



THE UNIONIST

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SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR



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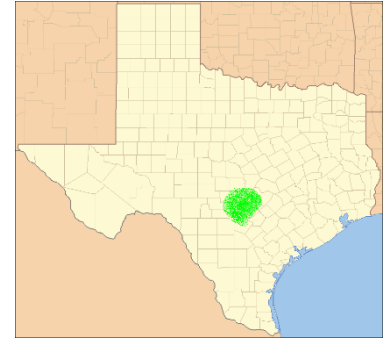
Cover Image “Battle of Atlanta” – Romanticized depiction of action on July 22, 1864 near Atlanta and the death of General James B. MacPherson, the highest-ranking officer to die in the battle. MacPherson was, in fact, accompanied by only two men when he was ambushed by a Confederate skirmish line in a heavily wooded forest – *artwork by Kurz and Allison, 1888.*

The Fate of a Band of Texas Hill Country Unionists

Late in the evening on August 9, 1862, sixty-eight men and boys stopped to set up camp beside the Nueces River in central Texas. After several days of traveling, they were about ninety miles from their homes in Comfort, Texas and the surrounding Hill Country. They reportedly traveled without urgency, stopping frequently to collect honey or hunt for game - confident that they were not being followed.

Most members of the traveling party were immigrants from Germany, and all of them were Union sympathizers. Their immediate destination was Mexico. They were making the journey to avoid conscription into the Confederate Army. One of their band, Charles Bergmann, a recent German immigrant, began the journey with the others, but later turned back for some reason. Bergmann was reportedly captured by Confederate Rangers, and forced to betray his friends in order to save his own life.

Unbeknownst to the sixty-eight men and boys who were leisurely preparing for a peaceful night of rest, pursuers were now on their trail.



The town of Comfort had been founded less than ten years earlier. It was settled by freethinking Germans - idealistic adventurers who were drawn to the United States to satisfy utopian yearnings. After arrival, they turned their new home into a place of culture and refinement. Musical instruments and books could be found in nearly every cabin.

Then, the Civil War broke out. The innocent idealism of the Germans was to be tested. The Hill Country immigrants, for the most part, had nothing to do with slavery and didn't own plantations. Many of them felt great loyalty to the federal government, and relied on federal troops to protect them from the resident Comanche and Apache. Therefore, Unionist sympathies ran strong in Comfort and the surrounding area. The citizens generally believed strongly in the principles of equality, freedom, and respect for their adopted country. So, when Texas seceded in 1861, most of the Hill Country settlers found themselves at odds with officials of the state. Shortly after secession, the Texas government proclaimed that any able-bodied male resident unwilling to pledge allegiance to the Confederacy had thirty days to leave the state - *with guaranteed safe passage to elsewhere*.

However, in May 1862, state officials became alarmed by the rising vocal support for the Union cause in the Texas Hill Country. Martial law was instituted in the region, and all males over sixteen were given three days to take an oath of Confederate allegiance or be considered traitors. Those who refused would be dealt with at the discretion of local commanding officers. Confederate authorities appointed Captain James Duff to command the troops that were sent to the Hill Country to deal with the situation. According to a respected historian, Captain Duff was heard to say: "I will hang all I suspect of being anti-Confederates."

Faced with the choices of conscription, death, or flight, the sixty-eight Hill Country men and boys made the choice of flight. They left their homes in early August 1862 to flee to Mexico. They assembled at Turtle Creek, about fifteen miles west of Kerrville and began their trek. The men carried rifles and six-shooters, most likely for protection and hunting.

After Charles Bergmann turned back and informed the Confederate authorities about the traveling band of Union sympathizers, Captain Duff dispatched a company of 94 men under the command of Lt. Cole McRae to go after them. One of the members of the pursuing Confederate force was Robert Hamilton Williams. Williams later wrote a book about the ordeal, where he suggested that from the beginning, it was evident that Capt. Duff intended to show no mercy to any fugitives. He wrote: "Sinister rumors of Duff began to spread, and it was said among other things that he had given certain of his followers to understand that he wanted no prisoners brought into his camp."

After eight days of leisurely travel, the German Unionists had only reached the Nueces River. If they had known of their eminent danger, and picked up their pace, they could have reached Mexico in half that time. They set up their evening camp beside the river, near a cedar brake. Since horsemen had been spotted in the distance earlier in the day, the group decided to be on their way first thing in the morning. Four guards were posted as darkness fell.

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Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 – Houston

Veterans Day – Friday, 11 Nov 2022 - Houston, Texas

On Veterans Day 2022, Brothers of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 assembled on the grounds in front of Houston City Hall to participate in Houston's official *Veterans Day* ceremony. An eleven-man Federal Honor Guard was formed, commanded by Tommy Attaway of the *Texas Rifles*. The men of the *SUVCW* were augmented by several members of *Co. A, 13th U.S. Infantry* and the *Texas Rifles*. The unit was given the honor of rendering a rifle salute to all Veterans of our nation. The unit, in formation on the grassy area beside the Reflection Pond, pre-loaded during the ceremony, and waited for the cue to salute.

LOAD!

L-R: Joey Alamia, Tommy Attaway (in front with sword), Joe Akers, Roy Eanes, Michael Rappe, Michael Lance, John Scott, Rion Braddock, and Howard Rose.

Rear rank and not visible: Daniel Pourreau and Curtis Lewis.



When the politicians and military dignitaries ended their speeches, the spectators were directed to turn their attention to the grassy area beside the pond.

FIRE!

Three booming salute volleys were fired by seven of the men of the Honor Guard. Tommy Attaway, commanding, loudly barked the orders to *FIRE, LOAD, READY, AIM*, and again *FIRE!* In all three volleys, the seven guns blasted as one!

The shots thundered and echoed through the skyscrapers of downtown Houston. After the third volley, the unit was ordered to *PRESENT ARMS* as *Echo Taps* was sounded by a pair of buglers.

At the conclusion of the formal ceremonies in front of City Hall, the Honor Guard marched a couple blocks to the parade

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

staging area and waited for the procession to begin. Meanwhile, Brother Michael Lance and Curtis Lewis (13th U.S. Infantry) fell out to exchange their muskets for flags – and then returned to wait with the unit.



Soon, the wait was over. The Honor Guard converted to a Federal Color Guard and entered their assigned position in the parade procession. With Colors waving, the unit smartly marched along the parade route. The boys in blue were warmly cheered by the spectators lining the streets of downtown Houston as they marched by.

As the unit marched past the reviewing stands near the end of the parade route, Michael Lance dipped the Regimental Colors in salute – while at the same time, the rest of the Color Guard saluted by turning their heads to face the stands.

After reaching the end of the parade route, the unit was dismissed, with each man satisfied that he had done his small part to honor the veterans of our Nation!

Left: The Federal Color Guard marching along the parade route

*... Report by Michael L. Lance, PCC
... Photos by Sarah Rappe*

Trivia - Veterans Day

Veterans Day is a federal holiday recognized nationwide each November 11 to celebrate and honor all U.S. veterans, whether they are deceased or living. It is always observed on November 11 each year, no matter what day of the week it falls on. Since there are over 18 million veterans living in the U.S., it is a holiday that is commemorated, in some way, by nearly every community in the country. Festivals, parades, ceremonies, and other events are typically scheduled to recognize and honor local veterans.

The difference between *Veterans Day* and *Memorial Day*, is that *Memorial Day* is observed near the end of May each year – specifically to remember service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice of their lives while serving their country.

Veterans Day was originally called *Armistice Day*. In 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower officially changed the name to *Veterans Day*. Because World War I was a multi-country effort, other countries involved in that war also honor their veterans this time of year. France, Australia, Canada, and Great Britain pay respects to their veterans on or near November 11. The U.K. and Canada call the day *Remembrance Day*.

Each year on November 11, at exactly 11 a.m., Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia conducts a *Veterans Day* event. It starts with a wreath-laying at the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*, and the public is invited to attend.

Final note: *Veterans Day* is spelled *without* an apostrophe, according to the Department of Defense.

...submitted by Michael L. Lance, DC



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

Wreaths Across America - Saturday - 17 Dec 2022 - Houston, Texas

Camp SVC John Vander Meulen, JVC Daniel Pourreau, and Brothers Michael Rappe and Michael Lance, PCC, assembled near the Hemicycle at Houston National Cemetery to participate in the *Wreaths Across America* event. While posing for photos with visitors before the start, the unit met a troop of local Boy Scouts. The Scouts enthusiastically agreed to join the men for the laying of wreaths and giving honors to veterans buried in the cemetery.



Brothers of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 team up with a local Boy Scout Troop

The ceremony program included a vintage aircraft flyover, bagpipers, the presenting of wreaths by veterans of previous wars, a rifle salute, and echo *Taps* by a pair of buglers. After the speeches were over, volunteers laid 48,510 wreaths at the graves of veterans in the vast cemetery. The *Lea Camp* men and the Scout troop marched together to the boxes of wreaths near the graves. The Scouts collected about two dozen wreaths and then formed up with the men in blue to give honors at the graves of veterans.



R-L: SVC Daniel Pourreau, Michael Lance, PCC, Scout, SVC John Vander Meulen, Scout, Michael Rappe, and Jason Hoffman

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

The veterans graves were addressed one at a time. After Brother Vander Meulen called the veteran's name, rank, and service branch, a Scout stepped forward to lay a wreath, then stepped back into formation. All members of the unit then saluted, with rifle or by hand, in a moment of silent reflection. The unit then turned to march to the next grave and repeat the honors, and so on.



Lea Camp Brothers L-R – Jason Hoffman, Michael Rappe, John Vander Meulen, and Michael Lance

Left: Within a relatively short time span, tens of thousands of wreaths decorated veteran's graves across most of the vast cemetery.

After laying numerous wreaths, the *Lea Camp* formation marched to a distant section of the cemetery to decorate and honor the graves of two relatives of the Scout leader. She video-recorded the salute ceremony to show to other family members.

The veterans were respectfully remembered and honored during this special event!

... submitted by Michael Lance, DC/PCC



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

Battle of Galveston Commemoration Ceremony - Saturday, 7 Jan 2023 - Galveston, Texas

The 2023 annual Battle of Galveston Commemoration ceremony was a great success once again. Hosted by the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2*, the event attracted volunteer participants from across the state. They included: 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 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; Maj. Mark Knight with several Galveston Ball High School *JROTC Cadets*; and several members of *Co. A, 13th Reg't U.S. Infantry/Texas Rifles*.

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 Pourreau, Kerry Manning, 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. Each member then advanced to their individual ceremony positions around the Union monument.

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

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

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



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

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

After Brother John Schneider, representing *MOLLUS*, offered greetings, Department Cmdr. Michael Lance moved to the podium to present a historical sketch of the 1863 battle that took place on Galveston's Kuhn's Wharf.

A solemn *Roll Call* of the battle casualties was then read by Dept. Chaplain, Stephen Schulze, with the bell sounded by DC 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 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 assembled in position around the Lea grave, the Colors were re-posted. The second half of the program began with an interesting historical sketch by Chaplain Richard Gray of the *Harmony Lodge Masons*. The Accoutrements of the Soldier were then placed at the headstone by Officer of the Day, John Schneider, and then he posted Brother Lee Wallace as the Grave beside it.

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

Then followed the somber placing of an evergreen wreath at the headstone, symbolizing 'an undying love for the comrades of the war', which was laid by Sister Susan Barry. 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

Next, the Honor Guard 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

Below: SUVCW Brothers and DUVCW Sisters gather for a group photo. Brothers R-L: Michael Lance, John Schneider, Steve Brock, Stephen Duncan, Vince Trovato, John Vander Meulen, Lee Wallace, and Robert Riley



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

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

Muster and Drill - Saturday, 25 Feb 2023 - Humble, Texas

Brothers Daniel Pourreau, Michael Rappe, and Jason Hoffman of the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp* joined up with members of *Co. A, 13th Regiment, U.S. Infantry* reenactors 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 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, 13th Reg't U.S. Infantry

... submitted by SVC Daniel B. Pourreau – Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2
Photos by John Vander Meulen, CC

Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp #5 - Shreveport

Thursday, 14 Dec 2022 – Shreveport, Louisiana

At the December 14, 2022 Camp business meeting, Jr. Member Brother T. J. Henigan was sworn in as a Full Member of the Order by Department Cmdr. Michael Lance. He took the Oath of Obligation which was administered by acting Chaplain, John C. Vander Meulen.



Left: Brother John Vander Meulen administers the Oath of Obligation

The 2023 Camp Officers the Bailey Camp were also installed by the Department Commander. They included:

- Camp Cmdr. John Prime,
- SVC Michael Heller
- JVC Tony Vets II
- Secr./Treas. William 'Bill' Elliott
- Council #1 Tony Vets Sr.
- Council #2 Homer Ted Cox
- Council #3 William Nichols

Brother William 'Bill' Elliott, Secretary/Treasurer of the Bailey Camp presented a *SUVCW* Eagle Scout Award to college student, Travis Bister in late December.

Right: Brother Bill Elliott with Eagle Scout Travis Bister



... submitted by Bill Elliott, Secretary/Treasurer, Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp #5, Shreveport, Louisiana

Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp #18 - Dallas

Wreaths Across America - Saturday, 17 Dec 2022 - McKinney, Texas

Three members of *Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18* participated in the *Wreaths Across America* activities at Pecan Grove Cemetery in McKinney, Texas on December 17, 2022. The event was sponsored by the *John Abston Chapter* of the *National Society Daughters of the American Revolution*. DJVC Rick W. Erder, DS/T Donald L. Gates, PDC, and John E. Schneider Sr., PDC, attended the event representing the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*, and *MOLLUS*.

Right: Donald Gates, PDC, lays a wreath at a veterans grave

The laying of wreaths at Pecan Grove Cemetery is special to *Camp 18*, because it is believed that some, if not all, of the thirteen Union Army and Navy veterans buried there were members of *GAR Post 18* of McKinney. *Camp 18* had chosen its numeric designation to honor them.

Pecan Cemetery is also significant to the *Ellsworth Camp* because one of its members, Brother Bill Fleming, is buried there. The *Camp* laid Brother Fleming to rest with a graveside ceremony in 2012.

On this *Wreaths Across America* day, the Brothers honored Brother Fleming and three other veterans.

The wreath laying program began with a gathering of all volunteers for a brief memorial service. Afterwards, the volunteers each collected a wreath to lay at a designated veteran's grave. To honor and remember each veteran, a wreath was placed on his grave, and the volunteer spoke his name aloud as a final tribute to his service.



Left: John Schneider Sr., PDC at the decorated grave of Captain W. L. Boyd, a Union Veteran



For many years, *Ellsworth Camp 18* has placed a flag and flowers at the grave of the late Brother Fleming on Memorial Day, as well as on the graves of the thirteen Union veterans buried in the cemetery. The *Camp* will now do the same each year on *Wreaths Across America* day.

The non-profit *Wreaths Across America* organization was established in 2007. It currently distributes wreaths for placement on the graves of U.S. Veterans in over 3,400 cemeteries across the nation. *Wreaths Across America* day is usually celebrated on the second or third Saturday of December.

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Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp #18 - Dallas (continued)



Pecan Grove Cemetery McKinney, Texas

Left to Right

Jill Schneider
John Schneider Sr., PDC
Donald Gates, PDC
Richard Erder, DJVC
Lee Ann Erder, NSDAR

In addition to the activities at Pecan Grove Cemetery, Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18 was also represented at the San Antonio National Cemetery for a *Wreaths Across America* event on December 17th. Brother Blair Rudy, PDC, attended and placed a wreath to honor and remember a U.S. Veteran.

Left: **Brother Blair Rudy, PDC places a wreath at a veteran's grave.**

The *Wreaths Across America* event in San Antonio was sponsored by the Alamo Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.



Eagle Scout Award - Saturday, 25 Feb 2023 - Plano, Texas



On February 25, 2023, Brother John Schneider Sr. presented a SUVCW Eagle Scout Award Certificate to Vincent Mecca of Troop 380 of Plano, Texas.

Left: **Brother John Schneider Sr. and Eagle Scout Vincent Mecca**

... after-action reports and photos submitted by Brothers John Schneider, Blair Rudy, and Donald Gates Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18, Dallas

Department Patriotic Instructor's Message

Feb 2022 – From the Office of the National Patriotic Instructor

Brothers,

Most of my instructions for the past year have been on ways in which we can help in our community thus fortifying the foundation of patriotism. However, the month of February is too important to our order to not pay it special attention. We have all grown up with Presidents Day celebrating the lives of all Presidents of the United States and the leadership that they have provided our great country.

However, there is one President that many of us believe stands above the rest, the man that led this country through the Civil War, that's right, the one, the only, Abraham Lincoln. We believe in him so much that his birthday, 12 February, is a special day for us, known as *Union Defenders Day*. With all the holidays that we pay tribute to, one might ask themselves why this day is so important. Simply put, it is to ensure that not only do we pay homage to those that served to defend the country during the war, but to also give thanks and praise to Lincoln himself.

This day was first celebrated 1866 by President Johnson and his cabinet, as it was his first birthday after his death. In 1889 then Commander in Chief George B. Abbott of the *Sons of Union Veterans* issued General Order 17 requesting Camps and Departments celebrate and honor Lincoln on what he proposed be called "Sons of Veterans' Day". This went to the Committee on Officers Reports that year and returned with recommending that we add this day to our calendar but call it *Union Defenders Day*. We continue this tradition today as many Camps and Department have a Lincoln Luncheon or a different form of *Defenders Day* celebration.

This day is a great day for us, the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*, to celebrate Lincoln. We need to also take this opportunity to extend our celebrations out to other organizations and remind them of the deeds that occurred in this time. Most look towards his actions in freeing the slaves, as they should. However, we cannot let them forget about what he did to preserve the Union. The actions he took during the Civil War that do not get as much press or publicity. How he made the tough decisions necessary to lead the country through this trying time.

My challenge for you all this month is something that will be an easy way for us all to honor our ancestors and those brave souls that fought for the Union. This is to send a card or letter to our last living Real Son, Br. William Pool of the Department of Missouri. He is currently in a nursing home. Showing the last Real Son that we have not forgotten him, shows his father and all his comrades in the afterlife that we have not forgotten about them either. Please send to:

Br. William Pool
C/O Parkview Healthcare Facility
119 W. Forest St.
Bolivar, MO 65613

Please let us shower Br. Pool with love and let him know he is not forgotten!

Brother Benjamin Frail, PDC,
National Patriotic Instructor, SUVCW

*... submitted by Dept. Patriotic Instructor, Brother Bill Elliott,
Brig. General Joseph Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport, LA*

Editor's note: Brother William Pool's father was Charles Parker Pool, who served with Co. D, 6th West Virginia Infantry. William is now 97 years old and is a member of the SUVCW Col. John Bryner #67 of Peoria, Illinois. On the right is a photo of 'Real Son' William Pool and his late sister, 'Real Daughter', Florence Pool.



My Crash Course in American History

What started it all four years ago, was the realization that my mother had a rich American lineage. It included Civil War, War of 1812, and Revolutionary War veterans and patriots. Her lineage also included the pilgrim Robert Jones, who was one of the nine pilgrims murdered by the Wampanoag Indians in 1675 - an incident that sparked King Phillip's war.

What started innocently enough with a trial subscription to Ancestry.com quickly progressed to entire weekends researching my mother's lineage. Having been raised in France, I had learned all about Charlemagne and Napoleon, but nothing about Washington or Lincoln. But in less time than it took to discover that my wife and I are distant relatives (7th cousins twice removed), I was hooked on genealogy and American history!

On November 9, 2018, I was honored to be inducted into the *National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution*. My acceptance was based on the service of my 5th and 6th great grandfathers, who were both patriots during the Revolutionary War.



Samuel Carter Sr. of Warren, Connecticut fought alongside the British in the French and Indian war, then served during the revolution as Lieutenant of the *Ninth Company, 13th Connecticut Regiment Alarm List*.

Left: CT Provincial Soldier; French and Indian War (by Don Troiani)

His oldest son, Samuel Carter Jr., enlisted in April 1777 in Captain Albert Chapman's Company in Hermann Swift's *7th Connecticut Line Regiment* – just 12 days after his 17th birthday. His unit was ordered to join Washington's army in Pennsylvania in the fall. They fought the British at Germantown on October 4th to try to recapture Philadelphia from Sir Williams Howe's troops. The effort failed, and Samuel Jr. wintered at Valley Forge until January 1778, before returning to Warren.

Right: CT Continental Line Soldier with French Charleville Musket (by Don Troiani)

Both Samuels farmed and raised their families on today's *Turning Point Farm* on Cornwall Rd. in Warren, Connecticut until their deaths. Their old farmhouse still stands to this day and can be rented out.



Gratiot County, in central Michigan, is where my second great-grandfather, Aaron Ruple Porter, settled with his parents and surviving siblings in 1854. In August 1864, Aaron and his older brother Chauncey, who lived in Ionia, Michigan, joined the 1st Michigan Engineers, Co. E, in Grand Rapids. After a brief training stint, they rejoined the 1st Michigan Engineers in still smoldering Atlanta in late September. There, they were attached to Jefferson C. Davis's *XIVth Corps* for Sherman's infamous "March to the Sea".

On this march, Aaron's regiment was required to keep pace with the infantry, traveling over ten miles a day, while tearing up railroad tracks, twisting rails, burning bridges, repairing and making roads through marshes, and building bridges. It rained for most of the 250-mile trek to Savannah Georgia between November 16 and December 11.

After the fall of Savannah on December 24th, the regiment started on the long march through the Carolinas for Goldsboro, N.C. While it showed some restraint on the "March to the Sea" through Georgia, Sherman's army showed none as they moved through South Carolina, the State that started the conflict. Lt. Alex Campbell from Co. G wrote: "We have left a strip of ashes fifty miles in width". The regiment was present at Bennett's House on April 26, 1865, for the surrender of General Johnston's Army, and arrived in Washington on the 20th of May to take part in the Grand Review. All told, the Porter brothers travelled close to 2,700 miles by foot and rail during their year with the Michigan Engineers - before returning home to their families and farms.



... submitted by SVC Daniel B. Purreau, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2, Houston

The Fate of a Band of Texas Hill Country Unionists *(continued from page 3)*

The Confederate pursuers had begun their chase three days after the fleeing Germans left Turtle Creek. But since they traveled purposefully, they caught up with the Unionists just as they were settling down in their evening camp. Lt. McRae was intent on capturing the band of Union sympathizers by surprise. About 11 p.m., his troops began moving slowly and silently toward the camp in single file. He ordered his men to creep up close to the camp in the darkness and then attack at first light.

At 3 a.m., gunfire suddenly shattered the calm of the night. Two of the four camp guards were killed after accidentally encountering the approaching Confederates. Williams later wrote: "Someone had loosed off his gun at a sentry and instantly the camp was abuzz - like a swarm of bees. Men ran hither and thither in great confusion; no one knew what to do."

During that night, either before or just after the first shots were fired, about 28 members of the German group had slipped out of camp and headed for home. So only about 40 Unionists remained in camp to defend against the 94 attacking Confederates. The Germans fought in close formation from the center of their camp, while the Confederates were spread out and sniping from all sides, many using the cover of the cedar brake. By every account, the Unionists put up a good fight, causing the Confederates to lose more men than anticipated. However, the larger force would soon prevail. Nineteen Unionists were killed or badly wounded in the melee. The Confederates suffered two killed and eighteen wounded, including Lt. McRae.

Regarding the wounded, "They had fought a good fight, and bore themselves so pluckily that I felt sorry that I had taken any part against them. We bound up their wounds, gave them water, and laid them as comfortably in the shade as we could," wrote Captain Williams.

Before the surrender was made by the wounded Germans, the able-bodied Unionists still left in camp managed to escape during the confusion of battle - but only temporarily. A determined manhunt began immediately after the surrender. Captain Williams joined in the search for the escapees. When he returned to the camp later that afternoon to check on the wounded captives, he found the camp deserted. He was informed that the prisoners had been moved a short distance away, to a place that afforded better shade. A few moments later, he heard a volley of shots. "I thought at first they were burying some of the dead with the honors of war, but it did not sound like that either. Then, thinking it might be an attack on us, I seized my rifle and ran in the direction of the firing. I met a man coming from it, who, when he saw me running, said: 'It's all done; you needn't be in a hurry, it's all done; they have shot the poor devils and finished them off!' 'It can't be possible they have murdered the prisoners in cold blood?' I said. 'Oh, yes,' said the man, 'they are all dead, sure enough, and a good job too.'"

Over the next few weeks, nine of the escaped German Unionists were captured and summarily executed in various locations, and eight more were killed in a skirmish with Confederate troops at the Rio Grande. A few survivors did manage to straggle home to give an account of the massacre. The cruelty of the event shocked the people of the Texas Hill Country. Two thousand frightened Union sympathizers took to the hills to avoid a possible encounter with *Duff's Partisan Rangers*. Twenty-five years later, survivor Jacob Kuechler wrote: "Soon afterwards I visited our old camp and stood pale and shuddering at the sight of the fate which had befallen the poor wounded, who could not leave camp with the rest of us, having every one been murdered and mutilated by a cruel foe."

Survivor Henry Joseph Schwethelm also made it back home to Comfort - eventually. After leaving the gunfight at the camp, he made his way to, and crossed, the Rio Grande and then got to Monterrey, Mexico. He then caught a ship at Veracruz and sailed to New Orleans - and enlisted in the Union army! On the third anniversary of the battle, Schwethelm led a group from Comfort back to the site to retrieve the bones of his comrades. The bones were then placed in a mass grave in Comfort. A limestone monument, the *Treue der Union Monument* (Loyalty to the Union), the oldest Civil War monument in Texas, was erected above it. The bodies of those who drowned in the Rio Grande were never recovered.

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The Fate of a Band of Texas Hill Country Unionists (continued)

On August 20, 1865, a funeral was held for the victims of the massacre. Three hundred people attended. Federal troops fired a salute over the mass grave. Edward Degener, father of victims Hugo and Hilmar Degener, delivered the eulogy.

Right: Treue der Union Monument

The *Treue der Union Monument* was dedicated August 10, 1866. The names of all the Union sympathizers who were killed beside the Nueces, later shot or hanged as prisoners, or killed at or drowned in the Rio Grande, were inscribed on four name tablets at the top of the monument. The obelisk stands twenty feet high and was constructed of native limestone. It was the first monument authorized to display a 36-star U.S. Flag at half-mast in perpetuity. The Monument was listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1978. A time capsule rests within the structure.

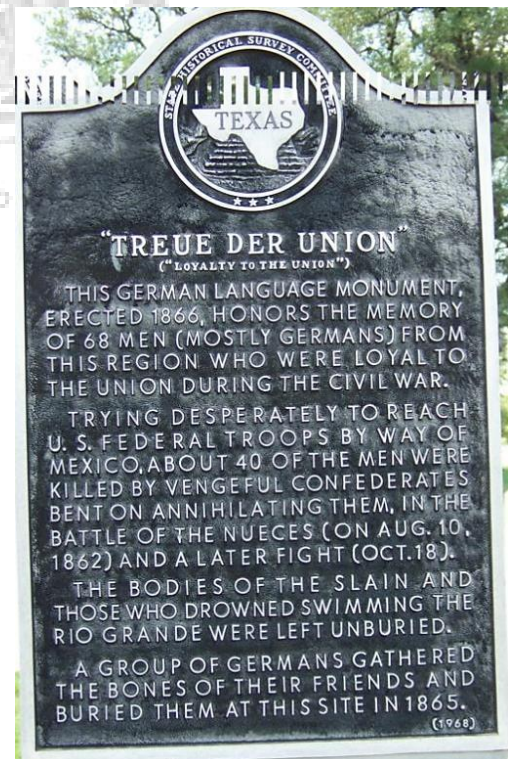


A sign erected to commemorate the August 20, 1865 funeral stands next to the flag pole. It reads:

"The procession of three hundred people, headed by the fathers of four of the victims, old men of sixty and seventy years, preceded the funeral car drawn by four white horses. Under the Union banner lay the remains. A detachment of Federal troops accompanied the cortege. At the grave, E. Degener, father of two victims, pronounced an oration which brought tears of grief to the eyes of the mourners. He concluded thus: *'The sacrifice that we, the fathers of the slaughtered, made to our country and to liberty, is great and dolorous. We shall, however, console ourselves; we shall be proud of having offered our sons to the Union, if the glorious victory of its arms bear all the fruits that the nation and the whole of humanity justly expect to reap.'* The Federal troops fired a salute over the grave. The little remote site where they rest must be to the nation as sacred as those places where thousands are deposited. Small in number, far away from the patriotic heart and the strong arm of the loyal North, surrounded by fierce enemies of the Union, those brave and devoted Germans offered their lives."

Right: Texas State Historical Marker at the Monument

The Texas Hill Country town of Comfort survived the Civil War to become a mecca for "health seekers" suffering from tuberculosis. It later became a sleepy tourist destination. Today, Comfort features an impressive series of antique stores, several historic limestone buildings, and examples of old German Fachwerk cabins. The *Treue der Union Monument* - a solemn reminder of the town's unfortunate Civil War history - graces the top of a hill in the center of town.



... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PCC, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2

Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients - U.S. Army (Part 5)

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 5 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.



- **Abraham K. Arnold – Brigadier General** – Abraham K. Arnold was born in Bedford, Pennsylvania. He entered West Point and graduated with the class of 1859 as a brevet 2nd Lieutenant in the 2nd Cavalry Regiment. Arnold was promoted to 1st Lieutenant in April 1861 and served as adjutant of the 5th Cavalry Regiment. After the *Battle of Gaines Mill*, he was promoted to Captain for "for gallant and meritorious services." Then, after the *Battle of Todd's Tavern*, he was brevetted to Major. Arnold was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the *Battle of Davenport Bridge* leading his regiment in a cavalry charge against superior Confederate forces to rescue men under his command and preventing their capture. His citation reads:

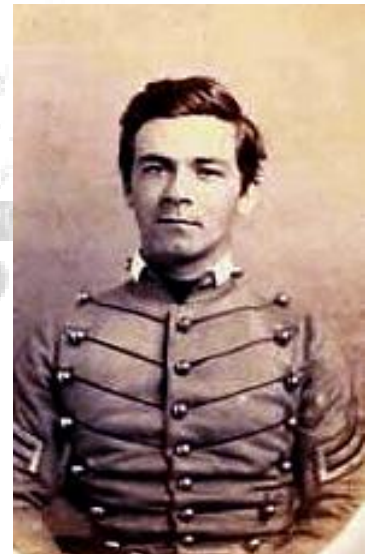
"By a gallant charge against a superior force of the enemy, extricated his command from a perilous position in which it had been ordered."

Right: Abraham K. Arnold

In June 1869, Arnold was promoted to full Major of the 6th U.S. Cavalry. In early 1879, he was directing operations against the Apaches in southeastern Arizona, accompanying an expedition into Mexico to Lake Guzman later that year in pursuit of renegade Apaches.

As acting assistant Adjutant Gen. to Gen. Orlando B. Willcox, Arnold would also take part in the *Battle of Cibecue Creek* on August 30, 1881. In 1886, now a Lt. Colonel, Arnold would fight in the expedition against the Crows of the North Plains. In 1891, he was promoted to full Colonel. Arnold then held a number of command posts during the next 12 years, including a term as commander of the *Cavalry and Light Artillery School* from 1895 to 1898).

During the *Spanish–American War*, Col. Arnold accepted a field commission as Brigadier General of Volunteers and led the 2nd U.S. Division of the 7th Army Corps in Cuba from January 16, 1898 to April 1, 1899. Gen. Arnold was also Companion of the *California Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*. He retired on March 25, 1901, and died later in the year in Cold Spring-On-Hudson, New York.



- **William B. Avery – 1st Lieutenant** – William B. Avery Avery was born in 1840 in Providence, Rhode Island. He served during with the Union Army during the Civil War with *Co. B, 1st New York Marine Artillery*. He received the Medal of Honor on September 2, 1893 for his bravery at the *Battle of Tranter's Creek*. Later, Avery was a *Companion of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*. He died in 1893 at age 52 in Bayside, Rhode, Island. His Medal of Honor citation states:

"Handled his battery with greatest coolness amidst the hottest fire."

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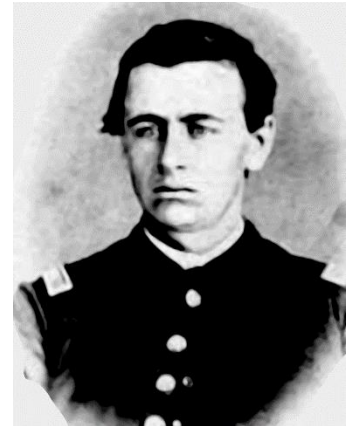
Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients - U.S. Army *(Part 5 continued)*

- **David Ayres - 1st Lieutenant** - David Ayres was born in 1841 in Kalida, Ohio. He enlisted with the U.S. Army and served with the *Co. A, 57th Reg't, Ohio Volunteer Infantry*. On May 22, 1863, Gen. Ulysses Grant ordered an assault on the Confederate heights at Vicksburg, Mississippi. The plan called for a storming party of volunteers to build a bridge across a moat and plant scaling ladders against the enemy embankment in advance of the main attack. The volunteers knew the odds were against survival and the mission was called a "forlorn hope". Only single men were accepted as volunteers, and even then, twice as many men as needed came forward and were turned away.

Right: David Ayres (aka. Ayers)

The assault began in the early morning following a naval bombardment. The Union soldiers came under enemy fire immediately and were pinned down in the ditch they were to cross. Despite repeated attacks by the main Union body, the men of the 'forlorn hope' were unable to retreat until nightfall. Of the 150 men in the storming party, nearly half were killed. Seventy-nine of the survivors were awarded the Medal of Honor. Ayres' Medal of Honor citation reads:

"For gallantry in the charge of the volunteer storming party on 22 May 1863".



- **John G. K. Ayers - Private** – John G. K. Ayers was born in 1837 in Washtenaw County, Michigan. He served as a Private in the Union Army with *Co. H, 8th Missouri Volunteer Infantry*. He also participated in the assault on the Confederate heights at Vicksburg, Mississippi as a member of the 'forlorn hope'.



Left: John G. K. Ayers

Nearly half of the 150-man storming party were killed. Ayers was one of the survivors and was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions. His citation reads:

"For gallantry in the charge of the volunteer storming party on 22 May 1863."

- **William J. Babcock - Sergeant** - William J. Babcock was born in Griswold, Connecticut. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War with the *2nd Rhode Island Infantry*. He was promoted to Color Sergeant and later received the Medal of Honor for his actions at the *Third Battle of Petersburg* in an assault on Confederate defenses on April 2, 1865. He was the first to enter the Confederate lines and planted the colors on top of the Confederate works.



Left: William J. Babcock in his Sergeant's uniform

After the war, Sergeant Babcock married and had five sons and two daughters. He died in 1897 and is buried with his wife in the Riverside Cemetery in South Kingstown, Rhode Island. His Medal of Honor citation reads:

"Planted the flag upon the parapet while the enemy still occupied the line; was the first of his regiment to enter the works."

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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients - U.S. Army (Part 5 continued)

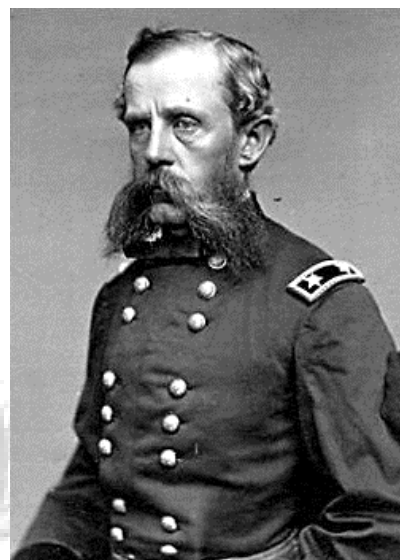
- **Elijah W. Bacon - Private** – Elijah W. Bacon was born in 1836 in Burlington, Connecticut. He joined the 14th Connecticut Infantry in July 1862. During Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on July 3, 1863, Bacon captured the battle flag of the 16th North Carolina Infantry. He was killed on May 6, 1864 at the *Battle of the Wilderness*, and received the Medal of Honor posthumously on December 1, 1864. His citation reads:

"Capture of flag of 16th North Carolina regiment."

- **Absalom Baird – Brig. General** – Absalom Baird was born in Washington, Pennsylvania in 1824. He graduated from the preparatory department of Washington College (*now Washington & Jefferson College*) in 1841. He then attended the U.S. Military Academy and graduated in 1849, ranking 9th in a class of 43. From 1852 to 1859, he was a mathematics instructor at *West Point*. From 1859 to 1861, he served with the U.S. Army in Texas and Virginia.

When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Baird was promoted to Brevet Captain and fought at the *First Battle of Bull Run*. In November 1861, he was promoted to Major in the Regular Army while serving as Assistant Inspector General.

Right: Brigadier General Absalom Baird



In April 1862, while serving as Chief of Staff to Maj. Gen. Erasmus Keyes during the first part of the *Siege of Yorktown*, he was promoted again - to Brigadier General of U.S. Volunteers. He took command of the 27th Brigade, 7th Division in the *Army of the Ohio* and helped secure the Cumberland Gap in June 1862.

Baird then commanded the 3rd Division, *Army of Kentucky* until his troops were assimilated into the *Army of the Cumberland*. Baird's division became the 1st Division of Maj. Gen. George Henry Thomas's XIV Corps. It was in this post that he won fame for his heroic efforts at the *Battle of Chickamauga* and the *Chattanooga Campaign*. During the *Atlanta Campaign*, Baird led a brigade charge in the *Battle of Jonesborough*, which earned him the Medal of Honor. He then led his division in Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman's *March to the Sea* and *Carolinas Campaign*.

In January 1865, President Abraham Lincoln nominated Baird for appointment to the Brevet grade of Maj. General of Volunteers. Then in April 1866, President Andrew Johnson nominated him to Brevet Brig. General in the Regular Army. In July 1866, President Andrew Johnson then nominated Baird for promotion to Brevet Maj. General in the Regular Army. Baird was mustered out of the volunteer service in September 1866.

Following the war, Baird served as commander of the *Department of Louisiana*. In June 1867, he was then appointed an Assistant Inspector General, and finally to full Inspector General of the Army in March 1885. His final promotion came in September 1885, when he was promoted to a full grade Brigadier General.

In 1887, Baird traveled to France to observe military maneuvers, and was named a Commander of the *Légion d'honneur*. He finally retired from the Army in August 1888, having reached the mandatory retirement age of 64.

Baird was also a Veteran Companion of the *Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States* and a member of the *General Society of Colonial Wars*. He died near Baltimore, Maryland in June 1905, and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. His Medal of Honor citation reads:

"Voluntarily led a detached brigade in an assault upon the enemy's works."

... series to be continued next issue with Part 6

Upcoming Activities - Department of Texas and Louisiana

Mar 8, 2023	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 - Business Meeting - 6:00 pm. Caddo Parish Coroner's Office, 2900 Hearne Ave, Shreveport, Louisiana
Mar 14, 2023	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting - 6:30 p.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, TX - 7:00 p.m.
Mar 16, 2023	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 - Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas - 7:00 p.m.
Mar 21, 2023	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 - Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas
Apr 11, 2023	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting - 6:30 p.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, TX - 7:00 p.m.
Apr 12, 2023	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 - Business Meeting - 6:00 pm. Caddo Parish Coroner's Office, 2900 Hearne Ave, Shreveport, Louisiana
Apr 18, 2023	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 - Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas
Apr 20, 2023	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 - Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas - 7:00 p.m.
Apr 22, 2023	Annual Medal of Honor Parade - <i>Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1</i> Host city - Gainesville, Texas
Apr 29, 2023	29th Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas and Louisiana - 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The Tea Room at the Heritage Society Museum, Sam Houston Park 1100 Bagby St., Houston, Texas
May 6, 2023	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 - Recruiting Event Texas Civil War Museum 760 Jim Wright Fwy North, Fort Worth, Texas
May 9, 2023	Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 - Monthly Business Meeting - 6:30 p.m. Trini Mendenhall Community Center, 1414 Wirt Rd., Houston, TX - 7:00 p.m.
May 10, 2023	Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 - Business Meeting - 6:00 pm. Caddo Parish Coroner's Office, 2900 Hearne Ave, Shreveport, Louisiana
May 16, 2023	Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp 18 - Business meeting - 7:00 p.m. Heritage Farmstead Museum, 1900 W. 15 th St., Plano, Texas
May 18, 2023	Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 - Business Meeting - 7:00 p.m. VFW Hall 5617, 580 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, Texas - 7:00 p.m.
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 – 9:00 a.m. Houston National Cemetery 10410 Veterans Memorial Dr, Houston, Texas

JOIN US IN FRATERNITY, CHARITY, and LOYALTY

Department of Texas and Louisiana



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Newsletter: The Department newsletter, *The Unionist*, is published quarterly (*Feb, May, Aug, and Nov*). Send questions or comments concerning the newsletter to the Editor at: mlance387@gmail.com



Department of Texas and Louisiana

CAMP NAMESAKES



Gen. James J. Byrne

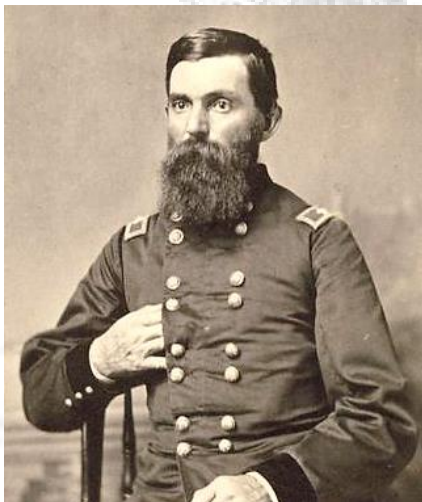
Namesake of the Fort Worth Camp



Killed in Action on the USS Harriet Lane

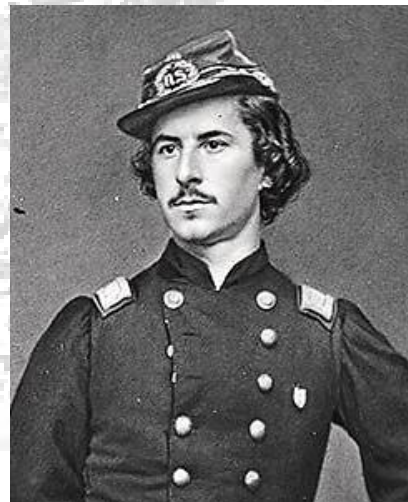
Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea

Namesake of the Houston Camp



Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey

Namesake of the Shreveport Camp



Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth

Namesake of the Dallas Camp



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR