

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Policy on the Use of the Deed of Conveyance

(June 2000)

The following Policy regarding use of the Grand Army of the Republic's Deed of Conveyance to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War was authorized by the National Council of Administration on June 13, 2000 and was made effective June 14, 2000 by General Order #10, Series 1999/2000, of the Commander-in-Chief.

A. On the 13th day of February 1954 The Grand Army of the Republic in the person of Albert Woolson, the last surviving member of the Grand Army of the Republic, "grant[ed], bargain[ed], [sold] and convey[ed] to the Commander[y]-in-Chief, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War all property of any and every kind and nature owned by the Grand Army of the Republic, and wheresoever situated, and all records and archives thereof; except such property and records as are specifically mentioned and described in a resolution adopted by the Grand Army of the Republic at its 83rd and final Encampment held at Indianapolis, Indiana August 28 to September 1st, 1949."

B. The property was conveyed to the Commandery-in-Chief -- The National Organization -- of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. As such, the terms of the Deed of Conveyance grant no powers, rights, or authority to Departments or individual camps of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

C. Departments and Camps are organized and function under charters granted by the National Order. The National Organization of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War expressly retains all authority, rights, and ownership of all property conveyed in the Deed of Conveyance. None of these rights, authority or ownership are automatically conveyed with the issuance of a charter to a Department or Camp.

D. Departments and Camps are obligated to notify the National Organization in the person of the Commander-in-Chief or his duly appointed representative of the existence of any such property or records of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Commander-in-Chief shall ascertain the condition and any threats to the property or records by any means available to him including assigning the task to a Department. Camp or individual member. After determining the current state of the property, the Commander-in-Chief, after consultation with his advisors and the Council of Administration, shall make a determination of any action necessary.

E. The Commander-in-Chief may retain control over the situation, assign a representative of the National Order to pursue the matter, or assign the responsibility to a Camp or Department. Without the express approval of the Commander-in-Chief no demands for action shall be made to any governmental body, organization or individual. No legal action shall be initiated on behalf of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War without the expressed approval of the Commander-in-Chief and Council of Administration. The Commander-in-Chief and Council of Administration shall not unduly withhold authorization for action by a Camp or Department that is prepared to financially undertake such action if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Order.

F. The Deed of Conveyance further obligates the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War to return records, monuments and other items to the communities where the Grand Army of the Republic existed. To this end, actions of Commanders-in-Chief have designated the Grand Army of the Republic Museum, Philadelphia as the repository for all GAR records from the metropolitan Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area and the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall Museum and Trust as the repository for all GAR records from the metropolitan Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania region.

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