



# The Sharpshooter

“Preserving the Heritage of the Illinois National Guard”

The Newsletter of the Illinois State Military Museum

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## Museum Update

By Mark K. Whitlock

The museum staff is preparing for the next exhibit, which is titled *Illinois Citizen-Soldier: A Look Through Time*. This exhibit will feature major themes from our state’s military history. It will begin with the Early Militia and continue through Desert Storm. Several famous Illinois military figures will be featured. In addition, we will focus on the National Guard’s mission to provide aid to Civil Authorities in times of conflict. The exhibit will open the first of May and will be available for loan to other museums and armories next May.

If you haven’t seen the new M-60A3 Tank that we received from the Tank, Automotive and Armament Command, please stop by the museum and check it out. Special thanks to CW4 Don Lowe, the CSMS and the 3637th Maintenance Company for their help in painting and positioning the Tank for display in front of the current museum.

The museum is working with Facilities to upgrade the existing vault in the “Castle”(the Museum’s future location). It will feature mobile aisle shelving with built-in weapons racks. The project will also include a new alarm system.

You can support the museum by joining the Illinois National Guard and Militia Historical Society. The Society provides the museum with part-time Museum Assistants who help with museum operations, artifact cataloging, exhibit development and research. The Society also manages a gift shop within the museum. You may join by calling 217-761-3975 or by writing to the **Illinois National Guard and Militia His-**

## Artifact Highlight

By Mark K. Whitlock

This silver sculpture, entitled “Buffalo Hunt,” was originally created by Theodore Bauer for exhibition at America’s Centennial Fair in Philadelphia. In



**Washburn Trophy**

1887, a copy of the original was presented by Senator W.D. Washburn of Minnesota to the Northwestern Military Rifle Association as an award for annual state rifle team shooting competitions. Of the competing states—Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin—Illinois was the first to win the title three times (1891, 1892, and 1903) and thus became the permanent owner of the trophy. It is currently on display on the second floor of the Headquarters building. A similar reproduction of the original sculpture is on exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution in

## Illinois Cavalry Officer Fires First Shot at Gettysburg

By Lieutenant Colonel Mark DePue

July 1st, 1863 was a momentous day for the Illinois volunteer regiments raised during the Civil War. Fully 32 of these regiments, more than those of any other state, were with Ulysses S. Grant as he tightened the noose around the strategic river town of Vicksburg, Mississippi. Colonel Benjamin Grierson of Jacksonville, Illinois, and his Illinois cavalry brigade had just completed the most famous Union cavalry raid of the Civil War. Grierson’s force sliced through the heart of Mississippi during April and May, with Confederate forces hard on its heels. His diversionary raid opened the back door to Vicksburg for Grant’s hard marching infantry. As a result, the beleaguered Confederate garrison surrendered three days later, on the Nation’s birthday.

One thousand miles to the east, 1st Lt Marcellus E. Jones of the 8th Illinois Cavalry was leading a small reconnaissance patrol just west of the small crossroads town of Gettysburg, nestled in the rolling hills of south central Pennsylvania. The 8th Illinois Cavalry had been organized at St. Charles, Illinois three years prior. These were citizen soldiers of the truest sense; farm hands, shop keepers, and adventurous spirits from all across north central Illinois who had answered the call to

## Future Articles

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*Spring 1999*

## Illinois Cavalry Officer Fires First Shot at Gettysburg

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arms. By 1863, they were seasoned veterans, fresh from their victory over the dashing Confederate cavalry officer, Jeb Stuart, at Brandy Station, Virginia.

On June 26th, a Confederate force commanded by General Jubal Early passed through Gettysburg in search of food, shoes, and other supplies before moving on to Wrightville, 20 miles further east. The Confederate foray raised the ire of the local inhabitants, but no Union regulars were anywhere near

the town. However, by June 30th, Brigadier General John Buford's Union cavalry descended on Gettysburg in force. Buford's horsemen beat a Confederate infantry brigade into Gettysburg by minutes. The Confederates, looking only for supplies and not a fight, withdrew quickly. Buford's keen eye analyzed the terrain, then he settled his troopers into position and threw out a cavalry screen, to include First Lieutenant Jones and a small party of vedettes (mounted sentinels). Fully expecting a fight, Jones posted his patrol adjacent to the Chambersburg Pike approximately three miles west of Gettysburg, with orders to watch for any enemy movement. With the Union army in position, the stage was now set for a battle.

First light on July 1st found Lt Jones straining to see through a light morning drizzle, while fog clung stubbornly in the low ground to his front. Suddenly, one of Jones' troopers spotted movement on the Chambersburg Pike. Confederate foragers appeared first, then mounted soldiers emerged out of the early morning mist. Behind them, a Confederate infantry column was marching toward a nearby stone bridge.

These foragers, mounted soldiers and infantry were the lead elements of Confederate Major General Henry Heth's 2d Division, part of A.P. Hill's III Corps. They were merely the first element of the entire Army of Northern Virginia, more than 70,000 strong, that would descend on Gettysburg over the next two days. As much by chance as by design, Confederate General Robert E. Lee had chosen Gettysburg for his army's next test of arms.

When the Confederates were within 700 feet, Jones borrowed his sergeant's carbine, took aim at the horsemen, and pulled the trigger. No Confederate blood was drawn, but the shot caused the col-

umn to stop and deploy skirmishers. Their duty performed, Lt Jones and his small patrol withdrew, eventually to fall in with the main body of the 8th Cavalry, part of a thin line formed by Buford's cavalry. Their mission now was to fight dismounted and block the Confederate's entry into Gettysburg.

Prior to July 1st, 1863, Gettysburg had been just a small farm community like thousands of others in the United States. Three days later, the battle was over,

*"citizen-soldiers of the truest sense...  
...adventurous spirits from all across north central Illinois who had answered the call to arms"*

## Famous Guardsman

By MAJ James McCabe

At the onset of World War One, Marshall Field, a 24 year old investment banker, was heir to the department store bearing his name. At Field's request, Colonel Milton J. Foreman, commander of the 1st Illinois Cavalry and a family friend, swore him in as a private. When the Illinois National Guard was activated for World War One, the 1st Cavalry became the 122d Field Artillery. By December 1918, Field was promoted to Captain and had seen action in the battles of St. Mihiel and the Argonne Forrest. According to Colonel Forman, Field "performed his duties with great distinction and gallantry." After the war he returned to banking and founded the *Chicago Sun* newspaper.

## Museum Staff

Director: COL (Ret) Wm. "Dutch" Holland  
Curator: CPT Mark K. Whitlock  
Assistants: Noel Clevenger, Scott Metzke,  
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## Museum Information

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The museum is located in Building 41 on the grounds of Camp Lincoln at the corner of North Grand Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard.