

William Warner 1882-1883

Major William Warner, 44th Wisconsin Infantry US Volunteers
(Born 1839 Wisconsin - Died 1916 Missouri)

17th Commander-in-Chief, Grand Army of the Republic (1888/1889)



Original Member, Missouri
Commandery, Military Order of the
Loyal Legion of the U.S.

<http://www.dnr.mo.gov/shpo/nps-nr/77000811.pdf> Link Kansas City
House on National Register

Warner, William, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, was born June, 1839, in Lafayette County, Wisconsin. Left an orphan while but a child, he was deprived of all the advantages which parents might afford, and his accomplishments in life, education, profession and honorable position have been acquired through his own industry, perseverance, and a forcefulness of character born of necessity and laudable ambition. From the age of six years he earned his livelihood through such work as he could perform, and when but ten years old he began work in a store, where he remained five years. While so engaged he devoted his spare time to elementary studies, meanwhile practicing a rigid economy and saving a little sum which enabled him to afterward pursue brief academic studies during portions of two years. Having obtained a license as a teacher, he taught school during several winters, discharging his duties with faithful ability, and at the same time devoting his night hours to reading law. On arriving at age he passed a successful examination and was admitted to the bar. The beginning of the Civil War found him prepared and desirous of entering upon practice, but an intense feeling of patriotism moved him to abandon his purpose and enter the army. He enlisted in the Thirty-third Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteers, in which he was commissioned as adjutant, and afterward as captain of Company B. With this command he served gallantly

in the Tennessee and Mississippi campaign of 1862 under General Grant, and in 1863 in the operations culminating in the capture of Vicksburg.

July 4th, the day of the surrender, it was his privilege to read the Declaration of Independence between the two lines, with officers and soldiers as deeply interested auditors. In 1864 he was promoted to the rank of major in the Forty-fourth Regiment, Wisconsin Volunteers. His service until the end of the war was faithful and meritorious, and included various important staff assignments. In 1865 he located in Kansas City and laid the foundations for a brilliant and successful professional career. At the same time he has continually been



among the foremost of those who have afforded loyal and active assistance in forwarding the many movements through which the commercial and political pre-eminence of the city have been established. His services in public positions have been peculiarly conspicuous, redounding at once to the advantage of the people and to his own honor. In 1867, in face of an adverse political majority, he was elected city attorney, and the following year he was elected circuit attorney. He served in the latter capacity until May, 1870, when he was elected to the mayoralty, being the only successful candidate upon his ticket. That year marked the beginning of some of the most important municipal movements and public enterprises attending the building up of the city, and in all he was a zealous and sagacious leader. Regarding public interests as of first importance, he laid aside party considerations, and contributed materially in 1875 to the election of Turner A. Gill, the Democratic candidate for mayor, in order to oppose the designs of the National Water Works Company. The same year, as a member of the committee which drafted the new charter of Kansas City, he

was primarily instrumental in safeguarding public interests through wise provisions incorporated therein. In 1884 he was elected to the Forty-ninth Congress, in which body he gained almost instant recognition as a man of ability and force of character, and in spite of the traditions which relegate a new member to obscurity, thirteen bills introduced by him were enacted into laws. In 1892, as candidate for Governor, he considerably reduced the party majority of an unusually popular opposition candidate. In February, 1898, he was appointed United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri. The position came to him unsought, and it was accepted solely as a public duty and in the interests of political harmony, and involved much personal discomfort as well as the abandonment of a considerable portion of his extensive private practice. In politics he has ever been an earnest Republican, and one of the most influential and popular leaders of his party in the State. In every campaign he has been a much sought orator, and his fearless utterances, convincing logic and impassioned eloquence have ever commanded the warmest admiration of his party friends and deep-seated respect on the part of his opponents. In 1892, and again in 1896, he was a delegate at large to the Republican national convention, and a commanding figure in those great assemblages. In State and minor conventions he is habitually a prominent actor. His military record gives him a firm hold upon the affections of his comrades, and he has been advanced to the highest positions in the Grand Army of the Republic. He was twice elected commander of the Department of Missouri, and in 1888 he was elected commander-in-chief of the national body. To his effort is largely due the establishment of the Soldiers' Home at Leavenworth, Kansas. He is also a member of the Missouri Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion. He was married, in 1866, to Mrs. Sophia F. Bromley, a sister of T. B. Bullene, a prominent dry goods merchant in Kansas City.

He was a member of Geo. H. Thomas Post 8, Kansas City.