

HISTORY OF THE MAJ. FONTAINE R. EARLE CAMP #1453
SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS

The Maj. Fontaine R. Earle Camp held its first organizational meeting in mid-1986 at the Fayetteville Public Library. This first meeting was organized by the members of The Mildred Lee Chapter #98, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Mrs. Louise Reagan, President, and was attended by Mrs. Reagan, and Chapter members Mrs. Stanley Saunders and Mrs. Fred Kolb.

Prospective members of the Camp attending were Doyle Barnes, Gary Barnes, Fred Kolb, Brian Umberson, Russell Pennington, William Goff, and James E. Gibson.

At the next meeting officers were elected: James E. Gibson, Commander; Russell B. Pennington, Adjutant; and Fred H. Kolb, Treasurer. The required 10 members were soon found, and on September 16, 1986, an Application for Camp Charter was forwarded to Larry Rhodes, Commander, Division of Arkansas, at El Dorado.

Our application was approved in January 1987 and the Charter Members were: James E. Gibson, Summers; Russell B. Pennington, Springdale; Fred H. Kolb, Fayetteville; Gary Lee Barnes, Gentry; Stanley M. Saunders, Fayetteville; William E. Goff, Kingston; Gary Ewell Tunnell, Summers; Warren K. Scott, Summers; William L. Bush, Sr., Lincoln; Charles Dorman Kolb, Harrison; Herbert Dorman Kolb, Harrison; Fontaine R. Earle, Peoria, Illinois; Doyle Barnes, Siloam Springs; and William Odle Beaty, Summers.

Other members have come to the Camp by transfer and the payment of dues, and membership now stands at 19.

Maj. Earle, for whom our Camp was named, was first a Cumberland Presbyterian Minister. Born in 1831 in Kentucky, he was schooled in Hopkins County, and Cumberland University at Lebanon, Tennessee, graduating in 1858. After graduation, he was ordained a Cumberland Presbyterian minister, and became pastor of Old Liberty Church, Muhlenberg County, Kentucky. From this post, he came to Cane Hill, as President of Cane Hill College, in 1859. He it was who granted the first degrees from Cane Hill College to Samuel H. and John T. Buchanan in the spring of 1859. Later, when the outbreak of the War Between the States forced the suspension of classes, President Earle enlisted in the Confederate Army where he served 4 years. He soon became Captain, commanding "B" Company 34th Ark Inf. Later he was promoted to Maj. and commanded two regiments. He saw action in the battles at Oak Hill, Prairie Grove, Helena, Jenkins Ferry, and others. After the war, he returned to the Presidency of Cane Hill College, where he served until its close. He later was president of its successor, Arkansas Cumberland College at Clarksville. He is buried at Cane Hill. We are honored to have his grandson, also Fontaine R. Earle, as a Charter Member.

Current members of Camp No. 1453, in addition to the Charter Members, are: Commander William Bell, Jr., Siloam Springs; Frank Burke, Springdale; David Couch, Fayetteville; Dr. Daryl M. Quimby, Prairie Grove; and William A. Myers, Fayetteville.

The camp is committed to assisting the Southern Memorial Association with maintenance of the Confederate Cemetery at Fayetteville.

Another project of Camp No. 1453 is the location and marking, with Confederate Army markers, of the graves of all Confederate soldiers buried in Washington County, Arkansas.

Maj. James E. Gibson
Inf. AUS Ret.
Commander