



# THE UNIONIST

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



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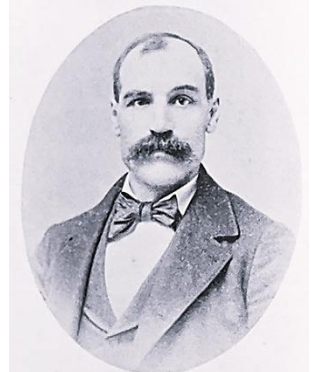
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## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA



### From the Commander's Tent

Brothers:

I want to extend my sincere 'Thank You' to all of you who worked so hard in the various supporting roles to help make the 144<sup>th</sup> National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War a resounding success. The reports and feedback that I have received have all been positive! It was a team effort and I appreciate each of you who stepped up to the plate to make it happen.

A special tip of the kepi to the members of *Co. K, 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Infantry, SVR*. You did a fabulous job with presenting and posting the Colors, setting the tone for the activities to follow. Our *G.A.R.* forefathers would be proud – *as am I!*



### Texas/Louisiana Delegation Receiving the *National Encampment Streamer* from CinC Kevin Martin

Kneeling L-R: Todd Wilber, George F. Hansen, Larry Joe Reynolds, Blair G. Rudy, and Daniel B. Pourceau.

Standing L-R: James K. Lea, Michael D. Rappe, William D. Myers, Cody N. Holcomb, Jason M. Kyle, Stevenson T. Holmes, Michael L. Lance, Donald L. Gates, John C. Vander Meulen, Stephen D. Schulze, Brook J. Thomas, CinC Kevin Martin, John E. Schneider Sr., Robert G. Riley, Timothy M. Phillips (*partially hidden*), Terry T. Sutton, Herbert W. Powers, Brian R. Glass, Michael K. Schneider, Ronald 'Steve' Brock, and Ben C. Bonnett.

Not included in photo: Richard Carson, Harrison G. Moore IV, Paul Ridenour, William L. Swafford, Clifford F. 'Butch' Durham, Harold L. Sickler, Richard W. Erder, and Beau B. Moore.



As always, I remain Your Most Obedient Servant,

**Brook Thomas, Commander**  
Department of Texas and Louisiana  
*Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*



## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA

### **Thursday-Sunday, August 7-10, 2025 – National Encampment - Houston, Texas**

In June 2014, an exploratory committee was appointed at the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas in Corsicana, Texas to assess the feasibility of hosting a National Encampment in the Lone Star state. The idea proved to be popular throughout the Department and a National Encampment fund was established to begin setting aside monies earmarked to support the project. It turned out to be a long-term term project, finally coming to fruition as the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* was selected to host the 144<sup>th</sup> Annual National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War in Houston, Texas in August 2025. Commander-in-Chief Kevin Martin of the *Department of the Chesapeake* presided over the proceedings.

The Department's National Encampment Host Committee was chaired by John Schneider, Sr. of *Ellsworth Camp 18*. The theme selected for the event was, 'Treue der Union' – translated from German means 'True to the Union'. This theme was chosen to honor the many Texans who remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War. Miniature replicas of the twenty-foot high *Treue der Union* monument located in Comfort, Texas were crafted by Michael Schneider of *Ellsworth Camp 18*.

**Right: Miniature replica of the *Treue der Union* monument**

The souvenir monuments were used as the primary feature of the colorful centerpieces adorning the tables at the formal Encampment banquet (see page 8). The centerpiece monuments were eventually awarded as souvenirs to one delighted recipient at each dining table.

The *Department of Texas and Louisiana* was well-represented at the Encampment. Twenty-nine members attended to assist with the tasks of hosting the event – as well as helping boost the Departments voting strength. They included twelve past-Department Commanders, one Department Commander, a full complement of six elected Delegates, and ten elected Alternates. Representatives from twenty-seven other Departments traveled to Houston to attend the Encampment. The following images portray some of the highlights of the four-day event that involved members of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*.

On Thursday, August 7, 2025, the featured activity was a bus tour to the *San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site*



in La Port, Texas for a glimpse into Texas history. Following the tour of the world's tallest war memorial, the 567-foot high San Jacinto Monument, the tour bus transported the encampment delegates to the Kemah Boardwalk on Galveston Bay in Kemah, Texas. Leisurely waterfront dining, sight-seeing, and camaraderie was experienced and enjoyed by all. Tip of the Kepi to Brother Blair G. Rudy of *Ord Camp No. 3* of San Antonio for his excellent service as host of the tour.

**Left: Color Guard advancing the Colors**

Early on Friday, August, 8, 2025, a Joint Memorial Service preceded the opening of the first business session of the Encampment. The solemn but inspirational

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## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA (CONTINUED)

service was hosted by CinC Kevin Martin and Rosemary Martin, National President of the *Auxiliary of Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. The program featured hymns by a duo of bagpipers, an outstanding formal presentation and posting of the Colors by *Company K, 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Infantry, SVR* of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* – commanded by Brook Thomas of *Ellsworth Camp 18*, the reading of the names of recently deceased members of both the *SUVCW* and *ASUVCW*, sing-alongs, and an impressive inspirational presentation by Stephen D. Schulze of *Lea Camp No. 2* of Houston.

**Right: Formal photo of the Company K, 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Infantry, SVR, Color Guard, Department of Texas and Louisiana.**

*Front L-R:*

**Richard Erder, Blair Rudy, William Myers, and Brook Thomas**

*Back L-R:*

**Michael Schneider, Timothy Phillips, Daniel Pourreau, Harold Sickler, and Beau Moore.**



The proceedings of the business sessions on Friday were audio and video recorded by Assistant National Secretary for Recordings, John Vander Meulen of *Lea Camp 2*, who managed the soundboard. He was assisted with the various cameras and microphones by Robert Riley and Herb Powers, both also of *Lea Camp 2*.

**Right: John Vander Meulen at the soundboard**

Another highlight of the Friday sessions was a unique gesture of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* to the *Department of Illinois*. First, a little background:



One hundred and forty-one years ago, *Joseph B. Rood Post No. 472* of the *Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.)* was officially organized in Chicago, Illinois. Twenty-three members signed their names to the Charter of the new Post. Even though *Rood Post No. 472* had a solid core membership when it was organized in 1884, it disbanded a short five years later. The original Post Charter was salvaged by someone at that time and probably changed hands several times afterward during the following decades. Its whereabouts remained relatively unknown until a few years ago when Isaac Frieze, a new member of *Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Camp No. 3* of San Antonio, purchased it to add to his collection of *G.A.R.* memorabilia. Ironically, *Ord Camp No. 3* had been newly Chartered less than nine months earlier.... in December 2024!

Although Brother Frieze had joined the Order too late in the year to attend the 2025 National Encampment in Houston, he made it known at the June business meeting of *Ord Camp 3* that he wished to return the old Chicagoland *G.A.R.* charter to the delegation from Illinois at the upcoming National Encampment. He felt the right place for this historic document was back home in Illinois. The fragile rolled-up Charter was carefully unrolled and placed in a temporary presentation frame.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA (CONTINUED)

Blair Rudy, commander of *Ord Camp No. 3* officially presented the old Charter to a delighted Illinois delegation during the business session of the National Encampment on Friday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. *HUZZAH!* to Brother Isaac Frieze for his generosity and thoughtfulness!



**Above Left:** Chaplain Jerry Kowalski and other members of the Illinois delegation accepting the return of the 1884 Charter of *Joseph B. Rood Post 472, G.A.R.*

**Above Right:** *Ord Camp 3* commander, Blair Rudy, supported by other members of the *Texas and Louisiana* delegation, presents the Charter to the *Department of Illinois*.



**Left:** The original 1884 Charter of *Joseph B. Rood Post No. 472, Grand Army of the Republic, Chicago, Illinois*.

*Ord Camp 3*, along with the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*, encourages all Brothers to return any G.A.R. memorabilia they happen to run across - to their original homes.

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## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA (CONTINUED)

During the evening on Friday, representatives from nearly every Department gathered for a fun-filled 'Camp Fire'. Entertainment was provided by the lively *Das Ist Lustig (That's Fun)* German folk band. Gifts, roasting, and tales were presented to CinC Martin and President Martin during the celebration – *all in good fun, of course!*

The *Auxiliary* ladies of the Department bestowed a basketful of various Texas-themed gifts to President Martin.

**Right: Texas/Louisiana Auxiliary presenting gifts to Auxiliary National President Rosemary Martin.**



The men of the Department gifted CinC Martin an elegant felt Stetson hat.

**Right: Commander-in-Chief Kevin Martin dons the gifted Stetson** (note the theme-correct uniform of PDC John E. Schneider, Sr. on the far right!)



The business sessions on Saturday, August 9<sup>th</sup> included not only completing the business of the Order, but also the presentation of awards and many Certificates of Appreciation.

The Texas-Louisiana delegation received the *National Encampment Streamer* from CinC Martin, and then stood for a group photo (see photo on page 3). The streamer is destined to adorn the Department flag at forthcoming events.



The lengthy process of nominating and voting for candidates to fill the National offices for the 2025-2026 term was completely smoothly during the Saturday session. The *Department of Texas and Louisiana* had the largest voting block compared to the delegations from the other Departments - and duly voted to help elect the next CinC, SVCinC, JVCinC, National Secretary, National Treasurer, and two new members to the National Council of Administration.

Sr. Vice-Commander Kevin Tucker was elected to serve as Commander-in-Chief for the 2025-2026 term. His list of appointed National officers to serve during his administration was then announced.

**Commander-in-Chief-elect Kevin Tucker**

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## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA (CONTINUED)

The appointed officer list included two members of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*: John C. Vander Meulen as Assistant National Secretary of Recordings, and Michael L. Lance as Assistant National Secretary for Transcriptions. Installation of the elected and appointed officers was ceremoniously conducted by Past CinC Steve Michaels.



### Elected and Appointed National Officers for 2025-2026 being Installed – Oath of Office

At the conclusion of the business session, the meeting room was converted into a large dining venue by the hotel staff. Members of the *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary No. 1* of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* then beautifully decorated the head table and the numerous ten-seat round dining tables in the huge ballroom. Their efforts resulted in a very elegant setting for the banquet.



Right: Banquet table centerpiece

### *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary No. 1* L-R: Jill Schneider, Vali Reyes, Norma Pollard, National President Maryann Martin, Lisa Riley, Annette Kinslow, and Jana Marsh.

In addition, a smaller ‘missing man’ dining table display was set up at the front of the venue – courtesy of Larry Joe Reynolds of *Bailey Camp No. 5*.

Richard Carson of *Lea Camp 2* set up a photo booth in the courtyard just outside the hotel ballroom. He took professional-quality photos of several Encampment attendees (see a few examples on the next page).



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## DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA *(CONTINUED)*

On Sunday morning, August 10, 2025, a Church service was conducted by National Chaplain Dexter Bishop, supported by Chaplain Jerry Kowalski, and Department of Texas/Louisiana Chaplain, Stephen D. Schulze, PDC.

### Roll of the Delegation representing the *Texas/Louisiana Department*:

#### **Byrne Camp #1**

Clifford 'Butch' Durham	Alternate
Brian R. Glass	PDC
George F. Hansen	PDC
Beau B. Moore	PDC
Timothy M. Phillips	PDC
Todd Wilber	Delegate

#### **Ord Camp #3**

Blair G. Rudy	PDC
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#### **Lea Camp #2**

Ronald 'Steve' Brock	Alternate
Richard Carson	Alternate
Cody N. Holcomb	Alternate
Stevenson T. Holmes	PDC
Michael L. Lance	PDC
Harrison G. Moore, IV	PDC
William D. Myers	Alternate
Daniel B. Pourreau	Delegate
Herbert W. Powers	Delegate
Michael D. Rappe	Alternate
Robert G. Riley	Delegate
Stephen D. Schulze	PDC
John Vander Meulen	Delegate

#### **Bailey Camp #5**

Larry Joe Reynolds	Alternate
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#### **Ellsworth Camp #18**

Richard W. Erder	Alternate
Donald L. Gates	PDC
Paul Ridenour	Alternate
John E. Schneider, Sr.	PDC
Michael K. Schneider	Delegate
Harold L. Sickler	PDC
William L. Swafford	Alternate
Brook J. Thomas	DC

The *Department and Texas and Louisiana* is sincerely grateful to the many members of the Order - from across the nation - who supported the *144<sup>th</sup> National Encampment* with their attendance. The exceptional unity and cooperation of all participants were instrumental in making the 2025 National Encampment experience truly special. We deeply appreciate everyone's participation and look forward to seeing you again at future gatherings.



**Timothy Phillips**



**George Hansen**



**Daniel Pourreau**



**William Myers**



**Robert Riley**



**John Jr., John Sr., and Michael Schneider**



**Jason Kyle**

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

**Friday, July 4, 2025 – San Antonio, Texas**

Ord Camp 3 of San Antonio was invited to pay respects to our American Revolution Heroes and offer a floral wreath at the Fort Sam National Cemetery in San Antonio on July 4, 2025. The program was sponsored by the San Antonio Chapter of the *Order of Granaderos y Damas de Galvez*. This is an historic order which promotes and educates on Spain's role in our national struggle to free ourselves from Great Britain - and we were honored to participate.

Unfortunately, an unexpected family emergency with my Brother Neal took me to his ICU bedside in Peoria, Illinois on July 4<sup>th</sup>, so I was unable to attend the cemetery event as planned. However, Past Department Commander John Schneider of *Ellsworth Camp 18* of Dallas was already planning to attend the event in San Antonio and most graciously stepped up to represent *Camp 3* and our Department in my place. Thank you commander, Schneider!



... Blair G. Rudy, Camp Commander – Ord Camp 3, San Antonio

On July 4, 2025, I represented the *Gen. Edward O.C. Ord Camp #3* at the 41<sup>st</sup> Fourth of July Patriotic Ceremony at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio, Texas. The Event was hosted by the *Granaderos y Damas de Galvez* San Antonio Founding Chapter. Over a dozen patriotic and hereditary organizations participated in the event.



**Right: John E. Schneider, Sr. presenting a wreath**



In addition to *Camp #3*, the *Clara Barton Detached Tent #3*, *Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War* presented a wreath during the ceremony.



**Left top: Los Granaderos de Galvez Musket Detail**

**Left bottom: Los Granaderos Fife and Drum Corps**

... John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC – Ellsworth Camp 18, Dallas



## PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR'S MESSAGE

August is the month dedicated to a military decoration that has gone out to some 1.8 million American armed service members, but few if any would desire to pin it on their uniforms. It is the *Purple Heart*, awarded to people under orders who are wounded or killed in action against a foreign military. And the injuries do not have to be caused by an enemy; changes in award criteria in recent decades have allowed those hurt by *friendly* fire in combat to receive the *Purple Heart*.

General George Washington should get credit as an inventor. Two of his inventions are the presidency and the *Purple Heart*. He established the *Purple Heart* August 17, 1782, for soldiers who secured victories in battle. It was known as the *Badge of Military Merit*, and the first to receive it were William Brown and Elijah Churchill of the Continental Army. In World War I, soldiers first received the *Purple Heart* on the grounds of the last encampment of the Continental Army. The *Purple Heart* did not become permanent until the bicentennial of George Washington's birthday in 1932.



Purple Heart

### NOTEWORTHY RECIPIENTS

**John F. Kennedy** - So far, he is the only U.S. president to receive the medal. The young Naval officer was recognized for injuries incurred when his PT boat was rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer. He displayed exceptional courage in rescuing some of the men under his command.

**James Arness** - An actor who took a severe leg wound at Anzio in WWII. He dealt with leg pain for the rest of his life. He also received the Bronze Star for that operation.

**Oliver Stone** - Stone also was awarded the Bronze Star and *Purple Heart* for service in Vietnam. He dropped out of Yale to volunteer for military service and combat duty.

**Audie Murphy** - Too little and too young for the Marines and the Army, Murphy found himself "promoted" to family provider when his father abandoned his family during Audie's teen age years. When the Army relaxed its physical standards later in the war, Murphy enlisted and proceeded to earn every award for valor the Army offered, including the *Medal of Honor*. He became the most decorated American soldier of WWII.

**Desmond Doss** - A devout Seventh-Day Adventist, Desmond Doss had an overwhelming need to serve his country during WWII. He joined the Army as a medic; as a conscientious objector he refused to carry a weapon. In the Pacific campaign, Doss received three *Purple Hearts*, in addition to two Bronze Stars and the *Medal of Honor*.



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

The *Purple Heart* award is a 1 3/8 inch wide purple and gold colored heart-shaped brass-alloy medal containing a profile of George Washington. Above the heart is a shield of Washington's coat of arms between sprays of green leaves. The reverse consists of a raised bronze heart with the words 'FOR MILITARY MERIT' below the coat of arms and leaves. The ribbon is also 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of three vertical stripes: a 1/8 inch-wide white stripe on each side, and a 1 1/8 inch-wide purple stripe in the middle.

Additional awards of the *Purple Heart* are denoted by an oak leaf cluster (Army, Air Force, Space Force), or a star (Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard) placed on the ribbon.



Oak Leaf

Star

Reverse

## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

### Bucktail Chaplain

On the first Sabbath of June 1863, the new chaplain of the 149<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry preached his inaugural sermon. Health issues had delayed Rev. James Frederick Calkins, a Presbyterian minister, in Wellsboro, Pennsylvania from reporting for duty. According to a historian, the delay was worth the wait.

A New York native with degrees from Union College and Auburn Theological Seminary, Calkins had established the church in Wellsboro soon after graduation in 1844.

*"He not only ministered to the spiritual wants of the soldiers, but their physical needs, and in the day of battle helped to care for the wounded and the dying with a devotion and bravery that won their lasting regard."*

The first opportunity Chaplain Calkins had to serve on a battlefield occurred just a few weeks after his arrival - at Gettysburg. The 149<sup>th</sup>, also known as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bucktail Regiment, fought hard and suffered heavy losses along Seminary Ridge during the first day's engagement.

The Bucktails went on to fight in the *Overland Campaign* in 1864 and during operations around Petersburg, Virginia. In early 1865, the regiment received orders to guard the Confederate prison camp at Elmira, New York, and served in this capacity until it mustered out in June 1865. During the regiment's stay there, Chaplain Calkins posed for this portrait.

#### Rev. James Frederick Calkins



Calkins returned to his ministry in Wellsboro and other Presbyterians in Tioga County until his retirement in 1879. A regular at regimental reunions, he also welcomed a number of Bucktail veterans who visited to pay their respects. Calkins passed away in 1893 at about age 77.

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

## TRIVIA – 2<sup>ND</sup> BUCKTAIL REGIMENT

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bucktail Regiment was formed in 1862, recruited largely from Pennsylvania lumbermen and farmers. They were known for their marksmanship and rugged frontier skills. They proudly wore buck tails in their caps, a symbol of sharpshooting prowess.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Bucktails gained distinction in several major campaigns, particularly the *Battle of Gettysburg* in 1863, where they defended key positions on McPherson's Ridge during the opening clash. Their courage and heavy losses there earned them lasting honor in Pennsylvania's military history.

*Right: Pvt. Franklin W. Lehman, Co. C, 149<sup>th</sup> PA Infantry (Bucktails).*

The regiment also fought in the *Overland Campaign* and the defense of Washington. Known for discipline, accuracy in battle, and unwavering bravery, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bucktails embodied the determined spirit of Pennsylvania's citizen-soldiers who helped preserve the Union.



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Robert C. Warner was a member of *Lone Star Camp #1* of Arlington, Texas – one of the four Camps forming the *Department of the Southwest (later renamed the Department of Texas)* in 1995. He was also a Real Son. His father was William C. Carter, who served as a Private in *Co. B, 9<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry* during the Civil War. Immediately after the war, Pvt. Carter was returning home aboard the fated steam riverboat, *Sultana* - and survived the explosion and fire that destroyed that vessel.

*Right: Robert C. Warner, Real Son – Lone Star Camp #1*



The veteran's harrowing story was recounted in the Winter 1995 issue of *The Banner*, as related by his son Robert C. Warner. The story was given during the installation of the new *Department of the Southwest*. The *Banner* reported:

*"Real Son Rober Warren [sic] was in attendance at the Encampment. During a break, he related the following story about his father:*

*"My father was on the Transport Sultana for his return back north at the end of the war. He was sleeping near the boiler room when it exploded. He found himself in the water, uninjured, but only dressed in his underwear. Unable to swim, he grabbed on to a piece of wood floating by. It didn't support him, so he grabbed another one that floated by. Together they kept him afloat, however, he had to use the bottoms of his underwear to tie the pieces of wood together. A while later, a top hat floated by, so he grabbed that and plunked it on his head. That's what he was wearing when he was finally fished out of the water – his underwear shirt and a top hat. He was, to say the least, a sight to behold." ...The Banner, Winter 1995, pg. 17.*

A granddaughter of the veteran, Gail Keen Fitzgerald Warner of Dallas, Texas, and her grandson, Corbin Fitzgerald, also tells about the travails of Pvt. Carter in a [video presentation](#) (scroll down and click on the last video).



They provide a more detailed description of Pvt. Carter's survival of the *Sultana* disaster - with a slight variation to the account given by Real Son Robert Warner.

*Left: Granddaughter Gail Fitzgerald and great-great-grandson, Corbin Fitzgerald.*

*Right: Pvt. William C. Carter in old age.*



Pvt. Carter was born May 6, 1848, and was only 15 years old when he enlisted with the *9<sup>th</sup> Indiana Cavalry*. He spent time in the notorious Confederate Cahaba POW Camp – also known as 'Castle Morgan' – at Cahaba in Dallas County, Alabama. By the time he boarded the *Sultana* for his return home, Carter was just 16 years old. He mustered out of the Army on July 12, 1865, and died in Wellington, Kansas on May 18, 1933 at age 85

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

## FORT CLARK

Fort Clark, now renamed "Fort Clark Springs" retirement community, is located east of San Antonio along Rt. 90 at Brackettville. In addition to George Patton, the last post commander at Fort Clark was Col. Jonathan M. Wainwright IV - who stood with MacArthur on the deck of the *U.S.S. Missouri* for the surrender of Japan - after being left behind in the Philippines by MacArthur to endure the Corregidor and Bataan campaigns, which included the collapse of the Philippines and the Bataan Death March.

As you know from prior postings of mine, THAT "Wainwright" was the grandson of Commander Jonathan M. Wainwright II - commanding officer of the Union gunboat *Harriet Lane*, who was killed during the *Battle of Galveston* on January 1, 1863. Wainwright II was given a Masonic Funeral in Galveston conducted by Confederate Major Philip Crosby Tucker, Jr., who was at that time, Worshipful Master of the Lodge of which I am a member - *Harmony Lodge No. 6* of Galveston. The former commanding officer's quarters at Fort Clark is now a private residence, and it still is referred to as "Wainwright House" [or was last time I visited there some years ago].

During one of the several times we visited Fort Clark Springs while living in New Braunfels, we enjoyed staying at an enlisted barracks that had been converted into a modest "motel" - named "Patton Hall." And the old post hospital had been converted into a restaurant - where you could dine in "The Generals' Room." The venue had photographs of numerous U.S. cavalry and infantry officers who'd served there and later rose to the rank of at least brigadier general, including John Bankhead Magruder, Confederate commander at the *Battle of Galveston*, and George C. Marshall of WWII fame - in addition to Patton & Wainwright.

... contributed by Richard Gray – Chaplain, Harmony Lodge # 6 Masons, Galveston, Texas



## FORT CLARK – GUARDIAN OF THE WESTERN FRONTIER

The U.S. Army post of Fort Clark was established in 1852 at the head of Las Moras Springs ('The Mulberries', named by Spanish explorers) in Kinney County, Texas. The fort's mission was to guard the western frontier against Indian raids. The location was strategically chosen for its access to the spring-fed water source and because it was a stopping place on the eastern branch of the great Comanche War Trail into Mexico. The fort was named in honor of Major John B. Clark, a U.S. officer killed during the Mexican War in 1847. By 1853, quarters for the soldiers were nearly completed, and in 1854 three grass-covered officers' quarters were built. A stone hospital and a two-story storehouse were erected in 1855.

With the establishment of Fort Clark, the neighboring settlement of Las Moras came into existence when Oscar B. Brackett established a supply village for the Fort. In 1856, the town's name was changed from Las Moras to Brackett (and to Brackettville in 1873). The stage ran through the settlement and for almost a century the town and the Fort remained closely identified.



**Quartermaster's building - Fort Clark, Texas.**

The Federal garrison vacated Fort Clark in March 1861, just prior to the onset of the Civil War and the secession of Texas. The Confederate 2<sup>nd</sup> Texas Mounted Rifles then occupied the fort until August 1862. It also served as a supply depot and a hospital for Confederate troops and civilians living in the surrounding area. After the Civil War, Fort Clark returned to federal control and was regarrisoned in 1866, serving as a key frontier post to protect settlers from Native American raids and to patrol the Mexican border. Many federal infantry units and a large percentage of all

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## FORT CLARK (CONTINUED)

cavalry units, including the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Black Regiments "Buffalo Soldiers", were stationed at various times at Fort Clark. About 1890, as the Indian Wars were coming to an end, the usefulness of the old fort came into question, threatening it with closure.

In 1890, aging Civil War veterans living in and around Fort Clark and Brackettville organized a local Post of the *Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.)*. It was designated as *Lt. Col. William H. Lewis Post No. 17*, named in honor of Lt. Col. William Henry Lewis. Lewis had served in the 19<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry and had been stationed in Texas in the early 1850's. He was killed in action at the *Battle of Punished Woman Fork* in Kansas on September 28, 1878 and has the distinction of being the last Kansas military casualty of the Indian Wars.

Fort Clark had been garrisoned by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Texas Infantry prior to the Spanish-American War breaking out in 1898. That brief military conflict injected new life into the old fort. Its primary role shifted from border patrol to its deployment as a medical facility and a base for hospital and ambulance companies. Then, with the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910, the military usefulness of the old fort again became apparent, as turmoil spread along the U.S. southern border.

With the outbreak of World War I a few years later, Fort Clark experienced a period of reconstruction and enlargement to accommodate a new surge of soldiers. It became home to various cavalry units and was again utilized as a training station for medical units for field hospital and ambulance companies. It was also used as a base for constructing sod airfields for the U.S. Army Air Service's observation flights along the Mexican border.

But by the end of World War I, the technological advancement of modern arms foreshadowed the obsolescence of the horse cavalry – and therefore, the end of the need for Fort Clark. But it managed to hold on until June 1944, when the old fort finally closed - one of the last horse-cavalry posts in the country. The Fort was officially deactivated in early 1946, later sold for salvage, and eventually used as a guest ranch.

**Left: "Empty Saddle" statue commemorating fallen cavalymen stands above the entryway to Fort Clark.**



Today, Fort Clark Springs is a 2,700 acre gated resort and leisure living community bordering US

Highway 90 at Brackettville, Texas. Permanent residents, Winter Texans, and visitors from all over the world embrace the historical significance and natural beauty surrounding this unique place.

*... by Michael L. Lance – Lea Camp 2, Houston*

## TRIVIA - BLACK SEMINOLE INDIAN SCOUT CEMETERY

The Black Seminole Indian Scout Cemetery is the burial site of heroic U.S. Army men, families, and heirs, whose ancestors came mainly from Florida during the mid-1800's and settled in northern Mexico and Texas. The cemetery was first established in 1872, when scouts were stationed at nearby Fort Clark. The descendants of escaped slaves and Florida's Seminole Indians, the Black Seminole Indian Scouts were known as unparalleled trackers and fearless combatants. These scouts joined Lt. John Bullis and Col. Ranald Mackenzie to search for hostile Indians during the 1870s. Four of the scouts buried at this cemetery - Adam Payne, Isaac Payne, John Ward, and Pompey Factor - received the *Medal of Honor*. Their tombstones are marked with a reproduction of the Army's version of the medal, a wreath, and a representation of the goddess Minerva.

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

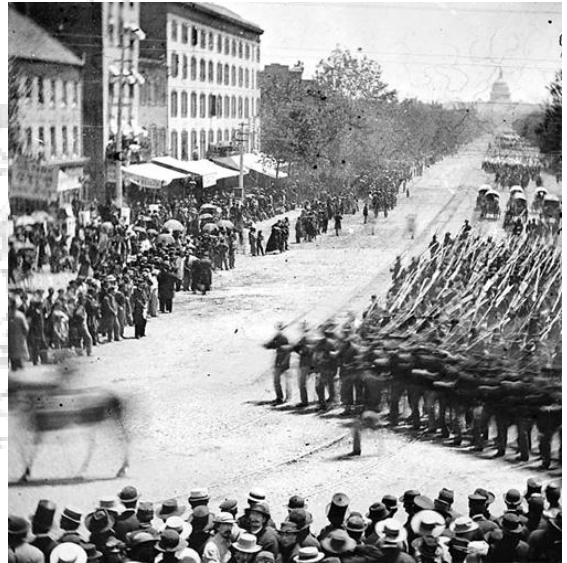
## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – JOHN L. BOYD

John L. Boyd was born September 11, 1848 in Fort Covington, Franklin County, New York. Fort Covington at that time was a small hamlet situated on the border with Canada. It began as a humble blockhouse, sheltering wounded soldiers during the War of 1812. John's parents, Benjamin Boyd and Sophia Guyette, were both natives of Canada. Benjamin worked as a laborer and farmer. In the mid-1840s, he and Sophia moved to Fort Covington with their four young children. In 1848, they welcomed John, their fifth child – and the first member of the family born in the United States.

In August 1850, John 'Boyer' was almost two years old and living with his parents and four older siblings in Fort Covington. His father, Benjamin 'Boyer', was a 39-year-old laborer. All members of the family, except John, were listed on the 1850 federal census as born in Canada East. New York is listed as John's birthplace. As a boy, he "received his education in the common schools." When the Civil War broke out in 1861, John at age 12, was too young to enlist. However, three years later, in late March 1864, he made his way south about 15 miles to Bangor, New York. By claiming he was 18 years old, even though he was only 15, John managed to join the Union ranks. On April 1, 1864, he mustered into Company H of the 98<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry as a Private.

Within weeks after mustering, John "participated in the fight at Cold Harbor...and took part in many other engagements." He was seriously wounded in action at Petersburg "from which he was a long time in recovering." But John survived the war, mustering out of the Union Army at Petersburg, Virginia on May 20, 1865. He "participated in the Grand Review at Washington" that same week and was finally discharged June 10, 1865.

**Right: The Grand Review parade in Washington DC, with the Capitol dome in the background, May 1865.**



Now a civilian, John returned home to Fort Covington, New York. The next year, 1866, he ventured to Springfield, Illinois, "where he operated a sawmill..." But apparently John's heart remained in Fort Covington, for in 1868 at age 20, John married 18-year-old Marceline Margaret LaFlesh, a native of his home town. The young couple reportedly settled in Springfield for about ten years, eventually becoming the parents of seven children.

John "did not take an active interest in political questions other than to exercise his right of suffrage. He always voted the Republican ticket." John and Marceline remained together for the rest of their lives. On January 25, 1870, their first child, Louise Boyd, was born in New York ... instead of in Springfield.

As the years passed, John apparently saw opportunity for his woodworking skills in the deep south. In 1876, he and his family migrated to Dallas, Texas, where "he founded and operated City Planing Mill", located at 1504 Cochran street. The firm was originally "known as Boyd & Webster, later Boyd & Illingworth, and after the death of Mr. Illingworth, the company was incorporated under the laws of Texas and the name changed to City Planing Mill, Inc., with Mr. Boyd as president."

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## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – JOHN L. BOYD (CONTINUED)

Soon, John's second child, a daughter, was born in Dallas. On October 24, 1876, baby Barbara A. Boyd was welcomed into the family. Another daughter, Cora Alice Boyd, followed two years later - on September 15, 1878. The June 1880 federal census for Dallas in Dallas County, Texas shows J. L. Boyd was 30 years old and employed in a planing mill. His wife, Marceline, listed as 'Martha', was 27 years old and keeping house. Three young children graced the 1880 Boyd household, including schoolgirl Louisa (age 10), Barby A. (age 4), and toddler C. A. (age 2).

On January 12, 1882, yet another daughter, Cicily Boyd, was born in Dallas. Then on October 31, 1884, John and Marceline's only son, John Edward Boyd, was welcomed into the family. Two years later, on December 7, 1886, John Boyd was 37 years old when Marceline gave birth to their sixth child, Irene Maria Boyd. Finally, on November 30, 1888, baby Josephine Mary Boyd was born in Dallas as the seventh and last child to grace the Boyd household.

As a Union army veteran of the Civil War, John was accepted as a member of the *Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.)* in Dallas sometime between 1885 and 1888. The *Department of Texas* of the G.A.R. had been organized on March 25, 1885, and John affiliated with one of the very early Posts of that city – *Maj. Gen. John A. Dix Post No. 11*. He was an active member and was elected by his peers as one of the early commanders of the *Post*. In April 1888, John was one of the four members from *Dix Post* that traveled to Austin to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> *Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas*. And in March 1890, he traveled to San Antonio to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment of the Department*, credentialed as a voting delegate based on his status as a past-Post commander.

John Boyd's name appears on the *Special Veterans Schedule* of the 1890 Federal census for Dallas. He reported serving as a Private with *Co. H, 98<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry* from Mar 31, 1864 to June 10, 1865 – having served one year, two months, and ten days. He did not report any lingering debilities resulting from his wartime wound.

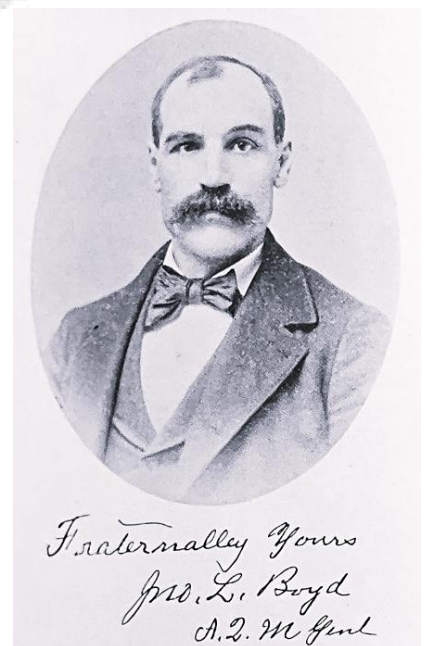
18498 John L. Boyd. Private H 98 N.Y. Inf. 31 Mar 1864 10 June 1865 1 2 10

**Above: Line 5 of the *Special Veterans Schedule* for Dallas, June 1890**

In 1891, the 6<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas* was held in Dallas, making it convenient for John to attend once again. His status and influence within the Department was increasing. At that encampment, he was appointed to an important committee charged with evaluating the Department Commander's encampment Address and, even more impressive, he was elected to serve as a member of the 5-man *Department Council of Administration* for the 1891-1892 term.

John continued to faithfully attend the annual Department Encampments each year from 1892 through 1894. He served as Assistant Quartermaster-General during that time span and continued in that office through at least 1897, traveling to annual encampments in El Paso, Denison, Dublin, and Houston to represent his Dallas G.A.R. Post. His dedication to service as a member of the G.A.R. is commendable.

**Right: John L. Boyd - Assistant Quartermaster-General, 1896**



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## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – JOHN L. BOYD (CONTINUED)

In 1894, John's eldest daughter, Louise Boyd, was 24 years old when she married Missouri-born architect Harry W. Cluskey. In June 1900, the couple had been married six years and were living as lodgers at Capitol Hotel in Marshall, Texas without any children. By April 1910, Lousie and Harry were living in Dallas, still without any children. He was employed as an estimator at a planing mill - most likely his father-in-law's firm.

John's daughter, Barbara, was reportedly 18 years old when she first married. However, the 1900 federal census indicates her marriage took place about 1896 – when she was 20 years old. Whether it was 1894 (*when she was 18*) or 1896 (*per the 1900 census*), her marriage turned out to be short-lived. Clues to that effect are found on the 1900 and 1910 federal census records. Both those censuses show Barbara living with her parents under her maiden name, Boyd, without a husband in the household, and without any children. However, she did remarry several years later.

*Left: Barbara Boyd-Elliston*



According to her 1939 newspaper obituary, Barbara married John W. Elliston in 1924. She would have been about 48 years old on that latter wedding day. John Elliston had also been previously married and brought a teenage son, Mark Elliston, into the marriage.

About 1895, John's daughter, Cora Alice Boyd, was approximately 17 years old when she married Texas-born railway company clerk, William Clapp. They became the parents of a son, John Clapp, about 1898. However, their marriage ended by divorce. The 1910 federal census lists her as Cora Clapp, age 31, divorced with one child [12-year-old John Clapp], and as co-owner of a retail milliner store with her younger sister, Josephine Boyd. Cora remarried August 26, 1912 in Dallas. Her second husband was Benjamin Bernard Linskie, who was a native of New York and was employed as a city sewer superintendent in Dallas.

By June 1900, John Boyd had been promoted to 'manager' of the planing mill. He was 51 years old and renting a house at 248 Cochran in Dallas. His wife, 'Martha', was now 50 years old and they had been married 32 years. All seven of their children were still living - and six of them were enumerated as living with them in the 1900 household, including: 'Barbra' Boyd (*age 22*) who had been married 3 years, but her husband was not present; Cora Boyd (*age 21*), who was married 5 years and had three children, all of whom were absent; unmarried 'Siscely' Boyd (*age 18*); laborer John Boyd (*age 15*); schoolgirl Irene Boyd (*age 13*); and schoolgirl Josephine Boyd (*age 11*). Thirty-two-year-old son-in-law railroad company clerk, William Clapp (*Cora's husband*), rounded out the Boyd household in 1900.

The 1902 *City Directory* for Dallas shows John L. Boyd was general manager at a firm located on W. Illingworth and still living at 248 Cochran. The directory also shows his son, John L. Boyd, Jr. [*sic*], as a clerk boarding at the same address.

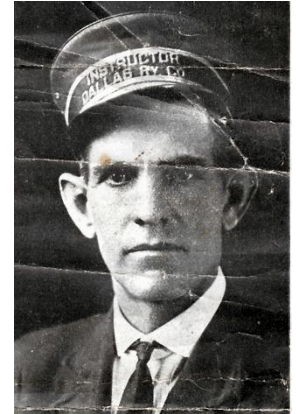
1904 was a memorable year for John as a member of the G.A.R. His local Dallas post, *Dix Post 11*, disbanded that year and then reorganized as *Maj. Gen. Richard J. Oglesby Post 6*. In addition, during elections at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas in San Antonio in April 1904, John was unanimously elected to serve as commander of the *Department* for the 1904-1905 term. By assuming that esteemed office, he served at the helm of a G.A.R. organization in Texas which, at that time, consisted of thirty-four local *Posts* located across the state – from El Paso to Beaumont to McKinney to Brownsville.

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## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – JOHN L. BOYD (CONTINUED)

In 1906, John's daughter, Cicily Boyd, was about 25 years old when she tied the marital knot. She married 24-year-old Charles B. Askins, a native of Richardson, Texas. He was employed as a street railway motorman. They eventually became the parents of at least four children, namely Marsylene Olivia Askins-Shurley, Celia Askins-Jones, Georgia Askins, and John D. Askins.

*Right: Charles Berl Askins – Dallas Railway Company Instructor*



On August 17, 1907, John L. Boyd, alias John 'Boyea', filed from Texas for an *Invalid Pension* based on his Civil War service with *Co. H, 98<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry* [application #1366072]. He successfully obtained pension certificate No. 1142782.

The 1910 *G.A.R.* membership roster for the *Department of Texas* listed John L. Boyd as a member of *Oglesby Post No. 6*, who was residing at 227 Maple Avenue in Dallas, and had served as a Private in *Co. H, 38<sup>th</sup> [sic] New York Volunteer Infantry*.

On January 18, 1910, John's daughter, Irene Maria Boyd, was 23 years old when she wed 37-year-old David Martin McNerney. He was a native of Union City, Indiana, born to natives of Ireland. Irene and David were married in Dallas by the Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral. They became the parents of a son, David Boyd McNerney, the following year. The child was born in Ohio on November 23, 1911 and later served as a Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army during WWII. The elder David would not see the military accomplishments of his son, because he passed away prematurely of "*acute indigestion*" on June 2, 1916 in Dallas at age 41. His father-in-law, John L. Boyd, was the informant for David's death certificate. John's daughter, Irene, thus became a 29-year-old widow.

In April 1910, John Boyd was 61 years old and still employed as a planing mill manager. The Boyd family was now residing at 327 Maple Avenue in Dallas according to the 1910 federal census. It also notes that he and Marceline had been married 41 years and they owned their house free and clear. Of their seven children, only two adult daughters, both unmarried, were still living at home - 33-year-old Barbara Boyd and 21-year-old Josephine Boyd.

The 1915 *City Directory* for Dallas includes a large advertisement (*image at right*) for City Planing Mill. It lists John L. Boyd as proprietor. The planing firm manufactured sashes, doors, mouldings, grilles, stair work, window and door frames and "*all kinds of Turning, Scroll Work, Etc.*" The artwork in the ad depicts a large manufacturing plant, located at 1404-1504 Cochran Street.

In September 1915, John travelled to Washington, DC to attend the 49<sup>th</sup> *Annual Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic*. He likely wanted to relive his memories of marching in the Union Army's triumphant *Grand Review* parade of fifty years earlier. At the encampment, he was credentialed to represent the *Department of Texas* as a Past Department Commander.

An advertisement for City Planing Mill from Worley's 1915 Directory. The ad is titled "CITY PLANING MILL" and lists John L. Boyd as the proprietor. It describes the firm as manufacturers of sashes, doors, mouldings, grilles, stair work, office fixtures, window and door frames, and all kinds of turning and scroll work. The ad includes an illustration of a large manufacturing plant with a sign that says "CITY PLANING MILL". The address is 1404-1504 Cochran Street and the phone numbers are Bell Main 292 and Automatic M 2929.

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## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN — JOHN L. BOYD (CONTINUED)

On June 2, 1916, John's daughter, Irene Boyd-McNerney, purchased a 400 square foot plot in Oakland Cemetery in Dallas. Her husband, David McNerney, had died that day. The plot included space for eight graves. Four days later, Irene's husband was the first person interred in what would informally become the Boyd family plot. Over the next several years, other members of the family would be laid to rest near him, including Irene.

John's daughter, Josephine, married on October 25, 1916 at age 27. The groom was 29-year-old traveling salesman Walter Adam Trester, a native of Sheboygan, Wisconsin. They enjoyed a brief honeymoon in Cuba and then resided in Philadelphia for a few months.



*Left: Josephine Boyd and Walter Adam Trester, 1915*

On July 3, 1917, Josephine and Walter moved in with his parents in Sheboygan. Unfortunately, Walter died shortly thereafter. On April 15, 1918, he passed away at his parents' home at age 30. He reportedly had been ill for a few years, but his death came as a shock *"as he was confined to his bed for only two days."* Now Josephine, like her older sister, Irene, became a young widow.

In May 1917, John Boyd was 68 years old when he travelled to Fort Worth to attend the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas, credentialed as a past-Department commander.

The January 1920 federal census lists John at 70 years old [*sic*] and living at 3215 Maple Avenue in Dallas. He was living with his 69-year-old wife, 'Marcylene', and three of their daughters: 49-year-old widow Louise 'Clusky' who was working as a milliner at a millinery shop; 33-year-old widow Irene McNerney with her 8-year-old son, Boyd McNerney; and 31-year-old widow Josephine Trester. John owned the house free and clear and as proprietor of a planing mill, was an employer.

The 1924 City Directory for Dallas lists John L. Boyd as President of City Planing Mill, Inc. and still living at 3215 Maple Avenue with his wife 'Marselene'. However, he was apparently in declining health.

### John L. Boyd

On January 11, 1927, John passed away *"at 3 o'clock Tuesday morning at his home, 3215 Maple avenue. He had been in ill health for some time, having been confined to his bed for several weeks prior to his death."* His son, John Edward Boyd, who was living at the same address, was the informant for the death certificate. The younger John reported his father: was 78 years, 3 months, and 28 days old; was born September 13, 1848 in Fort Covington, New York; was President of City Planing Mill of Dallas; was a son of Benjamin Boyd and Sophia Guyett, both born in Canada; and had lived in Dallas for 50 years.



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## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – JOHN L. BOYD (CONTINUED)

The attending physician noted on the death certificate that John's demise was caused by "chronic nephritis" and "uremic pericarditis" [kidney failure] from which he had been suffering for nearly two years. John was laid to rest in the Boyd family plot at Oakland Cemetery in Dallas two days later.

Eleven days later, on January 24, 1927, John's widow, Marceline Boyd, applied from Texas for a *Widow's Pension* based on her late husband's Civil War service [application # 1568184]. She was also apparently successful, being awarded pension certificate No. A-5-25-27.

Less than two months later, on March 1, 1927, John's widow Marceline suffered the loss of her daughter Cora. Cora was only 48 years old when she died of apoplexy [stroke]. Cora's 2<sup>nd</sup> husband, Benjamin Linskie, was the informant for the death certificate. He reported that Cora died at their home at 2506 Reagan in Dallas and was buried in the Linskie family plot in Calvary Hill Cemetery and Mausoleum in Dallas on March 3, 1927.

In April 1928, the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas was held in San Antonio, Texas. In the official proceedings report of that encampment, John L. Boyd of *Richard J. Oglesby Post No. 6* is listed on the 'Roll of Honor' [death roll] as having served as a Private in *Co. H, 98<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry*, and had died January 11, 1927.

Meanwhile, Marceline did not have long to enjoy her recently obtained widow's military pension - because she passed away August 28, 1928. Four days later, she was buried beside her late husband in the Boyd family plot in Oakland Cemetery. Then, on September 1, 1932, John's daughter Cicily became a 49-year-old widow when her husband, Charles B. Askins passed away. He died in Dallas at age 50 and was interred at Grove Hill Memorial Park in Dallas.

Daughter Barbara Boyd-Elliston passed away at home in Dallas of a "rupture of cerebral artery" [brain aneurysm] on October 25, 1939. She was 63 years old, a widow, and had been living in her late parent's house at 3215 Maple Avenue. Her husband, John W. Elliston, had died in 1934. The informant for her Texas death certificate was her younger sister, Mrs. Irene Boyd-McNerney, who was also living at the same address. Irene noted that Barbara was born in Dallas on October 24, 1876, and their parents were John L. Boyd and Marceline LaFlesh, both born in New York. Barbara was buried in the Boyd family plot in Oakland Cemetery on October 27, 1939.

On June 26, 1943, John's daughter, Louise Boyd-Cluskey died at Gaston Hospital in Dallas at age 73. She had been a widow for 49 years and had also been residing in her late parent's house at 3215 Maple Avenue. Her younger sister, Irene Boyd-McNerney, was again the informant for the death certificate and was still living at the same address. Louise was also buried in the Boyd family plot in Oakland Cemetery.

On August 28, 1957, John's daughter Cicily Boyd-Askins died in Dallas at age 75. She had been a widow for about 25 years and was laid to rest beside her late husband, Charles Burl Askins, in Grove Hill Memorial Park in Dallas. She was survived by three children, including Marsylene Olivia Askins (b. 1906), Celia Askins (b. 1907), and John D. Askins, Sr. (b. 1917).

On February 28, 1962, John's only son, John Edward Boyd, passed away at Valley Baptist Hospital in Harlingen, Cameron County, Texas. He was 77 years old, a widower, and a retired lumberman. His usual address was 1606 Cardinal Drive in Harlingen. He was buried in Mont Meta Memorial Park in San Benito, Cameron County on March 3, 1962. The informant for his Texas death certificate was his son, Andrew Boyd.

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## TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – JOHN L. BOYD *(CONTINUED)*

Two years later, on February 4, 1964, John’s daughter, Irene Marie Boyd-McNerney, passed away in Iowa Park, Wichita County, Texas. She suffered a heart attack after a 3-week stay in that far north Texas town. She was a 77-year-old widow whose normal address was 4139 Hawthorne in Dallas. She was also laid to rest in the Boyd family plot in Oakland Cemetery two days later. The images below depict the layout of the eight graves in the Boyd family plot in Oakland Cemetery, Dallas, Texas.

### Back Row



**Barbara Boyd-Elliston**  
Daughter  
Interred Oct 27, 1939



**Joseph P. Hohm**  
unknown  
Interred Sep 17, 1921



**Louise Boyd-Cluskey**  
Daughter  
Interred Jun 29, 1943



**Empty Space**  
as of 1964

### Front Row



**Irene Boyd-McNerney**  
Daughter  
Interred Feb 7, 1964



**David M. McNerney**  
Son-in-Law  
Interred Jun 6, 1916



**Marcelene LaFlesh-Boyd**  
Wife  
Interred Sep 1, 1928



**John L. Boyd**  
Civil War Veteran  
Interred Jan 13, 1927

On September 16, 1979, the last member of John and Marceline Boyd’s immediate family passed away. On that date, their youngest daughter, Josephine Mary Boyd-Trester, died at age 90 of a heart attack at St. Paul Hospital in Dallas. She was laid to rest two days later in Calvary Hill Cemetery in Dallas. The entire Boyd family was now reunited in eternal peace.

*... written by Michael L. Lance, PDC, Department/Lea Camp 2 Historian*  
*... research by Terry T. Sutton, Department/Lea Camp 2 Graves Regis. Officer*  
*Department of Texas and Louisiana - Apr 2025.*



## CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 15)

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 15 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.

➤ **Wilmon W. Blackmar - Lieutenant** - Wilmon Whilldin Blackmar was born in Bristol, Pennsylvania, in July 1841. He was a son of Rev. Joseph Blackmar, a Massachusetts clergyman. After relocating with his parents to Boston, Blackmar received his initial education at Boston's Brimmer Grammar School and the State Normal School in Bridgewater. He then pursued his higher education at Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire.

In August 1862, Blackmar was 21 years old when he left Phillips Exeter to enlist with the Union Army in Philadelphia. He mustered in as a Private with *Co. K, 15<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry* and participated in various operations associated with the *Army of the Potomac*.

Right: **Wilmon W. Blackmar**



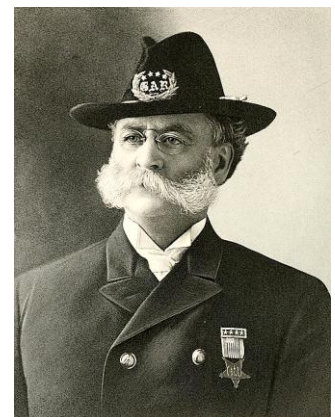
After the *Battle of Antietam* in September 1862, Blackmar was promoted to Corporal, and in March 1863, he advanced to the rank of Sergeant. His rapid rise continued as he was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant in May 1863. Blackmar then participated with the *15<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry* in the *Chickamauga Campaign* into September 1863, which included a well-publicized charge on Confederate forces at Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Blackmar was honorably discharged on May 15, 1864 and immediately accepted a commission as 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant of *Co. H, 1<sup>st</sup> West Virginia Volunteer Cavalry*. He received a commendation from his superiors, "for having saved, by a most hazardous ride, [his] brigade from capture by the forces of General Jubal A. Early", according to *Grand Army of the Republic* records.

Right: **Wilmon W. Blackmar later in life.**

Blackmar participated in the opening battles of the *Appomattox Campaign*, and then performed the act of valor for which he was personally brevetted in the field as a Captain that same day by Gen. George A. Custer - and later awarded the *Medal of Honor*. It was during the *Battle of Five Forks*, Virginia, on April 1, 1865, that Blackmar realized that the Union Army was in trouble and took the initiative to order his men and other Union troops to rapidly form a line and charge the enemy - an action which forced the Confederate troops to disperse.

On July 8, 1865, with the war ended, Blackmar honorably mustered out at the rank of Captain. He then returned to Phillips Exeter... and then went on to complete his legal studies at the Harvard Law School in 1868. After graduation, he was admitted to the Suffolk Bar and would practice as a lawyer during the 1880s and 1890s.



In 1867, Blackmar joined *John A. Andrew Post No. 15* of the *Grand Army of the Republic* in Boston. He remained

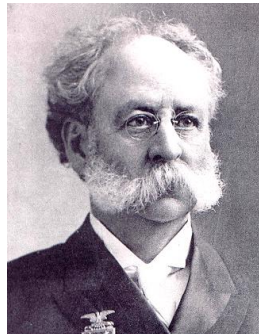
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## CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 15 CONTINUED)

active with the *G.A.R* for the rest of his life, helping to establish Boston's *Edward W. Kinsley Post No. 113*, and served in various National offices over the years. On November 17, 1880, Blackmar married Helen R. Brewster, a resident of Boston. The couple then divided their time between their permanent residence at 72 Commonwealth Ave. in Boston and their summer home, "World's End Farm," in Hingham, Massachusetts.

In 1894, Blackmar was described as a 53-year-old man who stood 5' 7" tall, with dark hair, blue eyes, an oval face with a high forehead, a straight nose, round chin, and fair complexion. After retiring, he served as Judge Advocate General for several Massachusetts governors, and in 1904, was elected as Commander-in-Chief of the *Grand Army of the Republic*, a position he continued to hold until his death on July 16, 1905 at age 63.

*Right: Blackmar with Grant's Appomattox chair, 1893.*



*Left: elderly Wilmon W. Blackmar*

Blackmar became only the second person in the history of Massachusetts to lie in state at the Massachusetts State House. He died in Boise, Idaho during a lengthy trip while visiting a number of *G.A.R.* posts in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief. His remains were returned to Boston and public tribute was paid to him at the State House. Afterward, he was laid to rest at Cedar Grove Cemetery in Dorchester, Massachusetts.

Blackmar's will revealed that he left \$3,000 to Nancy T.

Creel, a resident of Lexington, Kentucky, who was the daughter of the nurse who had rendered care to him during the Civil War as he recuperated from typhoid fever. He also made significant contributions to the *Grand Army of the Republic* and a gift to the *Smithsonian Institution* of "the chair in which General Ulysses S. Grant sat when arranging the surrender of General Robert E. Lee, of the Confederate Army at Appomattox,".... according to newspaper reports from that era. His *Medal of Honor* Citation reads, in part: "At a critical stage of the battle, without orders, led a successful advance upon the enemy."



- **William R. D. Blackwood - Surgeon** - William R. D. Blackwood was born in Hollywood, Ireland on May 12, 1838. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1859 and studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, completing his course work in 1861 and graduating in 1862. In September 1862, he enlisted with the 149<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry as an assistant surgeon but was later transferred to the 48<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry on April 28, 1863, where he was promoted to chief surgeon of the regiment. During the *Third Battle of Petersburg* when Fort Mahone was being attacked, Blackwood assisted several seriously wounded soldiers from the battlefield. He was awarded the *Medal of Honor* for his heroics. He died in Philadelphia on April 26, 1922 at age 83 and was laid to rest at Cheltenham Hills Cemetery in Philadelphia. His citation states:

*Right: William Robert Douglas Blackwood*

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Surgeon William Robert Douglas Blackwood, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 2 April 1865, while serving with 48<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry, in action at Petersburg, Virginia. Surgeon Blackwood removed severely wounded officers and soldiers from the field while under a heavy fire from the enemy, exposing himself beyond the call of duty, thus furnishing an example of most distinguished gallantry.*



*... continued on next page*

## CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 15 CONTINUED)

- **Thomas A. Blasdel - Private** - Thomas Annis Blasdel (*also as Blasdale*) was born in January 1843, in Dearborn County, Indiana. He was the second oldest of nine children born to Ferris Enoch Blasdel and Clarissa Annis Blasdel. For most of his military career, Blasdel served as a Private in *Company H, 83<sup>rd</sup> Indiana Infantry*. He is most famous for his contribution during the *Siege of Vicksburg*, Mississippi.

On May 22, 1863, Gen. Ulysses S. Grant ordered an assault on the Confederate heights at Vicksburg. The plan called for a storming party of volunteers to build a bridge across a moat and plant scaling ladders against the enemy embankment in advance of the main attack. Blasdel was 20 years old at the time and, while he hadn't been in the army for a full year yet, he volunteered to be a part of this party. The volunteers were well aware that the odds of survival were slim and the mission was called a "forlorn hope". Only single men were accepted as volunteers and even then, twice as many men as needed came forward. All but 150 of them were turned away.

The mission began in the morning, not long after a naval bombardment. Blasdel and the volunteers came under enemy fire immediately and were pinned down in the moat they were to cross. Even though attacked multiple times by the Confederates, the small storming party held off their assailants until nightfall, when both sides retreated because of darkness. Of the 150 volunteers, nearly half were killed. Blasdel and the other seventy-eight survivors were eventually awarded the *Medal of Honor*.

Blasdel was discharged in June 1865. He married Elizabeth and became the father of a son, Emert Blasdel. He died October 12, 1932, in Reno County, Kansas at age 89 and was laid to rest in Fairlawn Burial Park in Hutchinson, Kansas. On August 11, 1894, at age 51.... thirty-one years after the fact, Blasdel received his *Medal of Honor* for gallantry during the *Siege of Vicksburg*. His 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 Thomas A. Blasdale, United States Army, for gallantry in the charge of the volunteer storming party on 22 May 1863, while serving with Company H, 83d Indiana Infantry, in action at Vicksburg, Mississippi.*

- **Milton Blickensderfer - Corporal** - Milton Blickensderfer was born May 20, 1835 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Before the war, he lived in Tuscarawas County with his wife, Mary, and three children. He enlisted with the 126<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry in 1862 at Shanesville, Ohio. During the *Siege of Petersburg*, Blickensderfer captured a Confederate battle flag, an act for which he was awarded the *Medal of Honor*. He died May 17, 1916 in Tuscarawas County, Ohio and his remains were interred in Sugar Creek, Ohio. 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 Corporal Milton Blickensderfer, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 3 April 1865, while serving with Company E, 126th Ohio Infantry, in action at Petersburg, Virginia, for capture of flag.*



*... series to be continued next issue with part 16*

# 2025 - 2026 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

## Elected Officers

Department Commander	<b>Brook J. Thomas</b>
Department Sr. Vice-Commander	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>
Department Jr. Vice-Commander	<b>Clifford F. 'Butch' Durham</b>
Department Secretary/Treasurer	<b>Donald L. Gates</b>
Department Council Member #1	<b>Dr. Stevenson T. Holmes</b>
Department Council Member #2	<b>Blair G. Rudy</b>
Department Council Member #3	<b>Paul L. Kendall</b>

## Staff Officers

Patriotic Instructor ....	<b>Timothy M. Phillips</b>	Camp Organizer ....	<b>Blair G. Rudy</b>
Chaplain ....	<b>Stephen D. Schulze</b>	Registrar ....	<b>Daniel B. Purreau</b>
Historian ....	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>	Eagle Scout Coordinator ....	<b>John E. Schneider Sr.</b>
Civil War Mem. Off. ...	<b>Charles W. Sprague</b>	Newsletter Editor ....	<b>Michael L. Lance</b>
Graves Registr. Off. ....	<b>Terry T. Sutton</b>	Assistant Secretary ....	<b>Paul Ridenour</b>
Counselor ....	<b>John E. Schneider Sr.</b>	Assistant Signals Officer ....	<b>Larry Joe Reynolds</b>
Signals Officer ....	<b>John C. Vander Meulen</b>		

## Department Website

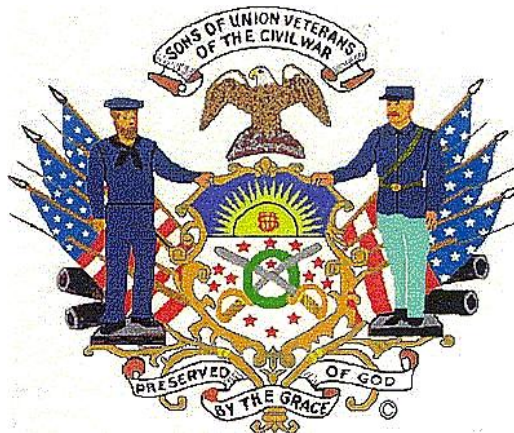
## Department Facebook Page

## 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)



## 2025 CAMP OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

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

Camp Commander **Brian Glass**  
 Camp Sr. Vice- Cmdr. **Michael E. Belcher**  
 Camp Jr. Vice- Cmdr. **Beau Moore**  
 Camp Treasurer **Donald L. Gates**  
 Camp Secretary **Donald L. Gates**

[Byrne Camp 1 Website](#)

**Gen. James J. Byrne**  
 Namesake of Camp 1



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

Camp Commander **Daniel B. Pourreau**  
 Camp Sr. Vice- Cmdr. **Herbert W. Powers**  
 Camp Jr. Vice- Cmdr. **Jason D. Hoffman**  
 Camp Secr./Treas. **Stephen D. Schulze, PDC**

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

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



### **Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Camp 3** - San Antonio

Camp Cmdr. **Blair G. Rudy, PDC**  
 Camp Sr. Vice- Cmdr. **Larry W. Lockett**  
 Camp Jr. Vice- Cmdr. **Kevin L. Kanter**  
 Camp Treasurer **Dustin S. Whittenburg**  
 Camp Secretary **Dustin S. Whittenburg**

**Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord**  
 Namesake of Camp 3

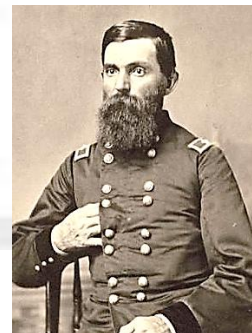


### **Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5** - Shreveport, Louisiana

Camp Commander **Michael A. Heller**  
 Camp Sr. Vice- Cmdr. **Ralph L. Diamond**  
 Camp Jr. Vice- Cmdr. **Robbie McMahan**  
 Camp Secr./Treas. **William M. 'Bill' Elliott**

[Bailey Camp Website](#)

**Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey**  
 Namesake of Camp 5

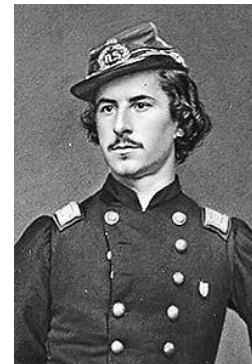


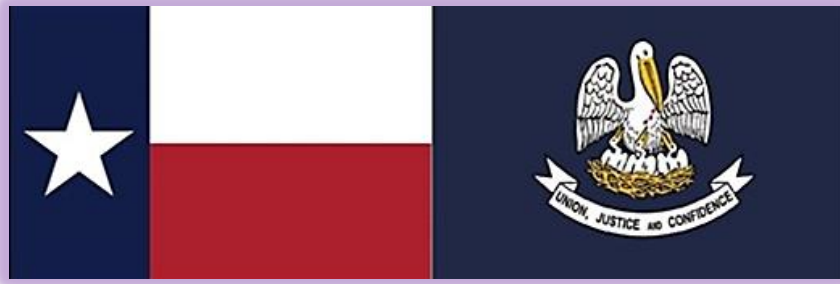
### **Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18** - Dallas, Texas

Camp Commander **Michael K. Schneider**  
 Camp Sr. Vice- Cmdr. **Kevin J. Ennis**  
 Camp Jr. Vice- Cmdr. **Paul Ridenour**  
 Camp Secr./Treas. **Donald L. Gates, PDC**

[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**