



Camp Douglas News

Committed to the Preservation of Chicago History



Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation

Chicago, Illinois

Winter 2017

Volume 8, Issue 4

Project Phases:

Awareness and Support:
2010-2017

Site Planning: 2014-2017

Archaeological Investigation:
2012, 2013, 2014, 2015,
2016

Construction: 2018-2019

Backyard Excavation



CDRF Director and archaeologist Michael Gregory was invited to excavate the backyard of Anthony and Anila Saineghi on Calumet Avenue, at the site of Prisoner Square of Camp Douglas.

Mr. Saineghi visited an earlier excavation at the John J. Pershing Magnet School and volunteered to offer his garden as an excavation site.

October 29 and 30 Dr. Gregory and 21 volunteers conducted the excavation which was the first time CDRF had an opportunity to excavate on private property. The dig confirmed the integrity of Camp Douglas and a Minie' ball was found at the site.

Mr. Saineghi invited CDRF back in the spring for an additional excavation.

Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation—Latest News

City Council Approves Resolution

On October 12, the Finance and Zoning Committees of the Chicago City Council approved the resolution supporting CDRF and the application for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. (see below.) The resolution was accepted by the full council October 18.

David Keller, Bernard Turner and Ted Karamanski, Ph.D., Professor of History at

Loyola University history professor, testified before the committee. The resolution was submitted by Alderman Edward Burke with strong support from 4th Ward Alderman Sophia King.

The nearly one and one half hour discussion resulted in unanimous approval by the committee with strong support of additional city recognition of Camp Douglas.

Special thanks to all who helped this project.

Chicago City Council Resolution

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the City of Chicago was one of the largest producers of manpower, material, transportation, and food for the Union war effort during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Camp Douglas, named after Illinois Governor Stephen A. Douglas whose estate provided property for the site, opened in 1861 as a training camp for the Union Army during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, Camp Douglas was the largest military installation in Illinois during the Civil War and the main presence of the Civil War in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, Chicago's role as a transportation hub made Camp Douglas the ideal location to train and move young men to the front lines of battles by way of the Illinois Central Railroad, the longest railroad in the world at the time; and

WHEREAS, the former site of Camp Douglas was located within the City's Bronzeville neighborhood and extended from Cottage Grove west to Giles Avenue and from 31st Street south to 33rd Place; and

WHEREAS, over 40,000 Union troops were trained at Camp Douglas during the Civil War, including some of the first African American Union soldiers; and

WHEREAS, after the Union victory at Fort Donelson, Tennessee in March, 1862, Camp Douglas was used to house Confederate prisoners and held over 30,000 total prisoners there during the remainder of the war; and

WHEREAS, the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation provides active leadership in the development, delivery, and preservation of educational and historic information regarding Illinois and Chicago during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, the Camp Douglas Restoration



Foundation has conducted seven archaeological investigations on the area of Camp Douglas over the past five years and has uncovered significant Civil War artifacts; and

WHEREAS, the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation has actively sought formal recognition of Camp Douglas as a listing in the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, by being listed in the National Register of Historic Places, Camp Douglas would receive local, state, and national recognition, become part of the National Register Archives, and have the opportunity to economically showcase the history of the community; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Joint Committee on Finance and the Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards does hereby request the Commissioner of the Department of Planning and Development and representatives from the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation to appear before this Joint Committee to testify to the significance of having Camp Douglas listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

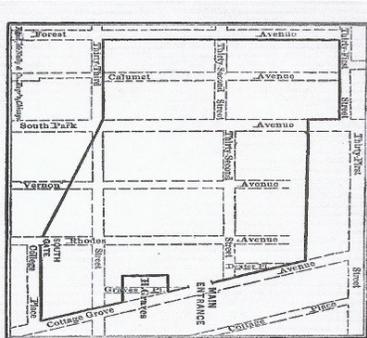
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we, the members of the Chicago City Council, do hereby support the listing of Camp Douglas on the National Register of Historic Places and urge the State of Illinois National Register Review Board to recommend the listing of Camp Douglas on the National Register of Historic Places; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chicago City Council urges the National Park Service in Washington, D.C. to list Camp Douglas to National Register of Historic Places for its significant role in helping preserve the Union and ending slavery within the United States during the Civil War.

Edward M. Burke, Alderman, 14th Ward

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CAMP DOUGLAS, 1864-5.
Map prepared by William Bross for a paper read before the
Chicago Historical Society, June 18, 1878

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Be Told*

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*City of Chicago Next
Step*

CDRF and Ted Karamanski, Ph.D met with Matt Crawford, coordinating Planner, Department of planning and Development, representing Eleanor Esser Gorski, Deputy to discuss Chicago land mark status for Camp Douglas.

While the entire footprint of the camp warrants landmark status, a smaller identified area is required by Chicago standards.

We agreed to request the former Griffin Funeral Home be designated. Lake Meadows Park will be used as an alternate.

CDRF has contacted Alderman Sophia King who has agreed to request the designation. CDRF will also prepare a request and will agree to prepare the Landmark Designation Report required for this action.

It is anticipated that the formal request will be forwarded to Deputy Commissioner Gorski in early December.

We hope for early approval with a marker placed at the site in early spring.

John Williford Justiss

Special thanks to Joy Lynn Justiss Edwards for sharing information on her great-great grandfather, John Williford Justiss.

John, born in 1829, joined Company H, 9th Texas Cavalry, October 14, 1861. His horse was valued at \$135 and equipment at \$30. (Confederate cavalry soldiers provided their own horse.)

The 9th Texas Cavalry first fought at the Battle of Pea Ridge. Later it participated at the battle of Corinth, MS. They participated in the raid in December 1862 on Holly Springs, MS. Later the unit joined General Johnston's relief unit of Vicksburg, MS. In April 1864, the 9th fought at the Atlanta campaign. After their defeat at in



John Justice (left) with
Brothers, Ca. 1900

January 1865 at Franklin, TN the 9th ended the war in Louisiana and Mississippi.

While there is no indication of Justiss' activities during these engagements, he was assigned to the unit and appeared to be a "wagon Smith in the field," between February 1, 1863 and July

31, 1863.

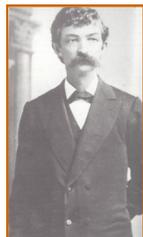
Records show he was captured January 31, 1864 at St. Joseph, LA or February 2, 1864 at Natchez, MS.

J. W. Justiss was shown as a prisoner at Camp Douglas February 24, 1864. There are no letters or documents indicating his stay at Camp Douglas. He was discharged June 14, 1865 after taking the Oath of Allegiance.

John T. Shanks and the 1864 Conspiracy

John T. Shanks was a significant player in the Camp Douglas Conspiracy of 1864. The conspiracy was planned by Captain Thomas Hines, CSA to take place during the Democratic Political Convention in August 1864. The plan was delayed until the November presidential election. For more details see the Fall 2012 *Camp Douglas News*.

John Shanks was a prisoner at Camp Douglas acting as a clerk in the prisoner express office. He was well known to Mary Morris, wife of Buckner Morris, former mayor of Chicago. The Morris were known confederate sympathizers. Captain Hines considered Shanks, who he met during the conspiracy, "a forger, thief traitor, spy, perjurer, and coward."



Captain Thomas
Hines, CSA

His opinion was shared by fellow prisoner and diarist, Robert Bagby who accused Shanks of stealing letter paper and postage from prisoners that had been provided by Mrs. Morris.

Shanks was a spy for Colonel Sweet during Sweet's investigation of the conspiracy. Shanks allegedly became a confidant of Morris and Hines. It is hard to believe that either Hines or Morris would place any confidence in Shanks or give him any



Buckner Morris

meaningful information on their plans.

At the trial of the conspirators in Cincinnati in January 1865 John T. Shanks testified and was cross examined by Mr. Harvey on behalf of Mrs. Morris. The *Chicago Tribune* January 26, 1865 published extensive details of Shanks' testimony.

Shanks presented himself as an important spy to Colonel Sweet giving details of the plot that permitted Sweet to arrest all principals. During his examination he denied reports of having two wives and committing forgery. These allegations had been repeated by Bagby and, apparently, Hines. Much of his testimony appears contrary to the likely truth.

Buckner Morris was found not guilty. Mary Morris was found guilty and banished to Kentucky. Shanks history after the war is unknown.

For more information see:

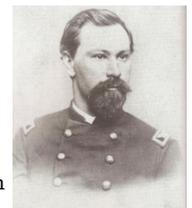
Chicago Tribune,
November 8, 1864 & January 26, 1865.

and

Available at www.campdouglas.org

Robert Anderson Bagby, Civil War Diary, CDRF.

The Story of Camp Douglas Chicago's Forgotten Civil War Prison, History Press.



Colonel Benjamin
Sweet