

Volunteers Find 350 Grave Sites Of Civil War Vets In Green-Wood

By HAROLD EGELN, JR.

There is even more to remember this Memorial Day 2003, thanks to historians.

ARMED WITH DIGITAL cameras and notebooks, an army of 50 volunteers found the grave sites of over 350 people believed to be Civil War veterans at Green-Wood Cemetery. The veterans were identified in a massive historic search.

There may be as many as 4,000 veterans buried at the 478-acre historic, scenic cemetery and the diligent volunteers scholarly trudged the grounds on Saturday, Armed Forces Day, on their mission, 138 years after the Civil War had ended.

It was the first Civil War Volunteer Day at the cemetery, said Green-Wood's historian, Jeff Richman, who led the tour. Another date will be set for September.

The new total of 350 possible veter-

ans identified will be added to the number of veterans that were already known as of the end of the 19th Century.

Research uncovered an article from the "Brooklyn Eagle" newspaper in 1899, which stated that, at that time, there were 2,225 Union soldiers buried there.

From that, historians have estimated that anywhere from 3,000 to 4,000 veterans are there, said Green-Wood President Richard Moylan.

That number is third highest only to those buried in Arlington and West Point Cemeteries, he said.

THE GREEN-WOOD HISTORIC Fund's Civil War Project is conducting the search to ensure that every Civil War veteran who does not have a gravestone gets one and to make sure that all existing Civil War tombstones are properly set.

"In all, there are 16 Union and two Confederate generals buried at Green-Wood Cemetery, as well as 37 Union soldiers who were breveted brigadier generals," said Richman.

That hints that among the presumed 4,000 Civil War soldiers buried in the cemetery, a small number may have been Confederate veterans, uniting North and South in death.

"No place today had a greater connection to, and more to say about, 19th Century New York than Green-Wood Cemetery," Richman said.

During the Civil War, Green-Wood created the Soldiers' Lot for free veteran burials.

Soldiers who fell at the Battles of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, Antietam in Maryland, Shiloh in Tennessee, and the Wilderness and Bristoe Station in Virginia are buried in the cemetery.

During the search by the 50 volunteers, people dressed in Civil War uniforms from the 14th Brooklyn Infantry, and were led by Tony Della Rocca, who is also the 127th New York Infantry historian. The Fifth New



Tony Della Rocca, in Civil War uniform, points to grave site of First Lieutenant Jephtha Jones, a Civil War veteran who died in 1891.



One of the 350 Civil War veteran grave sites discovered by volunteers at

York Infantry, led by Paul Hilts and Charlie Spickler, also took part in search.

In September, the search will be done again in the continuing effort to

locate and document all Civil War veterans at the cemetery.

For more information, or to volunteer for those searches, call Richman at 1-631-549-4891.