

## INTRODUCTION

The Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States was organized to date from April 15, 1865 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The organization was a hereditary membership copied from a similar feature of the Society of Cincinnati. In 1899 there were over 8,000 veteran members and other members who were sons and grandsons, with the following membership: Pennsylvania, 1,175; New York 1,296; Maine 163; Massachusetts 929; California 714; Wisconsin 222; Illinois 663; District of Columbia 747; Ohio 856; Michigan 310; Minnesota 313; Oregon 70; Missouri 305; Nebraska 117; Kansas 216; Iowa 255; Colorado 237; Indiana 308; Washington 71; Vermont 105.

In 1885 the Organization elected a Commander-in-Chief and other national officers. Gen. W. S. Hancock served until his death, Phil Sheridan until 1889, Gen. R. B. Hays until 1892, Gen. Lucius Fairchild until 1895, John Gibbon until his death in 1896, Gen. Bancroft Gherardi until 1899 and John Schofield until his death in 1906.

Col. John P. Nicholson was the Recorder-in-Chief from 1885 until his death. Col. Nicholson perhaps did more than anyone else to promote the Organization. His superb collection of books on the war are now at the Huntington Library at San Marino, California.

At the various meetings of each State Commandery, "papers" as they were called, were read by members. These "papers" were histories of campaigns, of battles and of isolated events of the war. The papers of all the Commanderies when assembled form a library of War Literature unequaled in accuracy and interest. These volumes were published under the direction of screening and

editing committees. There may be prejudice in these "papers" but there are very few inaccuracies. All of the State Commanderies started compiling and publishing volumes at about the same time; some in pamphlets and others in full bound volumes. They were: California 23 papers; District of Columbia 88 papers; Illinois 4 volumes; Indiana 1 volume; Iowa 2 volumes; Kansas 28 papers and 1 volume; Maine 4 volumes; Massachusetts 2 volumes; Michigan 2 volumes; Minnesota 6 volumes; Missouri 1 volume; Nebraska 1 volume; New York 4 volumes; Ohio 6 volumes and papers to make up 2 more volumes; Pennsylvania a very few papers dealing mostly with Lincoln; Wisconsin 4 volumes.

The last volume that I know of was published in 1914 by Wisconsin and by then the old officers' ranks were so thinned that new material to warrant publication was not available.

The Military Historical Society of Massachusetts published between 1881 and 1918, 14 superb volumes on all facets of war, foreign as well as our own wars.

All of the foregoing volumes and papers of these organizations are rare and expensive, and Morningside has undertaken the task of bringing you the choice papers of America's favorite battle.

Bob Younger  
Morningside, 1978

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