



THE UNIONIST

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Department of Texas and Louisiana

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR



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COVER IMAGE – *The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, May 1864* - Restored vintage poster by War is Hell Store (*original artwork by Thure de Thulstrup*)

DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA

Address by the Recent Past Commander

Brethren,

As we close another Department year, I'd like to touch on some highlights. By any measure, hosting the National Encampment was the crowning achievement for the Department during the 2025-2026 term. In my view, it was a complete success. We were blessed with good weather and good fortune, but fortune favors the prepared – and we could not have been better prepared! Host Committee Chairman John Schneider and every Brother who served either formally or informally on all the various subcommittees and did the heavy lifting, deserve our immense gratitude. In addition, we are eternally grateful to Past CinC Kevin Martin and Past National President Rosemary Martin for their leadership and participation in the Encampment and for their service during their year. Applause for every Brother that participated!

I congratulate the Signals Corps and the Internet Steering Committee on their excellent work in advancing Brother Reynolds' legacy, getting our on-line presence in order, and in continuing to expand our A/V and Zoom capabilities.

I have no adequate words to adequately thank Secretary/Treasurer Donald Gates for his Yeoman's work on the National Encampment and the profit the Department derived from it.

I am, frankly, shocked by the incredible volume of work done by Department Historian Michael Lance in archiving our Department records and illuminating the history of the G.A.R. in Texas. I am also grateful to the Department Graves Registration Officer, Terry Sutton, for his tireless efforts to find and document the Boys in Blue.

I am likewise grateful to Department Chaplain, Stephen Schulze, and Patriotic Instructor Timothy Phillips for discharging their duties with the grace and solemnity required to keep us properly focused on God and Country. I commend our Eagle Scout and JROTC coordinator, John Schneider, Sr., for his persistence in assisting the National Quartermaster to get Texas and Louisiana caught up on award presentations.

And, finally, I am immensely proud of every man who stepped up to participate in a Color Guard and/or a firing party this year. It is not easy to stand in front with all eyes upon you to recreate the ceremonies that our ancestors performed over 160 years ago. Thank you so much for making us all look good.

In conclusion, Brethren, I thank you for giving me the honor of steering this ship for a time, and I call upon each of you to redouble your efforts in service to our Order as we have truly been blessed by Almighty God with an outstanding slate of officers to lead us into the future.

I remain your most obedient servant.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brook Thomas".

Brook Thomas, PDC
Department of Texas and Louisiana.



FROM THE COMMANDER'S TENT

Brothers,

It is with gratitude, humility, and a profound sense of fraternal duty that I accept the honor of serving as your Department Commander. We have much to be proud of in our Department, and I look forward to working with all of you in the coming year.

As we move forward, let us recognize that our *G.A.R.* forefathers had the foresight to memorialize their traditions and practices so that a solid legacy would pass on to us. Therefore, knowing that all of us will eventually join them in the eternal Camp, let us be purposeful about leaving a legacy for our successors. I honestly believe that if we collectively engage in legacy thinking and make that the foundation of everything we do, we will then have confidence that *our* successors will inherit something of real value.

Therefore, let us start by increasing our knowledge of how the *Order* functions through designated training. The C-in-C ardently encourages Brothers to take advantage of opportunities for learning and leadership development within the *Order*. In keeping with this, I will be hosting a series of live Zoom sessions for any Brother who wants to learn more about Camp leadership roles and how to function well in them. I have asked past Commander-in-Chief, Steve Michaels, to be the instructor for the course, and he has agreed. The first class will focus on the role of Camp Commander. Subsequent sessions will address the other Camp Officer positions.

Please mark your calendars, and join me on Sunday evening, June 14, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. To register for the course, send an email right away to vanderjohn@gmail.com and I will provide the Zoom link.

There will soon be more to announce, but for now let me conclude by echoing the choice words from our Commander-in-Chief.

The true strength of our Order has always rested in the commitment and character of its members. Time and again, whether in moments of adversity or in times of great opportunity, the Brothers of our Order have been willing to rise to the occasion, to serve with integrity, and to give freely of their time and talents for the good of the whole. Let no Brother ever doubt his value or hesitate to step forward, whether to take up the mantle of leadership or to contribute through participation, and unseen labor. Every act of service matters. Every effort, large or small, moves us forward. Together, guided by our founding principles, we remain united. And as we stand shoulder to shoulder in common purpose, we will continue to grow stronger, not only in number, but in spirit.

Sincerely in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,



A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "John C. Vander Meulen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John C. Vander Meulen, PCC
Commander
Department of Texas and Louisiana
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR



NATIONAL PROCLAMATION



U.S. ARMY 250th Anniversary, June 14th, 2025

WHEREAS, the Grand Army of the Republic was chartered in 1881 by Congress and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) is the legal heir and successor to the GAR, to carrying on traditions to preserve the history and legacy of the Grand Army of the Republic; and

WHEREAS, the SUVCW is dedicated to honoring all who have served in defense of the United States of America, preserving the memory of those brave men and women, many who gave their final measure of devotion to country, and all those who have borne the burden of battle in defense of liberty and union, to Country; and

WHEREAS, in the early morning of APRIL 19th 1775, signaling the start of the Revolutionary War, local Militias and British troops exchanged musketry as the "Shot Heard Around the World" rocked the independence minded citizenry of British Colonial Massachusetts at Lexington's village green, and Concord's Old North Bridge; and

WHEREAS, on JUNE 14th 1775, the United States Army, first known as the Continental Army, was created as the nation's first institution by Second Continental Congress decree; and

WHEREAS, the Continental Army achieved ultimate victory over British forces throughout America's 13 colonies under the command of General George Washington; and

WHEREAS, SEPTEMBER 3rd 1783, the Treaty of Paris was signed by King George III and American Representatives, ending the American Revolution, with Congress disbanding the Continental Army, Marines and Navy; and

WHEREAS, JUNE 3rd 1784, the United States Army was officially re-established by Congress; and

WHEREAS, during the American Civil War (1861–1865), United States Army Boys in Blue stood faithfully alongside the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marines, protecting land based national assets, participating in critical actions, and serving in engagements that proved vital to preserving the United States and abolishing slavery; and

WHEREAS, for two and a half centuries, the United States Army has answered the call in every major conflict, from colonial America, to the War of 1812, the Mexican American War, the America Civil War, the Spanish American War, WWI, WWII, the Korean War, Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf, Iraq Afghanistan Wars, humanitarian aid efforts, counter narcotics and counter terrorism operations around the world; and

WHEREAS, the SUVCW SALUTES and HONORS the UNITED STATES ARMY in its entirety, your 250 years of battle history, Army traditions, your Veterans and families, the ongoing US Army Mission to protect and defend Freedom in the United States and around the World; and

THEREFORE, on behalf of the SUVCW CinC Kevin Tucker, our America 250th Birthday Committee and entire Membership, and in Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty, we extend our deepest recognition, gratitude and respect to every active United States Army Soldier, Veterans and families for their unfailing, steadfast service to Freedom, God and Country. Hooah! United States Army!

Ordered on this 14th Day of June, in the Year of Our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Five, on your 250th Anniversary,

Signed in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania January 1st, 2026,




Kevin P. Tucker
Commander in Chief
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War


Roderick J. Fraser Jr.
Chair, America 250 Committee


J. Benjamin Hobbs
Partners Officer, America 250 Committee

32ND ANNUAL ENCAMPMENT – DEPT. OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA

Saturday, May 16, 2026 – Waco, Texas

Delegates from across the Department gathered at the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco, Texas to attend the 32nd Annual Encampment of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*. The event was hosted by *Gen. James J. Byrne Camp #1* of Fort Worth, and was presided over by Department Commander Brook J. Thomas of *Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp #18* of Dallas. National Sr. Vice-Commander Daniel Murray was our special guest, representing the National Organization, and served as installing officer for the newly elected and appointed Department officers. Also attending were members of the *Auxiliary* to the *SUVCW*.

The Color Guard for the event did a magnificent job. The unit was led by Blair Rudy (*Ord Camp #3*) as Color Sgt., the U.S. Color were borne by Todd Wilber (*Byrne Camp #1*), the Department Colors were carried by Daniel Pourreau (*Lea Camp #2*), and the armed guards were Beau Moore (*Byrne Camp 1*), Frank Kebelman (*Ord Camp #3*), and Robert Mathis (*guest*). The marching cadence was provided by drummer William D. Myers of *Lea Camp #2*.



Color Guard advancing the Colors.

After being welcomed into the Encampment, Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Daniel Murray gave an inspiring address. Brother Blair Rudy, as Chair of the *Credentials Committee* reported that twenty-seven duly credentialed Brothers were in attendance.



Right: Sr. Vice-Commander-in-Chief Daniel Murray

Department Commander Brook Thomas presented Appreciation Award certificates to his staff officers, and also *Length of Service* awards to two Brothers: William Swafford of *Ellsworth Camp #18* was recognized for reaching the 10-year milestone, and Beau Moore of *Byrne Camp #1* for attaining the 20-year mark.



**SVCinC Daniel Murray
Congratulates Length of
Service Award recipients.**

Left: William Swafford



Right: Beau Moore

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32ND ANNUAL DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT (CONTINUED)



Staff Appreciation Awards,

L-R: Daniel Purreau, Blair Rudy, Butch Durham, John Vander Meulen, Stephen Schulze, Stevenson Holmes, Brook Thomas, Timothy Phillips, Terry Sutton, Michael Lance, Donald Gates.



Brother of the Year recognition was awarded to Frank L. Kebelman of *Ord Camp #3* for his impressive work as Graves Registration Officer for that Camp. The certificate was presented to him by Department G.R.O. Terry Sutton.

Right: Terry T. Sutton and Frank L. Kebelman

As the slate of candidates presented by the *Credentials Committee* included no contested positions, the candidates submitted for 2026-2027 Officer positions were efficiently elected by acclamation.

The officers-elect include:

For Department Commander:	John C. Vander Meulen
For Department Sr. Vice-Comdr.	Butch Durham
For Department Jr. Vice-Comdr.	David Rediger
For Department Secretary:	Michael L. Lance
For Department Treasurer:	John E. Schneider, Sr.
For Council Member #1:	Stevenson T. Holmes
For Council Member #2:	Blair G. Rudy
For Council Member #3:	Donald L. Gates

Lea Camp #2
Byrne Camp #1
Ellsworth Camp #18
Lea Camp #2
Ellsworth Camp #18
Lea Camp #2
Ord Camp #3
Ellsworth Camp 18 & Byrne Camp 1

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32ND ANNUAL DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT *(CONTINUED)*

The following Brothers were elected, also by acclamation, to represent the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* at the 145th National Encampment of the SUVCW in Gettysburg in August:

Todd Wilber	<i>Byrne Camp #1</i>	Robert G. Riley	<i>Lea Camp #2</i>
Butch F. Durham	<i>Byrne Camp #1</i>	Terry T. Sutton	<i>Lea Camp #2</i>
Jack Christopher 'Chris' Blair	<i>Byrne Camp #1</i>	Larry Joe Reynolds	<i>Bailey Camp #5</i>
Daniel B. Pourreau	<i>Lea Camp #2</i>	William L. Swafford	<i>Ellsworth Camp #18</i>

All other members of the Department were elected as Alternate Delegates

Most of the appointed Department officers from the previous year volunteered to continue in their positions for the 2026-2027 term. They include:

Patriotic Instructor	Timothy M. Phillips	Camp Organizer	Blair G. Rudy
Chaplain	Stephen D. Schulze	Registrar	Daniel B. Pourreau
Historian	Michael L. Lance	Eagle Scout Coord.	John E. Schneider Sr.
Civil War Mem. Off.	Charles W. Sprague	Newsletter Editor	Michael L. Lance
Graves Registr. Off.	Terry T. Sutton	Assistant Secretary	Paul Ridenour
Counselor	John E. Schneider Sr.	Webmaster	Michael K. Schneider
Signals Officer	John C. Vander Meulen	Ass't Webmaster	Robert G. Riley
G.A.R. Records Officer	Michael L. Lance	Website Aide	Larry Joe Reynolds
ROTC/JROTC Coord.	John E. Schneider, Sr.		



Newly elected and appointed Department Officers taking the Oath of Office

Other Brothers who attended the Encampment who are not mentioned above include:

From *Byrne Camp #1*

Brian Glass, PDC (*Camp Cmdr. and By-Laws Committee Chair*),
Jack Christopher 'Chris' Blair, and **Grant Lee**.

From *Lea Camp #2*

Jason M. Kyle, **Michael D. Rappe**, **James K. Lea**, and **Richard Carson** (*event photographer*).

From *Ellsworth Camp #18*

Zachary R. Countryman.

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32ND ANNUAL DEPARTMENT ENCAMPMENT (CONTINUED)



**Commander-elect
With the
Color Guard**

Front L-R:
**Blair Rudy and
John Vander Meulen.**

Back L-R:
**Beau Moore,
William Myers,
Daniel Pourreau,
Todd Wilber, and
Frank Kebelman.**

On behalf of the Department of Texas and Louisiana, this editor extends a hearty 'Thank You' to Sr. Vice Commander-in-Chief Daniel Murray for honoring us with his presence and assistance in the program. Also, our appreciation is extended to Lisa Riley and Coleen Swafford of the *Auxiliary to the SUVCW*.



*Left: Auxiliary National
Chaplain
Coleen Swafford and
Lisa Riley of
Sarah Emma Seelye
Auxiliary #1 of Houston.*

*Right: Timothy Phillips of
Byrne Camp #1
sounding Taps*



A double 'tip of the kepi' is deservedly given to the members of *Byrne Camp #1* for their hard work, attention to detail, and superb planning as hosts of the event. Their efforts made the experience enjoyable for all. The Encampment was a fitting tribute to the *G.A.R.* and an honor to their legacy. **WELL DONE GENTLEMEN!**

... Report submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC – Lea Camp #2, Houston.

GEN. JAMES J. BYRNE CAMP #1 – FORT WORTH

Saturday, May 16, 2026 – Waco, Texas

On May 16, 2026, *Byrne Camp #1* successfully hosted the 32nd Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas. The venue selected was the Education Center at the *Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum* in Waco, Texas.

The event was well attended, and included eight members of the *Byrne Camp*. They served in several important roles during the program, including as Department Jr. Vice-Cmdr., as Patriotic Instructor, as members of the Color Guard, manning the registration table, as Department Guide and Guard, and as Chair of the *Credentials Committee*.

... by Brian Glass, Camp Cmdr. – Byrne Camp 1, Fort Worth



Monday, May 25, 2026 – Fort Worth, Texas

Members of *Byrne Camp #1* gathered at Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth on *Memorial Day* to honor our gallant ancestors. They were assisted by *Co. K, 1st U.S. Infantry, SVR*, and *Venture Crew 1872*, assembling at the *G.A.R. monument* in the cemetery. After the ceremony, the *Camp* visited *Pioneers Rest Cemetery* in Fort Worth to render honors to the namesake of the Camp, Gen. James J. Byrne.

Right: G.A.R. monument in Oakwood Cemetery.

Below: Combined Memorial Day contingent



... submitted by Todd Wilber, GRO – Byrne Camp 1, Fort Worth

LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 - HOUSTON

Saturday, April 18, 2026 – La Porte, Texas

The members of *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1* thought it would be a good idea to get out in front of the public at a new event, and it was! For the first time, our organization had a booth at the annual *San Jacinto Day Celebration*.

We set up a nice tent with flags and banners, and other displays. We promoted fundraisers, including the Opportunity Quilt drawing, and sale of Patriotic Cockades. And, of course, membership information was on hand to pass out to visitors. All were a big success!



Sisters Vali Reyes, Jana Marsh, Lisa Riley, and Annette Kinslow attended in either Civil War-era attire or ASUVCW gear, along with Brother Robert Riley from *Lea Camp #2*.

Left: Vali Reyes, Lisa Riley, Robert Riley, Jana Marsh.

The ladies explained the importance of Patriotic Cockades and showed housewife (sewing) kits. We are planning for next year when the Brothers will join the Sisters in force at *San Jacinto Day*, complete with uniforms and displays of our own.



... submitted by Robert G. Riley

Robert and I had a great day at *Battle of San Jacinto Day* yesterday with my some of my fellow sisters from *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary Texas #1*, *Auxiliary to Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. It was the first time our organization has had a booth at the event, which is in La Porte, Texas.

We were able to explain the importance of patriotic cockades back to Revolutionary War days, plus show housewife (sewing) kits that soldiers would keep with their gear.

Right: Lisa Riley, Vali Reyes, Jana Marsh, and Annette Kinslow.

And, yes, some of us were dressed in period dress. You can check out more at <https://www.camplea.org/>.



... submitted by Lisa Riley - Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary Texas #1, Auxiliary

LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 – HOUSTON (CONTINUED)

Monday, May 25, 2026 – Houston National Cemetery, Houston, Texas

Brothers William 'Bill' Myers and Michael Lance assembled with members of the 13th U.S. Infantry to form an eleven-man Honor Guard at Houston National Cemetery on Memorial Day. They gathered to honor the memory of our fallen military heroes. Myers served as drummer for the unit and Lance participated as a member of the firing party. The Honor Guard fired a single volley immediately after a unit of *Texas Army* re-enactors opened the event with a cannon salvo. Later in the program, the federal unit reorganized as a Color Guard and fell into slot 32 of the *Parade of Remembrance* procession. The federals marched smartly into the Hemicycle to the beat of the drum with shouldered arms and Colors flying.



View from a distance: The Texas Army cannon crew and a portion of the Federal Honor Guard

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC – Lea Camp #2, Houston

Monday, May 25, 2026 – Glenwood Cemetery, Houston, Texas

Nine Union veterans are buried in the relatively small G.A.R. lot in Houston's Glenwood Cemetery. They rest amongst approximately 50 other known Union veterans scattered elsewhere around the historic burial ground. On *Memorial Day*, *Lea Camp #2* conducted a formal remembrance ceremony at the G.A.R. lot.



The Camp was supported by members of *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1* and *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent #4*, who took active roles in the program.

Camp SVC Herb Powers was the organizer of the program and several other Brothers volunteered for various roles in the script, including: John Vander Meulen, PCC as a speaker; Steve Brock as Patriotic Instructor and master of the ceremonial bell; and Stephen Schulze as Chaplain.

Left: Camp SVC Herbert W. Powers

The 4-man Honor Guard consisted of William Myers (*drummer*), Michael Lance (*unit leader and musket*), Michael Rappe (*musket*), and guest John Scott (*musket*).

The following additional images of the solemn event were captured by Brother Richard Carson.

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LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 – HOUSTON (CONTINUED)



Honor Guard at 'Present Arms'

L-R: William D. 'Bill' Myers,
Michael L. Lance,
John Scott,
and
Michael D. Rappe



Left: John Vander Muelen

The ladies of the *Auxiliary* and the *DUVCW* also had important roles: Susan Barry (*DUVCW*) read the poem "When the Boys in Blue are Gone"; Vali Reyes, Jana Marsh, and Lisa Riley of the *Auxiliary*, along with Susan Barry, Mary Anthony Startz, and Kimberly McDonell of the *DUVCW* placed roses on the veteran headstones.

Right: Susan Barry - the poem.



Brother Robert Riley managed the multiple video recording devices, and the following images of the solemn event were captured by Brother Richard Carson.

Right: Robert Riley monitors
one of the video cameras as
Camp Cmdr. Daniel Pourreau,
in G.A.R. garb, observes.



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LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 – HOUSTON (CONTINUED)



Volley fired 'by the drum'

L-R: Bill Myers, Michael Lance, and John Scott



**Lisa Riley, Vali Reyes, and Jana Marsh
Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1**

Thank you to all the Brothers and Sisters who attended and participated in this important event. *Memorial Day (formerly known Decoration Day)* was the signature event for the G.A.R. each year, as they faithfully remembered and honored their fallen comrades. *We are keeping their legacy alive!*



**Front row L-R: Lisa Riley, Vali Reyes, and Jana Marsh (Auxiliary),
Susan Barry and Kimberly McDonell (DUVCW).**

**Back row L-R: Michael Lance, Steve Brock, Bill Myers, Robert Riley, John Scott, Daniel Pourceau,
John Vander Meulen, Stephen Schulze, Mary Anthony Startz (DUVCW), and Herbert Powers.**

... report by Michael L. Lance, PDC – Lea Camp #2, Houston

... images by Richard J. Carson – Lea Camp #2, Houston

MAJ. GEN. EDWARD O. C. ORD CAMP #3 – SAN ANTONIO

Friday, April 10, 2026 – San Antonio, Texas.

I presented a Treue Der Union Monument statue to Gigi Sanchez, President of Clara Barton tent #3, DUVCW of San Antonio on April 10th.

We are building a rapport with the Sisters of the *Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War* in San Antonio and look forward to standing with them at the Treue Der Union Monument in Comfort, Texas during ceremonies this coming *Memorial Day*.

Right: **DUVCW Tent President Gigi Sanchez and Camp Cmdr. Blair G. Rudy**

... submitted by Camp Cmdr. Blair G. Rudy, PDC – Ord Post #3



Monday, May 25, 2026 – Comfort, Texas

On *Memorial Day*, Mike Skiles, Kevin Kanter, and I supported Clara Barton Detached Tent #3, DUVCW of San Antonio at the Treue Der Union Monument in Comfort Texas. We were honored to provide the musket salute for the event.



L-R: Kevin Kanter, Blair Rudy, and Mike Skiles pose before the Treue der Union Monument.



Salute Volley by Blair Rudy and Mike Skiles.

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**Mike Skiles (far left) and Blair Rudy (far right) pose before the Treue der Union Monument.
Sisters of the Clara Barton Detached Tent #3 of San Antonio,
Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War.**

A Coda in Blue

Every trained musician knows that a coda is often used as a passage that is added to bring a musical composition to an end; a way for composers to complete their creation in a suitable fashion. Displayed below is a poem I have always admired, but one that is mostly forgotten in the larger community of U.S. veterans.

Not long ago, I was cleaning headstones in the old historic cemetery district at Alamo Masonic Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas, where at least three confirmed Union Soldiers are interred. While was taking a break, I was thinking about the connection that all veterans have, especially those who have experienced war in all its vicious drama. It occurred to me that most veterans, of whatever generation, could relate to the poem that John Fredericks wrote long ago - and would probably be grateful to learn about it - if only there was some way to connect his creation to current and future generations of veterans. That is when the idea of adding a coda to "When the Boys in Blue are Gone" began to take shape.



Frank L. Kebelman

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MAJ. GEN. EDWARD O. C. ORD CAMP #3 – SAN ANTONIO (CONTINUED)

John Fredericks' beautiful elegy, "When the Boys in Blue are Gone," his lament about what will happen when all the Union Civil War veterans have passed on to their ultimate reward, is a patriotic poem that all Americans ought to know, for it highlights how quickly the incredible sacrifices of one generation can be forgotten by subsequent ones.

For those who have not served in an American military service, you might not know how common a blue uniform really is. The Army certainly has had dress blue uniforms for many years. Likewise, the Marine Corps and the Navy still do. And the Air Force is often referred to as the "blue suiters." So I believe a "blue" uniform is truly the link to what Fredericks wrote.

Having been a musician most of my life, I decided that John Fredericks' poem might become more well known if a concluding verse was added, one that might help link veterans (*boys and girls*) and their sacrifices together, no matter how far apart those generations are. But such a coda would have to match the style, rhyme, and cadence of the original first five verses. With this in mind, I began the process of composing "A Coda in Blue." Surprisingly, the words quickly began to appear and within a few days my proposed coda was complete. Composed in humble honor of all American military veterans (boys and girls) of all generations, past, present and future, here is the poem....

When the comrades have departed, when the veterans are no more,
when the bugle call is sounded on the everlasting shore.
When life's weary march is ended and campfires slumber long;
Who will tell the world the story when the boys in Blue are gone?

Who will tell about their marching from Atlanta to the sea?
Who will halt, and wait and listen, when they hear the reveille?
Who will join to swell the chorus of some old Grand Army song?
Who will tell the world the story when the boys in Blue are gone?

Sons and daughters of this nation, you must tell of triumphs won;
when on earth our work is ended and the veteran claims his own.

You must all cherish Old Glory and its teachings pass along.
You must tell the world the story when the boys in Blue are gone.

To that flag our country's emblem you must pledge allegiance to;
to that flag our nations emblem may your hearts be ever true.

That the nation be protected 'gainst injustice and all wrong.
You must tell the world the story when the boys in Blue are gone.

You must keep your country's honor, from each stripe withhold all stain.

You must take the veteran's places and repeat the roll of fame.

You must keep your country's honor and your flag above all wrong.

Then we'll trust you with the story when the boys in Blue are gone.

*To all of our descendants, those children yet unborn;
Your time will come to raise that flag and weather such a storm.
Take courage from our victories and see your battles through.
For though you cannot see us, we're standing next to you;
The newest generation of the Boys and Girls in Blue.*

... by Lt. Col. Frank L. Kebelman, USMC retired, Graves Registration Officer - Ord Camp #3, San Antonio

BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH BAILEY CAMP #5 – SHREVEPORT

Our Camp has had a busy spring. We had produced a memorial marker honoring the Union forces that fought at the *Battle of Pleasant Hill*, Louisiana on April 9, 1864, and held a dedication ceremony to unveil the marker on March 28, 2026.

On April 3rd, we presented the ROTC award to a deserving army cadet at Northwestern State University of Louisiana.

For Memorial Day, we were at Oakwood Cemetery in Jefferson, Texas to participate in a service honoring all military veterans buried there - including many veterans of the Civil War and reconstruction. That afternoon we moved to Forest Park Cemetery in Shreveport, Louisiana for the unveiling of a gravestone for a Civil War veteran who didn't have a marker at his grave. Samuel R. Arbuthnot served in both *Co. D, 34th Ohio Infantry* and *Co D, 36th Ohio Infantry* (see story on next page).

Saturday, March 28, 2026 – Pelican, Louisiana

The *Battle of Pleasant Hill* took place on April 9, 1864. It was a significant event in Louisiana history, being the largest and one of the last engagements of the Civil War fought in this state. The names of the Union units that took part in this action - the last half of the battle that began the day before as the *Battle of Mansfield* - have been absent from the field of monuments erected at both battlefields in the decades since.

That changed on March 28, 2026 when *Bailey Camp #5* unveiled and dedicated a memorial marker at the Battle of Pleasant Hill Park in Pelican, about 15 miles south of Mansfield. The 1 p.m. ceremony was open to the public and was well attended.

The *Bailey Camp* was formed in July 2018 in Shreveport by fifteen descendants of Union military veterans. The Camp Charter was approved at the National Encampment of the *SUVCW* in Massachusetts in August 2018. It is the first Camp organized in Northwest Louisiana since an African-American Post of the *Grand Army of the Republic* formed in the city in the late 1880s or 1890s.



Memorial Marker - Honoring the Union forces that fought at the *Battle of Pleasant Hill*

... submitted by Michael Heller, Camp Cmdr. – Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport, Louisiana

BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH BAILEY CAMP #5 – SHREVEPORT (CONTINUED)

Monday, May 25, 2026 – Shreveport, Louisiana.

Samuel R. Arbuthnot was born in Hardin County, Ohio, in September 1847. In early 1865, he was but 17 years old when he enlisted in the Union Army. He served with the 36th Ohio Vol. Infantry and mustered out that July. But during his relatively short time in the service, Samuel saw plenty of action. The 36th Ohio was soon ordered to Cumberland, Maryland, and was on duty there until April. It then moved to Winchester, was on duty there until June, and then to Wheeling, West Virginia through July, where it mustered out July 27, 1865.

Following his discharge and return to Ohio, Samuel's life is largely unknown. According to his obituary, published upon his demise in late May 1920, he had resided in Belcher – a quiet village in Caddo Parish, located just north of Shreveport, Louisiana - where he had moved just prior to World War I. He was described as a "prominent merchant." His funeral at Forest Park Cemetery drew "a large concourse of friends ... the floral offerings attesting the esteem in which he was held by the community."

While Samuel Arbuthnot did not die in battle, as did the men and women we honor today on *Memorial Day*, he did die in the sense that he had passed from memory. He and his wife, Millie, who died in 1924, rest here in graves that had been unmarked - *until today*. Their four children have long since moved hither and yon, and efforts to locate living kin have proved unsuccessful. Placing this marker here today restores him to his adopted community.

L-R: William Elliott, Bill Nichols, John Prime, and Robb McMahan

Samuel Arbuthnot's grave is marked today through the efforts of many people. Acting on a request from a researcher with the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* seeking a photo of his grave, it was revealed that he had no marker. The staff at Forest Park East Cemetery, led by new owner



Matt Seyler, then requested a proper and period-styled marker from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Research for the headstone application was provided by William "Bill" Elliott, Secretary of *Bailey Camp #5*.

With the unveiling and dedication of his new headstone on May 25, 2026, Samuel Arbuthnot rejoins the ranks of his fellow Union Soldiers buried locally. Two others are buried here in Forest Park East, among a total of 28 Union veterans resting in Caddo Parish. Another is buried in Bossier Parish. There are also two dozen Union veterans buried in Marion County in East Texas, including *Medal of Honor* recipient 2nd Lt. Daniel J. Murphy of the 19th Massachusetts Infantry, who died Sept. 19, 1870.

Our community welcomes and remembers Private Arbuthnot on this *Memorial Day*. We thank him for his service, as well as all the other U.S. veterans who lost their lives in the service of our great nation.

... submitted by William 'Bill' Elliott, Camp Sec./Treas. – Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport



COL. ELMER E. ELLSWORTH CAMP #18 – DALLAS

Monday, May 5, 2026 – Washington, DC

The *National Memorial Day Parade* in Washington, DC was sponsored by the *American Veteran's Center (AVC)* and organized by *Under the Sun Productions (USP) Inc.* The *Irish Brigade Camp #4*, Department of the Chesapeake and its SVR counterpart, the *Irish Rifles, 2nd Military District*, together with the *Lincoln Cushing Camp* and *Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War* have participated in the National Memorial Day Parade for many years.



Per CinC Kevin Tucker's message, we were honored to have a role in this year's event as part of the America 250th celebrations. We had two members from *Ellsworth Camp 18* attend to represent *Co. K, 1st U.S. Infantry SVR* – PDC John E. Schneider, Sr. and PCC David Rediger.

Above and Right: John E. Schneider, Sr. dipping flag in Salute, and David Rediger with musket on far right.



Left: Photo Op with Lincoln

*... submitted by John E. Schneider, Sr.
and David Rediger
Ellsworth Camp #18, Dallas.*

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COL. ELMER E. ELLSWORTH CAMP #18 – DALLAS (CONTINUED)

Tuesday, May 19, 2026 – Plano, Texas.

On May 19, 2026, John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC, of *Ellsworth Camp #18* of Dallas presented a *SUVCW* Eagle Scout Certificate and patch to Johan Kuzhimatton of *Troop 259* of Plano, Texas.

Scout Kuzhimatton earned his Eagle Scout status by successfully progressing through the lower ranks, earning at least 21 merit badges, serving in a troop leadership position, planning and leading a large community service project, and passing a final board of review before his 18th birthday.

Right: Scout Johan Kuzhimatton and John E. Schneider, Sr.

Now this exemplary Scout can add the coveted *SUVCW Eagle Scout Award* to his vast collection of achievements!



... submitted by John E. Schneider, PDC – Ellsworth Camp #18, Dallas

Sunday, May 30, 2026 – Dallas, Texas

Ellsworth Camp #18 conducted its annual *Memorial Day* ceremony at Greenwood Cemetery in Uptown Dallas on May 30th. They were joined by Scouts from *Troop 42, Circle Ten Council*, who were conducting an Eagle Scout project of cleaning headstones of Union Veterans interred in the cemetery.

Attending Camp members included Donald Gates, John Schneider, Sr., Brook Thomas, Michael Steindorf, and Richard Erder. Reenactor Robert Mathis assisted. Sister Jill Schneider of the *Auxiliary* (and DOLLUS) also participated.



Donald L. Gates and John E. Schneider, Sr.



L-R: Robert Mathis, Brook J. Thomas, and Richard W. Erder

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COL. ELMER E. ELLSWORTH CAMP #18 – DALLAS (CONTINUED)



Scouts at work.



Memorial marker



Greenwood Cemetery in Dallas, Texas

Kneeling L-R: Seven Scouts from Troop 42, and Michael Steindorf.

Standing L-R: Five Scouts from Troop 42, Robert Mathis (guest), John Schneider, Sr., Jill Schneider (Auxiliary and DOLLUS), Donald Gates, Brook Thomas, and Richard Erder.

Established in 1874, Greenwood Cemetery is one of Dallas's oldest burial grounds. Located in the Uptown neighborhood at 3020 Oak Grove Ave, this 30-acre site serves as the final resting place for many of the city's earliest founders, mayors, and prominent historical figures, including approximately 110 Union veterans interred in the designated Union soldier section.

... submitted by John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC – Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18 - Dallas, Texas

PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR'S MESSAGE

The United States Department of the Navy seems to have excelled over the years in creating slogans. We have inspirational ones: "Retreat hell! We just got here " and "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead!" spring to mind. But there is also a more sobering category, at least one of which found its way to a dormitory door at the Naval Academy: "Take her down." This short, but to the point, saying was coined by Commander Howard Gilmore of the Silent Service.

Commander Howard W. Gilmore, USN

Born in Selma, Alabama, in 1902, Gilmore began his naval career as an enlistee. He gained admission to the Academy by examination in 1922, graduating 34th in a class of 436. He was commissioned in 1926 and posted to *USS Mississippi* (BB-41). He took submarine training in 1930 and served aboard numerous submarines in the next several years. His first command, *USS Shark* (SS-174) ended with his transfer on August 12, 1941 to the brand-new *USS Growler* (SS-215).



Commander Gilmore, though a bit old at age 40, conned his command through four successful patrols: his first two saw one enemy destroyer and four merchant ships sunk and two Navy crosses awarded. On patrol number 4 in early 1943, *Growler* was stalking a convoy when an escort attempted to ram her. Instead, *Growler* hit the escort amidships at 17 knots, bending *Growler's* bow 90 degrees.

In addition to severe damage to the boat, machine gun fire from the enemy escort cut down the lookout party and dazed the XO, blocking access to the control room. Knowing his one chance to save the boat, and the cost of doing so, Commander Gilmore gave the order, "Take her down."

XO Schkade returned to the area to attempt rescue, but the captain was nowhere to be seen. For making the ultimate sacrifice to save his command and his men, Gilmore became the second member of the Silent Service to receive the *Medal of Honor*.



USS Growler

For a righteous individual, sacrifice is a part of life that cannot be removed. Without people with time, talent, or treasure sharing some of that with the group, nothing gets done. And when the gift is a really big one, the reward can be – *immortality*.



... Patriotic Instructor Timothy Phillips, PDC – Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1, Fort Worth

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

"As Stars Go Out With the Rising Sun"

Chaplain Sullivan Hardy Weston of the 7th New York State Militia delivered a sermon in the House of Representatives at the U.S. Capitol on Sunday, April 28, 1861. The date is noteworthy. The two weeks leading up to his appearance had been a whirlwind of head-spinning events: The bombardment of Fort Sumter, mobilization of troops, and the rush of Union regiments to protect Washington, D.C.

Against this backdrop, Weston, a 44-year-old Episcopal minister, preached a powerful sermon that echoed familiar themes of duty, country, and God.



We are living in eventful times. Our National Capital is echoing with the tramp of armed men, and the glorious sunlight flashes back from thousands of glittering bayonets. 'Grim-visaged war' is upon us; and yesterday, on yon grassy field, a thousand ready right hands were raised to Heaven; a thousand willing voices rung out on the still air, pledged to sustain the Constitution of our common country.

Left: Chaplain Sullivan Hardy Weston

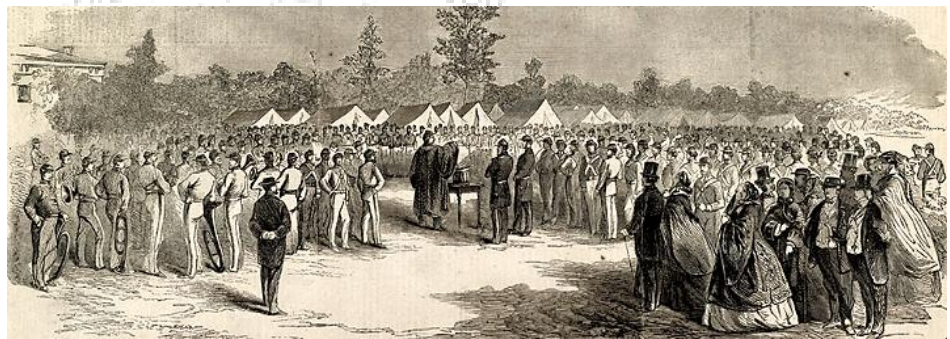
He continued:

My brethren, it cannot be denied, war is a tremendous evil. It has been the scourge of men since the primal, eldest curse, a brother's hand was thicker than itself with brother's blood. It appeals to the worst principles—arouses all the worst passions of the human heart. It throws Christianity back centuries. Language is powerless to paint its horrors.

He accurately predicted future events when he noted:

"Human arithmetic is impotent to cast the aggregate of the woes it entails. Blighted credit, ruined commerce, sacked cities, devastated fields, hospitals crowded with the maimed, battle-fields strewn with the slain, and lamentations of grief from the bereaved at home, who mourn their unreturning brave."

A week after his Capitol sermon, Chaplain Weston preached to his regiment and others at Camp Cameron (Library of Congress).



Weston campaigned twice with the 7th during the Civil War and went on to serve in Trinity Church in New York City. His 1887 obituary honored him for his deeds over decades of work—including the sermon excerpted above.



... by Stephen D. Schulze, Department Chaplain – Lea Camp No. 2, Houston

CIVIL WAR PENSIONS

In the decades following the Civil War, the country faced the enormous challenge of caring for more than two million veterans and their families. By the 1890s, many former soldiers were aging, physically worn down, and struggling through economic hardship. Most veterans had worked as farmers or laborers before the war, and as their ability to perform physical labor declined, pensions became essential for survival. What emerged after the war was the largest and most influential pension system the nation had ever seen, shaping politics, economics, and veterans' benefits for generations.

The pension system differed sharply between North and South. Union veterans were supported through a federal pension program, while former Confederate states created separate systems funded individually. Unlike earlier military pensions, the Civil War system gradually expanded beyond white male soldiers. Black Union veterans, widows, nurses, and orphaned children also became eligible for aid, though each group faced different rules and obstacles.

The pension system for Union veterans began in 1862. Initially, pensions were limited to soldiers disabled by military service, and to the widows and children of those killed in action. Payments were modest; a totally disabled private received only \$8 per month (*about \$264 in 2026 dollars*). However, as the war continued and recruiting became more difficult, pensions also served as incentives for enlistment.

Over time, eligibility broadened further. The *Arrears Act* of 1879 allowed veterans to receive back payments dating to their discharge rather than only from the date of application. This caused pension costs and applications to rise sharply. The most important expansion came with the *Dependent Pension Act* of 1890, which granted pensions to veterans unable to perform manual labor, even if their disability was unrelated to wartime injuries. Veterans needed only 90 days of honorable service to qualify. By 1893, more than one million veterans were receiving pensions, and pension costs consumed over 40% of federal revenues.

In 1907, old age itself was classified as a disability, making pensions nearly universal for surviving Union veterans. By 1910, over 90% of living Union veterans received government assistance. Remarkably, Civil War pensions continued far into the 20th century. The last Union veteran, Albert Woolson, died in 1956, while the final known widow pensioner survived until 2008.

Widows and dependents also benefited from changing laws. Early restrictions denied pensions to remarried widows, but Congress gradually relaxed those rules. Women who served as Union nurses became eligible for pensions in 1892, thanks largely to the activism of Annie Wittenmyer.

Although technically race-neutral, the pension system often discriminated against Black veterans. Many lacked the medical records or financial resources necessary to complete complicated applications, and white officials frequently rejected their claims. Even so, organizations such as the *Grand Army of the Republic* advocated for equal treatment of Black veterans.

Ultimately, the Civil War pension system became a model for future veterans' programs. Though expensive and controversial, it provided vital support to thousands of aging veterans and established the principle that the nation bore lasting responsibility for those who had served in war.



TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – PVT. JAMES HENRY SHORT

James Henry Short was born October 9, 1847 in Randolph County in southwest Illinois. He was one of at least seven children born to Kentucky native William Augustus Short and Sarah Houseman of Illinois. On September 19, 1850, James was 3 years old and listed on the federal census for Randolph county by his middle name, 'Henry'. He was living with his parents and two brothers – Edward (*age 5*), and Lewis (*age 1*). His 30-year-old father was employed as a carpenter and their homestead was valued at \$200 (*about \$8,340 in 2026*).

On September 3, 1860, James, as 'Henry' again, was 12 years old and still living in Randolph county with his parents and six siblings. The Short homestead was surrounded by other farms, and his father, William, was now also a farmer. Their farm was valued at \$1,500, and they owned personal property worth another \$500. The growing Short family appeared to be prospering. The Civil War erupted about six months later.

On December 17, 1863, with the war well into its second year, 16-year-old James H. Short made his way to the town of Sparta in Randolph County and enlisted with the Union Army. He was described as a farmer standing 5 feet, 8 inches tall, with light hair, hazel eyes, and a light complexion. But James did not actually muster into service until several months later.

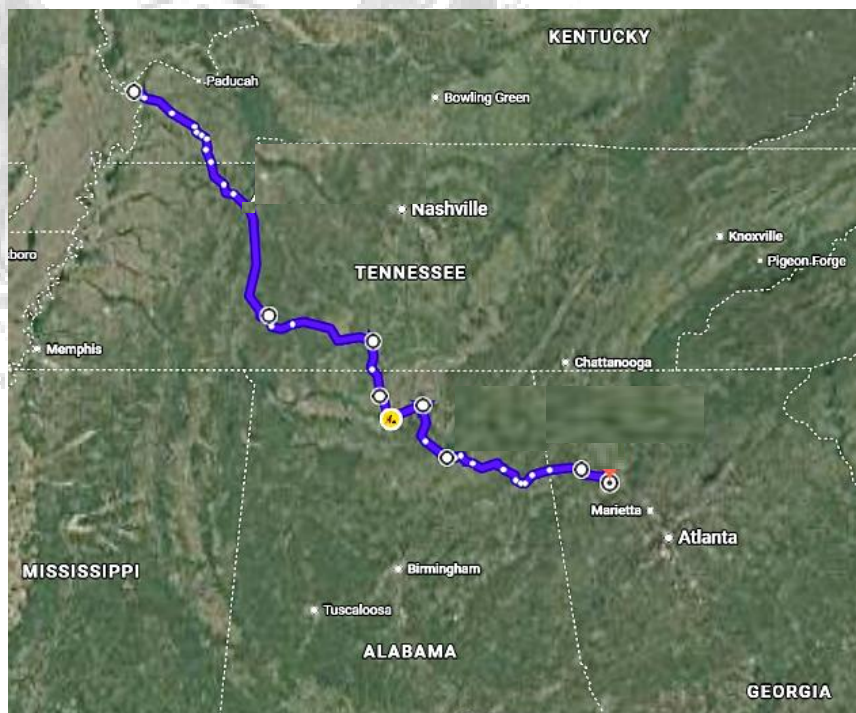
On April 17, 1864, he was still 16 years old when he ventured north about 125 miles to muster at Camp Butler at Springfield, Illinois. He became a Private in *Co. E, 30th Illinois Infantry*, having signed up for a 3-year term. His regiment was immediately on the move.

The following day, the *30th Illinois* departed Camp Butler and traveled to the far southern Illinois town of Cairo to participate in the *Tennessee River Expedition*. James quickly saw a lot of countryside in a relatively short amount of time.

His regiment continued southeast to Clifton and Pulaski, Tennessee, then moved thirty miles south to Athens, Alabama. It then turned east and trekked another thirty-five miles to Huntsville, Alabama.

There were still many more miles yet to go. By the end of May 1864, James' regiment had moved further south, crossed the Tennessee River, and continued on to Warrenton, Alabama. Then they turned eastward and crossed into Georgia, arriving at Rome and then Kingston, Georgia, where they linked up with General Sherman's Grand Army.

James would not serve his 3 full years, due to the war ending in mid-1865. At any rate, he spent some time as a POW, having been captured by the Confederates on July 22, 1864. He was sent to Andersonville Prison and survived the horrors of that infamous detention center. On July 17, 1865, he was mustered-out of the Union Army at Louisville, Kentucky. At that time, James was still nearly 3 months shy of his 18th birthday.



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G.A.R. VETERAN – PVT. JAMES HENRY SHORT (CONTINUED)

Now a civilian, James soon migrated westward into Kansas. On June 8, 1870, he was 23 years old and living alone in Elm Creek Township in Saline County, Kansas. He is listed on the federal census as an Illinois-born farmer, living on real estate valued at \$1,800. He was now prepared to begin a family.

In 1872, he married Mary E. Anderson, a native of Ohio. She was about 17 years old at the time. However, their marriage was destined to be brief due to her untimely death in New Cambria, Kansas on October 14, 1874. She was only 19 years old, and was laid to rest in Highland Cemetery in New Cambria.

Right: Gravestone of Mary E. Anderson-Short at Highland Cemetery.



On February 12, 1879, James was 31 years old when he remarried. His new wife was 27-year-old widow, Mrs. Amelia E. Brewer-Gage. They were united in matrimony in Cambria Township by Minister of the Gospel, John Miller. Amelia (*aka. Milly/Millie*) was born in Farmington, Iowa on December 3, 1853. She had previously been married to Frederick H. Gage, who passed away two years earlier. From that earlier union, she brought two young children into her marriage with James - Fred W. O. Gage and Maud A. Gage.

On June 3, 1880, James was still 31 years old and farming in Cambria Township. Whether through hard work or by marriage – or both – he had become a prosperous farmer. He and 28-year-old Millie owned 160 acres valued at \$1,200, with farm equipment worth another \$500. Their livestock consisted of 7 horses, 2 milk cows, 16 swine, and 50 chickens. Their 3¼-acre orchard included 2 apple trees and 300 peach trees.

During the previous year, their other crops produced 500 bushels of wheat, 1,000 bushels of Indian corn, 100 bushels of oats, and 50 bushels of Irish potatoes. Their cows enabled the Shorts to produce butter to the value of \$125, and their chickens contributed 400 dozen eggs. Taken together, the family realized an income of \$650 in 1879 from their farm products. In 1880, Millie's two children were 8 and 5 years old, and the Shorts utilized the services of a 22-year-old hired man, Isaiah Faust - who also lived in the Short household.

Even though the future looked bright for the Short family, tragedy soon visited. The following year, on April 21, 1882, Amelia's 9-year-old son, Fred W. O. Gage, passed away in New Cambria. He had been born May 19, 1872 in Hamilton, Hancock County, Illinois, and was about 4 years old when he and his family migrated to Kansas. Fred was also laid to rest in Highland Cemetery in New Cambria.

Right: Burial obelisk of young Fred W. O. Gage.



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G.A.R. VETERAN – PVT. JAMES HENRY SHORT (CONTINUED)

May 18, 1884, however, was a joyful day for James and Amelia Short. They celebrated the arrival of their first child together – Zillah K. Short was born in Salina, Kansas.

On March 1, 1885, the Short household was enumerated on the Kansas State census. James was 37 years old and still farming in Cambria Township. His wife, 'Millie', was 33 years old, and their baby daughter, Zilla K. Short, was 10 months old. Millie's 10-year-old daughter, 'Maudy' Gage, from her previous marriage, was also living in the household - as well as James' unmarried 27-year-old Illinois-born younger brother, John Short.

NOTE: James' step-daughter, Maude Abbie Gage, was born November 21, 1874 near Hamilton, Illinois. She was two years old when her family relocated to a farm in central Kansas. She later obtained a teacher's certificate from Normal School in Salina, Kansas. On October 10, 1898, at age 23, she married entrepreneur Ross Shaw Sterling in Texas. He was the founder of Humble Oil.

Right: Maud Abbie Gage-Sterling and her husband, Ross S. Sterling

Maud and Ross eventually became the parents of five children. Maud was an active member of the South End Christian Church, a member of the Y.W.C.A. board, a *Red Cross* instructor during World War I, and a member of the *Alexander Love Chapter* of the *D.A.R.*



In 1931, Maude became the First Lady of Texas when her husband was elected governor. Sterling served as governor from 1931 to 1933. Their mansion (*named Miramar*) in Morgan's Point, Harris County, Texas was, at the time, the largest private home in the state. A portrait of Governor Sterling graced the cover of the September 21, 1931 issue of *Time Magazine*.



On July 16, 1888, James filed for a military pension from Kansas. He based his claim on his Civil War service with *Company E, 30th Illinois Infantry*. His pension application was eventually approved (*Pension Certificate No. 442.408*).

Tuesday, September 18, 1888 was another memorable day for James Short and his second wife, Amelia. The occasion was the birth of their second child, Frank Arthur Short, in New Cambria. Later in life, Frank preferred to be called by his middle name, 'Arthur'. The Short family soon pulled up stakes and migrated from Kansas to Texas.

In 1900, growing numbers of settlers, many from Kansas, settled in Graydon, Texas, a recently established small farming community in central Chambers County about 60 miles due east of Houston. They were attracted by the mild climate, the good farmland - and the active promotion of developers. Among those early settlers was the James Short family.

On June 12, 1900, James was 52 years old and farming in Graydon with his 47-year-old wife, 'Millie', and

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G.A.R. VETERAN – PVT. JAMES HENRY SHORT (CONTINUED)

their two teenage children, Zillah Short (*age 16*), and Arthur Short (*age 11*). A niece, 17-year-old Kansas-born Inez Dickinson, was also living in the Short household. The 1900 census also shows James and 'Millie' had been married 20 years, and three of Millie's four children were still living. The Shorts owned their farm free and clear, but James' farming days were numbered.

On April 18, 1910, James was 62 years old and living on San Jacinto Street in La Porte, Harris County, Texas. He was reportedly employed as a house carpenter. He shared the home with his 57-year-old 2nd wife, 'Milly' and their two unmarried Kansas-born adult children, Zillah K. Short (*age 26*), and feed store salesman, Arthur F. Short (*age 21*). James and 'Milly' were listed as having been married 32 years, they owned their home free and clear, and three of 'Millys' four children were still living. The 1910 census also notes James was a Union Army veteran. The Shorts soon moved to nearby Houston in Harris County.

At 1:15 a.m. on Tuesday, February 21, 1911, Amelia Short passed away at 224 Travis St. in Houston. She was 57 years old and died of heart failure, with tuberculosis being a contributing factor. The next day, she was buried in the Short family plot in Houston's Glenwood Cemetery. James was the informant for her death record.

Right: Gravestone of Amelia E. Brewer-Gage-Short

On October 1, 1914, even though James was a week shy of his 67th birthday, he married for the third time. His new wife was 60-year-old Mrs. Frances M. Peters. They were united in matrimony by A. B. Buchanan, Pastor of Central Park Church of Houston. Frances was born November 9, 1853 in Madison, Jefferson County, Indiana.



In 1915, James H. Short is listed in the *Houston City Directory* (pg. 820) without an occupation and living at 2415 Hamilton St. His daughter, Miss Zillah Short, was boarding a little over a mile and a half away at 600 Avondale Ave.

On January 6, 1920, James was 73 years old, retired, and still living at 2415 Hamilton St. in Houston's 3rd Ward. He was living with his 3rd wife, Frances, and his 43-year-old unmarried railroad shipping clerk nephew, Charles L. Gaul. James and Frances soon moved to San Antonio - most likely later that year.

At some point, after moving to San Antonio, James became a member of the *Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), Department of Texas*. It is not yet known if he had previously been a member of the G.A.R. elsewhere. In San Antonio, he became affiliated with *Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Post No. 3*. His G.A.R. membership was based on his Civil War service and honorable discharge from the *30th Regiment, Illinois Infantry*.

The 1926 *City Directory* for San Antonio shows James Short living at 533 W. Magnolia Ave., which would ultimately be his final address. His heart was beginning to fail. On April 19, 1930, James was 83 years old, retired, and still living at 533 W. Magnolia Ave. He was living with his 74-year-old 3rd wife, Frances, and 26-year-old unmarried lodger, Mark E. Watson. The 1930 federal census shows their home was valued at \$8,000 and they owned a radio set. James' was now entering the last six months of his life.

On October 23, 1930, James died at home. His five-year-long battle with heart problems was over, as he succumbed to the effects of myocarditis. He was 83 years and 14 days old. He had been living in San Antonio

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G.A.R. VETERAN — PVT. JAMES HENRY SHORT (CONTINUED)

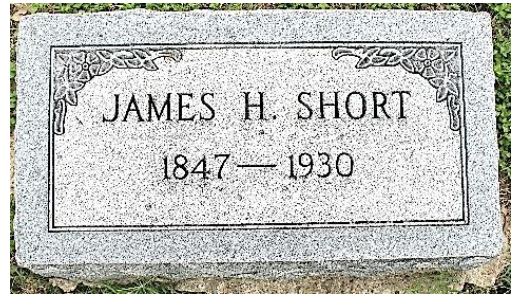
for 10 years and left Frances as a widow. The resulting death certificate for James was issued by the *Texas State Department of Health* and filed October 23, 1930.

A newspaper obituary announcing James' death was published by the *Austin American-Stateman* in Austin, Texas on October 24, 1930. Several other newspapers in towns across Texas also noted his passing. He was laid to rest the next day at Mission Burial Park in San Antonio.

The *Department of Texas, Grand Army of the Republic* memorialized his death by listing his name on the *Death Roll* in the 1931 *Proceedings* of the 46th *Encampment of the Dept. of Texas, G.A.R.*, which was submitted to the *U.S. Library of Congress* in 1932.

R.I.P. Comrade Short!

James' widow, Frances, survived him by about three and a half years, passing away in San Antonio on March 30, 1934 at age 80. She was buried beside him in Mission Burial Park South.



NOTE: James' daughter, Zillah Short, never married. During the last thirty years of her life, she lived with her half-sister, Maud Gage-Sterling, and husband, former Texas governor Ross Sterling.

On February 18, 1944, the Sterling household was in La Porte, Texas. On that date, Zillah passed away of a heart attack at Hermann Hospital in Houston. She was 59 years old and was laid to rest near her mother in Glenwood Cemetery in Houston.



NOTE: James' son, Frank Arthur Short, Sr., was 26 years old when he married on January 4, 1915. His bride was 19-year-old native Texan Mildred Angell. They were united in matrimony in Liberty, Texas and eventually became the parents of at least four children. They resided in Nederland, Jefferson County, Texas.

Frank was employed variously as a driller, oil dispatcher, and a dock man at the Sun Oil Co. refinery in Beaumont. He passed away March 15, 1958 at St. Mary's Hospital in Port Arthur, Texas at age 69. He was laid to rest the next day in Oak Bluff Memorial Park in Port Neches, Texas.



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G.A.R. VETERAN — PVT. JAMES HENRY SHORT (CONTINUED)

NOTE: James' step-daughter, Maude Abbie Gage-Sterling became a widow on March 25, 1949 when her husband, Ross Sterling passed away in Fort Worth, Texas. He was interred in the Sterling family plot in Glenwood Cemetery in Houston.

Maude survived him for many years, passing away on March 7, 1963 at age 88. She was also laid to rest in the Sterling family plot in Glenwood Cemetery.



... written by Michael L. Lance, PDC
Dept./Lea Camp #2 Historian

... research by Terry T. Sutton
Dept./Lea Camp #2 Graves Regis. Officer



Department of Texas and Louisiana
May 2026

TRIVIA — TOOLS OF THE SURGEON

The Civil War produced devastating injuries because of the widespread use of the Minié ball, a conical soft-lead bullet fired from rifled muskets. These bullets shattered bone and caused massive internal damage. Surgeons needed specialized instruments to locate and remove them quickly, often under primitive battlefield conditions.

Bullet extractors came in many forms. Some resembled long forceps with claw-like ends, while others used spring-loaded mechanisms to grip bullets lodged deep in tissue. Surgeons frequently carried them in portable surgical kits alongside bone saws, scalpels, and probes. Since anesthesia and antiseptic practices were still developing, procedures were often painful and dangerous despite the skill of army surgeons.

Another unusual feature of these tools was how adaptable they had to be. Bullets sometimes flattened, fragmented, or embedded themselves in bone, forcing surgeons to improvise during operations. Successful extraction could save a soldier's life, though infection remained a constant threat.

These instruments reveal an important reality of the Civil War: technological advances in weaponry far outpaced advances in medicine, forcing surgeons to develop specialized tools and techniques in response to the war's horrific wounds.



CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 18)

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.

Right - U.S. Army version of the Medal of Honor

This issue of the Unionist presents Part 18 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 the wording of their citations.



- **John W. Blunt – 1st Lt.** – He was born May 18, 1840 in Columbia County, New York and grew up in a rural farming family. In October 1861, at age 21, he enlisted in the Union Army as a Sergeant from Chatham, New York, and was assigned to the 6th New York Cavalry. He was commissioned as an officer the following year, November 1862. Even though he was badly wounded in spring of 1864, his injury did not prevent him from heroic conduct later that year at the *Battle of Cedar Creek*, the largest battle fought in the Shenandoah Valley. The injury permanently affected his life. Blunt was recommended for a *Medal of Honor* for valor by Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan for his actions during the *Battle of Cedar Creek* – which he belatedly received on June 1, 1908.

Right: John W. Blunt

In June 1865, Blunt transferred to the 2nd New York Provisional Cavalry, and mustered out with that regiment that August with the brevet rank of major. He declined an offer from the regular Army for further service after the war due to his health. He married in 1867 and became the father of three children.



Blunt played a prominent role in Civil War commemorations as a member of the G.A.R. He was instrumental in establishing the *Gen. John A. Logan Post* in Chatham, and frequently led the town's annual Memorial Day parades, "including riding at the front in 1906 at age 66, adorned with his military sash, saber, and decorations." He died in January 1910 in New York at age 69. His citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to First Lieutenant John W. Blunt, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 19 October 1864, while serving with Company K, 6th New York Cavalry, in action at Cedar Creek, Virginia. First Lieutenant Blunt voluntarily led a charge across a narrow bridge over the creek, against the lines of the enemy.



... continued on next page

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 18 CONTINUED)

- **Peter Martin Boehm – 2nd Lt.** – He was born in Albany, New York in February 1845. In July 1858, he joined the U.S. Army as a bugler at the tender age of 13. He served with *Troop B, 2nd U.S. Cavalry* until transferring to the *15th New York Cavalry*. He was promoted to 2nd Lt. with the *15th New York* in March 1865. As aide-de-camp to General Custer, Boehm was involved in the *Battle of Dinwiddie Court House* in Virginia. On seeing a line of men being forced back by the enemy's assault, Boehm took the flag from the Color Bearer and mustered the line of men into action, eventually beating back the assault. He mustered out of the Army in October 1865.

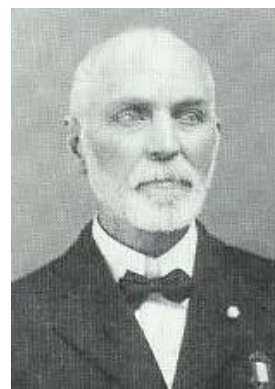


After the war, Boehm was involved in the Indian Wars. He suffered multiple severe wounds during the Indian Campaigns, including a “severe wound in right elbow”. He died in Chicago, Illinois in 1914 at age 69, and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia. His citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Second Lieutenant Peter Martin Boehm, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 31 March 1865, while serving with Company K, 15th New York Cavalry, in action at Dinwiddie Courthouse, Virginia. While acting as aide to General Custer, Second Lieutenant Boehm took a flag from the hands of Color Bearer, rode in front of a line that was being driven back and, under a heavy fire, rallied the men, re-formed the line, and repulsed the charge.

- **Henry G. Bonebrake – Lieutenant** – He was born in Waynesboro, PA in June 1838. Before the war, he became a teacher. In September 1862, Bonebrake enlisted with the *17th Pennsylvania Vol. Cavalry*. He was elected 1st Sgt. and later commissioned as a 2nd Lt. - and ultimately as a 1st Lt. in January 1865.

During the *Battle of Five Forks* in April 1865, Bonebrake spotted a color-bearer urging on his fellow Confederates. Bonebrake captured the flag, which belonged to the *35th Regiment North Carolina State Troops*. He was presented with a *Medal of Honor* in May 1865 for this act of bravery. Bonebrake mustered out of the army in June 1865, along with the rest of his company. Following the war, he continued with teaching and later got into farming. He also owned a grocery store and, in 1898, was an assistant postmaster. He married Cora Walters and then, after her death, to Clara Palm.



Bonebrake was honored by Franklin County in 1987 and again in 2002 for earning the community's only *Medal of Honor* during the Civil War. A bronze tablet was dedicated to his memory.

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to First Lieutenant (Cavalry) Henry G. Bonebrake, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 1 April 1865, while serving with Company G, 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry, in action at Five Forks, Virginia. As one of the first of Devin's Division to enter the works, First Lieutenant Bonebrake fought in a hand-to-hand struggle with a Confederate to capture his flag by superior physical strength.

... series to be continued next issue with Part 19

2026 - 2027 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

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 Department Sr. Vice-Commander
 Department Jr. Vice-Commander
 Department Secretary
 Department Treasurer
 Department Council Member #1
 Department Council Member #2
 Department Council Member #3

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Clifford F. 'Butch' Durham
David Rediger
Michael L. Lance
John E. Schneider, Sr.
Dr. Stevenson T. Holmes
Blair G. Rudy
Donald L. Gates



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 G.A.R. Records Officer **Michael L. Lance**
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 Assistant Secretary
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 Website Aide

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Daniel B. Pourreau
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Department Website

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The Unionist newsletter is published quarterly (Feb, May, Aug, and Nov).

Send comments, articles, or photos to the Editor at:

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2026 CAMP OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

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	Lea Camp Facebook		
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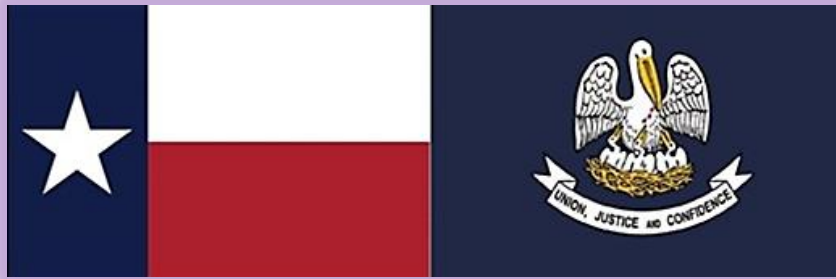
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HONORING OUR UNION ANCESTORS
BY
KEEPING THEIR LEGACY ALIVE



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR