one more encampment — with Confederate survivors of America’s bloodiest war. At 109, Hard is the oldest war veteran in the nation, but stoutly maintains he feels “as good as I did when I was 100.”

Three other GAR veterans also want to see the GAR meet again. They are Robert Barrett, 103, of Princeton, Ky.; Albert Woolson, 103, of Duluth, Minn., and Joseph Clovese, 106, of Pontiac, Mich., only Negro left in the Grand Army.

Commander-in-chief Theodore A. Penland, 101, of Vancouver, Wash., is still active despite a heart condition and plans to attend a meeting of GAR affiliates in Los Angeles Sept. 3 to 7. But he doesn’t think there should be another reunion.

“The boys are too old to travel,” he stated.

Charles L. Chappell, Long Beach, Calif., died just two weeks after attending the Indianapolis reunion without realizing his wish to be national commander “if only for the last 15 minutes of my life.”

Records show there are five other surviving members of the veteran organization — making 10 in all out of a maximum of 492,000.

Veterans Administration figures in May indicated there were an additional six Union veterans who had never been GAR members and about 23 Confederate survivors.

Last year there were 17 GAR survivors. Insurance statisticians say there may be no more than two next year. But the old soldiers have been foiling the statisticians for many years.

The Korean War has disturbed the old men. Like Hard, who keeps up with GAR affairs, one GAR member, 105, recently stopped attending conventions because he was afraid of losing touch with GAR.”

Men have a stake in the outcome of the Korean War and will win any box seat, or lukewarm clash with Russia just as it has all the other wars.

Hard admits he isn’t planning to attend any reunions just now, but asserted: “I miss them — my comrades. They are all fine men.”

Hard Cancels Trip To Encampment

James A. Hard will miss his Boston lobster dinner this year after 49 years.

Memories of a seafood dinner the 109-year-old Civil War veteran enjoyed at a Sons of Union Veterans encampment more than 30 years ago had previously prompted the nation’s oldest living veteran to accept an invitation to their 1950 convention beginning this week. Yesterday he decided not to make the trip to Boston.

“I’m feeling fine but I just don’t want to bother making the journey,” Hard explained. “I’ll just stay around home.”

Hard Decides Against Trip

James A. Hard is still an able fellow at the groaning board for all about 109 years, but he’s lost his taste for lobster.

That’s why he won’t attend the national encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans at Boston this week, he explained today.

The nation’s oldest Civil War veteran previously had accepted the invitation. At the time he recalled a deluxe lobster dinner he had had at the STLV encampment in Boston more than 30 years ago.

“Somehow or other I’m not as keen about lobster now as I was years ago,” Hard commented. “I’m feeling fine, but I guess I’ll stay home.”

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Hard Mourns Death of GAR Commander

James A. Hard today mourned the death of his command at the Grand Army of the Republic.

The last elected head of the GAR, Theodore A. Penland, 101, of Vancouver, Wash., died in a VA hospital yesterday of a heart attack, one of a series that had confined him to the hospital for a year.

“Commander Penland was a fine man and an able commander,” Comrade Hard, 109, commended at his home in Portsmouth Ter.

“I voted for his election at the last encampment of the GAR in Indianapolis in 1949. He was the youngest of the seven Civil War soldiers at the encampment, and we all hoped that it would never be necessary that he have a successor in the office.”

The nation’s oldest Civil War veteran, Comrade Hard advances to senior vice-commander of the GAR as the result of Commander Penland’s death. Penland appointed Hard junior vice-commander last October when Charles A. Chappell of California died. Alfred Woolson of Minnesota, appointed senior vice-commander at that time, now succeeds Penland as commander-in-chief.

(Other details, Page 25.)

Keating Bill Cites Hard

Rochester’s 109-year-old James A. Hard and the other few Civil War veterans of the nation would be permitted to enter the hospital of their choice for medical treatment under a bill introduced yesterday by Representative Kenneth B. Keating of New York.

Under the present law, Keating explained, aged veterans must now enter veteran hospitals. Veterans Administration pension rolls carry 13 Civil War veterans.

The Associated Press said Keating cited Hard, oldest living Civil War veteran, who has suffered illnesses in recent years and cannot travel the distance required for treatment at a VA hospital.
Healthy Hard at 109 Sees
Hospital Aid Unnecessary

James A. Hard is looking for- ward to continued good health at 109. But I’m feeling fine, and I don’t
expect I’ll be needing any hospital
services until the last of the
month, when he will continue to travel
with the hospital at government
expense, instead of requiring them by
the national executive secretaries.

It’s nice of Mr. Keithing and Mr. Minn, the chief
of Veterans’ Hospitals to keep me in
mind.

CARL E. EKSTEN SR.
Henrietta, N. Y.

Healthy Hard at 109 Sees
Hospital Aid Unnecessary

James A. Hard is looking forward to continued good health at 109. But I’m feeling fine, and I don’t
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It’s nice of Mr. Keithing and Mr. Minn, the chief
of Veterans’ Hospitals to keep me in
mind.
Masons Honor 2 Members With 60-Year Palms

JAMES A. HARD, 109, (center), oldest living Union veteran of the Civil War, receives 60-year Masonic palm from Walter O. Parmington, district deputy grand master of the Second Masonic District. Locking on is Charles Kase, master of Rochester Lodge. Ceremony was held yesterday at Hard's residence, 31 Portsmouth Terr.

James A. Hard, 109-year-old Civil War veteran, yesterday added his signature to one of the Freedom Scrolls which are being circulated throughout the nation and will be placed in a Freedom Shrine in Berlin.

Cautioning against "getting caught napping," Hard said "we have to do everything to defeat the Communists. I've said that time and again. The Crusade for Freedom sounds like the best thing I've heard of for telling those Communists about democracy."

Thomas E. McFall, president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, sponsors of the Crusade here, said the scrolls will be available for signatures of other Rochesterians next week when special Freedom booths will be set up in the downtown area. Labor unions, veterans groups and industry also are circulating scrolls.
Hard Joins Freedom Crusade

TIMES UNION OCT 4 1950

Tm for It

James A. Hard, the nation's oldest ex-soldier, today joined the army which is fighting bloodless battles for democracy overseas—the Crusade for Freedom. The Civil War veteran affixed his signature to one of the Freedom Scrolls which are being circulated throughout the nation by the Crusade organization and which will be placed in a Freedom Shrine in Berlin. "The Crusade for Freedom," Hard said, "has been explained to me, and I'm for it. It sounds like the best thing I've heard of for telling those Communists about democracy."

The 109-year-old veteran, who joined the Union army to fight for Freedom almost 90 years ago, added: "We can't be caught napping this time. We have to do everything to defeat the Communists. I've said that time and again."

Other Rochesterians have the opportunity to sign the copper-colored scrolls next week, when special Freedom booths are set up at Main and Clinton, in downtown banks and elsewhere. Other scrolls are being circulated by labor unions and veterans groups, and in industry.

Thomas E. McFarland, president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce, which is sponsoring the Crusade here, said he hopes every Rochesterian will go out of his way to put his name on a scroll. He pointed out that in Syracuse recently more than 125,000 signatures were collected, and more than $45,000 in contributions forwarded to Crusade headquarters in New York City.

"The Crusade is the ideological counterattack on Communism, in answer of us having been waiting for," he said. "This is not just another organization—it is the major effort of millions of Americans who feel that up to now America has not been getting the truth about democracy to people in Iron Curtain countries."

He explained that climax of the first phase of the Crusade will come Oct. 24—United Nations Day—when a huge Freedom Bell is installed in the Freedom Shrine in Berlin—hundred of miles behind the Iron Curtain. "We hope," he said, "that the Freedom Bell will become a symbol for the fight against Communism just as the telling of Big Ben in London and the V-for-Victory sign were symbols of the struggle against Axis in World War II."

The ceremony took place at Hard's residence, 31 Fortieth Street. Almost 90 years ago, Hard was a soldier in the Union Army fighting for freedom for slaves.
ENROLL IN THE CRUSADE FOR FREEDOM
HELP LIFT THE IRON CURTAIN EVERYWHERE

 Declaration of Freedom

I believe in the sacredness and dignity of the individual.
I believe that all men derive the right to freedom equally from God.
I pledge to resist aggression and tyranny wherever they appear on earth.

I am proud to enlist in the Crusade for Freedom.
I am proud to help make the Freedom Bell possible, to be a signer of this Declaration of Freedom, to have my name included as a permanent part of the Freedom Strive in Berlin, and to join with the millions of men and women throughout the world on the cause of freedom sacred.

Hard at 109 to Cast Ballot; First Voted 86 Years Ago

Believed to be the oldest voter in the country as well as the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, 109, who cast his first vote 86 years ago, will go to the polls in Rochester Tuesday.

"I've never missed voting in a presidential election since I cast my first vote for Abraham Lincoln, and I never missed voting for a New York State governor since 1868," Comrade Hard said today at his home in Portsmouth Ter.

"And I've always voted the straight Republican ticket," he added emphatically. "This time I'll be voting for Gov. Dewey and Ken Keating for Congress."

The best governor New York State has ever had in his time, said Hard, was Theodore Roosevelt. "I voted for him for governor in 1898," he added, "and two years later I voted for him for president."

Hard cast his ballot for Lincoln at Nashville, Tenn., in 1864, a year after his regiment was mustered out of service in the Civil War.

He missed voting Election Day of last year for the first time in many years.

At the right is a closeup of Hard's signature on the Freedom Scroll.
Careful scrutiny of party tickets is made by James A. Hard, 109-year-old Civil War veteran who will go to polls to cast his vote for the 86th time. Rochester's oldest voter, he voted first in 1864, missed only one election—last year's. His nurse will accompany him today.

**Old Soldier Answers Duty Call**

Duty calls and today the old soldier will respond.

For 109-year-old James A. Hard, oldest living veteran of the Civil War, will be conveyed to the firehouse at University Ave. and Merri-
man St. about 9 a.m. today to participate in his 85th election.

He has missed only one since he cast his first vote for Abraham Lincoln as a soldier in Nashville, Tenn. in 1864. Last year he was unable to make the polls.

"But I'll be there this time," he said yesterday as he sat in his Portsmouth Ter. apartment. "I'm resting up for it and don't intend to miss it.

"Everyone should vote, regardless of party. It's a duty."

"But how is Comrade Hard going to vote?"

"That's easy," he said. "Straight Republican. I always have and always will."

Because of eye strain and the desire for plenty of rest, the old soldier has paid little attention to the bitter New York State campaign. He did take time, however, to join a veterans committee for Republican vote for him. I also marched for Representative Kenneth B. Keating whom he calls "comrade, as I do all soldiers." But the oldest Civil War veteran chuckled over some of his campaigning habits in his younger days.

"I once marched in a torchlight parade for that sheriff from Buffalo, Cleveland, I think his name was."

But President Grover Cleveland was a Democrat, it was gently sug-

"Sure," he rejoined. "But didn't
As Readers See It

Hard’s Vote in 1900 Helped Elect TR Vicepresident

Editor, The Times-Union:

In the Nov. 4 issue of The Times-Union, it was stated that Commander Hard, a grand old veteran at 109, never missed voting in a presidential election since he cast his first ballot for Abraham Lincoln.

The article stated that the best governor New York State ever had was Theodore Roosevelt and quoted Mr. Hard as saying, “I voted for him for governor in 1898 and two years later I voted for him for president.”

New York State fortunately has had a great line of governors from both parties, to mention some: Theodore Roosevelt, Al Smith, Lehman, F. D. Roosevelt and Dewey.

But Mr. Hard did not vote for Theodore Roosevelt for President in 1900 because TR was nominee for vice-president and heecided to the presidency upon McKinley’s assassination in 1901.

The reporter was plugging too hard.

H. S. TURNQUIST, 312 Peate St.

Editor’s Note: Mr. Hard may have said “I voted for him for President,” since Theodore Roosevelt did, in fact, serve most of the term for which McKinley was elected, and the reporter quoted him without noting the needed correction.

James Hard Again Will Head Parade

James A. Hard again has been named to head the Memorial Day Parade, it was announced yesterday.

The nation’s oldest Civil War veteran, Hard, 109-year-old Hard was elected grand marshal at the annual meeting of Veterans Memorial and Executive Council of Rochester at City Hall Annex. Others chosen were Henry E. Norton, chief marshal, and George N. Hope, commander, Hope Monroe County superintendent of veterans graves.

Hard Elected Parade Marshal

James A. Hard, 109, the nation’s oldest Civil War veteran, was elected grand marshal of the 1951 Memorial Day Parade last night at the annual meeting of Veterans Memorial and Executive Council of Rochester at City Hall Annex.

Others elected included Henry E. Norton, chief marshal; George N. Hope, commander, Hope in Monroe County superintendent of veterans graves. A band concert was given by the new Sons of Union Veterans Band, directed by Fred Dutroff.

Comrade Hard Quits Hospital

After 6 Days

James A. Hard, the nation’s oldest Civil War veteran at 109, returned to his home in Portsmouth Ter., this afternoon after warding off a threat of pneumonia in General Hospital.

Apparently none the worse, Comrade Hard hummed a farewell to his nurses before ending his six-day visit to the hospital.

The veteran greeted his press visitors in his usual strong voice this morning. But his usual morning cigar was missing. He’s been smoking only one a day since he entered the hospital last Friday, his nurse, Miss Agnes Arbuckle, reported.

Hard’s physician said he responded to treatment just about as well as he did in December of last year and again early this year. At that time Hard’s recuperative powers were termed “amazing.”
"HE WAS A BIG MAN"—James A. Hard, 109-year-old Civil War Veteran, describes Abe Lincoln to Cleon E. Heald of Keene, N. H., left, speaker at Lincoln dinner at Hotel Seneca last night, and Mrs. Lela Shugart, national president of Sons of Union Veterans Auxiliary. Heald and Mrs. Shugart visited Hard at his home yesterday, and heard stories of when Hard met Lincoln.

Hard Hopes to Take Place

At Head of Lincoln Banquet

Weather permitting, James A. Hard will take his place at the head of the banquet table for the annual Abraham Lincoln anniversary dinner at 6:30 p.m. Monday at Hotel Seneca.

The 109-year-old Civil War veteran, oldest living ex-GI in the U. S., is to be guest of honor at the celebration of his hero's birthday, an event sponsored by the Rochester Abraham Lincoln Association.

CLeON E. HARD

Hard, who declared yesterday that he wouldn't miss the banquet if he could help it, recalls three occasions when he shook hands with the Great Emancipator. In his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., Hard keeps a number of Lincoln mementos among the treasured souvenirs of his long life.

Guest speaker at the Lincoln dinner will be Cleon E. Heald of Keene, N. H., commander-in-chief of the Sons of Union Veterans, the organization which founded the local Lincoln Association. An avid collector of Lincolniana, Heald has been active in the SUV and served as an aide to the New Hampshire Grand Army of the Republic until that organization became defunct. He also is a leader in the American Legion in his home state.

Other leaders who will attend the banquet are Mrs. Lela Shugart of Marion, Ind., national president of the SUV Auxiliary; Leslie More of Owego, department commander of the SUV, and Mrs. Rae Maier of Albany, Auxiliary department president. Mayor Samuel Dicker will open the affair with greetings from the city, and George E. Hoyt, president of the Lincoln Association, will be toastmaster.

Hard Recalls Lincoln

As Big in Heart, Body

Ask James A. Hard what he recalls about Abraham Lincoln and you'll probably hear: "He was a big man—in heart as well as body."

That was the way Rochester's 109-year-old Civil War veteran described the Great Emancipator to a group of admiring visitors who called at his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., yesterday.

Because of the weather, Hard was unable to attend the annual Abraham Lincoln Association dinner at the Hotel Seneca last night. The guest speaker at the banquet, Cleon E. Heald of Keene, N. H., commander-in-chief of the Sons of the Union Veterans, and Mrs. Lela Shugart of Marion, Ind., national president of the SUV Auxiliary, called on him.

"I met President Lincoln at a White House reception," Hard said, "just after I had entered the Army during the Civil War. I shook hands with him, and oh, what a big hand he had!"

At his home, Hard keeps a number of Lincoln mementos which are among the treasured souvenirs of his long life.

"Later when I was with the Army," he said, "I saw Abraham Lincoln again. He was traveling on horseback and his feet almost touched the ground he was so tall. That shows how big he was!"

Hard told his visitors that he had traveled on land and in the air, and that now he was looking forward to taking a trip by water. "Sometimes I think I'll take a trip from here to Albany on the Barge Canal," he said smiling.

Hard Improved, Still in Hospital

James A. Hard, 109, was feeling pretty chipper as he drifted away on a big cigar last night in General Hospital.

Nurse said his condition was fairly good and the attending physician said the nation's oldest GAR Veteran has been making steady improvement. Hard was hospitalized Friday with pneumonia, a mild form of flu.
James A. Hard
Goes Back
To Hospital


"His condition seems almost as good as when he came in last December—but you never can tell at Mr. Hardy's age," said the attending physician at General Hospital.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran and the last New York State commander of the Grand Army of the Republic is "a little better" than when he arrived at the hospital late yesterday afternoon from his home in Portsmouth Ter. He has pneumonia, a relatively mild form of pneumonia.

"He doesn't require constant oxygen today, his temperature is down, and his color is better," the doctor said.

But bantering Jim Hardy isn't bantering with the nurses today. He did on his former visits. And he isn't up even smoking his usual morning cigar.

Doctors still call him the "amazing old gentleman."

Hard Better,
Sings Again

Once again James A. Hard is demonstrating the recuperative powers that amaze the doctors each time he enters the hospital.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran at the age of 109, Mr. Hard, was reported in "quite good" condition today in General Hospital. The attending physician said he has made steady improvement since he was hospitalized Friday afternoon with pneumonia, a relatively mild form of pneumonia.

Although he still hasn't resumed his daily cigar smoking, the last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic has resumed the singing of one of his old favorites: "My

His Spirits High,
Hard Puffs Cigar

On a hundred and nine years old, James A. Hard, a big cigar in his mouth, was in high spirits today in General Hospital.

Nurses said his condition was "quite good" and the attending physician said the nation's oldest Civil War veteran has been making steady improvement. He was hospitalized last Friday with pneumonia, a relatively mild form of pneumonia.

James A. Hard was reported failing today in General Hospital.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran at 109, Mr. Hard has been failing to respond to treatment in the past 24 hours, the attending physician said. He is refusing to take medication and apparently has lost interest.

The last commander of the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic, Mr. Hard entered the hospital a week ago today when he contracted a mild form of pneumonia. His condition improved for several days and then appeared to be out of danger.

Commander Hard
In Fair Condition,
Hospital Reports

Commander James A. Hard, 109, last night was reported still in "fair" condition in General Hospital.

Commander Hard, who has been in the same hospital several times in the past few years for treatment of pneumonia has had another attack a few days ago. As on his former visits to the same hospital from his Portsmouth Ter. home, Hard was really ill. His illness. As usual when taken to the hospital he immediately was placed on the "danger list" because of his age. Last night the hospital said he was not on the "danger list"

Hard Sitting Up,
Chipper at 109

James A. Hard is again his own chipper self.

The 109-year-old Civil War veteran, the nation's oldest, was sitting up in a chair in General Hospital today, apparently well on his way to recovery from an attack of pneumonia.

Henry E. Norton, Spanish-American war veteran, today was named chief marshal of Rochester's Memorial Day Parade by Grand Marshal James A. Hard, commander of the Department of New York, Grand Army of the Republic.

Commander Hard, at 109 the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, also made these designations:


Hard Perks Up,
Quits Hospital

After 15 Days

They just can't keep an old soldier down.

James A. Hard, at 109 the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, was to leave General Hospital this afternoon and go home.

In the hospital 15 days with a lung disorder, the amazing veteran was feeling pretty perky as he planned his exit to 31 Portsmouth Ter.

The last New York State commander of the Grand Army of the Republic entered the hospital with pneumonia, a relatively mild form of pneumonia.

But he didn't stay in bed too long. He took to his wheelchair and just kept right on improving.

Hard Names
Parade Aides
HARD’S COLORS—Viewing new banner of Rochester Masonic War Veterans Post is James A. Hard, for whom chapter is named. Colors were shown Hard by Monarch Lewis B. Noble, Post Commander Lancey Thomson and James Eksten, Hard’s great-grandson.

Hard Describes Boyhood
In Local History Magazine

James A. Hard, the nation’s oldest ex-GI, has gone into the magazine-writing business.

Hard, the Civil War veteran who has been amazing to Rochesterians for years, has contributed an article on his boyhood to “Scrapbook,” a magazine of local history and folklore published by the Rochester Historical Society.

Titled “My Boyhood 100 Years Ago,” the article describes life on the Hard family farm near Binghamton. He talks of working one Summer for a not-too-kindly farmer, of his first fight at school, and of a memorable visit to Binghamton on the Fourth of July, 1871.

Another highlight of the article, which was told to Andrew Wolfe of The Times-Union staff, is Hard’s description of maple-sugaring as practiced in the Hard household.

IN THE SAME ISSUE, George Brooks of Groton, writer of magazine fiction, tells of the closing years of the Rochester Herald, giving sketches of such notable figures as Louis P.

THE SCRAPBOOK can be obtained by writing to Dr. Blake McKelvey, secretary, Rochester Historical Society, 115 South Ave. Another issue is planned for Fall.

Spanish War Vet
APR 22, 1951

Named Marshal
For Memorial Day

Rochester’s 1951 Memorial Day parade will begin at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday, May 30, at East Ave. and Portsmouth Ter.

Plans for the Memorial Day observance were announced yesterday by the Veterans Memorial and Executive Council. James A. Hard, 109, America’s oldest Civil War veteran and grand marshal of the parade, has named Henry E. Norton of the United Spanish War Veterans and senior past commander of the council as chief marshal.

Other Parade Leaders

Other parade leaders named by Hard include George W. Stout, United Spanish War Veteran, deputy marshal; Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Drum, commanding officer of the 105th Antiaircraft Artillery Brigade, New York National Guard, chief of staff for the procession, and Col. Edward J. Thompson, deputy chief of staff and executive officer.

The parade will proceed on East Ave. from Portsmouth Ter., to Main St. E., west on Main St. to Clarissa St., south on Clarissa St. to Broad St., and east on Broad St. to South Ave. Hard and his staff will review the parade on the south side of Broad St. opposite City Hall. Mayor Samuel B. Dicker and other city officials will review the procession from a stand in front of the City Hall.

Gold Star Mothers

A reviewing stand for Gold Star Mothers ladies of the auxiliaries and war mothers will be in front of the Court House, west of the officials’ stand. Norton will receive the salute of commanding officers in the parade for the grand marshal.

The parade will include bands and drum and bugle corps of the various veterans’ organizations.

The council’s Memorial Day Observance Committee will meet at 8 p.m. today in the GAR Rooms, City Hall Annex, to complete arrangements for the parade.

Commander Hard
APR 22, 1951
Views Post Colors

Commander James A. Hard viewed the colors of his post yesterday.

Hard, 109, oldest Civil War Veteran in the United States and commander of the Masonic War Veterans Post named after him here, was shown the new post banner by Monarch Lewis B. Noble, Post Commander Lancey Thomson and James Eksten, Hard’s great-grandson.

The banner will be presented officially to James A. Hard Post, Masonic War Veterans, at ceremonies Tuesday in Clifton Lodge. The presentation will be made by Laila Rooks Grotto.

The James A. Hard Post was the 18th Masonic War Veterans chapter to be chartered in the State of New York. Eligible to membership are men who are Master Masons and veterans of any American war.

Hard said to be the oldest living Mason in the world, possesses the Mason’s 60-year palm. His great-grandson is first lieutenant commander of the new post.
"... IN BURNISHED ROWS OF STEEL!"

With memories of another war and other Decoration Days in his mind, 109-year-old James A. Hard, oldest Civil War veteran in the nation, acted as grand marshal of Rochester's parade again yesterday. Fifty thousand saw marchers.

D & C, May 31, 1951

Hard Rides Again

---Minus Big Cigar

James A. Hard led the Memorial Day parade here yesterday—without his usual big black cigar.

The nation's oldest living Civil War veteran—he'll be 110 July 15—rode in a closed car through the three-mile parade waving to the throngs.

Hard rode with three great-grandsons and one granddaughter, one of them told reporters that the old boy has been warned by his doctor to give up smoking his customary Havana.

"I heard the cheers of the crowd clearer than I have for many a year," Hard said.

His grandchildren said that during the parade, their granddad often hummed the chorus of the old Civil War song, "Home Again."

Hard said he hopes to attend the state convention of the Sons of Union Veterans in Buffalo in June "if I can fly."
Hard Smoking Despite Rumor

Yep! James A. Hard still smokes cigars—and all he wants to smoke.

The 109-year-old Civil War veteran, perched at the rumor that got around that he had quit his favorite pursuit, gave forth through a cloud of blue smoke yesterday his protests over the whole business. His doctor, according to James Eksten, great-grandson, says he can eat, drink and smoke as he pleases. As he says, He smoked around a cloud of blue smoke yesterday his protests over the whole business.

Disabled Vets to Send Cigars to Hard

Albany — (GNS) — New York Department, Disabled American Veterans, is not an outfit to leave a veteran in distress.

So yesterday, the delegates to the 29th annual convention, hearing that 109-year-old James A. Hard of Rochester, the oldest GAR vet in the nation, was in "distress," agreed to send him a box of cigars.

Recently Hard scotched a rumor that his doctor had forbidden him to smoke his favorite cigar. He feared the rumor might deter his friends who keep him supplied.

To cover any lapses, the DAV delegates agreed to fill the breach the best way they could—by sending cigars. They also voted a citation for Hard. The enabling resolution was made by Lt. Harry Barlow of Rochester.

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Hard Hopes President
Notes 110th Birthday

Reported in good health and with enough fan mail to keep him in good spirits for many days, venerable James A. Hard, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, today prepared for his 110th birthday celebration tomorrow.

As of noon today some 150 greeting cards had been delivered to his 51 Portsmouth Ter. residence. His reception—"I'm going to read every card." And I'm sure looking forward to one from the President. But, you know, I've voted Republican in every election since I voted for Abe Lincoln."

A CONCERT will be held at his home tomorrow from 3 to 4 p.m. by the 54th Regiment Band, playing some of Hard's favorite tunes. This will be followed by a reception lasting until 6. In addition to the annual avalanche of greeting cards and cigars, the old gentleman will receive a cake dicked with 110 candles.

Hard was born in Victor in 1841. He was 23 and working in a sawmill when the Civil War began. He joined the Union forces immediately.

SERVICE in several major engagements, including Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, South Mountain and Antietam followed. He still has his blue GAR uniform.

Hard continues to smoke about 10 cigars a day and says he feels "pretty good, but the weather doesn't help any." The old soldier sums up 110 years of life like this:

"It seems like a long time, I suppose, but the time goes real quickly, even if you have lived as long as I have."

DEAR JAMES A. HARD—

This is the first time we have ever written to anyone 110 years old, and the fact that you will reach that extremely special state on Sunday leaves us a little embarrassed at our inadequacy of expression.

There doesn't seem to be much that any of us can tell a man of your age, your experience and your stature. All we can do is ask, knowing that somewhere in your miraculous memory you have most of the answers.

You have said and written several times that you have faith in the United States and all for which this nation stands, that you have tyranny, that you love liberty and that you are convinced that oppression must be fought and freedom is worth dying for.

These are sentiments in which all good Americans concur. It is to be hoped that all will continue to hold them fast long after we and even you have gone.

WHAT YOUR FAITH in America does for us is something very good indeed.

For along the years of your tremendous life span you have gleaned the kind of knowledge that few men can acquire in their small lifetimes.

You have known men who could have known Washington and Jefferson and the Adamses. You have met Lincoln and seen Grant and been contemporary with Lee and Sherman and Sheridan.

You have seen what fool politicians and well-intentioned statesmen have done to the greatest land on earth and seen that land become involved in six major wars in your own time. You have seen it survive and grow stronger even while ineptness and stupidity and wastefulness have gnawed at its inwards and corroded its outward beauty.

YET YOU HAVE REMAINED constant and your faith has remained firm and your judgment sound.

You have not preached, and this is refreshing to find in any man. You have not scolded and that, too, is a virtue. You have not prescribed—either for long life, or for morals or for human conduct. You have not filled us full of recipes or formulas.

You have exercised two of the America's greatest privileges—to fight for his country and to vote for his candidates and in fighting and voting you have helped keep our America intact.

AND SUNDAY is your birthday—several lifetimes after your first—and we want to wish you many happy returns, and God grant, many happy years.

We want to tell you that you are revered not only because you are an ex-soldier, not only because you are a leading citizen, and not only because you have stood fast for certain things.

You are also held in special esteem because you have done what none of the rest of us dare hope to be able to do—defied time and the wind and the rain of the years and emerged perhaps a little worn but still triumphant.
Hard, 110, Recalls Highlights of Life

BY JACK VAN BUREN
James A. Hard, the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, is all set to celebrate his 110th birthday today. This McClellan hat caused him to reminisce.

"After a little while," he continued, "an officer in my detachment came up to me and said, 'Hard, do you know who you were just talking to?' I answered no. Then he told me I had just shaken the hand of General Grant. I was flabbergasted!"

Hard, who was born in Victor on July 15, 1841, was running a sawmill at Indiana when the Rebels fired on Fort Sumter in April, 1861. He enlisted immediately and was assigned to the 32d Volunteers.

He vaguely recalled how he had fought with the forces of the blue at bloody Antietam, Bull Run, Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg.

"But I remember clearly when Lee surrendered in 1865," Hard said. "I was at Atlanta with the railroad corps of Sherman's Army. We were maintaining the transportation and supply lines for the march to the sea when the news of the surrender reached us."

The last commander of the Grand Army of the Republic listed his meeting with General Grant as one of the two most important experiences of his long and full life.

"My other memorable experiences happened just after I entered the Army. I was in Washington, D.C. for awhile and one day I attended a White House reception and met and shook hands with Abraham Lincoln, M'lady. How big his hands were!"

The Civil War veteran spoke in a husky voice as he sat in his favorite chair at 31 Plymouth Ter., where he makes his home. Later he tried on the McClellan hat, which was given to him as a birthday gift by Mrs. Margaret Schreiber of 88 Avenue D. Heaped beside him on the desk were more than 500 birthday cards sent to him by friends. This afternoon, a special concert will be given for him by the 54th Regiment band, which will play his favorite tunes, including 'Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground.'

He'll Get Cake, 110 Candles
Following the band concert on the lawn of his home, a reception, sponsored by the Monroe County Chapter, Sons of Union Veterans, will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. A birthday cake, decked with 110 candles, will be presented to him.

What's Hard looking forward to now that he has reached 110? "Well, I'm looking forward to another 110 years," he said with a chuckle and a twinkle in his eye..."
DRAMATIC DAY in the life of James A. Hard, the nation's oldest Civil War vet, was enjoyed when he celebrated his 110th birthday.

James A. Hard, known to Rochester physicians as "the amazing old gentleman," was a decade of his second century.

He was reported relaxing completely and enjoying himself this morning at his 31 Pompeouth Terrace residence. By 9 a.m., he had even smoked one of the many cigars he received yesterday at his 110th birthday party.

"He hasn't talked much about yesterday's festivities," an aide at his residence reported this morning. "But he's feeling fine. We expect that he'll be in a more conversational mood later in the day."

YESTERDAY, surrounded by friends and relatives and deluged by greetings from across the nation, Hard superintended the slicing of a huge birthday cake decked with 110 candles. Below his porch the 54th Regiment Band, the city's oldest playing since 1866, played "When the Battle's O'er," "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Presented with an old blue McClellan hat, the venerable last commander of GAR reminisced about the battles of Antietam, Bull Run, Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg. He remembered also his personal meetings with General Grant and President Lincoln.

Hard recalled that during a trench digging assignment on the James River near Richmond, Va., a portly officer approached him.

"He asked how things were going, then we shook hands and chatted for a while before he finally walked off," the old soldier remembers. "Later I was told I had shaken the hand of General Grant."

His meeting with Lincoln was at a White House reception early in the war.

YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, Hard had another contact with the White House.

"It has just come to my attention that July 15 is your 110th birthday and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to extend to you my cordial congratulations," ran a special delivery message from Washington. "This is indeed a remarkable attainment."

I'm glad to join your host of friends in extending very best wishes as you continue your journey through life.

It was signed "Very sincerely yours, Harry Truman."

Hard said he was pleased to hear from the President. "But, you know," he added, "I've voted Republican in every election since I voted for Abe Lincoln."

With him, looking over huge cake, is Cleon E. Heald, national commander of Sons of Union Veterans.
BIRTHDAY CIGARS—The oldest soldier of them all, James A. Hard, passes out cigars here to 107-year-old Eddie Van Duyne, right, and Cleon E. Heald, national commander of the Sons of Union Veterans, which sponsored yesterday's birthday reception. Hard was 110.

Letter from Truman, Band Concert

Make 110th Birthday Happy for Hard

By LARRY HOWE

An old man sat near a cake with 110 candles yesterday and had his birthday cake.

Outside on the lawn, a band played his favorite tunes. Friends, relatives, and neighbors crowded into the house to tell him how happy they were to see him looking so well. Most left gifts and cards, and signed a guest register.

The giant of honor was James A. Hard, this country's oldest living Civil War veteran. Some 200 persons and a band took time out to show him how they felt about it. They made it a memorable birthday, but it was a trying one for Hard. He was up before his usual 6:15 rising hour, a little excited. He ate a good breakfast and sat and mused in his room until lunch. His party got underway in the afternoon.

The 54th Regiment Band, the city's oldest, arrived at 2 p.m. for the special concert. They practiced for a while, then began to play the music that is closest to Jim Hard's heart, music like "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Poses for Photographers

At about 3:30 Hard left his room to go downstairs and pose for photographers. The reception began at 4 and the people began to stream in. Those he remembered, Hard spoke to by name. Those he didn't, he greeted cordially and thanked for coming. Most remarked that they hoped they'd be back for his 111th birthday party.

One guest at yesterday's reception is only two and a half years younger than Hard. He's Eddie Van Duyne, 107 River St., sometimes known as "Holy Cow," who turned 107 last Jan. 15. Van Duyne and Hard shook hands and wished each other well. Van Duyne, who missed service in the Civil War, "caused me hurt my leg on my way to enlist," attended the reception for Hard two years ago.

A congratulatory wire, cards, and letter poured into the Portsmouth Express' home where Hard resides. Of special interest was one which came by special delivery late yesterday afternoon from the White House. It read:

Dear Commander Hard:

It has just come to my attention that July 15 is your 110th birthday and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to extend to you my cordial felicitations. This is indeed a remarkable attainment and you are blessed to have the privilege of such unusual longevity. Such a notable occasion will certainly be enriched by the cherished memories of this long and eventful span of years. I'm glad to join your host of friends in extending very best wishes as you continue your journey through life.

Very sincerely yours,

Harry Truman.

Among other congratulatory messages were ones from Gov. Thomas E. Dewey and Mayor Samuel B. Dicker.

Up to yesterday Hard had received some 400 cards, telegram and letters. And Mrs. Carl E. Ecksten, Hard's granddaughter, said she had received 231 of them to him since Friday.

"He gets tired hearing all the names," Mrs. Ecksten said, "but he always perked up when he hears a name he knows."

'Never Felt Better,' He Says

The reception, sponsored by the Monroe County Council of Sons of Union Veterans, was somewhat of a strain on the Victor-born veteran. But he started it out feeling fine.

"Never felt better," he said. "This is always a big day for me, and it's nice weather for it too."

The SUV national commander, Cleon E. Heald, drove in from his Keese, N. H., home for the party. He said he had promised Hard he would attend when he visited him here last February.

Guests at the party brought Hard several boxes of cigars, which he consumes at the rate of about 10 a day. Other gifts included neckties, handkerchiefs and ties.

Neighborhood children turned out in force for the reception. All were greeted by Hard who told one to be good and "and you might grow up to be President."

A little after 5, when the last of the guests were off the porch and on the way to their cars, Hard went back upstairs for his supper and a chat with members of his immediate family. He smoked a cigar before retiring about 7. The 110th year was ended. Next one up was the 111th. Said James A. Hard:

"I'll come. Times goes quickly."
FOR SERVICES RENDERED—James A. Hard, 110-year-old veteran of the Civil War, receives citation from Disabled American Veterans, New York State Department, for 80 years of service to veterans, their widows and orphans. Presenting the scroll is Louis Vandeau, left, a past state commander.

State DAV Cites James Hard
For 80-Year Service to Vets

A citation recognizing James A. Hard’s “80 years of service to veterans” was presented yesterday to the 110-year-old Hard by the Disabled American Veterans, New York State Department.

At a ceremony at Hard’s home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., Louis H. Vandeau of Rochester, past state department commander, presented a framed scroll to the last survivor of the New York State Grand Army of the Republic.

The State Department of the DAV unanimously adopted a resolution to make the citation at the unit’s convention in Albany last June. Vandeau, who also is a past commander of Rochester Chapter 15, DAV, said as he made the presentation, “Your work always has been faithful to your comrades, their widows and orphans. At 110, you are still interested in all veteran activities, now being national junior vicecommander of the GAR.”

Hard commented, “I expect to have a number of years of work with veterans before me.”

Department Commander Joseph M. Smyth of Albany sent his regards to the Civil War veteran.

Oldsters Equal
Hard’s Record

If a couple of oldsters remember rightly, Rochester’s senior citizen, 110-year-old James A. Hard, has company as the holder of the record for the most consecutive years of voting in New York State.

Hard, who has voted 72 times in the last 73 years, found his record tangled in a three-way tie yesterday as Samuel E. Quackenbush, 83, former Republican assemblyman and one-time mayor of Corning, and John Shattell, 93, of Syracuse, both voted for the 72nd time.

As he cast his vote in Cornwell, Quackenbush boasted he hadn’t missed a vote since he was 21, according to the Associated Press. And in Salamanca, former State Supreme Court Justice Thomas H. Dowd, 92, said he was one year behind Hard and Quackenbush.

Although he was sliding this one out because illness prevented him from registering, Hard bore his new peers no ill will.

“Anybody who’s voted as many times as that is a good citizen,” the aged Civil War–veteran remarked last night.

James Hard
To Present Rifles

James A. Hard, the nation’s oldest living Civil War veteran, will present two Army training rifles to the James A. Hard Post, Masonic War Veterans, in a ceremony Tuesday at his home.

The rifles will be used by the post’s honor guard at the Masonic War Veterans Upstate Convention here Nov. 24. Hard, 110-years-old, is an active charter member of the post.

Hard Gives Guns
To Veteran Post
Named After Him

First honorary member of the James A. Hard Post 18, Masonic War Veterans, the 110-year-old Civil War veteran has presented two honor guard rifles to the post.

The rifles, accepted in behalf of the post by its commander, Lancy Thomson, and first lieutenant commander, James P. Eckstein, great-grandson of Hard, will be used for the first time at an upstate convention here on Saturday. Hard is the only Civil War member of any such post.

State Veteran Group
To Honor James Hard

For his long service in the Grand Army of the Republic, James A. Hard will be honored at his home today by New York Department of the Disabled War Veterans. A citation will be given to Hard by Louis Vandeau of Rochester, a past state commander.
JAMES HARD PRESENTS two honor guard rifles to James A. Hard Post No. 18 of Masonic War Veterans. The 110-year-old Civil War veteran is the first charter member of the post and the only Civil War member of any such post. Accepting the honor guard rifles, which will be used for the first time at an upstate convention here Saturday are Lancey Thomson (left), commander of the post, and James P. Eksten (right), first lieutenant commander and great-grandson of Hard.

110th Christmas Parades By, D. & C., Dec 28, 1951

Hard Set for Hundred More

It was James A. Hard's 110th Christmas yesterday and after the grand old man of the GAR polished off the last of his turkey dinner at his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., he observed that he'd just as soon have a hundred more.

The 110-year-old Civil War veteran got presents and cards by the hundreds and they came from all over the country. Of course, knowing Hard's predilection for cigars, there were plenty of those. He generally manages to store up nearly a year's supply at Christmas time.

His associates said Hard's health is good, in fact better than it has been for some time, with no sign of the respiratory troubles which in recent years have landed him in the hospital for short stays. Hard also had numerous visitors during the day, people who wouldn't let Christmas go by without calling on him.
Union troops were being retrained following the Battle of Bull Run. Presented McClellan Cap, which was a replica of the style worn by Union troops in the Civil War. Hard, whose eyesight had failed considerably, fondled the visor and crown and a few seconds later, his voice ringing with delight exclaimed: "Why it's a McClellan cap! Sure. Why it's the same kind we used to wear—named after General McClellan.

He seemed happy to hear that youngsters are wearing such caps these days—but nobody mentioned that some children are wearing the gray. Confederate counterpart of the McClellan cap, also known as a kepi, was presented to Hard.

This Winter, Hard spends most of his waking hours usually from 7 a.m. to about 8 p.m.—he arose an hour earlier yesterday—in a comfortable chair in his second floor room. His inability to get out saddened him a bit yesterday when a group from Rochester's Abraham Lincoln Association paid him a visit. The association held its 30th annual dinner at the Hotel Seneca last night, an affair Hard used to attend with great enjoyment.

"Wish I Could Go," he said. "I only wish I could go there with you tonight," he told Roy J. Bennett, commander-in-chief of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, who came here from Des Moines to attend the dinner. "Are you going to have chicken? I'd love to sit down to a chicken dinner.

Bennett told him that he expects to stop over in Duluth, Minn., on his return trip to Des Moines. There, he said, he'll visit another of the few surviving Union veterans of the Civil War, Albert C. Woolson, who became 105 years old Monday.

"He's in good health," Hard wanted to know. "He sure is," replied Bennett.

"Good," said Hard. He reached over to a side table fell about him and his fingers located his stock of cigars—he still smokes three a day.

"Give them these" he said, passing over a couple of the stories to Bennett. "And tell him I hope he had a good picture of Lincoln coming down—happy birthday."
HE'S A-RARIN' TO GO—Come Spring, and Comrade James A. Hard, at 110 the nation's oldest war veteran, gets thinking about the Memorial Day Parade. Entering into spirit of Mr. Hard's marching plans are (at left) Master Danny Maxwell, 9, wearing miniature Union Army cap. Mrs. Cora Dieter

9-9-52
James Hard, 110, Says He'll Lead Parade

When the bands play and flags fly for Rochester's annual observance of Memorial Day, Grand Marshall James A. Hard, who will be 111 years old on July 15, expects to take his customary place at the head of the parade.

Hard, oldest of the few surviving Civil War veterans in the country, is making preparations for the day at his home, 21 Portsmouth Ter. He is reported in good health and spirits and firm as ever in his determination to carry on the Memorial Day traditions of the Grand Army of the Republic.

HARD WILL be escorted by members of the Sons of Union Veterans, their new band, and members of the Masonic Veterans, of which he is the oldest member and only representative of the GAR.

A meeting of the Memorial Day Observation Committee will be held at 7:30 p.m. Saturday in the City Hall Annex to complete plans for placing flags on the graves of more than 10,000 veterans in Rochester cemeteries. The work requires more than 300 volunteers.

The annual Memorial Day Sunday service will be held May 25 at 8 a.m. in the Masonic Auditorium. There will be music by the Sons of Union Veterans Band and Jefferson High School Choristers. The Rev. William A. Hallock and the Rev. Paul Hoover are in charge of the program.

GROVER C. SCOTT, adjutant of the Veterans Memorial and Executive Council, said the Memorial Day parade will be expanded this year to include all fraternal, military and veterans units, who have marching auxiliaries of such units will have their own divisions.

Kenneth Abar, vice-commander of the American Legion, and George Stout, have been appointed deputy marshals for the parade.

Battles Long Ago

The durable James Hard is one of the few living Americans who can be expected to take more than a passing interest in the news that this state has bought for memorial purposes a piece of the field where the second battle of Bull Run, also known as Manassas, was fought. It has its high place in our history, but younger generations will associate "battle" with alien names like Chateau Thierry, St. Lo, Okinawa, Inchon.

Something can be learned about the nature of war, however, by noting that the second battle of Bull Run represented a popular misconception about the Civil War. It was believed in 1861 that the first engagement there would be final. The war was to be a quick, decisive Northern triumph, and official Washington rode out in a picnic mood to witness the rout of the Rebels.

One of the spectators that July day was Alfred Ely, Rochester's representative in Congress. When the shooting was over he was in the South's first bag of prisoners. The men of the 13th Infantry, Rochester's own regiment, under fire for the first time, had some casualties and some bad news. They had enlisted for three months, and their time was up, but the government had decided to hold them for two years.

The moral is that a short war is an illusionary hope.
FOES? NO SUH! From below Mason-Dixon Line, Baltimore Catholic War Veterans voted a citation to James A. Hard, 110, oldest of Union Civil War men, for his "citizenship." Here, Robert E. Wilson (left) and Donald J. Foley make the presentation of the citation.

Hard Receives Citation

From Baltimore Veterans

From Baltimore yesterday came a tribute to James A. Hard, Rochester's 110-year-old Civil War veteran, in recognition of his responsible citizenship and inspiring Americanism. The tribute was inspired by a news story that told about Hard's voting in his 85th election, and that was published in many newspapers throughout the country. The news article came to the attention of members of St. Elizabeth's Post of the Catholic War Veterans of America, in Baltimore, and they decided that something should be done about it.

"Our post is especially interested in promoting a broader exercise of the franchise by our citizens," officers of the post wrote to Monroe County leaders of the Catholic War Veterans. "This magnificent record appealed to us, especially when so many men and women in their youthful vigor are too indolent and uninterested to take the few moments to vote."

So the St. Elizabeth's Post prepared a scroll honoring Hard, and sent it to local CWV leaders with the request that it be presented to the aged veteran in appropriate ceremonies. It was given to Hard at his Portsmouth Ter. home yesterday by Robert Wilson, assisted by Donald Foley, county commander of the Catholic War Veterans.

Hard longevity refutes 'Oldest Mason' claim

Claims from Texas on the death of a man believed to be the "world's oldest Mason," were refuted yesterday.

Rochester's James A. Hard, Civil War veteran, became a member of Rochester Lodge, F & A.M., on Dec. 8, 1884, received a 50-year service pin in May, 1944, in which was added a 60-year palm last year. At 110, he is four years older than the Texan who died in Fort Worth, Thursday at the age of 106.

Hard One of Four Remaining Vets of Union Army

There are only four remaining Civil War veterans of the Union Army. That was ascertained yesterday following some confusion of the number remaining after the death of one veteran in California. James A. Hard, who is 110, is one of the four.

Mrs. Carl Eksten of Henrietta, granddaughter of Hard, said the contacted Miss Cora Gillis of Jamestown, national secretary of the Grand Army of the Republic. According to Mrs. Eksten, Miss Gillis checked pension rolls in Washington and the GAR files.

Hard, who lives at 31 Portsmouth Ter., is junior vice-commander in chief of the GAR. Mrs. Gillis also reported that there are six remaining veterans of the Confederate Army. The other three remaining Union vets, all of whom are members of the GAR, were listed as William Magee, 105, of California; Israel Broadwater, 105, of Samuels, Idaho, and Albert Woolson, 105, of Duluth, Minn.

Hard Scorns VA Estimates: 'I'll Be Around a Long Time'

James A. Hard, 110-year-old Rochester Civil War veteran, expects he'll "be around for a long time" no matter what Veterans Administration 1953 budget figures imply.

The VA's 1953 budget reportedly makes provision for only one Union Civil War veteran pension. It is now paying four members of the Grand Army of the Republic $1,440 a year each.

Hard and Albert Woolson, 105, of Duluth, Minn., share the verifiable Rochesterian's love of cigars, and are confident the VA will have to revise its estimate.

"I FEEL FINE," was Hard's comment on this penny-pinching. "Cut down my cigar smoking to about five a day. Eat good. Sleep good. I'll be around for a long time, no matter what the VA figures."

Apparently lively as ever, he reportedly wakes up other residents of 31 Portsmouth Ter. by occasional 4 a.m. renditions of "Testing Tonight" and other Civil War songs.

Woolson, whose idea of a life-prolonging diet is cigars and coffee, expects to be around for another five years, according to International News Service. He is still spry enough to shovel the deep Minnesota snows from his Duluth sidewalk.

At Van Nuis, Calif., farthest distant link in this nationwide argument, William A. Magee, 106, expects to live through the year; he won't taking any bets on the more distant future.

ONLY NOTE OF GLOOM from the elderly quartet comes from Israel Broadwater, 105, of Samuel, Idaho. "We regard Mrs. Magee, 105, of California; Israel Broadwater, 105, of Samuel, Idaho, and Albert Woolson, 105, of Duluth, Minn."

Hard's voting in his 85th election, and that was published in many newspapers throughout the country. The news article came to the attention of members of St. Elizabeth's Post of the Catholic War Veterans of America, in Baltimore, and they decided that something should be done about it.
ONE SOLDIER FOR ANOTHER—James A.
Hard, 110, nation's oldest ex-GI, boarded the
gen. Eisenhower-for-President bandwagon
yesterday when he signed petition for an Ike
campaigner, Gerry Court, at right. Hard
donned "I Like Ike" lapel button right away.

Hard Climbs Aboard
Eisenhower Bandwagon

Other voters may be waiting for Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower
to take a stand on issues of the day, but not 110-year-old James
A. Hard.

Gently fingering the "I Like Ike" button on his lapel, yester-
day afternoon, the oldest living Civil
War veteran went on record as favor-
ing Eisenhower because he "is an
honest man and knows more about
the problems of the country than
any other citizen."

To show he meant business Hard
grasped a pen in his still steady
right hand and signed a petition
being circulated by local Eisenhower
committee booster, Gerry Court.

For Ike from First
Since he is not able to listen to the
radio, read newspapers or watch
television in his room at Dieter San-
tarium, 11 Portsmouth Ter., Hard
has depended on talks with his nurse,
Mrs. Nina Foote, and other visitors
for news of the campaign and the
candidates.

When asked how long it took him
to make up his mind about Ike, Hard
replied "I was for him as soon as
I found out he was running."

Hard, considered a dyed-in-the-
wool Republican, said he was looking
forward to casting a ballot for Eisen-
hower in the fall.

3 More 'Boys' Still Alive

Besides Rochester's James A. Hard, 110, only three others of
the once mighty Boys of Blue, the Civil War were believed to be
alive.

They are William A. Magee of
Van Nuy, Calif, Israel Brod-
swod of Samuel, Idaho, and Al-
bert Woolson of Duluth, Minn.,
all 105.

Magee lives with a granddaugh-
ter who says, "He's still too ac-
tive for us." He gets his own
breakfast and lunch, is up with
the sun, takes walks, reads his
newspaper thoroughly.

Woolson, who smokes as many
cigars as he wants, will be honor-
ary grand marshal of Duluth's
parade tomorrow.

Brodswod lives in seclusion
with two trapper sons. Towns-
folk in Samuel say he is still
hearty but his sight and mind have
failed in the last year.
Hard, Nation's Oldest Soldier, To Lead Memorial Day Parade

With the nation's oldest soldier leading them, Rochester's Memorial Day marchers tomorrow will write another chapter of memories that link the city with its various warrior-dead.

Grand marshal of tomorrow's parade, which begins at 9:30 a.m. at East Ave. and Portsmouth Ter., will be 116-year-old James A. Hard, 31 Portsmouth Ter., one of only four survivors of the Grand Army of the Republic, which once numbered more than a million stalwarts.

This is his ninth straight year as grand marshal. Deputy marshals are Henry E. Norton, George Stout, Kenneth Abar and Lawrence Hauck. Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doucet is chief of staff.

preceded by the Park Band and Masonic War Veterans, the grand old soldier's car will be escorted along the line of march by the Son of Union Veterans to the reviewing stand at Broad St. opposite City Hall.

THE PARADE annually is the big event in Mr. Hard's life. His eyesight all but gone, his hearing impaired, he spends much of his time resting in an easy chair at the nursing home where he resides. His daily consumption of his beloved cigars is limited to about two.

But this week he has prepared carefully for the big day, getting more than his usual amount of rest. He says he is feeling fine. He will be 117 on July 15.

Tomorrow's will be one of Rochester's biggest Memorial Day processions—expanded considerably over last year. There will be two reviewing stands—the official one in Main St. W. in front of the Court House and the grand marshall's position in Broad St. opposite City Hall.

Division of all veterans' organizations, Boy and Girl Scouts, fraternal and other groups will participate.

The line of march will bring the procession down East Ave. to Main St. E., then west to Washington St., south to Broad St. and east to South Ave., where wreaths will be laid on the World War Memorial Plaque.

Donald A. Fossey, county commander of the American Legion, will speak. The parade is expected to last about two hours.

(For an editorial, "The Eve of Memorial Day," please turn to Page 6.)
Will He Top Longevity Record of 113 Years?

Why, Says Rochester's Last Civil War Veteran,

'I'll Bet I Live to Be

at Least 115!'
By ALTON L. BLAKESLEE
Associated Press Science Reporter

THE drums of civil war memory still sound for 12 remarkable veterans, the youngest 104, the oldest, Rochester's James A. Hard, nearly 112 years old.

One or more may top the record of human longevity — 113 years — accepted by statisticians as authentic.

One or more might even live another nine years, to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the war in which they fought.

Of these 12 surviving veterans, 8 fought with the Confederate Army, 4 with the Union Army.

A year ago, there were 28 of them, the year before that '41.

Professional statisticians cannot give you any odds on the survival probabilities because there is just no past experience on which to base estimates.

"There is a remote chance that one could live to 106," explained Mortimer Spiegelman, assistant statistician of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. "But I wouldn't want to bet on it."

FIRST LOOK at the longevity roll of the dozen veterans:

Oldest is Hard, who will be 111 on July 15, born, his record says, in 1841.

His three Union Army companions are Israel A. Broadword, of Sanuim, Idaho, who was 105 last Dec. 23; William A. Magee, Los Angeles, who will be 106 on Aug. 19, and Albert Woolson, Duluth, Minn., who was 105 last Feb. 11.

Youngest of all 12 is Confederate William D. Townsend, Olla, La., born Apr. 12, 1848, who was 104 last month.

The seven Confederate survivors are William W. Williams, Franklin, Tex., who will be 110 next Nov. 14; William J. Bush, Fitzgerald, Ga., who is 106; W. M. Loutdermilk, Jonesboro, Ark., who will be 105 on Oct. 27; William A. Lundy, Laurel Hill, Fla., who was 104 last Jan. 18; Arnold Murray, Orangesburg, S. C., who will be 106 on June 10; Thomas E. Riddle, Austin, Tex., who turned 106 last Apr. 16; John Salting, Swing, Va., who was 105 on May 15.

SCIENCE does not know of any upper limit on how long a human can live. Some optimists think man could live 150 to 200 years. History and legend tell of men or women who supposedly lived to astonishing age, such as 169, 145, 152, 145, 157. (Methuselah lived to 969 years, but the secret to that was a different method of counting "years"). The Russians now tell of people who supposedly are 130 or more.

But a close check usually shows there are no accurate birth records, or that a birth date is vouchsafed only by relatives, or that the birth-to-death dates of a father and son of the same name had been put together, or that there is some fibbing.

The investigations of two students of longevity point to 113 years as the top, best-authenticated age of a human. The record first was given to Pierre Joubert, a French-Canadian shoemaker who apparently lived from July 15, 1701, to Nov. 16, 1814, with his age vouched for by a statistician of the Canadian Census Bureau in 1878.

A decade ago, another expert told of finding a woman in New York State who apparently had lived a few weeks longer than Joubert.

ALTHOUGH ONE of the Civil War veterans may top the 113 years, there are better chances that veterans of World Wars 1 and 2 might do it. For the chances are stronger that more veterans of the 20th Century wars will live to be over 100, or even over 105, Spiegelman said.

One reason is simply that there were so many more veteran of the world wars. Another reason is that the average U. S. life span increased, with more people living to be 60, 70, 80, 90, and so on.

It might be a good bet that the last surviving veteran of World War 2 will be a WAC, a WAVE, or a SPAR — for U. S. women, on the average, are outliving men.

(From Picture — Preceding Page)

By HARRY RAMSEY

His chin jutting defiantly, Rochester's 110-year-old (nearly 111) James A. Hard was quick to agree that he would top the human longevity record which Alton L. Blakeslee in the accompanying article credits to Pierre Joubert, French-Canadian who lived to be 113.

"Why, I'll bet I live to be at least 115," he cracked a couple of days ago. "Don't see any reason why I shouldn't."

ON THE DAY the oldest living Civil War veteran announced his intention to top Joubert's record he was busy with a flurry of newspaper and radio interviews. In the morning he was interviewed on a tape recording for half an hour by station WHEC for a special pre-Memorial Day program. A few hours later he announced to the press his intention to back another Army man for President, General Eisenhower, and posed for pictures.

While he sat in an easy chair in his nursing home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., Hard (below, with his nurse, Mrs. Nina Foote) brushed the dust off his GAR campaign hat, not an original, and talked about the upcoming parade. "Guess I'm all set for Memorial Day," Hard declared. "All I have to do is put on my hat and coat."

TO MRS. FOOTE and seeral visitors the old campaigner remarked in a matter of fact way: "I'm as healthy today as I was in 1850."

Asked later about Hard's health, his nurse commented: "He's at least as healthy as he was last year and he hasn't been seriously ill since 1950, when he had a severe attack of pneumonia."

ALTHOUGH HE is extremely hard of hearing and virtually blind, Hard thinks clearly, chuckles at a wise-crack and signs his name legibly. When asked a question, he reflects a moment and comes up with a logical answer, stated precisely. As his nurse puts it: "At his age he can't afford to mince words."

Perhaps the longevity record of the long-dead Joubert will spur the patriarch, who will be 111 July 15, to make good his claim. Maybe you're only as old as you feel after all.
Hard Nears
TIMES UNION JUL 11 1952
111th Birthday

The venerable veteran for whom life appears endless will be accepting his customary anniversary cigars on Tuesday. The celebrant will be James A. Hard, oldest living veteran of the Civil War, and he has just cause for celebration: He will be 111.

The birthday party will be the 12th staged off to the Monroe County Council of the Sons of Union Veterans, the first one having marked his entry into the fraternity of centenarians.

On that occasion, as he surveyed a huge birthday cake with 100 candles, he remarked that he would provide the birthdays if the SUV would furnish the cakes. The SUV has compiled each year.

ON TUESDAY between 4 and 6 p.m. the SUV will again present Hard with a birthday cake. Guests will be welcomed at the reception at 31 Portsmouth Ter. On hand for purposes of serenading the brawny veteran will be the 54th Regiment Band.

The remaining part of the observance will be the cigars. He usually receives no less than 1,000.

Must Be the Climate

We have heard Rochester's climate castigated from top to bottom as an uncomfortable, unpredictable, and unhealthy commodity. So far as the last characteristic is concerned, we offer the simplest, most undeniable sort of refutation—James A. Hard.

Mr. Hard celebrated his 111th birthday yesterday. He is one of the oldest persons in the world, a distinguished witness for the tonic quality of Rochester's climate. Just to spotlight the fabulousness of Mr. Hard's age, consider:

He was born the year after the Antarctic Continent was discovered. He was 3 years old when the first message was sent by telegraph. There were only 27 states in the Union when Mr. Hard was born. Texas became the 28th in 1845. During his childhood the outstanding writers were such men as Dickens, Tennyson, Thackeray, Hawthorne, Melville. He was 15 years old when the first train crossed the Mississippi River. He was a middle-aged man of 51 when the first gasoline buggy was successfully operated.

At the recent Republican convention, there were many references to Abraham Lincoln, a figure who dwells now only in the mist of time, for it was 92 years ago that he was nominated for the Presidency, long before the rest of us were born. Yet Mr. Hard was a young man of 19 at that time, as a matter of fact was working on a railroad when Lincoln was nominated.

The sights that have crossed his vision in the last five score years and 11 run a great gamut in human progress. Hats off to him, and we sincerely hope that he will enjoy his 112th birthday.

MAGNIFIED GREETING—James A. Hard, dean of nation's few surviving Civil War veterans, gets closeup with the aid of his spectacles of greeting on one of scores of cards and telegrams congratulating him on 111th birthday upcoming tomorrow.

Hard Will Be 111 Tomorrow
D. & C. JUL 14 1952

Messages of Congratulation
Swamp Oldest War Veteran

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, is eagerly awaiting his 111th birthday tomorrow. Despite his 111 years and his failing eyesight, Hard is enjoying good health. He will receive friends and well-wishers tomorrow at the annual celebration at his home, sponsored by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Local veteran and patriotic groups will present Hard a birthday cake large enough to accommodate 111 candles. The 54th Regiment Band, under Floyd C. King, will serenade him.

Comrade Hard To Be Serenaded

Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, will serenade Comrade James A. Hard, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, on his 111th birthday July 15 at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter. All veteran, patriotic and civic organizations are invited to participate. The 54th Regiment Band under the leadership of Floyd C. King will play at Comrade Hard's special request, between 4 and 6 p.m.
**Old Soldier Hard Hopes to Live 35 Years More**

The band outside was playing "Old Soldiers Never Die," but 111-year-old Jim Hard, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, says this probably is exaggerated.

Asked about this at his birthday lawn party yesterday, the old soldier allowed as how 35 more years was probably the top.

"I'll be around for a long time yet," Hard told his nurse, Mrs. George Foote, as he prepared for the big day yesterday. "And I don't know why not; I'm not going anywhere."

Lounging back in his chair, his feet propped up on a footstool, Hard leaned forward and cupped his hand over his ear to catch the names of the well-wishers.

**Old War Tunes**

The feebly but alert veteran lives now in a world of semi-darkness and near-silence, but his mind and his sense of humor still are sharp.

The 54th Infantry Regiment Band, which was formed in Rochester during the Civil War, played a program of old war tunes on the lawn at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Lines of greeters, including Rep. Kenneth B. Keating, members of the Sons of Union Veterans and other organizations, filed into the living room of the home to pay their respects. On the table was a 2-by-3-foot cake with 111 candles and addressed in red icing to "Comrade James Hard" from the Sons of Union Veterans.

A printed sign, pinned to the drapery behind Hard's chair said "No Hand Shaking, Please," but Hard gave nearly everyone a handshake anyway.

**Holy Cow! Present**

Among the visitors was Ed (Holy Cow) Van Dyne, whose nickname derives from the ejaculation with which he begins nearly every sentence, and who is 108 years old.

Asked how he thought the old veteran looked, "Holy Cow" admitted: "He's a tough old piece of meat like myself, quite a boy." Van Dyne rode out to the house from downtown on the bus to pay his respects.

Hard says he works at longevity by "eating three good meals a day — and enjoying it." Enjoying it means topping each one off with a big cigar.

The appropriate question to ask a man who has been around in the world longer than almost anybody else is "What do you think of it?"

Hard had a heartening answer: I think it's improving. It's getting a lot better than it used to be."

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**Hard Remains Loyal to Ike**

Old soldiers not only need each other — they always stick together.

And sticking hopefully to Dwight D. Eisenhower in James A. Hard, 31 Portsmouth Ter., the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, who served and lived under the last president to be President of the United States — Ulysses S. Grant.

Hard, who celebrated his 111th birthday July 15th, sent a telegram to "Ike," congratulating him on his nomination as Republican candidate for the presidency. Now he has received a letter from the former five-star general which says:

"Dear Mr. Hard:

"Mrs. Eisenhower joins me in sincerest thanks for your heartwarming message received during the convention in Chicago last week. It was certainly kind of you to think of us as you did and encouraging to know that we will have your continued help in the task ahead. With kind regards.

Sincerely,

"Dwight D. Eisenhower"

---

**Only 2 Union Vets Remain with Hard**

The death yesterday in Spokane, Wash., of Israel Broadword, 105, leaves James A. Hard, 111, one of the last surviving Union veterans of the Civil War.

Hard, who observed his 111th birthday July 15, lives at 31 Portsmouth Ter. Other known surviving Union veterans are William A. Magee, 105, of Van Nuys, Calif., and Albert Woolson, 105, of Duluth, Minn.

Broadword died at the Spokane Veterans Hospital.
MILESTONE NO. 1111—It's old soldier Jim Hard's birthday today, and Jimmy Root, of 119 Melrose St., just 110 years younger, was on hand yesterday at Comrade Hard's home to congratulate him. Jimmy's great-great-great-granduncle was Civil War vet, same as Mr. Hard. Nurse is Mrs. George Foote. (Photo by Len Maxwell)

Hard, 111 Today, Defies Heat to Celebrate

By GENE GRIFFIN

James A. Hard is taking the midsummer heat and the excitement of another birthday celebration in stride.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran is 111 today. He made just one concession to age and the heat. He received no visitors at his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., this morning to reserve all his still considerable strength for the birthday party at 4 p.m.

At that hour the front rooms of the house were to be given over to the annual tribute by Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans. When he turned 100, the Council promised him a cake on every birthday. He expects to be around to receive many more.

Hard, whose sight and hearing are failing, is still keenly aware of what goes on around him. He awoke at 4:30 a.m. today, an hour earlier than usual, because he was "too excited about my birthday." The night nurse recorded that he was "cheerful and expectant.

Seated in a chair after a hearty breakfast — orange juice, oatmeal, toast, coffee and his favorite graham crackers—he declared he felt "pretty good."

How does he take the heat? "Lay around in my pajamas a good deal of the time," he answered, "but it doesn't bother me too much. But I wish I could have by birthday in September, when it's not quite so hot. Think I'll try to have it then next year.

LIKE THE REST of the population, Hard's big interest right now is politics. He said at the time of a previous Republican convention, the one in 1860 when they nominated Abraham Lincoln, he was working on the railroad and "didn't know anything about it."

But this year he followed the convention closely, and declared himself as a staunch Dwight D. Eisenhower backer. "He's my man right straight through," he said, "one of the best men we could nominate."

The flood of congratulatory birthday cards and telegrams began yesterday. He also expects the usual gifts of cigars, which numbered about 1,000 last year, although he has been cut down to smoking four a day.

The cake, large enough to hold 111 candles, and a serenade by the 54th Regiment Band under Floyd C. King were to highlight the birthday party.
Hard, 2 Other Civil War Vets
D. & C. Jui 1, 1952
Almost Skipped on Pensions

The government almost forgot about pensions for two of its three Union Army veterans in its most recent budget, a Washington dispatch said yesterday.

But if it had, 111-year-old James A. Hard of Rochester would have reminded the government promptly. Hard, who celebrated his birthday last month, knows he has a pension coming.

The old timers will get their pensions anytime, the Associated Press said, but for a while it seemed doubtful.

Veterans Administration records show that Hard, Israel A. Broadwater of Samuel, Idaho, and Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn., both 105, are veterans of the Civil War and are drawing pensions.

But the budget for the year which began July 1 contained an estimate of only $1,440 for pensions for one Union Army veteran, at $120 a month. Congress voted funds on that basis.

The VA must estimate for Congress what its expenditures will be for each purpose during a year. An official told a reporter there were no standards on which an estimate of Civil War pensions could be based, due to the age of the veterans involved, so a figure was more or less arbitrarily adopted. But, he added, the VA must make the regular monthly payments prescribed for all eligible veterans regardless of the estimate.

If more money is needed as the year passes, it will be transferred from other funds or a supplemental appropriation will be asked, he added.

Actually, the Civil War veterans get an increase in their monthly payments starting with this month. Congress decreed they should receive $129 a month, instead of $120, when they need regular aid and attendance.

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Hard Gets $9 Pension Raise
D. & C. G. 2, 1952

The morning mail brought good news for 111-year-old James A. Hard yesterday and dispelled any doubts the nation's oldest Civil War veteran may have had about receiving his usual pension check.

His check was there, all right, as it always is on the first of every month, but this time there were nine dollars more than the customary $120.

The old campaigner said he was very pleased to see the increase but added casually, "I've been expecting a raise for a long time."

Congress recently decreed that Hard and other Civil War veterans should receive $129 a month instead of $120 when they need regular aid and attendance.

For a while, Hard wasn't sure that he should get his usual check. He had heard that the current Army Department budget called for a pension for Union veteran instead of for the three still living.

D. & C. Aug. 4, 1952

James A. Hard, Rochester's 111-year-old and the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, has received a $9-a-month pension increase, by decree of Congress. The answer is probably in the records some place, but we are curious why Congress sanctioned exactly $9 a month. It seems like such a departure from current practices of dealing in round figures like 3 billions for this and 400 millions for that. The figure 9 is like an oversight in a bookkeeper's records. Well, no doubt Mr. Hard is too busy with the radio and with current events to care much; too busy being an amazing old gentleman who is very much an inspiration to this city's mere children of 60 and 70 and 80.
**James A. Hard, 111, nation's oldest Civil War veteran and contender for the title of nation's oldest voter, is shown today as he was assisted from his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter. to register at a polling place nearby on University Ave. His helpers are staff members of Eastern Ambulance Service, Donald Martin (left) and Frank Fontana.**

**James Hard, 111, enjoys MOST Exciting Election**

James A. Hard, the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, exclaimed today that the election was "the most exciting one in my day." And that covers a lot of days—more than 40,000.

The 111-year-old Rochesterian who voted for Abraham Lincoln 88 years ago, cast his ballot for Gen. Eisenhower yesterday. Commenting on the election outcome, he declared:

"I don't know when I've heard such good news. We have elected one of the greatest men for President in the world today."

And then he added:

"Just tell 'em I'm awfully, awfully happy."
Commander James A. Hard, 111 years old, Santa’s nearest rival in age in Rochester, was well remembered with gifts from Mr. Claus and his sack.

Spending the holiday in his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., the nation’s oldest surviving GAR member was reported in a jolly mood all day, singing “Jingle Bells” and other ditties of the season. Five generations of his family called to pay their respects, as well as a number of other friends.

His appetite sharpened by the menu, Hard went through a full turkey dinner, but shortly afterward he was eagerly looking forward to the one thing he had asked for Christmas: Two dozen steamed clams. When they were served at 4 p.m., he ate them all with relish.

As for the gifts, there were the inevitable cigars—three boxes—as well as ties, fruit, pajamas and flowers. In all, it was a merry, jolly Christmas for the old warrior.
VA Pessimism

Fails to Perturb
That Hardy Hard

One of the nation's only two surviving Union veterans of the Civil War, James A. Hard, 111, isn't at all worried over the Veterans Administration belief that there will be only one such veteran by July 1. Though the venerable but spry Rochesterian and 105-year-old Albert Woolson of Duluth are both in good health now, the VA budget for the next fiscal year makes pension provision for only one of them.

Said the cigar-smoking Hard today at his 31 Portsmouth Ter. residence:

"I guess that one man is me, because I expect to be around for a long time yet."

No comment was forthcoming today from Woolson, but last May he was predicted that he will be living five years hence.

Hard and Woolson get an annual pension of $1,548 each.

DAV Signs Up
D. & C. JAN 23 1953
James A. Hard

Rochester's James A. Hard, 111, one of the eight survivors of the Civil War, was made a member of the Disabled American Veterans organization yesterday.

Hard's acceptance into the DAV was announced by Floyd L. Ming, national commander, following a meeting of the national executive committee in Cincinnati, Ohio, the Associated Press reported. Hard and two other members of the Grand Army of the Republic were admitted to the organization with five surviving United Confederate Veterans.

Milton D. Cohn, manager of the city's Veterans Administration office, was named by the group to the DAV Pearl Harbor Memorial Committee which is planning the erection of a memorial to Marine and Navy men who died in the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941. Cohn is a past national commander of the DAV.

VA Says He's Not Veteran
VA Expects to Die by June 30

The Veterans Administration budget for the fiscal year beginning June 30 promises to be thrown out of whack by a couple of Union veterans of the Civil War, one of them James A. Hard, 111, of 31 Portsmouth Ter., and the other Albert Woolson, 105, of Duluth, Minn.

Comrades Hard and Woolson are the only two surviving Boys in Blue on the VA pension list.

The VA budget provides for only one pensioner in the new fiscal year, so who is going to lose out? "Not me," said Comrade Hard. Hard is being treated for a heart ailment, and Woolson, in Duluth, could not be reached for comment, but last May he was reported in good health and declared he would be living five years hence.

So it looks as if the VA will have to dig up another $1,548 somewhere or find an unbalanced budget on its hands. The $1,548 is the annual pension paid Union veterans of the Civil War.

CORNOR QUIZ ANSWER

It has been estimated that a lightning flash involves the equivalent of about 3,000 kilowatt hours of electricity.

D. & C. JAN 10 1953

Hard 'Satisfactory'

After Surgery

Old soldier James A. Hard is fighting another battle today.

The 111-year-old Civil War veteran, who has fought death and won a number of times in the past, underwent surgery in General Hospital shortly before noon to relieve a circulatory deficiency in his right foot.

Soon after the 45-minute operation, a physician described Hard's condition as "very satisfactory at present" in view of his age.

Surgeons said the operation was a "lumbar sympathectomy." It involved cutting some nerves in Hard's back to ease the circulatory disturbance, they reported. Hard "may be the oldest person ever to have such an operation," one doctor said.

Foot Ailment

Union Feb. 14 1953
 Sends Hard To Hospital

Comrade James A. Hard, one of the nation's two surviving members of the Union Army, is reported in "fair" condition today in General Hospital, where he is being treated for what is described as a "circulatory insufficiency in the right foot."

The 111-year-old Hard, oldest of the seven remaining Civil War veterans, entered the hospital at 2:30 p. m. yesterday from the Terrace Sanitarium, 31 Portsmouth Ter., where he makes his home.

"We expect him back soon," a sanitarium aide said.
Hard Feeling 'Just Fine'
After Surgery

James A. Hard, 111-year-old veteran of the Civil War, was in top spirits today in General Hospital, insisting that he felt "just fine" after an operation yesterday to relieve pain in his right foot.

Physicians, in a 40-minute operation, severed a spinal nerve to ease pain caused by a circulatory deficiency in the foot. The operation was performed with local and spinal block anesthetics. Hospital authorities said Hard's condition was excellent.

Hard Continues To Show Gain

Continued improvement was shown today by James A. Hard, 111-year-old Civil War veteran, in General Hospital.

His attending physician said Hard still has some annoyance in his right heel, but that the circulation in the foot is better and Hard's condition is listed as "good."

The Union soldier, who underwent an operation to sever a spinal nerve Wednesday, sits up in a chair once or twice a day. However, he is not yet smoking the cigars which have been a sort of trade mark with Hard for years.

Hard Reported 'Very Good'
After Surgery to Ease Pain

James A. Hard, the old soldier who refuses to even fade away, was holding his own last night after a surgical operation in General Hospital.

The 111-year-old Civil War veteran—the oldest of only seven in the country—was reported "very good" by hospital attendants. Physicians had severed a spinal nerve to ease the pain caused by a circulatory deficiency in his right foot.

Hard was in the operating room from 11 to 1:40 a.m. The operation, which was called "successful" by physicians, was conducted with local and spinal block anesthetics which do not cause the patient to lose consciousness. The operation is called a lumbar sympathectomy.

On Lincoln's Birthday last Thursday, Hard greeted visitors in the 31 Portsmouth Ter. Sanitarium where he has made his home in recent years. He was taken to the hospital Friday.

Doctors were making no estimates of his chances. He had been hospitalized several times during the last few years for respiratory ailments.

Feel 'Fine,' Says Hard

Though he still wasn't feeling well enough yesterday to puff away on his favorite cigars, James A. Hard said he was feeling "just fine" following an operation on his right foot.

Physicians at General Hospital, where he is recuperating, reported the 111-year-old Civil War veteran's condition is "very good" and that "he is coming along nicely." The old soldier probably will be allowed some cigars today, they added.

The operation was performed Wednesday. Termmed "successful" by surgeons, it involved severing a spinal nerve to ease pain caused by a circulatory deficiency. Physicians reported he'll probably be confined to the hospital for about two weeks.

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James Hard Still Sure at 111
Lincoln Was U.S.'s Greatest

Other Lincoln Day stories, pictures Page 23

Comrade James A. Hard still thinks Abraham Lincoln was America's greatest man.

The 111-year-old Union Army veteran said just that yesterday on his hero's birthday, but had to ex- press his regrets to the Abraham Lincoln Association of Rochester that he could not attend their 31st annual banquet at the Hotel Seneca.

Comrade Hard spent the day quietly at his 31 Portsmouth Ter. home.

He protested to Hermon L. Brockway, lthica, national chaplain of the Sons of Union Veterans, that he felt "first rate," though his nurse said his feet had given him considerable pain during the morning.

Mr. and Mrs. Brockway visited Hard to pay the respects of Frederick K. Davis, Eugene, Ore., national commander of the S.U.V.

Hard, who recalls having seen Lincoln face to face three times—having shaken his hand once, and having voted for him in 1864—is one of two surviving Union veterans. The other is Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn.

Five Confederate veterans—Walter L. Williams, 118; William Lundy, 105; John Saling, 105; William Townsell, 106, and Thomas Evans Riddle, 106—are still alive.

Hard Better; Ill in Hospital

James A. Hard, the oldest surviving veteran of the Civil War, was in "good" condition last night at General Hospital where he is being treated for a circulatory condition in his right foot.

Hard, 111, was admitted to the hospital Friday. His condition was reported as "only fair" at first, but yesterday the durable GAR veteran showed marked improvement.

Aides at the Portsmouth Sanitarium, 31 Portsmouth Ter., where Hard makes his home, said they expected him back soon.

Feel 'Fine, Takes Cigar
NEXT: A CIGAR—Civil War Veteran James A. Hard, 111, is recovering rapidly in General Hospital, where he recently underwent an operation. He is pictured as he took his lunch from Nurse Helen May. Hard is one of 2 remaining Union men.

Hard Enjoys Few 'Puffs'

From North, East, South and West, from all over the nation, get-well cards are pouring in daily to Rochester's Old Soldier, James A. Hard.

The 111-year-old Civil War veteran, recovering from a leg operation at General Hospital, has received upwards of 200 cards in the last few days. A sample:

"No one else can fill yo shoes.

"F'evens sake!

"Hurry and get well."

Signed: Edwin L. Barnard, commander Vermont Department, Sons of the American Revolution.

Yesterday morning Hard lit up the first cigar since he underwent an operation to relieve a circulatory ailment on Feb. 13. Since it was his first, he was allowed only a couple of puffs on it.

Instead of his usual diet of cigars in between meals, the Old Soldier is given tall glasses of milk to sip on.

Although physicians do not know when he will be allowed to go home, Hard is progressing favorably from the operation. When he goes home, he'll find several boxes of cigars that have been sent him by interested Rochesterians. Relatives are keeping it a secret—so he'll be surprised.

Hard Improving After Operation

James A. Hard, oldest surviving GAR member, recovering from a leg operation. spent Washington's Birthday "about as usual" but still without cigars. General Hospital reported last night.

The old warrior's condition was described as good, but apparently he still did not feel up to lighting his first stogie since his operation to relieve a circulatory ailment Feb. 13. There was no indication when the 111-year-old Civil War veteran would be discharged.

No Cigs Yet For Ailing Hard

Although his physician says he can smoke them if he wants to, James A. Hard didn't feel up to a cigar yesterday at General Hospital, where he is recovering from an operation on his right foot.

But the 111-year-old Civil War veteran—oldest of seven left in the nation—is coming along "very well" according to Dr. Harold C. Bonner, who is attending him. Hard still has some pain in his heel, but the circulation in his foot is better, the physician said. Like younger patients recovering from surgery, Hard sits up in a chair once or twice a day.

The operation on the old Union soldier Wednesday was to sever a spinal nerve to relieve pain caused by a circulation deficiency in the foot. He is expected to remain in the hospital for two weeks.
Hard Sinking Fast;
Operation Cancelled

Old Soldier Hard, 111, Rallies
After Losing Leg, Amazes Doctors

Despite a major operation which amputated his right leg "just above the knee," apparently indestructible James A. Hard, at 111 the nation's oldest surviving Civil War veteran, was reported in good condition today in General Hospital.

The operation began at 6 p.m. yesterday and lasted about 45 minutes.

Comrade Hard continued to astound his physicians with his ability to hang on.

The operation was necessary because of a circulatory condition that threatened to cause gangrene in the leg. At one stage yesterday, the operation was postponed because, it was feared, Mr. Hard might not be able to survive the amputation.

Mr. HARD, who for years has been living at 31 Portsmouth Ter., a nursing home, entered the hospital Feb. 13. Five days later he underwent surgery to sever a nerve that affected circulation in the right leg. It was learned today from physicians that Mr. Hard's weight is only 75 to 80 pounds.

He cannot eat. Nourishment is provided intravenously. Prior to the major operation, he did take milk—but only "with a lot of fussing."

Mr. Hard talks very little.

AFTER MORE THAN A CENTURY of living, which goes back to the days of Abraham Lincoln, Mr. Hard has amazed physicians with his vitality in overcoming various illnesses.

He has said on a number of occasions recently: "I have no intention of dying. I'll be around for years."

Mr. Hard loves cigars and was a great one for singing old battle songs at the nursing home. He frequently woke up at odd hours in the night singing such songs as "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

HARD, who is one of the two surviving Union soldiers, was Amputated his right leg from the knee above the knee late last night. His condition was so poor that physicians canceled the operation.

The decision against the operation was made, doctors said, because the patient has gone downhill so rapidly since yesterday that it does not seem feasible.

The grandest old soldier of them all was reported fading away today in General Hospital.

James A. Hard, at 111 the oldest veteran of the Civil War had been scheduled to undergo amputation of his right leg above the knee late last night. His condition was so poor that physicians canceled the operation.

The decision against the operation was made, doctors said, because the patient has gone downhill so rapidly since yesterday that it does not seem feasible.

HARD, who is one of the two surviving Union soldiers, had been in General Hospital since Feb. 13. He underwent surgery on Feb. 13, when a spinal nerve was severed in an attempt to relieve the effects of a circulatory deficiency in his right foot.

Recently Hard has recovered sufficiently to take a few puffs on his favorite cigars. But today doctors described his condition as "early pre-coma." His attending physician said Hard "doesn't realize what's going on and is insensitive to pain. He is listless and not responsive."
Comrade Hard Rallies, Survives Operation To Remove Right Leg

An amazing rally by old soldier James A. Hard yesterday afternoon enabled his doctors last night to go through with an amputation of his right leg.

The 111-year-old Civil War veteran's condition was reported "fairly good" at General Hospital at 2 o'clock this morning, several hours after the operation.

"The outcome of the operation was very satisfactory, considering the circumstances," a doctor declared. "It was a major operation for any person at any age."

Blood Pressure Normal

In order to avoid as much as possible of postoperative anesthetic reaction, the physician explained, Hard's leg was packed in ice for four hours before the operation and very little nitrous oxide was necessary during the 45-minute operation. There were some effects after the amputation from the injection of a pain-deadening drug, the doctor said, but Hard's blood pressure was normal, and although his pulse rate was a little faster than usual, the beat was "as regular as it has ever been in the past few years."

A circulatory condition of the leg had been tearing loose Hard's tenacious hold on life and his condition had deteriorated to the danger stage, doctors announced. Amputation of the leg, a desperate measure in view of the age of the oldest survivor of the War, between the States, had first been scheduled for 4 p.m. yesterday. Early in the day, however, the doctors said that Hard's condition had worsened and that he had "gone downhill so rapidly" since Sunday that the amputation doesn't seem feasible. But with the will to battle for survival which has distinguished Commander Hard, he struggled back so successfully that at 4:30 p.m. General Hospital authorities listed his condition as "fine."

Entered Hospital Feb. 13

Not until the operating room where the operation was performed. He had entered General Hospital Feb. 13 and five days later underwent abdominal surgery to sever a nerve affecting circulation of the right limb. Hard, it appeared, had come through that ordeal all right and rallied to the point where he was allowed to resume puffing on his beloved stogies. But he began failing over the weekend, hospital authorities reported, and so the operation was scheduled.

Public concern for the old soldier's welfare appeared extremely heavy all yesterday, as both newspapers and radio stations stayed lighted up with calls about his condition. Informed that Hard apparently had come through the amputation as well as could possibly be expected, a typical caller commented, "If he's able to pull through, he's sitting in that marshal's car in the next Memorial Day parade."

If spirit and refusal to give up has much to do with it, it appeared that Hard would make that a good bet.

"THEY'RE FOR GRANDPA!" James A. Hard's great-great-grandchildren, Barbara Eksten, left, 7, and Peter Eksten, 7, of Reeves Rd., Henrietta, examine a few of the more than 150 cards he has received from well-wishers while in the hospital. (Story Pg. 1.)
Letters, Calls Wishing Luck to Hard
Pour in from All States in Union

The nation James Hard served during one of its greatest crises has taken an embattled soldier to its heart.

From every state in the Union he fought to preserve, from young and old, hundreds of well-wishing messages are pouring into General Hospital. There the 111-year-old Civil War veteran is waging his amazing, but most critical, fight for life.

The flood of cards, letters and telephone calls began shortly after the news spread that Hard had been hospitalized in preparation for last night’s operation. The valiant veteran’s granddaughter, Mrs. Carl E. Eksten, Henrietta, said today she stopped counting when the message total reached 130.

"Since then we’ve been swamped with mail from all over the United States," she said from her room at the Seneca, where she maintained a night-long vigil following amputation of her grandfather’s leg.

Much of the mail has been in the form of cards—many signed only "A Friend." But dozens of letters were received, some of them requesting answers or the autograph of one of the last two surviving Union soldiers.

... MRS. EKSTEN TOLD of one letter from a Wisconsin man 78 years young who wrote that he is suffering from the same ailments plaguing Hard. He sought advice on what to do, adding that his doctors hesitate to operate "because of my age." The letter was referred to the 111-year-old patient’s nurses.

Other letters wishing Hard good health have come from the Sons and Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the Ladies of the Grand Army and the Women’s Relief Corps (originally the auxiliary of the Grand Army of the Republic). Miss Cora Gillis, national secretary of the GAR, which no longer holds encampments, has been in touch with Mrs. Eksten from her hometown home. The organization—down to but two members—will continue as long as a Union veteran lives.

... DESPITE HER CONCERN for her grandfather, Mrs. Eksten expressed worry that she has not heard from Albert Woolson, 106-year-old Duluth, Minn., resident. He is the only other surviving member of the Union Army.

"I still remember February that he celebrated his birthday shoveling snow in front of his home," she said, "We haven’t heard from him since Gram pap went into the hospital. I hope he didn’t take sick then."

Mrs. Eksten said that Hard’s present hospitalization is far more serious than any of three previous ones, when he was stricken with pneumonia.

"The pain, which he didn’t have the other times, has worn him down," she said. "This is a much different thing. The nurses all love him—they call him Gramp. But they’ve taken care of him before, and they say this time he hasn’t the humor he had then."

... MRS. EKSTEN has been taking care of her grandfather’s affairs for years. She has spent many hours at his bedside since he was hospitalized. When the decision to operate was reached, she left her Henrietta home to be closer at hand in the city.

One of her three children, 34-year-old James Eksten, is a veteran of World War 2 who saw combat in Europe.

Leg Amputation at III
Rated Command Performance

A leg amputation is a major operation at any age. But when the patient is 111, the operation becomes a command performance, both on the part of the patient and the operating physicians.

Removal of James A. Hard’s leg yesterday in General Hospital was accomplished by a senior surgeon and two assistant surgeons. Three nurses, including a chief nurse and two others, assisted. An anesthesiologist administered the anesthetic.

The operation was begun at 6 p.m. after a postponement of two hours. It was concluded successfully about 6:45.

... HARD IS BELIEVED to be the oldest person ever to undergo such an operation successfully. Four hours before the surgery the Civil War veteran’s leg was packed in ice to avoid as much post-operative reaction as possible, primarily because of his age. Very little nitrous oxide was necessary but some demerol was administered intravenously.

Despite some after-effects Hard’s blood pressure was normal and his pulse rate only a little faster than usual, the doctors said. Today, however, he was reported more aware of the pain.

Chief problem confronting the physician was treatment of post-operative shock which, they stated, is true in any amputation.

Other physicians at the hospital witnessed the operation but there were no photographs.
Hard Gripped by Pain
Fights Back at Death

Through pain and against overwhelming odds, James A. Hard, at 111, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, last night was fighting back at death.

General Hospital authorities described his condition as fairly good more than a day after amputation of his right leg. The operation was deemed necessary in an attempt to save his right leg from a circulatory ailment.

Comrade Hard spent an agonizing day as his pain penetrated into his consciousness through a heavy curtain of sedatives. So hard was the ordeal that at times he could not suppress cries of pain.

Picture on Page 17

Many Get-Well Wishes
Mrs. Eisten is one of the few permitted in Hard's room besides hospital personnel. Except for family, she said, the only outsiders who have visited the patient were two clergymen—the Rev. George E. Up, pastor of Brighton Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. G. B. E. Hallock, an old friend and chaplain of Rochester Veterans' Council.

The postoperative shock was the principal barrier to the patient facing, doctors said. It was believed that Hard was the oldest person ever to have undergone such surgery. But it was pointed out that shock usually is the chief problem after amputation regardless of the patient's age.

Mrs. Carl E. Eksten, the old warrior's granddaughter, keeps a bedside vigil during all her waking hours and gets what sleep she can clench.

She has not been home—in Reeves Rd., Henrietta—since Monday, the day of the operation, but she turned down many invitations from friends in the city to spend her nights with them until she feels she can leave Hard's bedside. Instead, she said, she sleeps in a downtown hotel, being constantly on call and able, if necessary, to get to her grandmother's side in a few minutes.

Recuperative Powers
Doctors were marveling at his recuperative powers as his pulse and blood pressure were returning to normal. Because of the heavy sedation his condition required he was unable to take food and had to be fed intravenously.

Postoperative shock kept the principal hurdle to the patient facing, doctors said. It was believed that Hard was the oldest person ever to have undergone such surgery. But it was pointed out that shock usually is the chief problem after amputation regardless of the patient's age.

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If personal visits were cut, good wishes by mail were very

Order of Amputation
By last night Hard had received about 200 get-well cards from all parts of the country, with many from personal friends. One of them was from Mrs. Virginia Footle, until recently Hard's private nurse. Mrs. Footle, according to her last report, was in satisfactory condition. By coincidence, Hard occupies the same room in General Hospital where 80 years ago she was a patient. The message came from 111-year-old Mr. John O'Connor who wished the old soldier "speedy recovery from the Yankee deep in the heart of Texas who sent you birthday greetings on your 111th birthday."

Hard Gets Food; Blood Pressure Worries Doctors
James A. Hard, the nation's oldest war veteran, today was given a "high calorie" food mixture through a tube from the mouth to his stomach.

The 111-year-old Civil War veteran, one of only two surviving Union soldiers, has suffered low blood pressure since amputation of his right leg Monday. He has been given cortisone and a small amount (.04 gram) of thyroid extract in an effort to correct this. Since the operation he had been fed Intravenously until today.

General Hospital lists his condition as "fairly satisfactory," but doctors are still worried about the low blood pressure.

"The most notable thing he looked good this morning," Hard's physician reported, "is the patient is not so bad as it has been.

Doctors have been amazed at the speed of his recovery from the opera-
tion. His pulse is continuing good, but his blood pressure has been dropped after the operation, has dropped 'well below 100.'

"Understanding circumstances it should not take much to change the picture considerably," Hard's physi-
cian said. "Cortisone treatment earlier in giving his blood pressure a temporary boost. However, he has been at General Hospital since Feb. 15.

Hard Regains Ground
In Battle for His Life

Two days after a major operation, 111-year-old James A. Hard last night had won back a little more ground in his battle for life.

The tough campaign of the Civil War gave up a leg Monday to stem a serious circulatory ailment. By yesterday he had regained use of his stomach which was given a high-calorie food mixture to digest via a tube from the mouth.

Most important, the pain was beginning to ease off. General Hospital authorities said. His tempera-
ture went down to 99, he was sleeping better, and his condition was described as "fairly satisfactory."

It was pointed out, however, that in light of the patient's age it would not take too much of a change to alter the picture considerably. At the moment, the main problem was described as keeping his blood pres-
sure up. Cortisone and thyroid extract are being administered for that purpose, doctors said.

The old warrior's granddaughter, Mrs. Carl E. Eksten of Henrietta, spent her third night in a downtown hotel in order to be close-by at all times. The rest of her time is spent at Hard's bedside.

News of Hard's illness was being withheld from the only other survivor of the Grand Army of the Re-

public, Albert Woolson, 106, of Dub-

lith, Minn., where relatives ex-

pressed fear that the news would upset Woolson too much.
Old soldier James A. Hard held off the enemy one more day yesterday.

And General Hospital authorities said the nation's oldest Civil War veteran showed signs of considerate improvement. The condition last night, three days after the amputation of his right leg, was described as "fair.

But in the leg has subsided, apparently, and his temperature was 98.4. The 111-year-old campaigner's blood pressure, which had worried his doctors previously, was up to 100 last night. It had been around 80.

The physicians were also encouraged by the fact that Hard's pulse was down in the 70s. Normally it is in the 60s, but since the operation there has been more than 10.

Hard was still being fed a formula of vitamins and food supplements by a tube which leads directly into his stomach through his throat. Yesterday he took a little water directly through his mouth.

**Old Soldier Hard Has Good Night, Fights Valiantly**

A "very good night" was spent by the amazing 111-year-old James A. Hard, the nation's oldest surviving Civil War veteran, it was reported at General Hospital today. His condition listed as "fairly good," the old soldier continued to fight back valiantly against the pule of a major operation Monday — when his right leg was amputated just above the knee.

Earlier this morning, Mikel's condition had been given as "unchanged — still fair."

Monday's operation was necessary, physicians said, because of a serious circulatory condition which could have left the leg gangrenous.

Mr. Hard for the second day was able to take food through his mouth by tube. Previously, he had been fed intravenously.

**Hard's Condition Fair, D. & C. Mar. 6, 1953**

**Showing Improvement**

James A. Hard is still holding his own very nicely, General Hospital authorities said last night.

The 111-year-old Union Army veteran's condition remained much the same yesterday as it had been on Thursday. He had no fever, slightly low blood pressure and a slightly rapid pulse. But there were encouraging doctors said, and every day he remains as well as he is he must be considered a victory. But doctors did point out that there could change at any moment's notice, they pointed out.

Hard underwent amputation of his right leg on Monday.

**Hard Hangs On, Doctors Say Vet Gaining Strength**

James A. Hard's condition was reported as "still poor" and he had "only a fair night." Hard's temperature and breathing were reported to be as normal as could be expected.

But his pulse and blood pressure, the hospital said, were "pretty good." The other surviving member of the Union Army is Albert Woolson, 106, of Buffalo, N.Y., who wore a 106-year-old Union uniform. He met Mr. Hard's "case of confidence."

But whether the old soldier's condition could change at any moment's notice, they pointed out.

**Hard's Condition Called 'Weaker,'**

James A. Hard, the nation's oldest surviving Civil War veteran, was reported to be fighting back at death with all the courage of his exhausting illness had left, but the condition of the 111-year-old veteran was described as not hopeful.

Although he was relatively comfortable yesterday, doctors said he was less aware of pain than usual — his temperature and breathing were below par and his general condition was described as poor.

Doctors said his pulse and blood pressure were "pretty good," but his respiration was rapid and his temperature high. But last week underwent amputation of his right leg in an attempt to stem a dangerous circulatory ailment. Since then, according to his physicians, he has regained full consciousness.

Hospital spokesmen emphasized that the main danger was in the patient's advanced age which robbed him of some of the stamina needed to bounce back.

Attendants thought the old soldier understood a message read to him from his sole surviving comrade of the Grand Army of the Republic, Albert Woolson, 106, of Buffalo, N.Y., who wrote a note expressing his regret over Hard's loss of his leg.

**Hard's Condition Becomes Worse; Running Fever**

Old soldier James A. Hard gradually went downhill yesterday, according to his physicians at General Hospital.

His fading condition caused hospital authorities to change his condition report from "fair" to "poor."

Doctors said the 111-year-old Civil War veteran began running a fever yesterday. It was expected to rise during the night. A mucous congestion in the throat was reported by a suction pump. The old soldier's blood pressure remained slightly low and his pulse rate was still slightly rapid.

Hard's right leg was amputated Monday because of a circulatory condition that physicians feared would become gangrenous.

**Hard Continues Fight for Life; Condition Poor, D. & C. Mar. 10, 1953**

Doctors had reported him as "still poor" and he had "only a fair night." Hard's temperature and breathing were reported to be as normal as could be expected.

But his pulse and blood pressure, the hospital said, were "pretty good." The other surviving member of the Union Army is Albert Woolson, 106, of Buffalo, N.Y., who wore a 106-year-old Union uniform. He met Mr. Hard's "case of confidence."

But whether the old soldier's condition could change at any moment's notice, they pointed out.

**Hard Undergoes Monthly Check-up**

Critically ill James A. Hard, the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, received a blood transfusion today.

The old soldier afterward was reported at General Hospital to be "holding his own."

It was the first transfusion to Hard since he entered the hospital with his right leg amputated. He was given a pint of blood.

The veteran's condition was reported as "poor." He reportedly spent a fairly good night.

**Comrade Hard's Condition Worse; Transiton Set**

After a temporary upturn in his condition James A. Hard worsened again last night, according to doctors at General Hospital. Worst symptoms of the 111-year-old Civil War veteran — oldest of the surviving six — was his running fever.

During the operation a countermassure against a dangerous circulatory ailment. Hard's strength was sustained yesterday both by intravenous feeding and the injection of a special formula via a stomach tube. He has been unable to take ordinary food since the operation.

**Hard Appears Slipping in Fight to Live**

James A. Hard, 111, the nation's oldest surviving Civil War veteran, appeared to be slipping today at General Hospital, where he is fighting the after-effects of a right leg amputation.

His condition was reported as "still poor" and he had "only a fair night."

Hard's temperature and breathing were reported to be as normal as could be expected.

But his pulse and blood pressure, the hospital said, were "pretty good." The other surviving member of the Union Army is Albert Woolson, 106, of Buffalo, N.Y., who wore a 106-year-old Union uniform. He met Mr. Hard's "case of confidence."

But whether the old soldier's condition could change at any moment's notice, they pointed out.

**Hard Improving, Temperature Down; Hospital Reports**

"Fairly satisfactory, considering everything," that was the report last night on the condition of James A. Hard, 111-year-old Civil War veteran. As the old warrior continued to confound medical men, some changes for the better were recorded yesterday.

Doctors said the veteran's temperature was not too high, standing at 101.6. His blood pressure built up to about 85/50. He considered a good sign, and his pulse was 64 or 70. At General Hospital, authorities said last night, he had made somewhat to movement about him and that he appeared to be in too much discomfort.

Major concern of medical men appeared to be the veteran's respiration which continued quite rapid.
OLDEST GAR VET,

DIES

JAMES HARD,

CHester, N. Y., FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1953

James hardest, Oldest Gar Vet,

James A. Hard
Veteran, 111, Fails to Rally From Surgery

A soldier's life is story, pictures—Pages 20, 21, 22

The nation's oldest soldier, James A. Hard, died at 11:45 o'clock last night in General Hospital.

Despite his 111 years, the old warrior fought a tenacious holding action against death for 11 days. Since amputation of his right leg Mar. 2 his condition had twice been described as poor, indicating little hope, and twice he stayed death and rallied. But he was constantly on the danger list, and he never regained full consciousness after the operation.

The old soldier's final days were fraught with pain, but in spite of it he seemed to be rallying at times. As late as 11 o'clock his condition was described as fair — although hours before the amputation he was thought to be sinking too fast to permit the surgery.

Due to Old Age

Doctors said death was due to old age — his body lacked the reserves to recover from the operation which, in itself, was pronounced successful. The amputation was believed necessary as a countermeasure against a dangerous circulatory condition. An earlier nerve operation, performed Feb. 13, failed to give him the needed relief.

A veteran of the second Bull Run, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg and Antietam, Mr. Hard was one of six remaining Civil War veterans. His death leaves a sole survivor of the Grand Army of the Republic, Albert Woolson, of Duluth, Minn. Four Confederate veterans are still alive.

All his life, Mr. Hard took part in veterans affairs as a serious duty. The community's recognition of his stature was climaxed by his selection in 1944 as Grand Marshall of the Memorial Day parade, a post he held each year since then. In each of the nine parades he headed he rode, waving the cigar that was his trademark, in the lead, usually in an open car.

Eyesight Impaired

Although he was confined to a wheelchair in his last years and his eyesight and hearing were impaired, he always was ready and waiting when the car called at his residence. 31 Portsmouth Ter., early on Memorial Day. After riding in the parade he would review it — through the eyes of his family—from a vantage point opposite City Hall.

He regularly attended GAR encampments until they were disbanded after the 1949 meeting. His interest in politics—he voted for every Republican presidential candidate since Lincoln — was unabated until the end. Last year he made headlines with his endorsement of another soldier, Dwight D. Eisenhower, for the highest office in the land.

HE MADE HISTORY LIVE — There was always a ready audience when James A. Hard had time and strength to tell his Civil War stories. Here Jerry Tompkins and Geoffrey Palmer, neighbors of veteran, listen attentively as he recalls some of his war experiences. These recitals of battles were never done without embellishments and Mr. Hard often confided that he had been "scared" many times during the war, laid no claims to heroics.

THE CHANGES OF 91 YEARS — These are pictures of James A. Hard's lifetime. From left: 20, in the Civil War; at 42; at 70; when he reached a century, and 2 years ago, at 109.
EVERYBODY KNEW HIM — Year after year, James A. Hard acted as Grand Marshal for the Memorial Day parade until he was a familiar figure to everyone who witnessed the annual festival. Here he is pictured riding in lead car for parade of 1951, when he was 109.

His first high honor in veteran circles came in 1910 when he was elected national commander of the Union Veterans Union. He was the last commander of New York State GAR and at last national encampment in the same year he was oldest of few veterans present.

A HOBBY — Mr. Hard enjoyed flowers and, for as long as health permitted, worked at gardening chores at home.
SIGN OF THE MAN—Cigars and Jim Hard were synonymous and when he couldn't smoke, everyone knew that Mr. Hard was ill. Picture was taken in 1950 on his 109th birthday.

MASSON MORE THAN HALF HIS LIFE—In 1941, with nine other members of Rochester Lodge, F&AM, Mr. Hard received his 50-year medal for service in Masonry. Deputy Grand Master Walter H. Wickins presents medal.

HE RODE AIRPLANES—Just before the takeoff at Rochester Airport for the 1948 GAR Encampment at Grand Rapids, the Union veteran is shown in Gannett Newspapers plane with a nurse who accompanied him on trip to see his old comrades.

HE OKAYED A GENERAL—Nation's oldest ex-GI when this picture was taken, Mr. Hard at 110 is shown as he signed Eisenhower-for-President petition. Gerry Court holds petition.
HE LIKED YOUNGSTERS—Danny Maxwell, 9 last year when this photograph was taken, wears a miniature Union hat and gets a lesson in proper way of holding a pistol.

TWO SOLDIERS—Twelve years ago, when Pvt. James Eksten came home from Louisiana war games, his most eager listener was his great-grandfather, who then was century old.

At the time of his death, Mr. Hard also had two great-great-grandchildren with whom the Union veteran had been pictured many times. Family ties meant much to the old soldier.
Hard Offered Motion
To Adjourn GAR Vets

With misgivings and sorrow, but facing unalterable facts, James A. Hard offered a motion to his comrades in Indianapolis on Aug. 31, 1940:

"I make a motion that we adjourn," said the old rebel fighter, knowing he was bringing to a close his last meeting with his Grand Army of the Republic comrades.

The eyes were unanimous, and the GAR—focal point in Hard's life—had passed into history.

Before offering his resolution, Hard, who died last night, tried to persuade his comrades to have a final meeting with Confederate veterans but at last agreed with reluctance that it was not practical. He said he was sure he could make it—"I may reach the 200 mark"—but the rest of the comrades were too old, he decided. At 105, he was the senior of the group.

Asserted Convictions

In Indianapolis, Hard went along with the rest on all issues, but not so during the 1948 encampment in Grand Rapids, Mich. He asserted his convictions particularly on the question of where the next encampment should be held. He favored Springfield, Ill., in the state where the GAR was organized. The other five grizzled veterans wanted Indianapolis, site of the first encampment.

A stickler for parliamentary propriety, he objected when the GAR's permanent secretary, Miss Cora Gillis of Jamestown, tried to advance Hard's own viewpoint before the delegates.

"I think the secretary is very much out of order," he objected. "There should be a motion on this question."

Selected Over Vote

A motion there was—to select Indianapolis. That city was selected over Hard's no vote; but in losing his point he had kept faith with the rules of fair play.

Despite his advanced years, the old campaigner stayed in step with the times. He readily agreed to fly to the two final encampments when the Gannett Newspapers offered him his plane and pilot for the purpose. After the trip to Michigan, he was so sold on the air age that he eagerly accepted the offer to be flown to Indianapolis also.

Of the six old men who wrote "finis" to the GAR, Hard's death leaves only one—Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn.
Comrade Hard Was a Familiar Figure in Many Places

PUBLIC EVENTS—Post as grand marshal of the Memorial Day parade was one of his delights. He preferred open car, is shown here at 1947 parade.

OFFICIAL LIFE—He took leading part in GAR affairs, sounded taps in 1848 for New York State Department.

‘Wonderful Patient,’ Says Nurse

Until he entered the hospital for his last-ditch battle against death, James A. Hard was ‘intelligent, alert to news developments, gave rational answers to questions, and was a wonderful patient.’

This was the reaction today of Mrs. Nina Virginia Foote, who for four and one-half years was Mr. Hard’s nurse in the Portsmouth Veterans’ Sanitarium where he lived. Mrs. Foote said:

“Grandpa— that’s what I called him— was a great kidder. He knew I was from Baltimore, and he often called me ‘Rebel’. He used to say, ‘Virgie, just imagine an old Union soldier like I am being taken care of by a rebel’.”

IN HIS LATER DAYS, Mrs. Foote said, Mr. Hard had a sharp appetite for clams and oysters.

“An old friend of his, Joe Plum, who lives in Linden St., often brought him clams,” Mrs. Foote said. “So did his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten.”

Mrs. Foote said that Mr. Hard, who wore glasses but could see hardly anything, was quite deaf, but that with a hearing aid he was able to understand questions aimed at his left ear.

“It doesn’t quite seem possible that Grandpa is really dead,” Mrs. Foote said. “He hung on so long—so very long. He was a grand old man.”

HOME LIFE—Proud as any grandfather, he was three times as proud of great-great-grandson, shown with him here.

AS CITIZEN—He was a regular voter, was proud of vote he cast for Lincoln in 1864.
Taps Sound for James A. Hard:
July 15, 1841-Mar. 12, 1953;
He Knew Lincoln,
Fought in Civil War's Bloodiest Battles

When Taps sounded just before midnight last night in General Hospital for James A. Hard, it was the end of a courageous battle waged by the nation's oldest Civil War veteran to survive.

He had been admitted there Feb. 13 and underwent two operations.

Mr. Hard's death left only Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn., as the last remaining Union Army veteran. The Union Army once numbered 2,988,304.

Only four others survive from among the millions who fought for the North and South. All were the Confederate gray. They are:

Walter L. Williams, 90, who lives near Franklin, Tex.; William (Jim) Bull Lundy, 105, of Laurel, Hill, Fla.; John Salling, 105 of Slant, Va., and Thomas Evans Ridle, 106, who lives in the Confederate Home for Men in Austin, Tex.

A fifth Confederate veteran, William Townsend, 106, of Ohio, died several weeks ago.

Mr. Hard's last and losing fight against death was far from his first. His recuperative powers in the past had prompted medical men to refer to him as "the amazing Mr. Hard."

Barley a month ago Mr. Hard puffed on a cigar in his room in a sanatorium at Portmouth, N.H., and scoffed at a Veteran Administration prediction that only one Union Army veteran—he on Albert Woolson—would be alive this coming July 1.

"I guess that one man is me," Mr. Hard observed, "because I expect to be around for a long time yet."

And last Lincoln's Birthday, Mr. Hard smiled as two children from the neighborhood visited his cheerful room and gave him a blue cap, a replica of the "McClellan hat" worn by Union troops in the Civil War.

Next day, Mr. Hard was taken to the hospital.

The last state commander of the once proud and mighty Grand Army of the Republic, Mr. Hard, was believed to be the oldest person in Michigan.

His last public appearance was at grand marshal of Rochester's 1952 Memorial Day parade. Although his dimmed eyes could not see the marching units and he heard the martial bands only when they passed directly in front of him, Comrade Hard took a lively interest in the patriotic observance.

His Sturdiness and his fondness for parades was demonstrated in the final national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic at Indianapolis on Aug. 31, 1949.

Despite a slight drizzle that night Commander Hard rode in an open car, smiling and waving his acknowledgment of the cheers of the crowds witnessing the parade.

Mr. Hard made the trip to Indianapolis and returned aboard the Gannett Newspapers airplane as guest of The Times-Union.

His flight to the Indianapolis encampment and return duplicated his journey aboard the same plane to the encampment at Grand Rapids, Mich., in 1948.

Mr. Hard was a soldier who knew Lincoln and had met Grant. His boyhood was contemporary with the productive years of many great figures in literature and history whose names have long since entered history books.

When Mr. Hard was born, Victoria of England was only 22 years old. Abraham Lincoln was 32, Karl Marx was 23, Charles Dickens was 22, Alfred Tennyson was 32.

Mr. Hard was born July 15, 1841, in Victor, the son of a Western New York pioneer settler, Lacon Pratt Hard and a native of Rochester, Martha Frost Hard. His father drove a stagecoach between Mt. Morris and Canandaigua before 1855.

Mr. Hard spent his boyhood in Windsor, near Binghamton, and as late as July, 1947, recalled with clarity the scene of his childhood and the events of his early life—among them a walking trip of 14 miles into Binghamton with his brother at 13 to watch the city celebrate the Fourth of July.

Honored guests then were veterans of the War of the Revolution and 1812.

When Mr. Hard was still a youth, his family moved to Potsdam, near Dryden, where he enlisted in Company E, 39th New York Volunteer Infantry, four days after Fort Sumter was fired upon on April 12, 1861, and three days after Lincoln called for volunteers.

He left a job in a Jordan sawmill to join up.

He participated in some of the bloodiest fighting of the war—at Bull Run, West Point, Va., Fredericksburg, Chancellorville, South Mountain and the slaughter at Antietam.

In September, 1937, he was one of 21 surviving Union and Confederate veterans to return on the battlefield of Antietam, and in 1938 he attended a soldiers' reunion at Gettysburg on the 75th anniversary of the great battle.

As a soldier, Mr. Hard shook hands with President Lincoln at a White House reception and saw the martyred President twice more, once when he reviewed troops in Virginia.

Recalling Lincoln, he said not many years ago, "He was a comical-looking fellow on horseback," but the Civil War President remained his "comrades in arms" through all the long years after the conflict.

Of meeting Lincoln, he said in 1947:

"It was at a White House reception. I was in the Army then and I shook hands with Lincoln, his wife and his son, Bobby. They were all grand people and Lincoln was one of the most wonderful "men I have ever met."

Comrade Hard's first vote was for Lincoln in 1864 at Nashville, Tenn. An Eisenhower supporter, his last vote was in the 1952 presidential election.

Mr. Hard was honorably discharged from the Army June 29, 1863, but remained in government service as a civilian construction boss, in which role he met Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, commanding federal forces.

"I was bossing a gang of men who were building sanitary ditches," Mr. Hard recalled many years later, "when the general came along. He stopped his horse, looked over the work, asked me how it was going, complimented us on what we had done and rode on."

Mr. Hard was a railroad man for 13 years after the Civil War. Later, he became a building contractor in Rochester and afterwards a veterans' pension attorney, with offices in the old Reynolds Arcade Building.

Although the passing years slowly took their toll, he remained physically active, with keen interest in public affairs and the nation's role in an unsettled world. He never abandoned the role of sugars, but his comments on politics, military affairs and patriotic duties remained pithy and decisive.

With the passing of many of his local contemporaries, he assumed many of their roles and duties on patriotic occasions. Like the late Henry Lilly and Joseph (Cont. on opposite pg.)
Comrade Hard Saw
The Parade of America

The parade finally has stepped past James A. Hard. But before it did, after the Civil War, life as always...
Dismissed, Soldier

There is a feeling of sadness in Rochester today. The passing of Old Soldier James Hard has not quite so stunning as would be the sudden disappearance of the City Hall or the rerouting of the Genesee River, but it leaves us grooping for something solid to reassure us that it is the same old city. For the moment it is hard to realize that there will be no more pictures of the old warrior shaking his stogies in the face of the calendar, no more cake studded birthday cakes, no more reminiscences that carry us back in a living line to an era more than a century away.

Life began for Commander Hard at 100 and the eleven years of his second century of life made drama in which the city richly shared. There was a cocky audacity about his defiance of the years that made him more than just an old person waiting for the last summons. He was a soldier leading a soldier's battle against odds which overwhelmed the majority of his fellow beings long before they reach his stage of life. He became a symbol of indominitvability and of the fighting qualities that everyone admires. He was Patutin holding the line at Verdun; he was General Wolfe charging up the sheer cliffs at Quebec; he was General McCauliffe saying "Nuts" to the enemy demand for surrender.

It was this irresistible appeal to the imagination of his fellow citizens that put Commander Hard into a special place in the city's life. It was not merely that, like Methuselah, he lived a great many years and then died; he held onto the zeit for living after family, old friends, old associations, had long since faded away. He still liked life and people and cigars and parties and excitement. He was what all of us would wish to be in the closing years of a long and active life. He took on Time at its own terms, asked no quarter, bucked the line for gain after gain.

In those days of '61 when the nation's youth lined up shouting "Glory Hallelujah," we could hardly have told which among those thousands was marked with the lucky numbers? Fate spun his wheel and pointed to James Hard. "You are to be the oldest survivor of your time, one of the last of this whole great army." In those later days, when blue coated veterans marched cumb to curb in Memorial Day parades, Jim Hard, otherwise inconspicuous, still wore the lucky number. His comrades fell out, one by one, then in whole masses. All at once, in place of the many veterans, there were only a few hundred, then a score, then only two or three, then, in Rochester, only one. A generation that saw the steady dwindling of the ranks was privileged also to touch hands with the last survivor, the last leaf on a once luxuriant tree.

Now the last one is gone, and a part of Rochester color goes with it. We are at least fortunate to have had for so long so sturdy a specimen of a departed race of heroes. Now James Hard, with almost all of the other architectural great drama of the cities, belongs to history. "Soldier, rest; thy warfare o'er. Sleep the sleep that knows no breaking."

As We See It

And Long Remember What They Did

Only one is left now, with the passing of James A. Hard at the age of 111, of all that mighty host that sprang to arms at Lincoln's call. Because of them, and only because of them, both North and South can pledge today "one nation, indivisible."

James A. Hard has been for many years a Rochester institution, a frail but hearty symbol of that great host. For everyone past 50 he stood for all his departed comrades who at the turn of the century filled such a large place in every schoolboy's life.

Decoration Day was real to schoolboys then. Union veterans—men who had lived through dreadful battles boys then were sure they never would experience—would come to school and tell again the stories of that dead, heroic age. Then children and veterans would march together to the cemetery to decorate the graves of lost comrades.

THESE UNION VETERANS were the strength of boyhood in those days. And now all are gone. It is no longer customary for younger veterans to visit the schools. Maybe the boys of today miss something.

Hard's life was so astonishingly long and he had come to be so much a symbol that it is difficult now to place him as James A. Hard, the man. But for nearly 40 years he maintained a law office in the old Reynolds Arcade, an office which he did not close until 1927. He was a familiar figure around Four Corners during all those years.

Back of him was Bull Run, West Point, Va., Gaines Mill and Malvern Hill—fearful names of long ago. And then there was Antietam, and the disasters of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, while Lincoln desperately tried to find a general. 'Hard saw them all. His captain, Sylvester Brown, Co. E, 32nd N. Y. Volunteers, was killed at Hard's side at West Point, Va.

WHEN LINCOLN found Grant, Hard built railroads for his army as a member of the transportation corps of the War Department, forerunner of the Army Engineers. Then, at last, it was over.

Only three years ago in recalling the end of the war Hard said, "People were glad the Union had been saved, but they didn't forget the war real quick. Most every town had lost a lot of boys and it was sad for us to go home. His particular friend, George Round, had died of wounds. And even in 1950, across a void of 88 years, Hard said, "I've always missed him."

And so it will be of James A. Hard for many, many years to come. "We'll always miss him."
Hard Knew Servicemen of All Nation's Wars

With the passing of James A. Hard in his 112th year, Rochester lost its last living direct connection with the holocaust that swept the nation in the 1860s.

Hard was born July 13, 1941, at Victory, Cayuga County, the son of a stagecoach driver, Alphonse Pratt Hard, and of Martha Frost Hard, a native of Rochester. The family moved to Windsor, a Bronx County settlement east of Binghamton.

On holiday trips to Binghamton during his boyhood, he saw heroes of the American Revolution and the War of 1812, with long lines of veterans of the 1846 war with Mexico swinging down the street in Fourth of July parades.

Most Celebrated

"I used to think that it must be a wonderful thing to be a veteran," Hard said after his 20th birthday, "but I realized such an ambition meant a lot of hard work and some loneliness."

Once he was a middle-aged man, when Thomas Edison brought the light bulb to civilization and he was an old man when the Lusitania sank before the United States entered World War I.

Shortly after the Rebels fired on Fort Sumter in 1861, young Hard took the first notable step in a life that was to span 11 decades and lead him on a romp through history as the 20th century's Methuselah. At the age of 19, he left a sawmill job in Freeville, near Ithaca, and enlisted in Company F of the 32nd New York Volunteer Infantry. He served two years and fought in battles whose names today sound like a roll of Civil War drum on the historical record.

After the war, he returned to Freeville, where he worked in the beet fields and the Cincinnati Cigar Factory. He then went to Rochester and Antietam.

At the age of 109, Mr. Hard, whose memory remained amazingly nimble and coherent, told a reporter his most memorable event was the first time he was called upon to wear the uniform of a veteran. It was in a ceremony at the National Veterans Home in the 1940s.

Scared in Battles

At Antietam, his regiment had not been committed so he and three buddies went off and played cards. He recalled many years later that the group strayed into the area of an embattled Massachusetts regiment and were pressed into the fight. In the clash, a bullet grazed his right shoulder, but he was soon back on the job.

Never one to retrace his war experiences with relish or embellishment, Mr. Hard often qualified that he had been "scared" several times in battle and laid claim to no heroics. He used to enjoy relating how he and the Union Army soldiers used to steal chickens, often eating them raw—"feathers and all."

One of Mr. Hard's fondest memories was his meeting with President Abraham Lincoln at a White House reception soon after the outbreak of the Civil War. The President shook his hand and told him he'd like to wear a good soldier when I got my uniform," Mr. Hard liked to recall.

Most Fun After 100

Last year he told a reporter that his greatest thrill was the reign of King George II, when he could "stand up to me and ask how things were going." Mr. Hard related, "We could talk for hours and every time he asked me, I'd say, 'You can always ask me again'."

As he said, he was born in the week of his birthday and he felt he could go on forever.

He remembered coming to Rochester in 1882, and said of his residence here: "I like Rochester. It's the best of any city I was ever in. I like the atmosphere—people are so good.

With the cheers and felicitations of presidents and fellow citizens in his ear, Mr. Hard said he had lived an almost silent life. His hearing, he said, was "a little bit" better after his wife and daughter died.

Living all this time has been a wonderful experience," he assured a reporter once, "if I was to pick a hundred years which I could live, I'd pick the time I've had."

Healed State Veterans

His first high honor in veterans circles came in 1918, when he was national commander of the Union Veterans' Union, now extinct. He was the last national commander of the New York State Grand Army of the Republic and single-handedly convinced the War Department that the nation in 1860s.

At the last national GAR encampment in that year, Mr. Hard, a lonely figure in a wheelchair, was the oldest veteran present but, realizing the others no longer could attend, he sorrowfully proposed and cast his ballot.

"His remarkable handwriting was measured by the death rate of Civil War veterans in the past 11 years," he said. In 1941, there were 16 Union veterans in Monroe County alone. In 1950, there were 16 Union veterans in the nation. That year there were only two—a shrinking bridgehead in time.

When he was a mere youngster of 96, he returned to Antietam to take part in an historic 75th anniversary of that bloody battle. Then, on his return that the Rebels had become "grand fellows" in the 76-year interval.

Undoubtedly Rochester's most celebrated citizen, Mr. Hard loved parties and loved to be in the spotlight. For many years, he was marshal of Memorial Day parades and presided at civic and patriotic events.

He unflappably received gifts of cigars each time. And he boosted of having voted 72 times in 73 years—always Republican.

Had Four Careers

In his lifetime, he had four careers. In addition to the one he left as a millhand to enter the Civil War, Mr. Hard was a construction boss on railroads in the West, a carpenter in this state and a personal lawyer.

As an attorney, he operated his own office in the Reynolds Arcade for about 37 years.

He remembered coming to Rochester in 1882, and said of his residence here: "I like Rochester. It's the best of any city I was ever in. I like the atmosphere—people are so good.

With the cheers and felicitations of presidents and fellow citizens in his ear, Mr. Hard said he had lived an almost silent life. His hearing, he said, was "a little bit" better after his wife and daughter died.

Living all this time has been a wonderful experience," he assured a reporter once, "if I was to pick a hundred years which I could live, I'd pick the time I've had."

The inventions and the things that have happened in my lifetime have been astonishing."

Relatives most closely associated with him in the last few years were a granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten of East Henrietta, and a grandgrandson, James Eksten of Henrietta. Mr. Hard outlived two wives, Loretta Davis and Anna West, and two daughters, Alberta.

"People ask me," he said not long ago, "if it isn't sad to live longer than everyone else. I'm sad when I think of all those who are gone. But I find life very interesting and I'd like to live a while longer yet."

Central Library of Rochester and Monroe County · Historic Scrapbooks Collection
James Hard's Body
to Lie in State;
Old Soldier's Funeral
on Monday

JAMES A. HARD
... the nation's oldest war veteran during the last year of his life
Nation's Oldest Veteran Dies
After 111 Years, 7 Months
And 26 Days

Mr. Hard entered General Hospital last Feb. 13. On Feb. 18, he submitted to surgery in which a spinal nerve was severed to remove a circulatory condition in the right foot.

Mrs. Eksten said that Mr. Hard had a great deal of pain in the final days of his long existence.

"It was a blessing," she said, "that grandfather went when he did.

In the final analysis, physicians said, the staunch old soldier's battle to survive was lost because of his extreme age; he no longer had the necessary strength to offset effects of the leg amputation.

FOR MANY YEARS in the long twilight of his amazing life, Mr. Hard lived in a sanitarium at 31 Postern Gate Ter.

Until he entered the hospital recently for his final stand, he frequently awakened at early hour and could be heard singing—usually military songs like "Battle Hymn of the Republic.

Mr. Hard was a great one for smoking cigars, which he had been doing since he was 18. He had to give up this practice after entering the hospital for the last time.

THE COLORFUL OLD WARRIOR, who fought in major battles of the Civil War, had been partially dead in his last years and was con
tinent to a wheelchair. His eyesight was also poor virtually to the point where he could scarcely see much of anything.

But Mr. Hard insisted on vot
ing regularly on Election Day.

Mr. Hard's death now leaves only Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn., as the last living remnant of the Union Army, Four Confederate veterans of the "War between the States," survive, however.

"People don't seem as healthy today as in the old days," the physician said, "I don't worry, the rest of us.

But Mr. Hard's death hurt approximately 15 times fewer per cent than the "average person.

Over the years, the slower heat could have meant less wear and strain on Mr. Hard.

Never Exercised

Associated with this fact was the Civil War veteran's tendency to take everything in stride, never becoming over excited or upset. He was a

And, too, when asked by re
testers to what did he attribute his old age, Mr. Hard answered, "I don't ever worry about anything. When something comes along, don't worry, the rest of us.

Another side of his nature which enabled him to live such a long life, the physician said, was his "remark-

able physical endurance. He could take things which would have staggered a younger.

An example of this was cited yester
day by Mr. Hard's granddaugh
ter, Mrs. Eksten.

Arranged Operation

"When he was 90, Grümgas had a cataract in one of his eyes. We were going to arrange to have an operation performed in a hospital," she said, "but he hated it to us.

"All by himself, he went to a physician's office, where he made the doctor perform the operation. Right after, he came home by himself down here on the way. People who don't seem as healthy today as in the old days, I think it's because they don't eat enough wholesome food. Enough roughage, enough corn meal and meat.

The physician said that Mr. Hard's health had been good enough to keep most people in a good frame of mind. Except for the previous radio interviews with him, the physician had had a good appetite, eating a lot of vegetables and cereals. "Maybe that helped his digestion," he said. He added that Mr. Hard had never been much interested in the question of why the commander of the American Legion.

But his physician was probably right. "Only God can answer the question."
Over the route he so loved to follow during the city's Memorial Day parades, in which he figured many years as honorary grand marshal, on Monday afternoon will move the funeral cortège carrying James A. Hard to his final resting place.

May 31, 1953

**Hard Cortège Monday to Follow Route of Memorial Day Parades**

Over the route he so loved to follow during the city's Memorial Day parades, in which he figured many years as honorary grand marshal, on Monday afternoon will move the funeral cortège carrying James A. Hard to his final resting place.

**State Legislature, Albany**

**To Honor Hard**

Albany — (GNS) — The State Legislature will adjourn today in respect to the memory of Rochester's oldest Civil War veteran who died Thursday night.

Senator George T. Manning and Assemblyman A. Gould Hatch, Rochester Republicans, announced yesterday they will sponsor the adjournment resolution today on the death of James A. Hard of Rochester, who was 111 years old when he died.

"Whereas, it is sought to pay homage to the honor and memory of James A. Hard whose death at the age of 111 years occurred Mar. 12, 1952, and"

"Whereas, he was the nation's oldest veteran of the Civil War, being until his death one of the currently living survivors of the Union Army, and"

"Whereas, he fought valiantly for the Union in the Second Battle of Brimham, Chancellorville, Fredericksburg and Antietam, and"

"Resolved, that while the Legislature is unable to pay all due respect to the memory of James A. Hard and be it further

D. E. C. MAR 14 1953

**Many Tributes Honor James Hard — Memory**

It was difficult for Rochester to realize yesterday that Conrade James A. Hard was gone. Despite his more than 111 years, Hard had been considered as a fixture in the city and a man to whom the entire city looked with pride. Tributes were many and deep-felt. Some of them, typical of many, follow:

Rep. Kenneth B. Keating: "Mr. Hard had become a national figure and will be mourned throughout the country. We in our community will, of course, miss him most since he has been an inspiration to thousands. Rochester has lost in many respects its first citizen."

Mayor Samuel S. Bicker: "The City of Rochester is deeply sorrowful at the passing of Conrade Hard. He was a great personality for our community all these years. He was an inspiration to everyone, because of his loyalty to government and his willingness to sacrifice himself. The memory of Conrade Hard will live, always, not only in Rochester, but in the entire United States."

Bruce Percy, American Legion commander: "It would be impossible to pay all the tribute to Mr. Hard that he deserves. It seems to me, however, that an important aspect of his life is that the veterans in which he was held by this generation certainly will have in

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LONE SURVIVOR—Death of Rochester's James A. Hard at 111 leaves only Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn., to uphold traditions of GAR. A cigar-smoking veteran like Mr. Hard, Woolson was shaken by news of last comrade's death.

Albert Woolson Saddened

Lone GAR Survivor Willing To Follow Hard 'Anytime'

Albert Woolson, 106, last survivor of 80,000 "Boys in Blue," said yesterday at his Duluth, Minn., home he is "ready and willing" to follow James A. Hard in death anytime.

Miss Gillis noted that official disbanding of the GAR would require an act of Congress. The records of the organization then would be turned over to the Library of Congress. To, the Smithsonian Institution would go its flags, banners, medals, official seal and other property. The GAR held its last encampment in Indianapolis in 1949. Woolson was named senior vice-commander-in-chief and Mr. Hard junior vice-commander-in-chief.

The GAR once counted 400,485 members. A meeting of state GAR secretaries is scheduled for Milwaukee in August to decide the future of the organization.

At his home in Duluth, Woolson rescuedly said yesterday he would follow the traditions of the GAR "with all his ability and all his honor."
5 of Kin, Friend Named
Active Bearers for Hard

Four great-grandsons, a grandson and a close friend will be active bearers at tomorrow’s funeral of James A. Hard.

The great-grandsons are James and Donald Nelan of Victor and Carl and James Eklund of Rochester. The grandson is Earl H. Osborne of Buffalo. The friend, who spent much time with Commander Hard, is Joseph Plum of Rochester.

Honorary bearers named yesterday were: Carl S. Hallauer, Bausch & Lomb Optical Company; Fred Colwell, Sons of Union Veterans; Fred I. Parrish, chairman of Monroe County Democratic Committee; Charles E. Carson, Eastern Kodak Company; Charles E. Gard, Optical Company; Lee McCanne, Stromberg-Carlson Company; William A. Fay, Stromberg-Carlson Company; Hansen; George Strang; the Rev. Charles J. Mahony, superintendent of Catholic schools; the Rev. of Rochester; James M. Spinning, superintendent of schools; Frank Gannett, president, Gannett Company Inc.

Also Bernard E. Flinn, Security Trust Company; Harry A. Holm- land, Scranton’s Inc.; John D. Hayes, Fanny Farmer Candies; James E. Gleason, Gleason Works; Thomas J. Hargrave, Eastern Kodak Company; W. J. Jaggard, County Manager; Clarence A. Smith, Postmaster Donald A. Dailey; Walter L. Todd, Todd Company; Robert E. Ginn, Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation; Paul Miller, vice-president of the Gannett Company Inc.; Sheriff Albert W. Skinner; Donald H. Campbell, Rochester Telephone Corporation; Attorney Charles C. Wilson; William A. Lang, Rochester Transit Corporation; Roy D. Bush, chairman, Monroe County Democratic Committee; Carl L. Bausch, Bausch & Lomb Optical Company, and Attorney William P. Strang.

During the procession the City Hall bell will toll for the first time in eight years. It will ring 13 times in respect to Mr. Hard, and City Commerce Commissioner Donald H. Foose said yesterday it will be rung by a member of the City Hall maintenance staff, probably a veteran. The bell last sounded on V-J Day and last was tolled for a Civil War veteran on the death of Henry Lilly, 101, on Nov. 7, 1942.

At the Ralph D. Scobell Funeral Home, 642 Main St. E., where the body of Mr. Hard will rest until taken to the Masonic Auditorium tomorrow, officials last night reported that the public had adhered to the request of the family that it avoid going to the funeral home. There were some flowers from close friends and members of the family, but the public likewise appeared to be following wishes that floral offerings be sent to the auditorium tomorrow morning.

Among the floral pieces received yesterday were one from Frederick X. Davis of Eugene, Ore., commander-in-chief of the Sons of Union Veterans. Hundreds of telegrams of condolence were received from all over the country.

Among tributes received yesterday was one from Robert H. Mahon, New York Department commander of the Sons of Union Veterans.

In preparation for the funeral tomorrow, Grover C. Scott, county vice-commander of the Sons of Union Veterans, requested that all members of the DAV meet at the Masonic Auditorium at 2:30 p.m. Members of all units of the National Guard participating in the procession tomorrow have been asked to meet by Maj. J. B. McGinty, commander of the 106th AAA Gun Battalion, to meet at the Main St. E. Armoury at 1 p.m.

ROCHESTER TIMES-UNION
Mon., Mar. 16, 1953

5 Relatives and Friend Serve as Hard Bearers

Five relatives and a close friend were to be pall bearers for James A. Hard this afternoon.

They include four great-grandsons, James and Donald Nelan of Victor, and Carl and James Eklund of Rochester, and a grandson, Earl H. Osborne of Buffalo, and the friend Joseph Plum of Rochester.

Honorary bearers include: Rep. Kenneth B. Keating; Carl S. Hallauer, Bausch & Lomb Optical Company; Fred Colwell, Sons of Union Veterans; Fred I. Parrish, chairman of Monroe County Republican Committee; Edward Peck Curtis, Eastern Kodak Company; Charles E. Carson, eastern Kodak Company; Lee McCanne, Stromberg-Carlson Company; William A. Fay, Stromberg-Carlson Company; Hansen; George Strang; the Rev. of Rochester; James M. Spinning, superintendent of schools; Frank Gannett, president, Gannett Company Inc.

Also Bernard E. Flinn, Security Trust Company; Harry A. Holm- land, Scranton’s Inc.; John D. Hayes, Fanny Farmer Candies; James E. Gleason, Gleason Works; Thomas J. Hargrave, Eastern Kodak Company; W. J. Jaggard, County Manager; Clarence A. Smith, Postmaster Donald A. Dailey; Walter L. Todd, Todd Company; Robert E. Ginn, Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation; Paul Miller, vice-president of the Gannett Company Inc.; Sheriff Albert W. Skinner; Donald H. Campbell, Rochester Telephone Corporation; Attorney Charles C. Wilson; William A. Lang, Rochester Transit Corporation; Roy D. Bush, chairman, Monroe County Democratic Committee; Carl L. Bausch, Bausch & Lomb Optical Company, and Attorney William P. Strang.

DAV Unit Pays Tribute to Commander Hard

With gratitude to the Grand Army of the Republic for laying the groundwork for today’s veteran’s benefits, Rochester chapter of the Disabled American Veterans last night paid homage to the memory of James A. Hard, last GAR member of the state who died Thursday.

At their annual dinner at Cass Lorentzo’s, 100 DAV members and their wives stood in silence for a minute in Mr. Hard’s memory, after hearing their state commander, Francis R. Bueno of Bayside, review Hard’s contributions to veterans affairs.

“We pay tribute,” he said, “to the last representative of the GAR in our state for his part in bringing veterans into the category they occupy. Comrade Hard was one of the mainstays of the GAR, the organization which began the program for benefits and recognition to veterans.”

Other speakers with brief parts in the program were Leo R. Wheatle of Utica, first junior vice-commander of the state DAV; V. W. and Milton D. Cohm, managers of the local veterans facility. Leo C. Viola was dinner chairman.

Main part of the evening was given over to "Junior Folliot’s" variety show staged by the membership.
President in Tribute
To Comrade Hard;
Final Rites Planned

President Dwight D. Eisenhower yesterday paid tribute to the late Commander James A. Hard.

As the city prepared for full participation in paying homage to the Civil War veteran who died at the age of 111 in General Hospital late Thursday night, Mayor Samuel B. Dicker received a telegram from Thomas E. Stevens, serving secretary to the President. Mayor Dicker had wired an invitation to attend the funeral tomorrow.

The President has asked me to express to the President the regret he feels at not being able to attend the funeral services of Commander James A. Hard and send the wire.

"The significance of Mr. Hard's passing is, of course, that it marks the passing of one of the great and cherished traditions of our nation. I wish to extend my deep sympathy to his relatives and friends of the deceased commander."

Under the general guidance of the veteran's committee, headed by Harry E. Norton of the Sons of Union Veterans, all veterans, military, religious and civic groups in the city had all day yesterday arranging plans for tomorrow's ceremonies and procession.

Mayor Dicker yesterday issued a formal proclamation designating tomorrow as a day of commeration for Commander Hard. It read:

"Whereas, Comrade James A. Hard, one of the original members of the Sons of Union Veterans, passed away at Rochester, N.Y., March 12, 1955, at 111 years of age, and..."

"Whereas, he has been a national symbol of the cause for which he and his comrades so valiantly fought, and..."

"Whereas, it is fitting and proper that the city, its civic leaders and citizens, pay respect to this gallant old soldier.

"Now, therefore, I, Samuel B. Dicker, mayor, hereby proclaim March 16, 1955, as a day of commemoration for James A. Hard and request that, as far as practicable, business cease at 1 p.m. and all civic leaders and citizens be prepared to participate in the ceremonies and procession."

The City Council will meet at 1 p.m. tomorrow and the Board of Supervisors will meet at 1:30 p.m. to adopt resolutions on the death of Mr. Hard. Both groups will proceed to the funeral service.

Hard Funeral Today;
Dewey to Miss Rites

Gov. Thomas E. Dewey yesterday expressed regret over his inability to attend today's burial of James A. Hard, eldest Union veteran of the Civil War who died Thursday.

The Governor designated Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Deus, commandant of the 109th A.A. Brigade, New York National Guard, as his personal representative. Press of business, Dewey said, would prevent him from attending the rites in person.

Dewey's secretary, H. Burdell Bay, wired Mayor Samuel B. Dicker word of the Governor's inability to come as follows:

"Governor Dewey very much regrets to learn of the passing of Commander James A. Hard, and wishes that it were possible for him to attend the funeral service. Because of the pressure of the legislative session he will be unable to do so and has designated Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Deus... as his representative."

The old warrior's body will lie in state in the foyer of the Masonic Auditorium from 9 a.m. today until 2 p.m. The first hour is reserved for school children who, with parents, will be permitted to miss classes to pay their final respects to Commander Hard.

The public will be admitted after 10 a.m.

The body will rest on the Auditorium stage for the funeral rite which begins at 3, with the Rev. George E. Upi and the Rev. William A. Hallock. The Rev. Mr. Hallock will give the GAR, the Rev. Mr. Hattuck will give the GAR, the Rev. William A. Hallock officiating.

The funeral cortège will move about 2:45 p.m. from the Auditorium over the downtown route of Memorial Day parades, with military, veterans, civic and other groups providing marching escorts. The procession will continue on to the Mt. Hope Cemetery, where Masonic services will be held at the graveside.

The nation's last Union Army veteran—Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn.—placed a wreath yesterday in tribute to his departed comrade of the GAR, Commander Hard. According to the Associated Press, Woolson placed the wreath at a statue honoring the dead of all wars in the Duluth civic square.

3-14-55
Young and Old Salute James A. Hard; Old Soldier Rides in ‘Final Parade’

A saddened public today offered solemn salute and bade farewell to James A. Hard.

Singly and in groups, in overalls and in business suits, they passed the bier of the nation’s oldest soldier. The body lay in state in Masonic Temple Auditorium from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., when funeral services began.

One person came on crutches, hobbling slowly along the row of flowers to pause with head bowed before the bier. Many of those who came to pay last respects to the old warrior were elderly persons who reverently touched the casket as they filed by.

Parents whose sons are buried beneath the soil of foreign lands came to make homage to another’s era’s soldier—the nation’s oldest Civil War veteran.

Some people entering the foyer hesitated before passing the bier in order to view the flowers, flags and uniformed color guards.

In the foyer, the color guard stood at parade rest before the flags of the United States and the City of Rochester. Another bank of flowers, including lilacs, carnations, daffodils, gladioli, roses and geraniums, was to the left of the bier.

On Mr. Hard’s left breast were a GAR badge and a medal from the government for service in the Civil War.

To the right of the foyer a color guard stood at parade rest before the flags of the United States and the City of Rochester. Another bank of flowers, including lilacs, carnations, daffodils, gladioli, roses and geraniums, was to the left of the bier.

THROUGHOUT the morning a steady procession filed past the bier. At noon the number of persons swelled, as workers and businesspeople interrupted their noon hours to pay last respects to the commander.

Last rites for Mr. Hard, who died Thursday night in General Hospital at the age of 114, were conducted at 3 p.m. on the stage of the auditorium.


The City Hall bell, which hasn’t been sounded since V-J Day, tolled 13 times during the funeral. The bell must be tolled on the death of a Civil War veteran.

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Prized GAR Hat Lies on Casket

The familiar black GAR hat of James A. Hard lay on his casket today, just over his left shoulder.

The hat was almost a mark of identification in late years of the old campaigner’s life. He wore it on the many occasions when he acted as honorary grand marshal of Rochester’s Memorial Day parade, and nearly always reached for it when posing for photographers.
Soldier

Hard Lies

At Rest

The body of A. H. A. Hall today beneath the soil of the country he loved well and for which he fought nearly a century ago.

...the post of duty

THE CORTEGE

about 3:30, carrying Mr. Hall to the further resting place in Mt. Hope Cemetery.

The procession moved westward

in Main St. to Plymouth Ave. St., to Broad St., passing before City Hall in the manner of Memorial Day parades, for which Mr. Hall served as parade marshal a number of years. Participating in the procession were uniformed members of military and veterans organizations in the city.

The honorary escort preceded the hearse on foot as the cortege. The escort was comprised of 10 Jewish War Veterans, Catholic men, two each from the VFW, War Veterans, Army-Navy Union and American Legion.

Masonic services were held at the cemetery. Taps were sounded over the graves of the old warriors by a brass quartet of the 54th Regiment Band.

The state and nation's chief executives sent regrets to the family. In their inability to attend the services, Gov. Dewey designated Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doud, commandant of the 105th AAA Brigade, New York National Guard, as his personal representative.

Dewey's secretary, H. Burdell Bly, in a telegram to Mayor Dicker, stated:

"Governor Dewey very much regrets to learn of the passing of Commander James A. Hall and wishes that it were possible for him to attend the funeral services... Because of the pressure of the Legislative session he will be unable to do so..."

President Eisenhower's message was read by his acting secretary, Thomas E. Stevens. The wire read: "The President has asked me to extend to you the personal regret of the Commander and wishes that it were possible for him to attend the funeral service of Commander James A. Hall.

"The significance of Mr. Hall's passing is, of course, that with the passing of time a great and cherished tradition of a good soldier moves further into history. The President shares with all patriotic citizens the feeling that the heritage we enjoy we owe to those who bore the battle.

"Commander Hall was a good citizen as well as a good soldier. Please convey the President's sympathy to the relatives and friends of the deceased commander."

In a proclamation, Mayor Dicker cited Mr. Hall as "a national symbol of the brave, the good and his comrades to valiantly fought," and proclaimed today as a day of commemoration for Mr. Hall.

City Hall was closed at 1 p.m. in mourning for the passing of Mr. Hall. The Courthouse remained open.

In Duluth, Minn., yesterday, the nation's last Union Army veteran, Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, placed a wreath at a statue honoring the dead of all wars in tribute to his departed comrade of the GAR.

(For other details, please turn to Page 19.)

Hard Editorials

Go into 'Record'


In inserting them in the appendix, Keating commented: "The ideal of the old and by his infallible patriotism and unyielding concern for the best interests of his community and nation, furnished an inspiration to thousands of younger men and women through several generations."

JULY 15, 1953

By Sup. R. F. Keating

Resolutions

RESOLUTION NO. 48 OF 1953

Expressing Respect of the Board of Supervisors in the Passing of James A. Hard, Civil War Veteran.

Mr. Chairman:

At the session of Thursday, March 12, 1953, was drawings in a large degree the war was the victor over a tremendous battle which ended the one hundred and seventy years of a remarkable life of the nation's most distinguished veteran in the Civil War.

Mr. Hard had the distinction of being the last New York State Commander of the excep proud and mighty Grand Army of the Republic. In his youth, Mr. Hard entered at the age of seventeen, in Company E, 10th New York Volunteer Infantry, by answering an immediate call for volunteers due to the Lincoln administration in 1861 and participated in some of the glorious battles of the Civil War, including the Battle of Antietam, South Mountain and the slaughter at Antietam.

Mr. Hard was honorably discharged from the Army on June 15, 1865, and continued in the service of his country in the Civil War Memorial Day Department, where he was under the direct command of General D. S. Grant, Commander of the Federal Forces.

During his lifetime, Mr. Hard had patriotic devotion to the general Memorial Day observances and acted as Marshall of the parade on this historical day, paying tribute to those veterans having served our Country.

Now, therefore, to express our esteem for our late and honored Civil War Veteran, be it

Resolved, That we, the members of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Monroe, do hereby express our deep feeling in the death of James A. Hard, late the oldest living veteran of the Civil War; and be it

Further Resolved, That the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors be directed to order a copy of this resolution to be sent to both the bereaved family, and also a copy in the minutes of the Board for this memorial.

This Resolution was unanimously offered, each Supervisor voting in its favor.

Respectfully submitted,

George J. Conlon

Supervisor, 1st Ward

Sam D. Bisbee

Supervisor, 3rd Ward

Sam P. Lawrence

Supervisor, 4th Ward

Frank J. Lawrence

Supervisor, 5th Ward

Eben Cl. Converse

Supervisor, 6th Ward

William T. Frank

Supervisor, 7th Ward

John J. Cotter

Supervisor, 8th Ward

Sam J. Langen

Supervisor, 9th Ward

Sam J. Wood

Supervisor, 10th Ward

Robert H. Armstrong

Supervisor, 11th Ward

James F. Smith

Supervisor, 12th Ward

Henry H. Draper

Supervisor, 13th Ward

Tisdale H. Van Alst

Supervisor, 14th Ward

James J. O'Connor

Supervisor, 15th Ward

Special Memorial Committee.

Arthur Lomax

James G. D'Amico

Ralph M. Czarnik

Lee T. Minick

Robert A. Vail

Charles DeAjara

William J. Reckner

Joseph T. Upham

Joseph K. Thomas

Samuel H. Davis

Charles E. Darke

Charles E. Spence

Newcomb A. Lofland

Edward D. Seward

Tyrone F. Morgan

Harold W. Nelson

Arthur M. Torrey

D. & C. MAR 19, 1953

113
88 Years After Battle, Oldest Soldier Rests

D. & C, MAR 17 1953

TAPS—Friends, young and old, mass at open grave of James A. Hard, state's last Civil War veteran, to pay final tribute to old soldier at Masonic service. Graveside rites were climax of funeral ceremonies which began with traditional GAR battlefield service held in Masonic Auditorium. Earlier, thousands paid respects as body lay in state in Auditorium.
"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD . . ."—On Auditorium stage filled with dignitaries, the Rev. George E. Ulp recites 23rd Psalm at funeral for James A. Hard. Flanking casket are honor guards from James A. Hard Post, Masonic War Vets.

Many Children
Walking alongside the hearse bearing Mr. Hard's casket were honorary escorts from veterans' groups. They were: J. Malley Lons and Joseph Donovan, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Allen M. Church and Robert McIntosh, Army and Navy Union; Samuel DeNaro and Gerard Beachamp, Catholic War Veterans; Sol Gutenberg and Harry Sandler, Jewish War Veterans, and Donald Irish and Kenneth Abar, American Legion.

Many of the spectators were children as the procession came about an hour after schools closed. Although Mr. Hard was little more to them than a name and a tradition, they seemed to sense the glory of his era as they followed through the city, the final route of their hero.

George A. Swalch of 586 Flower City Rd., stood for a while in the crowd but perhaps a few steps closer than the rest of the men, all of whom he knew. He was, at hand, in the exact spot, across Broad St., from City Hall, from where Comrade Hard reviewed Memorial Day parades for many years he was honorary grand marshal.

"I knew the old vet," Swalch, a past state ruler of the New York State Elks Association, said after the hearse had gone by. "I marched in plenty of parades with him. Just stopped off to pay my last respects to the man who stood for something."

Did he pick his vantage point on purpose? "Why no," he said, surprised. "I just happened to be here. —But it's a good spot to remember him."

City's Main St. Hushed As Hard Cortege Passes

Through a gray, cold drizzle, James A. Hard yesterday took his last ride along the route where he often had honored the others who served and died.

The city paused in its stride as the procession which ended at the old war hero's grave retraced the traditional Memorial Day parade route.

The old soldier, who died at 111 last Thursday, would have been proud to see how they honored him and the flag he had fought to preserve. Thousands lined the sidewalks along downtown Main St., many braving the cold in shirtsleeves and flimsy dresses. They did not come out to see a spectacle —there were no bands, no muffled drums, no fancy uniforms—they simply came to say goodbye to Jim.

Salutes for All
Where on Memorial Days you could easily count those who gave the Stars and Stripes the tribute they commanded, those along the route yesterday saluted almost to a man as the flag passed. And no mark head remained covered as the earthly remains of James A. Hard passed, en route to final rest.

It was an emotional crowd that lined Main St. almost solidly from East Ave. to Plymouth Ave. As the City Hall bell tolled solemnly, the people stood patient in the cold. There was no apparent lament for the man who had earned his rest, only respect for what he had done.

A Bow to Industry

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I express my deepest appreciation to the industries of Rochester for the splendid cooperation extended to the National Guard of this area on the occasion of the funeral ceremonies of the late Commander James A. Hard.

Under ideal conditions, the rendering of Guardmen from their respective duties for any formation of this kind represents a dislocation of which some compensation must be made by planning ahead.

Under the circumstances, however, prior planning was impossible yet moved by a spirit of civic pride to honor the memory of one who reserved the industries of Rochester released Guardmen from their regular duties in unprecedent numbers to take part in these ceremonies. The result for all to see was a splendid tribute to a fallen hero.

On behalf of the National Guard I sincerely thank you.

ALFRED H. DOUD,
Brigadier General,
10th AAA Brigade.
City Pays Last Honors
In Hard Funeral Rite

By BILL BEENEY

The old soldier is at rest.
Under somber, leaden skies—punctuated by the staccato farewell volley of a firing squad, and the haunting strains of "Taps"—the flag-draped casket of James A. Hard was lowered into his Mt. Hope Cemetery grave in the waning hours of yesterday afternoon.

Thus ended the illustrious 111-year career of the nation's oldest war veteran, Rochester's most celebrated citizen, one of the country's oldest men. He died last Thursday (Mar. 12, 1953) in General Hospital.

He went to his final resting place with the heartfelt sympathy and understanding and prayers of all Rochester; thousands of his fellow citizens paid their last respects to the gladiated Civil War veteran during a daylong civic funeral-tribute that marked the end of an era in Rochester history.

Mr. Hard lay in state in the foyer of the Masonic Temple Auditorium yesterday morning. And past his bier, covered with a United States flag and flanked high with Bowers, filed thousands of people—young and old—to pay homage.

A changing color guard, representing various military groups, stood alongside the casket as the mourners passed. They came from every walk of life, in work clothes and in Sunday best, people of every creed and color, schoolchildren and elders.

Campaign Hat on Casket

Respectfully, silently, they looked upon the man who in 111 years of life had seen more of history than almost any other man. They thought those thoughts that are reserved for a moment when men and women become humble in the presence of death. Then they walked quietly away.

Mr. Hard had a white carnation on his uniform, and upon his left breast two medals, one signifying his Civil War service, the other a GAR badge. His GAR campaign hat rested on the casket near his head. Members of his family will preserve the campaign headdress as a memento of their famous hero.

In the afternoon the scene shifted to the stage of the Auditorium Theater, where funeral rites—the same traditional services which were used by the GAR on the battlefields of the Civil War—were held.

The theater, filled with several hundred of Mr. Hard's friends and acquaintances, throbbed to the pulsating beat of time-honored Civil War songs, played on an organ, as a prelude to the services.

It was at Mr. Hard's request that the GAR Burial Service was used. Not long ago, he asked through Past Department Commander Fred E. Colwell of the Sons of Union Veterans that the traditional GAR rites be performed at his funeral.

Officiating at the ceremonies were Colwell; the Rev. William A. Hall, S.U.V. Department Chaplain; Walter S. Bielby, senior vice-commander; Harold T. Bielby, junior vice-commander, and Robert Mc-Mahon, Department Commander.

From the old GAR ritual, the Rev. Mr. Hallcock intoned the prayer: "... As comrade after comrade departs, and we march on with ranks broken, help us to be faithful unto Thee and to each other... with Thing unseen, the unspoken assurance, comfort and counsel be contained in this event which calls us hence. Give them the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness."

Tribute of Comrades

Colwell, quoting the ritual, read: "One by one, as the years roll on, we are called together to fulfill three last sad duties of respect to our comrades of the war. The present, full of the cares and pleasures of civil life, fades away, and we look back to the time when, shoulder to shoulder on bloody battlefields, or around the guns of our men-of-war, we fought for our dear old flag.

"We may indulge the hope that the spirit with which, on land and sea, hardship, privation, danger were encountered by our dead heroes—a spirit incomplaining, nobly, manifestly obedient to the host of duty, whereby today our homes are secure, and our loved ones rest in peace under the flag—will prove a glorious incentive to the youth who, in the days to come, may be called to uphold the destinies of our country."

Thus three SUV comrades placed final floral tributes upon the casket... an evergreen wreath, "symbol of unyielding love for comrades of the war"... a rose, "symbol of purity"... a laurel leaf, "symbol of victory."

The Rev. George E. Ulp, pastor of Brighton Presbyterian Church, in the funeral rites prior to the GAR ritual, read the 23 and 121st Psalms, in addition to several passages of Scripture and poems which he thought Mr. Hard would have liked.

On the stage were clergymen, representatives of the city and county governments, honor guard bearers, and representatives of various veterans' organizations. At the close of the service, before the procession moved out for the funeral cortège's slow, measured trip through the city's Main St.—over the same route which Mr. Hard traversed many times as Memorial Day Parade marshal—the theater mourners joined in singing two of the old soldier's favorite songs: "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," and "We're Tenying Tonight on the Old Camp Ground."

City Hall Bell Tolls

While the funeral procession moved slowly through the business district, in an atmosphere of strangely unnatural quiet broken only by the rustle of flags and the stomp of marching feet, the City Hall bell tolled 15 times. It was the first time that the bell—which is sounded upon the death of a Civil War veteran—had been tolled since 1917. It was the last time it will ever be heard for a Rochester Civil War soldier.

The funeral cortège was made up of uniformed National Guardsmen, a color guard from the Monroe County Veterans, James A. Hard, four marching units of veterans' groups, and an automobile caravan of mourners stretching as far as the eye could see. During the funeral and procession, State Supreme Court sessions in Monroe County Courthouse, and the Monroe County Court recesses were recessed.

In Mt. Hope Cemetery, where the old soldier was laid to rest alongside his second wife, Anna, who died in 1929 at the age of 76, services were conducted by the Rev. Mr. Ulp and by the Rochester Lodge 660, F&AM, to which Mr. Hard belonged.

And there, in the glooming, the old soldier was ready to embark upon a new journey, and join his Civil War comrades of nearly a century ago.
CONFIDENT LIVING

Secret of James Hard’s Long Life:
Healthy Thinking and Feeling

By NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

One of the last of our Civil War veterans was not long ago. He was James A. Hard, his home was in Rochester, N. Y., and he had lived to be 111 years old.

There were many remarkable things about Mr. Hard, not the least of which was that, according to his physician, the best of his heart was somewhat slower than that of the average person. It is believed that he attained his great age partly because this slower beat meant less wear and strain on his heart.

Associated with this was the fact that Mr. Hard always took everything in stride, never becoming overly excited or too upset. Nothing bothered him too much and he led a happy life.

He took his first airplane ride at the age of 97 and, afterwards, remarked: “Gosh, I’d rather be up there than down here on the ground again.”

When this unusual man was asked to what he attributed his living beyond the normal span, he said: “I don’t ever worry about anything. When something had come along, I don’t worry but make the best of it.”

THE LONG LIFE of James A. Hard proves a point William James, the philosopher and psychologist, made years ago, when he said:

“The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.”

We are just beginning to realize that much illness and disease result from wrong thinking, and that health comes from right thinking. And we also are just beginning to learn that the Bible outlines very practical and very specific systems of health. Dr. James T. Fisher, the psychiatrist, states in a recent book that, if you boil down all that has ever been written on the subject of mental hygiene, you end up with an incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount.

THE REASON for this is simple. The Bible is full of healthy thinking and right attitudes. It urges you to look upon yourself as sound, as healthy, as filled with the well-being and vitality which is the gift of God.

And it also states a secret of living in the words: "According to your faith, so it will be done unto you."

A profound rule of life is: Practice healthy thinking and you will tend to have healthy feeling. Visualize yourself in harmony with God and the creative power of God’s universe.

Practice thinking joy, which will help you rise from the gloom of ill health to the pure area of happiness and well-being. The Bible says that "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine."
Hard's Death Recalls a Cause

Four score and seven years after the Civil War—America's fratricidal flight to make our country free—we have come to bury the last of its heroes, America's first great Legion of Honor.

The passing of Commander Hard reminds us once again of the purpose of his life and of his long-to-be-remembered generation. We are inspired with courage and confidence for the future of our country as long as we are true to the ideals that gave our country birth and for which so many Union heroes died.

When Grant returned Lee's sword at Appomattox that April day so long ago, history rang down its crimson curtain upon the conflict of cloth of gold. Our Civil War—so many still the Great Rebellion—brought out the deepest and the finest feeling because, perhaps, the rival knights were brothers.

It was a great and noble tournament in which America found her soul as she shed white and pure upon the altar of her freedom. Our national cemeteries, from Gettysburg to Antietam, enshrine the highest traditions of military honor and soldierly virtue, that will crown our arms as long as the Republic lives.

America fulfilled her destiny in the irrepressible conflict when she won the inner struggle to make come true the American Dream at home. Jefferson's immortal words—that all men are created equal—that the purpose of lawful government is service to the governed—that government give each man an equal opportunity to self-development—was finally realized when we agreed even to kill our brothers in the name of a perfect race within our midst as equal chance.

No other nation in all history can show such magnificent self-sacrifice and such magnificent glory, not claim, as we can, that we have crowned our hood with brotherhood for all men.

And we have continued that grand march beyond our borders through three great wars, bringing the freedom that our ancestors founded hard back to the benighted lands whence all our Pilgrim forebears came. Clock of history has swung full circle, and our new world—new at the apex of its power—has come time and again to rescue and redress the balance of the old.

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Vets Post Named for Hard Holds Memorial Rite at Grave

Members of the James A. Hard Post 18, Masonic War Veterans, were advised last night to keep alive the memory of the man for whom their post was named by adhering to the staunch principles by which he lived.

The occasion was a memorial service marking the GAR veteran's 112th birthday anniversary, Mr. Hard, next to the last of the veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic, died in March at the age of 111. The service was conducted at his grave in Mt. Hope Cemetery.

The Rev. William McKeel, post chaplain, recited the memorial prayer. The eulogy was given by Rev. Commander Lance J. Thompson, who described Mr. Hard as "a link to the heritage of the past," and advised the members of the post to "hold fast to his principles in order to strengthen our country."

Clarence Pfeifer, bugler in the Rochester Park Band, sounded taps. Participating in the memorial service were Commander Emery Carey and Walter Parmington, past district deputy of the Second Monroe County District. James Eksten, Mr. Hard's great grandson, and Peter and Larry Eksten, great great grandchildren, were present.

Earlier in the day the Clara Barton Circle, Daughters of Union Veterans, placed flowers on the grave, and Mrs. Carl Eksten, 322 Lake Ave., presented a chrome "walker" to the Cerebral Palsy Clinic in memory of the GAR soldier. The walker is a device used in aiding handicapped children to regain use of their legs.

Post Honors Hard Birthday

James A. Hard would have been 112 years old yesterday. A memorial rite was conducted at his grave in Mt. Hope Cemetery by members of the James A. Hard Post 18, Masonic War Veterans.

Mr. Hard died Mar. 12 at the age of 111. He was the nation's oldest Civil War veteran at that time.

A memorial prayer was recited at the grave by the Rev. William McKeel, post chaplain, and eulogy was given by Lance Thompson, past post commander. The service was conducted at Mt. Hope Cemetery.

Among those present were a granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten of 322 Lake Ave.; James Eksten, a great-grandson, and Peter and Larry Eksten, great-great-grandchildren.
Memorial Rites for James Hard

The fifth annual memorial service for James A. Hard, Civil War veteran and one-time commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, was held in Mt. Hope Cemetery yesterday — the 116th anniversary of his birth.

The service was conducted by the James A. Hard Post 18, Masonic War Veterans, founded in 1940, before Mr. Hard's death. A great-grandson of Mr. Hard, James Eksten, past commander of the post, and Clifton L. Jones, present commander, laid a wreath in Mr. Hard's memory in last night's graveside ceremony.

The Grand Lodge of New York State granted a dispensation in 1949 allowing the post to use the name of a living man in its title. The post has conducted a memorial service annually since Mr. Hard's death in 1953.

Hard Memorial

Set Tomorrow

Masonic War Veterans tomorrow will conduct their annual birthday memorial service at the grave of James A. Hard, Civil War veteran who died in 1953 at the age of 111.

In charge of the ceremony of placing a wreath will be the James A. Hard Post, Masonic War Veterans. Also participating will be members of the Sons of Union Veterans and the Anna P. Cleary and Clara Barton tests of Daughters of Union Veterans. The ceremony at 2 p.m. will be in Mt. Hope Cemetery, with the family of the war veterans at

Wreath Ritual Marks

James Hard's Birthday

A small group of people gathered in a quiet corner of Mt. Hope Cemetery yesterday and placed a wreath on a headstone marked "Jas. A. Hard, 1841-1953, Co. F 32 NY INF."

As the simple ceremony drew to a close, an airplane passing overhead shattered the silence around the grave of the Civil War veteran and eyes turned skyward for a moment to gaze at a symbol of the profound changes that had come to pass in the lifetime of a man who lived 111 years.

In the closing prayer the words "... well done, good and faithful servant," brought the service to an end.

The brief ceremony marking Mr. Hard's 116th birthday anniversary was conducted by James A. Hard Post, Masonic War Veterans. Also participating were members of the Sons of Union Veterans and the Anna P. Cleary and Clara Barton tests of Daughters of Union Veterans.

Prayers were read by Albert J. Seigfred, Masonic Post chaplain, and the wreath was laid by Frank Murtry, post adjutant.

Among those present were Mrs. Lula Eksten of 100 Reeves Rd., Henrietta, a granddaughter, and James Eksten of 200 Reeves Rd., Henrietta, a great-grandson. Several great-grandchildren were also there.

Mr. Hard was born July 13, 1841, near Victor, when he was 19 he enlisted in Company E, 37th New York Volunteer Infantry, three days after Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers following the firing upon Fort Sumter.

During his service Mr. Hard met President Lincoln and participated in battles at Bull Run, West Point, Va., Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, South Mountain and Antietam.

Mr. Hard died March 13, 1953, in Rochester.

Duluth GAR Vet

Replies to Card From Hard's Kin

Memories of Civil War days were bonds of friendship between the late James A. Hard of Rochester and Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn.

Both veterans of the Union Army, they had met many times at GAR encampments. They corresponded regularly. On behalf of Mr. Hard, his granddaughter, Mrs. Lula Eksten of Henrietta, wrote to Woolson. The Minnesota veteran replied in his own hand.

NO BUGLES, GUNS — Walking away from grave of Civil War veteran James A. Hard after service yesterday are his great-grandson and 5 great-great-grandchildren, James Eksten, and (from left) Julie, Peter, Karen, Barbara, Lawrence.

Ecksten sent a Christmas greeting to Woolson last month. Yesterday she received a reply, thanking her for the card and wishing her well. The reply apparently was in Woolson's own handwriting.

W & C JAN 14 1955

MEMORIAL RITES JULY 6 1958

C & D JUL 16 1958
HOW IT LOOKS IN FREEVILLE:

James Hard—An American Symbol

By A. B. GENUNG

As Memorial Day comes again, many Rochesterians will think of their famous Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, who died last spring at the age of 111.

He not only was the nation's oldest veteran but was next to the last Union survivor.

I think of Mr. Hard, too, for he was a resident of our village many years before he lived in Rochester. It was from Freeville that he enlisted in the Union Army. I have a little of his story from one of our old inhabitants, who had it from her mother.

It the spring of 1861, Jim Hard, then a youth of 18, was working for a lumberman named Seth Gunn, who had a sawmill on Virgil Creek, just south of our hamlet. There was no railroad here in those days, no telegraph. Our people got their news a day or so late from Ithaca or Cortland.

Everybody knew that the North and South were heading for trouble. Excitement ran high. The young fellows had begun to form little companies and drill at the Corners.

About noon of April 14, 1861, a rider stopped at Dodge's wagon shop with the news that the rebels had insulted the flag by firing on Fort Sumter.

A few days later came the news of Lincoln's proclamation and the call for volunteers for three months' service. It would take about that long to crush the rebellion! Jim Hard was one of four Freeville boys who at once left farm and sawmill to enlist.

His letters afterward told how the young recruits were transported to New York and thence to Washington in freight cars. The railroads lacked enough passenger cars. Three months later Jim Hard was marching out over the Virginia roads toward Bull Run.

James A. Hard as he reviewed his final Memorial Day parade.

The boys thought it a kind of lark as they moved through the Virginia countryside, though it was a lot hotter than here in the hills of New York. Even in the early stages of that first engagement, they were overflowing with confidence.

They thought they had the rebels whipped at Bull Run but all of a sudden there came a disastrous turning point in the fight.

A force of Confederates from Johnston's Army, who had been hurried over from the Shenandoah, moved in and cut off a couple of batteries which had been pushed too far forward without much infantry support. They poured some wicked volleys into the batteries which slaughtered men and horses.

A company of Union Zouaves that witnessed this bad turn of affairs became panic stricken, turned about and ran back across the field. The panic spread, soldiers throwing away their guns and equipment and streaming back in the direction of Washington. These, of course, were all raw recruits, without battle experience.

The confusion multiplied. Horses and wagons ran wild.

Mr. Hard Reenlisted

and saw action at Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, South Mountain, and Antietam. He saw Lincoln at troop reviews, shook hands with him at a white House reception later. Here in Freeville, Sam Willey, who was then our principal merchant, had three daughters, one of whom James Hard married. His wife, the former Phoebe Willey, always was known in the community as Aunt Phoebe Hard.

Sam Willey built a house for his three daughters, directly across the street from his own home, and here Aunt Phoebe Hard and her two spinster sisters lived.

Although all this was long ago, James Hard is still remembered here as a gallant soldier and a high-spirited old symbol of the generations that have made this a free country.