

#### IBC#4 Patriotic Instruction – DETHRONED – Not on My Watch! - Oct 2018 – Brother Ross Schwalm

As we look back to 1918, the United States and most of the world had changed forever. From almost a completely cold start, the United States had to ramp up quickly to create a large Army, equip a Navy to protect against a new weapon – the German U Boats, and equip the Army and Navy with the newest weapon of war – the airplane as a fighter and a bomber. The last combat action of the United States had been the Spanish American War but it affected a tiny portion of the population at large. Looking back further to the Civil War, it was almost seen as “ancient history” compared to the Great War in Europe. Military techniques and technologies started in the Civil War – Balloons for aerial observation, rail transportation of troops and supplies, wire line communications, the repeating rifle, massed artillery and the Gatling gun – were enhanced and perfected to devastating effects during the Great War.

The United States entered World War I in April 1917. Over 4.7 million men and women served in the regular U.S. forces, national guard units, and draft units with about 2.8 million serving overseas. There were 53,402 killed in action, 63,114 deaths from disease and other causes, and about 205,000 wounded.<sup>i</sup> Of these veterans, over 650, 000 joined the brand-new American Legion starting in 1919.<sup>ii</sup>

My friend and Johannes Schwalm Historical Association (JSHA) Board Member, Christine Reiner, is a collector of military memorabilia and artifacts. She had a display of some of her WW I items at the JSHA Annual Meeting in July 2018. She also gave a presentation on a set of binoculars, lent by a loyal citizen of my home town Mr. Edward Kantner, to the US Navy for use in hunting for U boats. One other item she displayed was a print entitled, DETHRONED. As soon as I saw it, I asked her to let me place it at the end of my Civil War posters documenting the Knoxville Campaign of 1863. I published an article on the campaign in the JSHA 2018 Journal which told the tale of Sgt Samuel Schwalm, 50<sup>th</sup> PA Infantry and Pvt Robert Bruce Thompson, 48<sup>th</sup> PA Infantry. Displaying the DETHRONED print was a great way to have our visitors see the transition from Civil War veteran standing next to an empty chair and looking at the WW I soldier with a crowd around him hearing his tales of WW I. Christine’s table of WW I items was right next to mine.



The old Union Veteran symbolically DETHRONED as portrayed by the empty chair is representative of what many Civil War veterans dealt with when the Doughboys came home.



As Sons of the Union Veterans, it is our sworn duty during our watch to not be DETHRONED and to keep the memory of the Civil War alive in the generations to come. I encourage each of you to go forth and tip your hat to veterans of all wars – from the American Revolution to the ongoing Global War on Terror entering its 18<sup>th</sup> year – during the upcoming Veterans Day memorial holiday. But never let yourself be DETHRONED in your task of educating people – young and old – about the Civil War.

Of my three great grandfathers who served in the Union Army, two of them, John P. Kessler, 48<sup>th</sup> PA and John Lebo, 210<sup>th</sup> PA, may have felt the same way as the soldier in this print. John Kessler died in 1919 and John Lebo died in 1922. My challenge is to honor them by registering their graves with the SUVCW.

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<sup>i</sup> [https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/World\\_War\\_I\\_United\\_States\\_Military\\_Records,\\_1917\\_to\\_1918](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/World_War_I_United_States_Military_Records,_1917_to_1918) accessed on 10/24/2018

<sup>ii</sup> November 2018 Issue of the American Legion Magazine.

<sup>iii</sup> Print from a painting by Anton Otto Fischer, Seventeenth of Pictorial Review's Series of Great War Paintings, published on page 27 of Pictorial Review for June, 1919.