

Records of General D. B. Birney Post No. 63, Grand Army of the Republic

RG-063

**Finding aid prepared by Jack McCarthy and Megan Atkinson, 2009-2010. EAD
conversion was completed through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's
Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories..**

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Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum and Library

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Summary Information

Repository	Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum and Library
Creator	Grand Army of the Republic. General D. B. Birney Post No. 63. (Philadelphia, Pa.).
Title	Records of General D. B. Birney Post No. 63, Grand Army of the Republic
Call number	RG-063
Date [inclusive]	1874-1935
Extent	1.5 cubic feet ((5 volumes in 3 boxes))
Language	English
Abstract	The General D. B. Birney Post No. 63 was formed in Philadelphia in 1874. The Records of General D. B. Birney Post No. 63, Grand Army of the Republic, 1874-1935, consist of administrative, financial, and membership records.

Biography/History

General D. B. Birney Post No. 63 was formed on August 21, 1874 by G.A.R. members of previously existing Posts. The first muster was on September 11, 1874. The wives of the Post members formed an auxiliary core on March 15, 1876. The Post originally met at Shober's Hall on Girard Avenue and Eyre Street in Philadelphia, PA, but later moved to different locations throughout the Frankford and North Philadelphia sections of the City. The Post started with twenty-three members and eventually rose to 386,

but membership began to drop after the 1890s. It is not known when or how the Post disbanded, although there are no records after 1935.

Scope and Contents

The records of the General D. B. Birney Post No. 63 cover the years 1897 to 1935 and consist of five bound volumes and one folder. The records are organized into four series: Administrative Records, Financial Records, Membership Records, and Post History. It is not known how G.A.R. Civil War Museum and Library acquired the records or if additional records survived or existed.

Series I: Administrative Records - This series consists of one minute book. The minutes are of the Post's meetings from January 7, 1920 to November 20, 1933. The book ends with minutes that discuss the dispersal of the Post's funds to the remaining members, but the dispersal of funds remains unresolved at the end of the volume.

Series II: Financial Records - This series consists of an account book that dates 1932 to 1935. The account book records the general finances of the Post entered chronologically.

Series III: Membership Records - The Membership Records series consists of a one-volume descriptive book and an abstract of that descriptive book. The descriptive book entries run from April 1866 to 1885 and contains detailed information on the personal history of G.A.R. members, including: member's name, age, birthplace, residence, occupation, details on the entry into service and final discharge (which includes date, rank, company, and regiment), length of service, cause of discharge, the details of his G.A.R. membership, and remarks (which include death notices or membership ending through leaving or transferring). There are 901 Post members described in the book, including entries added later on the date of death for most members. The records are a rich source of social and demographic information on members accepted into the Post.

The descriptive book abstract is a file of typed, stapled, loose-leaf papers with abbreviated entries from the descriptive book. It is not known whether this is an original Birney Post record or was compiled later. It appears to have compiled in the early 20th Century. The Abstract is incomplete and does not document all members.

Series IV: Post History: The war memorial sketch books are two bound volumes that record in detail the history of Post members' service in the Civil War and their membership in the G.A.R. The first volume dates from 1897 to 1898; the second volume from 1898 to 1899. The information in the sketch books was originally recorded on a memorial war sketch form, which the Post Historian then used to compile the memorial war sketch book. The 1897 to 1898 volume contains a hand-written, detailed history of the Post and is more complete than the 1898 to 1899 volume.

Administrative Information

Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum and Library
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Sponsor

This preliminary finding aid was created by staff of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories (HCI-PSAR) using data provided by the Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum and Library. The HCI-PSAR project was made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Access Restrictions

Contact the Grand Army of the Republic Museum and Library for information about accessing collection.

Processing Information note

The records were rough sorted and placed in archival boxes by board members and volunteers of the GAR Civil War Museum & Library in 2008. In 2009-2010 they received preliminary processing by Archival Consultant Jack McCarthy and Intern Megan Atkinson, working on a project funded by grants from the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission and National Endowment for the Humanities. This finding aid is the result of that project. The grant funds allowed for only minimal processing and very little re-housing of the records; as noted above, the records require more thorough processing.

The finding aid created by McCarthy and Atkinson was converted to the EAD format in 2011-2012 as part of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories (HCI-PSAR), funded by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Grand Army of the Republic. Dept. of Pennsylvania.
- Grand Army of the Republic.

Geographic Name(s)

- Philadelphia (Pa.)

Subject(s)

- Fraternal organizations
- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865
- Veterans

Financial records

Collection Inventory**Administrative records.**

Box

Minutes, 1920 January 7-1933 November 20. 1 Items.

1

Financial records.

Box

Account book, 1932-1935. 1 Items.

1

Membership records.

Box

Descriptive book, 1874-1914. 1 Items.

1

Abstract of descriptive book, circa 1900s. 1 Items.

1

Post history.

Box

War Memorial sketch book, 1897-1898. 1 Items.

2

War Memorial sketch book, 1898-1899. 1 Items.

3