



BLUE AND GRAY EDUCATION SOCIETY GREAT PHOTOGRAPHY HUNT

Check out the results from last week's Medford Photo #50, then scroll down to see this week's mystery Medford Photo #51—and email us what you know!



German General (?)
Napoleon Zerman

Medford Photo #50

The Medford files identify this photo as "General (?) Napoleon Zerman, a German officer who was an authority on the use of 'Greek fire.'"

One cohort adds the following: "Lincoln nominated Zerman on March 15, 1862, for Brigadier General in the Volunteer service. The Senate confirmed his appointment on May 5, but recalled it and tabled it on June 12. In a letter from Zerman to Lincoln on August 14, 1862, Zerman blamed the recall on intrigues of foreign politicians."

A few other interesting finds:

Zerman took part in the French Revolution of 1830 and was banished from France.

He commanded the Turkish Black Sea Fleet (1842–1847) and was an Admiral in the Mexican Navy (1854–1859).

"Greek fire" refers to the use of fire/flamethrowers from ships (used by ancient Greeks), but I could not find an association with Zerman or its use in either the Turkish or Mexican navies.

According to another source, Zerman sometimes embellished his own rank and importance to foreign military officers. Perhaps being a "Greek fire" authority is made up?

Since Zerman was born to Alsatian or Corsican parents in Venice, Italy, he is unlikely to be German. Zerman is a common name in Turkey and Italy.

His dress is atypical. His coat is that of a naval captain over non-regulation dress including cavalry boots!

Medford Photo #51

March 17, 2021, blueandgrayeducation.org



Tell us what you know! Who or what is it? Where is it? When is it? Where is the original image housed?

Respond [here](#).

Results will be published next week in this Dispatch.



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What is the Medford Collection?

In the late 19th century, Gen. Samuel C. Lawrence collected photographic images like we used to collect baseball cards. It was his passion, and whenever copies were presented or opportunities existed to grow his collection, he collected—nearly 3,700 images. Most are familiar to us—Lawrence did not acquire images shot entirely or exclusively for him. Thus what we know is that the original and countless copies exist around the world.

Lawrence was able to identify some and marked them accordingly. Some no doubt were misidentified, while others were unknown to him. In partnership with the Medford Historical Society & Museum, BGES would like to put the spotlight on these timeless looks at the past and provide Medford with additional meaningful information about its collection. You can help by joining BGES's GREAT PHOTOGRAPHY HUNT: REVEALING THE TRUE STORY.

We want to hear from you the answers to the great four questions: Who or What is this? Where is this? When was this? Where is the original of this?

You can reply to this Dispatch with what you know. We will compile and evaluate the answers and forward credible information to the Medford Historical Society.

We know that you know or you know someone who knows!

Now we all want to know.

For a look at additional images for examination and comment, [click here](#).

Medford Photo Provenance Project Dispatch is published every Wednesday. This is an active project in conjunction with the Medford Historical Society and is an effort to improve the provenance and documentation of their collection. Lacking a staff expertise in the Civil War and photography, they are counting on the Civil War, historical, and photographic communities to help them fill in the empty spaces. With over 3,600 images, the project is a longterm one. In addition to these weekly releases, BGES will be posting 15 additional images at their website for examination and comment. The posting will change monthly, allowing us to showcase over 200 images a year.

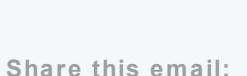
[Click here to go to the BGES website posting.](#)

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Established in 1994, BGES is a small but active nonprofit and tax-exempt Civil War educational group. It has a long list of completed projects and has others in addition to this that are underway or planned. It is supported by donations from its members and the general public. Membership is open to all.

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