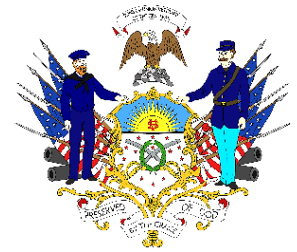




# THE HARRIET LANE



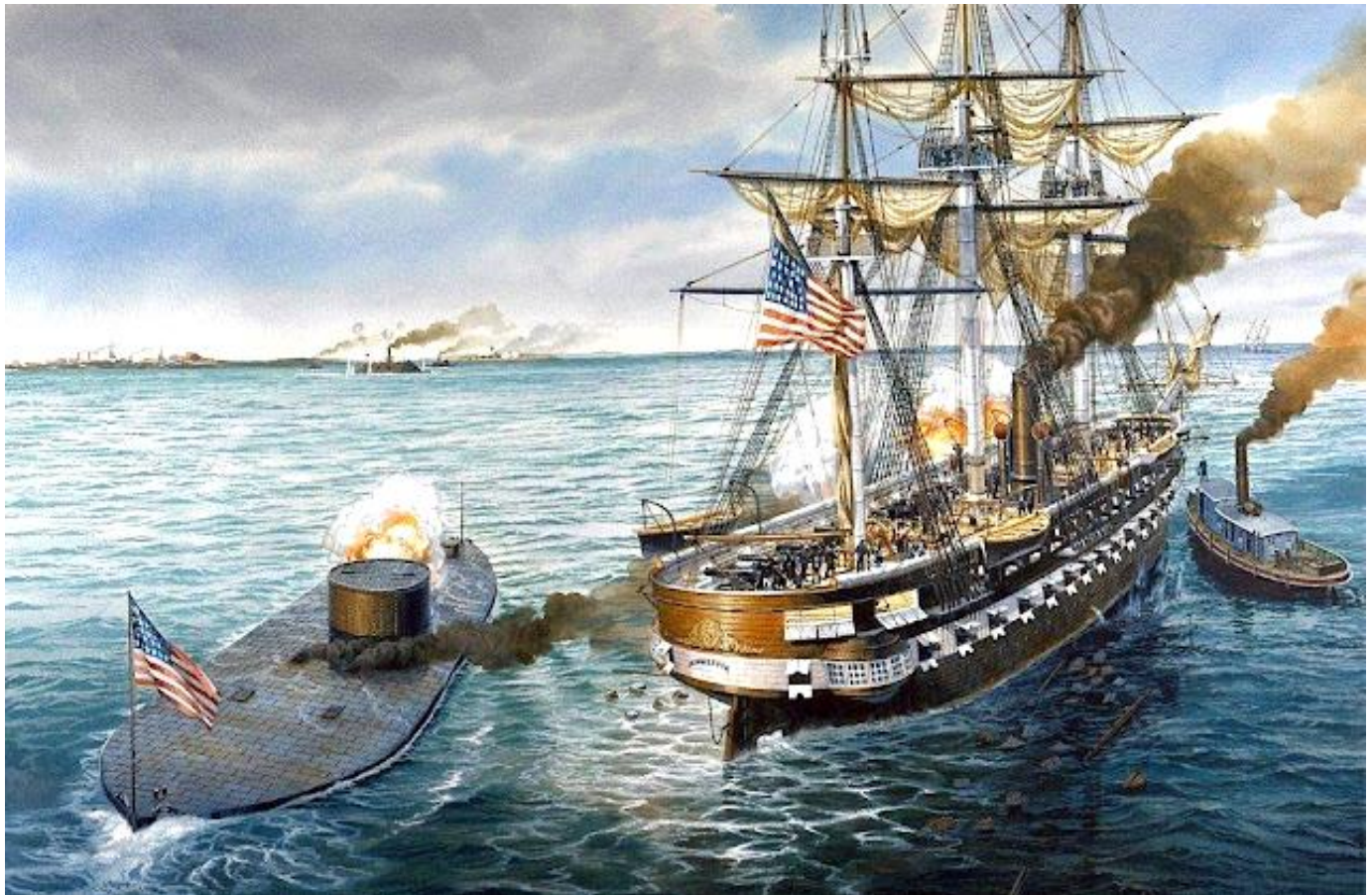
The Official Newsletter of  
Lt. Commander Edward Lea U.S.N. – Camp No. 2 - Houston

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Mar 2023

Volume 29

No. 1



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## Cover Images

*Large:* **"Wooden Warrior: The First *USS Minnesota*"** - Artwork Depicting the *USS Monitor* Defending the *USS Minnesota* During the March 9, 1862 Battle of Hampton Roads, Off the Coast of Virginia

*Left Inset:* **During the Ceremony** - Guard Lee R. Wallace Posted Beside the Decorated Grave of Lt. Commander Edward Lea, and Dept. Commander Michael L. Lance at the Podium, Episcopal Church Cemetery.

*Mid Inset:* **Stacked Arms** – Brother Michael Rappe (*on right in front rank*) in Arms Stacking Position #1, Jesse Jones Park.

*Right Inset:* **Agar Gun** - One of Several Rapid-fire Gun Designs Introduced During the Civil War.

The *Harriet Lane* newsletter is published quarterly (March, June, September, and December). Send questions or comments concerning the newsletter to the Editor at: [mlance387@gmail.com](mailto:mlance387@gmail.com)

## The Medal of Honor – 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Editor's note: The following article was inspired by the March 2023 Patriotic Instruction memo issued by National Patriotic Instructor Ben Frail. In his memo, Brother Frail reminds us that March 25<sup>th</sup> is the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the presentation of the very first Medal of Honor. He also challenges us all to identify and learn about a local Medal of Honor recipient, and to share the story of his heroism with the community. Our heroes deserve no less.*

In February 1861, during the Apache Wars, the first military action undertaken which earned a *Medal of Honor* was by Assistant Army Surgeon Bernard John Dowling Erwin - *two months before the outbreak of the civil war*. The action began after Cochise, leader of a band of Chiricahua Apache warriors, captured and rode away with a young Arizona boy. Sixty troopers of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry immediately rode from Fort Breckenridge in pursuit of the kidnapers. However, the troopers were unaware that they were riding into a trap. They soon found themselves surrounded and pinned down by a greatly superior Apache force.

Surgeon Irwin then led a small rescue party, consisting of only 14 soldiers, mounted on mules. That small contingent was all that could be spared from the fort. The party trekked 100 difficult miles to Apache Pass, Arizona, encountering blizzard conditions along the way. With a carefully laid out plan featuring strategic placement of his 14 men, Irwin succeeded in tricking the Indians into believing that he had arrived with a much larger force. The Indians chose to withdraw rather than fight. With the siege lifted, the 60 troopers then combined with Irwin and his 14 men and tracked Cochise into the mountains. The Apaches were eventually engaged, and the captive Arizona boy was rescued. Surgeon Irwin was lauded for his efforts, and was deserving of recognition. However, since the *Medal of Honor* had yet to be introduced, Irwin was not presented with a *Medal* until January 24, 1894 – more than 30 years after his heroic actions!

In December 1861, as the Civil War raged on both land and sea, James Grimes, a Senator from Iowa, introduced legislation in Congress to “promote the efficiency of the Navy” through the creation of “medals of honor” that could be presented to enlisted seamen and marines who “distinguished themselves by gallantry in action and other seaman like qualities.” A few days later, President Abraham Lincoln signed the bill, which contained a provision for just such a medal for the *U.S. Navy*. It was “to be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen, and Marines as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry and other seamanlike qualities during the present war.” A few months later, on July 12, 1862, legislation was passed to also include the *U.S. Army*.

The first *Medal of Honor* recipient was Army Private Jacob Parrott, a member of *Co. K, 33<sup>rd</sup> Ohio Voluntary Infantry*. He received the award on March 25, 1863 as a result of his actions during *Andrews Raid*, aka. *The Great Locomotive Chase*. This engagement took place in April 1862 in northern Georgia. Raiding Union Army volunteers commandeered a train, *The General*, and drove it northward towards Chattanooga, Tennessee - doing as much damage as they could along the way to the *Western and Atlantic* railroad line. Confederate forces hotly pursued Parrott and the other raiders for nearly 87 miles - at first on foot, and later on a succession of locomotives, including *The Texas*.

**Right: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jacob Wilson Parrott, b. 1843, d. 1908**

Since the Federal raiders were careful to cut telegraph wires as they progressed, the Confederates were not able to send alerts ahead to Confederate forces along the railway. However, the raid was eventually stopped by the Confederates. Andrews and seven of the raiders were captured, tried, and hanged as spies. Several others avoided capture, including Private Parrott, who later rose in rank to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. For their actions, Parrott and five other surviving raiders were the first recipients of the newly-created *Medal of Honor*.



*... continued on page 12*

## Battle of Galveston Commemoration Ceremony 2023

**Saturday – 7 Jan 2022 – Galveston, Texas**

The 2023 annual *Battle of Galveston Commemoration* ceremony was a great success once again. The event attracted volunteer participants from across the state, including: Brothers Paul Kendal, Mark Parkison, and Matthew Parkison from the *Gen. James J. Byrne Camp #1* of Ft. Worth; John Schneider and his wife, Jill, from the *Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp #18* of Dallas, representing *MOLLUS* and *DOLLUS*; Sisters Vali Reyes and Jana Marsh of the *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary No. 1, SUVCW*; Susan Barry and six other Sisters of the *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent #4, DUVCW*; Chaplain Richard Gray of Galveston's *Harmony Lodge Masons*; Cmdr. Doug McBee and another member of the *John Bell Hood SCVCW Camp #50* of Galveston; JROTC Instructor Maj. Mark Knight with several Galveston Ball High School *JROTC Cadets*; and several members of *Co. A, 13<sup>th</sup> Reg't U.S. Infantry/Texas Rifles*.

**Right: An impressive 11-man Honor Guard provided the musket salute**

**Front row L-R: Howard Rose, Private, Jared Garcia, Rion Braddock, Zane Hooper**

**Back row L-R: Chris Strzelecki, Michael Rappe, Jason Hoffman, Daniel Poureau, Kerry Manning, and Ben Bonnett**

Serving as Officer-of-the-Day, Brother John Schneider led the opening procession at the head of the Color Guard.



The long procession marched to a drum cadence as each participant advanced to their individual ceremonial positions around the Union monument.

**Left: Rear portion of the opening procession approaching the Union Monument**

Once everyone was in position, Commander-elect John Vander Meulen, acting as event Master of Ceremonies, opened the program.

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## Battle of Galveston Commemoration Ceremony 2023 *(continued)*



Following the Divine Blessing, offered by Chaplain Stephen Duncan, the Colors were posted by the Ball High Color Guard unit. The *Pledge of Allegiance* was then led by Patriotic Instructor Steve Brock, followed by a rendering of *Hail Columbia*. Brother Vander Meulen then gave greetings and welcomed the participants and guests.

**Left: Commander-elect John Vander Meulen offering opening remarks and greetings**

After Brother John Schneider, representing *MOLLUS*, offered greetings, Michael Lance, DC/PCC moved to the podium and presented a historical sketch of the 1863 battle that took place nearby on Kuhn's Wharf.

A solemn *Roll Call* of the battle casualties was then read by Dept. Chaplain, Stephen Schulze, with the bell sounded by Brother Lance after each name was called. Bouquets of flowers were then placed on the monument by Sister Jana Marsh (Secretary, *SUVCW Auxiliary*) and Sister Susan Barry (President, *DUVCW Tent*), followed by a Moment of Silence for the fallen Union men.

**Right: Dept. Chaplain Schulze at the podium calling out the names of the Union battle casualties, and Dept. Cmdr. Lance tolling the bell after each name was read**

Sister Susan Barry then read the poem, *When the Boys in Blue are Gone*, which concluded the first half of the program.

The Colors were then retrieved by the Color Guard and all participants formed up once again in procession. As a drum cadence began, the group marched by file several rows over to the grave of the Camp's namesake, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea.



Once everyone had reassembled in position around the Lea grave, the Colors were re-posted. The second half of the program then began with an interesting historical sketch by Chaplain Richard Gray of the *Harmony Lodge Masons*. The *Accoutrements of the Soldier* were then placed at Lea's headstone by Officer-of-the-Day, John Schneider, after which he posted Brother Lee Wallace beside it as Guard.

*... continued on next page*

## Battle of Galveston Commemoration Ceremony 2023 *(continued)*

An evergreen wreath was then laid at the headstone by Sister Susan Barry, symbolizing 'an undying love for the comrades of the war'. Then Sister Vali Reyes placed a single white rose, as a 'symbol of purity', followed by the placing of a grapevine wreath, the 'symbol of victory', by Brother Stephen Schulze.

**Right: Brother Lee Wallace posted as Guard next to the decorated headstone of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea. DC Michael Lance at the podium prepares to place a small U.S. Flag beside the headstone**

The Honor Guard then rendered a 3-volley musket salute, which was followed by echo *Taps*. John Vander Meulen then offered closing remarks, followed by the retiring of the Colors. The closing *Benediction* was given by Chaplain Stephen Duncan.



**Left L-R: Michael Lance, Jana Marsh, Vali Reyes, and John Vander Meulen pose for a photo after the ceremony**



**Left: SUVCW Brothers and DUVCW Sisters gathered for a group photo.**

*Brothers R-L*

- Michael Lance**
- John Schneider**
- Steve Brock**
- Stephen Duncan**
- Vince Trovato**
- John Vander Meulen**
- Lee Wallace**
- Robert Riley**

*... report submitted by Michael Lance, DC/PCC*

## Muster and Drill

**Saturday, 25 Feb 2023 - Humble, Texas**

Brothers Daniel Pourreau, Michael Rappe, and Jason Hoffman joined up with members of *Co. A, 13<sup>th</sup> Regiment, U.S. Infantry* at Jesse Jones Park in Humble, Texas on Saturday, February 25. They gathered for instruction and practice in maneuvers, and weapons handling and stacking. The men drilled primarily according to procedures described in Brig. Gen. Silas Casey's *Infantry Tactics* manual.



Gen. Casey originally designed the drills to facilitate efficient and safe movement of large formations of soldiers into firing positions, and then maneuver the unit quickly and safely to another position, as needed on a field of battle.

### **Left: Instruction on Stacking Arms**

In addition to being important for efficient battlefield maneuvering and tactics, some of the skills practiced by the men on Saturday are also relevant today for Honor Guards at ceremonies, parades, and other events. Learning and using the proper drill procedures is yet another way we strive to honor our ancestors for their service to preserving the Union.



**Combined units – Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 and Co. A, 13<sup>th</sup> Reg't U.S. Infantry**

*... submitted by SVC Daniel B. Pourreau – Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2*

*Photos by John Vander Meulen, CC*

## ***D.A.R. Convention***

***Thursday, 16 Mar 2023 - Dallas, Texas***

Camp Cmdr. John Vander Meulen traveled north to Dallas on Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> to represent the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp* at the annual Texas State Conference of the *Daughters of the American Revolution*. He and two Brothers from the *Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp* of Dallas, Secretary/Treasurer Donald Gates and Camp Cmdr. Brook Thomas, manned a presentation table at the event, and together, represented the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*.



***L-R: Donald Gates, Brook Thomas, and John Vander Meulen***

The Brothers greeted and interacted with some of the 2,000 plus *D.A.R.* ladies in attendance. Cmdr. Vander Meulen also accepted donations in exchange for several of the *Lea Camp's* Clara Barton Appreciation pins, and was recognized from the podium during the opening ceremony.

*... submitted by John C. Vander Meulen, CC*

## ***Trivia - Aftermath***

For the soldiers who were not killed or broken by the trials of the civil war, the day finally came when the fighting was over. For the union soldiers there was a tremendous sense of relief, combined with joy, in their victory. Since most of the war had been fought on Confederate territory, the Union army needed to trek northward towards home and demobilization. In late 1865, Colonel Elisha Rhodes traveled back to his hometown of Providence, Rhode Island, recognizing that his efforts and deprivations during the great trial had all been worth it:

*"Today, the Second Rhode Island was paid off and discharged. The regiment met at 9 a.m. and without arms marched into a building on South Main Street where they received their money and final discharge papers. About noon, the paymaster told me that I was the only man left in the regiment, and that he would be ready to pay me at 2 p.m. I went home, took off my uniform, and put on a suit of citizens clothes for the first time in over four years. I then went down to the office and received my pay and discharge. As I came out of the building, I found the regiment, yes, my regiment, drawn up on the sidewalk, and again I took each man by the hand. It was sad yet joyful, for the war is over and we are at home. No more suffering. No more scenes of carnage and death. Thank God it is over and that the Union is restored. And so at last I am a simple citizen. Well, I am content, but should my country call again, I am ready to respond."*

For those who served the Confederacy, defeat and dismissal offered a dignity not previously extended to them by a government that could not adequately provide them with regular food or shelter:

*"General Order No. 9 - After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. I need not tell the brave survivors of so many hard fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that would compensate for the loss that must have attended a continuance of the contest, I determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen. By the terms of their agreement, officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed, and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you his blessing and protection. With an unceasing admiration for your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration for myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell. R.E. Lee" (quote from 'Beyond the Battlefield', edited by David Madden, 2000).*



## Ancestor Profile – Pvt. Jacob Johann Lohrer

Jacob Johann Lohrer was born September 20, 1833, in Sandhausen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. He was a cooper by trade, but became a farmer later in life as industrialization made his skills uncompetitive. In 1859, Jacob married Angeline "Annie" Russell, and over the next 36 years, they became the parents of 13 children.

On March 9, 1864, Jacob Lohrer enlisted as a Private in the Union Army. He served in Companies E, L, and M with the 5<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry (also called the 65<sup>th</sup> Volunteers or Cameron's Dragoons). His unit saw considerable battle and skirmish action against the Confederates over the next few months.

### Jacob Johann Lohrer

On October 16, 1864, Private Lohrer's military service ended prematurely when he was honorably discharged due to wounds suffered in combat. Family tradition holds that he was wounded, captured, and contracted yellow fever while in a Confederate Prisoner of War camp.

After the war, Jacob continued working as a cooper - according to census records. Another family tradition suggests he would demonstrate his barrel making skills for visiting family on occasion. He was also known as a pious Baptist and would typically offer long prayers when saying grace at meals.



Grave marker of Jacob Johann Lohrer

### His wife, Angeline 'Annie' Russell

Jacob Lohrer died November 2, 1902, in Cuyahoga, Ohio, at age 69. He was buried at Lakeview Cemetery, in Cleveland, Ohio. His widow, Angeline, and son Jay received a modest pension for his Civil War service. They were eventually buried in the same lot next to his grave.



*... submitted by descendant Brother Karl Falken*

## Trivia – Molly Maguires

Originating in Ireland, and also called 'Sleepers' and 'Buckshots', the Molly Maguires were a loose association of rough Irish coal miners that were active in eastern Pennsylvania. They vehemently opposed the military draft during the Civil War - and also many other actions taken by the federal government during that period. They feared that if they left the coal mines for the front lines, they would lose their jobs to cheaper labor – especially freedmen and former slaves.

In 1862 and 1863, the Molly Maguires refused to allow further drafting from their ranks. As tensions rose, violence sometimes resulted. The Molly Maguires reportedly assassinated six mining officials and supervisors with whom they had employment-related grievances. After the New York City draft riots of 1863, reports circulated that 2,000 to 3,000 miners drilled daily in Schuylkill county to resist future conscription efforts. In addition, the Mollies allegedly threatened to burn the homes and mines of prominent Republicans to resist the drafting of the miners.

Nineteen members of this group were eventually hanged - 10 of them alone on June 21, 1877, known as the "Day of the Rope." Their deeds, and even their very existence, have become the stuff of legend.

*... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PCC*

## Weapons of War – Agar Gun

In August 1861, President Abraham Lincoln witnessed a demonstration of a new rapid fire machine gun, and was impressed. "I saw this gun myself, and witnessed some experiments with it, and I really think it is worth the attention of the Government."

What he witnessed was the new rapid-fire Agar machine gun, named for its inventor, Wilson Agar. It was also sometimes called a 'Coffee Mill Gun' or a 'Union Repeating Gun'. The nickname, 'Coffee Mill Gun', came about because the crank and funnel-shaped ammunition hopper on the top of the weapon looked a bit like an everyday kitchen coffee grinder.

Shortly after the demonstration, the President ordered that the 10 available examples of the new weapon be purchased immediately. The cost: \$1,300 each - which was a substantial outlay at the time. Later in the year, Gen. George McClellan ordered 50 more Agars – at a reduced cost of \$735 each – and Gen. Benjamin Butler purchased 2 more. In 1862, Gen. John Fremont purchased an additional 2 Agars at \$1,500 each.



The Agar machine guns were unique in a several ways. It fired a standard 58-caliber paper cartridge (the same size as used in the common Enfield and Springfield rifled muskets), but the paper cartridges were first loaded into the open end of a reusable metal tube. The opposite end of the metal tube had a nipple on which the operator placed a percussion cap. Then the 'loaded' metal tube, or round, was dropped into the funnel shaped hopper on the top of the gun – and was now ready to be fired.



**2¾ inch-long reusable metal tube used to hold paper cartridges. They were expensive to produce, heavy, and easily lost in the field**



**Open end of the metal tube for inserting the paper cartridges**



**Opposite end of the metal tube has a nipple to hold a percussion cap**



**Percussion cap installed on nipple**

To [fire the Agar gun](#), the operator turned a hand crank located at the rear of the weapon. The crank fed the loaded metal tubes (rounds) into the weapon from the hopper, and the rounds fired one-by-one with each turn of the crank. A cam-operated hammer would strike the percussion cap on the end the tube, providing a spark to cause the paper cartridge inside the tube to fire. After a cartridge was fired, its empty metal tube would collect in a pan underneath the weapon. The metal tubes were then cleaned, reloaded with a fresh cartridge, a percussion cap was inserted on the nipple, and then the tube was placed back into the hopper on top to be fired again. This firing/loading procedure was a challenge for the gun crews, because the tubes had to be reloaded quickly enough to keep up with the machine gun's relatively high rate of fire.

Since the Agar machine gun could fire many rounds per minute, its barrel was prone to overheating. The gun crews usually had two replacement barrels on hand, in order to swap out the barrel in use when it became dangerously hot. Agar also added a cooling mechanism to the barrel, which consisted of a metal jacket through which cooler air was forced in, powered by the same hand crank that was used to fire the weapon. This cooling air also served to blow away

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## Weapons of War – Agar Gun *(continued)*

any pieces of unburned paper from the spent cartridges that happened to drift near the hot barrel. The Agars rate of fire was limited to 120 rounds per minute, which also helped to prevent overheating.

The Agar machine gun also had a steel shield installed in front of the hopper. This new design feature was not present on other machine guns of the period. This gave the Agar a much more modern appearance, since single barrel machine guns with similar shields became common during World War I.

During the Civil War, the Agars were used only sparingly. The various types of rapid-fire guns were denounced by the Ordnance Department for using too much ammunition to ever be practical. So the Agars saw little use on the battlefield, and were usually deployed in remote locations to guard bridges and narrow passes.

However, some of these unique weapons did serve in battle theaters. For example, in January 1862 the 28<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry were said to have used Agar Guns in a skirmish near Harpers Ferry.



*Left: 96<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry with an Agar gun at Camp Northumberland near Washington - February 1862*

In another skirmish at Middleburg, Virginia, on March 29, 1862, Captain Bartlett recalled seeing Union soldiers firing an Agar Gun at “attacking Confederate cavalry at a distance of 800 yards, inflicting many casualties and causing the Rebels to flee.” The “Coffee Mill” gun also saw action during McClellan’s Peninsula Campaign in 1862.

The Confederacy also had the opportunity to experience using ‘Coffee Mill Guns’. When they captured Harpers Ferry in September 1862, they obtained 17 Agars – but only used them sparingly in 1864.

At the end of the day, the Agar rapid-fire machine guns did not have a stellar reputation due to reportedly performing poorly in the field. In addition to overheating, the weapon was also prone to jamming. The Agars were also criticized for having an effective range of only about 800 yards - roughly the same as the range of an infantrymen’s rifled musket. Weapons with a much longer range were generally preferred. At the end of the war in 1865, the few surviving Agar machine guns were sold off for \$500 each.

*... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PCC*

## Letters From the Front

“March 29<sup>th</sup> (1863)

I will write you a few lines to let you know that I am yet quite well. We have had a small battle here in which several were wounded and several were taken prisoner. I am detailed to perform duty as a teamster which I like pretty well. The weather here is good and the trees are getting green.

Dear father enclosed I send you \$20 - I have not much time to write, for we are on the March every day. Dear father this is written very badly but my friend Harris who wrote my letters is dead. Dear parents heartfilled greetings to you from your son.” (signed Ernest Arndt)

*Letter written in German, sent by Earnest Arndt to his father in Berlin. He was serving with Co. F, 22<sup>nd</sup> Michigan, having enlisted August 7, 1862. He was assigned as Brigade Teamster on October 24, 1862, and died April 23, 1865 at Chattanooga, Tennessee.*

## The Medal of Honor – 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary *(continued from page 3)*



*Left: Sgt. John Morehead Scott – one of seven men executed by the Confederates for espionage after Andrews Raid, aka. The Great Locomotive Chase.*

*Right: The Medal of Honor which was awarded posthumously in 1866 to Sgt. Scott - currently on exhibit at the Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History in Kennesaw, Georgia.*



Signal Quartermaster Robert Williams was the first member of the *U.S. Navy* to be presented with the *Medal of Honor*. He received the award for his December 1862 actions during the *Yazoo River Expedition* in Mississippi, while serving on the *USS Benton*. Williams received his *Medal* on board the *USS North Carolina* in the Brooklyn Navy Yard on May 15, 1863. His citation reads:

*For extraordinary heroism in action while serving as Quartermaster on board the USS Benton during the Yazoo River (Mississippi) Expedition, 23 to 27 December 1862. Taking part in the hour-and-a-half engagement with the enemy at Drumgould's Bluff, 27 December, Signal Quartermaster Williams served courageously throughout that battle against hostile forces in which the enemy had the dead range of the vessel and were punishing her with heavy fire and, for various other action in which he took part during the Yazoo River Expedition.*

The first member of the *U.S. Marine Corps* to receive the *Medal of Honor* was Cpl. John Freeman Mackie. He received the award in July 1863 for his May 15, 1862 action aboard the *USS Galena*. His citation reads:

*On board the U.S.S. Galena, in the attack on Fort Darling, at Drewry's Bluff, James River, on May 15, 1862. As enemy shellfire raked the deck of his ship, Corporal Mackie fearlessly maintained his musket fire against the rifle pits along the shore and, when ordered to fill vacancies at guns caused by men wounded and killed in action, manned the weapon with skill and courage.*

*Right: John Freeman Mackie*



1,522 *Medals of Honor* were awarded for heroic actions during the Civil War. It was the only military decoration attainable by a member of the *U.S. Armed Forces* during that era. On occasion, the *Medal* was awarded for reasons that would not satisfy later more stringent criteria. During 1916 and 1917, an Army board, consisting of 5 retired generals, reviewed all the previously awarded *Medals of Honor*, and subsequently determined that 911 of them were erroneously bestowed.

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## The Medal of Honor – 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (continued)

For example, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton had promised a *Medal of Honor* to every man in the 27<sup>th</sup> Maine Volunteer Infantry Regiment who extended his enlistment. The offer was accepted by 311 men of the unit. But because there was no official list of their names, the War Department simply issued *Medals* to all 864 men of the 27<sup>th</sup> Maine! In 1917, the Army board recommended that all 864 of those awards be revoked.



It was common for Civil War *Medals of Honor* to be awarded decades after the conflict ended – some posthumously. Andrew Jackson Smith's *Medal* was not awarded until 2001, an incredible 137 years after his heroic action at the *Battle of Honey Hill* in South Carolina. His wait had been caused by a missing battle report. Until 2014, it had been the longest delay for any recipient.

**Left: Cpl. Andrew Jackson Smith, 55<sup>th</sup> Mass. Vol. Infantry**

But on November 6, 2014, President Obama awarded the *Medal of Honor* to 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alonzo Cushing for his actions at the *Battle of Gettysburg* – a delay of 151 years!

**Right: 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Alonzo Hereford Cushing, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. Light Artillery**



Contract acting-Assistant Surgeon Mary Edwards Walker became the only woman, and one of only eight civilians awarded a *Medal of Honor*. Since there was no precedent for commissioning a female as an officer or enlisted service member, President



Andrew Johnson took it upon himself to personally award the *Medal* to her as a 'commendatory acknowledgment'. Thus, Walker had not been formally recommended for the *Medal of Honor*.

**Far left: Mary Edwards Walker wearing her *Medal of Honor* - ca. 1870**

**Near Left: Mary Edwards Walker at a later date, again wearing her *Medal of Honor***

In 1917, she, along with civilian contractor William F. 'Buffalo Bill' Cody, had her name struck from the *Army Medal of Honor Roll* by the Army review board. In 1977, Walker's *Medal* was restored by a controversial recommendation by a *Board for Correction of Military Records*.

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## The Medal of Honor – 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (continued)

The design of the *Medal of Honor* evolved a few times since its introduction during the Civil War. The original medal designs were worn by recipients pinned on their clothing. The current version of the *Medal of Honor* is the only U.S. Military medal that hangs around the neck. Here are examples of the Medal's evolution:

### U.S. Army



1862



1896



1904



Post 1944

### U.S. Navy



1862



1913



1919



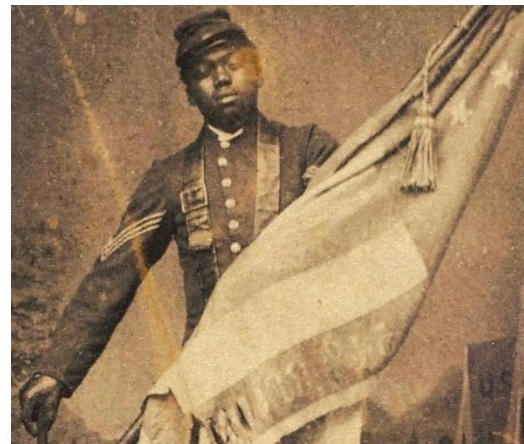
Post 1942

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## The Medal of Honor – 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (continued)

- Army officers were eligible to receive the *Medal of Honor* as of March 3, 1863, but incredibly, *Naval* and *Marine* Corps officers were not eligible until March 1915.
- At least 32 *Medals of Honor* were awarded to African Americans, including 16 sailors of the *Union Navy* and 16 soldiers of the *United States Colored Troops*.

*Right: Sgt. William Harvey Carney, 54<sup>th</sup> Mass. Colored Infantry - the first African-American Medal of Honor recipient, received the award in May 1900 for his actions at Fort Wagner on July 18, 1863.*



- In April 1916, Congress established a special tax-free *Medal of Honor* monthly pension of ten dollars for life. The pension also included annual cost-of-living increases, bringing the monthly stipend up to \$1,619 by 2022.
- 13-year-old musician William Johnston, one of the youngest *Medal of Honor* recipients, served with the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Vermont Infantry*. In July 1862, he earned the award for “Gallantry in Seven Day Battle and Peninsula campaign” – and was presented with his award in September 1863.

*Right: William Johnston in late 1863, wearing his Medal of Honor*



- On May 24, 1943, Signalman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Douglas A. Monro became the *first* member of the *U.S. Coast Guard* to be awarded the *Medal of Honor*. The award was presented posthumously to his mother by President Franklin Roosevelt. Monro was recognized for his heroism at Guadalcanal in September 1942 during World War II.
- The *U.S. Air Force* introduced their version of the *Medal of Honor* in 1965. Major Bernard Fisher was the *first* recipient, being recognized for his March 1966 actions in Viet Nam. The *Medal* was presented by President Lyndon Johnson at the White House in January 1967. Prior to 1965, all airmen recipients had received the *Army Medal*.
- The selling of a *Medal of Honor* is illegal in the U.S., and is punishable by fines up to \$100,000 and one year in jail.
- Although not required by military regulations, members of the uniformed services are encouraged to render salutes to recipients of the *Medal of Honor* - as a matter of respect and courtesy - *regardless of rank*, or whether or not they are in uniform.
- The disenrolled *Medal* recipients were *not* ordered to return their medals.
- In addition to a lifelong monthly pension stipend, *Medal of Honor* recipients have special “space available” free air transportation privileges and also receive invitations to attend Presidential Inaugurations and accompanying festivities. The children of *Medal of Honor* recipients can attend the military academies without the usual nomination requirement - and regardless of quota requirements.
- Only 7 *Medals of Honor* have been awarded since the *Vietnam War*, all posthumously – two for service in Somalia, one in Afghanistan, and four in Iraq.

*... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PCC*

*Editor’s note: Since December 2015, each issue of the Harriett Lane has featured Naval Medal of Honor recipients*

## Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 28)

The *Medal of Honor* is the highest military honor awarded by the United States for personal acts of valor above and beyond the call of duty. It was first awarded during the Civil War after President Lincoln signed a bill on December 21, 1861 containing a provision for the medal for the Navy. It was "to be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen, and Marines as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry and other seamanlike qualities during the present war."

Right: **Navy Version of the original Medal of Honor (1862)**

*Editor's note: With this issue of the Harriet Lane, in honor of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN - the namesake of our Camp, I am continuing to present a review of the recipients of the Medal of Honor who served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War.*



- **Daniel Lakin - Seaman** – Daniel Lakin enlisted with the Union Navy from New York in October 1861. He served aboard the steamer *USS Commodore Perry*, which was one of three gunboats deployed during a planned joint expedition of U.S. Navy and Army forces. The objective of the expedition was to attack the Confederate forces which were gathering at Franklin, Virginia. The October 3, 1862 assault was planned as a two-pronged attack, with the naval gunboats supporting an infantry advance.

Right: ***USS Commodore Perry***



However, communication delays caused the Union Navy to begin their attack along the Blackwater River before the Army was ready to move in. The early-arriving Union Naval forces found themselves unsupported and

greatly outnumbered by Confederate infantrymen. After a hot exchange of gunfire, the Federal gunboats were forced to retreat. For his heroic actions during the aborted Naval attack, Lakin was awarded a *Medal of Honor*, and promoted from Seaman to acting Master's Mate. He received his Medal on April 3, 1863. In August 1864, Lakin was promoted to acting Ensign, and was honorably discharged on September 25, 1865. His *Medal of Honor* citation reads:

*On board the USS Commodore Perry in the attack upon Franklin, Va., 3 October 1862. With enemy fire raking the deck of his ship and blockades thwarting her progress, Lakin remained at his post and performed his duties with skill and courage as the Commodore Perry fought a gallant battle to silence many rebel batteries as she steamed down the Blackwater River.*

- **John S. Lann - Landsman** – John S. Lanning was born in August 1843 in Rochester, New York. In July 1861, he enlisted with the 1<sup>st</sup> *New York Independent Battery Light Artillery*. He served with that Battery until the *Battle of Antietam* in September 1862, during which he was seriously injured and eventually sent home. After recovering, Lanning tried to return to his unit, but was rejected. So instead, he joined the *U.S. Navy* under the name John S. Lann from New York.

By March 5, 1865, Lanning (as Lann) was serving as a Landsman on the *USS Magnolia*. On that day and the next, he assisted a Union Army force during the *Battle of Natural Bridge* near St. Marks, Florida. He helped transport and

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## Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy *(Part 28 continued)*

fire a naval howitzer throughout the engagement despite heavy Confederate fire. For this action, he was awarded the *Medal of Honor*. The *Medal* was issued under the name he had enlisted with, John S. Lann. He was one of six sailors to receive the *Medal* for manning artillery pieces during that battle. His *Medal of Honor* citation reads:

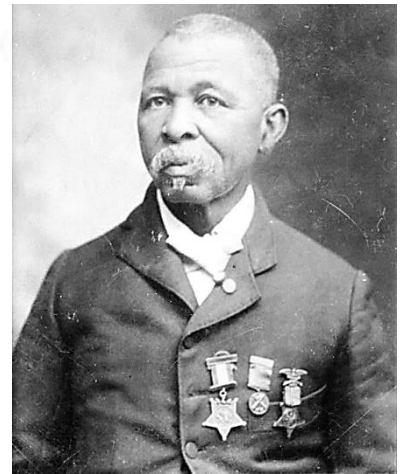
*As landsman on board the U.S.S. Magnolia, St. Marks, Fla., 5 and 6 March, Lann served with the Army in charge of Navy howitzers during the attack on St. Marks and throughout this fierce engagement made remarkable efforts in assisting transport of the gun. His coolness and determination in standing by his gun while under the fire of the enemy were a credit to the service to which he belonged.*

- **John Henry Lawson - Landsman** – John Henry Lawson was born in June 1837 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He enlisted the U.S. Navy from New York in December 1863 and served on the sloop-of-war steamer, *USS Hartford*. On August 5, 1864 during the *Battle of Mobile Bay*, while serving as a member of the ship's berth deck ammunition party, he was seriously wounded after a shell fragment struck him in the leg. The rest of his crew was killed or wounded by the shell.

Despite his wounds, Lawson remained at his post and continued to supply the *Hartford*'s guns. He was one of twelve men who received the *Medal of Honor* for heroism that day.

### John Henry Lawson

After leaving the Navy in July 1865, Lawson returned to the Philadelphia area, where he raised a large family and earned his living as a huckster. He died in Philadelphia on May 3, 1919 at age 81, and was buried in Mount Peace Cemetery in Lawnside, New Jersey.



Above: **New military grave marker for John Henry Lawson**

Left: ***USS Hartford, ca. 1858***

Over time, Lawson's tombstone deteriorated to the point that it became unreadable. In addition, a fire at the cemetery offices destroyed burial records and the cemetery map - making his exact resting place unknown. On April 24, 2004 a new tombstone was dedicated in John Lawson's honor and placed among at least 72 other Civil War veterans who are buried at Mount Peace. The new headstone was dedicated at a ceremony attended by veteran's groups, politicians, several of Lawson's descendants, and local community members.



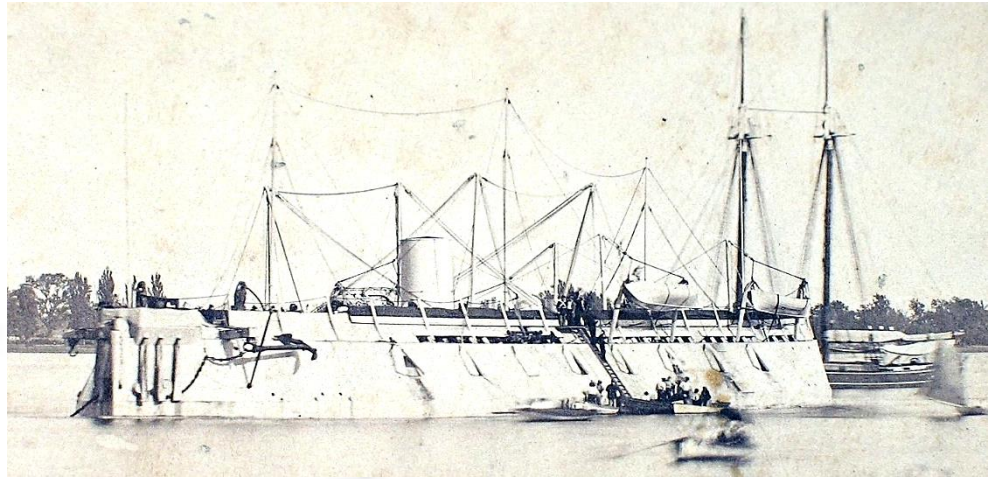
*... continued on next page*

## Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 28 continued)

- **Nicholas Lear - Quartermaster** – Nicholas Lear was born in 1826 in Rhode Island. In August 1862, he enlisted for a three-year term in the U.S. Navy. Lear was assigned to the wooden-hulled Union ironclad *USS New Ironsides*. He was awarded a *Medal of Honor* for his actions on December 24-25, 1864, and also on January 13-15, 1865.

Right: *USS New Ironsides*

Lear died in July 1902 at age 75 and is interred at Mount Moriah Cemetery in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His Medal of Honor citation reads:



*“The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to [Quartermaster Nicholas Lear], United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving on board the USS New Ironsides during action in several attacks on Fort Fisher, North Carolina, 24 and 25 December 1864; and 13, 14, and 15 January 1865. The ship steamed in and took the lead in the ironclad division close inshore and immediately opened its starboard battery in a barrage of well-directed fire to cause several fires and explosions and dismount several guns during the first two days of fighting. Taken under fire as she steamed into position on 13 January, the New Ironsides fought all day and took on ammunition at night despite severe weather conditions. When the enemy came out of his bombproofs to defend the fort against the storming party, the ship's battery disabled nearly every gun on the fort facing the shore before the ceasefire order was given by the flagship.”*

- **James H. Lee - Seaman** – James H. Lee was born on Long Island, New York in 1840. His family moved to Buffalo, New York while he was a young boy. Orphaned before the age of 10, Lee lived in Baldwinsville and North Stirling in upstate New York. He went to sea as a young man, embarking on a 3-year voyage in the Pacific Ocean. The Civil War had broken out by the time Lee returned to the U.S. He then enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and reported for duty at Boston.

On June 19, 1864, Lee he was serving as a Seaman on the sloop-of-war *USS Kearsarge* when she fought the commerce raider *CSS Alabama* off Cherbourg, France. He was awarded his *Medal of Honor* for gallantry under fire while serving as the sponger of the ship's Number 1 gun. Lee didn't learn about his commendation until after he was discharged from the Navy, and said he had no idea what he had done during the battle to distinguish himself so highly.

After the war, Lee lived in Oswego, New York. He was noted by his neighbors as an intelligent and honest man who was "untiring in the discharge of every duty." He died there in August 1877 of a "brain fever" (probably a case of either encephalitis or meningitis) at age 36-37. He was buried in Oswego Rural Cemetery. His *Medal of Honor* citation reads:

*“Served as seaman on board the U.S.S. Kearsarge when she destroyed the Alabama off Cherbourg, France, June 19, 1864. Acting as sponger of the No. 1 gun during this bitter engagement, Lee exhibited marked coolness and good conduct and was highly recommended for his gallantry under fire by the divisional officer.”*

... to be continued next issue with Part 29

## Upcoming Camp Activities

- Apr 15, 2023**      **Camp Business Meeting** - 10 a.m.  
Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
- Apr 28, 2023**      **Social Reception for SUVCW CinC Bruce Frail** – 6 p.m.  
Contact the Camp Cmdr. for time and location information.
- Apr 29, 2023**      **29<sup>th</sup> Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas and Louisiana** – 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
The Tea Room at the Heritage Society Museum, Sam Houston Park  
1100 Bagby St., Houston, Texas
- May 20, 2023**      **Camp Business Meeting** - 10 a.m.  
Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
- May 31, 2023**      **Memorial Day 2023** - G.A.R. plot graveside ceremony - 10:30 a.m.  
Washington Cemetery  
2911 Washington Ave, Houston, Texas
- May 31, 2023**      **Memorial Day 2023** - Ceremony, musket salute, and cannon firing – 9 a.m.  
Houston National Cemetery  
10410 Veterans Memorial Dr, Houston, Texas
- Jun 10, 2023**      **Camp Business Meeting** - 10 a.m.  
Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
- Jul 8, 2023**      **Camp Business Meeting** - 10 a.m.  
Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas

## 2023 Camp Officers, Staff, and Social Media Links

Commander	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>	camp2commander@txsuv.org	<b>Camp Council</b>	<b>Ben C. Bonnett</b>
Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>Daniel B. Poureau</b>	camp2svc@txsuv.org	<b>Camp Council</b>	<b>Stevenson T. Holmes</b>
Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>Jason D. Hoffman</b>	joincamp2@txsuv.org	<b>Camp Council</b>	<b>Thomas F. Coughlin</b>
Secy./Treas.	<b>Stephen D. Schulze</b>	camp2secretary@txsuv.org		

Chaplain	<b>Stephen F. Duncan</b>	Graves Regis. Officer	<b>Terry T. Sutton</b>
Patriotic Instructor	<b>Ronald S. Brock</b>	Civil War Mem. Officer	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>
Historian	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>	G.A.R. Records Officer	<b>Herbert W. Powers</b>
Color Bearer	<b>William D. Myers</b>	Facebook Mgr.	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>
Guide	<b>Thomas F. Coughlin</b>	Webmaster	<b>Thomas M. Eishen</b>
Guard	<b>Lee R. Wallace</b>	Zoom Facilitator	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>
Signals Officer	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>	Newsletter Editor	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>
JROTC Coord.	<b>Daniel B. Poureau</b>	Assist. Newsletter Edit.	<b>Daniel B. Poureau</b>
Eagle Scout Coord.	<b>Ben C. Bonnett</b>	Assistant Webmaster	<b>Robert G. Riley</b>

Website – Houston Camp	<a href="https://www.camplea.org/">https://www.camplea.org/</a>
Website – Dept. of TX and LA	<a href="http://www.txsuv.org/">http://www.txsuv.org/</a>
Facebook – Houston Camp	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/LtCmdrEdwardLeaCamp2HoustonSUVCW/">https://www.facebook.com/LtCmdrEdwardLeaCamp2HoustonSUVCW/</a>
Facebook – Dept. of Texas	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/SUVCW.TX.LA/">https://www.facebook.com/SUVCW.TX.LA/</a>

## Signature Photo



**Camp Cmdr. John C. Vander Meulen and  
Sisters of the Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent #4 of Houston, Texas  
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War**

Brother Vander Meulen was invited as guest speaker for the *DUVCW Tent* business meeting  
February 24, 2023

*“When I had left camp that morning I had not expected so soon the result that was then taking place,  
and consequently was in rough garb. I was without a sword,  
as I usually was when on horseback on the field, and wore a soldier's blouse for a coat,  
with the shoulder straps of my rank to indicate to the army who I was.  
When I went into the house I found General Lee.  
We greeted each other, and after shaking hands took our seats.”*

From the Personal Memoirs of Gen. Ulysses S. Grant  
Regarding his April 1865 encounter with Gen. Robert E. Lee at the McLean House, Appomattox Court House, VA