



THE UNIONIST

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



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COVER IMAGE - "*On To Richmond*" – art by Mort Kunstler

DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA



From the Commander's Tent

Brothers:

The Editor has offered me this space to share my thoughts. I intend to use it to provide a monthly summary of what the Department is working on for you.

Following this month's Department Encampment in Houston, we received excellent positive feedback from CinC Kevin Martin. He was very appreciative of our hospitality and approved the hotel we have planned as the venue for the 2025 National Encampment. It is critical that all brothers with an assignment for that event continue working toward completion of all tasks in advance of the big show in August. In addition, we need all hands on deck for the event itself. This is likely a once in a lifetime opportunity to attend a National Encampment right here in Texas. Do not squander it. [Click here to register today!](#)

As recommended at the Department Encampment on May 10th, I will be forming a special committee to study and recommend changes to the Department Bylaws for the administration of election of Delegates to National Encampments going forward. If you are selected for this important duty, you will be informed.

The Department owes a huge debt of gratitude to Brother Larry Joe Reynolds for his most excellent service as our Department Webmaster. As he transitions away from that role, we are working to modernize our website and cultivate the skills needed to take over control. Stay tuned for further information on this issue.

I attended Decoration Day (Memorial Day) ceremonies with Camp 18 and Camp 1 on May 25th and 26th, respectively. Hats off to Commander Brian Glass of Camp 1 for a good turnout and an excellent ceremony - *despite the weather*.

To round out the month, I will attend the Camp 3 business meeting on May 31.

Thank you for your attention and participation.

As always, I remain Your Most Obedient Servant.



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



* * * NOTICE TO MEMBERSHIP * * *

2025 National Encampment - The Department of Texas and Louisiana is proud to host the 144th National Encampment of the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* and the *Allied Orders*. The Encampment will take place August 7 through August 10, 2025 at the Sonesta Hotel Houston IAH Airport.

Support the Department by [registering online today](#). Volunteers are needed for various roles.

DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA (CONTINUED)

Saturday, May 10, 2025 - Houston, Texas

Delegates from across the state assembled in the gymnasium at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in west Houston, Texas to attend the 31st Annual Encampment of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*. All five Camps of the Department were represented. Department Commander Timothy Phillips gaveled the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

After calling for the roll of Department Officers, Cmdr. Phillips requested the Divine Blessing to be offered by Department Chaplain Stephen Schulze. Afterward, the 6-man Color Guard advanced to the cadence set by drummer William Myers, to post the Color. All remained at attention as the *Pledge of Allegiance* was recited and the National Anthem sounded.



Left: Color Guard waiting to advance the Colors.

Front Rank

Todd Wilber – National Colors

Blair Rudy – Color Sergeant

Herbert Powers – Regimental Colors

Rear Rank

Michael Schneider – Armed Guard

Harold Sickler – Armed Guard

Todd Williams – Armed Guard (hidden)

Encampment Guard, Jason Hoffman, soon announced the presence of National Commander-in-Chief, Kevin Martin, in waiting. Guide Michael Lance was ordered to escort the CinC into the meeting room.

Immediately afterward, Guard Hoffman announced the presence of Rosemary Martin, National President of the *Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. The Guide also escorted her in - and both were heartily welcomed by Cmdr. Phillips and all attendees.

In gratitude for the service rendered to the Order by CinC Martin, on behalf of the Department, Cmdr. Phillips presented him with a couple gifts. Auxiliary President Martin was also presented gifts from President Vali Reyes and Jill Schneider of the *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1*.



Guide Michael Lance escorting CinC Martin and President Martin into the Encampment room.

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DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA *(CONTINUED)*

2025 Department Encampment Continued ...

A special presentation of gifts to Cmdr. Phillips was made by Department SVC Brook Thomas.

Right: DSVIC Thomas presents a gift to DC Phillips



Cmdr. Phillips then invited Department Signals Officer, John Vander Meulen to present an audio/video tribute to the military veterans of the Department, our Civil War ancestors, and all veterans of the Civil War – followed by a Moment of Silence.

Then it was time to get down to the business of business. Reports were presented by several Department Officers, Department Committees, and Camp Commanders.



John Vander Meulen
Dept. Jr. Vice-Cmdr.



William Elliott
Dept. Patriotic Officer

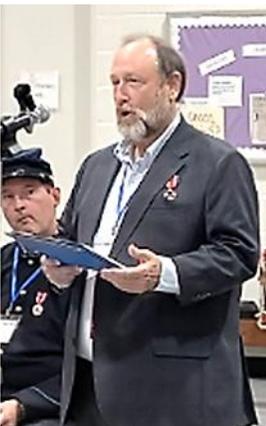


Michael Lance
Dept. Historian



John Schneider, Sr.
Dept. Counselor

The Camp Commanders each gave brief reports about the activities, achievements and plans of their individual Camps. Camp Sec./Treas. William Elliott reported on behalf of absent Cmdr. Michael Heller, of *Bailey Camp 5*.



Brian Glass
Byrne Camp 1 – Fort Worth



Daniel Poureau
Lea Camp 2 – Houston



Blair Rudy
Ord Camp 3 – San Antonio



Michael Schneider
Ellsworth Camp 18 - Dallas

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DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA (CONTINUED)

2025 Department Encampment Continued ...

Several Brothers were recognized for long-term membership and service to the Order. They were each handed a Certificate by Chaplain Stephen Schulze and a lapel pin by CinC Kevin Martin. Those present to receive their recognition included:

- **10 or more years' service** Herbert W. Powers and Michael D. Rappe (*both Camp 2*)
- **15 or more years' service** Brook J. Thomas and John E. Schneider, Sr. (*both Camp 18*), Beau B. Moore (*Camp 1*)
- **20 or More Years' Service** Stevenson T. Holmes (*Camp 2*), Harold L. Sickler (*Camp 18*), Brian R. Glass (*Camp 1*)
- **25 or More Years' Service** Stephen D. Schulze (*Camp 2*)



10 or More Years

L-R: S. Schulze, K. Martin, H. Powers, and M. Rappe



15 or More Years

L-R: S. Schulze, K. Martin, J. Schneider, B. Moore



20 or More Years

L-R: S. Schulze, K. Martin, S. Holmes, H. Sickler, B. Glass



25 Years – Dept. Chaplain Stephen D. Schulze
and CinC Kevin Martin

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DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA *(CONTINUED)*

Chaplain Schulze also received the prestigious *Department Achievement Award* from Commander Phillips. He was presented with this award to recognize his outstanding dedication and service to the Order for many years.

Right: Cmdr. Timothy Phillips and recipient Stephen Schulze

Following the presentations of awards, nominations and elections of 2025-2026 Department Officers and Delegates to the 2025 National Encampment was conducted. The elected Officers included:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| ➤ Commander | Brook J. Thomas | Camp 18 |
| ➤ Sr. Vice-Commander | John C. Vander Meulen | Camp 2 |
| ➤ Jr. Vice-Commander | Clifford 'Butch' Durham | Camp 1 |
| ➤ Secretary/Treasurer | Donald L. Gates | Camp 1/18 |
| ➤ Council #1 | Stevenson T. Holmes | Camp 2 |
| ➤ Council #2 | Blair G. Rudy | Camp 3 |
| ➤ Council #3 | Paul L. Kendall | Camp 1 |



Above Left: CinC Kevin Martin pins Department Cmdr. badge on newly elected Department Cmdr. Brook Thomas.

Above Center: Department Cmdr. Brook Thomas presents Past-Department Cmdr. badge to Timothy Phillips.

Above Right: Department Cmdr. Brook Thomas presents a Department Officer's badge to newly elected Department Jr. Vice-Cmdr. Butch Durham.

Left: Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War – Jill Schneider, Vali Reyes, Nat'l President Rosemary Martin, and Norma Pollard.

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DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS AND LOUISIANA *(CONTINUED)*

31st Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas and Louisiana Houston, Texas - May 10, 2025

Attendance Roster

Byrne Camp #1 – Fort Worth

Clifford 'Butch' Durham	PCC
Brian R. Glass	CC
Beau B. More	PDC
Todd Wilber	DEL

Stephen D. Schulze	PDC
Terry T. Sutton	DEL
John C. Vander Meulen	PCC

Lea Camp #2 - Houston

Ronald S. 'Steve' Brock	DEL
Jason D. Hoffman	DEL
Stevenson T. Holmes	PDC
Jason M. Kyle	DEL
Michael L. Lance	PDC
William D. 'Bill' Myers, Jr.	DEL
Herbert W. Powers, Jr.	DEL
Daniel B. Pourreau	CC
Michael D. Rappe	DEL
Charles F. Reed	DEL
Robert G. Riley	DEL

Ord Camp #3 – San Antonio

Blair G. Rudy	PDC
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Bailey Camp #5 – Shreveport

William M. 'Bill' Elliott	DEL
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Ellsworth Camp #18 - Dallas

Donald L. Gates	PDC
Paul Ridenour	PCC
John E. Schneider, Sr.	PDC
Harold L. Sickler	PDC
Michael K. Schneider	CC
Brook J. Thomas	PCC
Todd Williams	DEL

➤ PDC = Past-Dept. Cmdr. PCC = Past-Camp Cmdr. CC = Camp Cmdr. DEL = Delegate

National Guests – Commander-in-Chief Kevin Tucker and Auxiliary President Rosemary Martin.

Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1 of Houston: President Vali Reyes, Jill Schneider, and Norma Pollard.



*.... report by Michael L. Lance, Editor – Lea Camp 2, Houston
Photos by Robert G. Riley, John E. Schneider, Sr., and John C. Vander Meulen*

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

Monday, May 26, 2025 – Memorial Day – Fort Worth, Texas

Several members of Gen. James J. Byrne Camp #1 gathered at the G.A.R. monument in Oakwood Cemetery in Ft. Worth to conduct their traditional Memorial Day ceremony. Department Commander Brook J. Thomas and dual-member Donald L. Gates, both members of *Ellsworth Camp 18 of Dallas*, also participated in the event. Afterwards, the assembly traveled to nearby Pioneer's Rest Cemetery to decorate the grave of the Camp's namesake, Gen. James J. Byrne. They were assisted by members of *Boy Scout Venture Crew #1872*.



L-R: Donald L. Gates, Timothy M. Phillips, Brook J. Thomas, Beau B. Moore, Todd Wilber (kneeling), Brian R. Glass, Craig A. Reves, and Butch Durham.



Gravesite of Gen. James J. Byrne at Pioneer's Rest Cemetery

L-R: Bridger Moore, Craig Reves, Beau B. Moore, Joshua Wiersema, Kelley Wiersema, Calum McCoy, Brian Glass, Timothy Phillips, Donald L. Gates, Butch Durham, Ian Rousseau, and Todd Wilber



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

LT. CMDR. EDWARD LEA CAMP #2 - HOUSTON

Monday, April 14, 2025 – Houston, Texas

On Monday, April 14, 2025, Camp Commander Daniel B. Pourreau attended the Heights High School JROTC Ball and presented a *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* JROTC award certificate and badge to outstanding Cadet, Battalion Executive Officer, Scarlet Alcocer.



Left: JROTC Award badge

Right: **Cmdr. Daniel Pourreau** presenting the **SUVCW JROTC Award** to Cadet **Scarlet Alcocer**



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

Monday, May 26, 2025 – Houston, Texas

On Memorial Day, 2025, Camp Commander Daniel B. Pourreau and Past Camp Commander Michael L. Lance, both outfitted as Union Army Corporals, combined with men of *Co. A, 13th U.S. Infantry Regiment* to form an Honor Guard at Houston National Cemetery in Houston. The unit fired a coordinated and thunderous musket volley in the grassy area immediately outside the hemicycle to signal the opening of the official Memorial Day program inside the structure.

After the opening shot, two members of the Honor Guard stowed their muskets and obtained the U.S. and Regimental Colors as the unit transformed from a Federal Honor Guard into a Federal Color Guard. They then moved into position #21 of the procession to wait for their turn to march onto the parade grounds inside the hemicycle to salute with the Colors.



As the unit was announced, they marched in smartly, saluted, and then performed a right-wheel maneuver to march off the grounds.

Although their participation in the program was brief, the men to a person were proud to demonstrate their gratitude and respect for our nation's fallen heroes.

L-R: **Tommy Attaway (Cmdg.),**
Joey Almia,
Roy Eanes,
Michael Lance,
Daniel Pourreau,
and
Howard Rose.

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

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

Monday, 26 May 2025 – Houston, Texas

An elaborate and moving Memorial Day ceremony was conducted by the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp* in the *GAR* lot at the historic Washington Cemetery in Houston. The Camp was assisted by Sisters of the *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1* of Houston, and the *Sarah Emma Edmonds Detached Tent #4* of the *Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. Small U.S. flags were placed at each of the ten military gravestones in the lot. Commander Pourreau directed the program, which included an inspirational address by PCC John Vander Meulen.

During the program, the Sisters called out the names and service units of each *GAR* veteran, placed a red rose on his gravestone, and stepped back to salute. A ceremonial bell was tolled after each name was called. This year, a new element was added to the traditional program. Brothers Herbert Powers and Stephen Schulze were designated as ceremonial Sergeants - with one of them (*Schulze*) calling out the names of the other Civil War Veterans buried in the cemetery to the north of the *GAR* lot, and the other Sergeant (*Powers*) calling out the names of the Civil War veterans who were buried south of the *GAR* lot.

Beautiful ornate wreaths were placed at the grave of Sarah Emma Edmonds/Seely by a Sister representing each of the Allied Orders – Auxiliary President Vali Reyes and Past-President Susan Barry of the *DUVCW*.



Herb Powers calls the names of vets to the south



Sisters Reyes and Barry saluting at Seelye grave



A three-volley musket salute then echoed across the cemetery – fired by Daniel Pourreau, Michael Rappe, and Michael Lance. They fired by the drum – the signal provided by drummer William Myers. The musket salute was followed by the sounding of *Taps*.

Musket Volley

L-R: Daniel Pourreau, Michael Rappe, Michael Lance, and William Myers.

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



**Susan Barry eloquently reciting the poem,
*When the Boys in Blue are Gone***



**Showing respect - PCC John C. Vander Meulen
and Stephen D. Schulze, PDC**



**L-R Back: Michael Lance, Michael Rappe, Daniel Poureau, Maryann Anthony, Herbert Powers,
Stephen Schulze, John Vander Meulen, Ronald 'Steve' Brock, and William Myers,
L-R Front: Sarah Rappe, Susan Barry, Jana Marsh, and Vali Reyes**

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

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

Monday, 26 May 2025 – Memorial Day Ceremony - Galveston, Texas

I put flowers on the graves of the Union veterans in the Episcopal Cemetery and New City Cemetery in Galveston this morning. May their memory be eternal.



**Decorated grave of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN
Namesake of the *Lea Camp*
Episcopal Cemetery**



**Decorated headstone
1st Lt. George Frank Robie
Medal of Honor recipient
New City Cemetery**



**Union Monument
Memorializing the Federal Casualties
of the January 1, 1863 *Battle of Galveston*
Episcopal Cemetery**

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



COL. ELMER E. ELLSWORTH - DALLAS

Friday, May 30, 2025 - Plano, Texas

On May 30, 2025, John E. Schneider, Sr. of *Ellsworth Camp #18* attended an Eagle Scout Court of Honor program. The event was held at the LDS Legacy Building in Plano, Texas. During the ceremony, Brother Schneider presented a *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War* Eagle Scout Award to outstanding Scout, Matthew Smart.



Left: John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC presenting the *SUVCW* Eagle Scout Award to Matthew Smart.



L-R: Keith Scott, Scoutmaster of Troop 27; MG Keith Thurgood, USA (*Ret.*); Eagle Scout Matthew Smart; and John E. Schneider, Sr., PDC



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

AUXILIARY TO THE SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Below is a message recently posted by PDC David Hann, a member of the *Department of New Jersey*. He is also currently a member of the *SUVCW* National Council of Administration. I am reposting his message because it echoes my sentiments about the importance of the *Auxiliary to the Sons*. He writes

Dear Brothers,

As you know, I have been asking about getting our Auxiliary going. Please ask your wife, daughters, granddaughters, aunts, sisters, or any female that would qualify. I have two in my family that will join. I would hate to see our Auxiliary die.



As many of you know, the New Jersey Department Auxiliary has been disbanded. Our Camp Auxiliary, Elizabeth Thorn #14, will need to file paperwork to become an Auxiliary-at-Large.

Wives of current SUVCW members may join the Auxiliary using their husband's lineage. Dues for the Auxiliary are only \$20.00 per year with a one-time application fee of \$15.00.

Membership eligibility in the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War is obtained in the following ways:

- *As the wife, sister, daughter, legally adopted daughter, granddaughter, great-granddaughter and so forth, niece and grandniece and so forth, not less than twelve (12) years of age, of a deceased or honorably discharged Soldier, Sailor or Marine who served in the Union Army, Navy or Coast Guard (including Revenue Cutter Service) during the Civil War of 1861 to 1865.*
- *As the wife, daughter, widow, mother, or legally adopted daughter of a member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, with lineage, in good standing.*
- *As Associates: Those ladies who do not qualify for membership under #1 or #2 above, but who desire to affiliate with the ASUVCW.*
- *As Junior Members: Those young ladies between the ages of six (6) and eleven (11), who otherwise qualify for membership under #1 or #2 above.*

Dave Hann PDC, Camp Secretary
SUVCW National Council of Administration

The *Department of Texas and Louisiana* is fortunate to have an active long-existing *Auxiliary*. *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1* is affiliated with the *Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp* of Houston. For many years, this outstanding *Auxiliary* has assisted and supported the activities of the *Lea Camp*, as well as various events of the Department. Their support is greatly appreciated, and the value of their generous service cannot be overstated!

With that said, it seems to me that it would be very advantageous to the *SUVCW* in Texas and Louisiana - and to the *Auxiliary* - if we would take Brother Hann's message to heart. By following his advice – speaking with potential new female members - and help the *Auxiliary* grow and expand to other Camps in the Department.

... Newsletter Editor – Department of Texas and Louisiana

DEPARTMENT PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTOR'S MESSAGE

Memorial Day

Greetings to all of the patriotic persuasion in our Department. Since our Department Encampment was little more than a week ago, time to think on this missive has been a bit limited. In the coming year, I hope to make note of historic events less known, offer suggestions on marking these events, and try to help stoke the fire of reverence for our country wherever possible.

Memorial Day is our pride and joy, invented by our parent fraternity, the *Grand Army of the Republic*. That is one of those glorious names that gives a person goose bumps. Unfortunately, the sober and reflective character of the day has been diluted by the concept of "First day of Summer", and a time to honor the four B's: Beer, Bratwurst, Baseball, and Bedding Sales.

Fortunately there has lately been some interest in returning the Day to its original purpose. We have begun to appreciate the long term, destructive effects of combat on those who went "over there" and saw the elephant.

What can we do to "keep green the memory of these folks"? Here are a few suggestions:

- Break out the Colors. Raise the dear old flag they fought to keep from dishonor.
- Grab one of your history books and sharpen your knowledge of those times.
- Observe a moment of silence. Join me at 1500, wherever you are, in the *National Moment of Remembrance*, followed by *Taps*.
- Attend a Memorial Day parade or ceremony.



These are just a few ideas. And be sure to send me something about what you and/or your Camp did. We need it for newsletters, and those reports that National enjoys.

So, enjoy the day, keep the faith, remember those that died so we can celebrate this holiday!

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



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Pensacola's Chaplain

Robert Givin was a Methodist minister. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and began his life's work in New Jersey. In 1855, he received an appointment as a Navy chaplain, later telling a friend that he did so to be able to visit various missionary centers around the world. His travels took him as far as China.

When the Civil War began, Chaplain Givin joined the crew of the frigate *Roanoke* for duty in the *North Atlantic Blockade Squadron*. In 1863, he joined the *Potomac*, the flagship at Pensacola, Florida.

After his arrival at Pensacola, during the summer of 1863, Chaplain Givin learned of an abandoned chapel. An enterprising ensign pitched in to renovate it for religious services. Givin then spent more than two years there tending to the spiritual needs of Bluejackets, and ministering to crews passing through the harbor, and patients in the Navy Yard hospital.

In addition to conducting services, he distributed religious materials and schoolbooks. In an early 1865 report, Givin noted ...

"Both afloat and ashore I find good and attentive congregations and have good reason to believe that my labors have not been altogether unprofitable, though they have not been so successful as desired."



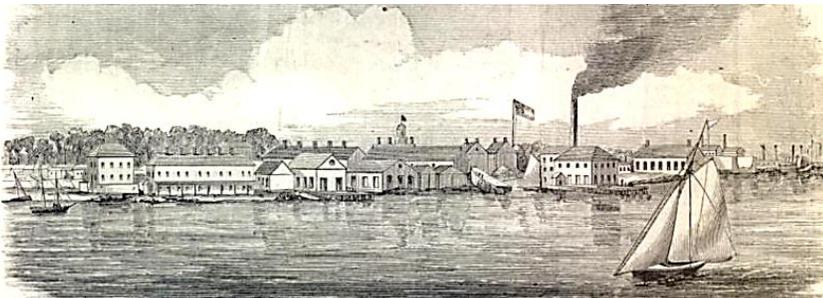
Chaplain Givin remained in the Navy after the end of hostilities. In 1872, he became one of the first four chaplains in Navy history to attain the relative rank of Captain. He eventually retired and died in 1895 at about age 76. He is buried in West Laurel Hill Cemetery at Bela Cynwyd, a suburb of Philadelphia.

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

TRIVIA – PENSACOLA NAVY YARD

Due to the large timber reserves nearby, President John Quincy Adams realized the potential of Pensacola harbor for shipbuilding. In 1826, he orchestrated the construction of a naval base in the new Florida Territory – the *Pensacola Navy Yard*. The resulting naval yard was used for new ship construction and became the home port for the *West Indies Squadron*. The squadron was tasked with suppressing piracy in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, blocking the international slave trade, and to hinder smuggling.

In 1861, the naval yard at Pensacola was seized by the Confederates when the South seceded. But when New Orleans was captured by Union forces in 1862, the Confederates, fearing attack from the west, evacuated the base after torching it - to avoid it from falling into Union hands.



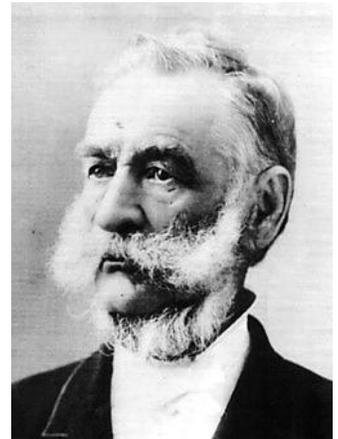
*Left: Sketch of Pensacola
Harper's Weekly, June 22, 1861*

TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH

Conrad Wentworth was born May 18, 1840 in Pensacola, Escambia County, Florida. He was the second child born to Robert Smith Wentworth and his first wife, Mary E. Warren. His father's career and background would strongly influence young Conrad's life.

The elder Wentworth served in the U.S. Navy from 1832 to 1838, was Sergeant of the Marine Guard on a Flag Ship, and later worked as a Clerk at the Navy Yard at Pensacola. His naval career also included a stint as Secretary to the Commandant at Pensacola, and by 1838, he was a Magistrate of Escambia County. In May 1838, Robert married his first wife at Pensacola and two sons were soon born, Samuel and Conrad. His military career then took him to Missouri.

Right: **Conrad's father, Robert Smith Wentworth (1812-1898)**



Conrad was just a toddler when he and his family migrated from Florida to Missouri. On September 11, 1843, a sister, Martha Frances Wentworth, was born at Lexington in Lafayette County, Missouri. Another brother, Chester, was born in 1845.

In 1846, Conrad's father was promoted to Assistant Quartermaster at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas. But by 1847, he was back in Missouri working as Assessor of Lafayette County. In 1848, Conrad gained another sister when baby Mary Matilda Wentworth was born in Lexington. Conrad would later have two more younger siblings - William and Hallie.

On September 14, 1850, Conrad was 9 years old and attending school with his older brother, Samuel, in Lafayette County, Missouri. Their 40-year-old father, a native of New York, was oddly reported as employed as a nurseryman, and their mother, Mary, a native of Maryland, was 37 years old. Four younger siblings rounded out the 1850 Wentworth family. Also enumerated as living with the Wentworths, and who apparently owned the real estate, was 55-year-old Virginia-born Martha Warren – who may have been Conrad's maternal grandmother or great-aunt.

In the early 1850's, while still a boy, Conrad ran away from home and obtained employment with the U.S. government. His job included accompanying stagecoaches traveling from Lexington, Missouri, to various U.S. forts across the western plains. He also carried mail from Independence, Missouri to Santa Fe, New Mexico and to Salt Lake, Utah. During these lengthy travels, he became acquainted with the various Indian tribes that inhabited the plains.

"On his first trip, when his party on the stage reached the Arkansas river, they came upon the Indians, whose tepees were pitched on the border of that stream and spread over a space as far, he says, as he could see. There were Indians not only by the hundreds, but by thousands. He states that when the aborigines saw his party, they began to utter their peculiar and weird war whoop. All their squaws and papooses came running out and stood along the side of the road as the coach traversed it. He says that his hair stood on end and he felt very homesick and strongly repented having run away from his home and parents. The coach ran straight on by the Indians, who did not molest the occupants, as was dreaded by Wentworth. He was complimented then for his bravery."

From that point on, Conrad "developed the natural instincts of the scout and guide, always watching, guarding." In 1857, Conrad likely experienced armed confrontation with another group of people. He "was with General [Albert Sidney] Johnson's party at Fort Bridger during the campaign against the Mormons." The fort had been occupied by the Mormons, who put it to the torch and fled as the federal troopers approached. The so-called *Utah*

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

War in the Utah Territory ended with few casualties - and the integrity of that U.S. territory was preserved. The fort was afterward rebuilt and used as an important military post – protecting laborers building the transcontinental railroad, gold miners, and Shoshone Indians living near the fort.

Because of his familiarity with the ways of the trail, Conrad was “selected as the courier to carry dispatches and important mail to Fort Laramie, 200 miles distant. He then had to traverse snow, which on the level was more than two feet deep and which was much deeper in places where it had drifted.” Along with the difficult winter conditions, he likely suffered many other hardships and deprivations. But Conrad did not toil just for the government wages, for his daily allowance of 25 cents was scant pay. His love for the freedom and adventure of the plains was likely his primary motivation.

Conrad became a scout for the army through a chance meeting with an army Sergeant while in camp on the trail in Kansas. In his own words

“I was a wagonmaster in charge of a train of forty wagons with six mules to each wagon and was camped at Salt Creek, a few miles from Leavenworth, Kansas. One evening, a large, fine looking man rode up on a big white horse. When he reached our camp, he said he wanted to see its boss. I was pointed out to him by one of my men, who said: ‘You see that little, dried up, weathery man sitting on that empty nail keg? Well, that’s him’.

“The man, who was Sergeant Nolan at that time, came up to me. He told me that he wanted twenty Western men to go to Washington as scouts for the United States army. I concluded I would accept the service and I got a number of my friends and companions of the plains to go with me.”

In April 1861, at the outbreak of the Civil War, Conrad enlisted as a Private in the Union Army from Independence, Missouri.

“I joined Troop K of the Second United States Cavalry, the celebrated Billy Steele’s troop. My first detail was to go to San Jose, Mo. and hoist the Stars and Stripes over the post office at that place, which I did. We went next to Washington after [Col. Elmer E.] Ellsworth had been killed at Alexander, VA. We crossed the long bridge and did picket duty about Arlington Heights, fought and skirmished until the first battle of Bull Run.”

On April 15, 1864, with the country still divided by war, Conrad married ‘Kate’ Cecil in Washington, DC. She was a native of the District of Columbia, and they eventually became the parents of six children: Charles, Alice, Robert, Grace, Kate, and Harriet Wentworth. During the war, Conrad “served as scout for Generals Sheridan, Hancock, and Merrill”, had two horses killed under him, and received saber wounds on his left arm and forehead. He also spent time in Libby and Belle Island Confederate POW camps. Not deterred by the hardships of Army life, Conrad thereafter made it his life-long career.

On December 31, 1867, Conrad and Catherine welcomed their first child, Charles W. Wentworth, born in Washington, DC. After reaching adulthood, Charles married twice. In 1890, he married Anna Laura Norris, but she passed away in 1899 at age 25 after bearing three sons – Stanley, Walter, and Frank. In 1905, Charles married again. His second wife was Vernie Aurelia Edge, and he became the father of at least five more children – Pearl, Charles, Mattie, Ruth, and Gracie. Charles died in 1934 in San Antonio, Texas at age 66, and was buried in City Cemetery #3 in that city.



Right: Conrad’s older brother, Charles W. Wentworth (1867-1934)

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH *(CONTINUED)*

Conrad lived with his wife and son in Washington, DC until 1868. Then his post-war duty took him back to the plains – first to Fort Dodge, Kansas. Describing his experience after returning to his old stomping grounds, he later wrote:

“When I left there to go to the war, the entire country was in the possession of the Indians, who up to then had been rather peaceable. But on my return, there was a decided change. White men had mixed among the Indians with whom they were continually at war.”

It wasn't long before Conrad became involved in the intense strife of the plains. With his knowledge of the territory and the customs of its inhabitants, he was often called upon for assistance in dealing with serious issues. For example, in his words ...

“Lieutenant Bates soon found out that we had a lot of trouble on hand. He learned that I was a Western man and knew a number of the principal Indians there. Shortly after we reached Fort Dodge - for that is what they called a lot of dugouts forming the fortress along the Arkansas River, I was detailed to go with Major Weinkoop [Maj. Edward W. Wynkoop] whose mission was to make treaties with the tribes of the Kiowa and Commanche.

“Our detail consisted of 199 soldiers. Our wagon train was full of goods and supplies of food and gifts for the Indians. We went twenty five miles and camped on Bull Creek. The next day we got into canoes and we saw Indians by the thousands. They began to come early, and among the most famous of the chiefs whom I saw there were the Kiowa chief Old _____ [illegible], the Comanche Kicking Bird, and others, all of whom I knew personally and who came up and shook hands with me.

“When Kicking Bird shook my hand, he held it and told the commanding officer he was glad to see me because I had given his children sugar and crackers out of my supplies whenever I passed their tepees on my _____ over the plains.

Right: Kiowa Chief Kicking Bird

“Soon the Indians formed a _____ about our campfire and _____ which they kept passing between them and to our officers _____ told them what the great white father up at Washington wanted _____ and what he had sent them in the wagons _____ portioned to each tribe _____ drawn up _____ were signed by our officers, and then signed by the Indians.” [Note: the gaps in the quoted text above are due to a badly faded original document].



During this peace conference with the Indians, the soldiers learned of an unfortunate white girl that had been taken by the Commanche and subsequently sold to an Arapahoe brave. Conrad was a member of the 3-man detail sent to retrieve the girl from the Arapahoe village. Again, in his words

“... we were informed that old Pobare, a chief of the Arapahoe tribe, who was present, was concerned with the detention by his tribe of a young white girl. Pobare was told that his tribe could not receive its share of the provisions and gifts until it restored this young girl.

“Pobare gutturally grunted he had been informed that she had been bought by one of his braves, who he said had given twenty five ponies to the Comanches for her and that the maiden had since become this brave's wife. Pobare was told peremptorily that this white girl must be surrendered to our force. Pobare said

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH *(CONTINUED)*

his tepees were eight miles away but he would go and see what he could do, and that he would return by the next sun at noon.

“At the appointed time, there appeared at our camp twenty chiefs riding the finest Indian ponies I have ever seen. They informed our interpreter that the maiden had been purchased, but to assuage the pride of her chief and braves, we must come for her and take her because they would not bring her.

“It was at once agreed that Lieutenant Bates with a detail, of which I was a member, was to go over to their camp with an ambulance after her. Bates, the driver of the ambulance, and myself constituted this detail.

“There were thousands of Indians, and almost as many dogs and more ponies. The women were wailing, the dogs howling, and the surly Indians scowling. We were directed to the tepee in which the girl was and we entered it. There we found her a very pretty little woman only about half clad and a small piece of white blanket being thrown over her shoulder. She looked up into my face and began to cry.

“My own eyes were a little watery until the great big brute of a buck Indian who had bought her and who was claiming her as his squaw, slapped her fair face. He at the same time said in his own language that ___ was broken. I thought that a ___ was to exhibit his grief and I was so incensed at his cowardly brutality that I drew one of my pistols and would have shot him ... but immediately realized that doing so, would have sealed the doom of the poor captive as well as that of Lieutenant Bates and the driver and, in all truth, my own.

“I took the little creature’s small bundle from her hand and placing her little hand in mine, gently led her from the tepee and lifted her into the ambulance to sit beside Lieutenant Bates. As we took her from the camp the loud wailing continued. The sad and simple story that [Lt. Bates] told us as we went to our camp was that the Comanche Indians had come upon her home some time before and had slain her parents.”

While thus on duty on the plains, Conrad spent considerable time away from his wife. After the death of the wife of his commanding officer, he recognized an opportunity to finally see her. Conrad was tasked with escorting the grieving man to Topeka, Kansas, the nearest railroad depot – a distance of 200 miles - in an army ambulance. After delivering the officer to the railroad depot at Topeka, and seeing him off, Conrad made his move. He secured permission to remain temporarily at the Topeka depot with the ambulance and summoned his wife to travel to him by train. After she arrived, Conrad planned to comfortably transport her back to his post for a long-overdue visit. But alas, his scheme came to naught ...

“I had not seen my own wife for two years and I got permission to keep the ambulance at Topeka a while so I might get her to come out and visit me. I telegraphed her and she even started to me, but her mother induced her to turn back telling her the Indians would kill or capture her. When I learned she was not coming, it was a very bitter disappointment to me and I am afraid I made some remarks that would not look well in a great religious daily Newspaper like The Express.”

Conrad’s military career path then required him moving even further away – northwestward into the state of Wyoming. He was stationed at several military posts in Wyoming during the next couple years, including *Fort Sanders* near Laramie, *Fort David A. Russell* at Cheyenne, *Fort Laramie* on the North Platte River, and *Fort Sedgwick* near Julesburg.

During his multiple stints in the U.S. Army over the years, Conrad faced danger many times. *“One of the closest calls he had was in 1869 when two comrades asleep with him by a campfire were riddled with bullets by the Indians.”* A

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

few years later, in 1877, Major Sir Rose Lambert Price of England authored *The Two Americas*, an illustrated travel account, which describes “*the death of [Conrad’s] companions and, tells of hunting on the plains of the United States with him as a guide.*”

Conrad was then sent back eastward to Omaha, Nebraska. There, his wife Catherine, and their young son joined him. In February 1870, Catherine gave birth to their second child, a daughter. Baby Alice Maude Wentworth was reportedly born in Omaha. In 1888, at age eighteen, Alice married William Heritage White, and they eventually became the parents of at least five children – Mary, Richard, Carrie, Samuel, and Stephen. She lived a full life and died in San Antonio on November 16, 1947 at age 76.

Right: Alice Maude Wentworth-White



On June 30, 1870, Conrad was a 32-year-old Private living at Omaha Barracks, a U.S. Army supply installation in Platte County. He was one of the very few soldiers stationed at the Post that had his family living with him. His wife, ‘Kate’, was 24 years old and employed as a laundress, and their two young children, Charles and Alice, were 2 and 5 months old respectively.

In the spring of 1872, Conrad was hired as a scout for Company M of the 2nd U.S. Cavalry. This cavalry unit, along with *Company C, 9th Infantry*, was posted at the newly established *Camp Vincent* in central Nebraska. It was located on the North Loup River in Howard County, not far from the current town of Cotesfield - and about 280 miles due west of Omaha. Elk were plentiful in the river valley, and as a scout, he was engaged in supplying the military camp with elk meat.

Conrad was a friend of renowned army scout Kit Carson, and knew William Hickok, better known as ‘Wild Bill Hickok’. He was also “*personally acquainted with others who have been the heroes of song and story. He himself was the hero of the story, ‘Little Buckshot, The White Whirlwind of the Plains,’* written by prolific dime novel author, Ned Buntline, “*who spent some little time with ‘Little Buckshot’ on a trip to the West.*”

Right: Ned Buntline – pen name of Edward Zane Carroll Judson



Conrad had earned his unusual moniker, ‘Little Buckshot’, after capturing and training four young elk calves. This accomplishment was memorialized in a story published in the *Omaha Daily Bee* on January 21, 1873. The article, entitled “*A Novel Team, Two Elegant Elks...Trained to Travel in Harness*” reads in part:

“Their captor and trainer was government scout Conrad ‘Little Buckshot’ Wentworth from the Loup Valley. The Bee said: ‘Last summer Little Buckshot of Company M, Second Cavalry, while out in the vicinity of the Loup river, caught four young elks, two bucks and two does. The animals were brought into the barracks at the time the company returned, and they are now nine or ten months old.’

“Buckshot has lately been training them all to drive in harness, having had a harness, with a peculiar bit, made for them by the saddler at the barracks, and he has also had rigged up for them a sleigh. The two bucks are now pretty well trained, and can be driven like a team of horses. ‘Buckshot’ recently drove them to Florence and back, considerably astonishing the natives of that rural place. It is said that he can drive them so as to make better time than Goldsmith Maid or Lucy [famous trotting horses].

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

"In a few days he intends to bring them into town and take a lively whirl through our principal streets, so that our citizens can have a good look at the knobby team.

"The two does, too, are fast reaching a high state of training, and 'Buckshot' expects soon to drive a four-in-hand. The happy family are kept in the stables at the Barracks, and run around loose a greater part of the time, there being but little fear that they will jump the guard, for they seem to have a great affection for the boys in blue. We understand that they will, in the course of a few months, be sent on to New York as a present to some parties there.

"'Little Buckshot,' who captured them and owns them, has been a member of Company M for about nine or ten months. He was formerly a scout and hunter on the plains and while thus engaged he won for himself quite a reputation, and is well known throughout the Western country."

Right: Conrad 'Little Buckshot' Wentworth wearing his Indian jacket.



"In stature [Conrad] was rather below medium height. As he appeared in those early days dressed in his handsome suit of buckskin, with long curly hair with braided scalp-lock, or riding the prairie mounted on his famous pony, 'Billy,' he presented a picture never to be forgotten."

When William F. Cody, aka. 'Buffalo Bill' toured the east coast with his *Buffalo Bill's Wild West* show, "it was Wentworth's Indian jacket that he wore." This fringed and embroidered show jacket is now displayed at the *Buffalo Bill Center of the West* in Cody, Wyoming.

On March 1, 1873, Captain John Mix and Captain Sam Munson – commanders of *Co. M, 2nd U.S. Cavalry* and *Co. C, 9th U.S. Infantry*, respectively - presented Conrad with a custom rifle. The ornately engraved plate on the stock reads:

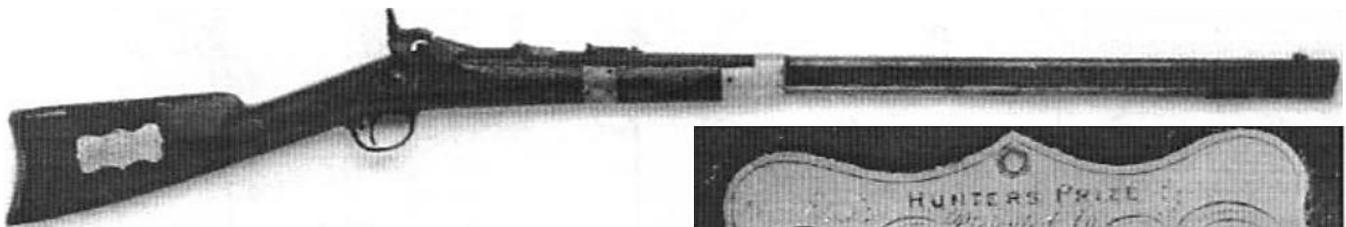
HUNTERS PRIZE

Presented by Capt. John Mix and Capt. Sam Munson
to

CONRAD WENTWORTH

Little Buckshot

March 1, 1873



Blurry images of the 'Hunter's Prize' rifle (above) presented to Conrad Wentworth – and the engraved stock plate (right).



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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

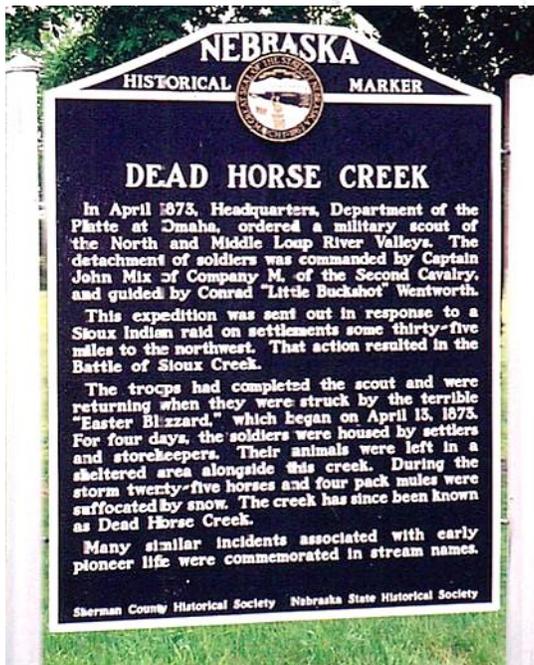
On September 1, 1873, Private Conrad Wentworth was discharged from *Company M, 2nd U.S. Cavalry*. He then went on a 10-year hiatus from the army – but was not totally disengaged. From 1873 to 1883, he was contracted by the U.S. Government as a scout and Indian hunter.

On October 4, 1874, Conrad's third child, Grace Vincent Wentworth, was born in Nebraska. In 1891, she married Louis F. Passailaigue in San Antonio, Texas, and became the mother of at least two children, Guy and Lawrence. Grace passed away at age 48 in Bexar County, Texas and was laid to rest in Mission Burial Park South in San Antonio.

In 1875, Conrad was dispatched about 15 miles southeast of Camp Vincent to the small newly founded town of St. Paul in the North Loup River country. He would remain there until 1882, engaged as *“chief of scouts for the troops sent to guard the settlers’ homes. He was at that time an ideal trailer. He was well at home in all the western Indian tongues and dialects, and his knowledge of the different tribes and their customs was simply wonderful.”*

A Nebraska State Historical Marker (*photo below*) was later erected in Loup City, Nebraska by the Sherman County and Nebraska State Historical Societies. It is engraved with:

DEAD HORSE CREEK



In April 1873, Headquarters, Department of the Platte at Omaha, ordered a military scout of the North and Middle Loup River Valleys. The detachment of soldiers was commanded by Captain John Mix of Company M, of the Second Cavalry, and guided by Conrad “Little Buckshot” Wentworth.

This expedition was sent out in response to a Sioux Indian raid on settlements some thirty-five miles to the northwest. That action resulted in the Battle of Sioux Creek.

The troops had completed the scout and were returning when they were struck by the terrible “Easter Blizzard,” which began on April 13, 1873. For four days, the soldiers were housed by settlers and storekeepers. Their animals were left in a sheltered area alongside this creek. During the storm twenty-five horses and four pack mules were suffocated by snow. The creek has since been known as Dead Horse Creek.

Many similar incidents associated with early pioneer life were commemorated in stream names.

In 1876, Conrad and Catherine welcomed their fourth child into the family when baby Robert S. Wentworth was born in Nebraska. Later in life, Robert reportedly worked as a civilian government employee on Wake Island, but died prematurely on February 24, 1898 at about age 22.

On May 25, 1878, another baby girl was born into the Wentworth household in Nebraska – Kate Mabel Wentworth. She later married Carlton Dee Tullos and became the mother of at least seven children. In April 1924, as a 42-year resident of San Antonio, Texas, Kate passed away at the relatively young age of 45. She was buried in Mission Burial Park South in San Antonio.

On June 3, 1880, when the federal census enumerator visited the Wentworth household in Howard County, Nebraska, he found 42-year-old Conrad supposedly employed as a farmer (*unlikely*) in the Fairdale Precinct. He was

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

'farming' with his 30-year-old expectant wife, Catherine, and their five children, Charles (*age 10*), Alice (*age 9*), Grace (*age 7*), Robert (*age 4*), and Katie (*age 2*). The enumerator noted that Conrad reported that he and his mother were both born in Florida, and his father had been born in New York. Conrad's wife and his oldest child, Charles, were both born in Washington, DC, and the rest of the children were all born in Nebraska.



Catherine gave birth the following month. On July 23, 1880, she and Conrad welcomed their sixth and last child into the family. Baby Harriet Louise Wentworth was born in Omaha. Louise later married James Andrew Winters and they became the parents of three children – James, Ethyl, and William. Louise lived a long life, dying in San Antonio, Texas in August 1962 at age 82.

Left: Harriet Louise Wentworth-Winters

"After ten years of scouting and Indian trailing, the Indians having by that time been practically 'educated' to mind their own business, [Conrad] decided that as there was little to do, he would visit his father at Lavernia, Texas [sic- La Vernia, a small town just east of San Antonio], whom he had not seen for twenty years. His father was then connected with a big railway project in Mexico.

"After some time spent with his father, [Conrad] came to San Antonio where he knew General Christopher Auger in command. He visited the general at the Post and decided to re-enlist, which he did on June 1, 1883." Conrad, now a Private in Company K, 8th U.S. Cavalry, relocated his family to San Antonio. He remained in the U.S. Army in "continuous service at the Army Post" at San Antonio until retiring as a Sergeant in 1917.

The *Special Veterans Schedule* of the June 1890 federal census shows Conrad Wentworth was living at the *Post of San Antonio* in Bexar County, Texas. The enumerator noted that Conrad had served as a musician with *Co. K, 2nd U.S. Cavalry*. No mention was made of him having any disabilities from wartime injuries or sicknesses.

About 1891, Conrad became a member of the *Grand Army of the Republic (GAR)* at San Antonio. He affiliated with local *Maj. General George R. Crook Post No. 49*. He quickly gained the respect and confidence of the other members of the Post, and was elected as Post Jr. Vice-Commander in 1893 – as is noted in the official report of the *Proceedings of the 8th Annual Encampment of the Department of Texas, GAR*.

In 1894, Conrad attained the next higher office at the *GAR Post* – being elected to serve as Post Sr. Vice-Commander. He was also elected as an Alternate Delegate to the 9th Annual Encampment of the *Department of Texas, GAR* in Dublin, Texas.

In 1898, the U.S. declared war on Spain. Conrad's involvement in that conflict consisted of *"sixteen months which he spent at department headquarters in Atlanta during the Spanish-American War."*

Conrad's affiliation with *Crook Post 49, GAR* of San Antonio ended when the Post disbanded in 1898. He then transferred his membership to the much larger *Maj. Gen. Edward O. C. Ord Post No. 3* of San Antonio.

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

On June 15, 1900, Conrad was 60 years old and still employed as a government messenger. He was living on Harrison Street in San Antonio with his 52-year old wife, 'Katherine', and their unmarried daughter, Hallie Wentworth (age 19). Three grandsons were also enumerated in the 1900 Wentworth household – Stanley (age 7), Walter (age 4), and Frank (age 2) Wentworth. The youngsters were the children of their son, Charles Wentworth.

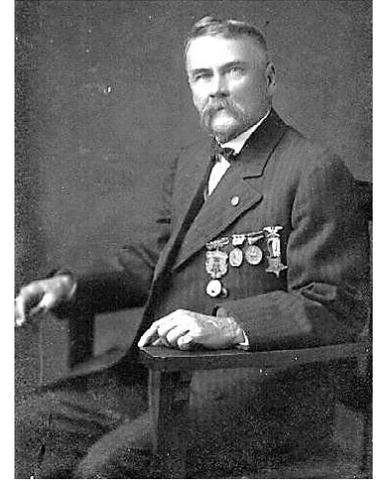


Left: Catherine 'Kate' Cecil-Wentworth

Right: Conrad Wentworth

The elder Wentworths were apparently caring for the boys since Charles' wife, Anna, had recently passed away.

The 1900 federal census also indicates Conrad and 'Katherine' had been married 37 years, five of their six children were still living, and they owned their home free and clear.



Conrad Wentworth is listed on a 1905 U.S. War Department *Register of Civil, Military, and Naval Service* record. His entry indicates he was employed as a 'messenger' in San Antonio in the *Department of Texas*, he was born in Florida, he had been appointed to his position in Bexar County, Texas, and his annual compensation was \$720.

In September 1906, Conrad filled out an application (#1352184) for an Invalid Pension based on his long military service. He was described as standing 5 feet, 6 inches tall, weighed 145 lbs., and had blue eyes and brown hair. Distinctive identifying marks included the saber cut scars on his left arm and forehead.

Conrad Wentworth is listed on a 1910 GAR Department-wide membership roster as living at *Fort Sam Houston* at San Antonio.

On April 18, 1910, Conrad and Catherine Wentworth were living at 1121 Van Ness Street in San Antonio. He was now 70 years old and still working for wages as a U.S. Government messenger. Catherine was 60 years old. Also enumerated in the household were: their unmarried daughter, Hallie D. Wentworth (age 29), who was employed as a Post Office clerk, and 17-year-old grandson, Stanley Wentworth, who was employed as an apprentice machinist. The 1910 census enumerator also noted that Conrad and Catherine had been married 46 years, five of their six children were still living, the Wentworth's owned their house free and clear, and Conrad was a Union Army survivor.

Conrad's married daughter, Alice M. White (age 39) was living nearby with her family at 119 Stafford Street in San Antonio. She was living with her 47-year-old husband, William H. White, a printer, and their 4 teenage Texas-born children – Dick, Carrie, Samuel, and Stephen. Alice and William had been married 21 years and all five of their children were still living.

The 1916 membership roster of *Edward O. C. Ord Post No. 3, GAR* of San Antonio, indicates 'C.' Wentworth was still living at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. At that time, Conrad "*probably was one of the oldest men in the army. Among his papers are numerous discharges from the army, but in almost every instance across the discharge, written in red ink, are the words, 'Re-enlisted today.'* Also in the space arranged for the record of service appears the one word "excellent."

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TRIBUTE TO A G.A.R. VETERAN – CONRAD WENTWORTH (CONTINUED)

Conrad kept active and enjoyed good health well into his old age. Even after passing his 77th birthday, he refused to retire from his government work. Every morning, he reported for duty as a messenger at the Adjutant-General's office of the Southern Department. In June 1917, he finally retired for good.

But even as a private citizen, Conrad did not become sedentary. In the Spring of 1918, he and his wife traveled roughly 150 miles to the coastal city of Corpus Christi, Texas for an extended visit. Other family members joined the elderly couple at that vacation destination.

"Mrs. Grace Passailaigne and little daughter, Hope, have gone to Corpus Christi, to visit Mrs. Passailaigne's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Wentworth."... San Antonio Light, June 2, 1918, pg. 12.

At 6:00 a.m. on June 26, 1918, while preparing for an early morning fishing trip, Conrad suddenly died of heart failure. He was 78 years old. His body was immediately returned to his family in San Antonio and buried the following day in San Antonio National Cemetery. His funeral included a military escort and was well attended by family, friends, Masons, and members of the *Grand Army of the Republic*.

The informant for Conrad's death certificate was his widow, 'Mrs. Conrad Wentworth of San Antonio'. She declared Conrad had been born in Florida and he was a retired government scout. She also reported that his parents were Robert S. Wentworth and Miss Mary Warren – but she did not know where they were born. At the time of his death, Conrad reportedly had 23 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Seven months later, on January 17, 1919, Catherine filed for a Widow's military pension based on her husband's long military service. She was awarded with pension certificate #874.488 by which *"she received \$30 per month pension from 1 May 1920 to 4 July 1924"*. Catherine continued to live in San Antonio at 318 E. Cincinnati Street until her death on July 18, 1924 at age 76. She was laid to rest beside her husband, Conrad, in San Antonio National Cemetery.

Right: Gravestone of Conrad Wentworth and his wife, Catherine

The following excerpt from *The Trail of the Loup*, authored by Harold Foght in 1906, makes a fitting epitaph for Conrad ...

"Among the many scouts, trappers, hunters, and all around plainsmen who have figured in the early history of the North Loup Valley, the most picturesque personality was Conrad Wentworth, known at that time from the Missouri river to the Rockies as 'Little Buckshot', government scout, and Indian trailer and fighter. His splendid courage and daring and countless deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice have long been celebrated in romance and song. To this great scout's tireless energy and constant watchfulness the early settlers on the Loup no doubt often owed their safety from attack by the savage Sioux. Wentworth came from a fine old southern family, but a natural love of adventure early led him to seek life in the West.

During his long life, Conrad Wentworth acted as a valuable scout for several prominent generals, experienced some of the most perilous work and circumstances, and steadfastly provided faithful and reliable service to the government before, during, and long after the Civil War. He had served as a bugler for the 2nd U.S. Cavalry, eventually attained the rank of Sergeant, and suffered saber wounds. Never seeking glory nor fame, he reportedly was *"a very quiet, unassuming man in San Antonio with an eventful career, which no one would suspect by meeting or even conversing with him"*.... a true American hero, indeed!

... Written by Michael L. Lance, Dept. Historian – with research by Terry T. Sutton, Department GRO



CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 14)

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 14 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.

- **Horatio L. Birdsall – Sgt.** – Horatio Latin Birdsall was born July 16, 1833 in Monroe Co., New York. In 1853, at age 20, he married Mahala Elizabeth Gout. When the Civil War broke out in April 1861, he was living in Iowa. He enlisted in Co. B of the 3rd Iowa Cavalry at Keokuk.

The 3rd Iowa Cavalry was part of Union Gen. James H. Wilson's forces when he moved on Columbus, Georgia. On April 16, 1865, during the *Battle of Columbus*, Birdsall and his regiment attacked and captured a series of Confederate entrenchments that protected a bridge over the Chattahoochee River – allowing the Regiment to capture the bridge. During that action, Birdsall captured the Confederate flag-bearer and his flag.

Birdsall suffered the loss of a part of his right thumb and was wounded in the head during the war. After the war, he migrated to Lawrence, Kansas, and died November 29, 1891 at age 58. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia.

For the capture of the flag and flagbearer during the *Battle of Columbus*, Birdsall was awarded the *Medal of Honor*. 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 Sergeant Horatio L. Birdsall, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 16 April 1865, while serving with Company B, 3d Iowa Cavalry, in action at Columbus, Georgia, for capture of flag and bearer.



- **Francis A. Bishop – Pvt.** – Francis Ashbury Bishop was born Dec. 3, 1840 Bradford Co., PA. On Sep. 15, 1861, he enlisted in the Union Army, serving with the 57th Pennsylvania Infantry. Bishop received a *Purple Heart* after being wounded at Fredericksburg. He eventually was promoted to Corporal. During action at Spotsylvania, Virginia on May 12, 1864, Bishop "dashed out of the Union lines to snatch a Union flag from the hands of a Confederate soldier who had captured it." He was awarded a *Medal of Honor* for that action. "He always wore those medals." Bishop served throughout the war, mustering out in June 1865.

Bishop became an early member of the G.A.R., joining in Athens, Pennsylvania "when there were only 200 members of the Order in the country." He later settled in Retsil, Washington, dying there on October 11, 1937 at the *Washington Veterans Home* at age 96. Bishop was one of the last surviving Civil War *Medal of Honor* recipients when he died. He was laid to rest in Blanchard, Michigan. 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 Francis A. Bishop, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 12 May 1864, while serving with Company C, 57th Pennsylvania Infantry, in action at Spotsylvania, Virginia, for capture of flag.

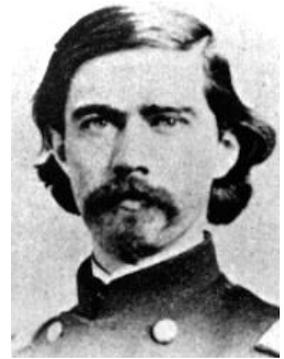


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CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 14 CONTINUED)

- **John Charles Black – Lt. Col.** – John Charles Black was born in Lexington, Mississippi, on January 27, 1839. In 1847, when John was about 8 years old, his father, a Presbyterian minister, relocated the family from Mississippi to Danville, Illinois. John later attended Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, to become a lawyer.

Just two days after the Civil War began, John and his brother, William Black, enlisted with the Union Army, serving as Privates in the 11th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. John was promoted to Sergeant Major a mere 9 days later, on April 25, 1861. After completing their 3-month term of service, the Black brothers mustered out of the Volunteers – but then helped organize Co. K, 37th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. On September 15, 1861, John became Major of the regiment. On March 7, 1862, he was wounded in the right arm at the *Battle of Pea Ridge*, Arkansas.



John Charles Black

On July 12, 1862, John was promoted to Lt. Colonel, in full command of the 37th Illinois Infantry. On December 7, 1862, he led his regiment against a fortified Confederate position during the *Battle of Prairie Grove*, Arkansas. His command suffered heavy casualties and was eventually forced to retreat. John himself was seriously wounded. In December 1862, John was promoted to full Colonel of the 37th Illinois. He would go on to command various brigades in the *Department of the Gulf* between 1863 and 1865. He resigned his commission on August 15, 1865.

On January 13, 1866, President Andrew Johnson nominated John Black for appointment to Brevet Brig. General of Volunteers to rank from April 9, 1865, because of his gallantry during the assault on Fort Blakeley, Alabama on that date. The U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment on March 12, 1866.

John was a member of the Illinois Commandery of the *Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States*. He also practiced law and became the U.S. District Attorney at Chicago. He also served as *U.S. Commissioner of Pensions* from 1885-1889. In 1888, he was a Democratic nominee for Vice President of the United States.

In mid-November 1893, John declared himself as a candidate for the Democratic Party's nomination in the 1893 Chicago mayoral special election. As a Democrat, he was elected to the 53rd U.S. Congress as the U.S. Representative at-large for Illinois, serving 1893-1895. Then from 1895-1899, he was the U.S. District Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois.

In 1896, during a review of numerous actions during the war, John Black was awarded the *Medal of Honor* for his actions at the *Battle of Prairie Grove*. His brother, William Black, also received the medal. They became the first of only five pairs of brothers to both receive the *Medal of Honor* (as of 2005). 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 Lieutenant Colonel John Charles Black, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 7 December 1862, while serving with 37th Illinois Infantry, in action at Prairie Grove, Arkansas. Lieutenant Colonel Black gallantly charged the position of the enemy at the head of his regiment, after two other regiments had been repulsed and driven down the hill, and captured a battery; was severely wounded.

In 1898, John Charles Black (oval photo above) was elected as Commander of the *Department of Illinois, G.A.R.*, and then as National Commander-in-Chief for the 1903-1904 term. He then served as president of the *United States Civil Service Commission* from January 17, 1904, until resigning on June 10, 1913. He died in Chicago on August 17, 1915 at age 76, and was buried in Spring Hill Cemetery and Mausoleum in Danville, Illinois.

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CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS - U.S. ARMY (PART 14 CONTINUED)

- **William P. Black – Capt.** – William Perkins Black was born in November 1842 in Woodford County, Kentucky. However, he grew up in Danville, a town in central Illinois about 5 miles from the Indiana border. He was studying for the ministry when the Civil War broke out, and enlisted in the 11th *Indiana Infantry Zouaves* under Lew Wallace.

Right: Ambrotype image of William P. Black in 1862

Black quickly advanced in rank serving as Captain with the 37th *Illinois Infantry*. He saw action in several major battles and, in 1862, became a recipient of the *Medal of Honor* for his actions at the *Battle of Pea Ridge*, Arkansas. After the war, Black turned to practicing law. In 1867, he moved to Chicago and built a successful corporate law practice. He was known as ‘Captain Black’.

In 1886, the infamous Haymarket trial began. The *Haymarket Affair* was a confrontation between police and demonstrators at a labor rally in Chicago's Haymarket Square. The rally was organized to protest police brutality against striking workers. A bomb exploded during the confrontation, killing several police officers and injuring others. The bombing led to a widespread crackdown on anarchists and labor activists. The resulting trial was highly publicized and “*eight anarchists were convicted of conspiracy and murder in connection with the Haymarket Affair. The trial was widely criticized as unjust and resulted in the execution of four of the defendants.*”

Right: Captain Black as a young lawyer - and in his later years.

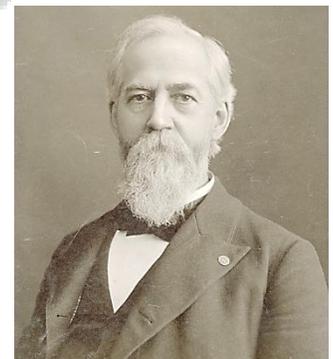
Before the trial began, Captain Black had been approached by socialist activist George Schilling and asked to represent the anarchists. Black did not care to represent the group and tried, without success, to find another lawyer with actual criminal experience to lead the defense. He decided to take the case after all “*on principle, against his wife's accurate prediction that it would severely harm his career. Fellow attorney Sigmund Zeisler stated that Black's accepting the case was ‘nothing short of an act of heroism.’*”

During the course of the trial, Black, while never approving of his clients' politics, became convinced of the purity of their character and intentions, and he felt the injustice he witnessed in the courtroom deeply and personally. The whole experience reportedly “*caused Black's hair to turn white*”. A criminal lawyer, William A. Foster, was finally retained to bolster the defense team. Foster and Captain Black led the interrogation of witnesses.

Captain Black was the brother of John Charles Black, who served as the 37th Commander of the *Grand Army of the Republic* in 1903-1904 – and was also a *Medal of Honor* recipient. The Black brothers are one of only 5 pairs of brothers to have received the *Medal of Honor*. In 1916, Capt. Black died at his home in Chicago at age 73, and was buried in Graceland Cemetery in that city. His official citation states:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Captain William Perkins Black, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 7 March 1862, while serving with Company K, 37th Illinois Infantry, in action at Pea Ridge, Arkansas. Captain Black single-handedly confronted the enemy, firing a rifle at them and thus checking their advance within 100 yards of the lines.

... series to be continued next issue with part 15



2025 - 2026 DEPARTMENT OFFICERS AND MEDIA LINKS

Elected Officers

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

Staff Officers

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

Department Website

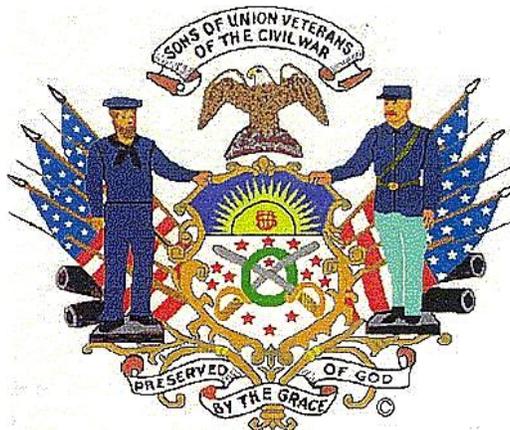
Department Facebook Page

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



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

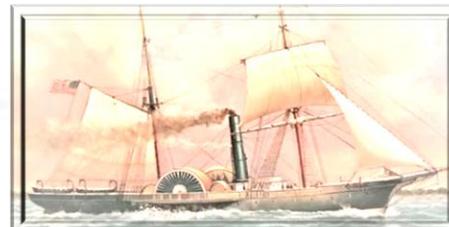


Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN Camp 2 - Houston, Texas

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

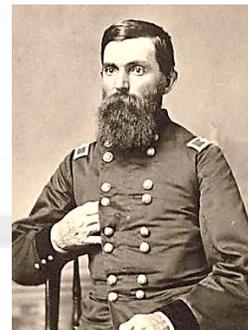


Brig. Gen. Joseph Bailey Camp 5 - Shreveport, Louisiana

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

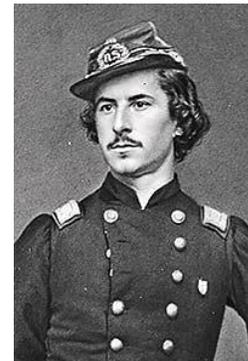


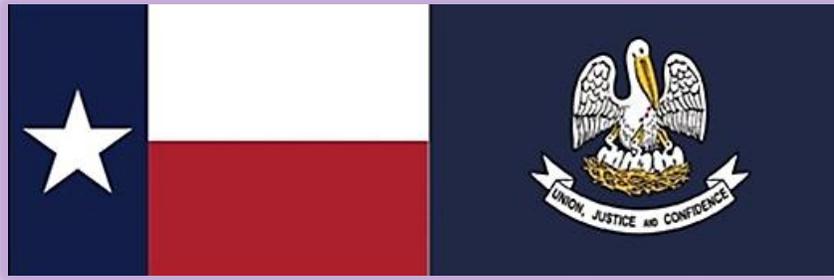
Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth Camp 18 - Dallas, Texas

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](#)
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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