

SB

NOT TO BE PHOTOCOPIED



Central Library of Rochester and
Monroe County
Local History & Genealogy Division
115 South Avenue
Rochester, New York 14604

**Reference Book
Not for Circulation**

Scrapbook of clippings 135
"

James A. Ward
"

Cutting Cake of Full Century



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

D+C July 16, 1947

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 the Hotel Seneca ballroom by 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 31 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 with cutting of a cake surrounded by 100 candles. The great-grandson, in service at Camp Claiborne, La., sent a telegram that gladdened his heart. "That was fine of 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 Gatzs and Frank Bissel 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 100 roses. And a flagstaff, with an eagle top, came from the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans.

Greeted by Officials

Greeting him were representatives of many organizations, Rochester's mayor, Samuel B. Dicker, and Councilmen John Hart and Joseph E. Silverstein. Here for the celebration also were members of General Sniper Post, Sons of Union Veterans, of Syracuse, led by Captain William Nielson. Edwin Morris, new state commander of the GAR, wired congratulations.

Besides serving as a birthday party for the aged Civil War veterans, the event also served as a family reunion. Besides Mrs. Albert Wilson, with whom Comrade Hard makes his home, and his granddaughter, Mrs. Ekston, another granddaughter, Mrs. Vera Nolan, Victor; a grandson, Earl

Osborn, Buffalo, and two great-grandsons were present. Five other great-grandchildren were unable to attend.

Edward G. Hartel, a past president of the Abraham Lincoln Association, presided at the celebration, and Charles H. Rohrer, newly-elected commander of Spanish War Veterans, was chairman of arrangements.

Birthday Fete Slated for Vet 103 Years Old

James A. Hard, 31 Rosalind St., Rochester's only living Civil War veteran, will be feted Saturday night in Hotel Seneca on his 103d birthday.

The party is under sponsorship of the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Feature of the affair will be the presentation to Mr. Hard of a birthday cake bearing 103 candles. Mr. Hard lives with his daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson.

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 Rosalind, Hard is quite excitedly 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 score 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.

As the red, white and blue garbed 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 2,000 of them, but the supply didn't quite hold out until this birthday. Although the smokes remained uncounted last night, they looked like a bumper crop. One of the high spots of the entertainment, in the opinion of the veteran, was the singing of "Tenting, Tonight on the Old Camp Ground" by Mrs. June Green Gadel, a yearly ritual at his birthday parties.

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 veteran auxiliary 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



'IT'S THE SAME OLD FLAG, EH PARD?' D. & C. JUL 16 '944

Here's something to write home about for an apprentice seaman from Queens, Gene Powell, V-12 student, who lit the birthday cigar

of James A. Hard, one remaining Monroe County Civil War veteran, who was given party last night in honor of his 103d birthday

Monroe's Lone '61 Veteran Feted on His 103rd Birthday

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

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

The cigar-smoking warrior, 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 by 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 celebrity and receive a grandfatherly kiss.

the radio, and spends much time telephoning and catching up on his correspondence by dictating to a granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten of East Henrietta. He lives with a daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, 31 Rosalind St.

Hard has two great-grandsons in this war; Sgt. James Eksten 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 Nolan of Victor, awaiting shipment overseas with the Army Air Forces.

Son of Pioneers

The late Frank Blaisell 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 and a Rochester native, Martha Frost Hard. His father drove stage coach from Rochester to Mt. Morris and Canandaigua before 1835. Hard fought in the Civil War battles of Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, South Mountain and Antietam.

He is one of 19 veterans of the war between the States remaining in New York State. He maintains, "I feel fine, am in perfect health, eat everything, and sleep like a baby."

Civil War Vet, 103, Sees Japs Whipped by June of 1946, Predicted Germany's Fall Within 23 Days of Actual Date

Comrade James Hard
Closest in Poll on
European War

By ARCH MERRILL

"JAPAN will be licked by June of 1946."

Don't dismiss that prophecy too lightly. For it comes from one who 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 of a V-E Day prophet.

He is James A. Hard, Western New York's last surviving veteran of the Civil War, who will be 104 years old on July 15.

BACK in March, 1944, I asked 20 well known 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 those interrogated was rather an imposing one. It contained the names of the city's mayor, a councilman, several other public officials, the directors of the city's Library, Museum and School of Music, a priest, 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, (and Comrade Hard himself admits, "It was only a guess") was Federal Judge Harold P. Burke, who picked Mar. 15 as THE DAY.

THE other day I called at 31 Rosalind St. on the southwestern rim of the city, where for years Comrade Hard has made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Alberta 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 awe came over me. I was in the presence of History. It was like seeing the Liberty Bell; the original copy of the Constitution under glass in the Congressional Library; the lantern that hung in the tower of Boston's old North Church the night that Paul Revere rode; the portentous marble figure of Abraham Lincoln beside the Potomac; the first covered wagon to cross the Rockies.

There was nothing formidable about the trim and gallant old figure in the easy chair that faced the southern windows whence the bright afternoon sunshine poured in. (It was one of the few sunny days of the current so-called Spring.)

The man, on whose square shoulders the long years rest so gently, greeted me pleasantly and with dignity.

He was not merely the Grand Old Man of Rochester, not merely



103-year-old James A. Hard, last surviving Civil War vet here, is shown reading the Arch Merrill-authored book he received as prize for being closest in V-E Day "guessing contest." Insets show Hard at the age of 20, left, and at 42.

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 a 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. Michigan 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 lilting Irish tune, "Kathleen Mavourneen."

Indians and buffalo roamed the plains of the Wild West. Only a few hundred souls dwelt in California, some of them beside Sutter's 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 Fitzhugh Street.

Only four years before, the first clumsy train had rumbled 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 to you 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 Eckstein of Henrietta whom Rochesterians will remember as the young escort of the veteran at peacetime patriotic gatherings, recently was honorably discharged after long service in North Africa and Italy. A grandson, Earl Osborne of Buffalo, served in World War I and for eight months in this war.

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

"So we sang 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 transportation 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 saw mill at Jordan in April, 1865, when the Rebels fired on Fort Sumter. He hid to the nearest recruiting office and signed up with the 32d Volunteers. He fought with the blue ranks at bloody Antietam, at

Would Divide Reich
Into Little States
To Keep Peace

Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg, before he was transferred to the Transportation Division.

Thrice he shook Abraham Lincoln's hand. He recalls the War President, "with a high hat and on horseback," reviewing 20,000 troops at Bailey's Crossroads, near Washington. "Lincoln's legs were so long they almost touched the ground. He should have had a higher horse."

In 1937 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 in the state, Mr. Hard?"

The old soldier indicated a letterhead 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 offices than there were veterans left to fill them. Some had to fill two posts. It was a pathetic thing.

For in the whole department, there remain only six old, old men, of all the legions that answered Lincoln's call to arms.

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

In the entire nation, according to a survey made in February, there are only 274 names on the rolls of the Grand Army — and probably some of them have answered the last call since then.

In the last five years he has heard taps sounded over the graves of his Monroe County comrades—Joseph Bauer, Henry Lilly, John A. Roe, Frank Bissell, Frank Van Alstyne.

He is the last of a gallant company.

EVERY angle store front on Main Street has changed since I came to Rochester 65 years ago. Everything is changed.

Where he now lives was a farm on the outskirts of the town. In 1880 Rochester had a population of only 89,000.

Hard worked for a time at his trade of carpenter on the Pennsylvania Railroad between Rochester and Olean. Then he went into the contracting business for himself and built many houses in the growing city. For 25 years he was a pension attorney with offices in the old Reynolds Arcade.

He served as national commander of the Union Veterans Union, a now extinct organization that was once 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: "I'm to be marshal of the Memorial Day Parade again this year, you know."

Three times during his lifetime, Hard has seen Germany break the peace of the world, with attended bloodshed and misery.

"What should we do with Ger-

(cont.→)

(cont., 5-20-45)

many now, Mr. Hard?"

"Cut her up into little states. See she never is a power again. Get the world empire idea out of her head," was the swift and emphatic reply.

"The venerable warrior does not believe Hitler is dead. 'It's a Nazi hoax,' he said.

I have interviewed many men, all of them younger than Comrade Hard. Few had readier answers or showed a greater grasp of affairs than this man in his 104th year.

* * *

"We spend our years as a day that is told.

"The days of our years are three score years and ten and, if by reason of strength . . ."

James A. Hard has exceeded the Biblical allotment by nearly 34 years.

"What is your recipe for longevity, Mr. Hard?"

"Work hard, don't worry and smoke plenty of cigars."

Mrs. Wilson told me as I left that her father had never been "upset about things. He'd always say 'never cross bridges until you come to them.'"

He has an almost boyish delight in smoking "good" cigars that are so hard to get these wartime days. He said he'd smoked since he was 15. Up to a few years ago he was able to walk down to the corner store to get his daily quota of smokes and the ice cream he likes so well.

"The ladies," he said, "are very good to me. They bring me cigars, good cigars. I have four left now. The ladies send cars and taxis to take me to meetings. I am fond of the ladies."

By "the ladies" he meant the women of the various veterans' auxiliaries who, in turn, are very fond of the cigar-smoking veteran of Antietam.

"By reason of strength," James A. Hard has exceeded so wide a margin the allotted "three score years and ten." It is the strength of the human spirit. He is a true son of pioneers who built the land that he fought to preserve.

* * *

WHEN in March, 1944, the 20 answers to the V-E Day question were published, a prize was announced for the winner. It was to be a copy of a book called The Lakes Country.

The other afternoon I left at the Hard home a new compilation in one volume of three books, A River Ramble, The Lakes Country and The Ridge—all by the same obscure author.

Comrade Hard's eyesight is not what it used to be. But "Lola will read the book to me," he said.

Lola is his granddaughter, Mrs. Lola Eksten.

How I wish I could have left a handful of good cigars, along with the book "that Lola will read" to her granddaddy.

* * *

WHEN a week from Wednesday you see the familiar blue-clad figure waving to the sidewalk crowds on Memorial Day, his day of glory, think also of the other days ahead for the lonely old man in his room that faces that Southland where he fought to save the Union over 80 years ago; the serene old man dialing his magic radio; the wise old man with his memories of nearly ONE HUNDRED AND FOUR years; the Grand Old Man of the fast dwindling Grand Army who yearns only for "good cigars."

104th Birthday Party Arranged For J. A. Hard

THE 104th birthday of Rochester's sole surviving Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, will be celebrated at a party Saturday, July 14, in the Seneca, according to family plans.

Friends and members of the Sons of Union Veterans and the Daughters of Union Veterans will gather to fete the cigar-smoking soldier. Hard, who lives with his daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, 31 Rosalind St., will be 104 on July 15.

Hard, 104 July 15, To Be Given Party

James A. Hard, Rochester's sole surviving veteran of the Civil War, will celebrate his 104th birthday at a party to be held by the Sons and Daughters of Union Veterans Saturday, July 14 at Hotel Seneca. The veteran, who lives with his daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, 31 Rosalind St., will be 104 July 15.

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, Mendon Ponds Park, July 15. He will be 104 years old.

Proceeds from the picnic, which will include a program of music and dancing, will go to the Handicapped Veterans Building Fund.

Party to Honor Veteran at 104

A public reception for Comrade James A. Hard, last Monroe County Civil War veteran, will be held from 8 to 10 p. m. tomorrow in Hotel Seneca to mark his 104th birthday.

More than 70 special invitations were mailed yesterday to every veteran chapter in the county by Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the sponsors. Walter S. Beilby, county SUV commander, is chairman of the party.

Formal entertainment has been ruled out of this year's program because of Comrade Hard's failing eyesight.

"The people of New York are proud of you—proud and grateful for your valor, appreciative of everything that you went through 80 and more years ago in order that 'Government of the people, by the people and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.' I hope most heartily that you may enjoy many happy returns of your birthday."

"I got a letter from Dewey last year, too," chuckled Hard.

A great, white cake decorated with Hard's name and "Your boys, SUV" (Sons of Union Veterans) and bordered with 104 red, white and blue candles was served to guests at the reception.

"The board under this cake has served you for five consecutive years," Fred Caldwell, past state department commander of the SUV, told Hard. "We hope it will serve five more. You stick with us and we'll furnish the cake."



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 Eksten Sr. of Henrietta, holds the match at birthday party. Part of his 104 candles are shown in the picture.

Party, Many Well Wishers Cheer Civil War Vet, 104

"Happy birthday to you—"

The song began with one or two voices and quickly swelled into a hearty chorus as all eyes turned on Civil War Veteran James A. Hard. He was entering the hall in a wheelchair, his cane resting across his knees, the blue GAR cap cocked jauntily on his head.

"I may be 104, but I still like parties," he informed friends who clustered around his chair.

The Victor-born warrior, whose chief pleasures between birthdays are smoking cigars and listening to the radio, had worried all day for fear it would rain and spoil the birthday party the Sons of Union Veterans had planned for him at Hotel Seneca. It rained, but nearly 100 old friends and officers of veteran organizations turned out to offer congratulations and cigars.

Denies Rain Cause

Reminded that rain had accompanied his birthday celebrations for some years, Comrade Hard hastened to say: "I don't think my birthday has anything to do with it."

Even the state executive chambers took note of the birthday of Monroe County's last Civil War veteran. A letter arrived last night from Governor Dewey, who wrote:

"I'm going to stick just as long as the Lord will let me," promised Hard with a grin and the assembly applauded.

Likes Greeting Cards

The Civil War veteran spent most of the day talking about his party and listening to his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten Sr. of Henrietta, read his birthday cards aloud.

"I've got only 70 so far," he worried. "Don't you think more will come Monday and Tuesday? I got 178 last year."

Today is the actual date of Hard's birthday, but his party was moved up a day so it wouldn't fall on Sunday.

To a table already piled high with presents, the veteran yesterday added a box of cigars from a great grandson, S/Sgt. Donald Nelson of Victor, recently returned from the European theater.

Party-Minded on 104th Birthday



—Times-Union JUL 14 1945

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 31 Rosalind, spoke up.

"Pa's younger than I am, even if I'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, stifled a note of reproach 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 Collapse

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 a month 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 white 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 Genesee Hospital to Mr. and Mrs. James P. Eksten of 77 East Blvd.

Hard, who is 104, has three grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren.

Times-Union JAN 16 1946

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 Hards, was born Tuesday night in Genesee Hospital to Mr. and Mrs. James T. Eksten, of 77 East Blvd. The State Commander of the GAR, who is 104, has three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

D. & C. JAN 17 1946

James A. Hard Pleads

for Comrades

Times-Union JUN 3 1945

Editor, The Times-Union:
A LETTER has just been read to me which was printed in The Times-Union of May 27. 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.

Pals Despite 104-Year Span

Times-Union APR 4 1945



James A. Hard, 104 years old and Monroe County's last 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.

Civil War Veteran Invited to Dinner

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 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 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. Waste 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.

Times-Union JUL 12 1946

'STICKING AROUND AS LONG AS I CAN'

D&C. JUL 15 1946

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 additional years.

"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 thumb-nail, 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 birthday, they'll furnish the cake."

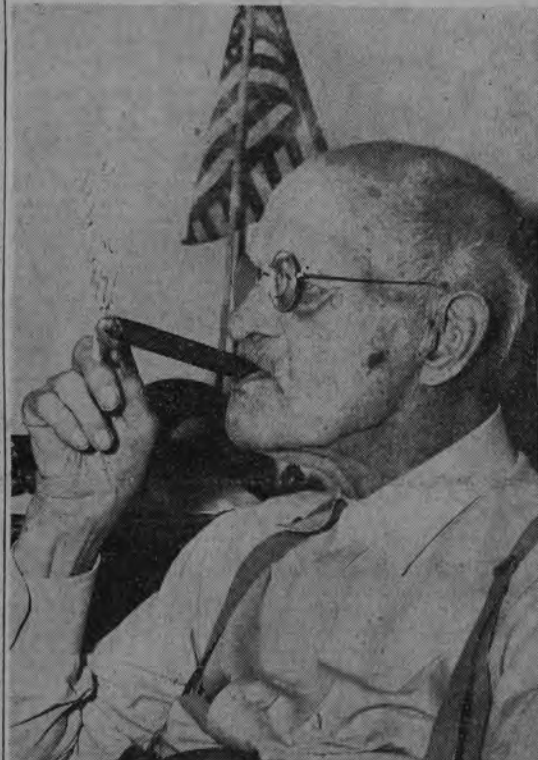
He smiled and added, "And I'm going to stick around as long as I can."

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 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 falling him—objects have become blurry and he can't recognize your features—and his hearing is lightly impaired—you have to raise your



JAMES A. HARD

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

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 pipefuls—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 29 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 moves 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."

Hard Feted 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 resolved 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 people of the entire state are glad and proud that he flourishes among us at his remarkable age. What he and his comrades did—their suffering and their sacrifices—for the preservation 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. Wilhelmina Taggart, department president, SUV Auxiliary, Rochester; Miss Olivia Smith, department president, Ladies of the GAR, Rochester; Miss Helen Hoag, department president, Daughters of Union Veterans, Syracuse, and William E. Kelley, department second vice-commander, SUV, Rochester.

Hard is the second oldest surviving Civil War veteran in the nation, the Veterans Bureau reported in Washington. Oldest is Francis Megaz, Tucson, Ariz., who is 107.

Among the messages received last night was a long distance telephone call from Robert M. Round of Ripley, 101, past national commander, GAR, and close friend of the Rochester veteran.

Civil War Vet, 105, Steps Out Tonight



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 members Alice Shufelt of 19 Cornell St. and Barbara Noyes of 340 Meigs St. are shown as they begin the job of placing them. Cake is gift to Hard from Sons of Union Veterans.

Times-Union JUL 15 1946

'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.



HARD

Thus at 105, Comrade Hard has more optimism than he did when he was in his 40s, which was back in 1880, years before there were automobiles, motion pictures or electric lights. At that time Hard who was a pension attorney, figured they'd be sounding taps for him when he was 75 years old at the latest. Now he's 30 years beyond the 75th milestone.

Except for dimming eyesight and slightly impaired hearing, the centenarian 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."

Aethuselah Hit Milestones



Mrs. Vera Nelan looks on as Civil War Veteran James A. Hard puffs at the 105 candles that bedecked his birthday cake at a party in Hotel Seneca.

Times-Union JUL 16 1946

Civil War Veteran, 105, Feels 'No Different'

HOW DOES IT FEEL to be in your 106th year?

"No different," says Civil War Veteran James A. Hard, "than in the 105th."

Comrade Hard was relaxing comfortably today at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter., after "stepping out" last night to attend the birthday party given him by Sons of Union Veterans at Hotel Seneca. More than 300 attended the fete, at which veterans of four wars were represented. Gov. Dewey forwarded congratulations to Comrade Hard.

Greetings also were received from Comrade Robert M. Rownd, Civil War veteran of Ripley, who with Hard comprised the only representation of the New York State Grand Army of the Republic at the organization's encampment in Rochester last summer.

Dignitaries present last night were Fred E. Howe, SUV department commander, and Mrs. Howe of Niagara Falls; Mrs. Wilhelmina Taggart of Rochester, SUV State Department Auxiliary president; Miss Olivina Smith of Rochester, department president, Ladies of the GAR; Miss Helen Hoag of Syracuse, department president, Daughters of Union Veterans; William E. Kelley of Rochester, SUV department second vicecommander.

Hard's birthday gifts included the usual bountiful supply of tobacco. Asked for an inventory today, he said:

"Let's make it eight pounds of tobacco, and a wagonload of cigars. I can hardly wait until next year."

He has no ills, 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 70.

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 70 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 salutes that his birthday brought.

D. & C. JUL 16 1946

SEP 29 1946

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 Vicemayor Frank E. VanLare; Mrs. Nettie C. Gardner, past department president of Auxiliary 1; Neil D. Cranmer of Elmira, national commander-in-chief of the SUV; Miss Josephine Parkhurst of Pulaski, department president of the Women's Relief Corps; 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. Anna Hoyt, president of Auxiliary 18, was toastmistress and Mrs. Alice M. Waste, general chairman. The dinner, which was followed by dancing, was sponsored by Auxiliaries 1, 18, and 23 of the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans.

RONICLE, MONDAY, MAY 26, 1947

D. & C. MAY 26 1947

HE 'NEVER FELT BETTER'

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-grandsons, Sgt. James P. Ecksten of Rochester, and Staff Sgt. Donald Nolan of Victor, both veterans of World War II.

"Never felt better in my life," Hard told Mrs. Adam Gilliland, 103 Rutgers St., with whom he resided for several years, in a conversation Saturday in which he asked her to accompany him and his granddaughter, Mrs. Lola Ecksten, to Lake Placid for the annual GAR convention this summer.

Although walking tires him, relatives say, his appetite continues hearty and he smokes six cigars a day. Hard, who will be 106 on July 15, is now residing at 31 Portsmouth Ter.



JAMES A. HARD

Hardly a Company Left

According to an Associated Press dispatch from Washington, this Memorial Day the Grand Army of the Republic will be able to muster hardly a company when the bugles blow for start of parades.

As of May 7, the 97 survivors of Northern Armies on Veterans Administration pension rolls were 58 fewer than on last Memorial Day and 143 fewer than the year before. The survivors live in 28 states and more than half have passed their century mark in age.

Close behind the Rochester veteran in age are Daniel A. Wedge of Aurora, Ill., who was born Oct. 26, 1842, and Albert Ray of Hinton, Okla., born Dec. 18, 1842. Five other veterans on the Veterans' Administration list were born in 1843 and eight in 1844. The youngest Civil War veteran is Charles Knecht of St. James, Mo., who was 11 when the war ended and who will be 94 next November.

Group of Centenarians

Charles Douglas of New Haven, Conn., celebrated his 100th birthday Friday, and Nathan Colburn of Champlin, Minn., and George Krug of Kingsdale, Pa., will be 101 today and Wednesday, respectively. Missouri boasts the largest list of surviving men who wore the blue uniform — 9, California and Illinois have 8 each. All the 7 Ohio and 4 Kentucky veterans are 100 or older. Although the government keeps no record of the men who fought on the other side in the War Between the States, it is estimated that fewer than 80 men who wore the Confederate grey are living.

'Brushing Up' for Memorial Parade

TIME UNION JUN 22 1947



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 105-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 97 veterans of the War between the States.

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

J & C JUN 3 1947

Hard Honored In Congress

To the nation's oldest living veteran of the Civil War, 105-year-old James A. Hard of Rochester, came special tribute from the floor of Congress, according to a Gannett News Service dispatch.

Honor to the "grand old man" came as Rep. Gordon Canfield (R., N. Y.) placed in the Congressional Record a speech delivered in Rochester last week by Rep. Kenneth B. Keating, referring to Hard.

Last night, Hard was guest of honor at the 35th anniversary party of Clare Barton Tent, Daughters of Union Veterans, at Melody Lane Restaurant, 24 Lincoln Ave.

Hard Leads Parade

Rochester's James A. Hard, at 105 the oldest Civil War veteran in the nation, played a familiar role today at the annual encampment of the New York Department, Grand Army of the Republic, at Lake Placid.

He was grand marshal of a parade of 1,000 men and women of five related groups of the onestrong GAR—the Women's Relief Corps, Ladies of the GAR, Daughters of Union Veterans, Sons of Union Veterans and the auxiliary of the SUV.

Wearing the blue uniform of the Union Army, the Rochesterian opened the one-man encampment yesterday, only one of four GAR men in the state able to attend. He was greeted by delegates of the other organizations and waved acknowledgment from a wheelchair. He later attended a banquet of the Daughters of Union Veterans. The encampment closes tomorrow.

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 6 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 last surviving "Boy in Blue."

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 ballroom 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 Bamber. Bamber 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

Editor: The Times-Union:
Get Hard times in the last year or so it has been stated that James A. Hard was the oldest living veteran of the Civil War.

Recently I saw a piece in Time where the Minnesota GAR at its 81st encampment gave up their charter. I sent a clipping of Mr. Hard and the 10 children it took to make 105 years. I have received a letter from Marion G. Jewell, who is secretary of the GAR in St. Paul, Minn. She wrote that Charles A. Hooker 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



Comrade James A. Hard packs his traveling bag for the trip to the Lake Placid encampment.

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.

The venerable former railroad man, carpenter and law practitioner, who will round out 106 years July 15, will leave Rochester by motor early tomorrow morning, equipped with his blue uniform, a good supply of his favorite cigars and enough pipe tobacco to fill in between the three or four stogies he smokes daily.

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 Rownd 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.

Resolutely, the Rochester veteran planned to make the trip. He will be driven to Placid from his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter, by Miss Louise Adams, a school teacher friend and daughter of a GAR veteran.

Hard expects about 1,200 daughters of veterans and some 200 sons, members of allied GAR groups, to attend the encampment. He particularly welcomes the warmer weather and believes he should stand the trip well, bolstered by his "three square meals a day" and "all the sleep I get."

"This has been the wettest, coldest spring I can remember," he said today. "I've never seen another like it, and that covers a lot of years."

Native of Victor

Hard was born in Victor, moved with his parents to Windsor, Broome County, as a boy, and was a resident of Freeville 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 railroads 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 30 years until his retirement.

Hard maintains a keen interest in national and world affairs and has never got over 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 imperialist Russia, her defeat by Germany in the first World War, watched the Russian revolution, the growth of Communism 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

"PRESUME 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 feasted at a public reception tonight in the Hotel Seneca, reported he was feeling better than in the last 4 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 GAR, maintains an ardent interest in the news of the day. He listens to news broadcasts, and friends who visit him at 31 Portsmouth Ter. read aloud portions of the daily newspapers.

The one-time national commander of the now defunct Union Veterans Union, one-time rival of the Grand Army of the Republic, forecast 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, hopes to 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."

'Celebrating' 4th--At 105!



D. & C. JUL 5 1947

THE Grand Old Man of Rochester expertly broke the head of a match with his fingernail, held it to the bowl of his pipe, and puffed vigorously.

"Remember when Independence Day used to be a pretty big thing in Rochester," he said, and leaned back in his chair (above) on the front porch of 31 Portsmouth Ter. to enjoy the cool Fourth of July breezes.

"Yes, ma'am," the 105-year-old Civil War veteran said. "They used to make a good bang. Used to set 'em off myself not so many years ago," he added with considerable pride.

James A. Hard, who has seen more Independence Days than any other person in Rochester, was in a mood for recollection.

"Battle of Gettysburg ended 84 years ago today. Fought it on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. We were on our way to it, we were in the Sixth Corps, but it ended before we got there. That was too bad, but I've seen a lot of fireworks since then," Hard laughed mildly.

Hard has been resting up since his trip to Lake Placid last week where he held a "one-man convention" of the G. A. R.

The "Grand Old Man" had this to say: "Just say I had a good time at the Lake. Best time I ever had anywhere . . ."

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

TIMES-UNION JUL 21 1947



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 placed as his car rolled into Page 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, 31 Portsmouth Ter., with whom he lives.

Not a Bit Excited

He said he was awfully 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 pried her with questions about the craft.

Tossing 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

could have the experience of riding in a helicopter.

It's a Lot of Fun

"It's a lot of fun," he said, "and a fine method of getting around."

From time to time, The Times-Union will arrange to take prominent Rochesterians for a trip in the helicopter, it was announced.

TWO UNION JUL 16 1947

GAR Veteran Launches Attack on Candles



Flanked (left) by Wilbur E. Kelly, state commander, Sons of Union Veterans, and John Bamber, commander, Monroe County Council,

SUV, James A. Hard attempts to blow out candles on 106th birthday cake at party in his honor at Seneca.

July 15, 1947

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 Ithaca, Niagara Falls, Albany, Pulaski, Henrietta. Lt. Gov. Joe R. Hanley sent greetings and Vice-mayor 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.



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

floral piece to Civil War Veteran James A. Hard, who was feted on his 106th birthday.

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

D. & C. JUL 1 1947

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 106th 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 numerals "106" on it.

Relatives Attend

Up from Ithaca came Fred Barnard and Herman Brockway. Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Stephan 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 Parkhurst 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 Racynowski 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. Dicker were represented by pinchhitters. Vice-mayor Frank E. Van Lare brought greetings from the Mayor while Lt. Gov. Joe R. Hanley, as acting Governor, sent congratulations by mail as did Representative Kenneth B. Keating.

County Commander John H. Bamber of Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans, presided and introduced William E. Kelly, department commander. The Rt. Rev. Msgr. George V. Burns, department chaplain, also brought greetings.

Then the gifts, chiefly cigars and pipe tobacco, were brought in and piled high on the table, enough to supply him through the year.

By the time Commander Hard had finished shaking hands with all his guests he was a pretty tired man and the program was terminated without his response.

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.

—TIMES UNION JUL 15 1947

Born Hungry 106 Years Ago Today, Says Hard

By MARIE POWELL

"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's looks belie his age. He wears a hearing aid and strong glasses and 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 nearby 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.

"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 he graciously 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 10 o'clock under sponsorship of the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans. He wondered if ice cream would be party fare.

Likes 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 "dressup 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.

Tears 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.

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 I. Cristy, chairman of the county observance, made the announcement yesterday at a meeting of commanders of county units of national veterans' organizations in the office of County Manager Clarence A. Smith in the Court House. Col. Arthur T. Smith will be assistant to the chairman, Cristy announced.

The date for the observance will depend upon the arrival of the body from overseas, Cristy 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.

Cristy said 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 Vicemayor Frank E. VanLare and unanimously adopted. It authorized City Manager Louis E. Cartwright to co-operate with Cristy and made 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. Cristy yesterday requested the commanders to submit names for appointment to committees, a move designed to give the entire preparations and the observance the broadest possible community representation.

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

D. & C. SEP 10 1947

Hard, 106, 'Sees Lincoln' Once More

TIMES U. S. • 10 1947

Impersonator Pays Visit to 'Boy In Blue'

MORE than 80 years fell away today and James A. Hard, Rochester's 106-year-old Civil War veteran, seemed again to see the bearded, deeply furrowed face and the lank figure of Abraham Lincoln before him.

The sad, kindly eyes and the high, penetrating voice were almost as Hard remembered them from the three times he saw Lincoln during the war between the states.

But the old gentleman wasn't doing a bit of vivid day-dreaming—Abraham Lincoln Hite, the Lincoln impersonator had come to pay a visit to Hard at 31 Portsmouth Ter.—on the 84th anniversary of the delivery of Lincoln's Gettysburg address.

Ambition Fulfilled

Hite, a bricklayer, employed at Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa., has a gaunt face, heavy eyebrows and a thin figure uncannily like those of the Great Emancipator. Strangely enough, he actually was christened Abraham Lincoln—after the family doctor, who had been named for the Civil War president. Often told of his resemblance to Lincoln, Hite began his impersonations during the war when asked to help sell War Savings stamps to school children. He came to Rochester today to satisfy a long-cherished ambition of meeting someone who had actually seen Lincoln.

Unfathomably courteous, the oldest survivor of the Boys in Blue cordially greeted his visitor, who wore Lincolnian clothing and make-up, including a wig and false beard. Then he squinted at him carefully.

"You certainly resemble the President very much," he said, "although you're not as homely a man as Mr. Lincoln. I think Lincoln was the homeliest man I ever saw."

Went to White House in '61

At Hite's urging, Hard told of meeting Lincoln at the White House in May, 1861.

"It was at a public reception in the Blue Room of the White House. I shook hands with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln and little Bobby Lincoln. I don't remember what the President said to me—it was just something pleasant."

"But he gave me a smile I always remembered—whenever he spoke to anyone he had a wonderful homely smile. And he gave me a handshake with a grip that crushed my hand nearly. I thought his hand was as big as a ham—it took mine right out of sight."



James A. Hard (right) greets Abraham Lincoln Hite on the 84th anniversary of the delivery of the Gettysburg Address.

Hite listened carefully as Hard told of twice seeing Lincoln at army reviews later in the war. He was particularly interested when Hard told how Lincoln in a review at Bailey's Crossroads, Va., rode a horse so small that his long legs seemed almost to touch the ground.

'Greatest Man Ever Born'

Told that reading and discussion of the Gettysburg address will take place in every Rochester school today, the aged veteran said, "We should try to make children as much like Lincoln in principle as we can."

"Lincoln," Hard concluded, "was the greatest man that was ever born. I wish we had him now."

Hite, who is not an exhibitionist but just a person who finds satisfaction in appearing before school children and invalids, thanked Hard enthusiastically for the interview.

"I reckon I never did anything so interesting," he said.

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. Milne 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 Miss Mae G. Hughes, past national senior vicepresident 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 B. 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.



D. & C. FEB 12 1948

James A. Hard, 106-year-old Civil War veteran, holds ballot box which he presented yesterday to James A. Hard Women's Relief Corps. The Relief Corps, in return, gave flag to Susan B. Anthony Memorial. Mrs. Milne P. Schermerhorn, left, gave flag; Mrs. George Howard accepted for the memorial.

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 60,000 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 christened 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 curb to curb at 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 Abraham Lincoln Association cited Lincoln's career as vibrant 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 organizations comprising the association, 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 Washington. The memento was sent for Hard by Mrs. Mary B. Forbes of Milton, Mass., a collector of Lincolniana, in return for an autographed picture of Rochester's grand old man.

Hard Recounts Meeting

Hard responded briefly, recounting his meeting the Civil War President at a White House reception when the strapping Hard was waiting for his uniform early in the War between the States, following his enlistment. The venerable veteran drew chuckles when he recalled Lincoln observed, "You look like you'd make a good soldier if you'd enlist."

Chief speakers at the dinner were Thomas J. Connor, principal of Scottsville High School, and Representative Kenneth E. Keating who, in the role of brigadier general also performed a second function which he described as "the most pleasant military duty to which I have ever been assigned."

General Keating conferred on Col. Montgomery E. Leary, Rochester physician, the Army Commendation 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 pinning the ribbon on Colonel Leary, who in World War I commanded a base hospital at Camp Jackson S. 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 "displayed outstanding devotion to duty and loyalty" in providing medical treatment and attention to personnel at military installations in Rochester and vicinity during World War 2.

Members of a committee of 29 prominent Rochesterians headed by Mayor Samuel B. Dicker, who were instrumental in obtaining the citation for Dr. Leary, were among the more than 200 persons at the dinner. Mayor Dicker presented the greetings of the city.

some hovel to aspire, if he will, to the portals of the White House.

Declaring that America has the highest living levels and the best government to be found anywhere, the speaker scored those who proclaim this type of government has become obsolete. He asserted:

"Lincoln would never have been a Socialist. He would never have been a Communist. He believed every man and every woman was entitled to the right to get ahead, but not to pull the other fellow down in getting there."

Hard Nears 107, Oldest Among Union Survivors

JAMES A. HARD of 31 Portsmouth Ter., who will be 107 next July 15, is the oldest of 53 known survivors of the Civil War who wore the Union Blue.

Rolls of the Veterans Administration show that the youngest Union veteran of the War Between the States is 97-year-old James Crugam of Chicago. No records are kept by the government 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 Robert M. Rownd, 103, of Ripley.



VETERANS OF THREE WARS

Headliners at the Lincoln Day dinner were, from left, Dr. Montgomery E. Leary, veteran of World War 1, who was awarded the Army

Commendation Ribbon; Rep. Kenneth E. Keating, a World War 2 soldier, and James A. Hard, 106, Civil War veteran.

Fred E. Colwell, president of the Abraham Lincoln Association, introduced as toastmaster William E. Kelly, also of Rochester, who is state commander of the Sons of Union Veterans. Among guests were Col Henry E. Moran, of Holyoke, Mass., commander-in-chief of the SUV, and other leaders of that body, the Woman's Relief Corps, Ladies of the GAR, Daughters of Union Veterans and the Auxiliary to the SUV.

Lincoln's Life Outlined

Representative Keating outlined Lincoln's life as "a symbol of the inexpressible grandeur of our constitutional system of government and our American equal opportunity society."

"We must," he said, "continue to perpetuate free, constitutional government; free economy and free society. We must continue to preserve that freedom of opportunity which will permit a child born in



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

They sang "Tenting Tonight" last night for James A. Hard—Rochester's 106-year-old commander of the Grand Army of the Republic.

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 be-

fore, 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.

LOOKS FORWARD TO 'MANY MORE'

D. & C. JUL 15 1948

Hard 107 Today, Finds Birthdays Pretty Much Alike

GAR Vet 'Feels Fine,' Keeps Abreast of World Events

By BILL BEENEY

"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 score 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?

"Those Russians are bad medicine. I predicted right after World War 2 that we've 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 beefsteak." His birthday meal will consist of roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, asparagus salad, peas, tea, cottage pudding.

To Be Feted Tonight

Hard will be feted at a public reception tonight in the Seneca Hotel. The affair is sponsored by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans.



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 it.

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



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

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 stands beside his favorite chair in his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter. 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 I 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 so sick 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 D. Cerame.

Grandpa's Children's Hour



These young descendants of Comrade James A. Hard helped him observe his 107th birthday. On his lap is Royce Racinowski, 8-month-old great great grandson. In front is Peter Eksten, great great grandson, and at rear, Marie Osborne, great granddaughter. Photo was taken at Hotel Seneca reception.

Hard Starts 108th Year With Plenty of Cigars

James A. Hard won't have to worry about his cigar supply—for a while, anyway.

Relatives and friends attending Hard's 107th birthday party last night at the Seneca saw to it he received five large boxes of his favorite, large-sized cigars.

Rochester's sole surviving Civil War veteran also received several pounds of smoking tobacco, an assortment of neckties, handkerchiefs and socks—and a gigantic birthday cake.

Hard's name and the numeral "107" were written on the cake, which was sheathed in red, white and blue frosting. Flaming on it were 108 candles—one for each year of the veteran's age, and "one to grow on."

With the help of three great-grandchildren Hard blew out the candles in accepted birthday manner. The GAR survivor was eulogized longer.

This morning Hard, at his home at 31 Portsmouth Terrace, was reported digging into his new supply of cigars, prepared, as he said last night, to "hang on a mite longer."



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 Pittenger, all awed by the size of the cake.

Grand Old Veteran Honored

Hard Reminded of Campfire By His 107 Birthday Candles

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 Hotel Seneca given him by 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 breathless assistance of three of his great-grandchildren.

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

Veterans, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and their auxiliary, Army and Navy Union.

"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 80—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."

Hard Plans To See Circus

Times Union JUL 21 1948

James A. Hard hopes to relive one of the earliest experiences of his boyhood Friday by attending the Mills Brothers Circus.

Monroe County's lone 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. Hoflick 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.

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. Hallock, 81, retired Presbyterian minister. The youngest birthday wellwisher was arm-held 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 Dicker praise him and eulogize 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, "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground." Afterward, with evident relish, 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.



JAMES A. HARD

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

Commander Hard, 31 Portsmouth Ter., was 107 on July 15, a month after he disbanded the State Department of the GAR as one of its two surviving members.

D. & C. AUG 14 1948

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 today 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.

MAYOR DICKER, members of the City Council and representatives of veterans organizations will gather at

In a letter addressed to Hard, Mayor Dicker states: "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.

the airport to participate in a send-off for the distinguished veteran.

James A. Hard To Fly To GAR Encampment

James A. Hard is planning to attend the national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, to be held in Grand Rapids, Mich., next week.

Hard, who at 107 is the oldest Civil War veteran in the United States, will fly to and from the encampment in The Gannett Newspapers plane, leaving Rochester at 10:30 a. m. Sunday, Sept. 26, and returning on Sept. 30.

Ceremonies in which Mayor Dicker and City Councilmen and representatives of various veterans' organizations will participate will be held at the airport prior to his departure.

Hard, the last commander of the Department of New York, GAR, will be accompanied to Michigan by Fred E. Colwell, secretary of O'Rork Camp, Sons of Union Veterans, and by Joseph Plum, also a member of the SUV.

Phone Call from Hard, 107, Brightens Up Blue Monday

By WILLIAM F. BUTLER

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 10:30 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, traveling in the Gannett Newspapers' airplane.

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

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

or 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.

HARD RETURNS TO HOSPITAL

Hardy James A. Hard, Rochester's 107-year-old Civil War veteran and the oldest survivors of the Grand Army of the Republic, last night was back in General Hospital for the second time in 2½ months, under a physician's diagnosis of pneumonia.

His condition was reported as satisfactory, and hospital authorities said the attack was not, as yet, at least, as severe as the one he underwent last October, when he was in the hospital for two weeks.

Hard was taken to the hospital about 9:30 last night, upon the advice of his physician.

Michigan Hails Hard Governor Writes to Veteran

KIM SIGLER, governor of Michigan, in a letter to 107-year-old James A. Hard, the nation's oldest GAR veteran, today extended a hearty greeting to the Rochesterian.

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 Encampment offers all of us an opportunity to rededicate ourselves to the principles of liberty, equality and justice, and, of course, unity."

"I am pleased that The Rochester Times-Union has made a com-

mission trip possible for you, and hope you will find your stay in Michigan enjoyable."

With the assistance of Mayor Dicker, a program has been arranged at the Rochester Airport beginning at 10 a. m. Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, will be 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

Horace T. McGinley, 55, of Niagara Falls, was sentenced to six months in Monroe County Penitentiary today in City Court when he pleaded guilty of petit larceny. He admitted receiving \$95 from Norine Quade, 9 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 Commander Hard will leave tomorrow morning aboard the Gannett News-papers plane 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 to the airport by a parade forming at Plymouth Ave. S. and Brooks Ave. tomorrow morning. Included in the parade will be members of the National Guard and the Naval Reserve.

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

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 has had 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 continuous 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 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 Rebs 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 for next year, which will mark the final encampment of the GAR."

"That will be our last chance to get together with the Rebs," 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.

J. A. Hard, 107, 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.

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 B. 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



TIMES UNION Oct. 16, 1948

James A. Hard gets a light from Nurse Agnes Arbuckle.

chest is clearing remarkably," the doctor added.

"Mr. Hard is making medical history," a member of the medical staff declared. "It definitely was not to be expected that a man of his years would make such rapid improvement. His progress to date may be attributed to the rapid advances that have been made in medical science, especially to such drugs as penicillin and streptomycin."

The veteran's temperature leveled off to normal within 12 hours after he entered the hospital at 2 p. m. Thursday, shortly after a cold he had for several days developed into pneumonia. He ate the regular hospital meal for pneumonia patients at supper Thursday night.

"I'd like to have a cigar, if I could," Hard told his nurse, Miss Agnes Arbuckle, this morning after devouring a breakfast of orange juice, toast, coffee and cereal.

The attending doctor approved the request.

"He's a grand patient," volunteered one of the nurses. "He's been telling us jokes about the Civil War days."

The patient's robust voice interrupted: "They're grand girls, these nurses. I'm really enjoying my visit."

"I'm still counting on getting to the last GAR encampment at Indianapolis next year," Hard told a reporter. "We can't miss that."

James Hard Glad to Be Home Again



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.

Hard Home; Makes Medical History

D. & C. OCT 27 1948



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 13 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.



MAIDES-DE-CAMP RALLY AROUND 'THE GENERAL' ON CELEBRATION EVE

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-

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-

D. & C. III 1-5-5076

Routine Is Easy at 107



Back home at 31 Portsmouth Ter. today after a 12-day rest in General Hospital to prevent recurrence of pneumonia, GAR Veteran James A. Hard, 107, also was back on his cigar-smoking routine. He beat an attack of pneumonia last October, returned home in time to vote Nov. 3.

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. 20, 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.



JAMES A. HARD

James Hard Critically Ill

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. 20 he again was hospitalized, but remained for only a few days before returning to his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Hard Oldest GAR Veteran

James A. Hard of Rochester yesterday advanced to the Number One position in seniority among Civil War veterans listed with the government, according to a Gannett News Service dispatch from Washington.

The death Tuesday of George Carroll, 111-year-old former slave of Cincinnati, makes the 107-year-old Rochesterian the oldest living veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Hard will be 108 on July 15, according to the Veterans Administration. His nearest rival, in point of years, is James W. Smith of Lebanon, Ore., who will turn 106 on July 8.

Veterans Administration lists only 24 surviving Union veterans on its pension roster. (Confederate veterans do not rate federal pensions). The GAR ranks are thinning by about 50 per cent each year. In June 1948, VA listed 49 Civil War veterans, down 42 from the previous year.

Probably more Civil War veterans are still living, VA believes, since many never applied for federal pensions. There are 13,043 Civil War dependants receiving VA pensions: 12,508 widows and 1,435 children.

DAY EVENING, JUNE 30, 1949

31

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 Gannett 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 Butler offered 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 Gannett Newspapers 12-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 heads the roster as the oldest Civil War veteran in the nation. He will observe his 108th birthday July 15.

Comrade Hard was advanced to the top of the VA seniority list by the death of George Carroll of Cincinnati on Tuesday. A former slave, Carroll 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.

GRAND MARSHAL — 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 aides. *T.U. Jun. 4-1949*

The morning of the parade Commander Hard proudly 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 reminiscence. For half an hour his strong, but low voice was heard in songs 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.

Hard Plans Open House

Because of impaired health, Comrade James A. Hard, oldest surviving Civil War veteran, will limit celebration of his 108th birthday July 15 to an open house in his home at 31 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 SUV, 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. These have been the usual tokens from auxiliaries of the veteran groups.

Hard Interviewed On Radio Show

James A. Hard, at 108 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 calling for both the Union and Confederate veterans of the Civil War to hold a united encampment. He was interviewed in the broadcast by John B. ...

JUL 1, 7 1949



AIDES-DE-CAMP RALLY AROUND 'THE GENERAL' ON CELEBRATION EVE

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-

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.

D. & C. JUL 15 1949

Jim Hard's 108 Today; Cigar Stock Only Worry

Ready for Celebration

On his birthday today he'll be up bright and early, as usual, for a hearty breakfast and a pipeful of tobacco while he listens to the morning news broadcasts. In anticipation of visits from his friends and patriotic groups he said: "I don't care how early they come—just so they come—I'll be up and ready for them."

Because of impaired health which has sent him to the hospital three times with pneumonia in the last eight months, Hard will limit his celebrating to an open house from 4 to 6 p. m. at his home. The party, sponsored by the Monroe County Council, Sons of Union Veterans, replaces the more elaborate celebrations in downtown hotels of former years.

In a ceremony preceding the party, Hard will present the gavel used at New York State GAR meetings from 1866 to 1948 to the Monroe County United Spanish War Veterans.

A group of musicians from the city's oldest band, the 54th Regiment Band, will play at the open house under the direction of Floyd C. King. The band concert is being co-sponsored by the Rochester Music Association.

The hands of Time's great grandfather clock today sweep 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 memory-stocked room at 31 Portsmouth Ter., while 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."

Cigar Stock Low

Two things, aside from birthday and the advance of time, were, however, of supreme importance to the white-haired centenarian who numbers among his contemporaries such figures as Abraham Lincoln, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Charles Dickens and Victoria of England.

Those two things are his journey to Indianapolis next month to attend the last national encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic.

and his dwindling stock of large-size, aromatic cigars.

On the first he said simply and quietly: "I've been to many a national encampment and I'll be there this year to answer the roll call." There could be little doubt that Jim Hard meant every word of that statement.

On his favorite topic of conversation—cigars—he had much to say. Wheeling quickly in his chair he flipped open his desk drawer and displayed what he bemoaned as his "last three or four cigars." He indicated that he might even have to switch to a pipe because of the shortage. His oral inventory proved a slightly pessimistic one, however, for the drawer contained no less than two full boxes and a large tin of tobacco.

But then, Jim Hard at 108 can still leave far younger men in a green distress when it comes to stogies. He's therefore, very apt to look far ahead when it comes to supply problems.

'On Top of World', Says Hard, 108 Years Young Today

Times Union July 15, 1949

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 he told a Times-Union reporter in firm, clear tones 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-pill?"

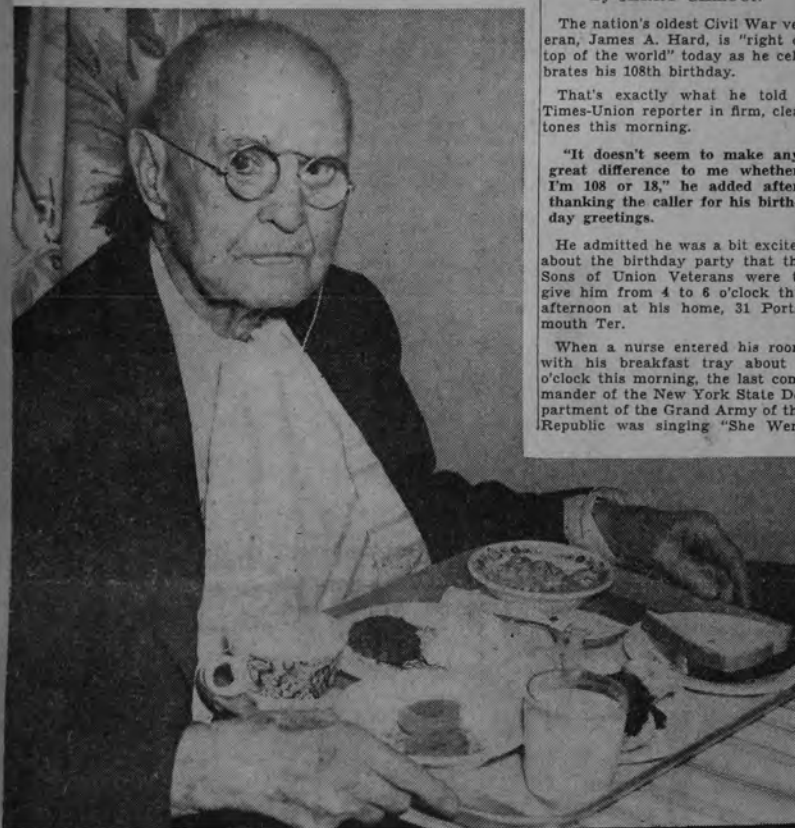
Commander Hard whiled away the morning hours listening to a companion read some of the 200 greeting cards from friends and well wishers in 38 states, and puffing away at an occasional cigar. Nearby were unopened gift packages of cigars and a large bouquet of red roses, the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank 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 WARC 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 so well that I think maybe I'm getting younger."



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.

James Hard, 108 Tomorrow, Plans to Smoke as Usual

TIMES UNION JUL 14 1949

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

at a party sponsored by the Sons of Union Veterans at his home 31 Portsmouth Ter. from 4 to 6 p. m.

There will be music by a group from the city's oldest band, the 54th Regiment Band, and gifts aplenty.

But the last commander of the GAR's New York State Department has his heart and mind set on a delayed gift that has been promised him for next month.

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 puffs a cigar or two.

JULY 16, 1949



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 youngster are sharing piece of birthday cake on hand a "party" in Hard's honor.

D. & C. JUL 16 1949

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 surviving GAR member cocked an attentive ear in its direction and beamed from ear to ear.

He turned in his chair to his regular nurse, Mrs. George Foote, standing beside him, and jokingly quipped: "I knew they'd play that rebel 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 sputtered about its perimeter.

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

Still Fit as Fiddle

"I'm as fit as a fiddle," he said. "It doesn't seem to make any great difference to me whether I'm 108 or 18. I might just up and live another century—it's gonna take about that long to smoke these cigars."

Jim Hard indicated with a triumphant wave of his hand the 31 full boxes of cigars and 11 tins of smoking tobacco which, in their gay wrappings, were arranged on the table beside him.

Today, as if yesterday hadn't provided enough excitement, Hard awaits the thrill of hearing his voice broadcast from coast to coast on a variety show being aired on an ABC hookup. The program, for which Hard made a recording to New York City by telephone Tuesday, will be broadcast over station WARC from 10 to 11 a. m. Comrade Hard is all agog about it, believing that his voice will be the oldest ever to be heard on the radio.

Dandles 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 knees, put his arm around the tot affectionately. It turned out to be Donald's birthday, too. The cake was brought forth and after sharing 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 105

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 Eddie VanDuyne, and 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," expostulated 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 30 members of the Monroe County Council, United Spanish War Veterans. The plaque, accepted by Albert E. Bricker, past county commander of the organization, bears the gavel used at state GAR encampments from 1866 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, 108. 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, Legionaries 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 repose 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 want one, too. James A. Hard, Rochester's 108-year-old Civil War veteran doesn't think they should have it. Senator Stennis (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 com-

memorating 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.

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 R. Gale, 102, of Seattle, Wash. Gale has been ill recently.

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 83rd and final encampment. Others are Joseph Clovese, 105, of Pontiac, Mich., the only surviving Negro of the group, and Theodore Penland, 100, of Portland, Ore., the national commander-in-chief.

Civic Sendoff to GAR Session Set for Hard

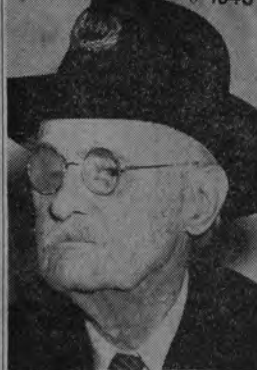
MILITARY veterans and civic groups will join in tribute to James A. Hard, when the nation's oldest Civil War soldier, 108, departs for the final encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic a week from tomorrow.

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-motored 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. Attendance at the reunion with the few remaining veterans able to attend is 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

TIMES UNION, AUG. 20 1949



JAMES A. HARD

be 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. Fitzhugh St. at 10:30 a. m. to escort the venerable veteran to the airport. The escort will consist of National Guardsmen, Voiture 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. S.; south on Plymouth to Elmwood Ave., and from there to the Airport. Harry J. Gaynor, municipal public service director, will be parade marshal.

Al Sigl, 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 Vicemayor VanLare, Chairman Gordon Howe of 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 flags.

Hard, 108, Flies Today to Last Reunion

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 83rd and final encampment of an organization that once numbered more than 408,000 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 coolly greeted at last year's conclave. 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, 1896, 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 Fitzhugh St. N. 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



GAR Chief of Staff Albert Woolson, 102, of Duluth, Minn., breaks crackers into his soup after he arrived in Indianapolis to attend last GAR convention.

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 Vicemayor Frank E. VanLare, 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

... TIMES UNION AUG 27 1949
 Oldest Vet Flies Tomorrow, States GAR Will Live On

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 Ter. on the eve of his flight to the 83d 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 enrolled 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 its single, brief business session in which the GAR will disband officially on Wednesday.

A detachment of National

Guardsmen, Legionaries, police and sheriff's deputies will escort Hard from Main St. W. and Fitzhugh 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 Al 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 Vicemayor 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.



Aided by David Dieter, 31 Portsmouth Ter., James A. Hard packs his uniform for the final encampment of the GAR.

Hard, 108, Says He's Ready For Hop to Last GAR Camp

TIMES UNION AUG 25 1949

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 83d and final GAR reunion at Indianapolis. He will make the flight aboard The Gannett Newspapers twin-motored plane as guest 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 gathering of Civil War veterans.

Commander Hard will be escorted to the airport Sunday morning by National Guardsmen. Virtually 108 of the 40 & 8, other veterans groups and Rochester police and deputy sheriffs. The escort will meet Hard and his companions at Main St. W. and S. Fitzhugh 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 Lodge of Masons.

A program of Civil War music will initiate the "bon voyage" ceremony at which Al Sigt, Times-Union newscaster, will be master of ceremonies. The program will be recorded for broadcast over WHEC at 2:30 p. m.

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

Stamp Proposed by Hard Appears

TIMES UNION AUG 30 1949

By JERRY GILLOON
Times-Union Staff Writer

Indianapolis—Uncle Sam has a bright new postage stamp today, thanks to an idea of James A. Hard, Rochester's grand old man of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The stamp is a special commemorative issue in honor of the last encampment of the GAR, which

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

Some 5,000 persons witnessed the ceremony of the issuance of the stamp yesterday afternoon in the shadow of the city's towering Soldiers and Sailors Monument, but only a few knew the memorial stamp had been proposed by the

108-year-old New York State veteran.

Although the crowds were ignorant of this, hundreds of men and women continuously crowded around Comrade Hard. The last commander of the GAR's New York State Department. Many shook his hand and asked for his autograph on their programs. Many more, including newspaper and newsreel photographers, shot his picture.

PROPOSED LAST YEAR

Comrade Hard proposed the memorial stamp at last year's encampment at Grand Rapids, Mich., and his fellow veterans unanimously approved. He was flown to both last year's encampment and this final one aboard a Gannett Newspapers plane.

The memorial stamp bears the picture of an aged veteran wearing the GAR campaign hat, as well as a shadowy image of his former self, a young soldier who fought on the battlefields of the Civil War.

Seated in his wheelchair near the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, Comrade Hard heard the stamp described as "a manifestation of gratitude who those who preserved our government when it was in peril," and "something to be credited to the debt we owe to the few surviving veterans of the Civil War and those who did not return from that war."

WELCOMED BY GOVERNOR

Taking part in the program were Indiana's governor, Henry F. Schricker; Assistant Postmaster General Joseph J. Lawler, and Mayor Al Toney of Indianapolis.

Quick to recognize Comrade Hard as he arrived for the ceremony, Gov. Schricker hastened to welcome him.

Especially enjoyable for Comrade Hard were the songs of Civil States Marine Corps Band. The Marine musicians are giving several concerts at the encampment by a special act of Congress.

Comrade Hard was guest of honor at a dinner of the New York Department of the Women's Relief Corps, but he was too weary after a long and exciting day to attend a reception given by Gov. and Mrs. Schricker in the Statehouse in the evening.

Another of the six old soldiers at the encampment, Charles L. Chappell, senior vicecommander from Long Beach, Calif., collapsed as he was on his way to the reception. He was revived shortly, however, and returned to his hotel room after a hospital checkup.



Comrade James A. Hard (center) is greeted by Gov. Henry F. Schricker of Indiana at Indianapolis. At left are Hard's military aide, Sgt. Bob Zollner and his nurse, Shirley Basom.

Hard Named To GAR Post

TIMES UNION OCT 1 1949

James A. Hard of Rochester today became junior vicecommander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, Hard, who is 108, was named to the office by Commander-in-Chief Theodore A. Penland of Portland, Ore. The appointment was occasioned by the death on Sept. 19 of Charles A. Chappel of California, senior vicecommander.

Alfred Woolson of Minnesota was advanced from junior vicecommander to succeed Chappel, and Hard takes over the office of Woolson.

Hard Receives D. & C. GAR Promotion

James A. Hard, 108 years old is a junior.

Junior vicecommander-in-chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, that is.

Hard, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, was appointed to the office by Commander-in-Chief Theodore A. Penland of Portland, Ore.

The appointment resulted from the death on Sept. 19 of Charles A. Chappel of California, senior vicecommander who was succeeded by Alfred Woolson of Minnesota. Hard takes over Woolson's post of junior vicecommander.



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 19.

6 GAR Survivors Split Over 'Last' Encampment

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 senior 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 eyes.

'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.

Charley Chappel had an idea yesterday: "I'm going to ask Penland for his place and see what he says."

"He don't want to give up his post," explained Mrs. Lillian M. Gardner of Los Angeles, secretary of the California-Nevada GAR Department.

Old Charley loves the GAR so much, she said, that he goes into Los Angeles once a month for a "post meeting," although no other veteran ever gets there.

Gray-bearded Robert Barrett, 102,

felt chipper enough, after a 250-mile automobile drive from Princeton, Ky., to watch the memorial service.

First for Negro Veteran

The old Kentucky cavalryman, who thinks more annual encampments would be fine, spent his time chasing Civil War "drillers." His son, Tom, explained that "drillers" posted as Union Army men rustling up provisions among farmers.

This is the first GAR encampment for Joseph Clovese, 105-year-old Negro veteran from Pontiac, Mich. Fleeing from slavery to join a Union colored unit in Louisiana, he was on garrison duty during the Civil War.

Clovese arrived by train yesterday morning, sporting the new black congress gaiter shoes he bought for the encampment.

Last to arrive was James A. Hard, who at 108 is the oldest of the 16 veterans left in the GAR. He had a good excuse. Rochester, N.Y., his hometown, drummed up a civic celebration to send him off in a plane provided by The Gannett Newspapers. The old veteran of Antietam, Chancellorsville, Yorktown and Fredericksburg is well satisfied to wind up GAR business "while we're able." But he'd like to see another joint meeting with Confederate veterans, like the one held at Gettysburg, Pa., in 1938.

Auxiliary Rite Rained Out

Chappel started his trip by plane Saturday night but took to a train in Chicago because of rain. He flown to the last four GAR sessions, but he admitted his flight was "pretty hard."

Maj. Gen. Carl R. Gray Jr., veterans administrator, added his own emphasis to the "last encampment" theme when he spoke at the memorial service.

"Well done," he told the last of the Boys in Blue. He gave his fare well "from all veterans," reporting 18,860,000 veterans now on VA rolls. Of them, he said, only 26 are Civil War survivors.

ROCHESTER TIMES-UNION SEP 1 1949

Mission Accomplished, Hard Heads Home after Final GAR Encampment

By JERRY GILLOON
Times-Union Staff Writer

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

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

Tensely he had sat in his wheelchair as taps were sounded at the last campfire of the Grand Army last night. He said nothing. If his thoughts were on the Virginia campfires of the Army of the Po-

tomac 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 echoes had died and 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 reticent, 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. He

and his fellow guests of the Rochester Times-Union 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 Basom of Henrietta, who has scarcely left his side since he left Rochester Sunday.

RESPONDS 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, 100-year-old Theodore Penland of Vancouver, Wash. Joseph Clovese, 105, the lone Negro veteran, of Pontiac, Mich., Robert Barrett, 102, of Princeton, Ky., and Albert Wollson, 102, of Duluth, Minn. 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.



TIMES UNION FEB 21 1950

Hard at 108 D. & C. FEB 10 1950 Eyes Dinner

Providing he is in good health, James A. Hard, 108-year-old Civil War Veteran, will be guest of honor at the 28th annual dinner of the Rochester Abraham Lincoln Association Monday night at Hotel Seneca.

Speaker of the evening will be Justice William F. Love of the State Supreme Court. The Rochester Association was founded in 1923 by the Sons of Union Veterans. Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doud will be toastmaster of the affair, which will observe the 141st anniversary of Lincoln's birth.

The following guests are expected to attend: Ethelyn Tucker of Alton, N. H., national president of the association; John H. Runkle of Harrisburg, Pa., commander-in-chief of the SUV; Judson N. French of Batavia, department commander, and Sophia F. Isaacs of Long Island City, department president.

Hard Better, Quits Hospital

James A. Hard has again shaken off a heavy cold (technically pneumonia) and the 108-year-old veteran quit General Hospital today to return to his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran entered the hospital a week ago yesterday. In his usual hardy manner that has amazed the medical staff of the hospital, Hard quickly responded to treatment, and was described as apparently back to normal today.

Evidence of his recovery was his habitual cigar puffing and joking with his nurses. His only complaint was that the medication dulled his appetite.

TIMES UNION FEB 28 1950

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

D. & C. MAR 16 1950

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, in 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 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., 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 D. & C. MAR 19 1950

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 Guardsmen, gave Hard the certificate. Hard told Nersinger he was pleased that the Guardsmen 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 Guardsmen a few years ago. Witnessing the presentation were Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, and John E. Gascoyne, junior vicecommander of the Guardsmen.

TIMES UNION MAR 15 1950

Guardsmen 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. will be Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, and John E. Gascoyne, junior vicecommander of the Legion.

TIMES UNION MAR 18 1950

ROCHESTER TIMES-UNION

Saturday Evening, March 18, 1950

9

Guardsmen Honor Hard



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 State Legion of Guardsmen. Hard was given the Guardmen's "certificate of recognition." Nersinger is past commander of the Thomas J. Griffith Post of the group and Gascoyne is junior vicecommander.

Hard to Attend

D. & C. MAY 24 1950

Memorial Rite

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 Catholic War Veterans. His subject will be "Victory or Defeat?"

The Rev. William A. Hallock, chairman of the Memorial Sunday Service Committee, said an invitation to attend is extended to all families and friends of any veteran who has died in the past year.

The program will open at 7:45 p. m. with organ selections by Fred Erick Clinton Lee, followed by as

sembly. Rudolph M. Genthner will preside and the Rev. Fremont Lerans and 37 former "Rebels." Two Chapman will give the invocation years ago the GAR forces alone numbered 43, and three years ago there were 97. The Confederate ranks were by the audience will be led by Lawrence H. Hauck, a past county commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Benediction will be given by the Rev. Mr. Hallock.

All veteran and patriotic organizations in the city will be represented at the service.

Hard Now Oldest

Of Civil War Vets

D. & C. MAY 29 1950

One hundred - and - eight-year-old James A. Hard, who will be grand marshal of the Memorial Day parade here tomorrow, now is the oldest Civil War veteran in the nation.

The death of John Graves, Higginsville, Mo., at the age of 108 on May 9, cut the known survivors of the Confederate Army to 23, according to the Associated Press. On the Union side only 16 men remain alive.

Youngest of the Union veterans is 101-year-old Theodore A. Penland of Vancouver, Wash. On the Confederate side, age records for many of the men are incomplete. Apparently at the extremes are John A. Marcum, Birt, Ark., 96, and R. V. Collie, 106, Louisville, N. C.

The forces are dwindling fast. Only a year ago there were 26 Union veterans and 37 former "Rebels." Two years ago the GAR forces alone numbered 43, and three years ago there were 97. The Confederate ranks were even larger.

Veterans Administration records list 2,213,365 as having served in the Civil War which ended 85 years ago. There still are 10,348 widows and 1,377 children of Union veterans of the war.

TIMES UNION MAY 31 1950

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 30 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.



GRAND MARSHAL James A. Hard as he rode at head of Memorial Day parade.

Hard Joins Masonic Post

TIMES UNION JUN 19 1950

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 Eksten, 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

D. & C. JUN 15 1950

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 read: "... It 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 Tresey Garrison 3206.

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 Michael Tresey Garrison 3206.

D. & C. JUN 13 1950

James Hard's Story

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



JERRY 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 three 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 to 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.

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

Palmer holds an old book about war from which background scene was taken. Notice Hard's medals and GAR hat.

TIMES UNION JUL 7 1950

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 first article, Hard tells the story of his boyhood.

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 term. 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 solid for 7 or 8 miles. We all had skates which we fastened on our boots, and we'd go on parties. We take lunches along, and eat them around campfires.

DROVE 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 organ put in our house. My sisters used to play it. They were right fine musicians.

To show how things have changed, we used to think it was a wonderful Christmas 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 shilling (12½ cents) 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.

6-8-50

SMILE

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 32nd 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 Ellsworth. 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 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

(turn up for end)

6-8-50

SMILE

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 32nd 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 Ellsworth. 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

rail I could find, but the guard picked up a heavier 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 him. 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 if for a Party

TIMES UNION JUL 10 1950



LINCOLN VISITS Gen. George B. McClellan at camp not far from Washington. James A. Hard saw Lincoln when the President made a similar visit to McClellan at Bailey's Cross-

roads, Va. The general is the short man in the center facing Lincoln. The photo is one of the large group of original Civil War prints in the George Eastman House collections.

James A. Hard, the nation's oldest living survivor of the Civil War, will be 109 on July 15. The doughty ex-soldier has been telling the story of his life to Andrew Wolfe of *The Times-Union* staff. This is the third article of James Hard's story.

By JAMES A. HARD

As Told to Andrew Wolfe

MY first real battle was the Battle of Bull Run. 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 a couple of times and got into skirmishes at Blackburn's Ford and some other little towns 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 gigs, hacks, and about every kind of carriage you could think of.



HARD

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 guard 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 army.

We went in as sort of a rear guard. I can remember my company—Company "E"—was in the position of honor on the flank. We were charged by the Rebel Black Horse Cavalry, 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.

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 danger.

After the battle was over I went back to my regiment. We did guard duty on the battle field that evening and helped pick up the wounded and the dead. I remember how many there were along a line of trees near where we were.

We saw some squads of Rebels go by not more than a couple of hundred yards off. They sort of straggled 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. I always liked McClellan. He was good to his men.

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

From next pg -
article 4

SAW 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 said a hundred thousand men took

part. Lincoln rode a real small horse, and I can remember his long legs hanging down as 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 sick and he couldn't keep up when we started to turn in "company front."

This major came up and hit him over the shoulder with his sword and said, "Git up there, you dirty dog." We always hated him after that.

One of the things that happened about this time 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 so. He was convicted and sentenced to be hanged. The whole regiment had to march up to Alexandria Prison to watch him hang. It was a disagreeable duty.

Toward evening we pulled out and started on the way back to Alexandria. You've never seen such a mess as there was on that road.

The road was full of stragglers and wounded and the people who'd come out from Washington to see the fight. You could hardly move there was such a press of people.

Broken wagons and carriages, smashed muskets, food boxes, and every 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 best 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 that because it was said that General McDowell was drunk at the time of the battle. He was our general at the time.

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 Summer 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 feet deep and eight feet wide in front of the forts. We filled them with water when we could.

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. Caissons and horses wait at left, while at right batteries are firing toward Confederate lines. This photo comes from the George Eastman House set of the 12-volume Photographic History of the Civil War.



ANTIETAM 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 109th 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.

Christmas that year didn't amount to much. We had our regular dut 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 the Spring 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 Eltham's 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. I 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.

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.

Next day the inspectors came. They didn't say 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 battles of Gaines Mill and Malvern Hill. They were hard battles, but after that we didn't do anything until Lee and the Rebels marched into Maryland.

We marched through Frederick City and I can remember seeing Barbry Frietichie. It was just like in the poem ("Barbara Frietich" by John Greenleaf Whittier.) She was a nice old lady with gray hair and well-

dressed. She waved a Union flag to us, and the boys shouted, "Three cheers for Barbry!"

My regiment was in the Battle of South Mountain — Crampton's Pass they called it where we were. It was a hard fight, but not nearly as hard as Antietam (Sept. 17, 1862), which was the worst battle of the whole war.

My regiment wasn't in much of a fight at Antietam, but I and three of my friends were right in the middle of things, although we didn't mean to be.

FEASTED ON CORN

After the Battle of South Mountain, we thought we'd had enough for a while. So we fell out of ranks and went into a field of corn and sweet potatoes to have a feast. Well, we ate so much we could hardly walk, and we were lying around after supper feeling pretty good when some lancers came up.

Lancers were like military police. They picked us up and took us down to Antietam. When we got there it was the night before the battle and they shoved us into the first regiment they found.

The lancers' lieutenant told a captain to keep an eye on us and make us fight—and I guess we did. I never did find out the name of the regiment, but I think it was from Massachusetts.

PRETTY CLOSE CALLS

The battle started just about dawn where we were and it was all over by 10 a. m. We could hear them fighting further down the lines until early evening, I think, but it was all over where we were.

(cont. on preceding page)

James Hard's Story

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



UNION ARTILLERY in action at the Battle of Fredericksburg as described in today's article by James Hard. This rare battle photo is from the George Eastman House collections.



TIMES UNION JUL 12 1950
AQUIA LANDING on the Potomac is shown in this photo, made about the time of the Battle of Fredericksburg. Hard describes how his regiment helped pull the Army of the Potomac out of the mud at Aquia Landing.

James A. 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.

By JAMES A. HARD
As told to Andrew Wolfe

At the Battle of Fredericksburg my regiment got a commendation from the general who commanded our corps. But it wasn't for fighting. It was for pulling the 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) didn't get 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 drifted across and we couldn't see what was happening. Afterward we heard some of our boys had taken an awful licking 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

eatables 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 generals 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 ground 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 Rebels.

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 lying there side by side, as close as though we were marching in ranks.

(cont. on next page)

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 and caissons got stuck in the mud.



HARD

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 ropes 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 ordered the quartermaster to give us 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 cool and reasonably clear although there wasn't much sunshine. It was in December, 1862. We turned out really early, and the first of my regiment crossed the Rappahannock River in boats before it was daylight.

The pontoon 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.

(cont. from
preceding pg.)

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 all 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.

THE TIMES UNION JUL 13 1950

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.



CONFEDERATE 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.

James A. Hard, the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran and New York State's only remaining survivor of the Grand Army of the Republic, is telling the story of his life to Andrew Wolfe of The Times-Union staff. This is the sixth article of his story.

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 hustled right down to



HARD

Washington to get a job with the transportation corps of the War Department. A friend of mine from Windsor, N. Y., Le Roy 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 \$3 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 \$2.50 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 \$35.

We had to work very hard building the railroads for the Army. I think I did everything 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 after that 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 can 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 go dig ditches in front of the forts." 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 Secesh (Secessionists or Confederates) weren't very friendly to what they used to call the Yanks. 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! Afterwards 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 Lanesboro 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.

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

The war ended just after that. 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 some of us to go home.

LOST BEST FRIEND

I lost my best friend. His name was George Round and he was the son of a minister. He was a nice-looking young fellow, about my size, a well educated. We had great good 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 and do what I could to better myself.

NEXT: Hard tells of his experiences in the West and his later life.

(from next page)

BEST 100 YEARS

Living all this time has been a wonderful experience. 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.

I've seen them invent electric lights, airplanes, autos, radios, telephones, movies and so many other things. I can remember when I was a boy how we used to have candles for light. And I can remember helping my mother make candles.

I recall the first time I ever saw an electric light. I was working for Erie Railroad then and I was down in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. One night I came away from the station, and I noticed a real bright light hanging from a pole about 50 feet in the air. I pulled a newspaper from my pocket and could read it, although it was pitch dark all around.

Things have changed a lot, but I think the country is better now than ever was. Some people say there is more opportunity 80 years ago than there is now, but I don't think the opportunity was as good as it is now.

There wasn't as much work then, except on the farms. And the wages were low on the farms and in the cities.

Sometimes I do get lonesome for my old friends, but people cheer me up. And I have soldiers of the other wars as comrades. I feel that everybody that was in any war is a comrade of mine. I feel attached to him and interested in him.

I don't believe in wars, but I think we're going to have them for a while yet. I'm afraid we're going to be at war with Russia in four or five years.

War isn't good, but I think a man learns something when he's a soldier. It made better men of a lot of them who fought in the Civil War, and I guess it was the same with the other wars. I think that a great many young men who didn't have courage enough to butcher a cow got courage after seeing blood and fighting, and could do anything that was necessary, whether it was in war or peace.

TIMES UNION JUL 14 1950

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.



20



42



70



100



109

James A. Hard, oldest living survivor of the Civil War, tomorrow will observe his 109th birthday. Keen as ever, he's looking forward to the birthday reception scheduled for 4 p. m. at the Dieter Sanitarium, 31 Portsmouth Ter., where he lives. Recently he has been telling the story of his life to Andrew Wolfe of the Times-Union staff. This is the concluding article of the James Hard story.

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 carpentry work. I can remember helping build a Catholic church at a little town that I think was called Strawberry Point.

Then I took a job as a carpenter for the Erie Railroad and I helped build railroad lines all over this part of the state. We built bridges and stations and whatever else was necessary. I never did do an apprenticeship as a carpenter, and I learned it as I went along. But I've claimed there was none better than me.

LIKES ROCHESTER BEST

My wife died of pneumonia about 1880, and I came to Rochester about two years after that with my daughter, Alberta, who was about seven years old then. I've been here ever since. I like Rochester the best of any city I ever was in. I like the atmosphere—people are so kind here.

Rochester has changed a lot since those days. When I got here there wasn't but one big plate glass window on Main St., and the downtown looked like a village.

I worked here as a carpenter and carpenter contractor. I built several houses from plans architects drew. I can remember building a nice place over on Gregg St. near Plymouth Ave. I got \$6,000 for building it. The owner was A. L. McKitterick. He was a salesman for one of the clothing companies, I think.

BECAME A NOTARY

But I wanted to better myself. I wanted to become a lawyer. One of my brothers took me to a lawyer and wanted me to hire out for three years to make me a lawyer. But that would have taken too long, so I became a notary. I read a lot of books, and then a judge examined me.

After that—it was about 1890, I think—I hired an office on the balcony of the old Reynolds Arcade and started business. I worked there for about 37 years. I drew a great many wills and settled a great many estates. I also served as a pension attorney, and did a lot of work for veterans and their wives and children.

In about 1884 I'd got married again. My second wife's name was Anna West. When I proposed to her she said she'd been engaged to a man who died in Denver and she said she could never love anybody

as much as she loved him. But we got married and before she died I think she loved me as much as any woman ever loved a man.

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, and my comrades. People ask me 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.

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.

It was while I was in Nebraska that I got married the first time. My wife's name was Loduska Davis and she had come from 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 fancy that kind of a job. So we went back to my family's place at Windsor for a while. I can remember helping my father build a milkhouse on the farm down there.

(Cont. on preceding pg.)



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

D. & C. JUL 15 1950

Nation's Oldest War Veteran

D. & C. JUL 15 1950

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.

Keeps Track of War

Now, the old soldier who loves life as dearly as anyone who has borne arms, keeps track of the ominous storm in the East and shakes his head.

"I don't know," he says. "It's strange and sounds bad. I can't understand it at all."

Hard's bewilderment is scarcely due to infirmity, for the hardy, alert fellow hears every bit of the news each day from his fond, pretty nurse, Mrs. George Foote, who reads the newspapers to him. He knows full well what the new draft law means, and he can recognize the rumble of other warlike sounds as well. He's seen the signs too many times before, he says, and his inability to understand the reasons is the same as any other citizen's.

Today, however, speculation on a dark future will be put aside by Hard and his friends, who will celebrate past glories at the senior veteran's annual birthday party.

Time for Reminiscence

It will be a time for reminiscence, story-telling and handshaking when Hard is greeted by veterans of other wars at a reception at 31 Portsmouth Ter., where he makes his home. Leaders of the Sons of Union Veterans will conduct the party from 4 to 6 p. m. when at least a couple of hundred persons are expected to extend greetings. In addition, the 54th Regimental Band will play his favorite marching songs throughout the affair.

"How do I feel?" Hard said yesterday. "I feel 20 years better at every birthday party. There'll be cigars, you know, and I've got a gay new tie to wear."

"Why," he continued, lighting a cigar as the thought reminded him that he still had another smoke to go that day, "birthdays are fun. I'd just as soon have a birthday every day."



A CENTURY AND NINE

D. & C. JUL 16 1950

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 was 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 Portsmouth 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.

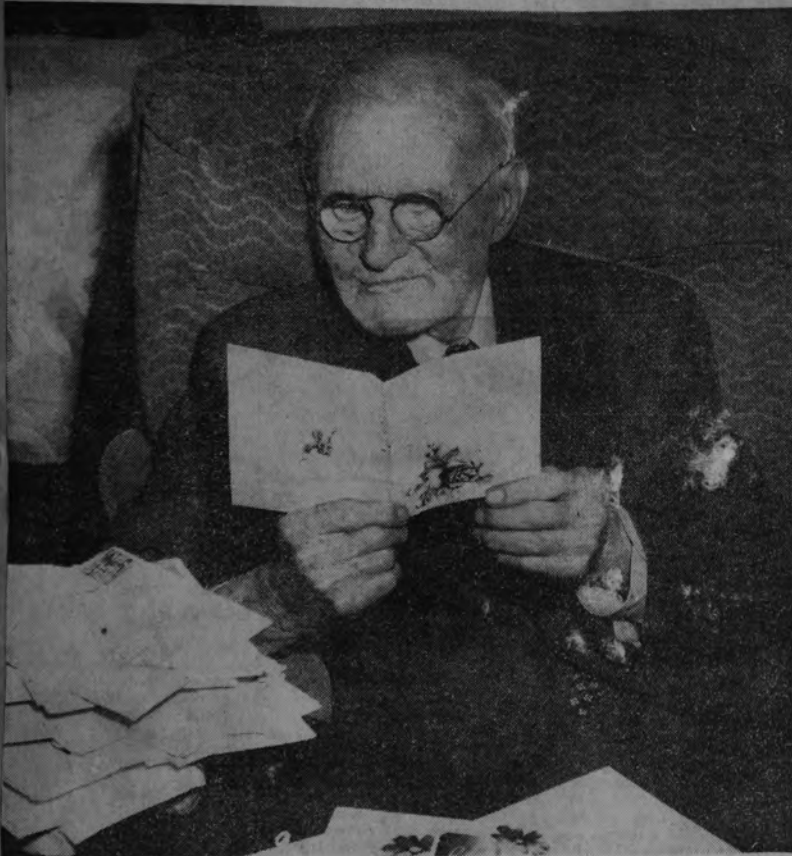
Near him on a table reposed a giant birthday cake with 109 red, white and blue candles, presented by

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'

TIMES UNION JUL 19 1950



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 Ter., where he makes his home. During the reception, arranged by the Sons 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.

TIMES UNION JUL 19 1950

TIMES UNION JUN 15 1950
More Honor for Hard



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 Norman Senecal, commander of Michael Tressy Garrison. The ceremony took place at Hard's residence, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

TIMES UNION JUL 10 1950
Hard Plans to Go To SUV Session

James A. Hard hopes to attend the Boston encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans in Boston the week of Aug. 20.

Comrade Hard, oldest combat survivor of the Civil War this weekend received an official invitation from SUV Commander-in-chief John H. Runkle. He instructed his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl E. Eksten Sr., of Henrietta, to write that he would like to attend. Mrs. Eksten said the Boston trip will depend on Hard's health at that time. She said, however, that if he's as well then as he is now, he'll probably go.

D. & C. JUL 14 1950
Hard, 109 Tomorrow, to Hear Regimental Band Serenade

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 veterans 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 celebration, 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.

Besides the concert, Hard will be presented a giant birthday cake, with a full count of candles. 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.

D. & C. JUL 9 1950
Hard Accepts Bid to Attend 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.

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.

TIMES UNION JUL 17 1950
Legion Votes Congratulation To James Hard

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 Hornell.

The official birthday "card" 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 vicecommander Edgar Allen, Dansville; finance officer, John Rehsteiner, Geneva, and sergeant-at-arms, Pat Lanfis, Painted Post.

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

"Symbol of Liberty," a song written by Mrs. Golda W. Rowley, Rochester, was recommended by the delegates to be adopted as the national song of the legion.

William Cavanaugh, Rochester, was chosen director of the Legion Mountain Camp, Jacob Ark, Rochester, past state Legion commander was commended in a resolution for "his efforts on behalf of all veterans."

County Legion posts were praised for sending more than 200 Boy Scouts to the National Jamboree held recently at Valley Forge. Cayuga County American Legion, which sent 108 boys, was presented a special certificate. Cost of this project to the district was more than \$10,000.

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 83d 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."



HARD

Three other survivors 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 veterans 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 fooling the statisticians for many years.

The Korean War has disturbed the old men. Like Hard, who keeps up news daily, the other GAR

men have watched progress of the Korean fighting closely. The consensus is that Uncle Sam will win any hot, cold, or lukewarm clash with Russia just as it has all the other wars.

Hard said 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 all.

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 his 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 SUV 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."

TIMES UNION SEP 14 1950

Hard Mourns Death of GAR Commander

James A. Hard today mourned the death of his commander-in-chief in the Grand Army of the Republic.

The last elected head of the GAR, Theodore A. Penland, 101, of Vancouver, Wash., died in a Vancouver 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, commented at his home in Portsmouth Terr.

"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 that 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 vicecommander of the GAR as the result of Commander Penland's death. Penland appointed Hard junior vicecommander last October when Charles A. Chappel of California died. Alfred Woolson of Minnesota, appointed senior vicecommander 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.

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

TIMES UNION SEP 21 1950

James A. Hard is looking forward to continued good health at the age of 109, but he was whimsical when he said he expects he'll be needing any hospital care.

While it was disclosed that the bill of Civil War veterans, which is inactive, will continue its passage until the last of its nine members is gone. Such a bill was presented in Congress yesterday by Rep. Keating. It would allow the remaining veterans of the Civil War to receive any necessary treatment at local hospitals at government expense, instead of requiring them to travel to Veterans' Hospitals for federal hospitalization.

"It's nice of Mr. Keating and his other Congressmen to think about the us veterans," commented Hard, the chief

of the nation's oldest Civil War soldier. "But I'm feeling fine, and I don't expect I'll be needing any hospital care."

Meanwhile, it was disclosed that the Grand Army of the Republic, which is inactive, will continue its passage until the last of its nine members is gone.

announcement of the status of the G. A. R., which once numbered over a million members, was made by the national executive secretary, J. C. Cora Gillis of Jamestown.

He stated that Albert Woolson of Minneapolis, Minn., will retain his position as senior vicecommander in

Board Backs Refusal to Pay G. A. R. Vet's Bill

The County Department of Social Welfare properly in refusing to pay the hospital bill incurred by James A. Hard, Rochester's 109-year-old Civil War veteran, the Board of Supervisors found unanimously yesterday.

There also was no laxity or impropriety by the department in the death of a woman in childbirth on July 6, the Board found. In both instances, the Board acted on a report of its social welfare committee headed by Supervisor George Jamieson, 23rd Ward, who said the committee found that the assistance of the County Welfare Department, 17th, 24th and 20th Wards, was requested at the time of the two cases published by a weekly, unprobed.

Bank Account, Key Evidence

In Hard's case, the committee report showed that a hospital bill of \$99 incurred by Hard in General Hospital in March, 1949, had been paid by the Welfare Department. A second bill of \$205.55 incurred at the same hospital in February, 1950, and referred to the Welfare Department, was rejected. It was found that Hard had a joint bank account with his granddaughter, estimated at \$1,315.52.

In the case of the woman who died, she was reported not on welfare rolls at the time of her death.

Party Lines Crossed

Jamieson voted with the Republican majority for adoption of the committee report as did three other Democrats present at yesterday's meeting, Walter Rybacki, George Jackman and Kenneth McDonald, 17th, 24th and 20th Wards. Jamieson, who offered in caucus to sponsor the resolution clearing the department, said the four voted as individuals, not as a party unit. Minority leader Val H. Rauber was not present. The committee report as moved by Haywood and unanimously approved read:

"Your social welfare committee has made a complete and thorough investigation of the facts of the two cases specifically mentioned in said resolution, and is of the opinion that the Department of Social Welfare of Monroe County complied with the law, rules and regulations of the Department of Social Welfare in each instance, and that there has been no malfeasance or nonfeasance on the part of the Department of Social Welfare, its director or any employees of the department."

Mr. Hard's Bill

Dated Sept. 21, 1950

In view of the publicity of the hospital bill of James A. Hard, I should like to state the full facts.

The four times Mr. Hard has been in the hospital he was taken there and returned to the nursing home without his family being notified that they were financially responsible for his care. Knowing that all veterans are entitled to care in government hospitals and that Mr. Hard could not travel the distance to Bath or Buffalo due to his age, the family assumed the government paid for his care locally, as no bill was ever presented to his granddaughter (my wife).

Upon investigation we found the hospital submitted the bill to the Veterans Relief of Monroe County for the first three times he was hospitalized and in each instance the bill was paid. The fourth time, however, it was submitted to the Veterans Relief of Monroe County. Payment was refused by them and then the bill was presented four months later to his granddaughter.

Mr. Hard has never found it necessary to apply to the Monroe County Welfare for assistance. The little money he has is chiefly pension money and gifts made him by friends and relatives, that he can feel independent in the paying for doctors, extra nursing bills, and medicines. These and other items the government does not pay.

He is so happy in the belief that his government will pay his hospital bills, no one has told him any different and he knows nothing of the publicity that has taken place. He need not know, I have mailed a check to the hospital and hope this will end all discussion.

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

Hard Honored For 60 Years In Masons

James A. Hard will add a 60-year palm Thursday to his golden jubilee medal presented to him on the 50th anniversary of his membership in the Masonic Order.

The palm will be presented to the 109-year-old Civil War veteran, the nation's oldest, by the Rochester Lodge at his home in Portsmouth Ter. The presentation will be made by Walter O. Parmington, district deputy grand master. The deputy will be accompanied by Charles Kase, master of the Rochester Lodge.

The 40-year medal was given for "distinguished service to the craft."

Comrade Hard's outstanding contribution to the order was his volunteer nursing service under the auspices of the lodge to infantile paralysis patients during the epidemic during World War I.

Supervisors Refuse to Pay Hard's Bill

The County Department of Social Welfare today was backed by the Board of Supervisors in its refusal to pay a hospital bill for James A. Hard, 109-year-old Civil War veteran.

The department rejected a hospital bill incurred in February on the grounds that Hard had a joint bank account with his granddaughter.

The board yesterday also accepted a report by its welfare committee that it did not find impropriety in its handling of a case of a death of a woman in childbirth on July 6.

The welfare committee, headed by Supervisor Sydney F. Haywood, 23rd Ward, conducted hearings in both cases.

TIMES UNION OCT 6 1950

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. Looking on is **Charles Kase**, master of Rochester Lodge. Ceremony was held yesterday at Hard's residence, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Masons Honor Pair With 60-Year Palms

The oldest Civil War veteran in the nation and oldest living past monarch of Lalla Rookh Grotto were presented Masonic palms for 60 years service yesterday.

James A. Hard, 109, was presented the palm yesterday afternoon at his home yesterday afternoon in Portsmouth Ter. by **Walter O. Parmington**, district deputy grand master, in behalf of the Rochester Lodge. Parmington cited Hard for his volunteer nursing service to infantile paralysis patients during the World War 1 epidemic.

The other palm was awarded to **Clarence E. Hedges**, 188 Summit Dr., last night by the Genesee Falls Lodge in the Masonic Temple. The presentation was made to him by his son, **Elihu Hedges**, who represented the grand master, **Elihu Hedges** also made the presentation of the 50-year medal to his father when that award was made 10 years ago.

Both Hard and Hedges will attach their palms to the 50-year medals previously granted "for distinguished service to the order." The elder Hedges is widely known for his many Masonic activities, having received the honorary 33rd degree of Masonry, the highest in the order, at Atlantic City in 1928. He is now past emeritus of Monroe Comandery, Knights Templar, and also the oldest living past monarch of Lalla Rookh Grotto.

D.&C. OCT 5 1950

James A. Hard Joins Crusade for Freedom

The Crusade for Freedom has the nation's oldest ex-soldier on its side.

James A. Hard, the 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. McFarland, 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.

'I'm for It'

Hard Joins Freedom Crusade,

TIMES UNION OCT 4 1950

Warns of Napping



STILL CHAMPIONS FREEDOM—Comrade James A. Hard is shown as he signed the Crusade for Freedom Scroll. Looking on is Thomas E. Mc-

Farland. The ceremony took place at Hard's residence, 31 Portsmouth Ter. Almost 90 years ago Hard was a soldier in the Union Army

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 so many of us have 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—hundreds 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 tolling of Big Ben in London and the V-for-Victory sign were symbols of the struggle against Nazism in World War 2."

Some Development Division of the Rochester Board of Education; Lester Cofran, coordinator of elementary education at Jamestown; Barbara Allen, a senior at Charlotte High School, and Stuart Hudnut, seventh grade student at No. 1 School.

In her address, Dr. Andrus cautioned parents to "think how you felt about being a child in your family."

"It is very important to try to get the child's, the growing boy and girl's, eye-view of their families and so of the world around them and the wide world. The child's whole being, feelings and behavior are expressions of the way he feels about his family and then feel about the world."

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 soon 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 will 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

fighting for freedom for slaves.

from article on preceding page



**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 whenever 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 Shrine in Berlin, and to join with the millions of men and
 women throughout the world who hold the cause of freedom sacred.

NAME	CITY - STATE	NAME	CITY - STATE
James A. Hard			

At the right is
a closeup of Hard's signature on the Freedom
Scroll.

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

TIMES UNION NOV 4 - 1950

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.



OLDEST SOLDIER . . . OLDEST VOTER

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

D. & C. NOV 7 1950

Hard, 109, to Vote in 85th Election

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 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 suggested.

"Sure," he rejoined. "But didn't

vote for him. I also marched for the other candidate.

"But not today. I'm resting up so I can vote as every citizen should do. It's good for the country."

As Readers See It

TIMES UNION NOV 7 1950

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 succeeded to the presidency upon McKinley's assassination in 1901.

The reporter was plugging too hard.

H. S. TURNQUIST.

312 Pease St.

Editor's Note: Mr. Hard may have said "I voted for him for



HARD

This is your daily "Town Meeting" column. Use it to express your views on local, state, national or world issues of the day. The Times-Union reserves the right to cut long letters. Every contributor must sign his correct name and address.

Heretofore it has been customary to permit the use of pen names. We believe this serves no good purpose but that the privilege can be used for bad purposes. An opinion worth printing should be credited to its holder. This should not be a barrier to complete freedom of opinion. In cases where readers have reason to fear retaliation for their opinions, The Times-Union would consider it a privilege to investigate matters that require correction when brought to its attention by a reader. No anonymous letters will be considered.—Editor.

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, 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 is Monroe County superintendent of veterans graves.

DEC 25 1951

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 is Monroe County superintendent of veterans graves. A band concert was given by the new Sons of Union Veterans Band, directed by Fred Dierhoff.

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.



CLEON E.
HEALD

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.

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

D. & C. FEB 13 1951

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. "Sometime 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 puffed away on a big cigar last night in General Hospital.

Nurses 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 pneumonia.

D. & C. FEB 9 1951

D. & C. APR 4 - 19

James A. Hard Goes Back To Hospital

JAMES UNION MAR 31 1951

James A. Hard, Rochester's 109-year-old citizen, is back in the hospital for treatment of a lung disorder.

"His condition seems almost as good as when he came in last December—but you never can tell at Mr. Hard'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 Hard isn't bantering with the nurses today as he did on his former visits. And he isn't up to smoking his usual morning cigar.

Doctors still call him "the amazing old gentleman."

James Hard Reported Failing

JAMES UNION APR 6 - 1951

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 he appeared to be out of danger.



HARD

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 centenarian was feeling pretty pert 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 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 hadn'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 Old Kentucky Home."

JAMES UNION APR 2 - 1951

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, had another attack a few days ago. As on his former visits to the same hospital from his Portsmouth Ter. home, Hard was rallying in 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."

D. & C. APR 7 - 1951

James Hard Ends Stay in Hospital

James A. Hard, 109, the nation's oldest surviving veteran of the Civil War and New York State's only one, figured yesterday that he had stayed in General Hospital long enough.

So at 2:10 p. m. the cigar-smoking veteran, who had been in the hospital with an attack of pneumonia for 15 days, bade the staff goodbye and returned to his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter. Commander Hard has been in the hospital several times during the last few years with mild forms of pneumonia, but every time he has amazed doctors by his prompt recovery.

D. & C. APR 14 1951

Hard Names Parade Aides

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:

Deputy marshal—George W. Stout, another Spanish American War vet; chief of staff, Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doud, New York National Guard, and executive officer—Co. Edward J. Thompson.

His Spirits High, Hard Puffs Cigar

One-hundred-and-nine-year-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 UNION APR 3 - 1951

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 toward recovery from an attack of pneumonia.

JAMES UNION APR 10 1951



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 tells 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, 1851.

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.

Antisdale, famed editor of the Herald, John Scott Clubb, its cartoonist, and Al Stone, the pioneer news photographer "who knew more people than anyone in Rochester."

The magazine also includes a history of the Moseley & Motley Milling Co., by Wesley M. Angle; an Arch Merrill article on the Embassy Theater and its predecessors in show business on South Ave.; John Warner Brown's story of a 130-year-old portrait of Red Jacket, Indian chief; a memoir of the Powers Art Gallery by Virginia Jeffrey Smith; and two tales of rescues on Lake Ontario by the late Mrs. Emma Greer of Charlotte.

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 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 Veterans, deputy marshal; Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doud, 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 Court House.

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 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 Charlotte Lodge. The presentation will be made by Lalla Rookh 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 Masons' 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

50,000 CHEER

At Rochester's Memorial Day parade—Stories, pictures on Pages 19 and 23. Other story Page 6.

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."



FIRST IN—James A. Hard, 109, the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, signs his Community Chest pledge card to inaugurate the 1951 campaign. With him is Mrs. George Foote, his nurse, and James Costello of Individual Subscriber's Division. (Story, other picture Pg. 1).

Hard Smoking Despite Rumor

Yep! James A. Hard still smokes cigars—and all he wants to smoke.

The 109-year-old Civil War veteran, peeved 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. And he does. He smokes around a

D. & C. JUN 1951

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

D. & C. JUN 1951

'Going to Read Every Card'**Hard Hopes President**
TIMES UNION JUL 14 1951
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 31 Portsmouth Ter. residence. His reaction—

"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 decked 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."



It's

THIS WAY

TIMES UNION JUL 13 1951

To a Very Old Soldier**--- Best Wishes***By Howard C. Hosmer***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 several times that you have faith in the United States and all for which this nation stands, that you hate 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 innards 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 formulae.

You have exercised two of the American'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 venerated 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 dares 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.



D. & C. JUL 15 1951

NUMBER 110 COMING UP! 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.

Hard, 110, Recalls Highlights of Life

BY JACK VAN BUREN

James A. Hard fondled an old blue McClellan hat yesterday on the eve of his 110th birthday and recalled Bull Run, Antietam and his meetings with Abraham Lincoln and General Grant.

"It was a long, long time ago that I wore a hat like this," he said as he held the faded cap in his remarkably steady hands.

The nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, who will be given a whopping birthday party today, then gazed far beyond the hat, far beyond the sun that shone through his window.

"It was wearing a McClellan hat just like this the day I met General Grant," he remarked. "I'll never forget that day."

Hard recalled how he was assigned to supervise a half dozen Union soldiers on a trench digging assignment along the James River, near Richmond, Va. When they had almost completed the task, a portly looking officer approached him.

"He came up to me and asked how things were going," the old soldier reminisced. "Then we shook hands and chatted for awhile before he finally walked off."

"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 saw mill at Jordan when the Rebels fired on Fort Sumter in April, 1865. 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 experience 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. My! How big his hands were!"

The Civil War veteran spoke in a hearty voice as he sat in his favorite chair at 31 Portsmouth 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 300 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.

With him, looking over huge cake, is Cleon E. Heald, national commander of Sons of Union Veterans.

James Hard Relaxes After 110th Birthday

TIMES UNION JUL 16 1951

James A. Hard, known to Rochester physicians as "the amazing old gentleman," was embarked today on the second decade of his second century.

He was reported relaxing completely and enjoying himself this morning at his 31 Portsmouth Ter. 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, played music of a far off day—"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 the 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

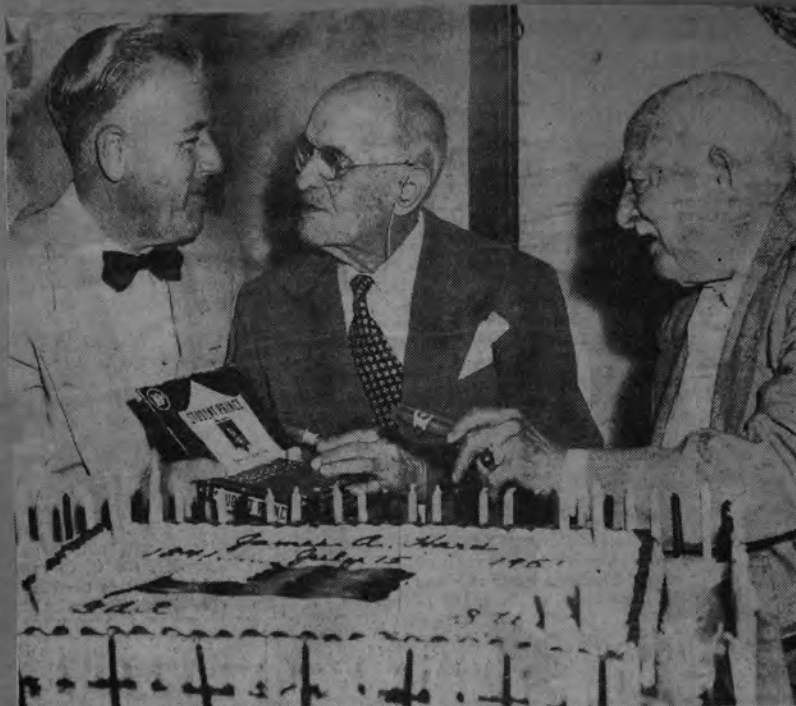
Hard had another contact with the White House.

"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 felicitations," 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."



BIRTHDAY CIGARS—The oldest soldier of 'em all, James A. Hard, passes out cigars here to 107-year-old Eddie Van Duyn, 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 a birthday party.

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 guest 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 tiring 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 Duyn, 102 River St., sometimes known as "Holy Cow," who turned 107 last Jan. 15. Van Duyn and Hard shook hands and wished each other well. Van Duyn, who missed service in the Civil War "cause I hurt my leg on my way to enlist," attended the reception for Hard two years ago.

Congratulatory wires, cards, and letters poured into the Portsmouth Ter. nursing home where Hard resides. Of special interest was one which came by special delivery late

yesterday afternoon from the White House. It reads:

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, telegrams and letters. And Mrs. Carl E. Ecksten, Hard's granddaughter, said she had read 231 of them to him since Friday.

"He gets tired hearing all the names," Mrs. Ecksten said, "but he always perks 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 Keene, 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 tie pins.

Neighborhood children turned out in force for the reception. All were greeted by Hard who told one to be good "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:

"It'll come. Times goes quickly."

6B

ROCHESTER DEMOCRAT AND CHRONICLE
Sunday, September 9, 1951



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 Yandeu, 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. Yandeu 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. Yandeu, 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.

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 Yandeu of Rochester, a past state

DAV commander.

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, 93, 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 Corning, 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 sitting 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, Lancey Thomson, and first lieutenant commander, James P. Ecksten, 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.

D. & C. NOV 21 1951



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 26 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 Terr. 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.



"YEP, I WORE ONE"—James A. Hard, 110-year-old veteran of the Civil War, adjusts a "McClellan hat" and chats with Rae Ellen and

Joanne Stein, neighborhood girls, who stopped in for brief visit on Lincoln's birthday. The veteran rose at 6 a. m., donned his best suit.

to a camp near Alexandria, Va., where Union troops were being retrained following the Battle of Bull Run.

Presented McClellan Cap

Two of the visitors to Hard's cheerful room at 31 Portsmouth Ter. yesterday were sisters from across the street, Rae Ellen and Joanne Stein, 8 and 7 years old, respectively. They presented the old soldier with a blue cap, a replica of the style worn by Union troops in the Civil War. Hard, whose eyesight has 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 cap.

This Winter, Hard spends most of his waking hours (usually from 7 a. m. to around 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'

"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 five 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: felt about it until his fingers located his stock of cigars—he still smokes three a day.

"Give him these!" he said, passing him he looked like a good soldier over a couple of the stories to Bennett. "And tell him I hope he had a happy birthday!"

Hard to Skip JAMES UNION FEB 6 1952 Lincoln Day Fete

For the first time in about 30 years, Civil War Veteran James A. Hard will not attend the annual Lincoln Day banquet.

According to Roy W. Pettinger, president of the Rochester Abraham Lincoln Association, sponsors of the dinner, Hard declined in order to save his strength for his 111 birthday July 15.

Roy J. Bennett of Des Moines, Iowa, commander-in-chief of the Sons of Union Veterans, will be speaker at the dinner, which will be held next Tuesday night at the Seneca.

Meetings with Lincoln D & C. FEB 13 1952 Keen in Hard's Memory

By KEN GRUBE

James A. Hard, at 110 the nation's oldest Civil War veteran, awoke at 6 a. m. yesterday and called for a clean white shirt and his neat gray suit. It was the birthday of Abraham Lincoln and Hard, who twice came in close contact with that great man, was

anxious to mark the day properly by being up bright and early.

His keen memory still feeds a garrulous disposition and a strong, deep voice which rarely falters. He recalled again yesterday his first meeting with Lincoln nearly 91 years ago.

Then as young Union soldier, he was presented to the President at an open house. Hard remembers that he hadn't yet been issued his uniform that Lincoln, with a kind smile, told him he looked like a good soldier over a couple of the stories to Bennett. "And tell him I hope he had a happy birthday!"

D. & C. FEB 6 1952

Hard to Pass Up Banquet

Civil War Veteran James A. Hard, 110, will not attend the birthday banquet of his idol, Abraham Lincoln, this year.

Roy W. Pettinger, president of the Rochester Abraham Lincoln Association which is sponsoring a Lincoln Day banquet Tuesday evening in Hotel Seneca, said yesterday it will be the first time Hard will be absent from the festivities in 30 years. Hard told Pettinger he will "conserve my

strength" for his 111th birthday July 15, when his friends will entertain him at a party.

Speaker at the Lincoln Day banquet will be Roy J. Bennett of Des Moines, Iowa, commander-in-chief of the Sons of Union Veterans. The Lincoln Association is comprised of SUV members and its allied organizations, the SUV Auxiliary, Daughters of Union Veterans, Women's Relief Corps and Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic.

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



9-9-52

ROCHESTER TIMES-UNION 29
Wed., Apr. 9, 1952

Head News Apr. 9, 1952
D. & C. Still Left in GAR

Civil War Veteran James A. Hard of Rochester, 110, now is one of the five living members of the Grand Army of the Republic. The ranks of the GAR were reduced to this number with the death of Douglas T. Story Tuesday in West Los Angeles. Mr. Story, 107, years old, died of pneumonia.

(right), who runs Portsmouth Ter. nursing

home where Mr. Hard lives, lights up stogie for him. Times-Union photos were taken by Leonard Maxwell, Danny's dad.

TIMES UNION APR. 9 - 1952

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, 31 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 War Veterans, of which he is the oldest member and only representative of the GAR.

A meeting of the Memorial Day Observance 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 p. m. in the Masonic Auditorium. There will be music by the Sons of Union Veterans Band and Jefferson High School Chorists. 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 groups. Marching auxiliaries of such units will have their own divisions.

Kenneth Abar, vicecommander 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 illusory hope.

D. & C. APR 27 1952



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.

For Citizenship, Americanism

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. "His magnificent record appealed to us, especially when so many men and women in their youthful vigor are too indolent and unconcerned 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 here.

Rochester's James A. Hard, Civil War veteran, became a member of Rochester Lodge, F&AM, on Dec. 8, 1884, received a 50-year service pin in May, 1941, to 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 recent 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 she 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 vicecommander 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 Broadsword, 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., who shares the venerable Rochesterian's love of cigars, 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 "Tenting 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 Nuys, Calif., farthest distant link in this nationwide argument, William A. Magee, 106, expects to live through this year, but isn't taking any bets on the more distant future.

ONLY NOTE OF GLOOM from the elderly quartet comes from Israel A. Broadsword, 105, of Samuels, Idaho. "I've lived a long time because I wore out the knees of my pants instead of the seat," INS quotes him as saying, "but I don't think I'll be around next year." Until two years ago he cut all the firewood for his son's ranch, but now he says "I prefer liquor to hard work, so I guess that lets me out of the longevity race."



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.

D. & C. MAY 21 1952 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, yesterday afternoon, the oldest living Civil War veteran went on record as favoring 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 Sanitarium, 31 Portsmouth Ter., Hard has depended on talks with his nurse, Mrs. Nina Foote, and other visitors for news of the campaigns 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 Eisenhower in the Fall.

Has Voted 80 Times

Although Hard recalls he has voted in more than 80 elections of all types he wasn't sure yesterday how many presidential contests he has voted in. However, it is believed he has voted in every one since he cast his vote for Lincoln.

In answer to the question of a military man making a good President, Hard indicated it seemed an advantage rather than a handicap in Ike's case. He intimated Eisenhower's

experience as a general gave him added understanding of problems vital to the country.

"There is no question in my mind that Eisenhower is the best candidate," Hard added with an assurance that brought a smile to the Eisenhower committeeman.

3 More 'Boys' Still Alive

Besides Rochester's James A. Hard, 110, only three others of the once mighty Boys in Blue of the Civil War are believed to be alive.

They are William A. Magee of Van Nuys, Calif.; Israel Broadsword of Samuels, Idaho; and Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn., all 105.

Magee lives with a granddaughter who says, "He's still too active 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 honorary grand marshal of Duluth's parade tomorrow.

Broadsword lives in seclusion with his two trapper sons. Townsfolk in Samuels say he is still hearty but his sight and mind have failed in the last year.



OLDEST SOLDIER—This is a recent camera portrait of Civil War Veteran James A. Hard, taken by Leonard Maxwell, Times-Union staff photographer.

TIMES UNION MAY 29 1952

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 110-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. Doud 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 Sons of Union Veterans to the reviewing stand in 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 111 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 mar-

shal's position in Broad St. opposite City Hall.

Divisions 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 and Donald A. Forsyth, 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.)

D. & C. MAY 25 1952

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!'*



80

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 111 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 he 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.

Expert 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 1961," 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. Broadsword, of Samuels, 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 other 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. Loudermilk, 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 Salling, Slant, 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, 143, 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 strong that more veterans of the 20th Century wars will live to be over 100, or even 110, Spiegelman said.

One reason is simply that there were so many more veterans 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.

5-25-52

(FROM PICTURE - PRECEDING PAGE)

By HARRY RAMSEY

IT IS 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 several 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 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:

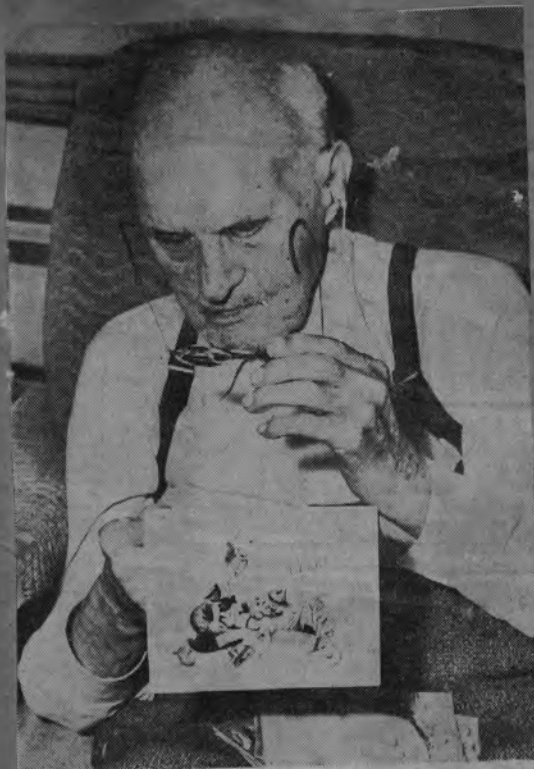
He will be 111.

The birthday party will be the 12th staged by 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 complied 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 hardy 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.



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.

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 mists 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.

Hard Will Be 111 Tomorrow Messages of Congratulation Swamp Oldest War Veteran

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran, James A. Hard, is eagerly awaiting his 111th birthday tomorrow.

The Grand Old Man of the GAR, interviewed yesterday at his home at 31 Portsmouth Ter., was busy looking over a pile of cards and congratulatory messages that have arrived this past week.

Smoking a cigar as usual, he was particularly pleased over a message from Tokyo. It was sent by a Honey Falls WAC. Other messages to Rochester's oldest citizen bore postmarks from such widely separated points as Florida and California. More cards, telegrams and messages are expected to arrive today and

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.

I'm Not Going Anywhere

D. & C. JUL 15 1952

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 feeble but alert veteran lives now in a world of semi-darkness and near-silence with his memories of the great days, 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 21 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 drape 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 sen-

tence, 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 was "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."

I'm Not Going Anywhere

Old Soldier Hard Hopes To Live 35 Years More

D. & C. JUL 16 1952

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 feeble but alert veteran lives now in a world of semi-darkness and near-silence with his memories of the great days, 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 21 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 drape 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 sen-

Hard Now One Of Three Vets

James A. Hard became one of three surviving members of the Grand Army of the Republic yesterday with the death of Israel Broadsword, who died in Spokane, Wash., at the age of 105.

Broadsword, according to the Associated Press, died at the Spokane Veterans Hospital where he was sent for diseases of the aged.

Hard, who is 111, lives at 31 Portsmouth Ter. Other known surviving Union veterans of the Civil War are William A. Magee, 105, of Van Nuys, Calif., and Albert Woolson, 105, of Duluth, Minn.

tence, 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 was "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."

Only 2 Union Vets Remain with Hard

The death yesterday in Spokane, Wash., of Israel Broadsword, 105, leaves James A. Hard of Rochester one of three 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.

Broadsword died at the Spokane Veterans Hospital.

Hard Remains

Loyal to Ike

D. & C. JUL 22 1952

Old soldiers not only never die — they always stick together.

And sticking hopefully to Dwight D. Eisenhower is James A. Hard, 111, Portsmouth Ter., the nation's oldest living Civil War veteran, who served and lived under the last general 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 heart-warming message received during the convention in Chicago last week. It was certainly kind of you to wire 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"

TIMES UNION JUL 26 1952



MILESTONE NO. 111!—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-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 GRIBBROEK

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 my 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 Almost Skipped on Pensions

D. & C. JUL 31 1952

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, still knows he has a pension coming.

The old timers will get their pensions anyhow, the Associated Press said, but for a while it seemed doubtful.

Veterans Administration records show that Hard, Israel A. Broadsword of Samuels, 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 got 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.

Hard, 2 Other Civil War Vets Almost Skipped on Pensions

D. & C. JUL 31 1952

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, still knows he has a pension coming.

The old timers will get their pensions anyhow, the Associated Press said, but for a while it seemed doubtful.

Veterans Administration records show that Hard, Israel A. Broadsword of Samuels, 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 got 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.

Hard Remembers But VA Slips On Pensions

D. & C. JUL 31 1952

James A. Hard is 111 years old but his memory is better than the government's.

A Washington dispatch disclosed that two of the three living Union Army veterans of the Civil War were forgotten when the Veterans Administration submitted its budget for the current year.

The budget contained only one pension of \$1,440 for a Union Army veteran. In addition to Hard, VA records show that Israel A. Broadsword of Samuels, Idaho, and Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn., both 105, are drawing pensions.

They'll get their pensions anyhow, the VA said, but Hard stands ready to refresh the government's memory if necessary. He is entitled to \$120 a month and he knows that the check is due tomorrow at his home, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Tomorrow's check may be the first to show an increase to \$129 recently voted for Civil War vets by Congress. Hard also receives a state pension because of failing eyesight.

Hard Gets \$9 Pension Raise

D. & C. AUG 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 awhile, Hard wasn't sure that he would get his usual check. He had heard that the current Army Department budget called for a pension for one Union veteran instead of for the three still living.

James A. Hard, Rochester's 111-year-oldster 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 somewhere, 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.

D. & C. AUG 4 1952



HARDY HARD—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.

D. & C. NOV 4 1952

Hard, 111; Van Dyne, 108

2 Oldest Voters in Rochester Casting Ballots Today for Ike

Would you have voted for Lincoln? He proved to be a pretty good president, and James A. Hard and Ed (Holy Cow) Van Dyne both were for him.

Hard cast his ballot, but Van Dyne fell off a train and disabled both himself and his vote.



EDWARD
VAN DYNE



JAMES A.
HARD

Today the two will go to the polls for the umpteenth time to vote for a Republican president. Hard, at 111 the nation's oldest

Civil War veteran, will cast his 73d ballot. Van Dyne, who is 108, remembers having voted in every election since Grant. Both will vote around 10 a. m., Hard in a firehouse in University Ave. near Portsmouth Terrace, and Van Dyne at St. John's Pk. in the 23d Ward.

James Hard, 111,
TIMES UNION NOV 5 1952
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."

D. & C. DEC 26 1952

Cmdr. Hard at 111 Tops Off Turkey Dinner with Clams

Commander James A. Hard, 111 years old, Santa's nearest rival in age in Rochester, was well remembered with gifts from Mr. Claus' 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.

TUESDAY UNION DEC 26 1952

Hard, 111, Feasts On Turkey, Clams

James A. Hard, 111 years old, ate a hearty turkey dinner yesterday — then topped it off with two dozen steamed clams.

Five generations of his family, as well as many old friends, called on him at 31 Portsmouth Ter. It was a merry Christmas for the Civil War veteran, oldest surviving member of the GAR.

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,



Hard

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 predicted that he will still be lively five years hence.

Hard and Woolson get an annual pension of \$1,548 each.

DAY 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 organizations 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.

Hard in Good Condition

James A. Hard, 111-year-old Union veteran of the Civil War, was reported in "good condition" today in General Hospital. Hard was taken to the hospital Friday for treatment of a circulatory condition in his right foot. He makes his home at the Terrace Sanitarium, 31 Portsmouth Ter.

Hard 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 taking a good bite on one of his

Christmas cigars. "I expect to be around a long time yet."

Woolson, in Duluth, could not be reached for comment, but last May he was reported in good health and declared he would be lively 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.

CORNER 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

TIMES UNION FEB 18 1953

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 40-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.

...

HARD, ONE OF SEVEN living veterans of the Civil War and one of two living veterans of the Union Army, entered the hospital last Friday from the Terrace Sanitarium at 31 Portsmouth Ter., where he lives.

Only last Thursday—Lincoln's Birthday—he greeted neighborhood children and other visitors in his cheery room at the sanitarium. But he was suffering pains in his foot.

Before today's surgery, a hospital aide said it would require "some local and some additional" anesthetic but would not require that he be unconscious.

Hard had been in hospitals a number of times in recent years, generally with respiratory ailments.

Foot Ailment 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.

D. & C. FEB 13 1953



HE REMEMBERS LINCOLN, TOO—James A. Hard, one of last two remaining Union war veterans, chats with Hermon L. Brockway of Ithaca, national chaplain of the Sons of Union Veterans, at Portsmouth Ter. home. Hard will be 112 in July.

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. nursing home.

He protested to Hermon L. Brockway, Ithaca, 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 SUV.

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, 110; William Lundy, 105; John Sallings, 105; William Townsend, 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.

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.

TIMES UNION FEB 19 1953

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.

TIMES UNION FEB 21 1953

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 11:40 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. Termed "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.

TIMES UNION FEB 21 1953

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.

D. & C. FEB 25 1953



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-quick cards are pouring in daily to Rochester's Old Soldier, James A. Hard.

The 111-year-old Civil War veteran, recuperating 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.

"Heavens sakes!

"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, recuperating 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 Cigars 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 recuperating 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.

TIMES UNION FEB 25 1953
Just a Few Puffs—
But Hard's Back
Smoking Cigars

James A. Hard, at 111 years the old war veteran in the nation, was back to smoking cigars today in General Hospital.

Yesterday he was allowed a couple puffs and today the privilege was extended as his condition continued favorable.

The rugged old campaigner, one of two surviving Union soldiers of the Civil War, had been getting milk to sip instead of his daily cigars since an operation to relieve a circulatory deficiency in his right foot.

Meanwhile boxes of cigars and hundreds of cards and letters from well-wishers have piled up at his bedside. One card came from Edwin L. Barnard, commander of Vermont Department, Sons of the American Revolution. Veterans and members of patriotic organizations have been particularly concerned with Hard's condition, as indicated by signatures on the cards.

Hard Sinking Fast;
Operation Canceled
TIMES UNION MAR 2 1953

Old Soldier Hard, 111, Rallies
After Losing Leg, Amazes Doctors
TIMES UNION MAR 3 1953

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."

MR. HARD, who was born July 15, 1841, served with the Union Army from Bull Run to Antietam. The only other surviving Union soldier is Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn. The two last saw each other at the 83d and last Grand Army of the Republic encampment at Indianapolis in 1949.

Four Confederate Army veterans survive. They are John Salling, 106, of Slant, Va.; Walter W. Williams, 109, of Franklin, Tex.; Thomas E. Riddle, 104, of Austin, Tex., and William A. Lundy, 105, of Laurel, Fla.

(Other details, picture, Page 15.)

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 this afternoon. But his condition was so poor that physicians canceled the operation.

The decision against the operation was made, doctors said, because "he has gone downhill so rapidly since yesterday that it doesn't seem feasible."

HARD, who is one of the two surviving Union soldiers, has been in General Hospital since Feb. 13. He underwent surgery on Feb. 18, when a spinal nerve was severed in an attempt to relieve the effects of a circulatory deficiency in his right foot.

Recently Hard had 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 post-operative anaesthetic 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 had 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

D. & C. MAR 3 1953
At 4:30 p. m. Hard was wheeled into the operating room where the amputation 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 seemed to 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 switchboards of 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, "I'll bet the old boy will pull through and be sitting in that marshal's car in the next Memorial Day parade."

Democrat and Chronicle

ROCHESTER, N. Y., WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1953 PAGE 17



—Democrat and Chronicle Staff Photo.

"THEY'RE FOR GRANDPA": James A. Hard's great-great-grandchildren, Barbara Eksten, left, 2, 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).

If spirit and refusal to give up has much to do with it, it appeared that Hard would make that a good bet.

Letters, Calls Wishing Luck to Hard Pour in from All States in Union

TIMES UNION MAR 3 1953

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 from 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.



VIGIL — Mrs. Carl E. Eksten of Henrietta, James Hard's granddaughter, looks at picture of the old soldier in her Seneca Hotel room, where she keeps vigil.

MRS. EKSTEN TOLD of one letter from a Wisconsin man 78 years young who wrote that he is suffering from the same ailment 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 nurse.

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 Jamestown 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 read in February that he celebrated his birthday shoveling snow in front of his home," she said. "We haven't heard from him since Gram-paw 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 111 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 anaesthetic.

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-opera-

tive anaesthetic 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 physicians was treatment of post-operative shock which, they state, 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

D. & C. MAR 4 1953

Picture on Page 17

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 the old warrior 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.

Recuperative Powers

Doctors were marveling at his recuperative powers as his pulse and blood pressure were returning towards normal. Because of the heavy sedation his condition required he was unable to take food and had to be fed intravenously.

Postoperative shock was the principal hurdle the patient faced, his 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 close-by.

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 grandfather's side in a few minutes.

Many Get-Well Wishes

Mrs. Eksten 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. Ulp, pastor of Brighton Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. G. B. F. Hallock, an old friend and chaplain of Rochester Veterans' Council.

If personal visits were out, good wishes by mail were very much in order. By last night Hard had received about 200 get-well cards from all parts of the country, with many with personal messages. One of them was from Mrs. Virginia Foote, until recently Hard's private nurse and now herself a convalescent. By coincidence, Hard occupies the same room in General Hospital Mrs. Foote vacated some weeks ago after undergoing an operation.

The messages came from all over, one radioed over an amateur network from Kelley Air Force Base outside San Antonio. The message was from Mrs. John Oragon 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 caloric" 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 from 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.

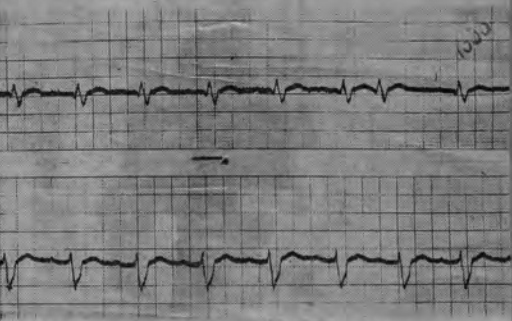
"The nurses felt that he looked good this morning," Hard's physician reported, "and the pain apparently is not so bad as it has been."

Doctors have been amazed at the extent of his recovery from the operation. His pulse is continuing good, but his blood pressure, which rebounded after the operation, has dropped "well below 100."

"Under the circumstances it wouldn't take much to change the picture considerably," Hard's physician said. Cortisone treatment earlier proved successful in giving his blood pressure a temporary boost. Hard has been at General Hospital since Feb. 13.

How a Man's Heart Beats Steadily at 111 Years

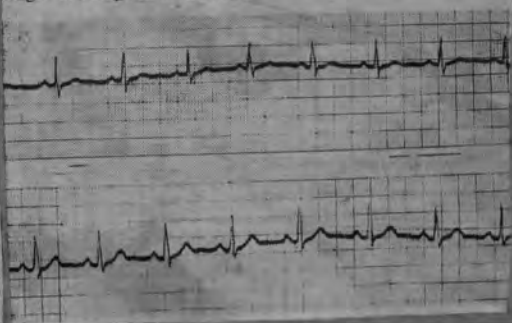
TIMES UNION MAR 5 1953



These charts (above and below) are electrocardiographs. They tell the story of two men's hearts. The one above shows the tiny voltage changes in the heart of James A. Hard, 111-year-old Union veteran who underwent amputation of his right leg in General Hospital Monday. The one below shows the heart beat of a normally healthy 29-year-old man.

The sequence of a small jog in each line followed by a larger fluctuation is the record of one complete heartbeat. Relatively straight lines between these sequences are spaces between beats. Almost no small jog shows in Hard's chart.

Comrade Hard's chart "doesn't look too bad," according to his physician. The significant difference between it and that of the younger heart is the wider spread of the fluctuation representing one beat. This indicates that it takes the old soldier's heart longer to complete a full beat.



Hard Regains Ground In Battle for His Life

D. & C. MAR 5 1953

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 campaigner 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-calory food mixture to digest via a tube from the mouth.

Most important, the pain was beginning to ease off. General Hospital authorities said. His temperature was down to 99, he was sleeping better, and his condition was described as "fairly satisfactory."

It was pointed out, however, that in view 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 pressure 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 Republic, Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn., where relatives expressed fear that the news would upset Woolson too much.

Hard Spends Good Night, Takes Food

TIMES UNION MAR 5 1953

James A. Hard, at 111 the nation's oldest surviving Civil War veteran, continued a remarkable fight for his life today.

At General Hospital, it was reported he spent a "pretty good night." His condition was listed as "fair."

Hard's right leg was amputated just above the knee Monday.

PHYSICIANS SAID the operation was necessary because of a serious circulatory condition which could have made the leg gangrenous. Yesterday, the old soldier was able to take food through his mouth by tube. Previously, he had to be fed intravenously.

Cortisone and thyroid extract are being administered to keep Hard's blood pressure up.

Hard and Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn. now are the last survivors of the Union Army which had a peak strength of 800,000.

Hard's Condition Fair, Showing Improvement

D. & C. MAR 6 1953

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 considerable improvement. His condition last night, three days after the amputation of his right leg, was described as "fair."

Pain in this 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 has been more than 80.

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

UNION MAR 6 1953

"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 effects of a major operation Monday—when his right leg was amputated just above the knee.

Earlier this morning, Mr. Hard'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 to be fed intravenously.

Hard Hangs On, Doctors Say Vet Gaining Strength

D. & C. MAR 7 1953

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 slightly rapid pulse. But these signs are encouraging, doctors said, and every day he remains as well as he is must be considered a victory. But the situation still could change at a moment's notice, they pointed out.

Hard underwent amputation of his right leg on Monday.

Hard's Condition Called 'Weaker'

D. & C. MAR 8 1953

James A. Hard seemed weaker yesterday, General Hospital doctors said. But he is still listed as being in "fair" condition.

The nation's oldest Civil War veteran may pick up a bit, they said, but at the age of 111, nobody can be sure. Outside of his weakness, there is nothing in Hard's condition that has changed since Friday. At that time he was reported to have no fever, slightly low blood pressure and slightly rapid pulse. He is being fed intravenously.

Hard's right leg was amputated Monday at General Hospital.

Hard's Condition Becomes Worse; Running Fever

UNION MAR 11 1953

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 mucus congestion in the throat was relieved by a suction pump. The old Union 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 Appears Slipping in Fight to Live

UNION MAR 10 1953

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 abnormal.

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 Duluth, Minn., who wrote Mr. Hard a note of condolence. But whether the old soldier understood the note when it was read to him was problematical.

Since the operation last week he has not regained full-consciousness.

Hard Continues Fight for Life; Condition Poor

D. & C. MAR 10 1953

James A. Hard last night was fighting back at death with all the strength his exhausting illness had left, but the condition of the 111-year-old soldier 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. Hard 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 not 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 warrior understood a message read to him from his sole surviving comrade of the Grand Army of the Republic, Albert Woolson, 106, of Duluth, Minn., wrote a note expressing his regret over Hard's loss of his leg.

Hard Improving, Temperature Down, Hospital Reports

D. & C. MAR 11 1953

"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.

His temperature was not so high, standing at 100.2. His blood pressure built up to about 100, considered a good sign, and his pulse was at 68 or 70. At General Hospital attendants said Hard reacts somewhat to movement about him and that he appeared to be in not too much discomfort.

Major concern of medical men appeared to be the veteran's respiration which continues quite rapid.

Comrade Hard's Condition Worse; Transfusion Set

D. & C. MAR 12 1953

After a temporary upswing, the condition of James A. Hard worsened again last night, according to doctors in General Hospital.

Worst symptoms of the 111-year-old Civil War veteran—oldest of the surviving six—were his temperature, up to 103, and respiration, which was too shallow for comfort, the doctors said. On the encouraging side, both pulse and blood pressure were described as "pretty good."

The old warrior's surgeon planned to give Hard about 250 cc of whole blood today. It would be the first transfusion given the patient since the amputation of his right leg 10 days ago. The operation was a counter-measure against a dangerous circulatory ailment.

Hard's strength was sustained yesterday both by intravenous feeding and induction of a special formula via a stomach tube. He has been unable to take ordinary food since the operation.

Hard Undergoes Transfusion

UNION MAR 12 1953

Critically-ill James A. Hard, 111, 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 where his right leg was amputated. He was given a pint of blood.

The veteran's condition was reported about the "same." He reportedly spent a fairly good night.

ROCHESTER, N. Y., FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 1953

JAMES HARD, OLDEST GAR VET, DIES



JAMES A. HARD

Veteran, 111, Fails to Rally From Surgery

A soldier's life in 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 counter-measure 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, 106, of Duluth, Minn. Four Confederate veterans are still alive.

All his life, Mr. Hard took participation in veterans affairs as a serious duty. The community's recognition of his stature was climaxed by his selection in 1944 as grand marshal 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 eye sight 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.

Picture Highlights in Life of

D. & C. MAR 13 1952

Rochester's Grand Old Man of Grand Army

- 5 pages under
this heading -



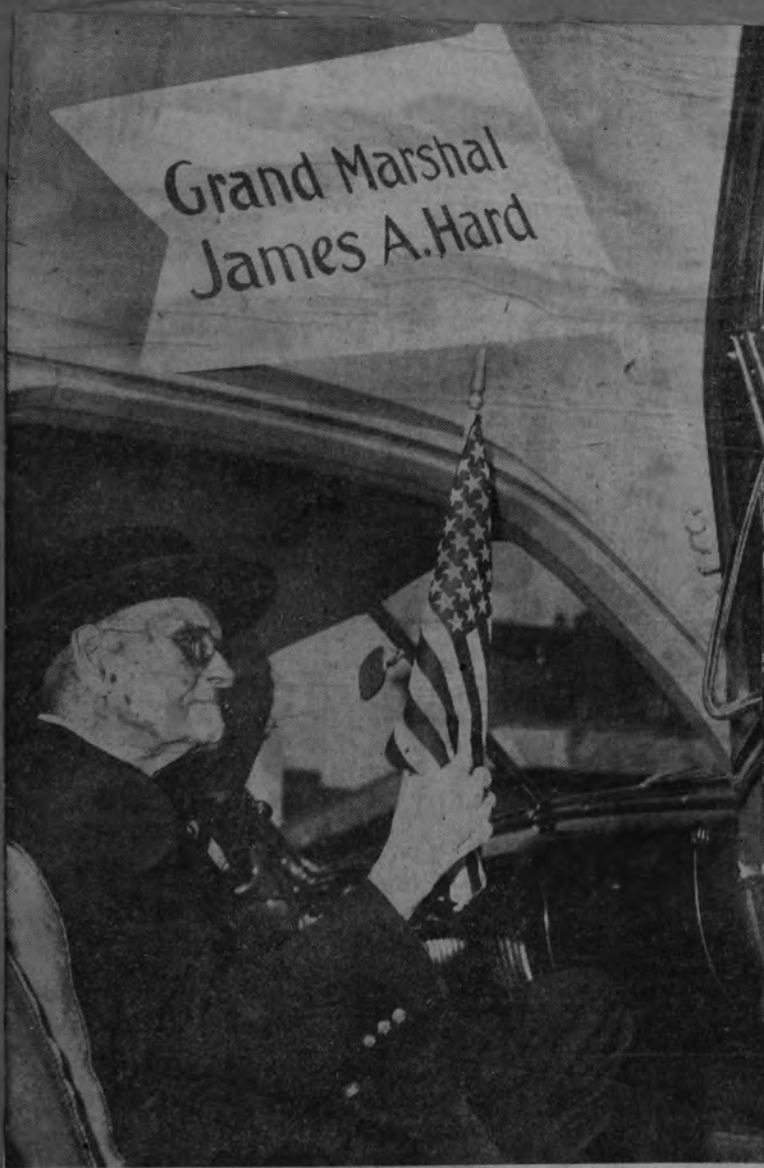
HE MADE HISTORY LIVE—There was always a ready audience when James A. Hard had time and strength to tell his Civil War stories. Here Jerry Tompkins and Geoffrey Palmer, neighbors of veteran, listen attentively

as he recalls some of his war experiences. These recitals of battles were never done with 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.



MASON 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. District Deputy Grand Master Walter H. Wickins presents medal.



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.



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.



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 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, 1949:

"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 ayes 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 108, 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 its 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 too.

Of the six old men who wrote "finis" to the GAR, Hard's death leaves only one—Albert Woolson of Duluth, Minn.



HIS LAST PICTURE—The extra-long span of life was running out when this picture was snapped in February after he entered General Hospital for treatment of circulatory ailment.



HIS CIVIC DUTY—An ambulance trip was necessary, but Mr. Hard had not failed to vote for many years and the election last Fall

was no exception. Here Frank Fontana, ambulance driver, assists the 111-year-old veteran into voting booth near his home.

THURSDAY MAR 13 1953

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 1948 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 some four and one-half years was Mr. Hard's nurse in the Portsmouth Ter. 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 2,898,304.

Only four others survive from among the millions who fought for the North and South. All wore the Confederate gray. They are:

Walter L. Williams, 110, who lives near Franklin, Tex.; William (Uncle Bill) Lundy, 105, of Laurel Hill, Fla.; John Salling, 105 of Slant, Va., and Thomas Evans Riddle, 106, who lives in the Confederate Home for Men in Austin, Tex.

A fifth Confederate veteran, William Townsend, 106, of Olla, La., 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."

Barely a month ago Mr. Hard puffed on a cigar in his room in a sanitarium at 31 Portsmouth Ter. and scoffed at a Veterans Administration prediction that only one Union Army veteran—he or 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 caps" 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 Monroe County.

His last public appearance was as 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 acknowledgement 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 29. Alfred Tennyson was 32.

MR. HARD was born July 15, 1841, in Victor, the son of a Western New York pioneer settler, Alapson Pratt Hard and a native of Rochester, Martha Frost Hard. His father drove a stagecoach between Mt. Morris and Canandaigua before 1835.

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



A FAVORITE PASTIME — James A. Hard puffs contentedly on cigar just before his 111th birthday last year.

of the Wars of the Revolution and 1812.

WHEN Mr. Hard was still a youth, his family moved to Freeville, near Dryden, where he enlisted at 19 in Company E, 37th New York Volunteer Infantry, four days after Fort Sumter was fired upon on Apr. 18, 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, Chancellorsville, South Mountain and the slaughter at Antietam.

In September, 1937, he was one of 21 surviving Union and Confederate veterans to reunite on the battleground 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 "commander-in-chief" 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 railroader 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 constantly active, with keen interest in public affairs and the nation's role in an unsettled world. He never assumed the role of sage, 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.)

Bauer, he participated in numerous Memorial Day parades and other civic and patriotic rites and programs. He rode as parade grand marshal for the last time May 30, 1952, four years after he declared the New York State Department of the Grand Army of the Republic disbanded in a ceremony at Highland Park.

He was state commander of the GAR on at least two occasions and served a term as national commander of the Union Veterans' Union, a now defunct rival organization. He first assumed state leadership at 104 on the death of Frank E. Cooley, 98, of Rensselaer.

He was appointed junior vicecommander in chief of the National GAR in September, 1949.

Mr. Hard never broke his links with the past. For years, the singing of "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground" by Mrs. June Green Gadget was a birthday ritual to which he looked forward eagerly and enjoyed immensely.

MR. HARD was 12 years old when Russia went to war against England, Turkey, France and Sardinia in the Crimea. Through the years he saw the deterioration of imperialist Russia, her defeat by Germany in World War I. He watched the Russian revolution, the growth of Communism and the nation's emergence as a first-rate military power.

"We must keep America strong," he kept repeating.

MR. HARD kept pace with developments of all kinds and took them in his stride. The man who was born long before the auto or the airplane was invented took his first helicopter ride in 1947. "When you get to be 106," he said, "you don't scare easily." Later, he said, "It's a lot of fun and a fine method of getting around."

Mr. Hard won many honors in his lifetime and was respected and venerated by generations of his fellow citizens. He had a faculty for taking life in stride, and if he had any recipe for longevity, it was this:

"Work hard, don't worry and smoke plenty of cigars."

For many years he lived with a daughter, Mrs. Alberta Wilson, at

31 Rosalind St. In recent years he had resided in the sanitarium at 31 Portsmouth Ter.

HE SPENT several days in the hospital in October, 1948, when he fought off an attack of pneumonia. He was discharged in time to vote in the Nov. 3 election.

And it was back into General Hospital in March, 1949, for a 10-day bout with pneumonia. In February, 1950, he visited General again with a severe cold.

Six months later he saw the nation prepare for war for the sixth time and said of the "Police Action": "Korea is strange and sounds bad; I can't understand it."

During the second week of July, 1950, he told his life story in a series of six articles which appeared in The Times-Union. Written by former Times-Union reporter Andrew Wolfe, the series won an award from the New York Historical Association.

IN OCTOBER, 1950, he signed a Freedom Scroll during the Crusade for Freedom, saying, "It sounds like the best thing I've heard of for telling those Communists about democracy."

That same month, as past monarch of Lalla Rookh Grotto, he was presented a Masonic Palm for 60 years' service and was cited for his volunteer nursing service to polio patients during a World War I epidemic.

In December, he came down with another attack of pneumonia but was out of the hospital by Christmas. In April of 1951 he again entered General Hospital and won another fight with pneumonia and later that month contributed an article to "Scrapbook," the folklore magazine of the Rochester Historical Society. It was called "My Boyhood 100 Years Ago."

In September, 1951, the New York State Department of the Disabled American Veterans cited him for "80 years of service to veterans."

LAST JULY 15 it was Happy Birthday No. 11 for Mr. Hard. He received more than 400 cards, telegrams and letters.

Jim Hard Leaves Behind Sharp Views on World

By virtue of his age alone, James A. Hard became a public figure as he neared and entered the slim ranks of centenarians. Yet he never rested long on the laurels of his years.

With an alertness belying his age, the Civil War veteran had pointed answers for questions often thrust at him by reporters and other visitors.

At the age of 103 he offered a prediction on the date Germany would surrender the next year—and missed by only 23 days. Six years ago he called—in his own way—for the stockpiling of atomic bombs.

MR. HARD never seemed to feel he was too old to try something new.

Thirty-five years after the Wright Brothers immortalized Kitty Hawk, N. C., he took his first airplane ride. After he landed at Rochester Airport following a flight over the city that October day in 1938, the 97-year-old air novice told a reporter:

"Gosh, I'd much rather be up there than down here on the ground again. Who said an old timer couldn't find any new thrills?"

Nine years later he went aloft in the Gannett Newspapers' helicopter. "It was different from anything I ever experienced in my life," he said at 106 years of age.

Famed principally as one of the few surviving veterans of the Union Army, Mr. Hard was quoted regularly on military matters.

In 1939, the 98-year-old veteran of Bull Run, Fredericksburg and Antietam was asked what he thought of the European war. France and Germany then were locked in their "phony war" behind the Maginot and Siegfried lines.

"War is always a serious business," Hard said to a reporter, "and it is

too early to tell what those soldiers must undergo. At present I think it is a pretty safe matter, a tame affair in comparison to what we went through. But I think they'll eventually go through as much as we did."

Later, after the United States went to war for the fifth time in its lifetime, Hard said Hitler would be beaten "after a good fight." He added: "If I were younger, I would enlist in a minute. I would like to get over there and wring Hitler's neck."

BUT IN 1950, the Korean conflict puzzled him:

"I don't know. It's strange and sounds bad. I can't understand it at all."

Mr. Hard thought the United States and Russia would be at war by 1952. He predicted that in 1947.

As the years rolled by, the spry-minded veteran became philosophical about his birthdays. How did it feel in 1946 to be in his 106th year?

"No different than in the 105th."

At the age of 107 he told his public: "I feel pretty good. And after you get to a hundred, birthdays aren't much different."

Of one thing, though, the old soldier was cheated. Last year he was informed that the authenticated record for longevity belonged to a French-Canadian who lived to be 113.

"Why," James Hard said almost disdainfully, "I'll live to be at least 115. Don't see any reason why I shouldn't."

He never reached his goal.

Comrade Hard Saw The Parade of America

The parade finally has stepped past James A. Hard. But before it did, after 111 years, the gallant veteran of the Civil War saw life as fully as few men have before him.

His early days were part of a fabulous page of American history—the Gold Rush, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Custer's last stand on the Little Big Horn. And modern life as we know it—a mechanical age of scientific marvels—unfolded during his manhood.

Alert and ready with pointed observations until a final hospital siege sapped his strength, Mr. Hard lived under 24 presidents and survived all but three of them. Seventeen times during his life major armed conflicts disrupted all or part of the world.

THERE WAS PEACE, though, on July 15, 1841, the day James Hard was born near Victor, N. Y. John Tyler then was president less than two months—President William Henry Harrison had died that April.

The people of Watertown, N. Y., were poking through the ashes of a fire which destroyed 80 buildings a few days before. And a new biography by Washington Irving had been published.

Samuel Morse was not to send his immortal telegraph message. "What hath God wrought!" for three years. The war with Mexico was five years off.

JAMES HARD was 11 when Uncle Tom's Cabin came out. A year later Abraham Lincoln's son, Thomas, was born. The United States was coining \$3 gold pieces.

Lincoln, the man Mr. Hard believed to be the greatest person in American history, was first elected to the presidency when Mr. Hard was 19. Two years later, in the service of the Union army, the young soldier took part in the Battle

of Antietam two months after his 21st birthday.

So the parade went. Mr. Hard was 28 when the United States purchased Alaska. The lay he was 35 Rochester papers carried confirmation of the massacre of Gen. George Custer and 276 troops by the Sioux at the battle of the Little Big Horn.

HE WAS 46 when the Statue of Liberty was unveiled. He was 52 when the first "gasoline buggy" was operated successfully. He was 60 when Marconi transmitted the first wireless message. He was 82 when talking pictures were introduced. He was 100 years old when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese.

James Hard watched all that and the first decade of the atomic age. And now the parade has passed.

Dismissed, Soldier

There is a catching of the breath and a slightly dizzy feeling in Rochester today. The passing of Old Soldier James Hard is not quite so stunning as would be the sudden disappearance of the City Hall or the re-routing of the Genesee River, but it leaves us groping 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 candle 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 overwhelm the majority of his fellow beings long before they reach his stage of life. He became a symbol of indestructibility and of the fighting qualities that everyone admires. He was Petain holding the line at Verdun; he was General Wolfe leading a charge up the sheer cliffs at Quebec; he was General McAuliffe 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 zest 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," who could have told which among those thousands was marked with the lucky numbers? Fate spun its 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 curb 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 actors in the great drama of the sixties, 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 school-boy'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."

TIMES UNION MAR 13 1953

TIMES UNION MAR 13 1953

D. & C. MAR 13 1953

Hard Knew Servicemen Of All Nation's Wars

With the passing of James A. Hard in his 112th year, Rochester loses its last direct living connection with the holocaust that swept the nation in the 1860s.

Hard was born July 15, 1941, at Victory, Cayuga County, the son of a stagecoach driver, Alanson Pratt Hard, and of Martha Frost Hard, a native of Rochester. The family moved to Windsor, a Broome 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 then that it must be a wonderful thing to be a veteran," Hard said after he had passed the century mark. He himself became the most celebrated veteran in Rochester history and enjoyed every minute of the attention he received. The hardy little man with the thick eyeglasses and big cigar was this city's most photographed, most feted citizen in his last years.

It was his almost incredible longevity which saw him outlive all but one of the hordes of Boys in Blue, that focused such attention on Jim Hard. He was a middle-aged man when Thomas Edison brought the electric light bulb to civilization and he was an old man when the Lusitania was sunk 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 to his eventual eminence as the 20th century's Methuselah. At the age of 19, he left a sawmill job in Freeville, near Ithaca, and enlisted in Company E 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 drums: Bull Run, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, South Mountain and Antietam.

At the age of 109, Mr. Hard, whose memory remained amazingly nimble and coherent, told a reporter his toughest battle was at West Point, Va., near Richmond. There, Mr. Hard recalled, he was standing next to his captain, when a shot ripped through the captain's shoulder, killing him. Mr. Hard was so close he was splattered by his captain's blood.

Scared in Battles

At Antietam, his regiment had not been committed so he and three buddies strayed away from the front lines. 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 coat, but he was not hurt.

Never one to recite his war experiences with relish or embellishment, Hard often confided 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 me I'd make a good soldier when I got my uniform," Mr. Hard liked to recall.

Numberless times he recounted the glimpses he got of the War President. Once he saw the President reviewing troops at Bailey's Crossroads, near Washington. "He was wearing a high hat and was on horseback," Mr. Hard recalled. "His legs were so long they almost touched the ground."

Most Fun After 100

Last year he told a reporter that he once was assigned to supervise a trench-digging detail along the James River, near Richmond. A portly officer approached him. "He came up to me and asked how things were going," Mr. Hard related. "We chatted for awhile and before leaving he shook hands with me." And that, he said, was how he met Gen. Ulysses S. Grant.

It was recollections such as these at such an advanced age that gave a measure of the venerable soldier's excitement about life and his indomitable desire to live. His vitality was a subject of awe and amazement to friends, family and the medical profession.

On his 102nd birthday, he said that the first 100 years were the hardest, but the second hundred the most fun. At 107, he survived three attacks of pneumonia. Barely a year after, he chided his daughter for not accompanying him on a plane trip to Miami. He took his first helicopter ride at 106 and commented, "It was different from anything I ever experienced."

His chief enjoyments in life were ice cream, radio newscasts, which he followed avidly up to the time his hearing failed, and "good cigars," he supplied by women's auxiliaries of veterans' organizations.

Mr. Hard began smoking cigars at the age of 15, and seldom missed a chance to call attention to his habit. In great puffs of smoke, he once commented mischievously: "Presume I'd live to be an old man if I hadn't smoked so much." Each birthday brought as many as 200 boxes of cigars, which he continued to smoke until just before his death.

Headed State Veterans

His first high honor in veterans circles came in 1910, when he was elected national commander of the Union Veterans' Union, now extinct. He was the last commander of the New York State Grand Army

of the Republic and single-handedly disbanded it in Rochester in 1948. 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 hardihood was measured by the death rate of Civil War veterans in the past 11 years. In 1941, there were five Union veterans in Monroe County alone. In 1950, there were 16 Union veterans left in the nation. This 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. There men of the Rebel Army, united by the passing of the years, shook hands and Mr. Hard told reporters 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 unfailingly received gifts of

cigars each time. And he boasted 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 millhand to enter the Civil War, Mr. Hard was a construction boss on railroads in the West, a carpenter in this state and a pension 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 has said of his residence here: "I like Rochester the best of any city I was ever in. I like the atmosphere—people are so kind here."

With the cheers and felicitations of presidents and fellow citizens in his ears, Mr. Hard in later years lived an almost silent life. His hearing inevitably failed and his eyesight deteriorated. But up to the end he could think clearly, chuckle at wisecracks and sign his name legibly.

"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 great-grandson, James Eksten of Henrietta. Mr. Hard outlived two wives, Lodiska Davis and Anna West, and his daughter, 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."

*James Hard's Body
to Lie in State;
Old Soldier's Funeral
on Monday*

TIMES UNION MAR 13 1953



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

The body of James A. Hard, who died last night at the amazing age of 111 years, 7 months and 26 days, will lie in state at Masonic Temple Auditorium, 875 Main St. E.

This was decided today after a conference by relatives.

The funeral will be held at 3 p. m. Monday from the auditorium, with the cortege to proceed down Main St., past City Hall, and thence to Mt. Hope Cemetery for burial rites.

At Mr. Hard's own request before he succumbed, a Grand Army of the Republic battlefield burial ritual will be used.

The public may view Mr. Hard's body only between the hours of 10 a. m. and 2 p. m. Monday.

However, at the request of Superintendent of Schools James M. Spinning, the period between 9 and 10 a. m. Monday has been set aside so that school children may view the body of the old warrior.

The body of the nation's oldest war veteran was removed this morning from General Hospital, where the clock finally ran out on Mr. Hard at 11:45 last night.

His 112th birthday would have been next July 15.

MR. HARD'S BODY is at the Ralph D. Scobell Funeral Home, 642 Main St. E.

Mr. Hard's family asked that persons not visit the funeral home, but to wait until the body is removed to the Masonic Temple.

The courtesy of no flowers was requested. Those wishing to remember the old comrade in a contributory sense, however, may send such contributions to the Cerebral Palsy Association, 1570 East Ave.

MEANWHILE, Mayor Dicker ordered the American Flag—which Mr. Hard served so faithfully—at half staff at City Hall.

The mayor also asked that all Rochesterians who have flags to place them at half staff throughout the city.

"The City of Rochester," the mayor said, "is deeply sorrowful at the passing of Comrade Hard. He was a great personage in 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 Comrade Hard will live always, not only in Rochester but in the entire United States."

THE MAYOR was arranging a meeting with veterans groups and civic leaders for military honors.

A meeting was held this afternoon in the mayor's office, with civic and veterans' organization leaders in attendance, to complete plans. It seemed apparent that thousands of persons would probably turn out to pay last respects to Comrade Hard.

MR. HARD entered General Hospital last Feb. 13. On Feb. 18, he submitted to surgery in which a spinal nerve was severed to relieve a circulatory condition in the right foot.

Mrs. Eksten said that Mr. Hard suffered 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 Portsmouth Ter.

Until he entered the hospital recently for his final stand, he frequently awakened at early hours 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 15. He had to give up this practice after entering the hospital for the last time.

THE COLORFUL OLD WAR-rior, who fought in major battles of the Civil War, had been partially deaf in his last years and was confined to a wheelchair. His eyesight also was poor virtually to the point where he could scarcely see much of anything.

But Mr. Hard insisted on voting regularly on Election Day. Last year he cast his ballot for Gen. Eisenhower. He voted for

every Republican candidate for president since Lincoln.

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.

MR. HARD attended Grand Army of the Republic encampments until the meetings were disbanded in 1949. He was a Union Army veteran of engagements at Chancellorsville, Antietam, Fredericksburg and the first Bull Run fight.

The grand old man for many years was a familiar sight here when he functioned as grand marshal of the Memorial Day parade. He would ride in the parade, then review it from a point opposite City Hall.

RADIO STATION WHEC will carry a memorial service eulogizing Mr. Hard tomorrow from 9:30 to 9:55 p. m. The program, conducted by Ralph Knox, will relate the story of Mr. Hard's life from his early days to the present.

There will be cut-ins of transcriptions of Hard's voice made on previous radio interviews with him as well as transcribed tributes to his memory by Bruce Percy, state commander of the American Legion, and Al Sigl, Times-Union News-caster.

D. & C. MAR 14 1953

Hard's Pulse Linked to Age

What was there about James A. Hard that enabled him to live a phenomenal 111 years?

While pointing out, "Only God can really answer that question," the old soldier's personal physician believes his heart had much to do with his long life.

"Mr. Hard," the physician said yesterday, "never had a rapid heart. It was somewhat on the slow side. His normal pulse beat was between 56 and 60 per minute." For most humans, the normal pulse is between 70 to 75.

This means that Mr. Hard's heart beat approximately 15 times fewer per minute than the average person's. Over the years, the slower heart could have meant less wear and strain on his heart.

Never Excited

Associated with this fact was the Civil War veteran's tendency to take everything in stride, never becoming overly excited or getting seriously upset through emotional worries. Nothing bothered him.

An example: After taking his first airplane ride at the age of 97 in 1938, he remarked: "Gosh, I'd much rather be up there than down here on the ground again."

And, too, when asked by reporters to what did he attribute his old age, Mr. Hard answered: "I don't ever worry about anything. When something bad comes along, don't worry, make the best of it."

Another side of his nature which enabled him to live such a long life, his physician said, was his "remarkable physical endurance. He could take things which would have staggered men one-fifth his age."

An example of this was cited yesterday by Mr. Hard's granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten.

Arranged Operation

"When he was 90, Grampa 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 heat us to it."

"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 in a cab. That was nothing but grit and courage."

Mrs. Eksten recalled how her grandfather used to say: "People 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 mush."

She said he always had a good appetite, eating a lot of vegetables and cereals. "Maybe that habit helped him to live so long," she suggested.

There are probably dozens of other factors that could be considered in the question of why James Hard lived to be 111 years old.

But his physician is probably right: "Only God can answer the question."

WHEN DEATH finally came peacefully to Mr. Hard in his sleep just before midnight at General Hospital, a nurse and interne were present.

One of the old soldier's granddaughters, Mrs. Carl Eksten of Henrietta, had left only 35 minutes earlier, after maintaining long days of vigil.

Besides Mrs. Eksten, Mr. Hard leaves another granddaughter, Mrs. Royce Nelan of Victor; a grandson, Earl H. Osborne of Buffalo; eight great-grandchildren, and 12 great-great-grandchildren.

Mr. Hard outlived two wives, Luduska Davis and Anna West, and a daughter, Alberta. The first wife died in 1879, the second in 1929. His daughter, by the first wife, died in 1948.

MRS. EKSTEN told The Times-Union that "we hardly knew he went." She had returned to the hospital quickly on being told her grandfather was dead.

"The death was very quiet," she said. "I was told that it was hard to know right away that he had stopped breathing."

Mrs. Eksten said that the last time she heard Mr. Hard speak was on Sunday, Mar. 1, the day before he underwent an operation for am-

putation of his right leg just above the knee.

The amputation was necessary, physicians said, because of a circulatory condition that would have turned the leg gangrenous.

3-14-53

Hard Cortège Monday to Follow Route of Memorial Day Parades

Other Stories, Picture on Page 12

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 cortege carrying James A. Hard to his final resting place.

All day Monday will be given over to honors to the Civil War veteran, who died in General Hospital late Thursday night at the age of 111 years, the nation's oldest soldier. Prior to the funeral procession the body will lie in state in the foyer of the Masonic Auditorium.

The program for the day has been timed as follows:

9 a. m. to 10 a. m.—The city's school children will pass by the bier to pay their final respects.

10 a. m. to 2 p. m.—The general public will be allowed to view the body.

1 p. m.—The City Council will meet at City Hall to adopt resolutions on Mr. Hard's passing. Council members then will leave in a body for the funeral and City Hall will be closed the balance of the day.

3 p. m.—Funeral services will be conducted at Masonic Auditorium, followed by the cortege to Mt. Hope Cemetery and final Masonic rites at the grave.

To plan for the day's events, Henry E. Norton of the United Spanish War Veterans and chairman of the veterans' committee handling arrangements, has called a meeting of commanders or representatives of all veterans' and military units in the city for 3 p. m. today. The session will be held in the quarters of the Veterans of Foreign Wars on the fourth floor of City Hall Annex at Main St. W. and Broad and Clarissa Sts. Norton emphasized it is important that all organizations be represented.

Mayor Assists in Plans

Initial plans for Monday's program were drawn up at a meeting called by Mayor Samuel B. Dicker at the City Hall at 2 p. m. yesterday. Present were city officials, representatives of veterans' and military organization, several city councilmen and representatives of the clergy.

Following the meeting, Superintendent of Schools James M. Spinning expressed appreciation of the setting aside of the hour from 9 to 10 a. m. Monday for school children to view the body of Mr. Hard as it lies in state. He said that school standard bearers and representatives of all schools will attend.

Officials emphasized that the general public should not appear at the Masonic Auditorium before 10 a. m. to give the school children their full allotted time. Beginning at 10 a. m. and continuing until 2 p. m. the public will have its opportunity to file past the bier.

Before the 3 p. m. time for the funeral services, the casket will be moved from the foyer of the Auditorium to the stage. Representatives

of all veterans' and military organizations and of all religious faiths are being asked to have representatives on the stage.

Under Auspices of GAR

The services at the auditorium will be under auspices of the GAR, represented by the Sons of Union Veterans. They will be opened and closed by the Rev. George E. Ulp, pastor of Brighton Presbyterian Church. At Mr. Hard's request, the GAR ritual developed on the Civil War battlefields will be used. The Rev. William A. Hallock will conduct that portion of the service.

The funeral cortege is expected to start from Masonic Auditorium at about 3:30 p. m. It will move westward on Main St. to Plymouth Ave. S., to Broad St., to South Ave. and then to the cemetery. As the procession moves by the City Hall in Broad St., those organizations not going to the cemetery will drop out of line.

At the cemetery committal services will be under Masonic auspices, with members of the James A. Hard Lodge, F&AM, serving as an honor guard. Taps will be sounded and a firing squad will provide full military honors.

Prior to its removal to Masonic Auditorium Monday, the body of the veteran will be at the Ralph D. Scobell Funeral Home, 642 Main St. E., but the public is asked not to go there at any time. Members of the family have asked that the entire time the body is at the funeral home be allotted to them exclusively.

No flowers should be sent to the funeral parlors. The family has requested that any floral offerings be sent to the Masonic Auditorium on Monday morning.

Throughout yesterday, at City Hall and City Hall Annex, the American flag flew at halfstaff in honor of the dead veteran. That was on order of Mayor Dicker, who urged that all places in the city displaying flags place them at halfstaff until after the funeral Monday.

Present at Mr. Hard's bedside in General Hospital at 11:45 p. m. Thursday when he died, were a nurse and intern. One of his granddaughters, Mrs. Carl Eksten of Henrietta, who has maintained long hours of vigil since he was admitted to the hospital a month ago, had left only 35 minutes earlier. She returned to the hospital quickly on being informed of the death.

'Death Was Very Quiet'

"The death was very quiet," she said yesterday. "I was told that it was difficult to know right away that he had stopped breathing."

She said the last time she heard him speak was on Sunday, Mar. 1,

the day before his right leg was amputated. She said he suffered a great deal of pain in the final days and that "it was a blessing that grandfather went when he did."

Besides Mrs. Eksten, Mr. Hard leaves another granddaughter, Mrs. Royce Nelan of Victor; a grandson, Earl H. Osborne of Buffalo; eight great-grandchildren and 12 great-great-grandchildren. He had outlived two wives, Loduska Davis and Anna West, and a daughter, Alberta. His first wife died in 1879, the second in 1929. The daughter, by his first wife, died in 1948.

From 9:30 to 9:55 p. m. today, Radio Station WHEC will broadcast a memorial service for Mr. Hard. Conducted by Ralph Knox, the program will relate the story of Mr. Hard's life. Cut-ins of transcripts of Hard's voice, made in radio interviews in the past, and transcribed tributes by Bruce Percy, state commander of the American Legion, and Al Sigl, Times-Union newscaster, will be included.

State Legislature To Honor Hard

Albany — (GNS) — The State Legislature will adjourn today in respect to the memory of the nation'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.

The resolution will read in part:

"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, 1953, and

"Whereas, he was the nation's oldest veteran of the Civil War, being until his death one of the currently remaining survivors of the Union Army, and

"Whereas, he fought valiantly for the survival of the Union in the Second Battle of Bull Run, Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg and Antietam, and

"Resolved, that when the Legislature adjourns today it do so out of respect to the memory of James A. Hard and be it further

"Resolved, that copies of this resolution, suitable engrossed, be transmitted to his granddaughters, Mrs. Carl E. Eksten and Mrs. Royce Nelan and his grandson, Earl H. Osborne."

D. & C. MAR 14 1953

Many Tributes Honor James Hard's Memory

It was difficult for Rochester to realize yesterday that Comrade 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 his unusual vigor and activity was best known to us. He has lived a life of great usefulness and has been an inspiration to thousands. Rochester has lost in many respects its first citizen."

Mayor Samuel B. Dicker: "The City of Rochester is deeply sorrowful at the passing of Comrade Hard. He was a great personage in 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 Comrade 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 veneration in which he was held by this generation certainly will have its

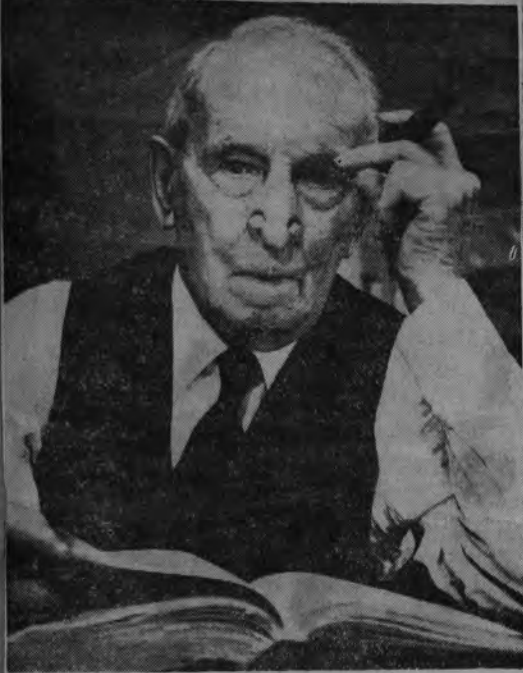
beneficial impact on the next generation."

Leonard L. Schieffelin, state junior vicecommander, Veterans of Foreign Wars: "Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars appreciate and fully realize his great services to the nation. He was foremost in advancing the cause of the veterans and a staunch advocate of justice throughout the nation."

Lee Harrer, county commander, Spanish War Veterans: "You can't say too much about the patriotism of James A. Hard. The Spanish War Veterans accord him all the honors and respect possible. It's certainly due him."

Mrs. Nina Virginia Foote, for four years Mr. Hard's nurse at the sanitarium in Portsmouth, N. H., where he lived: "It doesn't seem possible that Grandpa—that's what I called him—is really dead. He hung on so long, so very long. He was a grand old man. A great kisser, 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.'"

D. & C. MAR 14 1953



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 800,000 "Boys in Blue," said yesterday at his Duluth, Minn., home he is "ready and willing" to follow James A. Hard in death anytime.

The old soldier, left as the last member of the Union Army by Hard's death, appeared somewhat upset to find himself standing alone. His daughter, Mrs. John Kobus, "broke the news gently" that Mr. Hard, at 111 the nation's oldest soldier, had died in Rochester.

Usually talkative, Woolson didn't comment much except to say the Rochester veteran had gone through a "hard struggle." According to the United Press, after eating his breakfast, Woolson sat down and penned a note of sympathy to his comrade's relatives.

In the meantime, in Jamestown, the Associated Press quoted Miss Cora Gillis, secretary of the Grand Army of the Republic, as declaring that taps would not be sounded for the GAR before the death of Woolson. The passing of Mr. Hard had turned her GAR records to the final page.

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 vicecommander-in-chief.

The GAR once counted 408,489 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 resolutely said yesterday he would "guard the traditions of the GAR with all his ability and all his honor."

D. & C. MAR 15 1953

Marching Orders Issued for Hard Funeral Procession

Democrat and Chronicle

Page 11

ROCHESTER, N. Y., SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1953



FIVE SCORE AND ELEVEN YEARS—Flags at half staff on City Hall paid Rochester's tribute yesterday to the memory of James A. Hard, the country's oldest Union Civil War veteran, who died Thursday in General Hospital at the age of 111.

Administration orders for the funeral procession tomorrow for Commander James A. Hard were issued yesterday by Brig. Gen. Alvin War Veterans.

Assembly points will be: Military Units—Form on north side of Main St. E., head of column on Prince St. Honorary Escort—Form in foyer of auditorium, to proceed in procession with casket as it leaves the auditorium. Honorary Bearers—To ride in automobiles, with vehicles forming on Birch Cres., leading vehicle facing Main St. E.

The orders follow: All organizations to participate in procession will assemble at 2:15 p. m. Procession will clear assembly point at 3 p. m.

Procession formation is as follows: Police escort; military escort of the National Guard and the Marine Reserve; colors, with James A. Hard Post honor guard; chaplain, the Rev. Paul R. Hooyer, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church and Monroe County chaplain, American Legion; hearse bearing body of Commander Hard. The honorary escort will be composed of two representatives each of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, Catholic War Veterans, Jewish War Veterans.

In vehicles will follow active bearers, family of Mr. Hard, Mayor Samuel B. Dicker, Chairman Norton, honorary bearers.

Sons of Union Veterans, United Spanish War Veterans, Disabled American War Veterans, Army-Navy Union and Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Route of Procession: West on Main St. E., then South on Plymouth Ave. E., then east on Broad St. to City Hall. All marching units will disband at City Hall.

Guard Detail: Capt. Charles McCarthy, NYNG, is detailed and will supervise organization and posting of guard at Masonic Auditorium from 9 a. m. until relieved.

ROCHESTER TIMES-UNION
Mon., Mar. 16, 1953

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 Eksten 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 include Rep. Kenneth B. Keating; Carl S. Hallauer, Bausch & Lomb Optical Company; Fred Colwell, Sons of Union Veterans; Fred L. Parrish, chairman of Monroe County Republican Committee; Edward Peck Curtis, Eastman Kodak Company; Charles E. Carson, Eastman Kodak Company; Lee McCanne, Stromberg-Carlson Company and Station WHAM; the Rev. Charles J. Mahoney, superintendent of Catholic schools, Diocese of Rochester; James M. Spinning, superintendent of schools; Frank Gannett, president, Gannett Company Inc.

Also Bernard E. Finucane, Security Trust Company; Harry A. Holmlund, Scrantom's Inc.; John D. Hayes, Fanny Farmer Candies; James E. Gleason, Gleason Works; Thomas J. Hargrave, Eastman Kodak Company; County Manager Clarence A. Smith; Postmaster Donald A. Dailey; Walter L. Todd, Todd Company; Robert E. Ginna, Rochester Gas & Electric Corporation; Paul Miller, vicepresident of the Gannett Company Inc.; Sheriff Albert W. Skinner; Donald H. Campbell, Rochester Telephone Corporation; Attorney Charles C. Wilcox; William A. Lang, Rochester Transit Corporation; Roy F. Bush, chairman, Monroe County Democratic Committee; Carl L. Bausch, Bausch & Lomb Optical Company, and Attorney William F. 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. Foote 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 was one from Frederick

K. 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. McMahon, New York Department commander of the Sons of Union Veterans.

In preparation for the funeral tomorrow, Grover C. Scott, county vicecommander of the Sons of Union Veterans, requested that all members of the SUV met 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 by Maj. J. B. McManus, commander of the 106th AAA Gun Battalion, to meet at the Main St. E. Armory at 1 p. m.

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 Eksten of Rochester; 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 Co.; Fred Colwell, Sons of Union Veterans; Fred L. Parrish, chairman of Monroe County Republican Committee; Edward Peck Curtis, Eastman Kodak Company; Charles E. Carson, Eastman Kodak Company; Lee McCanne, Stromberg-Carlson Company; William A. Fay, Stromberg-Carlson Company and Station WHAM; the Rev. Charles J. Mahoney, superintendent of Catholic schools; Frank Gannett, president, M. Spinning, superintendent of schools; Frank Gannett, president, Gannett Company Inc.

Also Bernard E. Finucane, Security Trust Company; Harry A. Holm-

lund, Scrantom's Inc.; John D. Hayes, Fanny Farmer Candies; James E. Gleason, Gleason Works; Thomas J. Hargrave, Eastman Kodak Company; County Manager Clarence A. Smith; Postmaster Donald A. Dailey; Walter L. Todd, Todd Company; Robert E. Ginna, Rochester Gas & Electric Corp.; Paul Miller, vicepresident of Gannett Company Inc.; Sheriff Albert W. Skinner; Donald H. Campbell, Rochester Telephone Corporation; Attorney Charles S. Wilcox; William A. Lang, Rochester Transit Corporation; Roy F. Bush, chairman, Monroe County Democratic Committee; Carl L. Bausch, Bausch & Lomb Optical Co., and Attorney William F. Strang.

DAV Unit Pays Tribute to Commander Hard



—Democrat and Chronicle Staff Photo.

GUESTS FIRST—Mrs. David Thone pours tea for Francis R. Buono, DAV state commander, while husband, local senior vicecommander, waits turn. Occasion was unit's annual dinner.

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 in Casa Lorenzo'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. Buono 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 B. Wheeler of Utica, first junior vicecommander of the state DAV, and Milton D. Cohn, manager of the local veterans facility. Leo C. Viola was dinner chairman.

Main part of the evening was given over to "Junior Follies," a variety show staged by the membership.

D. & C. MAR 15 1953

President in Tribute To Comrade Hard; Final Rites Planned

Other stories, Pages 2B, 3B.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower yesterday paid tribute to the late Commander James A. Hard.

As the city prepared for full participation in paying honor 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, acting secretary to the President. Mayor Dicker had wired an invitation to attend the funeral tomorrow.

"The President has asked me to express to you the regret he feels at not being able to attend the funeral service of Commander James A. Hard," read the wire.

"The significance of Mr. Hard's passing is, of course, that with the marching of time a great and cherished tradition of our nation 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 Hard 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."

Under the general guidance of the veterans' committee, headed by Henry E. Norton of the Sons of Union Veterans, all veterans', military, religious and civic groups in the city worked all day yesterday arranging plans for tomorrow's ceremonies and procession.

Mayor Dicker yesterday issued a formal proclamation designating tomorrow as a day of commemoration for Commander Hard. It read:

"Whereas, Comrade James A. Hard, one of the two remaining Union Army veterans, passed away at Rochester, N. Y., Mar. 12, 1953, 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 Mar. 16, 1953, as a day of commemoration for James A. Hard and request that, as far as is possible, all official city business cease at 1 p. m. and all civic leaders and citizens are hereby called upon to pause in their usual occupations so that the people of the city may pay their last respects to this venerable Union soldier."

The City Council will meet at 1 p. m. tomorrow and the Board of Supervisors will meet at 12:15 p. m. to adopt resolutions on the death of Mr. Hard. Both groups then will proceed to the funeral service

The City Hall will be closed for the remainder of the afternoon, but the Courthouse will remain open.

Ceremonies tomorrow will open at 9 a. m., and until 10 a. m. school children will pass before the body of Commander Hard as it lies in state in the foyer of Masonic Auditorium. School standard bearers will form a guard of honor.

School principals will honor requests from parents to excuse their children from school to go to the auditorium. David W. Densmore, assistant superintendent of public schools, said. Parents wishing to take their children may do so, he said, through arrangements made with Chairman Norton.

The public viewing of the body will start at 10 a. m. and continue to 2 p. m. The adult public has been asked not to appear at the auditorium before 10 a. m. For the funeral services at 3 p. m., the casket will be moved to the stage of the auditorium. Officiating will be the Rev. George E. Ulp and the Rev. William A. Hallock. The Rev. Mr. Hallock will give the GAR burial ritual developed on the Civil War battlefields, in accordance with a wish expressed by the dead veteran.

The line of march and location of organizations and individuals for the funeral procession to Mt. Hope Cemetery was formulated yesterday. At the cemetery Masonic services will be held. Sounding taps will be a brass quartet of the 54th Regiment Band, led by Floyd C. King. Members of the quartet will be Howard W. Sickler, Howard E. Geyer, Joseph A. O'Connor and Robert H. Wrassman.

HARD—In his 112th year, on Thursday, Mar. 12, 1953, James A. Hard of 31 Portsmouth Ter. He is survived by three grandchildren, Mrs. Carl Eksten Sr., Mrs. Royce Nelan of Victor, N. Y., and Earl H. Osborne of Buffalo, N. Y.; eight great-grandchildren and 12 great-great-grandchildren.

Close personal friends of Mr. Hard and of his family may call at the Ralph D. Scobell Funeral Home, 642 Main St. E., through Sunday. The body will lie in state in the foyer of the Masonic Auditorium Monday from 10 a. m. to 2 p. m. where the general public may pay its respects. The public is invited to attend the funeral service which will be held in the Auditorium Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock, followed by burial in Mt. Hope Cemetery, in lieu of flowers, those wishing may contribute to the Muscular Dystrophy Research Fund in Mr. Hard's memory.

Hard Funeral Today; Dewey to Miss Rites

Gov. Thomas E. Dewey yesterday expressed regret over his inability to attend today's funeral of James A. Hard, oldest Union veteran of the Civil War who died Thursday.

The Governor designated Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doud, commandant of the 105th AAA Brigade, New York National Guard, as his personal representative. Press of business, Dewey said, will prevent him from attending the rites in person.

Dewey's secretary, H. Burdell Bixby, 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 services . . . Because of the pressure of the legislative session he will be unable to do so and has designated Brig. Gen. Alfred H. Doud . . . 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' excuse 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. Ulp and the Rev. William A. Hallock officiating.

The funeral cortege will move about 3:45 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 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.

3-16-53

Rochester, N. Y., Monday Evening, March 16, 1953



LAST REVIEW—School children, among his most faithful admirers, file past James A. Hard's bier as he lies in state.

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 guard.

FAREWELLS of thousands of persons were to come later in the day as the funeral cortege of the nation's oldest Civil War veteran rolled slowly through downtown streets—following a parade route on which Mr. Hard had been cheered many times in his long life.

At the Auditorium, the bier was draped with the flag of the United States and banked by multi-colored floral offerings. The flag of James A. Hard Post, Masonic War Veterans, stood in the center.

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 lilies, carnations, daffodils, gladioli, roses and geraniums, was to the left of the foyer.

FIRST to pay a final tribute to Mr. Hard were several thousand school children who were accorded the hour from 9 to 10 a. m. The pupils were excused from classes upon request of their parents.

Official representatives of the public schools were standard bearers and guardians of the flag. A color guard composed of high school students stood near the bier while classmates passed.

At 10 a. m. a color guard from

the Monroe County Council, Veterans of Foreign Wars, relieved the detail of pupils.

EACH HOUR, on the hour, the color guard was changed as follows: 11 a. m., New York National Guard; noon, New York Naval Militia; 1 p. m., Marine Corps Reserve; 2 p. m., American Legion.

Each of the military units relieved its own guard at regular intervals during the hour it was posted.

More than a score of policemen stood quietly about the Auditorium. The NYNG also posted uniformed men in the lobby and on the front steps.

THROUGHOUT the morning a steady procession filed past the bier. At noon the number of persons swelled, as workers and businessmen 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 111, were conducted at 3 p. m. on the stage of the auditorium.

The Rev. George E. Ulp, pastor of Brighton Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. William A. Hallock officiated.

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.

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 parades, and nearly always reached for it when posing for photographers.

(Cont. opp. pg.)

(Continuation preceding pp.)

The Board of Supervisors of Monroe County and the City Council met earlier in the day to adopt resolutions on the death of Mr. Hard. Both groups proceeded to the funeral service following the meetings.

THE FUNERAL CORTEGE began about 3:30, carrying Mr. Hard to his final resting place in Mt. Hope Cemetery.

The procession moved westward

in Main St. to Plymouth Ave. S., to Broad St., passing before City Hall in the manner of Memorial Day parades, for which Mr. Hard 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 grave of the old warrior by a brass quartet of the 54th Regiment Band.

The state and nation's chief executives sent regrets yesterday at 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 Bixby, in a telegram to Mayor Dicker, stated:

"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 services . . . Because of the pressure of the Legislative session he will be unable to do so . . ."

President Eisenhower's message was sent by his acting secretary, Thomas E. Stevens. The wire read:

"The President has asked me to express to you the regret he feels at not being able to attend the funeral service of Commander James A. Hard."

"The significance of Mr. Hard's passing is, of course, that with the marching of time a great and cherished tradition of our nation 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 Hard 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. Hard as "a national symbol of the cause for which he and his comrades so valiantly fought," and proclaimed today as a day of commemoration for Mr. Hard.

City Hall was closed at 1 p. m. in respect to the memory of Mr. Hard. 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.)

Soldier Hard Lies At Rest

The body of James A. Hard lay today beneath the soil of the country he loved well and for which he fought nearly a century ago.

The old soldier is gone but he will long be remembered.

He will be eulogized by the many who saw in him a cherished symbol of patriotism, studied as a part of history by the young of generations to come and respected in memoriam by those who called him comrade.

HE WAS LAID in his final resting place yesterday, bringing to an end a 111-year page in history. But before he was lowered into the ground in Mt. Hope Cemetery, he was accorded the full tribute he deserved.

. . . the tolling of the City Hall bell 13 times . . . the volley of the firing squad . . . the singing of his favorite hymns . . . the playing of taps.

The homage of thousands was paid as the body of the old warrior lay in state for six hours yesterday in Masonic Auditorium.

At 3 p. m. before a silent assemblage that nearly filled the Auditorium, the GAR burial service was performed as Mr. Hard had requested. Over theasket, placed on the stage for the rites, the Rev. William A. Hallock recited 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. . ."

THE GAR RITE, developed on the Civil War battlefield, was conducted by the Sons of Union Veterans. Participating were Past Department Commander Fred E. Colwell, Walter S. Bielby, senior vice-commander; Harold T. Bielby, junior vice-commander; Robert McMahon, department commander, and the Rev. Mr. Hallock, department chaplain.

The SUV comrades placed a rose, an evergreen wreath, a sprig of laurel and a flag on the casket.

The 23rd and 121st Psalms, passages of scripture and poems were read by the Rev. George E. Ulp, pastor of Brighton Presbyterian Church. "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground" were sung by all attending.

THE FUNERAL CORTEGE moved down Main St. past City Hall and to the grave.

And the many who had cheered and waved to him in parades of years past, removed their hats and bowed their heads.

At the cemetery over an open grave alongside that of Mr. Hard's second wife, Anna, who died in 1929 at the age of 78, the Rev. Mr. Ulp read the burial service, to which Mr. Hard belonged, participated.

And, then, the old soldier was lowered into the ground.

Hard Editorials Go into 'Record'

Washington —(GNS)— Editorials from both Rochester Gannett newspapers on the death of James A. Hard, oldest Civil War veteran, were placed in the Congressional Record yesterday by Rep. Kenneth B. Keating (R., N. Y.) of Rochester.

In inserting them in the appendix, Keating commented: "He lived his life to the full and by his unfailing patriotism and unflinching concern for the best interests of his community and nation, furnished an inspiration to thousands of younger men and women through several generations."

James A. Hard

JULY 15, 1841—MARCH 12, 1953

By Sup. Nolan— Intro. No. 30

RESOLUTION NO. 48 OF 1953

Expressing Regret of the Board of Supervisors in the Passing of James A. Hard, Civil War Veteran.

Mr. Chairman:

As the evening of Thursday, March 12, 1953, was drawing to a close, death was the victor over a courageous battle which ended the one hundred and eleven years of a remarkable life of the nation's most distinguished Veteran of the Civil War.

Mr. Hard had the distinction of being the last New York State Commander of the once proud and mighty Grand Army of the Republic. In his youth Mr. Hard enlisted at the age of nineteen, in Company F, 37th New York Volunteer Infantry by answering an immediate call for volunteers by Abraham Lincoln in 1861 and participated in some of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War at Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, South Mountain and the slaughter of Antietam.

Mr. Hard was honorably discharged from the Army on June 29, 1863, and continued in the service of his Country in the Civil Construction Department, where he was under the direct jurisdiction of General Ulysses S. Grant, Commander of the Federal Forces.

During his lifetime, Mr. Hard had patriotic devotion to the annual Memorial Day observances and acted as Marshal of the parades on this historical day, paying tribute to those veterans having served our Country.

Now, therefore, to record 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 we, in respect for his memory, attend the funeral service to be conducted for him; and be it

Further Resolved, That the Clerk of this Board is instructed to forward a copy of this Resolution to the bereaved family, and set aside a page in the minutes of the Board for this memorial.

This Memorial Resolution was unanimously adopted, each Supervisor voting in his place.

George A. Lawrence	Bonnie K. Jackus	William E. Frank
Val H. Rauber	Frank M. Hemmerich	William T. Nolan
Sam Piazza	Alvin Grossman	Raymond J. Lee
Frank J. Lawrence	Burton H. Carter	Culston H. Taitzian

Special Memorial Committee.

Supervisors

Arthur Lochte	James G. D'Amico	Almon C. Kramer
Ralph Anneschino	Al B. Frank	Walter G. Lauterbach
Leo T. Minton	Norman H. Selke	Harland P. Moffitt
Robert Averill	Gordon Duerr	Kenneth S. Barclay
Charles DeCarlo	Sydney E. Haywood	Herman G. Worden
William J. Beckler	Leonard A. Boniface	Hamilton C. King
John P. DeCesare	Thomas B. Steckel	Edward D. Seward
Joseph Kaufman	Charles M. Jones	Harold H. Embling
Daniel E. Macken	Elbert D. Finch	Raymond Goff
Theodore F. Metzger	Gordon A. Rowe	Harold W. Nelson
		Arthur M. Torpey

D. & C. MAR 19 1953

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.

—Democrat and Chronicle Staff Photos



—Democrat and Chronicle Staff Photo.

"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. Mallory Loos and Joseph Donovan, Veterans of Foreign Wars; Allen M. Church and Robert McIntosh, Army and Navy Union; Samuel DeNaro and Gerard Beauchamp, Catholic War Veterans; Sol Guttenberg 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 softened their voices as they waited, and fell silent as the old soldier passed.

George A. Swalbach of 586 Flower City Pk. stood far from the crowd but perhaps a few steps closer than the rest to the man he came to honor. He was, hat in hand, in the exact spot, across Broad St. from City Hall, from where Comrade Hard reviewed Memorial Day parades for the many years he was honorary grand marshal.

"I knew the old vet," Swalbach, 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 this man who stood for something."

Did he pick his vantage point on purpose? "Why no," he said, surprised. "I just happened to land here. —But it's a good spot to remember Jim."

City's Main St. Hushed As Hard Cortège 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 warrior'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 shirt-sleeves 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 command, those along the route yesterday saluted almost to a man as the flag passed. And no man's head remained covered as the earthly remains of James A. Hard passed, en route to final rest.

It was an unemotional crowd that lined Main St. almost solidly from East Ave. to Plymouth Ave. As the City Hall bell tolled solemnly, the people stood patiently 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 deepfelt gratitude 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 releasing of Guardsmen from their employment for any formation of this kind represents a dislocation 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 an old soldier the industries of Rochester released Guardsmen from their regular duties in un-

precedented 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
105th AAA Brigade.

Thanks for Aid

As chairman of the James A. Hard Funeral Committee, I wish to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks for the cooperation extended in making the necessary arrangements.

I realize that without the aid of the press and radio it would have been an impossibility to reach the number of organizations necessary to make the funeral of our Grand Comrade a successful event.

HENRY E. NORTON,
General Chairman.

Victor, Not Victory

In our house we are in a quandary over the birthplace of Comrade James Hard.

The morning paper said on Mar. 13 (Page 21) that he was born in Victory which is in Cayuga County. The Times-Union on the same day (Page 35) said he was born in Victor. The latter, as you know, is in Ontario County.

BEN AMES

THE TIMES-UNION MAR 26 1953

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Hard was born in Victor, says his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl E. Eksten Sr., of Henrietta, who has been closely associated with her grandfather for many years. Mrs. Eksten says the reference to Victory, Cayuga County, has cropped up before.

City Pays Last Honors In Hard Funeral Rite

By BILL BEENEY

Other Stories, Picture Page 18

3-17-53

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 its 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 grizzled 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 banked high with flowers, 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 oldsters.

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 headgear as a memento of their famous kinsman.

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. Hallock, SUV Department Chaplain; Walter S. Bielby, senior vicecommander; Harold T. Bielby, junior vicecommander, and Robert McMahon, Department Commander.

From the old GAR ritual, the Rev. Mr. Hallock 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 Thine own tenderness, console and comfort those bereaved by this event which calls us here. 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 these 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, dangers were encountered by our dead heroes—a spirit uncomplaining, nobly, manfully obedient to the best of duty, whereby today our homes are secure, and our loved ones rest in peace under the aegis of the flag—will prove a glorious incentive to the youth who, in the ages to come, may be called to uphold the destinies of our country. ..."

Then three SUV comrades placed final floral tributes upon the casket ... an evergreen wreath, "symbol of undying 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, honoray bearers, and representatives of various veterans' organizations.

At the close of the service, before the procession moved out for the



LAST RIDE—Thousands line procession route along Main St. E. to say goodbye to Mr. Hard, who for many years led Memorial Day parades over route. Flag at right flies half staff.

funeral cortege'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 Tenting 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 tramp of marching feet, the City Hall bell tolled 13 times. It was the first time that the bell—which is sounded upon the death of a Civil War veteran—had been tolled since V-J Day. It was the last time it will ever be heard for a Rochester Civil War soldier.

The funeral cortege was made up of uniformed National Guardsmen, a color guard from the Masonic War Veterans, James A. Hard Post; 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 sessions 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 78, 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 gloaming, the old soldier was ready to embark upon a new journey, and join his Civil War comrades of nearly a century ago.

As Others See It

CONFIDENT LIVING

TIMES UNION JUL 11 1953

Secret of James Hard's Long Life: Healthy Thinking and Feeling

By NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

One of the last of our Civil War veterans did not too 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 beat 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 bad comes 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,

James A. Hard was the nation's oldest Civil War veteran when he died last Mar. 12 at the age of 111. He was the state's last GAR veteran and the nation's second last. He had been active until a few months before his death in General Hospital following a leg amputation, necessitated by a circulatory ailment. He had attended GAR conventions regularly until the organization disbanded in 1949.



Dr. Peale

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, writes 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 & C. MAR 22 1953 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 Caesar of 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 so 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 courtly age. The scene was a fitting climactic to that great battle fought on the fields of cloth of gold. Our Civil War—to many still the Great Rebellion—brought out the deepest and the finest feelings because, perhaps, the rival knights were brothers.

It was a great and noble tournament in which America found her soul as she bled 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. That dream, in 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 to give a subject race within our midst an equal chance. No other nation in all history can show such magnificent self-sacrifice and such magnanimous 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 here back to the benighted lands whence all our Pilgrim forebears came. The clock of history has swung full circle, and our new world—now at the apex of its power—has come time and again to rescue and redress the balance of the old.

Vets Post Named for Hard D. & C. JUL 16 1953 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 McKee, post chaplain, recited the memorial prayer. The eulogy was given by Past Commander Lance Thomson, 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

Today we are beset by an old tyranny in modern dress—as cold, as cruel, as tragic—as any we have ever fought. The State, this tyranny maintains, exists upon the submission of the governed, and they exist for the exaltation of the State. Kings, Czars, Emperors, and Tyrants have always claimed the same. The roles, the personages, the words may vary, but the basic system of repression never sees a change. In all their twisted systems the democracy of Jefferson is treason, and the Love of Christ is sin. They have their own queer concepts of humanity—and for long periods of time they may succeed in keeping that humanity in chains. But always in the end a white knight comes to vanquish the black warrior and rescue man again.

This conflict is forever irrepressible, for black and white protagonists never can make a common cause together. And always the white knight prevails.

The keynote to the Civil War was Lincoln's sagacious observation: This Nation cannot survive half slave and half free.

Neither can the World.

Such are some small reflections upon the meaning of the passing of Commander James A. Hard. These dead shall not have died in vain.

DENNIS J. LIVADAS,
445 Powers Building.

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 leg muscles.

Veterans List Honor

For James A. Hard
D. & C. JUL 15 1953
The man for whom their post is named will be memorialized in a service by his grave in Mt. Hope Cemetery at 7 p. m. today by James A. Hard Post 18, Masonic War Veterans. An honor guard from the 101st Armored Cavalry and a bugler from the Rochester Park Band also will participate. Hard, next to the last of the veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic, died in March at the age of 111.

TIMES UNION JUL 16 1953



IN A SOLDIER'S MEMORY—Jimmie, 5, takes first steps in chrome "walker" presented to Cerebral Palsy Association in memory of Commander James A. Hard. Presentation was made yesterday, anniversary of Mr. Hard's birth, by his granddaughter, Mrs. Carl Eksten (left) and her granddaughter, Julie, 9. Money was donated last Memorial Day by veterans and other organizations in tribute to Mr. Hard, who died last Spring at 111.

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 McKee, post chaplain, and a eulogy was given by Lance Thomson, past post commander. Taps

were sounded by Clarence Pfeifer, bugler in the Rochester Park Band.

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.

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. Lola Eksten of Henrietta, wrote to Woolson. The Minnesota veteran replied in his own handwriting.

D & C JAN 14 1955

Anxious to carry on the tradition of correspondence, Mrs. Eksten 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.

Memorial Rites JUL 16 1958 For James Hard

The fifth annual memorial service for James A. Hard, Civil War veteran and onetime 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 1949, before Mr. Hard's death. A great-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.



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.

D & C JUL 16 1956

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. E 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 114th 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 tents of Daughters of Union Veterans. The ceremony at 2 p.m. will be in Mt. Hope Cemetery, with the family of the war veterans attending.

Prayers were read by Elbert J. Seigfried, Masonic Post chaplain, and the wreath was laid by Frank Murren, post adjutant. Among those present were Mrs. Lola Eksten of 166 Reeves Rd., Henrietta, a granddaughter, and James Eksten of 200 Reeves Rd., Henrietta, a great-grandson. Several great-great-grandchildren also were 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.

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 tents of Daughters of Union Veterans. The ceremony at 2 p.m. will be in Mt. Hope Cemetery, with the family of the war veterans attending.

D & C JUL 14 1956

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 19, 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 REINLISTED 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.

Mr. Genung writes **HOW IT LOOKS IN FREEVILLE** each Saturday from his farm in Freeville, Tompkins County. He is economist for the Northeast Farm Foundation.

