

## ELISHA DYER, JR



Elisha Dyer, "Junior" (the Son) enlisted as 4th sergeant of the R.I. 1st Light Artillery Battery, (Captain Charles Tompkins Battery), April 15, 1861. At the outbreak of the Civil War, the 1st RI Light Artillery Battery, RIM, was famous for being one of the best trained State Militia artillery unit in the country. It was known as the "Mother of All Rhode Island 90 Day Militia Field Artillery Batteries. Sergeant Elisha Dyer, Jr. was sent with the Battery to Easton, PA. by the State and the War Department to train other Volunteer Artillery units a few days after the fall of Fort Sumter. Dyer Jr. was discharged shortly after his arrival due to accidental injuries he suffered after an explosion of a limber chest, on April 21, 1861. Dyer the Younger, spent the remainder of the war as Lt. Col. Commanding the Providence Train of Artillery-R.I. State Militia and Aide-de-Camp to RI Governor James Y. Smith from 1863 to 1866. His cousin was Private Charles F. Dyer, 3rd Regiment RI Volunteer Heavy Artillery, Company C, a signer of the RI GAR Arnold Post No. 4 Charter, the son of Captain Cyrus G. Dyer, Adjutant of the 1st RI Volunteer Infantry.

After the war Elisha Jr. himself served 2 terms as Governor then several years as Adjutant-General of the R.I. National Guard. Elisha Jr. also wrote the most complete version of the R.I. Adjutant General's Report in 1893, while serving as Adjutant General of the R.I. State Guard. As RI Adjutant General he became known as the "Father" of the modern day RI National Guard and published the 1893 RI Adjutant General's Report, listing all RI Civil War Veterans and the units they served. His report is the standard resource of most RI Civil War historical research today.

Dyer Jr. helped oversee the construction of the "Soldiers & Sailor's" Civil War monument in front of Providence City Hall and assisted in the construction of the current Rhode Island State House, finished in 1903. His last major accomplishment was the 1903 completion of the Cranston Street Armory (corner of Cranston Street & Dexter Avenue) in Providence, which is located on the site of the "Old Providence Fair Grounds", and the 1861 training field of the first Civil War Units mustered by Rhode Island to fight in the Civil War (the 1st Light or Volunteer Infantry--R.I. Detached Militia; The 2nd R.I. Volunteer Infantry, Battery A, 1st Regiment R.I. Light Artillery).

Elisha Dyer Jr. died on November 29, 1906, in office, while serving as Mayor of the City of Providence. He was buried near his father in Swan Point Cemetery, Providence. Elisha Dyer Jr. lived at 154 Power Street in Providence, and was a member of RI GAR Rodman Post No.12 (headquarters, Old Arsenal 176 Benefit Street, Providence) and later a dual member of RI GAR Arnold Post No.4 (headquarters Old Arsenal 176 Benefit Street, Providence). He was also a hereditary member of the Massachusetts MOLLUS Commandery, MOLLUS ID No. 11212 (headquarters Boston).