



Department of Pennsylvania
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
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(To be read in the Camps and retained in Camp files)

By now, most of you are aware of the recent news article concerning the proposed auction of a Civil War Skull. The skull of this Civil War soldier and military relics found near the Gettysburg battlefield were scheduled to be sold at auction on Tuesday June 3, 2014. The skull was found in 1949 on private land near Benner's Farm by someone tilling a garden, according to news reports. Notarized and handwritten documents said the remains, along with 13 other artifacts, were found two miles north of a barn used as a field hospital during the Battle of Gettysburg.

Estate Auction Company was hoping to sell the skull at a price of \$50,000 to \$250,000 to a private collector or museum.

The proposed auction has since been cancelled following protests. Gettysburg National Military Park and the nonprofit Gettysburg Foundation said in a news release that the remains had been donated to the foundation late Monday June 2, 2014. After they are authenticated, they will be donated to the park "for interment with full military honors in the Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg," the announcement said.

This Department has been in contact with the National Park Service and has pledged our full cooperation and assistance in resolving this matter with the dignity this soldier deserves. We will continue to follow this case until the remains are interred with due respect, to do anything less would be unacceptable. This is not how a great nation treats war dead. Whether this soldier was Union or Confederate should not be an issue, he was an American. Let us treat his earthly remains with the same Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty that our ancestors exhibited in reunions with former Confederates. They provided us with a great, united and civilized nation; let us prove ourselves worthy of their gift.

I have asked Department Sr. Vice Commander Doug McMillin to be our point person with the National Park Service. I have also asked for weekly updates from him to be filed with this office until the dignified burial of this Soldier's remains occur.

By order of

Richard R. Essenwein
Commander
Pennsylvania Department