

MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES



Loyal Legion Vignettes



**CAPTAIN LEO RASSIEUR, 30TH MISSOURI INFANTRY, USV
(1844 Prussia - 1929 Missouri)**

**Insignia Number 8903, Original Member of the Missouri Commandery
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States
[34th Commander-in-Chief, Grand Army of the Republic \(1900/1901\)](#)**

**By
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Leo Rassieur was born April 19, 1844 at Wadern, Prussia (Germany), the son of Theodore and Margaret Rassieur. The mother died in Germany in 1848 and the father died in St. Louis, Missouri in 1875. Leo came to St. Louis, Missouri with his father in 1851, was educated in the public schools, graduating from the St. Louis High School in 1860. He was especially proficient in mathematics and during the last two months of his course in high school, when his teacher was granted a leave of absence due to an illness. Leo was placed in charge of his class as teacher of mathematics. His course

of study was designed to fit him for the profession of civil engineering, but later events operated to incline him toward the law.

In March of 1861, he made his maiden speech at a gathering of German citizens in the southern part of the city, which was evidently called for the purpose of procuring the adoption of resolutions designed to commit these citizens to the policy of neutrality in the then approaching conflict. A committee of prominent citizens was appointed to prepare and present resolutions bearing on this subject, and within a few minutes after their appointment this committee presented resolutions covering several pages, demonstrating conclusively that the resolutions had been prepared elsewhere and that an effort was to be made to force their adoption. The youthful Rassieur protested against this precipitous action and urged his neighbors and friends, many of whom were present at the meeting, which was held at George's Market, to raise their voices against the adoption of the resolutions. The result was that he was put forward as a spokesman of those who condemned the sentiment of the resolutions, and obtaining recognition from the chairman, he proceeded to make what may have been a boyish, but nevertheless an impassioned and telling speech against the proposed course of action. Fearful of the effect of his utterances, the chairman declared that he had no right to speak as he was not a citizen in the sense of being a voter. In response to this, young Rassieur declared that, although he was not twenty-one years of age, he might be called upon to serve his county in case of war and that being of those who would shortly be subject to military duty, he had the right to be heard concerning the issues involved in the impending conflict. When he attempted to proceed he was declared out of order, but appealed from the ruling of the chair. The chairman refused to put the question, and he then declared that if free speech was not to be allowed in the meeting as organized, he would ask those who believed in free speech and untrammelled action to leave the market house and assemble in front of it, where a new meeting would be organized and such action taken as would express the sense of the German citizens there assembled. Those present responded with practical unanimity to the request, only the chairman and his seven committeemen being left in the market house hall. The new meeting organized with R.E. Rombauer, then a young lawyer, as chairman, and Leo Rassieur as secretary. A new committee was appointed and this committee presented resolutions which were adopted unanimously, after a full and thorough discussion, and which pledged the assembled citizens unreservedly and patriotically to the Union cause.

Two months later Leo demonstrated that he could act as well as talk and enlisted as a Private in Company B, 1st USRC (3 months). He was made Orderly Sergeant May 7, 1861, serving for a short time under General Grant at Bird's Point, opposite Cairo, and was honorably mustered out August 20, 1861. He re-enlisted September 9, 1861 as a Private in Company E, 1st USRC (3 years) and was at once elected 1st Lieutenant of his company. He then served in the campaign under General Fremont in Southwestern Missouri. He was assistant post adjutant at Warsaw, Missouri while the army was there and was stricken with an illness which caused him to be discharged on account of his disability on April 21, 1862. He recovered his health over a few months, enlisted again on August 18, 1862 as a recruiting 2nd Lieutenant for the 34th Missouri Infantry (which was changed to the 30th Missouri Infantry), and upon organization was commissioned on October 29, 1862 as Captain of Company K, 30th Missouri Infantry, also serving as drill-master at Benton Barracks. Later he was assigned to command Fort Curtis, at Arcadia, being relieved to join his regiment when it received orders to join General Sherman's Army, then near Helena, Arkansas. While he was on march to St. Genevieve and near Farmington, Missouri he was ordered to return to Pilot Knob and inspect the small-pox hospital there, reporting its condition to General Curtis. Although he had never had the dread disease, he performed this duty faithfully and thereby won the lasting friendship of General John B. Gray, then Adjutant-General of Missouri. He was post adjutant at Vidalia, Louisiana in 1864, and later tendered the position of ordnance officer by General Slocum, then in command of the Army of the Tennessee, at Vicksburg, Mississippi. Afterward he was judge-advocate of General Dennis' division of the 19th Corps, Army of the Gulf. Still later he was placed in command of Fort Tracy, near Mobile, Alabama and in June of 1865 accompanied his regiment to Texas to take part in the proposed movement against Maximilian in Mexico. During his term of service in the army he participated in the battle of

Chickasaw Bayou, Mississippi fought December 1862; Arkansas Post, January 11, 1863; the Greenville, Mississippi expedition April 1863; the march from Young's Point, Louisiana to Hard Times Landing, and thence to Jackson, Mississippi to the west side of Vicksburg. He too part in the capture of Jackson and the seige of Vicksburg, and participated in the battles of Spanish Fort and Fort Blakely, fought April 1865, commanding his regiment in the engagement. In September, 1864 he was commissioned Major (a.w.m.) of his regiment, but was never mustered as such because of the depletion of the regiment to less than 500 effective men. He was honorably mustered out of the service on August 21, 1865 at Alleyton, Texas and returned to St. Louis early in the following month.

After his return to St. Louis he studied law, was admitted to the bar, and was in active practice until he was elected Judge of Probate in St. Louis in 1894. For ten years he was the attorney for the St. Louis School Board and for four years was a member of that body, serving as its vice president. Interested in athletics, he served as president of the St. Louis Gymnastic Society and for thirteen years was president of the Western Rowing Club, the largest organization of its kind in the West. As a youth, he was an uncompromising abolitionist and was a member of the Republican Party.

He was married on July 9, 1872 to Mary C. Kammerer of Wheeling, West Virignia. Leo died June 1, 1929 St. Louis, Missouri.

Captain Leo Rassieur, 30th Missouri Infantry, US Volunteers, was elected a Companion in the Missouri Commandery of Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the U.S. on June 6, 1891, Insignia #8903. He served as Senior Vice Commander 1912-1913, Commander 1913-1914, and on the Council 1924-1929.

He was a member of the Frank P. Blair, Grand Army of the Republic Post #1, St. Louis, Missouri, Member #276,612, was a delegate of the Missouri Department, Grand Army of the Republic at the 1886 Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic held in San Francisco, California, and was elected the 34th Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic 1900-1901.

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Sources:

- 1) *Report of the 45th Annual Meeting of the Commanery in Chief of MOLLUS*, 1930. Chicago, Illinois.
- 2) *Missouri Commandery of MOLLUS*, Circular No.601, 01 May 1925
- 3) *Membership Records of the Missouri Commandery of MOLLUS*
- 4) *Final Journal of the Grand Army of the Republic*, 1957. Compiled by Cora Gillis, Jamestown, New York, Past National President, Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, 1861-1865, Inc. and last National Secretary of the Grand Army of the Republic.

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