

Hartranft Herald

The Newsletter of

Maj. Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

www.SuvcwHarrisburgPa.org

Celebrating our **144th** Year serving Harrisburg Area

@ Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



Vol 28 No. 04

April

2026



Come to our general meetings and view central Pennsylvania from high atop Reservoir Park!

A newsletter for, about, and by the members of Camp 15!

2026 Hartranft Camp 15 Officers and your Staff	Commander ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Senior Vice Commander ~ ~ ~ Junior Vice Commander ~ ~ ~ Secretary ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Treasurer ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Council 01 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Council 02 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Council 03 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Patriotic Instructor ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Chaplain ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Graves Registration ~ ~ ~ ~ GAR Historian ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Counselor ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Eagle Scout Coordinator ~ ~ ~ GAR Highway Officer ~ ~ ~ Guide ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Color Bearer ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Guard ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Webmaster ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ROTC Coordinator ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Camp Historian ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Longevity Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ Praiseworthy Brother ~ ~ ~ ~ ~	Kyle Purchase 2025-2026 Logan Swanger PCC 2021-2026 Scott Debo, PCC 2021-2026 Wayne Blattner, PCC 2025-2026 David W. Demmy, Sr. PCC 2007-2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2023-2026 Charles Brackbill Jr 2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2026 Logan Swanger 2014-2026 Jeffery Smith, PCC 2018-2026 Charles Brackbill Jr 2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2025-2026 Gregory E. Kline, PDC 2008-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2021-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2021-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2022-2026 Dave W. Demmy, Jr. 2011-2026 Gregory E. Kline, PDC 2011-2026 Wayne Blattner PCC 2020 - 2026 Late Dave J. Klinepeter PCC 1943-2023 Late Floyd J. Demmy WWII Veteran Late Joseph E. Long, Jr., PDC, Veteran Late Lee F. Walters, PDC, Past Exec Dir.
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Camp 15 routinely meets at the National Civil War Museum, at Reservoir Park, Harrisburg, PA, 2 pm, 3rd Sunday of most months. PA Dept: www.PASUVCW.org National: <http://www.suvcw.org/>

In accordance with General Order #7, March 7, 2022: "Individuals attending events hosted by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, by virtue of their attendance, agree to the usage of their likeness in the *Banner*, any Camp or Department Newsletter, any SUVCW website and/or on any SUVCW Social Media outlet, promotional brochures, or any other SUVCW material."

Membership in our Order does not require a civil war ancestor nor is our Order a reenacting group!

April 2026 *Hartranft Herald* Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Award winning newsletter -- Marshall A. Hope Award presented to Hartranft Camp 2010-2011
Award winning website -- Horace Greeley Award presented to Hartranft Camp 2020-2022
SUVCW Legal heir of and representing the Grand Army of the Republic

Brothers, our April camp meeting is scheduled for Sunday April 19, 2026 2pm Reservoir Park within the National Civil War Museum building upper level.

Brothers and Sisters in distress

Sister Helen Shireman, great granddaughter to our camp namesake, Maj Gen John F Hartranft, is recovering from an ailment; likewise, Bill Jackson, founder of the Central Penn World War II roundtable is recuperating.

This current list includes prayers for Brother David Demmy Sr. as he struggles with some health issues; Camp counselor Chuck Brackbill Jr, ailments; Brother Scott Debo's family, and Ann Ribblett, wife of Camp #15 member Terry Bibblett. Sister Ann McMillin recovering from recent surgery. And, Annette Keener-Farley. Please keep all these Brothers and Sisters and their families in your prayers.

Camp 15 Dues Collection for year 2026

Hooray Brothers, we have a 100% re-enlistment of our 33 brothers. Thanx to brother Wayne for issuing invoices to last minute brothers! Membership cards were prepared and handed out or mailed to each brother.

Minutes of March Camp Meeting

Minutes of March 15th, 2026 Camp #15 Meeting

We met at the National Civil War Museum, upper level, Harrisburg, PA., Sunday March 15th, 2026. The weather was damp, cloudy, and 40 degrees.

Camp #15 Commander, Brother Kyle Purchase was preparing to open the meeting according to the SUCVW Ritual; but he could not do that because there were not enough Brother's on hand for a quorum. According to our camp bylaws, we need at least 5 brothers to be present. An informal meeting started at 2:06 P.M.

The following Brothers were present:

1. Kyle Purchase – Camp Commander

2. Logan Swanger – Senior Vice Commander
3. Wayne Blattner – Secretary and Council
4. David Demmy Sr. – Treasurer

Camp Meeting notes.

The last "official" Camp #15 Minutes from February 2025 were published in the March 2025 Hartranft Herald. Hopefully at the April meeting they will be reviewed and approved, along with the informal notes taken today.

Treasurer's Report:

Brother David Demmy Sr., shared with the Camp that there is about \$1900 in the checking account. Also, Brother David reported that about One to two percent of our Brothers have not paid their dues for 2026. In response to this statement, Brother Wayne will **again** send e-mail notices, and a SASE, to these tardy Brothers. We are looking for 100% retention, meaning **all** Brothers paying their dues. Brother David also mentioned we sold a SUCVW License Plate. [post note, all 33 of us have renewed our membership for 2026].

Patriotic Instructor. Today Brother Jeff is absent. Commander Kyle spoke to the need for our Camp Brothers to submit information to our Patriotic Instructor Jeff Smith dealing with SUCVW Form #40. This Form #40 when completed reveals the hours spent for promoting our organization to keep our 501.3c nonprofit rating. For your activities, use **calendar year 2025**. Please fill out this form for your activities and forward it to Jeff. He will crunch all the hours and activities into one Form #40, then he will submit it to the PA Department SUCVW Patriotic Instructor. Thank you! Camp treasurer sent a blank form 40 to all personnel to complete it, save it and share/email copy with brother Jeff for consolidation.

The Report of a sick Brother or a Brother's family in distress:

Please keep the Larry Keener-Farley family in your prayers. Also Commander Kyle, who is recovering from a short hospital visit. At this time, there are no new additions to the list below. Brothers please refer to the latest *Hartranft Herald* for those who need our continuing prayers. The current list includes prayers for Brother David Demmy Sr. Brother Scott Debo's family, and Ann Ribblett, wife of Camp #15

member Terry Bibblett, and Brother Counselor Chuck Brackbill. Please keep all these Brothers and their families in your prayers.

Committee Reports:

None at this time.

Old Business:

None at this time.

Good of the Order:

Yesterday, camp Brother Wayne Motts did a great job on a presentation at the Civil War Museum on General George Sears Green. About 100 people attended!

At this event a moment of silence was held in memory of Brother PCC Larry Keener-Farley. Also there was ceremony outside of the Civil War Museum dedicating a new way-side marker. It deals with PA regiments in McClellan's Cavalry. Check it out. It's located at the front doors of the Museum.

Brother Logan shared with the group his long-time project dealing with researching of a cemetery in southern Union County, in the New Berlin area. He is covering both Civil War veterans, and Revolutionary War veterans! He is hoping in the future to formalize all his findings into a book(s).

Commander Kyle stated that registration for the Department Encampment in June is now open. Refer to the PA Department SUVCW web site for details. [samples shown later in this newsletter].

Old Business.

Soon Camp #15 will be preparing for Memorial Day events. On May 23, 2026 Brother Wayne will be at Montgomery Cemetery in Norristown, at the General John Hartranft grave site ceremony. Also on May 23, 2026, Commander Kyle will be with Camp #15 in Harrisburg. More details at our April and May Camp meetings.

Commander Kyle mentioned that on May 2nd, & May 3rd, 2026 at the Ashland cemetery in Carlisle, PA, there will be a headstone cleaning and care seminar. It is sponsored by The Pennsylvania Reserve Volunteer Corps Historical Society. The hours are 9 to 4 each day. Brother Kyle is thinking of attending. Check out their Facebook page for details. The cemetery is located at 1 Giant Lane, Carlisle PA 17013-2649

Adjournment of Camp #15 took place at approximately 2:45 P.M. And, then we were off to local restaurant for a relaxing dinner and more conversations.

Next meeting is **April 19th, 2026**, at 2:00 P.M., in Harrisburg, PA. We are scheduled to meet on the Upper Level of the Civil War Museum. Brothers please don't allow gasoline prices from not attending; perhaps you can carpool! Respectively submitted,

In F C & L, Wayne N. Blattner, Camp Secretary

Memorial Day Cemetery Action, by camp commander:

I recently got off the phone with Tom Corerau, director of VA for Dauphin County and he provided me with an update for Memorial Day flag planting at Harrisburg Cemetery.

He is the person of contact for the event this year and he is planning for multiple groups to attend and help out, and he has the flags for us to place at the graves. He said a group from PA250 and the Harrisburg HS NJROTC, as well as us, will help out with the flags. He also said he would send an email to the groups as it gets closer to confirm the day's events, and possibly local news outlets may be there to cover it.

However, the event is scheduled for **Saturday, May 16th at 9 am**. He explained the NJROTC and himself cannot be there on the 23rd. Therefore, Camp 15's Memorial Day event will be on the **16th this year, NOT the 23rd**. We will still have our breakfast at Peachtree Creek and our trip to Lincoln Cemetery afterwards. The only thing that changes is the day itself. Make sure you wear your Camp 15 polos! [and good walking shoes].

For future years, Mr. Coreau said to me the NJROTC would take over the cemetery for

planting flags and he believes they would have no issue with us collaborating with them on that, and given the SUVCW's connection to the Scouts and Cadets. The Lt. Commander of the NJROTC and Mr. Coreau will be there, so that can be an opportunity for more of us to meet them face-to-face.

I think this is a "win-win" for both groups going forward and should be a special Memorial Day this year, since it coincides with America250. He expressed his appreciation for us helping out.

See you all next Sunday! In F, C, & L,

Kyle G. Purchase, Commanding

Camp 15 on the Road for 2026

April camp meeting is scheduled for 19th.

May 16th Camp 15 annual breakfast at 7:00ish a.m. at PeachTree Restaurant, prior to attending Memorial Day tribute to veterans of historical Harrisburg Cemetery. Guests are welcome

May camp meeting is scheduled for Sunday 17th.

Memorial Day Monday May 25th.

June 25 thru 27 annual encampment of the **PA Department at Carlisle**. Carlisle is a mere 30-ish miles from the greater area served by camp 15. Enjoy fellowship, meals and voting on motions during the business meetings.

Veterans Day Free Day Saturday, November 7?, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, at the National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg. Brothers, please consider attending this weekend event to support Camp 15, and the PA Department too.

Be Proud - Wear the Badge



Come out to a meeting and engage with us!

- **The Allied Orders of the GAR:**
- -Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to GAR,
- -Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic,
- -Daughters of Union Veterans of Civil War,
- -Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and
- -The Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans Civil War.

Camp Officers & authors, the first Friday of each month is the Deadline for submission of stories, events, articles, and photos for *Hartranft Herald*.

Membership Bio Profiles will continue to appear as members submit them.

Complete an **e-worksheet**, please ask for one – send e-mail request to DoubleD@Demmy.cc

Bring a nephew, uncle, brother, father, grandfather, cousin, your neighbor and all your friends to a Camp meeting! Family and our sisters of the Allied Orders are always welcome!

Camp 15 Established February 11, 1882
in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty!

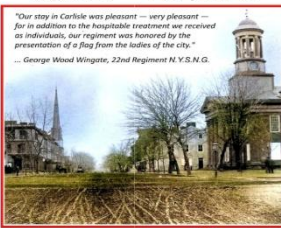
God bless you and yours and God bless the USA.

Pennsylvania Department Encampment

June 25th – 28th, 2026



FREE TOUR
1pm Thursday
Shelling of Carlisle
Guided Walk
Downtown
Battle of Carlisle



FREE TOUR
Thursday 10-5
Self Guided
Indoor & Outdoor
US Army Heritage
Education Center



Comfort Suites Carlisle, PA

10 SOUTH HANOVER STREET
CARLISLE, PA 17013

717-960-1000 Press 4 for the local desk

Reservations made under the name:
"Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War"

Regular Room Rates \$129

Direct Reservations Link

<https://www.choicehotels.com/reservations/groups/OV92U4>

Buffet Lunches Friday & Saturday \$25 ea

Saturday Night Banquet with Entertainment by Susquehanna Travelers \$35

Friday Evening Campfire Program Guest Speaker Doug Cubbison of the
US Army Heritage and Education Center

Subject: M.O.H. Winner, Capt William E Miller, Hero of Gettysburg

Full size items were emailed to all 4/4/26

January 2026

www.pasuvcw.org

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Department of Pennsylvania
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Annual Encampment

Camp No: _____ Date: _____

Brother: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I am a member in good standing in this camp
and my rank in the Order is:

____ CinC ____ PCinC ____ DC
____ PDC ____ CC ____ PCC

Attending as: ____ Delegate ____ Alternate

Pre-Registration fee is \$7.00 by 6/12/2026

\$10.00 at Encampment

Make check payable to: PA Dept., SUVCW

And send to: Secretary/Treasurer: Rob

Koenigsberg 504 Prospect St.

Portage, PA 15946

814-244-0899

rkoenigsberg3@gmail.com

CREDENTIAL CARDS

If your intention is to make either the Department Encampment in June 2026 or the National Encampment in July/August 2026, please make sure you obtain a signed card before making either event.

The Credential Card for the Department Encampment can be obtained from your Camp Secretary and must be filled out fully so that you have the right to participate during the business meetings and vote.

The Credential Card for the National Encampment must be filled out fully and signed by the Department Secretary before you are able to participate. So please contact your Camp Secretary or Camp Commander and he can obtain these for you from the Department.

The form for the Credential Card is located on the National web site under the forms tab. This is a printable form right off the site. The site is www.suvcw.org

Please make every effort to have these filled out correctly as it makes it easier for those who do the registration to help you.

Reminder

2026 Pennsylvania Department **Meals Order**
Form, Comfort Suites, Carlisle, PA June 26-27,
(Meal cost includes fees and gratuity)

Friday June 26 Lunch

Soup and Sandwich Buffet (12 PM) - Ham and Swiss on Brioche Roll Chicken Noodle Soup Salad with Ranch & Balsamic Dressings Kettle Cooked Chips, Assorted Cookies Regular and Decaf Coffee, Hot Tea and Unsweetened Iced Tea. \$25.00 each # attending _____

Saturday June 27 Lunch

Soup and Sandwich Buffet (12 PM): Turkey and Cheddar on Pretzel Roll Chicken Corn Chowder Salad with Ranch & Balsamic Dressings Kettle Cooked Chips, Assorted Cookies Regular and Decaf Coffee, Hot Tea and Unsweetened Iced Tea. \$25.00 each #attending -----

Saturday June 26 Evening Banquet

Buffet Dinner (7 PM) With Cash Bar Dinner Rolls, Green Salad with Ranch & Balsamic Dressing Two Entrees: Bourbon Bird Chicken Breast Top Round with Au Jus Two Sides: California Blend Red Skin Potatoes Water on Tables Regular and Decaf Coffee, Hot Tea and Unsweetened Iced Tea. \$35.00 each #attending

TOTAL \$ TOTAL ATTENDING _____
NAME

Reservation and Payment Due **NO LATER THAN 6/12/2026**

Make checks payable to: PASUVCW Mail check and order form to:

Ann McMillin, PDP
622 N Pitt St., Carlisle, PA 17013



Pennsylvania Department
Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic

2026 Encampment Program Book

Support the 2026 Pennsylvania Encampment/Convention by purchasing an AD in the Encampment Program Book. Proceeds from the Program Book help to cover operating costs and expenses related to the annual encampment/convention. Recognize and honor your camp or tent, Department or National Officers, Civil War Ancestor or fellow Allied Order members.

Recognize a Revolutionary War ancestor during the 250th celebration of the founding of our country!

Cost For Program Book AD

Full Page - \$65.00

Half Page - \$40.00

Quarter Page - \$30.00

To place an order, please send payment and artwork to:

Doug McMillin
622 N Pitt St
Carlisle, PA 17013

dpmcmillin@gmail.com

Checks Payable To: PA SUVCW

Deadline for submission is 5/11/2026

Please submit Program Book orders, with artwork, by email if possible, followed by a check in the mail. ADs will be produced in full color.

If you would like to use an AD from last year, please let us

know and we will be happy to accommodate.

April 2026 Hartranft Herald Camp 15 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Award Winning Newsletter - Marshall A. Hope Award presented to Hartranft Camp 2016-2021
Award winning website -- Horace Greeley Award presented to Hartranft Camp 2020-2022
SUVCW Local Units are affiliated with the Grand Army of the Republic

Off to the Races! The 1865 Pennsylvania Auditor General Election

By Kyle Grant Purchase, Commander, Hartranft Camp serving greater Harrisburg Area.

The October 1865 Pennsylvania Auditor General's race was a battle between two locals — Bucks County's William W. H. Davis and Montgomery County's John F. Hartranft.

Davis, Colonel of the 104th Pennsylvania, ran on the Democratic ticket for Auditor General, with Colonel John P. Linton of Cambria County, as his ticket mate, running for Surveyor General.

Hartranft, Colonel of the 51st Pennsylvania, ran on the Union (Republican) ticket for Auditor General, with Colonel Jacob M. Campbell (also of Cambria County) as his ticket mate, running for Surveyor General.

According to the Auditor General's website, the Auditor General:

“...is responsible for ensuring that the Commonwealth receives all moneys to which it is entitled, and that public money is spent legally and properly...adjusts claims against the Commonwealth, examines tax settlements made by the Revenue Department, and oversees the examination of practically every financial transaction involving the state.”

The Surveyor General was the precursor to the Secretary of Internal Affairs, a position that has not existed in the state government since the late 1960s. Nevertheless, the responsibility of the Surveyor General (or Internal Affairs Secretary) was to:

“...exercise all of the powers and perform all the duties of the Surveyor General, subject to such changes as shall be made by law. His department shall embrace a bureau of industrial statistics, and he shall discharge such duties relating to corporations, to the charitable institutions, the agricultural, manufacturing, mining, mineral, timber and other material or business interests of the State as may be prescribed by law. He shall manually, and at such other times as may be required by law, make report to the General Assembly.”

(The duties of the Surveyor General can be found within various state agencies today.)

Both men had accomplished careers in the war, with Davis being a local hero in Bucks County, a member of George G. Meade Post #1 of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), and serving as a pension agent for the federal government, while Hartranft was a recipient of the Medal of Honor, oversaw the imprisonment, trial and execution of the Lincoln co-conspirators, had prior experience in local affairs when he was a sheriff in Montgomery County, and was a member of Gen. Samuel K. Zook Post #11 of the G.A.R.

Their respective campaigns, however, wasted no time taking shots at one another in newspapers, in examples seen below:

☞ Davis and Linton are the Democratic candidates for Auditor General and Surveyor General, and the only State officers to be voted for this year. They are both honest and brave men, and are *white*. Neither of them was ever guilty of hanging a woman like the

From the *Luzerne Union*, October 4, 1865
(The 'woman' referenced here is Mary Surratt, the first woman executed by the U.S. government. Hartranft served as provost marshal of the conspirators and read their death warrants.)

Jeff. Davis and Booth, Lee and Wirz, were all Democrats, and would all vote the Democratic ticket in Pennsylvania, if they had votes here.

From *The Daily Evening Express*, October 5, 1865

SOLDIERS! do not forget that the party headed by Hartranft in this State openly proclaimed that negroes were better soldiers than white men were.

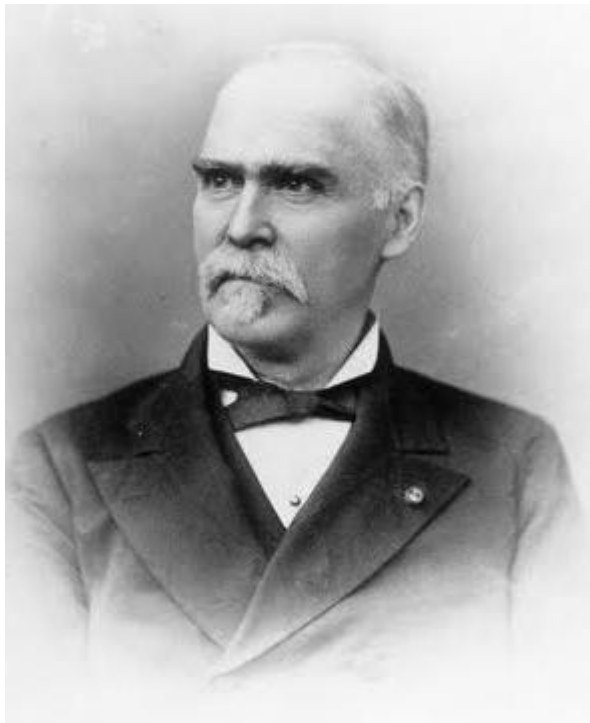
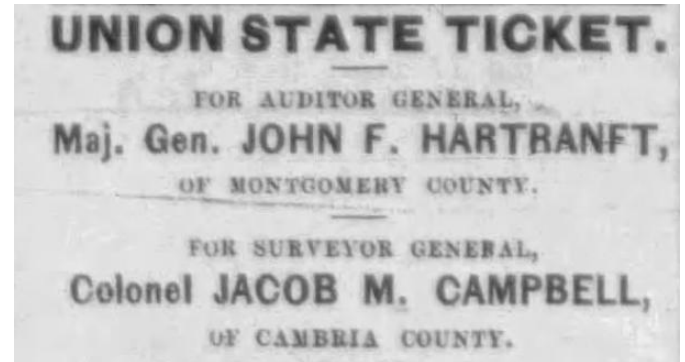
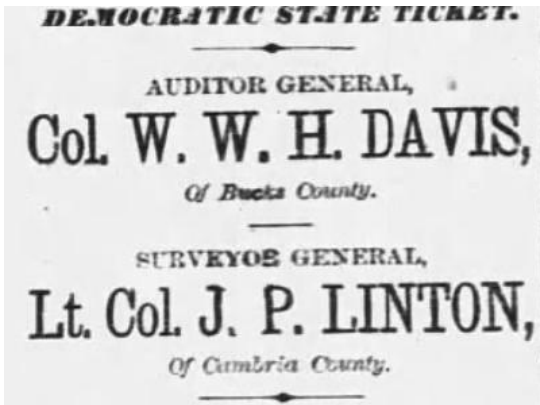
From *The Lancaster Daily Intelligencer*, October 6, 1865

Resolved, That in its nominees, Maj. Gen. John F. Hartranft and Col. Jacob M. Campbell, we recognize gentlemen of ability, integrity and patriotism, both as soldiers and civilians, eminently qualified for the duties of the offices for which they are to be chosen, and we hereby tender them an assurance of our earnest support.

From *The Pittsburgh-Post Gazette*, October 7, 1865
(Reporting on the Soldiers' State Convention that met in Harrisburg.)

The reading of the resolutions was interrupted by deafening applause, and when Gen. Owen moved their adoption, they were carried unanimously, amid the greatest enthusiasm of the delegates and spectators present.

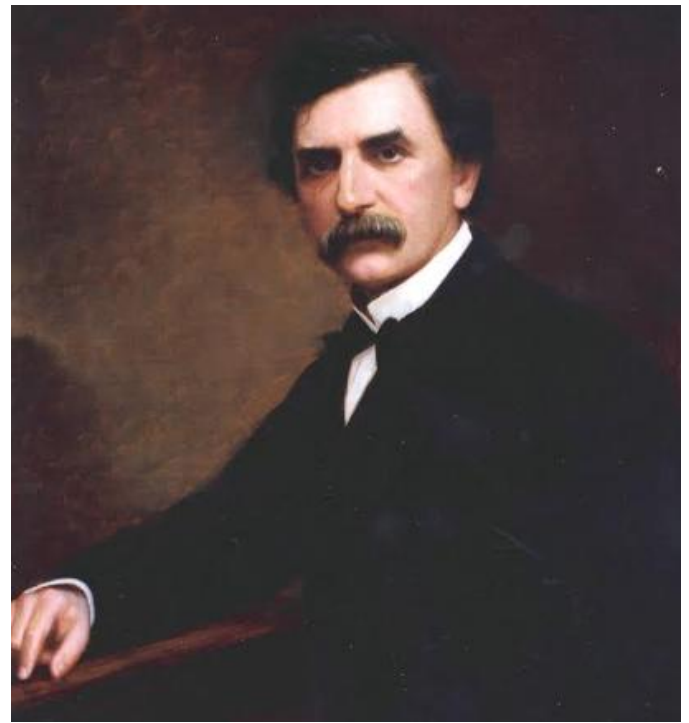
In the end — **THE FINAL VOTE TALLY:**



Davis – 215,740

Hartranft –
238,400

With a difference of 22,660 votes, Hartranft secured the victory! Despite the loss, Davis won his home county and *even took* Montgomery County from



Hartranft.

Davis would nevertheless leave his mark in Bucks County, founding the Bucks County Historical Society, writing numerous histories including the history of Bucks County, the Doylestown Guards and the Hart family, and being the editor of the *Doylestown Democrat*. He also served as U.S. Commissioner to the 1878 Paris Exposition. The Bucks County Civil War Round Table and Museum houses artifacts of the 104th Pennsylvania's reunions and autographs of Davis as well. Davis died on December 26, 1910, at the age of 90, and is laid to rest in Doylestown Cemetery in Doylestown.

The position of Auditor General certainly was not the final role of Hartranft's life and career. He would be elected as Governor of Pennsylvania, serving from 1873-1879 and as Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C) of the G.A.R. from 1875-1877. (At one point during his tenure as Governor, he appointed Bucks County native, George Lear, to serve as Attorney General of Pennsylvania, in which he served from December 7, 1875, to February 26, 1879). *It was during his tenure as G.A.R. C-in-C where the G.A.R. National Encampment would be held in Philadelphia, coinciding with the nation celebrating its' 100th birthday with the Centennial*

Exhibition. Hartranft would also have a significant role in reforming the Pennsylvania National Guard, an effort he would continue to participate in after his term as Governor. Hartranft died on October 17, 1889, at the age of 58, and is laid to rest in Montgomery Cemetery in Norristown. An equestrian statue in his honor is on the grounds of the Capitol Complex in Harrisburg, which was dedicated in May 1899 with veterans of the 51st Pennsylvania in attendance.

After his passing, Hartranft was the namesake of J. F. Hartranft Post #58, Pennsylvania Department, G.A.R. The G.A.R. established a rule that prohibited a post from naming a post after an individual who was alive. After Hartranft passed, members of Post #58 in Harrisburg requested to change their name in honor of Hartranft. Pennsylvania Department Commander Thomas J. Stewart of Norristown, and member of Zook Post #11, approved the name change. The post would exist until their last surviving member, Charles B. Rhoads, would pass away on October 23, 1940, at the age of 91. Rhoads is buried at Shoops Cemetery in Harrisburg.

Hartranft is the namesake of **Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp #15**, Pennsylvania Department, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, (SUVCW, an organization in which this writer is a proud member of, along with Baker-Fisher Camp #101). **Baker-Fisher Camp #101** of the SUVCW conducts Memorial Day services at Hartranft's gravesite which includes the laying of a wreath on behalf of Hartranft Camp #15, and the firing of volleys. Hartranft's ticket mate, Col. Jacob Campbell, is the namesake of another SUVCW Camp — **Col. Jacob M. Campbell Camp #14**, where they currently meet in Campbell's native Cambria County.

Sources:

Gambone, A.M. *Major-General John Frederick Hartranft: Citizen Soldier and Pennsylvania Statesman* (1995)

Newspapers.com

Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General. "History." <https://www.paauditor.gov/about-the-department/history/>

End