



THE UNIONIST

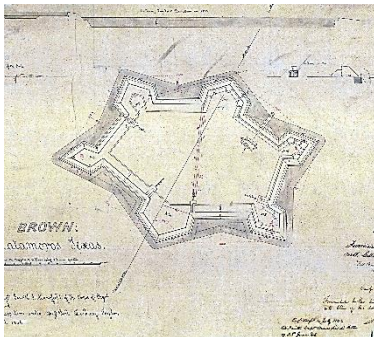
The Official Newsletter of the
Department of Texas and Louisiana
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR



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No. 3



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Cover Image “The Forlorn Hope” – *1st Maine Heavy Artillery, Battle of Petersburg, June 18, 1864* – Civil War digital artwork by Don Troiani

Brownsville National Cemetery

This article is about a little-known National Cemetery in far south Texas. The story includes the oldest U.S. military installation in Texas, the disinterment of hundreds of Union veterans, and even international intrigue. It was brought to light by Department Graves Registration Officer Terry T. Sutton. Let's start at the beginning....

On April 25, 1846, Mexican troops crossed the Rio Grande River and attacked U.S. soldiers commanded by General Zachary Taylor. The fighting took place in Texas between the Rio Grande and Nueces Rivers. Sixteen U.S. troopers were killed or wounded as a result. It seems the exact location of the border between Mexico and the U.S. was hotly contested after the U.S. annexed Texas in December 1845.

Right: Rivers of South Texas

General Taylor had been ordered by President James Polk to occupy the disputed area between the two rivers. The attack by the Mexicans compelled President Polk to advise Congress that Mexico had *"invaded our territory and shed American blood on American soil."* The Mexican-American War was thus ignited!



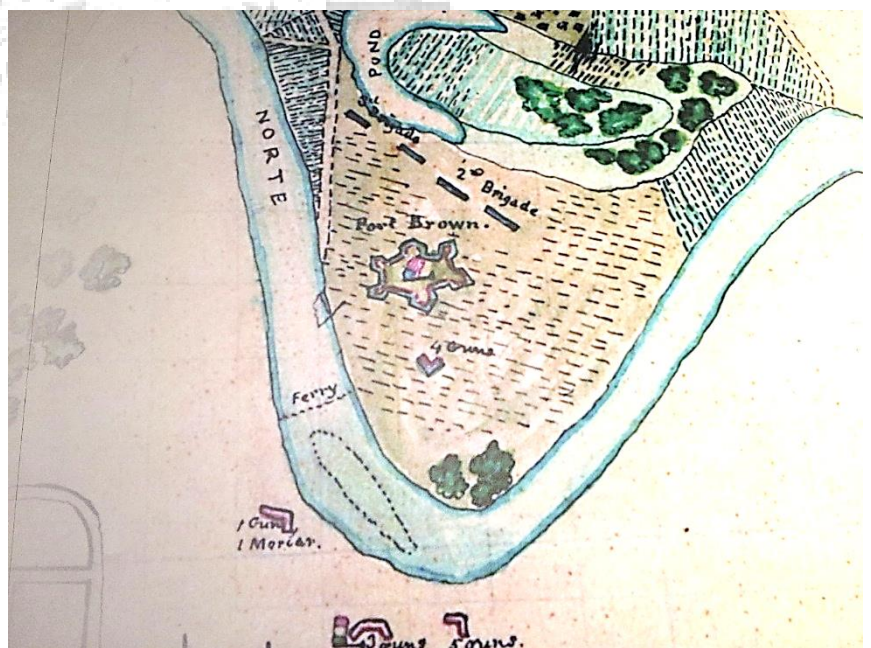
To provide protection for his 'Army of Occupation' forces, General Taylor ordered the construction of an earthwork fort near the north bank of the Rio Grande. The resulting fortification was unofficially referred to as *Fort Texas* and was built to house 800 men.

Shaped like an irregular six-sided star, the walls were 9 feet high and 15 feet wide. A moat 20 feet wide and 8 feet deep surrounded the structure.

Right: Sketch of Fort Texas/Fort Brown

A number of bomb-proofs and powder magazines were built inside the fort to provide shelter for the men and ammunition from incoming fire. Fort Texas was commanded by Major Jacob Brown.

Almost immediately, the Mexican forces, commanded by General Jose Mariano Arista, laid siege to the hastily built fort. Artillery fire from both armies pounded each other.



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Brownsville National Cemetery (continued)

The siege of Fort Texas lasted for six days but resulted in only two American casualties – one of which was the commanding officer, Major Brown. He had been struck in the leg by a cannonball on May 6th and died three days later, just hours before the siege ended. Despite his serious injury, Major Brown had provided moral support to his troops until he finally succumbed to his wound. His soldiers then renamed the fort as ‘Fort Brown’ in his honor.

Today, Fort Brown is memorialized on the *Brownsville Heritage Trail* with a historical marker. The marker reads:

This Earthen Fort Was Built By Gen. Zachary Taylor's Troops In 1846 And Was Originally Called Both 'Fort Taylor' And 'Fort Texas'. The Fort Featured Bastion Walls 9½ Feet High Forming An Irregular Six-Point Star. Most Sections Of The Earthworks Were Destroyed Early In This Century By Levee Construction. An Original Breastwork Section Is Visible In The Distance, Now Lower In Height Due To Erosion. The Mexican Siege And Bombardment Of This Fort Was A Precipitating Event In The Mexican-American War. Gen. Taylor Officially Named The Site Fort Brown "In Memory Of The Gallant Commander Who Nobly Fell In Its Defense".

Department Graves Registration Officer Terry T. Sutton took notice of Fort Brown during his research on Civil War veterans buried in Texas. He noted that a military cemetery had been located on the grounds of old Fort Brown and that U.S. soldiers had been interred there since the fort was first constructed – including Major Jacob Brown.

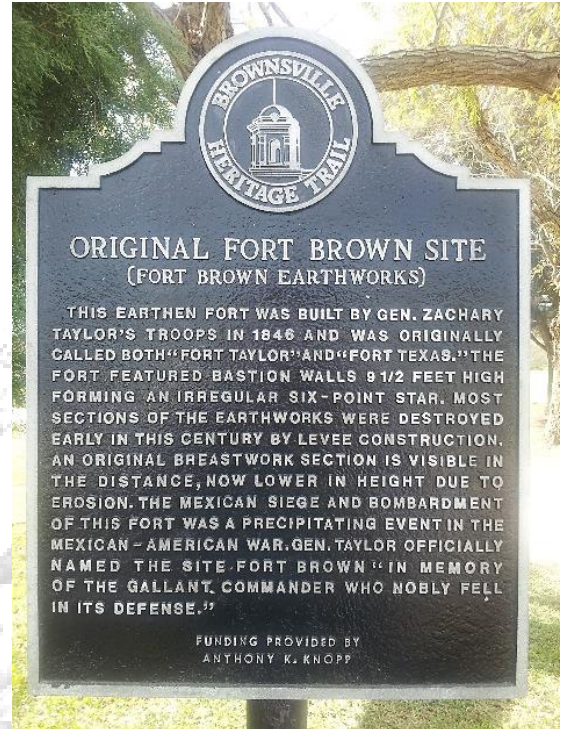
Following the Civil War, the old military cemetery at the fort was converted into a National Cemetery as a result of the passage of Public Law 37, the *Civil War and National Cemeteries Act of 1867*. This law reads in part:

Be it enacted...that in the arrangement of the national cemeteries established for the burial of deceased soldiers and sailors, the Secretary of War is hereby directed to have the same enclosed with a good and substantial stone or iron fence; and to cause each grave to be marked with a small headstone, or block, with the number of the grave inscribed thereon, corresponding with the number opposite to the name of the party, in a register of burials to be kept at each cemetery and at the Office of the Quartermaster General, which shall set forth the name, rank, company, regiment, and date of death of the officer or soldier; or if unknown, it shall be so recorded.

In 1868, the remains of 920 deceased Union soldiers were buried at Brownsville National Cemetery. They had been moved to Brownsville National from locations around the state. After 1868, additional reinterments were added, arriving from various Texas locations, including White Ranch, Brazos Santiago, Redmond Ranch, Roma, Ringgold Barracks, Victoria, Lavaca, Placido, Indianola and vicinity, Corpus Christi, and Port Isabel. By 1909, 3,783 soldiers had been buried at the cemetery, which included 183 officers and 3,600 enlisted men.

For the Union soldiers buried in Brownsville National Cemetery within Fort Brown, *their final resting place turned out not to be 'final' after all!*

Brother Sutton learned that although the old fort remained in service until 1945 when it was finally deactivated by the U.S. military, the soldiers buried in the National Cemetery there had actually been unearthed much earlier – in 1911 - and transported to Alexandria National Cemetery at Pineville, Louisiana. The headstones were not moved with the bodies.



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Brownsville National Cemetery (continued)



Laborers Exhuming U.S. Veterans at Brownsville National Cemetery in 1911

On Sunday, March 22, 1936, the *Brownsville Herald* published an account of the 1911 disinterment and removal of the remains of U.S. veterans from Brownsville National Cemetery. The following lightly edited excerpts are from that article:

MORE THAN 3,000 BODIES MOVED FROM CEMETERY AT FORT BROWN, LATER BURIED IN LOUISIANA War Dead Among Those Moved En Masse

Historic Fort Brown - Almost twenty years ago there was a military cemetery at the army post here. Located on what is known as the "island" in the center of the fort, the cemetery lay around a big flagpole, set by a large brick building in which lived the caretaker. The 183 graves of officers lay in a circle around the flagpole, while the graves of 3,600 enlisted men dotted the surrounding area.

This entire cemetery was moved, requiring the labor of 75 men for about three months, and is one of the interesting historical features of the army post here. The cemetery was moved by the late N. E. Rendall, a contractor who at the same time installed Brownsville's first sewer system and waterworks.

The cemetery at Fort Brown was started shortly after the [Mexican/American] war of 1848, bodies of the American soldiers who were killed at the battle of Resaca de la Palma, Palo Alto, and at Cadayreta, Mexico, the first engagement on Mexican soil, having been brought to the cemetery here after the war.

Few of these bodies were identified. According to E. A. Rendall, son of the contractor who moved the cemetery

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Brownsville National Cemetery (continued)

and who as a boy of nine was an interested spectator of the proceedings, there were about 1,100 gravestones on which there were no names, just numbers.

Most of the men who were killed in these battles were volunteers, and the records of events during the war were kept badly so that it was practically impossible to identify the dead. The soldiers then wore no identification tags as did those who fought in the World War.

More bodies were placed in the cemetery when the people of the United States fought a four-year war internally, many soldiers having been killed along the border in many brushes between the Confederates and the Federals. Soldiers at Fort Brown and Fort Ringgold, which sent their dead to the old cemetery here, died like flies during the yellow fever epidemic of 1885-86, and the cemetery received hundreds more bodies during that period. Most of these were bodies that could not, under rigid quarantine regulations of that period, be shipped to any other place.

By 1909 the Cemetery had about 3,600 graves of enlisted men and 183 officers. The decision to move the cemetery came that year when the army post was abandoned in the aftermath of the negro raid on the city.

The army advertised a contract to move the cemetery, and three bids were submitted. N. E. Rendall bidding \$18,700 and H. L. Pitch and B. E. Hinkley bidding larger amounts. The contract was awarded to Rendall, and he started the work in June, completing it in September.

The first obstacle that he encountered in executing the contract was in getting laborers. Not a one of them would touch the work without first going to the priest, confessing, and getting permission. This process took about two weeks, and the work was then started. The remains were dug up, placed in cloth containers, then encased in 38-inch frame boxes, and treated with creosol. The bodies of the officers were placed in full-length caskets.

When the laborers dug into the graves, they found that in a large number of them, blacksnakes had made their homes in the ground cavity.

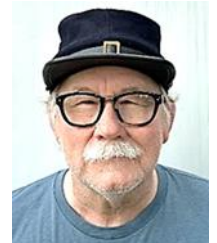
The remains occupied about five freight cars, and were shipped to Alexandria, La., where they were reburied in the military cemetery there and where they remain at present. [A] provision of the contract called for the contractor to take [possession of] the tombstones, and they were sold locally, some to stone cutters, and some for use as foundation stones for buildings."

As mentioned, Fort Brown remained active as a military post until after World War II. After a century of gradual erosion, the old fort received a fatal blow in the 1950s. Due to flooding problems, much of the earthen structure was bulldozed to build a levee along the Rio Grande. Only a small section of the original walls survives today, and the original cemetery grounds are occupied by the Fort Brown Motel.

Fortunately, preservation of the Fort Brown site is ongoing. Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park is currently involved in activities to stabilize the surviving earthworks, to protect the site, and to interpret the old historic fort as a unit of the park.

Meanwhile, hopefully, the deceased but well-traveled U.S. veterans referenced above are finally Resting in Peace!

... submitted by Terry T. Sutton, DGRO, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp No. 2, Houston
(edited and further researched by Michael L. Lance, DC/PCC)



142nd National Encampment - 2023

Saturday – 3-6 Aug 2023 - Houston, Texas

The 142nd Annual National Encampment of the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* was conducted in Nashua, New Hampshire on August 3 through August 6, 2023. The Encampment was hosted by the Department of New Hampshire, which did an outstanding job organizing and conducting the event, with our friend, Commander-in-Chief Bruce Frail presiding.

Six members of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* traveled to New Hampshire as Delegates to represent our Department. They included John E. Schneider Sr., PDC of Camp 18 and his wife Jill, John C. Vander Meulen, DSO and Commander of Camp 2, Terry T. Sutton, DGRO from Camp 2, Michael L. Lance, DC from Camp 2, Stephen D. Schulze, DChaplain from Camp 2, and Donald L. Gates, DST from Camp 18 and his wife, Susan.

In addition to the lengthy business meetings conducted on Friday and Saturday, the program also included a full schedule of other activities, including pre-encampment tours, a Joint Memorial Service with the Allied Orders, a fun-filled Campfire program with a live band honoring outgoing CinC Frail and Auxiliary National President Allison Pollitt, a beer and wine reception, a cocktail hour, a formal SVR Breakfast, an elegant dinner banquet, and a short Sunday morning religious service conducted by National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski.



John and Jill Schneider



Donald L. Gates



Terry T. Sutton

The business meetings were punctuated by lively discussion, the election of National officers, and the presentation of awards. The *Harriet Lane*, newsletter of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 received the coveted *Marshall Hope Award* for best Camp newsletter in the nation – the 4th time so honored over the past several years.

John Vander Meulen, in his role as Assistant National Secretary of Proceedings, played key role during the business sessions by working to ensure that the business meetings were recorded for transcription purposes. And John E. Schneider, Chair of the Department's National Encampment Host Committee met with the National Encampment Site Selection Committee and successfully articulated our bid to bring the National Encampment to Texas in 2025.

The Department was represented well at the National Encampment, and an enjoyable experience was had by all. Next year, the 143rd National Encampment will be held in Kentucky.

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, DC, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston

... continued on the next page with an additional photo

142nd National Encampment (continued)



Delegates from the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* in Nashua, New Hampshire

L-R: John E. Schneider Sr., John C. Vander Meulen, Terry T. Sutton, Michael L. Lance, Stephen D. Schulze, and Donald L. Gates

One of the most memorable moments of the National Encampment was a special Initiation ceremony for two new members. Past Commander-in-Chief Donald Darby instructed Chace Frail, age 8, and Colin Frail, age 6, to approach the Alter, grasp the standard of the U.S. flag, and repeat after him the Oath of Obligation.



"I Chase/Colin, in the presence of the great creator, and the witnessing members of this Encampment, hereby voluntarily and solemnly pledge myself to support and defend the government of the United States of America. To offer my life, if need be, to preserve the flag from being lowered in defeat. To always observe the day, set aside by the Grand Army of the Republic, as Memorial Day. Sacred to the memory of the Union soldiers and sailors of 1861 – 1865. To do all in my power to persuade others to do the same. To be faithful in all duties of citizenship, and to promote actively its objects and interests always and everywhere, so help me God."



... submitted by John C. Vander Meulen, Camp Commander, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston

Gen. James J. Byrne Camp #1 – Fort Worth

Memorial Day - Monday, 29 May 2023 – Fort Worth, Texas

Several members of *Gen. James J. Byrne Camp No. 1* assembled at Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth on Memorial Day. They gathered at the *G.A.R.* to conduct their annual Memorial Day ceremony.

Standing L-R:

**Craig Reves, Gene Willis,
Paul Kendall, Brian Glass,
David Appleton,
Todd Wilber, and Butch
Durham**

Sitting in front:

Camp Cmdr. Hal Hughes



The ceremony program included a musket salute in honor of our Nation's fallen veterans. The Honor Guard was commanded by Brian Glass, PDC



**Gene Willis, PDC (standing), and Camp Commander Hal Hughes
Observe the Musket Salute**

... Gen. James J. Byrne Camp #1 continued on next page

Gen. James J. Byrne Camp #1 – Fort Worth (continued)

Sunday, 11 Jun 2023 – Fort Worth, Texas

On Sunday, members of *Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1* visited Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth to clean the old military headstone marking the grave site of Captain William S. Parmley. Captain Parmley had served with *Co. B, 33rd Iowa Infantry* during the Civil War. After the war, he became a member of the *Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.)*.

In September 1884, *Fort Worth G.A.R. Post No. 4, Department of the Gulf* was organized in Fort Worth. Captain Parmley was named as the first commander of the new Post. However, he passed away shortly afterward - in March 1885. When the *G.A.R. Department of Texas* was formed later in 1885, *Fort Worth Post No. 4* was renamed as *Parmley Post No. 4* in honor of the recently deceased commander.



Above Left: Paul Kendall, PDC details the engraving on the headstone.

Above Right: Brother David Appleton works on the back side of the headstone.

Left: The old headstone is now clean and readable.

*... submitted by Camp SVC Todd Wilber,
Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1, Fort Worth*



Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 - Houston

Saturday, 27 May 2023 – Galveston, Texas

This morning, I placed U.S. flags in the Episcopal Cemetery in Galveston. They were placed at the graves of Lt. Cmdr. Lee, namesake of the Camp, and 1st Lt. George Frank Robie, a Medal of Honor recipient. I also placed flags at the marble monument commemorating the Soldiers and Sailors lost during the January 1, 1863 Battle of Galveston.



Grave Marker of 1st Lt. George Frank Robie



Monument Honoring Union Casualties from the 1863 Battle of Galveston



Grave marker of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea

Boy Scouts were also out putting flags on veterans' graves in the cemetery. The colors of the flags looked nice against the backdrop of the wildflowers that the city is allowing to grow throughout the cemetery. It was a beautiful sight.

... submitted by Camp Chaplain Stephen F. Duncan, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston



Juneteenth Celebration - Monday, 19 Jun 2013 – Galveston, Texas

The 44th Annual Al Edwards' Juneteenth Celebration was held once again at the historic Ashton Villa mansion on Broadway in Galveston, Texas. And once again, Brother Stephen Duncan ably portrayed Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger at the event. He was joined by Brothers Zane F. Hooper and Michael L. Lance, serving as his Federal armed guards.

Brother Duncan, as Maj. Gen. Granger, gave the welcoming address and then took a seat and observed the program with the guards. At the end of the program, he would return to the stage at the front of the crowded ballroom.

Right: Stephen Duncan, as Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger,

After a number of city, state, and federal legislators and other dignitaries gave greetings and speeches, including Galveston Mayor Craig Brown and U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, guards Hooper and Lance escorted the Major back to the podium. The room was hushed as all attention was riveted on the reading of *General Order 3*. After the reading, the program ended as the three-man Union unit marched from the stage.

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, DC/PCC, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston



... Lt. Edward Lea Camp #2 continued on next page

Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 – Houston (continued)

Memorial Day – Monday, 29 May 2023 – Houston, Texas

On Memorial Day 2023, several members of the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lee Camp No. 2* gathered at the *G.A.R.* plot in Washington Cemetery to render honors to the Union veterans buried there. They were joined by members of the *Sarah Emma Seeley Auxiliary #1, SUVCW*, and the *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent #4, DUVCW*.

Camp Cmdr. Vander Meulen opened the ceremony with remarks appropriate for the occasion, including: “As we render honors to these veterans today, may we do so while remembering how bravely they stood shoulder to shoulder on the bloody fields of battle fighting for liberty and the dear old Flag.” Then, in recognition that *Hail Columbia* was the national hymn these buried veterans would have been most familiar with, a rendition of that hymn was played while all attendees saluted the U.S. Flag.

Reading from their rituals book, members of the *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent #4, DUVCW*, reminded everyone how much the buried veterans pledged to exercise the greatest Christian virtue, *Charity*. Past President Susan Barry remarked, “Let each of us, like them, strive to exercise this virtue. May it be to us a guiding star urging us to strive to nobler acts of kindness and charity.”

Sister Gail Johnson then gave a biographical sketch of Sarah Emma Edmonds Seeley, one of the veterans buried in the *G.A.R.* plot. This reading was followed by the laying of two wreaths, one by Valerie Reyes, President of the *Auxiliary*, and the other by Rebecca Feaster, President of the *DUVCW* Tent. Brother Herbert Powers then provided a biographical sketch of another veteran, Ensign John Reagan, which was followed by the Navy Hymn, *Eternal Father Strong to Save*.

Those in attendance then proceeded to respectfully lay roses and small US flags at the graves of each veteran buried in the plot, while music, *Hymn to the Fallen*, played in the background. An Honor Guard, consisting of Brothers Stephen Schulze and Michael Rappe, then rendered a musket salute, which was immediately followed by *Echo Taps*.

Sister Feaster then read the poem, *When the Boys in Blue are Gone*. Afterward, Cmdr. Vander Meulen offered his closing remarks and thanked everyone for participating in the special ceremony. He ended with the phrase, “Taps are sounded, lights are out, the soldiers sleep.” To see a video recording of the event, visit [SUVCW Houston](#).



Members of the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp No. 2*, and Sisters of both the *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary No. 2* and *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent No. 4, DUVCW*

... submitted by John C. Vander Meulen, Commander, *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston*

... *Lt. Edward Lea Camp #2* continued on next page

Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 – Houston (continued)

Memorial Day – Monday, 29 May 2023 – Houston, Texas

Memorial Day ceremonies were conducted within the Hemicycle at Houston National Cemetery in Houston on Monday, May 29, 2023. Veterans of various wars, Scout Troops, JROTC units, veteran organizations of many stripes, dignitaries, politicians, and patriotic citizens gathered once again to celebrate and honor our fallen heroes.



Daniel B. Poureau, Jason Hoffman, and Michael Lance of *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp No. 2* combined with members of *Co. A, 13th US Infantry Regiment* to form an impressive Color Guard and armed Honor Guard. The Federal unit had the honor of signaling the start of the program by firing a single volley just outside the Hemicycle.

During the *Parade of Remembrance*, the 10-man Federal Color Guard unit was introduced and then marched in, led by Capt. Tommy Attaway, commanding. After saluting, the unit performed a right-wheel maneuver and exited the grounds.

Left: Federal Color Guard Advances during the Parade of Remembrance Ritual

About midway through the program, the attention of the crowd was drawn to the sky as a flight of vintage warbirds passed overhead in ‘Missing Man’ formation. The aviators gave an aerial salute with one of the aircraft dramatically splitting off from the formation. As the program drew to a close, the Federal unit converted into an Honor Guard. They assembled inside the Hemicycle at the edge of the parade grounds and, on cue, offered a 7-gun three-volley salute.



Federal Honor Guard Fires a Volley



At PRESENT ARMS during Taps

From the top level of the Hemicycle, a pair of excellent buglers, one on each side, sounded ‘Echo Taps’ immediately after the 3rd volley. The blue-clad men were immediately ordered to ‘PRESENT ARMS’. Thick gun smoke filled the air around them. It was a solemn and fitting end to an excellent tribute to our Nation’s fallen servicemen and women.

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, DC/PCC, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston

... Lt. Edward Lea Camp #2 continued on next page

Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 – Houston (continued)

Memorial Day - Monday, 29 May 2023 – Riverton, Wyoming

Beginning at 10 a.m. on Memorial Day, a formal service honoring our nation's fallen servicemen and women was conducted at Mountain View Cemetery in Riverton, Wyoming. Representatives of several patriotic and heritage organizations participated in the event.



Brother Karl Falken of the *Lt. Edward Lea Camp*, who currently resides in Riverton, attended in a full Civil War-era Cavalry uniform to represent the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. He made a brief declaration of honor to our fallen heroes, then placed a wreath in commemoration.

Karl Falken advances with a wreath and places it on a display stand

Post 27 American Legion Riders had placed U.S. flags along the near roadways and around the grounds, including at most of the 2,300 veteran graves in the cemetery. Local veterans and dozens of members of the community had gathered to observe the ceremony.



... submitted by Brother Karl Falken, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston

Trivia – Red Poppies of Flanders Field

From 1914 to 1918, World War I took a greater human toll than any previous conflict, with some 8.5 million soldiers dead of battlefield injuries or disease. The Great War, as it was then known, also ravaged the landscape of Western Europe, where most of the fiercest fighting took place. From the devastated landscape of the battlefields, the red poppy would grow and, thanks to a famous poem, become a powerful symbol of remembrance.

Across northern France and Flanders (northern Belgium), the brutal clashes between Allied and Central Powers soldiers tore up fields and forests, tearing up trees and plants and wreaking havoc on the soil beneath. But in the warm early spring of 1915, bright red flowers began peeking through the battle-scarred land. The blooms were *Papaver rhoeas*, known variously as the Flanders poppy, corn poppy, red poppy, and corn rose. As Chris McNab, author of *The Book of the Poppy*, wrote in an excerpt published in the Independent, the brilliantly colored flower is actually classified as a weed, which makes sense given its tenacious nature.



Lt. Col. John McCrae, a Canadian who served as a brigade surgeon for an Allied artillery unit, spotted a cluster of poppies that spring, shortly after the *Second Battle of Ypres*. McCrae tended to the wounded and got a firsthand look at the carnage of that clash, in which the Germans unleashed lethal chlorine gas for the first time in the war. Some 87,000 Allied soldiers were killed, wounded, or went missing in the battle (*as well as 37,000 on the German side*).

Struck by the sight of bright red blooms on broken ground, McCrae wrote a poem, "In Flanders Field," in which he channeled the voice of the fallen soldiers buried under those hardy poppies. Published in *Punch* magazine in late 1915, the poem would be used at countless memorial ceremonies and became one of the most famous works of art to emerge from the Great War. Its fame had spread far and wide by the time McCrae himself died, from pneumonia and meningitis, in January 1918.

... from *'The WWI Origins of the Poppy as a Remembrance Symbol'*, by Sarah Pruitt, on *History.com*, first published in 2017

Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp #5 - Shreveport

Saturday, 26 Aug 2023 – Marshall Civic Center, Marshall, Texas



Members of the *W. W. Heartsill Camp 2042*, SCVCW set up and worked a recruiting booth at the Marshall Civic Center during the last weekend of August.

Since the SCV Camp had members who belonged to both the SCVCW and the SUCVW, visitors to the booth were invited to learn about and join one organization or the other - *or both!*

Left: Brother William 'Bill' Elliott standing on the far left

... submitted by William M. Elliott, Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport

Brother William 'Bill' Elliott serves as Secretary/Treasurer of *Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5*, SUCVW of Shreveport, Louisiana. He is also the current Commander of *W. W. Heartsill Camp 2042* SCVCW.

Under Brother Elliott's leadership, his SCV Camp won the coveted Superior Camp Award at the 128th SCVCW National Reunion in Hot Springs, Arkansas. This award is presented as the 2nd best Camp in the Division of the Trans-Mississippi Army.

Right: Cmdr. William Elliott (on right) receiving the Superior Camp Award

Congratulations are in order for Commander Elliott and the members of his SCV Camp!



... submitted by William M. Elliott, Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport

Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp #18

Memorial Day - Monday, 22 Apr 2023 - Denison, Texas



On Memorial Day, May 29, 2023, members of *Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth, Camp #18*, gathered to honor the Civil War veterans buried at Fairview Cemetery in Denison, Texas. Brother John Schneider, who is also Commander of *Texas State Commandery, MOLLUS*, gave the welcoming address. The Honor Guard was commanded by Brother Brook Thomas, who is also Commander of *Co. K, 1st U.S. Infantry, SVR*.

Left: Color Guard commanded by Camp Cmdr. Brook Thomas

The formal ceremony included the placing of a wreath at the G.A.R. monument, the decoration of thirty-eight Union graves, a cannon volley, historic readings, a musket salute, and live music performed by the *Heritage Brass Band*.



... submitted by
Donald Gates, PDC
Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth
Camp 18



Trivia – Colors in Action



At Antietam, a Federal unit found itself facing a furious charge launched by men of the Sixth Georgia Regiment. Union color bearer George Horton had been shot through the arm two days earlier at South Mountain. Suddenly, a minie ball crashed into his ankle, giving him reason enough to abandon the fight. Because his role gave him unique responsibility, he shook his head at offers of assistance.

As an officer described the vivid moment: *“Horton had gone down, his foot shot off. The colors he had firmly planted in the ground. Several of us begged him to give us the colors, that we might save them. ‘Stay and defend them,’ was his answer. The enemy rushed on the colors. Horton with pistol held the flag upright, defended. It was a grand fight. A member of the Sixth Georgia, when not over a rod from the colors, fired, and Horton fell dead.”.*

... source: *Civil War Curiosities, pgs. 173-174, by Webb Garrison, 1994*

Department Patriotic Instructor's Message

August 2023 – From the Office of the National Patriotic Instructor

Brothers,

Another National Encampment has come and gone, and I want to take this time to thank Br. Bruce Frail, PCinC for trusting me with this position for his term as well as express my gratitude towards Br. Peter Hritsko, our new Commander-in-Chief of keeping me in the position for his term. I look forward to working with him this year. As we enter the last few months of our busy season, I look forward to seeing all of the hard work you all continue to do online.

With the coming school year, I hope that all Brothers, Camps, and Departments look into teaming up with local schools to honor the boys in blue through either school presentations, scholarships, ROTC Collaborations, or by helping with back-to-school needs.

For a while now I have mentioned that interacting with our communities is the best way for us to complete our multiple missions; Remembering the Boys in Blue, Teaching the History of the Civil War, Promoting Patriotic Values, and Promoting the Order just to name a few of them.

By working with schools as students go back, or during the school year, we can accomplish many of these missions. Many of our current school programs tackle a few of these items, if not all, which is even more of a reason why we need to take advantage of this, as school-age parents will agree with me, most wonderful time of the year.

However, our standard presentations are just the tip of the iceberg in giving back to our communities during back-to-school season. Some additional ways that we can support our local communities during the back-to-school frenzy is by sponsoring different programs. What programs do you ask? Camps and Departments can sponsor school supply drives to help provide classrooms with supplies that they are in desperate need of. We can also sponsor backpack giveaways to those in our towns that might not be able to afford new backpacks and school supplies. These are just two ways in which we can support our local schools and students. I can already hear you asking, well how does this spread Patriotism?

In both examples, we can provide the students, teachers, administrators, and parents with literature on Patriotism that is available on the Patriotic Education page on our webpage (<https://suvchw.org/patriotic-education>). There is no wrong way to support our local schools, and I hope that your Camps and Departments will take the time this school year to discuss ways in which they might be able to.

As you might have guessed, my challenge to you all this month is to find some way to work with your local schools to spread Patriotism and succeed in our many missions. I look forward to hearing and seeing all the ways you interact with your local schools this year!

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,
Br. Ben Frail, PDC
National Patriotic Instructor



*... submitted by Department Patriotic Instructor William 'Bill' Elliott
Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport*

Department Chaplain's Corner

I found the following article on the internet. The author is Traci Rhoades. I'd like to share it with you. You Might Say 'Amen' Without Much Thought, but Here's What the Word Actually Means© Provided by Parade.

We come across the word "Amen" throughout the Old and New Testaments. Using Hebrew letters, אמן, or ἀμήν in ancient Greek, it's a word that's actually more than 2,500 years old! In Hebrew, it shares remarkable similarities to the word for "believe" (amam), meaning faithful.

But what is Amen's meaning, exactly? This is the linguistic skeleton of what has become a profoundly meaningful word for people of faith, although its religious impact has found its way into secular expressions as well. So, what do we really mean when we say "Amen"?

The word "Amen" is defined as "so be it" or "certainly." It's a phrase used in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. For Muslims, it's translated as "ameen," and said at the end of daily prayers, even repeated after particular phrases in those prayers. It is not a required ending, but is a common one.

The word "Amen" has long been considered part of Jewish liturgy, and carries a good deal of weight, similar to the idea of taking an oath. Jewish people might even draw the word out a bit, giving it greater emphasis.

In Christianity, "Amen" has been part of the liturgical makeup of worship services for centuries. It ends formal and spontaneous prayers. Christians use it in corporate and individual prayers. Here is an early prayer from a worship service found in the Didache (or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles), a Greek text compiled in the first or second century:

"May grace come and may this world pass away. Hosanna [Hebrew hosha-na, "Save Thou us"] to the God of David! If any man is holy, let him come; if any is not, let him repent. Maranatha. Amen."

How To Pronounce 'Amen'. Depending on who's saying it, we might phonetically hear "ah-men," or in the Ashkenazi dialect, "uh-main." Perhaps you learned it as "a-men." There can also be slight spelling variations in other languages: "amin" and "ameen."

The first time we read the word "Amen" in scripture isn't necessarily a verse we're all that familiar with:

"And this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, to make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to rot: And the woman shall say, Amen, amen" (Number 5:22, KJV).

It's used in plenty of other places, though, including a number of psalms, found in a collection of songs that form the first prayer book of God's people.

"And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen" (Psalm 72:19).

Turning to the New Testament, Jesus often began statements with the word, "amen," translated as "verily, verily." This placement ties in with his claim to be a divine being. Fully God, fully man. In a way he was saying, "I know this to be true firsthand." In the words of Jesus:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).



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Department Chaplain's Corner *(continued)*

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus's sample prayer for his followers, he ends with:

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:13).

The epistles include a number of creedal statements and prayers of God's people, which end with "Amen." Here's an example from Romans:

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:36).

In the last book of the Christian Bible, Revelation records Jesus himself identifying as "Amen":

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God..." (Revelation 3:14).

The primary reason people say "amen" is to voice agreement with what has been said. It's an expression that signifies you found the words you read or heard to be true. It's the ending to a solemn statement. It's a habitual ending to our prayers.

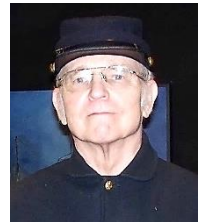
From the nineteenth-century American evangelist and publisher, Dwight L. Moody, here's a quote that shows a powerful tie to the word "Amen" with people of faith:

"Faith takes God without any ifs. If God says anything, faith says, 'I believe it,' faith says 'Amen' to it."

Some have called "Amen" the best-known word in the world. From its origins in Hebrew, it's been translated into Greek, Latin, English, and a number of other languages. Truly, it's a word with an almost universal meaning.

In the words of National Chaplain Jerry Kowalski: *"If you agree with me, say Amen."*

... submitted by Department Chaplain Stephen D. Schulze, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston



Trivia – Fighting Clergy

The Rev. B. C. Ward, pastor of a Congregational church in Geneseo, Illinois, conceived and announced a unique plan. Early in 1862, he received from the governor permission to recruit a company of infantry, all of whom were to be ordained clergymen. Ward solemnly called on *"the fighting stock of the Church militant"* to join him. Ministers, he urged, should *"come out from behind velvet-cushioned barracks"* in order to face *"the hot shot of rifled artillery."* Despite wide publicity, ranks of the 'clerical regiment' expanded so slowly that it was never called into service.

The Rev. William A. Pile, a Methodist minister, joined the fray as chaplain of the First Missouri Light Artillery. Just ten months later, in June 1862, he transferred to line duty as captain of the unit's Battery I. Boosted to the rank of brigadier general, the clergyman's leadership of black troops at Fort Blakely, Alabama, was so outstanding that he became a brevet major general.

Another Methodist, Granville Moody, had no interest in the chaplains' corps. When the Seventy-fourth Ohio Regiment was being formed, he was invited to become its colonel. After gaining the consent of those who made up the membership of his church, he took the post. At Stone's River, his men gave him the same nickname bestowed on Lorenzo Barber and John M. Chivington: 'Fighting Parson'.



... source: Civil War Curiosities, pgs. 51-53, by Webb Garrison, 1994

Ancestor Profile – Israel Day Prime

My Civil War ancestor was my great-grandfather, Israel Day Prime. He was born in Angelica, New York, on June 26, 1843. He died under the name James Francis Prime in the Bronx, New York, just after Christmas Day in 1922. What changed him from one name to the other was his service in the Civil War, a two-year stint with the 37th New York Volunteer Infantry, also known as the *Irish Rifles*.

Israel Prime's family was Old Dutch and used the surname spelling "Pruyn" until his father, David P. Prime, decided to anglicize the name in the 1830s. Israel was the oldest son of David Prime's third marriage to Nancy Ellen Vedder, who also came from an old-line Dutch family. *Note: David Prime's son from a previous marriage, Abram Prime, also would serve in the Union Army, but his is another story.*

First, further details about my great-grandfather's immediate family. The family was in the Dutch Reformed church, an evangelical Protestant sect that today in the South would be akin to Presbyterians or Methodists. Thus the children in the family, with two exceptions, had names such as Abram, Israel, Jacob, John, Mary, and Hannah. The exceptions were Albert and Anna.

Daughter Mary died in western Oklahoma just prior to World War I. She had married a Civil War veteran and friend of her father. A sister of Mary's husband was briefly married to Mary's brother, Abram Prime.

Israel's son, John, was a civilian his entire life, and son Albert went west and was a laborer and handyman who died in Kansas in 1912.

Son Jacob was reportedly a highwayman and ne'er do well who per one of several newspaper items on his misdeeds fell prey to "vicious companions, vile whisky and lewd women". He died in 1888 when, in a drunken stupor, he fell asleep on railroad tracks and was ground to hamburger by a train. Daughters Hannah and Anna are lost to time.

Israel's father, David P. Prime, and his male offspring (Jacob aside) were good with their hands and found steady work as carpenters in Ellicottville, a town in western New York. The father and most of Israel's siblings called this town home for the remainder of their days.



"Carpenter" in that day not only meant working with wood, but also with masonry and metals, taking in what we today might refer to as "practical engineering" or "all-around handyman" work. David Prime's obituary from 1885 states that "many of the buildings in Ellicottville bear evidence of his skillful handiwork."

Israel Prime's life changed in 1861 when the Southern states seceded and President Abraham Lincoln called for volunteers to serve in the Federal Army. Like numerous other men in Cattaraugus County, he volunteered. In his case, he joined Co. I, 37th New York Volunteer Infantry. Companies I and H were both made up of mainly strapping young Protestants from Cattaraugus and neighboring Chautauqua counties. The remaining companies of the regiment were mostly young Irishmen from New York City, and their antics and lilting brogue, as well as the fact that they were, as they like to claim, "the first of the Irish to take to the field of battle," gave their regiment its name, "the Irish Rifles."

Left: 37th NY Vol. Infantry 'Irish Rifles' – by artist Don Troiani

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Ancestor Profile – Israel Day Prime (continued)

Israel enlisted on May 9, 1861, at age 18, mustering in with his company on June 7, 1861. He mustered out with his regiment in June 1863, just prior to the *Battle of Gettysburg*. His term was for two years of service; some men in the unit signed up for three years, and they were transferred to the 40th Volunteer Infantry or, in a few cases, to the 154th New York Volunteer Infantry, also known as the “Hardtack Regiment.”

During his two years in uniform, Israel Prime spent almost all his time in Virginia. He took part in the *Seven Days Battles* in 1862 and fought at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. He was taken prisoner by Stonewall Jackson’s men at White Oak Creek on June 30, 1862, and spent a month in captivity. He was exchanged, and a newspaper account exists noting his boat transit of the Potomac, during which his friend and fellow prisoner Byron H. Bentley succumbed to dysentery.

Israel’s Company I along with Company H were detached to serve as garrison troops at Fort Washington, one of the posts that ringed Washington, DC, as its primary protection from the South. They were there from August 1861 to March 1862. Then in March 1862, the regiment embarked for Fortress Monroe. It was active in the *Siege of Yorktown*. While at Williamsburg, the regiment received a complimentary mention from Gen. Philip Kearny for gallantry in action. During this battle, 95 men were killed, wounded, or deemed to be missing.

At the *Battle of Fair Oaks* and in the Seven Days’ battles the regiment was closely engaged, after which it went into camp at Harrison’s landing. It moved from there to Alexandria and was present at the battles of *Bull Run* and *Chantilly*. It reached Falmouth on Dec. 6, 1862, and was active at *Fredericksburg* with a total loss of 35 soldiers. It then wintered near Falmouth.

Israel Prime’s official service record for April and May 1863, shows him as detached for provost guard duty in Gen. Henry Hooker’s headquarters. He remained there until his regiment joined him and took part in Chancellorsville, the high point of Confederate arms.

The 37th Regiment’s heaviest loss was suffered in the *Chancellorsville Campaign* in May 1863, when 222 soldiers were killed, wounded, or missing. A report from Maj. William DeLacy recounted the actions of this engagement in detail.

The regiment struck tents the morning of April 28, 1863, and marched about 6 miles toward the Rappahannock River where it encamped. Crossing the river on May 1 at about 11 a.m., it defended a battery on the front and then connected with the left of Gen. Howard’s command. A night attack was undertaken at around 11 p.m. DeLacey recounted how the regiment “Drove some troops from the rifle-pits on our right.”

On May 3, while the brigade was moving to the rear of the Union lines, a deadly attack on the front and flank caused confusion and forced the regiment to fall back. That was the regiment’s last major action. During its service, the 37th New York lost five officers and 69 enlisted men killed and mortally wounded, with one officer and 37 enlisted men lost to disease, for a total of 112.



Battle of Chancellorsville - by Kurz & Allen

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Ancestor Profile – Israel Day Prime (continued)

As was said following World War I, “How are you going to get them back on the farm after they’ve seen Paree?”

Israel Prime did not return to western New York or Cattaraugus County to live, though he did visit on various occasions over the years. Instead, he moved with most of his service buddies to New York City, where he abandoned the use of his given name and adopted an alias, “James Francis Prime.”

Now living as James Prime, he affected being an Irishman, reportedly taking on a brogue and using a Hawthorne walking stick, or shillelagh, which was not passed on to future generations. He met and wooed a fair Irish lass, Mary “Molly” Furniss, marrying her in 1872. Back in that day, when you married an Irish girl who was Roman Catholic, you had to be Catholic yourself.



It isn’t known for sure when Israel Day Prime (Protestant) transformed into James Francis Prime (Catholic), but it was no earlier than 1862 or 1863, and certainly no later than 1872, when he and Molly married.

Left: **Israel Day Prime**



Right: **Mary (Molly) Furniss-Prime**

The couple had four children, of which only two sons survived infancy.

One son, Thomas Gabriel Prime, grew up to work as a stationary engineer and also got involved in politics. Moving from Bronx to northern New Jersey in the years before World War I, Thomas Prime ran for and was elected mayor of Bergenfield, N.J., serving from 1918 to 1922. He died in 1967, at age 84.

The second son, David Prime, became a dog trainer, dying in California in 1939.

Israel and Molly remained in the Bronx, living there until his death in 1922. Molly survived him, dying in Bergen County, New Jersey on July 5, 1934. In her dotage, Molly used to tell her grandchildren that her husband once had served as a guard to President Abraham Lincoln. They thought she was telling tall tales or suffering from elderly confusion.

Israel Prime’s service record does state that he served in a provost capacity at Hooker’s headquarters in the period immediately before Chancellorsville, and also during a period in which President Lincoln and his son Tad visited the headquarters. Given Lincoln’s propensity for talking to soldiers and his concern for them, it is highly likely that her late husband did, in fact, guard the President – but we will never know for sure.

Upon Israel’s death, the multi-volume diary he kept during the war, as well as his musket rifle and other Civil War mementos, fell into the possession of his son Tom. When Tom died in 1967, relatives cleaning out his effects threw these out, losing them to time. One can only hope they exist in some junkman’s closet or attic, awaiting discovery.

When Israel Prime became James Francis Prime, he wasn’t terribly open about it. While his parents and others knew

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Ancestor Profile – Israel Day Prime (continued)

his name, other acquaintances were left in the dark. He never legally changed his name, rather relying on people just assuming he was who he said he was.



When Molly Prime filed an application for his widow's pension, she had to find witnesses who would swear that James Francis Prime and Israel Day Prime were one and the same person. As Molly stated in her own affidavit, she herself didn't know his true name until two weeks after their marriage, when he took her to Ellicottville to meet the family.

Left: Elderly Israel Day Prime, aka. James Francis Prime, and his wife, Mary (Molly) in Bergenfield, New Jersey in 1921.

It was several of Israel's friends from that town who stepped forward to swear that he adopted the name after the war to avoid any prejudice, as he assumed people would hear his name and assume he was Jewish. There was extreme anti-Semitic sentiment within the immigrant Irish community in which he hoped to become assimilated.

Molly's own affidavit suggests she wasn't prejudiced, but just wished her husband had been more honest and open with her.

And that is the story of Israel Day Prime, also known as James Francis Prime.



... submitted by John Andrew Prime, Commander, Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport

Trivia – Under-reported Disaster

Heading for home after weeks, months, even years of captivity in Southern prisons and camps, the Union soldiers piling aboard the steam-powered side-wheeler *Sultana* at New Orleans and Vicksburg were jubilant, even ecstatic. And why not? It was late April 1865, and the war was over. They at last were going home! And so they piled aboard.

On a Mississippi crawler licensed to carry 376 passengers and 80 crew, probably 2,200 to 2,400 Federal soldiers, plus 100 civilians, 90 crew, 100 horses and mules, and 150 tons of sugar, all somehow were squeezed aboard.

At Vicksburg, Capt. J. Cass Mason, part owner of the vessel, resorted to heavy timbers to hold up the decks. But it wasn't the overcrowding or the excess weight that doomed the steamboat; it was the gigantic explosion – probably the boilers – followed by a devastating fire that sank her just above Memphis the night of April 27, 1865, in a few minutes' time.



Sultana - overloaded

Greater even than the *Titanic's*, the *Sultana's* death toll of 1,800 or more souls would be the greatest single-vessel loss in modern maritime history until World War II. And yet the disaster received little publicity - in the *New York Times*, for instance, a single paragraph on an inside page. With the war just ending, Lincoln assassinated, and 623,000 dead to mourn, North and South, the *Sultana* just wasn't the big news it would be today.

... source: Best Little Ironies, Oddities & Mysteries of the Civil War, pgs. 326-327, by C. Brian Kelly, 2000

Spring Creek Powder Mill

I discovered a bit of little-known (to me at least) local Civil War history while participating in a Civil War battle re-enactment a few years ago. The event was named 'Battle for the Powder Mill' and took place at Spring Creek Park in Tomball, Texas. After asking about the meaning of the name of the event, I was directed to a Texas historical marker located in the secluded out-of-the-way, and rarely-visited northwest corner of the park. Close to Spring Creek and nearly obscured by surrounding woods, the marker had been erected in 1966 to memorialize the site where a mill once made cannon powder for the Confederate army. The mill had opened in 1861 and operated until the Spring of 1864 when a violent explosion destroyed the facility. The blast leveled the mill, killing an unknown number of local civilian employees.

The powder mill was located on Spring Creek near what was to later be named the railroad stop town of Peck in 1906 (and soon renamed Tomball in 1907). It was part of a manufacturing complex that used the flowing waters of Spring Creek to power the mill's large waterwheel. Besides the powder mill, the complex included a wagon-building shop, a repair shop, and a blacksmith shop that produced hardware for the Confederate cavalry. The operation covered about four acres at a site that today includes part of the Powder Mill Estates subdivision in Tomball - adjacent to Spring Creek Park.

When in operation, the civilian mill workers, mostly German immigrants, made black powder by mixing charcoal, sulfur, and saltpeter and dissolving the mixture in water. After the water evaporated, the thin cake that was left behind was processed into an explosive powder. The violent explosion in the Spring of 1864 took place in that mixing room, totally obliterating the men working in that portion of the mill.

The number of employees killed that day is unknown, and their names are lost to history. However, the historical marker does mention three men: William Bloecher, Adolph Hillegeist, and Peter Wunderlich. These three men were working in an area adjacent to the mixing room and were critically burned. They were taken to the nearby Hillegeist residence for care, but Blöcher and Hillegeist died that night, and Wunderlich died the next morning.

The force of the blast was so great that it created a huge crater which eventually filled with water. The resulting pond became a popular swimming hole for area residents. Rumors of spirits at the site did not deter bathers from enjoying the cool waters. However, after several unexplained and mysterious drownings, the 'powder mill pond' was fenced off. The mill never reopened. However local people reportedly went to the site for some time afterward to retrieve black powder residue for use in eliminating ant beds.

Contemporary research indicates the 1966 historical marker includes a couple of inaccuracies. It dates the explosion to 1863, but church, newspaper, and gravestone records indicate the disaster happened in 1864. Further, it is very likely that it was not William Bloecher who was burned and died, but rather his father, Johann Jost Blöcher.

The German immigrants who built and worked at the powder mill may have supported the Confederacy, but not necessarily its stance on slavery. German immigrants were generally opposed to slavery, but because of religious convictions, they had respect for authority. As a result, they likely supported their local government – which was part of the Confederacy at the time.

Since 1864, the site of the powder mill has remained largely untouched. It has been preserved by the Scherer family, who has owned the land for years. Efforts to learn more about the mill complex, remember the victims, and preserve its history are ongoing.



... submitted by Michael L. Lance, DC/PCC, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston, Texas

Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients - U.S. Army (Part 7)

The *Medal of Honor* is the USA's highest military honor, awarded 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 - U.S. Army version of the Medal of Honor

This issue of the *Unionist* presents Part 7 of a comprehensive review of recipients of the *Medal of Honor* who served with the U.S. Army during the Civil War – with a brief description of their heroic actions, and if available, the wording of their citation.

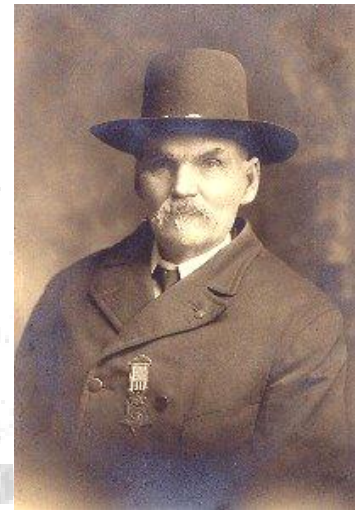


- **James A. Barber – Corporal** - James Albert Barber was born in 1841 in Westerly, Rhode Island. On November 11, 1861, at age 20, he enlisted with the U.S. Army at Westerly. He was assigned as an artilleryman to *Battery G, 1st Rhode Island Light Artillery*. After completing his term of service, Barber reenlisted as a Veteran Volunteer in December 1863. He was eventually promoted to the rank of Corporal. On April 2, 1865, Barber was among a 20-member detachment from *Battery G.*, along with an infantry assaulting party, that captured enemy weapons and assaulted enemy forces at Petersburg. He was awarded a Medal of Honor for his actions at Petersburg.

Cpl. James Albert Barber

After the war, Barber was employed as a mariner and harvested seaweed to be used as fertilizer. He passed away in June 1925 and was buried in River Bend Cemetery in his hometown of Westerly, Rhode Island. His Medal of Honor citation states:

"The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Corporal James Albert Barber, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 2 April 1865, while serving with 1st Rhode Island Light Artillery, in action at Petersburg, Virginia. Corporal Barber was one of a detachment of 20 picked artillerymen who voluntarily accompanied an infantry assaulting party, and who turned upon the enemy the guns captured in the assault."



- **Nathaniel C. Barker – Sergeant** – Nathaniel Barker was born in 1836 in Piermont, New Hampshire. He enlisted with *Co. E, 11th New Hampshire Regiment Volunteer Infantry* in August 1862. During the Battle of Spotsylvania, Virginia on May 12, 1864, six of the Color Bearers of Barker's company were killed. Barker took up the regiment's two flags and advanced with them for the remainder of the battle. He was awarded a Medal of Honor for this action.

Sgt. Nathaniel C. Barker

Barker was wounded in June 1864 at Cold Harbor, Virginia, and was discharged from duty on May 25, 1865. He passed away in 1904 at age 67 and was buried at Last Rest Cemetery in Merrimack, New Hampshire. His Medal of Honor citation states:

"The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Sergeant Nathaniel C. Barker, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 12 May 1864, while serving with Company E, 11th New Hampshire Infantry, in action at Spotsylvania, Virginia. Six Color Bearers of the regiment having been killed, Sergeant Barker voluntarily took both flags of the regiment and carried them through the remainder of the battle."



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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients - U.S. Army (Part 7 continued)

- **William H. Barnes - Private** - William Henry Barnes was born and raised in St. Mary's County, Maryland. He worked as a free tenant farmer there before enlisting in the U.S. Army. On February 11, 1864, Barnes enlisted at Norfolk, Virginia as a Private with *Co. C, 38th U.S. Colored Infantry Regiment*. His enlistment papers record his age as 23, implying a birth year of 1840 or 1841, but other sources give his birth as 1845.

At the *Battle of Chaffin's Farm* in Virginia in September 1864, Barnes' regiment was among a division of black troops assigned to attack the center of the Confederate defenses at New Market Heights. The defenses consisted of two lines of abatis and one line of palisades manned by Brigadier General John Gregg's Texas Brigade. The attack was met with intense Confederate fire. More than 50% of the black troops were killed, captured, or wounded. Barnes was awarded the Medal of Honor for being among the first to enter the enemy's works, even though wounded. He was promoted to Sergeant on July 1, 1865.

Barnes remained in the Army after the war, traveling to Texas with his regiment. He died of tuberculosis at an Army hospital in Indianola on December 24, 1866, at age 20-25. An 'IN MEMORY' marker for him was placed in San Antonio National Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas (*photo at right*). Barnes is also honored and memorialized by being listed on the *United States Colored Troops Memorial Statue* in Lexington Park, Maryland, where he grew up. His Medal of Honor citation states:

"The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private William Henry Barnes, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 29 September 1864, while serving with 38th Colored Infantry, in action at Chapin's Farm, Virginia. Private Barnes was among the first to enter the enemy's works; although wounded."



- **Henry A. Barnum - Colonel** – Henry Alanson Barnum was born in 1833 in Jamesville, New York. He was educated in the common schools, attended Syracuse Institute, and passed his bar exam in 1860.

In May 1861, at age 27, Barnum enlisted with the U.S. Army as Captain of *Co. I, 12th New York Infantry*. He was promoted to Major of the regiment in October 1861. He served with distinction during the 1862 Peninsula Campaign under Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan.

Right: Brig. Gen. Henry A. Barnum

On July 1, 1862, at Malvern Hill, Virginia, Barnum was seriously wounded - shot through the left pelvis. Seemingly mortally wounded, his body was abandoned on the field and fell into the hands of the Confederates. But he recovered and made his way back to the Union lines. He then accepted a commission as Colonel in the *149th New York*, dated October 4, 1862, and was mustered into service at Syracuse, New York.

Due to his wound, Col. Barnum was not able to assume immediate command. He finally joined the regiment in the field in January 1863. However, he required further surgical operations. On April 1, 1863, Barnes obtained a leave of absence and traveled to Albany, New York, for treatment.



... series to be continued next issue with part 8

Upcoming Department Activities

Sep 13	Wednesday	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Monthly Business Meeting - 5:30 p.m. Dinner Belle Restaurant, 4803 E. End Blvd. South, Marshall, Texas
Sep 16	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting – 10:00 a.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
Sep 19	Tuesday	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 – Monthly Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas
Sep 21	Thursday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Monthly Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas
Sep 23	Saturday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Recruiting Event – 9:30 a.m. Texas Civil War Museum, 760 Jim Wright Freeway North, Fort Worth, Texas
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Oct 11	Wednesday	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Monthly Business Meeting - 5:30 p.m. Dinner Belle Restaurant, 4803 E. End Blvd. South, Marshall, Texas
Oct 17	Tuesday	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 – Monthly Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas
Oct 19	Thursday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Monthly Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas
Oct 21	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting – 10:00 a.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
Oct 28	Saturday	Department of Texas and Louisiana – Special Department Encampment – 11:00 a.m. Zoom Session – Delegates and Alternates only
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Nov 5	Sunday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Massing of the Colors – 2:00 p.m. Birchman Baptist Church, 9100 N. Normandale St., Fort Worth, Texas
Nov 8	Wednesday	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Monthly Business Meeting - 5:30 p.m. Dinner Belle Restaurant, 4803 E. End Blvd. South, Marshall, Texas
Nov 11	Saturday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Veterans Day Parade – 9:00 a.m. Panther Island Pavilion, 395 Purcey St., Fort Worth, Texas
Nov 11	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 – Veterans Day Ceremony and Parade – 10:00 a.m. Houston City Hall, 901 Bagby St., Houston, Texas
Nov 11	Saturday	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Veterans Day Activity Location: TBD
Nov 16	Thursday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Monthly Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas
Nov 18	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting – 10:00 a.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, Texas
Nov 21	Tuesday	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 – Monthly Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas

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Upcoming Department Activities – 2023-2024

Dec 13	Wednesday	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Monthly Business Meeting - 5:30 p.m. Dinner Belle Restaurant, 4803 E. End Blvd. South, Marshall, Texas
Dec 16	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 – Wreaths Across America Event – 11:00 a.m. Houston National Cemetery, 10410 Veterans Memorial Dr., Houston, Texas
Dec TBD	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting – 10:30 a.m.
Dec 16	Saturday	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Wreaths Across America Event Northwest Louisiana Veterans Cemetery, 7970 Mike Clark Rd., Keithville, Louisiana
Dec 19	Tuesday	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 – Monthly Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas
Dec 21	Thursday	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 – Monthly Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas
Jan 6	Saturday	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 – Battle of Galveston Commemoration – 10:00 a.m. Episcopal Church Cemetery, 4001 Ave K, Galveston, Texas

2023-2024 Department Officers and Media Links

Elected Officers

Department Commander

[Michael L. Lance](#)

Department Sr. Vice-Commander

[Timothy M. Phillips](#)

Department Jr. Vice-Commander

[Richard W. Erder](#) (for membership info)

Department Secretary/Treasurer

[Donald L. Gates](#)

Department Council Member

[Charles W. Sprague](#)

Department Council Member

[Dr. Stevenson T. Holmes](#)

Department Council Member

[Lewis Eugene 'Gene' Willis](#)



Staff Officers

Dept. Patriotic Instructor

[William M. 'Bill' Elliott](#)

Dept. Organizer

[Blair G. Rudy](#)

Dept. Chaplain

[Stephen D. Schulze](#)

Dept. Signals Officer

[John C. Vander Meulen](#)

Dept. Historian

[Michael L. Lance](#)

Dept. Eagle Scout Coordinator

[John E. Schneider Sr.](#)

Dept. Civil War Mem. Off.

[Charles W. Sprague](#)

Dept. Assistant Signals Officer

[Larry Joe Reynolds](#)

Dept. Graves Registr. Off.

[Terry T. Sutton](#)

Dept. Newsletter Editor

[Michael L. Lance](#)

Dept. Counselor

[John E. Schneider Sr.](#)

Dept. Assist. Newsletter Editor

[Daniel B. Pourceau](#)

[Department Website](#)

[Department Facebook Page](#)

Newsletter: *The Unionist* is published quarterly (Feb, May, Aug, and Nov). Comments to: mlance387@gmail.com

2023 Camp Officers and Media Links

Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 - Fort Worth, Texas

Camp Commander **Todd Wilber**
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander **Matthew H. Parkison**
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander **Michael E. Belcher**
Camp Treasurer **David B. Appleton**
Camp Secretary **Mark D. Parkison**

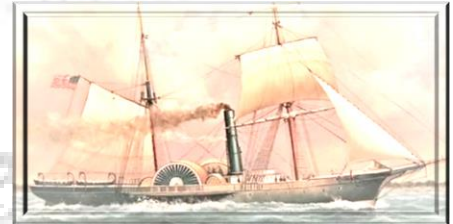
Gen. James J. Byrne
Namesake of Camp 1



Camp 1 Website
Camp 1 Facebook

Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN Camp 2 – Houston, Texas

Camp Commander **John C. Vander Meulen**
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander **Daniel B. Poureau**
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander **Jason D. Hoffman**
Camp Secretary/Treasurer **Stephen D. Schulze**



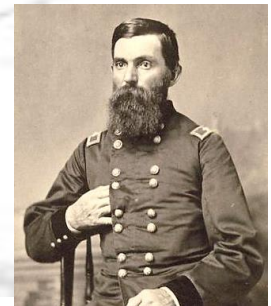
Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea
Namesake of Camp 2
Killed in Action on the USS Harriet Lane
1 Jan 1863

Camp Website
Camp Facebook

Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Shreveport, Louisiana

Camp Commander **John A. Prime**
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander **Michael A. Heller**
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander **Tony L. Vets II**
Camp Secretary/Treasurer **William M. 'Bill' Elliott**

Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey
Namesake of Camp 5

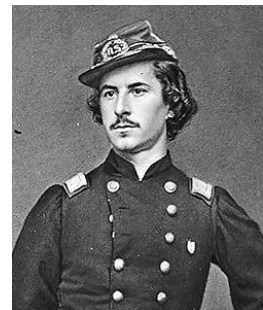


Camp Website
Camp Facebook

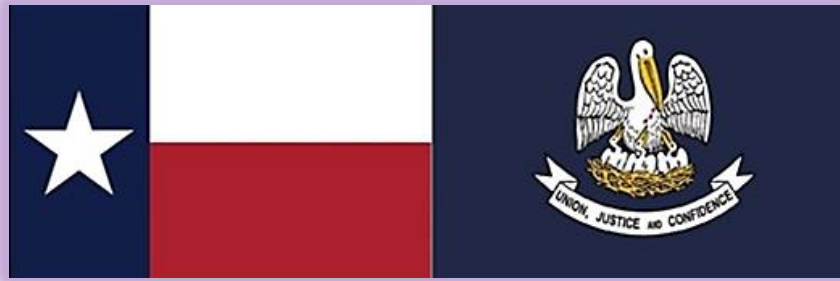
Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18 – Dallas, Texas

Camp Commander **Brook J. Thomas**
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander **Michael K. Schneider**
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander **Kevin J. Ennis**
Camp Secretary/Treasurer **Donald L. Gates**

Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth
Namesake of Camp 18



Camp Website
Camp Facebook



**DEPARTMENT
OF
TEXAS
AND
LOUISIANA**

Honoring Our Union Ancestors by Keeping their Legacy Alive



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR