



# THE UNIONIST

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



Nov 2024

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**COVER IMAGE** - "*First Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia*" - December 11, 1862, Fredericksburg, Virginia, by unknown artist.

## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA

### *Thursday, Nov 21, 2024 – Department Leadership Roundtable Session*

At 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2024, I hosted another monthly Department Leadership Roundtable meeting via Zoom. It was well attended and many topics were discussed regarding the operations and plans of the Department.

I was pleased to hear that the steps required for organizing a new Camp in Central Texas are progressing. Camp Commander-elect, Blair Rudy noted that the proposed *Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Camp 3* of San Antonio will begin with 10 charter members. He updated us on the progress of the Charter application process.

Since several members of the *2025 National Encampment Host Committee* were present, including chairman John Schneider, Sr., much discussion involved our planning and progress with that upcoming event. The Department is right on schedule with the many tasks that need to be done.

Also, Department Historian Michael Lance advised us of a new far-reaching research project involving the history of the *Department of Texas* of the *Grand Army of the Republic*. Please note the two important news items in *Dept. Dispatch No. 1* on the next page.

Finally, after discussion and consideration, I have decided that *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2* will host the 2025 Department Encampment. The venue location is yet to be determined. I want to thank the *Lea Camp* for agreeing to take on this important responsibility.

*Note:* On Veterans Day, John Vander Meulen, Cmdr. of *Lea Camp 2*, hosted a special Zoom session to honor the military veterans of the members of that Camp. I was invited to attend. So I submitted two photos of family veterans. After Cmdr. Vander Meulen presented a moving video slide show showing the veteran images he had collected, each participant was given time to talk about their veteran's stories and service – *thus keeping their memories alive!* I hope we can conduct a similar program next Veterans Day - *on a Department-wide basis*. Here are the two photos I submitted.



**Pvt. William Riley Phillips**  
Co. B, 6<sup>th</sup> Reg't TN Cav.  
My Civil War Ancestor



**SSgt. Morris S. Phillips**  
US Army - Guadalcanal  
197<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Depot Co.  
My Father



*... submitted by Timothy M. Phillips, DC - Gen. James J. Byrne Camp 1 - Fort Worth, Texas*



*Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*  
Department of Texas and Louisiana  
Timothy Phillips, Commander



Department Dispatch No. 1  
SERIES 2024-2025  
25 Nov 2024

**Texas GAR History Project**

Brothers,

I don't know how many of you get to hear about the proceedings of our monthly Senior Staff Roundtable Zoom meetings, but a couple of items came up in our most recent one that you all will want to know about.

Somebody once told me that, at the end, a person dies twice: once when vital signs cease, and, more insidiously, *the last time his name is mentioned*. This second demise goes to one of the core charges of our Order- to "keep green the memory" of those that sacrificed so much to preserve the life of the Republic.

To that end, Department Historian Michael Lance has begun the *Texas GAR History Project*. With some 83 former GAR posts scattered about our state, in places as big as Houston and as small as Baird, the scope of this endeavor is cosmic. Brother Lance is asking Camps and individual Brothers to "adopt" a GAR post and ferret out as much information as possible about that Post; its activities, its members, existing photos, etc. The information collected will all be stored digitally and made available via our websites. The importance of this Project cannot be understated, as most of our GAR history is now likely hidden on brittle yellow paper in dusty, crumbling boxes. I have personally volunteered for *Travis Post 66* in Abilene. And I gladly throw the prestige of the office of Department Commander behind this project. Several other Posts have also been spoken for, but the vast majority are still waiting to be 'adopted'.

Another consideration is our need to recognize those members who put in extra effort for the Good of the Order. This recognition will be in the form of a Department Commander's Letter, which will go in the member's file and will be useful for consideration for Brother of the Year qualification.

Let me close by extending best Christmas and New Year's wishes to all. Stay safe and I hope to see you in 2025.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

Timothy Phillips, Commander  
Department of Texas and Louisiana  
*Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*

## DEPARTMENT CAMP ORGANIZER UPDATE

Brothers,

The long awaited formation of a new *Camp* in Central Texas at San Antonio is moving closer towards a reality. We have submitted the appropriate paperwork to apply for a Camp Charter. The application includes the names of 10 Charter members, all of which will be transferring from their current Camps in Texas to the new Camp in San Antonio.

I am looking forward to being able to rally the otherwise distant Texas Brothers into a local Camp in San Antonio to allow us to advance and embrace the *Order's* mission. The new Camp will be named *Gen. Edward O.C. Ord Camp No 3*. The moniker was lifted from the *Grand Army of the Republic's Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Post No. 3* at San Antonio - as suggested by Brother historian Michael Lance. Gen. Ord was a storied Officer and was instrumental in the founding of the current Fort Sam Houston Army Post in San Antonio. His legacy will live on as we embrace his name as the namesake for the new Camp. We start small and look forward to a thriving Camp in the near future. Huzzah!

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,  
Blair Rudy, PDC, Dept. Camp Organizer  
Cmdr.-elect of future *Camp 3*.  
214-505-1452  
blairrudy@me.com

## GEN. EDWARD O. C. ORD – CAREER SOLDIER

Edward Otho Cresap Ord was born in 1818 in Cumberland, Maryland. He was raised in a disciplined environment that prepared him for a future in the military. In 1839, he graduated from the *U.S. Military Academy* at West Point, ranking 17<sup>th</sup> in his class. He was immediately commissioned as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Reg't, *U.S. Artillery*. His pre-Civil War career was marked by steady progress. As an artillery officer, he served in the *Second Seminole War (1835-1842)* in Florida, earning a promotion to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.

Ever ambitious, Ord petitioned unsuccessfully for an assignment on the front lines when war erupted with Mexico in 1846. In January 1847, he traveled on the *USS Lexington* with his friend, Lt. William T. Sherman, from New York around Cape Horn, and on to Monterey, the capital of the newly acquired territory of California. Ord immediately assumed command of *Battery F, 3rd U.S. Artillery*. He was ordered to complete the construction of *Fort Mervine*, which was renamed *Fort Halleck*. Lt. Ord and his second in command, Lt. Sherman, superintended the construction to completion (in Feb 1865, the fort was renamed *Ord Barracks*).



### Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord

Ord was still stationed in California when the gold rush began in 1848. With the prices of everything skyrocketing, military salaries no longer covered living expenses. Ord and other young officers took on side jobs to supplement their incomes. In late 1848, Ord and Sherman, in the employ of the *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* assisted in the survey of Sacramento, California, helping to produce the map that established the future capital city's extensive downtown street grid. In 1848, Ord also produced a map of the *Gold and Quicksilver District*, a sketch depicting the mines and mineral resources of California.

In 1849, officials of Los Angeles officials needed a survey of their public lands in order to sell them. Ord was hired as the surveyor. He and his assistant, William Hutton, mapped out Los Angeles in July and August of that year.

... continued on page 22

## LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 - HOUSTON

**Saturday, Oct 5, 2024 - Houston, Texas**

It was a beautiful Fall morning as members of *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2* of Houston began arriving at historic Glenwood Cemetery in Houston Heights. They were gathering to take part in a graveside ceremony honoring Civil War veteran, Captain Isaac Conroe. Conroe had served as Captain of the *12<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry* and migrated to Texas after the war. He built a lumber business, and eventually founded of the city of Conroe, Texas.

The ceremony, hosted by the *Lea Camp*, was supported by volunteer participants from the *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary No. 1*; *Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18* of Dallas; and the *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent No. 4, DUVCW*. Special guests included Conroe City Councilwoman, Shana Arthur, Andrew V. Rapoza of the *Montgomery County Historical Commission*, and several descendants of Captain Conroe.

The program went smoothly, featuring a biographical reading about Capt. Conroe by Mr. Rapoza, a mayoral proclamation presented by Councilwoman Arthur, the laying of wreaths and roses at the grave, and a 3-volley musket salute. The event was very moving for everyone present, and especially so for the descendants of the Civil War veteran.

The program began with the toll of the ceremonial bell by Camp Patriotic Instructor, Steve Brock. At that signal, the Federal Honor Guard, marched to the gravesite, led by drummer William 'Bill' Myers.



**R-L: Bill Myers, John E. Schneider, Sr., Brook Thomas, Jason Hoffman, Michael Rappe, Daniel Poureau, Michael Lance, and Herbert Powers.**

After the Honor Guard was in position, Camp Cmdr. John Vander Meulen offered some opening remarks, and called on Department Chaplain Stephen Schulze to give the Invocation. Then, after Capt. Thomas, brought the Honor Guard to 'PRESENT ARMS', Patriotic Instructor Brock led the *Pledge of Allegiance*. Cmdr. Vander Meulen followed by welcoming and introducing the participating organizations and guests. He invited Councilwoman Arther to the podium, who gave greetings from the mayor of Conroe. She also read and presented a Proclamation from the mayor (see pg. 13). Mr. Rapoza was then invited to the podium to read his very interesting biographical sketch about Captain Conroe. The bio sketch was followed by the poem, 'When the Boys In Blue Are Gone', read by Susan Barry of the *DUVCW*.

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

Michael Lance, was then summoned to the podium from his position in the Honor Guard to conduct a version of a 1917 GAR graveside service. It began with the placing of the 'Tools of the Soldier' at the grave and the posting of a grave Guard (Herbert Powers) by Officer-of-the-Day, John Schneider, Sr. Next, an evergreen wreath was laid at the grave by Rebecca Feaster of the *DUVCW*, followed by the laying of a white rose by Vali Reyes, President of the *Auxiliary*, and then a grapevine wreath was placed at the grave by *Lea Camp* Brother Keith Moody. Several descendants of Capt. Conroe then solemnly filed up in turn to each lay a red rose at the grave. Brother Lance then inserted a small 35-star U.S. flag on the *GAR* marker located beside the grave.

Captain-of-the-Honor Guard, Brook Thomas, then gave the commands for a nicely executed 3-volley musket salute. Drummer Bill Myers coordinated the firing movements by drum signals. The volleys were followed by a recorded version of *Echo Taps*. Brothers Robert Riley and Michael Schneider recorded the event with video and still cameras. The following image gallery illustrates their efforts.



**John C. Vander Meulen**  
Welcomes participants and guests.



**Andrew V. Rapoza**  
Biographical sketch about Capt. Conroe



**John E. Schneider, Sr.**  
Officer-of-the-Day



**Michael L. Lance**  
1917 GAR graveside service



**Susan Barry**  
'When the Boys In Blue Are Gone'

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



Above: **Rebecca Feaster**  
Laying an evergreen wreath



**Vali Reyes**  
Laying a white rose



**Keith Moody**  
Laying a grapevine wreath

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**Descendants of Capt. Isaac Conroe**  
Laying red roses



**Herbert W. Powers**  
Grave Guard



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



**“READY!”**



**“FIRE!”**

*... continued on next page*

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



**Honor Guard Retires**



**John Vander Meulen and Shana Arthur**  
Receiving Mayoral Proclamation



**Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary No. 1**  
L-R: Vali Reyes, Norma Pollard, and Jill Schneider

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

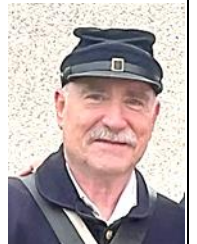


L-R: William Myers, Jason Hoffman, Daniel Pourreau, Herbert Powers, Donald Gates, Brook Thomas, Steve Brock, John Schneider, Sr., Michael Lance, Michael Rappe, Stephen Schulze, John Vander Meulen, Robert Riley, Keith Moody



L-R: Jill Schneider, Mary Anthony-Startz, Janet Hicks, Charity Zemzoum, Susan Barry, Rebecca Feaster, Cecily Kelly, Anne Lineberry, Vali Reyes, and Norma Pollard

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC  
Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN, Camp 2 - Houston, Texas





# CITY OF CONROE

Est. 1904

## Proclamation

by the

Mayor of the City of Conroe, Texas

To all to whom these presents shall come,

Greetings:

WHEREAS, remembering the beginnings of Conroe, Texas is an important aspect of moving into the future; and

WHEREAS, the founder of Conroe, Texas, Isaac Conroe, was a Patriot and served as a Captain in the Union Army during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is to keep alive the memory and legacy of their Union Veteran ancestors; and

WHEREAS, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is conducting a Remembrance Ceremony to honor Captain Isaac Conroe at his gravesite on October 5, 2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CONROE, TEXAS, THAT October 5, 2024 is hereby declared

“SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR DAY”

in the City of Conroe, and ask our citizens to remember our founder Isaac Conroe, a man with a vision for our beloved City.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the City of Conroe, Texas to be affixed this 28<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2024.

DUKE W. COON, MAYOR

ATTEST:

SAMI H. QUINLAN, INTERIM SECRETARY



## LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 - HOUSTON

*Saturday, Nov 11, 2024 - Houston, Texas*

As in prior years, Camp SVC Daniel B. Pourreau and PDC Michael L. Lance assembled on the grounds in front of Houston City Hall on the morning of November 11, 2024 - *Veterans Day*. Soon, they were joined by four uniformed members of *Co. A, 13<sup>th</sup> Reg't U.S. Infantry/Texas Rifles* to form an Honor Guard. The purpose for the unit was to fire the musket salute near the end of the formal Veterans Day program conducted on the plaza in front of City Hall. Besides Brothers Pourreau and Lance, the other participants were Tommy Attaway as Captain, Howard Rose, Rion Braddock, and Kerry Manning. They fired three resounding and precise volleys.

### One of three Volleys

At the conclusion of the program at City Hall, the unit reformed as a 5-man Color Guard to march in Houston's Veterans Day Parade. Capt. Attaway led the unit, with Daniel Pourreau and Kerry Manning carrying flags instead of muskets. They marched smartly, saluting the officials in the grand stands near the end of the parade route. Each participant was glad to have had the opportunity to honor our Nations veterans.



**Color Guard marches with the Colors held high and muskets at Right Shoulder Shift,**

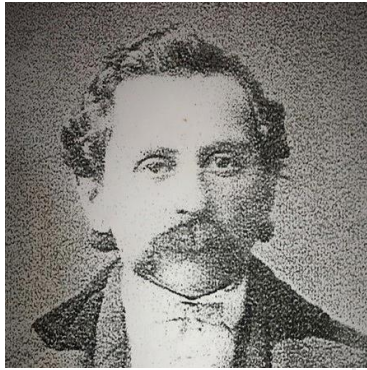
*L-R: Daniel Pourreau, Michael Lance, Tommy Attaway (Capt.), Rion Braddock, and Kerry Manning*

*... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC, Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN, Camp 2 - Houston*

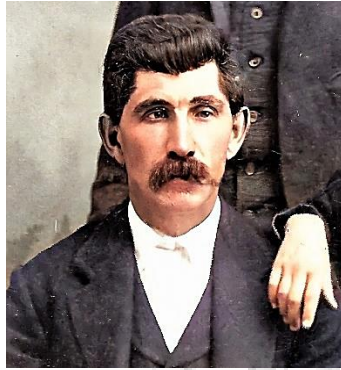
## LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 - HOUSTON

*Saturday, Nov 11, 2024 - Houston, Texas*

On Veterans Day, several members of the *Lea Camp* logged in to participate in a special Zoom session hosted by Camp Cmdr. John Vander Meulen. The Cmdr. played a video tribute presenting the images of several of our Civil War ancestors (*photos below*), as well as other family members who served in the U.S. Armed Forces. In addition to remembering and honoring our veteran forefathers, the event gave each attendee the opportunity to share family stories and traditions.



**Sgt. Charles Myers**  
82<sup>nd</sup> Reg't, PA Vol. Inf.  
Anc. of William Myers



**Pvt. Frederick Sewart**  
143<sup>rd</sup> Reg't, IL Vol. Inf.  
Anc. of John Vander Meulen



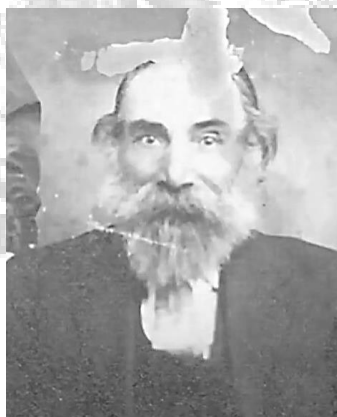
**Pvt. Isaac C. Sutton**  
8<sup>th</sup> Reg't, IN Inf.  
Anc. of Terry Sutton



**Pvt. Henry Ludwig Schulze**  
9<sup>th</sup> Reg't, IL Vol. Inf.  
Anc. of Stephen Schulze



**Cpl. John Wesley Lance**  
58<sup>th</sup> Reg't, IN Vol. Inf.  
Anc. of Michael L. Lance



**Pvt. Lafayette Rape**  
8<sup>th</sup> Reg't, OH Cav.  
Anc. of Michael Rappe



**Pvt. John Nuckles**  
8<sup>th</sup> Reg't, TN Cav.  
Anc. of Larry Nuckels

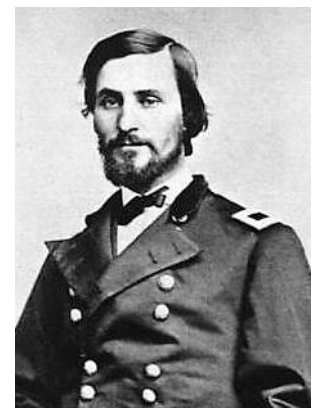


**Lt. Col. Kasper Schneider**  
103<sup>rd</sup> Reg't, NY Inf.  
Anc. of John Schneider Jr. & Sr.



**Pvt. John H. Powers**  
104<sup>th</sup> Reg't, IL Inf.  
Anc. of Herbert Powers

**Brig. Gen. William Sooy Smith**  
1<sup>st</sup> Division, XVI Corps  
Anc. of James Rice



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



**CMMachinist Clausen L. Schisler**  
USN  
1926-1954  
Grandfather of William D. Myers

Other family veterans remembered during the special Veterans Day Zoom tribute included:



**Fireman Lester Lance**  
USN - Korea  
1948-1953  
Father of Michael Lance



**Lt. William D. Myers**  
USNR – Korea  
1952-1954  
Father of William D. Myers



**Tech. Sgt. Milton J. Schulze**  
US Army  
1942-1946  
Father of Stephen Schulze



**Cpl. James Edward Vander Meulen**  
U.S. Army - Germany  
1954-1956  
Father of John C. Vander Meulen

The fighting during WWI ceased when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of *“the war to end all wars.”*

Today, Veterans Day is observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week it falls on. The observance of Veterans Day on November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: *A celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.*



## BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH BAILEY CAMP #5 - SHREVEPORT

### Headstone Cleaning, Aug – Nov 2024 – Marshall, Texas

The gravestone cleaning project begun in August 2024 by *Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5* of Shreveport has proved to be very successful. The photos below show the three phases of the operation: *Before*, the original dirty condition; *During*, gravestone sprayed down with a D2 solution; and *After*, the final result of the cleaning.

This Union gravesite was 'discovered' in Greenwood Cemetery in Marshall, Texas earlier in the year. As you can see below, it was badly in need of attention. The black mold and other stains nearly made the inscriptions unreadable. Members of the *Bailey Camp 5* came to the rescue in August, taking immediate action to correct the situation. A heavy coat of a D2 solution was applied and allowed to 'cure'. Additional applications were applied as necessary, resulting in the beautiful fresh-looking gravestone shown below.

The federal soldier buried beneath the headstone is Pennsylvania-born George W. Rake (*Raike*). In August 1862, he was a 31-year-old married tailor living in Aurora, Illinois when he enlisted as a Private at Camp Butler. He was assigned to *Co. H, 124<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry* for a 3-year term, mustering into service on September 10, 1862. He served through the end of the war, mustering-out at Camp Douglas near Chicago as a Corporal.

After the war, George Rake and his wife, Hannah, apparently divorced. She and their three children continued to live in Aurora, Illinois, while George migrated to the Marshall, Texas area. He married the widow Pheobe Ann Slater sometime after 1880, and died in March 1890 at age 59.



Before



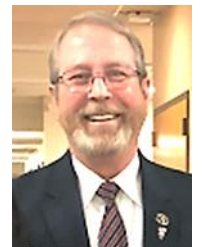
During



After

As members of the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*, it is our duty and obligation to care for and maintain the final resting places of our veterans. By keeping their gravestones looking clean and fresh, we honor their memory and demonstrate our dedication to preserving their legacy.

There is a good chance that a neglected and forgotten Union veteran headstone exists near you. Take some time to bring it back to life - as we have done for George Rake. You will feel a great sense of pride in knowing that you have helped a veteran regain a respectable appearance once more!



... submitted by William 'Bill' Elliott, Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 – Shreveport, Louisiana

## COL. ELMER E. ELLSWORTH CAMP #18 - DALLAS

### Aug 1-4, 2024 – Lexington, Kentucky

UMA members John Schneider, left, and Eric Atkisson, right, attended the 143<sup>rd</sup> National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) in Lexington, Kentucky, August 1-4.

Organized in 1881 and chartered by Congress in 1954, the SUVCW is the legal heir and successor to the Grand Army of the Republic, a fraternal organization of U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines who fought for the Union during the American Civil War. Structured similarly to the G.A.R., the SUVCW is headed by a Commander-in-Chief, elected annually at the National Encampment, who oversees the operation of 31 Departments, each consisting of one or more states, a Department-at-Large, a National Membership-at-Large, and more than 200 community-based camps.

Schneider, an administrative patent judge, Patent Trial Appeal Board, lives in Texas and has been a member of the SUVCW since 2007. Among other positions in the order, he has served as commander of the Col. Elmer Ellsworth Camp No. 18, in Dallas, and the Department of Texas and Louisiana. He is the great-grandson of Lt. Col. Kasper Schneider of the 103<sup>rd</sup> New York Infantry.

Atkisson, a communications manager in the Office of the Chief Communications Officer, currently on detail as a senior advisor in the Office of the Under Secretary, lives in Virginia and has been a member of the SUVCW since 2015. He recently served as commander of the SUVCW's DC-based Lincoln-Cushing Camp No. 2 and is currently Junior Vice Commander for the Department of the Chesapeake. He is the great-great-grandson of Private James P. Atkisson of the 15<sup>th</sup> West Virginia Infantry and Lieutenant Newton C. Whims of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, U.S. Colored Troops Infantry.

Schneider and Atkisson are also both members of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, whose members are descendants of Union officers of the Civil War.

*... article submitted by John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC – Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18 – Dallas (Reprinted from newsletter of the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office Military Association, Fall issue, pg. 11)*



### Saturday, 5 Oct 2024 – Houston, Texas

Members of Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18 of Dallas traveled to Houston on October 5, 2024 to participate in a formal graveside memorial ceremony. They combined with members of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 of Houston at the gravesite of Civil War veteran, Captain Isaac Conroe, who served in the 12<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry – and was the founder of the City of Conroe, Texas - located 20 miles north of Houston.

The Dallas area participants included: John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC; his wife, Jill Schneider, representing the Dames of the Loyal Legion of the United States; their son, Michael K. Schneider, CC; and Brook J. Thomas, DSVC.

*(Note: see related report and additional photos on pages 6-13.)*



**Michael, Jill, and John E. Schneider, Sr.**

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

## ANCESTOR PROFILE – PVT. JAMES WILLIAM ELLIOTT

James William Elliott was born Feb. 2, 1842 in Sangamon Co. Illinois. On Dec 23, 1863, he was 21 years old and living in the small town of Moweaqua, Illinois when he traveled about 40 miles to enlist in the Union Army at Camp Butler in Springfield, Illinois. He served in *Co. E, 32<sup>nd</sup> Reg't, Illinois Volunteer Infantry*. The ranks of the *32<sup>nd</sup> Illinois* at that time were being replenished after suffering losses during the siege and capture of Vicksburg, Mississippi, which culminated on July 4, 1863. As luck would have it, James' brother-in-law, John P. Campbell was the Sergeant of *Co. E (later promoted to Lieutenant)*. Having his brother-in-law as a Company officer may have made things a bit easier for James!

A couple months later, at the end of February 1864, the regiment received a 20 days veteran's furlough. The regiment then re-formed at Camp Butler as a Veteran Infantry regiment, received new Springfield model 1855 rifled muskets, and moved to Bird's Point, Missouri with the rest of the Division.

The regiment left Bird's Point by boat on May 8, 1864, heading to Clifton, Tennessee. Then they marched to Huntsville and Decatur, Alabama. Then they moved on to Rome Georgia where they joined Gen. William Sherman's forces. The regiment saw action at the *Battle of Kenesaw Mountain* in Cobb County, Georgia at the end of June 1864.

On Nov. 13, 1864, they joined Gen. William Sherman's "March to the Sea", entering Savannah, Georgia on December 21. The men had marched and fought for 100 miles in a month's time.

On Feb. 1, 1865, the *32<sup>nd</sup> Illinois* began marching northward through South Carolina, and on into North Carolina. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, they captured Fayetteville, North Carolina. A month later, on April 13, 1865, they reached Raleigh, North Carolina, and on April 29<sup>th</sup>, began a march north through Petersburg, Richmond, and Alexandria – and on to Washington, DC. They proudly marched in the *Grand Review* in Washington on May 24, 1865.

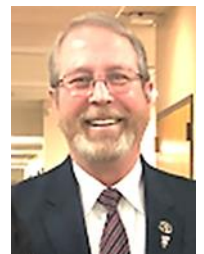


With the war all but over, James Elliott and the *32<sup>nd</sup> Illinois Infantry* were transported by rail to Parkersburg, Virginia on June 6, 1865, thence by boat to Louisville, Kentucky. On June 20, 1865, the Brigade was transferred to the *Department of Missouri* and moved by boat to St. Louis, Missouri. Then they were ordered to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, arriving on September 2, 1865. The *32<sup>nd</sup> Illinois* was finally mustered-out two weeks later, on Sept. 16, 1865. The newly discharged men then needed to find their own way back to Central Illinois.

James Elliott returned to Moweaqua, Illinois, which is 20 miles south of Decatur, Illinois. He married in 1866 and eventually became the father of ten children. He worked as a farmer and a teamster. In 1890, he took his wife and seven children south to Grayson Co., Texas to settle in the small community of Gunter, which is 17 miles southwest of Sherman, Texas. James William Elliott, died Nov. 25, 1923 in Gunter, Texas at age 81.

The three children who had stayed behind in Illinois were their son, Willie Oliver Elliott, who had died at age 3, their daughter Clara who had married, and their 4<sup>th</sup> child, Charles Eugene Elliott, who had married Anna Belle Jarvis. Charles and Anna Elliott were my great-grandparents. Their first child was Merrill James Elliott, my grandfather.

... submitted by descendant William Merrill 'Bill' Elliott  
Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5, Shreveport, Louisiana



## DEPARTMENT PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR'S MESSAGE

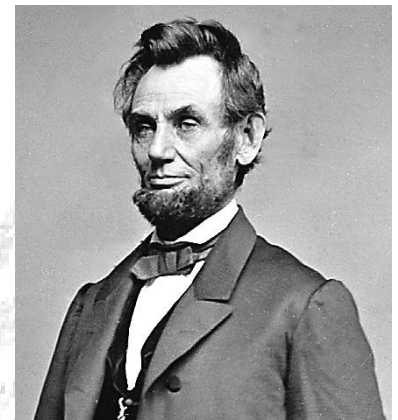
Brothers,

As Thanksgiving 2024 approaches, I would like to share information from our National Patriotic Instructor Tad C. Campbell, Past CinC, as well as some thoughts of mine. As in all of these messages, I am sharing my thoughts as a way to get you to think and remember - *not to cause heartburn!*

Well, the long awaited National Elections and Veterans Day have come and gone. We were able to exercise our rights as Americans because of the unselfish acts of giving by our Veterans. The election happened, and the world did not come to an end. As the votes are still being counted and contested in some locations, it is time to move forward and work for the unity of our country. We have the right to complain or campaign for change, but when the voting is over, we need to come back together for our families and country. Again, all of this is possible because of the patriotic acts of our Nation's Veterans. *God Bless them all for what they did for us.*

On October 3, 1863, after the *Battle of Gettysburg*, with this victory in mind, as well as its cost, President Abraham Lincoln issued a proclamation:

*I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, ... to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving ... and I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due Him ..., they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with Devine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.*



**President Abraham Lincoln**

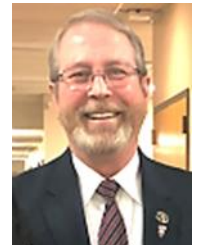
I can share with you that there is a movement underway to ask the incoming administration to restore the *Reconciliation Monument* at Arlington National Cemetery. The main reasoning is because it stood for what it was named for, *Reconciliation*, period. Its origins go back to a Union Veteran, Brevet Major William McKinley, who served in the 23<sup>rd</sup> *Ohio Infantry* under another Union Veteran and future President, Major Rutherford B. Hayes.

After the Spanish-American War, in a speech at the *Atlanta Peace Jubilee* on December 14, 1898, President McKinley not only celebrated the end of sectionalism, but also announced that the federal government would now begin tending Confederate graves, since these dead represented "a tribute to American valor."



**President William McKinley**

So, this Thanksgiving season, thank the Good Lord for our Country, our blessings, our families, and for the memory of those who served to give us these blessings. And for me, I offer special blessings for *all* of our ancestors who have gone on to be with our Lord and Savior.



*... submitted by Dept. Patriotic Instructor, William M. 'Bill' Elliott  
Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 - Shreveport, Louisiana*

## DEPARTMENT CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

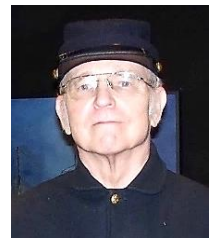
### A THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Here is a Thanksgiving prayer, courtesy of the first Abigail Van Buren (Dear Abby). Even if you read this a little late for this Thanksgiving, it can be used for other holidays or any time you wish to thank God for the blessings He has bestowed on you and your family.

Oh, Heavenly Father,  
We thank you for food and remember the hungry.  
We thank you for health and remember the sick.  
We thank you for friends and remember the friendless.  
We thank you for freedom and remember the enslaved.  
May these remembrances stir us to service.  
That your gifts to us may be used for others.

As Chaplain Jerry Kowalski would say, "If you agree with me, say AMEN."

... submitted by Dept. Chaplain Stephen D. Schulze  
Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp 2 – Houston, Texas



**The First Thanksgiving** - celebrated in 1621, was a momentous gathering that marked the Pilgrims' survival in the New World and symbolized cooperation between vastly different cultures. After enduring a grueling first winter in Plymouth, Massachusetts, during which half their group perished, the Pilgrims' fortunes improved thanks to the assistance of the Wampanoag people. This harvest celebration reflected a hard-earned triumph over adversity and a tenuous alliance that would later grow more complex.

The Pilgrims, a group of English separatists seeking religious freedom, arrived on the *Mayflower* in 1620. Their survival was nothing short of miraculous, owed largely to the guidance of Squanto, a member of the Patuxet tribe. Squanto taught them essential skills like planting corn, fishing, and hunting, enabling the Pilgrims to secure their first bountiful harvest. To celebrate, the Pilgrims organized a three-day feast to give thanks to God for their success and to share their gratitude with their Wampanoag allies.

The menu of that first Thanksgiving bore little resemblance to today's iconic turkey-and-stuffing spread. Historical accounts suggest it included wildfowl, venison provided by the Wampanoag, corn, shellfish, and other local fare. While pie, cranberry sauce, and potatoes were likely absent, the spirit of gratitude and camaraderie was present in abundance.



The alliance between the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag was born of necessity, and later relations between European settlers and Native Americans were fraught with conflict and betrayal. Today, Thanksgiving serves as both a commemoration of that early feast and an opportunity to reflect on its complicated legacy. It reminds us to appreciate not only our blessings but also the importance of mutual respect and understanding in overcoming hardship.

## GEN. EDWARD O. C. ORD (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

In 1850, while stationed in the Pacific Northwest, Lt. Ord was promoted to Captain. In 1852, the War Department transferred him to the *U.S. Coast Survey*. This assignment sent him back to California to work on the geodetic survey of Southern California's coast and California's Channel Islands. Ord's work improved navigation safety - as the California gold rush had increased ship traffic - *and accidents*.

In October 1854, Ord married Mary Mercer Thompson, and they eventually became the parents of thirteen children.

Ord was transferred back to the Army in 1855. Serving again in the Pacific Northwest, he combated the Rogue River Indians in Oregon in 1856, and then against the Spokane Indians two years later in Washington Territory. Then he returned to California.

Ord was soon transferred to Virginia. In October 1859, he was attending artillery school at Fort Monroe when Col. Robert E. Lee led a force of U.S. Marines to quell the uprising sparked by militant abolitionist John Brown at the arsenal at Harpers Ferry. Capt. Ord was summoned to support Lee, but Lee had the situation under control by the time Ord and his men arrived. Instead, Ord's unit was tasked with keeping order ahead of Brown's execution. *However, opportunities for front-line action were soon to be plentiful.*

Captain Ord was 43 years old in 1861 when the Civil War broke out. His loyalty to the Union remained unwavering despite his Maryland roots - a state with divided allegiances. He also had strong Southern ties and was a staunch Democrat. In September 1861, Ord obtained an appointment as a Brig. General and received command of a brigade in the newly established *Army of the Potomac*.

Ord's first action soon occurred. In Dec 1861, he clashed with Brig. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart's brigade at Dranesville in Fairfax County, Virginia. Stuart eventually withdrew, leaving Ord in command of the field. Ord's success at Dranesville was widely publicized in Northern newspapers. The victory lifted spirits in the North, which was much needed after the earlier disasters in northern Virginia at First Bull Run and Ball's Bluff.



**Brig. Gen. Edward Ord leads Union troops to Victory at Dranesville**

On May 3, 1862, Ord was promoted to Major General. The following month, he received orders to report to Corinth, Mississippi, where he took command of a division under Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant. Ord showed considerable initiative during the ensuing campaign for control of the Mississippi River. He was seriously injured during the *Battle of Iuka*, but did not stay sidelined for long. Grant put Ord in command of the *XIII Corps* during the final days of the *Siege of Vicksburg*. Ord immediately made improvements to the Corps' situation. He widened and connected the Corps' trenches, which made it easier to transfer artillery where it was needed most, and advanced them forward. These improvements tightened the grip on the Confederate works. After the fall of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863, Ord remained in command of the *XIII Corps*.

In 1864, Ord was transferred back to the Eastern Theater to assume command of the *XVIII Corps* in the *Army of the James* during the campaigns against Richmond and Petersburg. In the fall of 1864, his leadership in the assault on Fort Harrison was particularly noteworthy, as it played a critical role in tightening the Union stranglehold on Confederate defenses. Ord continued to demonstrate strategic brilliance and personal bravery, often leading his troops from the front lines. However, he was badly wounded during the attack on Fort Harrison when a ball sliced through his leg. He

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## GEN. EDWARD O. C. ORD (CONTINUED)

bound his bloodied leg with a tourniquet and continued to issue orders from an ambulance wagon - until a surgeon finally convinced him to leave the field to be treated. He was not able to return to active duty until January 1865.

Ord's career soon peaked. He was assigned command of the *Army of the James* during the *Appomattox Campaign*. First, his army played a significant role in the breakthrough at Petersburg. Then, on April 9, he led a forced march to Appomattox Court House, cutting off Gen. Robert E. Lee's escape routes – and relieved Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan's cavalry. These actions were deciding factors in forcing Lee to surrender. Gen. Sherman said that he *"had always understood that [Ord's] skillful, hard march the night before was one of the chief causes of Lee's surrender."* Gen. Ord was present at the McLean house for that historic surrender, and afterward, he reportedly purchased the marble-top table where Lee signed the surrender document.



Ord remained in the army after the war, commanding several departments during Reconstruction, one of which was the *Department of Texas*. After accepting the Texas assignment in April 1875, he helped keep the peace on the U.S.-Mexican border. This occasionally involved pursuing renegade Indians and bandits into Mexico. During this time, he worked closely with his counterpart on the Mexican side, Jeronimo Trevino (*note: In 1882 Trevino married Ord's daughter, Roberta*). While at times at odds with his superiors on his policies, Ord worked hard to keep the border safe and maintain good relations with Mexico. He also supervised the construction of *Fort Sam Houston* at San Antonio (*photo at left*).



In December 1880, President Rutherford B. Hayes signed the order forcing Ord into retirement at the mandatory age of 62. Ord then went to work as a civilian agent in Mexico for the Southern Pacific Railroad and Standard Oil Company. Later, in 1881, he was hired by Grant, then the president of the Mexican Southern Railroad, as a civil engineer to build a railroad line from Texas to Mexico City.

While working in Mexico, Ord contracted yellow fever. He became seriously sick while on his way by steamer from Vera Cruz to New York. He was taken ashore at Havana, Cuba, where he succumbed to the disease on July 22, 1883. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, Virginia.

Gen Sherman wrote of Ord, *"As his intimate associate since boyhood, the General here bears testimony of him that a more unselfish, manly, and patriotic person never lived"...* and *... "He has had all the hard knocks of service, and never was on soft or fancy duty. He has always been called on when hard duty was expected, and never flinched."*

And Grant's faith in Ord's capabilities was obvious by the way he gave Ord important commands during the Union Army's greatest campaigns, including Vicksburg, Petersburg, and Appomattox – as well as entrusting him with important business posts as a civilian after retirement from the military.

Edward O. C. Ord's legacy is one of skill, dedication, courage, and toughness. His contributions to the Federal Army's successes, in both strategic campaigns and battlefield leadership, rank him as one of the most prominent unsung heroes of the Civil War.



*... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC – Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN, Camp 2 - Houston, Texas*

## TRIBUTE TO A TEXAS GAR VETERAN – HENRY WARREN NYE

Henry Warren Nye was born Oct 19, 1841 in Fairfield, Somerset Co., Maine. His parents were Herman A. Nye (b. 1803 – d. 1885) and Julia A. Wing (b. 1805, d. 1871). In 1850, Henry Nye was 9 years old and still living in Fairfield with his farming parents, Herman and Julia A. Nye. He was the second youngest of the six Nye children enumerated in the household at that time.

Ten years later, in June 1860, Henry was 18 years old and still living with his parents and 3 siblings in Fairfield, Maine. He and his 15-year-old brother, Greenleaf Nye, were reportedly attending school, while his father and older brother, Hiram Nye, were engaged in farming. Then the Civil War broke out

On August 25, 1862, Henry W. Nye was 20 years old when he enlisted as a Sergeant with Co. C of the 19<sup>th</sup> Maine Infantry. He served valiantly for more than two years. On July 2, 1863, he was wounded at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and spent time in a hospital. He soon recovered and rejoined his unit. In 1864, Henry was promoted to the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant. On May 12, 1864, Henry was wounded in action again, this time at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia. He again recovered. On February 12, 1865 he mustered-out of service and was discharged February 23, 1865 as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant.

In 1869, Henry Nye married Ellen A. Fuller. In June 1870, the newlyweds were living in Rutland, Vermont, lodging in the household of Baptist clergyman, B. B. Cunningham. Henry was employed as a life and fire insurance agent, and Ellen was with child. Baby Georgianna Nye was born to the young couple later that year.

*Right: Ghostly image of Henry's wife, Ellen*

In 1872, Henry and Ellen Nye were living at 4 Cain in Rutland, and he was still employed as an insurance agent at an office located at 2 Merchants Row. But tragedy soon visited the Nye household. 'Georgie' was still a toddler on November 27, 1873 when her mother passed away. Ellen Nye may have died from complications of childbirth since her death occurred just 8 days after giving birth to their second child, a son, Frederick Francis Nye. Frederick was born November 19, 1873 in Rutland (*note: the Nye family grave monument shown below at Evergreen Cemetery in Rutland indicates Ellen died in 1872 instead of 1873*). Henry Nye was now a widower with two young children.



On April 29, 1875, Henry W. Nye remarried. He and Mary J. Whitman were united in matrimony in Auburn, Maine. But tragedy soon revisited the Nye household. Henry's young daughter, Georgie, passed away March 15, 1876 from spinal meningitis. She was only 5 years old (*note: the Nye grave monument shown below at Evergreen Cemetery indicates her death year as 1875 instead of 1876*).

Then, on February 25, 1876, Henry and his second wife, Mary, became the parents of a son in Rutland, William Harwood Nye. The Nye family soon packed up and migrated to the deep south, settling in north Texas.

By June 1880, Henry and Mary Nye were both reportedly 37 years old and living in Tarrant County, Texas with two young sons, Fred F. Nye (age 6) and Willie Nye (age 4). The 1880 federal census shows the family was engaged in farming. Henry and his parents, as well as Mary and her parents, were listed on the census schedule as all born in Maine. Both sons were born in Vermont.

On March 25, 1885, the Union veterans living in Texas organized to create the *Department of Texas*, which became the 38<sup>th</sup> Department of the *Grand Army of the Republic*. Before the year was out, *Fort Worth Post No. 4* in Fort Worth was renamed to *Capt. William S. Parmly Post No. 4* – in honor of the first Post Cmdr., William Parmly, who died shortly after the Department was organized. Henry Nye was a member of *Parmly Post 4*, and was likely one of the founding members.

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## TRIBUTE TO A TEXAS GAR VETERAN – HENRY WARREN NYE (CONTINUED)

In June 1885, he was elected to the *National Council of Administration* during the 19<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment* of the *Grand Army of the Republic* in Portland, Maine - even though he had not traveled to Maine to attend that event. His election to the *National CofA* allowed him to represent the *Department of Texas* at the national level.

In August 1886, Henry did not travel to San Francisco to attend the 20<sup>th</sup> *National Encampment* of the *Grand Army of the Republic*, even though he was credentialed as an elected member of the *National Council of Administration*. But in March 1890, since it was closer to home, Henry was one of the five Delegates who traveled to San Antonio to represent *Parmly Post 4* at the 5<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment* of the *Department of Texas*.

The June 1890 *Special Veterans Schedule* of the U.S. Federal Census for Tarrant Co., Texas, Henry W. Nye indicates Henry Nye was still living in Fort Worth. He reported that he had served as a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. with *Co. C, 19th Maine Infantry* during the Civil War. He confirmed that he had enlisted July 25, 1862, and was discharged February 23, 1865, after having served 2 years, 6 months, and 28 days – and he fortunately had no disability issues related to his war-time service.

Then, in August 1890, Henry traveled to Boston, Massachusetts to attend the 24<sup>th</sup> *Annual National Encampment* of the *Grand Army of the Republic*. He was still serving as a member of the *National Council of Administration* and represented the *Department of Texas*.

Henry W. Nye is listed in the 1896 *Fort Worth City Directory* as living at 705 S. Jennings Ave. He was a principle at *Nye & Jack* real estate and loans company, which was located at 401 Main. His business partner was Alexander N. Jack. Henry's two sons, Fred F. Nye and William H. Nye, were both listed as also living at 705 S. Jennings. Fred was employed as a billing clerk at Pac. and U.S. Exp. Co., and William was a bookkeeper at T. M. Brown & Company.

The 1900 *Fort Worth City Directory* shows Henry W. Nye still living at 705 S. Jennings Ave. He continued as a principle of the *Nye & Jack* real estate and rental agent company, which had moved to 118 E. 4<sup>th</sup> in Fort Worth. Henry's two sons were also listed in the same 1900 city directory – and still living at home with their parents at 705 S. Jennings. Son Fred F. Nye was employed as a money clerk for Pac. and U.S. Export Co., and son William H. Nye was now a cashier at T. M. Brown & Co.

In 1891, Henry W. Nye was elected as Commander of *Parmly Post 4* of Fort Worth. As Post Commander, he conducted the 6<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment* of the *Department of Texas* in Dallas on March 4-5, 1891. However, he skipped the 7<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment* of the Department in El Paso in March 1892.

Henry Nye did travel to Denison, Texas the following year to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment* of the Department. The Encampment took place on March 21 through March 23, 1893, and Henry was credentialed as a Past Post Commander. But once again, he passed on attending the 9<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment* of the Department which was held in Dublin, Texas from April 3 through April 5, 1894.

In April 1910, Henry and Mary Nye had been married 35 years and were both reportedly 68 years old. They were living at 655 Jennings Ave. in Fort Worth and Henry was proprietor of a Real Estate office. Their married son, Will H. Nye, was also living in the household with his 33-year-old Texas-born wife of 8 years, Lucile L. Nye. Will was employed as an office salesman – possibly in his father's real estate office.

On March 23, 1912, Henry Nye's second wife, Mary, passed away in Fort Worth at age 70. Her final illness was passive congestion of her left lung. She was laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth on March 25, 1912.

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## TRIBUTE TO A GAR VETERAN – HENRY WARREN NYE *(CONTINUED)*

In 1915, Charles S. Brodbent of *Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Post 3* of San Antonio was elected as Commander of the *Department of Texas, GAR*. As a result, he resigned his position on the *National Council of Administration* and appointed H. W. Nye of Fort Worth to assume his vacated seat on the *Council* to, once again, represent the *Department of Texas*.

In January 1920, Henry Nye was a 78-year-old widower still living in Fort Worth, Texas. He was rooming with W. F. and Irene Buchanan on Jennings Ave. Ten years later, on April 14, 1930, Henry Nye was an 89-year-old widower still living in Fort Worth. His health was failing fast. He was boarding with George and Willie M. McCaully - *at his address, 655 South Jennings Ave.*

On June 24, 1931, Henry Warren Nye died at home at 655 S. Jennings Ave. in Fort Worth. He was 89 years, 8 months, and 5 days old. He had been suffering from senility for four years, which was aggravated by apoplexy during the final 3 years of his life. Henry was laid to rest in Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth on June 26, 1931. The informant for his death certificate was his son, William – *who did not know the name or birthplace of his paternal grandmother.*



**Nye grave monument at Evergreen Cemetery  
Rutland, Vermont**

HENRY W. NYE  
1841 -  
ELLEN FULLER NYE  
1846 – 1872  
THEIR DAUGHTER  
GEORGIE A. NYE  
1870 – 1875  
**NYE**



**Nye grave monument in Oakwood Cemetery  
Fort Worth, Texas**

MOTHER NYE    H. W. NYE  
WIFE OF  
H. W. NYE    1841 - 1931  
1841 - 1912  
**NYE**



*... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC - Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN, Camp 2, Houston, Texas*

## CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 12)

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 12 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.



- **Samuel N. Benjamin – 1<sup>st</sup> Lt.** – Samuel Nicoll Benjamin was born in New York City in Jan 1839. His parents were William M. Benjamin (1800–1862) and Sarah Jane Turk (1805–1903). He had four siblings: Edith, Sarah, Arnold, and Laura. Samuel graduated from the *U.S. Military Academy* at West Point with the class of 1861.

During the Civil War, Benjamin saw more than his fair share of action, including fighting at the *Battle of Blackburn's Ford*, the *First Battle of Bull Run*, the *Peninsular Campaign*, the *Northern Virginia Campaign*, the *Maryland Campaign*, the *Battle of Fredericksburg*, the *Vicksburg Campaign*, the *East Tennessee Campaign*, and the *Overland Campaign*, including both the *Battle of the Wilderness* and the *Battle of Spotsylvania Court House*. He commanded *Battery E* of the 2<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Artillery as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.



After the war, Benjamin served at West Point and in the Adjutant General Corps. He married Julia K. Fish, the daughter of New York governor, Senator, and Secretary of State, Hamilton Fish. They would eventually become the parents of three children. Benjamin received his *Medal of Honor* in June 1877 for his lengthy distinguished service - from *Bull Run* to *Spotsylvania* (1861 to May 1864). On May 15, 1886, he died at age 47 while on duty on Governors Island, New York. His *Medal of Honor Citation* states:

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to First Lieutenant Samuel Nicholl Benjamin, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on July 1861 – May 1864, while serving with 2d U.S. Artillery, in action at Bull Run, Spotsylvania, Virginia, for particularly distinguished services as an artillery officer.*

- **Orrin Bennett – Pvt.** – Orrin Bennett was born in Bradford Co., Pennsylvania. On Aug 22, 1862, he mustered into Co. D of the 141<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry at Towanda, Pennsylvania as a Private. Bennett survived the war and mustered out as a Private at Washington, DC on May 28, 1865. He received the country's highest award for bravery during combat, the *Medal of Honor*, for his action during the *Battle of Saylor's Creek* in Virginia in April 1865. Unfortunately, his birth and death dates are unknown, but he was reportedly buried in Luther's Mills Cemetery in Towanda. His *Medal of Honor citation* reads:

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private Orrin Bennett, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 6 April 1865, while serving with Company D, 141st Pennsylvania Infantry, in action at Deatonville (Sailor's Creek), Virginia, for capture of flag.*

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## CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 12 CONTINUED)

- **Orson W. Bennett – 1<sup>st</sup> Lt.** – Orson W. Bennett was born in Union City, Michigan in Nov 1841. He was educated in the public schools in Dubuque, Iowa and eventually received certification to teach in the schools of Dubuque County. In April 1861, immediately after President Lincoln's first call for 75,000 volunteers, Bennett enlisted as a Private with the *Governor's Greys, Co. I, 1<sup>st</sup> Iowa Vols.* He was wounded at the *Battle of Wilson's Creek* in August 1861. Bennett re-enlisted in Dec 1861 with *Co. G, 12<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry.* He served until the fall of Vicksburg in July 1863, and then re-enlisted as a veteran in the same company and regiment. In all, Orson saw action in seventeen engagements during the war.



Bennett was then examined by the *Military Commission of Officers of the Regular Army* for service with colored troops. He passed and was commissioned as a 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant, serving in *Co. A, 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Colored Infantry* until the end of the war. He was promoted to Captain when mustering out at the end of Sep 1865.

Bennett received the *Medal of Honor* for his actions during the 1864 *Battle of Honey Hill.* The *3<sup>rd</sup> New York Battery,* after having been decimated, withdrew and left behind some artillery pieces. Bennett led his infantry forward and, after several attempts, recovered the cannons. His Medal of Honor citation reads:

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to First Lieutenant Orson W. Bennett, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 30 November 1864, while serving with Company A, 102d Colored Infantry, in action at Honey Hill, South Carolina. After several unsuccessful efforts to recover three pieces of abandoned artillery, First Lieutenant Bennett gallantly led a small force fully 100 yards in advance of the Union lines and brought in the guns, preventing their capture.*

After the war, Bennett returned to Le Mars, Iowa and worked for 10 years in the hardware business. He then became involved in the grain and real estate businesses in Fargo and Bismarck, North Dakota. Orson later moved to Washington, D.C. and worked in real estate and patents. He died January 8, 1904 and was buried at Bala Cynwyd, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

- **William Bensinger – Pvt.** – William Bensinger was born in Jan 1840 in Waynesburg, Ohio. He enlisted with *Co. G, 21<sup>st</sup> Ohio Infantry* and was among a small group of Ohio men who volunteered for an unconventional mission to disrupt Confederate communications.



In April 1862, this group, led by James Andrews, penetrated into Confederate territory and boarded a train in Georgia as passengers. When the train stopped at Big Shanty (*Kennesaw*), Georgia, the crew and passengers left the train to eat breakfast. Bensinger and the other raiders took that opportunity to hijack the locomotive (*The General*) and 3 boxcars and headed north towards Chattanooga. Pursued by the Confederates, the raiders destroyed track and telegraph lines along the way. They never made it to Chattanooga, and were forced to abandon the engine. All of the raiders were captured within a week. Some were hanged and some, including Bensinger, were taken to prison. Bensinger eventually escaped from prison and made it to Washington, DC. He later moved to McComb, Ohio, where he died on Dec 19, 1918. His Medal of Honor Citation states:

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private William Bensinger, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in April, 1862, while serving with Company G, 21st Ohio Infantry, in action during the Andrew's Raid in Georgia. Private Bensinger was one of the 19 of 22 men (including two civilians) who, by direction of General Mitchell (or Buell), penetrated nearly 200 miles south into enemy territory and captured a railroad train at Big Shanty, Georgia, in an attempt to destroy bridges and track between Chattanooga and Atlanta.*

... continued on next page

## CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 12 CONTINUED)

- **William H. H. Benyaurd - 1<sup>st</sup> Lt.** – William Henry Harrison Benyaurd was born in 1841 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He graduated 6<sup>th</sup> in his class at West Point in June 1863. Upon graduation he was immediately promoted to the rank of 1<sup>st</sup> lieutenant in the *Corps of Engineers*. In August 1864 he was breveted to the rank of Captain for "gallantry and meritorious service" in the campaign before Richmond, Virginia. In April 1865, he received a brevet to Major for heroism in the *Battle of Five Forks*. He was awarded the Medal of Honor on September 7, 1897 for the same action. His Medal of Honor citation reads:

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to First Lieutenant (Corps of Engineers) William Henry Harrison Benyaurd, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 1 April 1865, while serving with Engineers, in action at Five Forks, Virginia. With one companion, First Lieutenant Benyaurd voluntarily advanced in a reconnaissance beyond the skirmishers, where he was exposed to imminent peril; also, in the same battle, rode to the front with the commanding general to encourage wavering troops to resume the advance, which they did successfully.*



After the war, from 1866 to 1869, Captain Benyaurd served as an assistant professor at West Point. In 1874, President Ulysses S. Grant appointed him to a special 5-man commission to develop a reclamation plan for the Mississippi River Valley. Benyaurd served as a commissioner intensively studying the waterway until 1879, when Congress created the current *Mississippi River Commission*. He was promoted to Major in March 1879, and assigned to waterway maintenance on the tributaries to the lower Mississippi River, which included an ongoing effort to clear snags caused by vessels which sank there during or after the Civil War.

In July 1889, Benyaurd was promoted to Lt. Colonel. During the Spanish–American War (1898) he was in charge of submarine defenses (*mines*) at Jacksonville and Tampa Bay, Florida. He was also in command of defensive fortifications on the St. John River in Florida. Benyaurd was a member of the *Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS)* and the *Military Order of Foreign Wars*. The U.S. Army *Corps Of Engineers* named a large towboat in his honor.

- **Charles M. Betts - Lt. Col.** – Charles Malone Betts was born in Aug 1838 in Bucks Co., Pennsylvania. He grew up on a farm and attended the Loller Academy in Hatboro, Pennsylvania, and then the Gummere's School in Burlington, New Jersey. When the Civil War broke out, Betts first joined a military company in Pennsylvania, which became part of the *Army of the Potomac* in Alexandria, Virginia.

He later returned to Pennsylvania and, on August 12, 1862, mustered into the *15<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry*. He was involved in the battles of *Stone River* and a battle with Cherokee Indians near Gatlinburg in East Tennessee, among others. In April 1865, as Lt. Colonel in command, his regiment captured enemy wagons containing a large quantity of silver coins, bank notes and bonds, all valued at approximately \$4 million, in addition to other items. He was awarded the *Medal of honor* for later leading his regiment to successfully capture a South Carolina cavalry battalion near Greensboro, North Carolina. Betts mustered-out on June 21, 1865.

After the war, Betts was involved with various lumber firms in Philadelphia and New York. He was also a member of *MOLLUS* in Pennsylvania, as well as president of the *Lumbermen's Exchange* in 1890. Betts died Nov 10, 1905, and was buried West Laurel Hill Cemetery. 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 Lieutenant Colonel Charles Malone Betts, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 19 April 1865, while serving with 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, in action at Greensboro, North Carolina. With a force of but 75 men, while on a scouting expedition, by a judicious disposition of his men, Lieutenant Colonel Betts surprised and captured an entire battalion of the enemy's cavalry.*

... series to be continued next issue with part 13.

# 2024 - 2025 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

## Elected Officers

Department Commander	<b>Timothy M. Phillips</b>
Department Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>Brook J. Thomas</b>
Department Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b> <i>(for membership info)</i>
Department Secretary/Treasurer	<b>Donald L. Gates</b>
Department Council Member	<b>Charles W. Sprague</b>
Department Council Member	<b>Dr. Stevenson T. Holmes</b>
Department Council Member	<b>Tony L. 'Bo' Vets II</b>

## Staff Officers

Dept. Patriotic Instructor	<b>William M. 'Bill' Elliott</b>	Dept. Organizer	<b>Blair G. Rudy</b>
Dept. Chaplain	<b>Stephen D. Schulze</b>	Dept. Signals Officer	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>
Dept. Historian	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>	Dept. Eagle Scout Coordinator	<b>John E. Schneider Sr.</b>
Dept. Civil War Mem. Off.	<b>Charles W. Sprague</b>	Dept. Assistant Signals Officer	<b>Larry Joe Reynolds</b>
Dept. Graves Registr. Off.	<b>Terry T. Sutton</b>	Dept. Newsletter Editor	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>
Dept. Counselor	<b>John E. Schneider Sr.</b>	Dept. Registrar	<b>Daniel B. Pourceau</b>

## Department Website

## Department Facebook Page

## Department Newsletter:

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

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

[mlance387@gmail.com](mailto:mlance387@gmail.com)



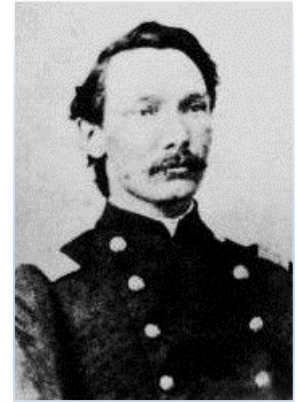
## 2024 CAMP OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

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

Camp Commander	<b>Clifford F. 'Butch' Durham</b>
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>Michael E. Belcher</b>
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>vacant</b>
Camp Treasurer	<b>David B. Appleton</b>
Camp Secretary	<b>Ky W. White</b>

[Byrne Camp 1 Website](#)

Gen. James J. Byrne  
Namesake of Camp 1



### **Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN Camp 2** - Houston, Texas

Camp Commander	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>Daniel B. Pourreau</b>
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>Vincent T. Trovato</b>
Camp Secretary/Treasurer	<b>Stephen D. Schulze</b>

[Lea Camp Website](#)  
[Lea Camp Facebook](#)



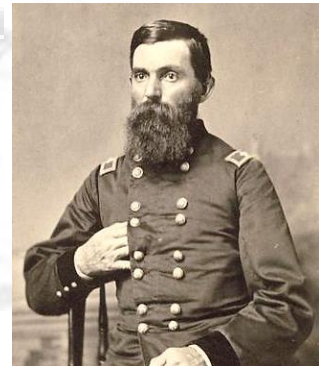
Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea  
Namesake of Camp 2  
Killed in Action on the *USS Harriet Lane*  
1 Jan 1863

### **Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5** - Shreveport, Louisiana

Camp Commander	<b>Michael A. Heller</b>
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>John A. Prime</b>
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>Ralph L. Diamond</b>
Camp Secretary/Treasurer	<b>William M. 'Bill' Elliott</b>

[Bailey Camp Website](#)

Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey  
Namesake of Camp 5

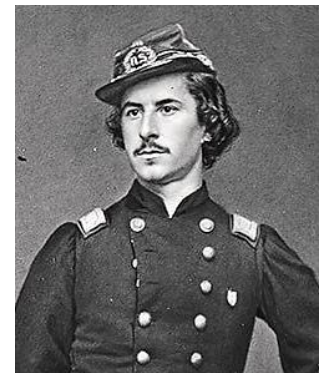


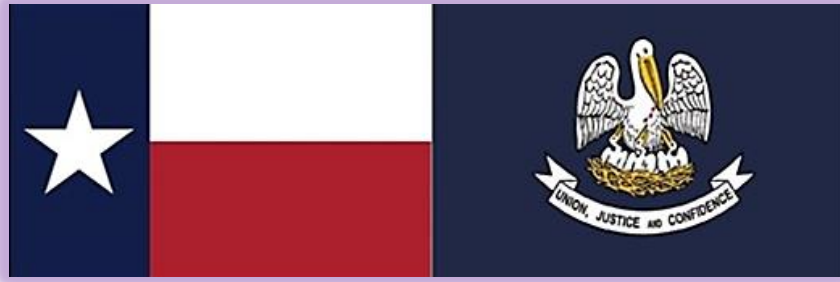
### **Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18** - Dallas, Texas

Camp Commander	<b>Michael K. Schneider</b>
Camp Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>David M. Rediger</b>
Camp Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>Kevin J. Ennis</b>
Camp Secretary/Treasurer	<b>Donald L. Gates</b>

[Ellsworth Camp Website](#)  
[Ellsworth Camp Facebook](#)

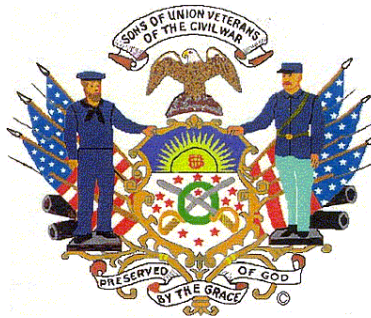
Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth  
Namesake of Camp 18





DEPARTMENT  
OF  
TEXAS  
AND  
LOUISIANA

HONORING OUR UNION ANCESTORS  
BY  
*KEEPING THEIR LEGACY ALIVE*



**SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR**