



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Pennsylvania Department

Office of the Department Commander

403 Grand Circle, Scranton PA 18505-2870

wefjr.suvcw@gmail.com



**DEPARTMENT ORDER 7
SERIES 2024-2025**

17 July 2024

LAFAYETTE'S FAREWELL TOUR BICENTENNIAL

1. Brothers, I share with you that the 200th anniversary of the Marquis de Lafayette's Farewell Tour of America is soon to commence, beginning 16 August 2024, and runs well into the summer of 2025.
2. Although there are limited direct ties between a hero of the American Revolution and our Boys in Blue, the reception that Lafayette received by a grateful nation remains epic and heartwarming. Of note, at least one Civil War unit, the 7th New York Militia Regiment, a pre-war unit also known as the "Silk Stockings," was reorganized and officially attached on 25 June 1861 to New York's First Brigade, Battalion of Artillery. First organized in 1806, the unit, then a battalion, on 25 August 1824 (just as Lafayette was embarking on his Farewell Tour) was named *Battalion of National Guards* in tribute to Lafayette. It was mustered in and out of federal service several times between 1861 and its final muster out on 21 July 1863. Of particular note, serving in 1861 was Private Robert Gould Shaw, who later commanded the well-remembered 54th Massachusetts Infantry. Perhaps a Pennsylvania Civil War unit also paid homage to Lafayette?
3. Lafayette's legacy included being an abolitionist who sought the end of slavery, and was often cited by leading abolitionists, including Frederick Douglass. Massachusetts Senator Charles Sumner quoted a 1786 letter from Lafayette to John Adams, in which the Marquis declared, "Whatever be the complexion of the enslaved, it does not, in my opinion, alter the complexion of the crime which the enslaver commits, a crime much blacker than any African face." Lafayette not only sought abolition but racial equality.
4. There are hundreds of events planned to commemorate Lafayette's Farewell Tour Bicentennial, with many in our commonwealth. For specifics, visit:

<https://lafayette200.org/>
5. This is an outstanding opportunity for Pennsylvania Department camps and our Allied Orders to partner with the American Friends of Lafayette, the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, and local organizations to honor Lafayette, to tell of his abolitionism, and to make our Allied Orders known.

SO ORDERED IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY AND LOYALTY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William E. Fischer, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

William E. Fischer, Jr., PCC
Commanding

ATTEST:

Robert J. Koenigsberg, PCC
Secretary