



The Harriet Lane

The Official Newsletter of

Lt. Commander Edward Lea, USN, Camp No. 2 – Houston, Texas

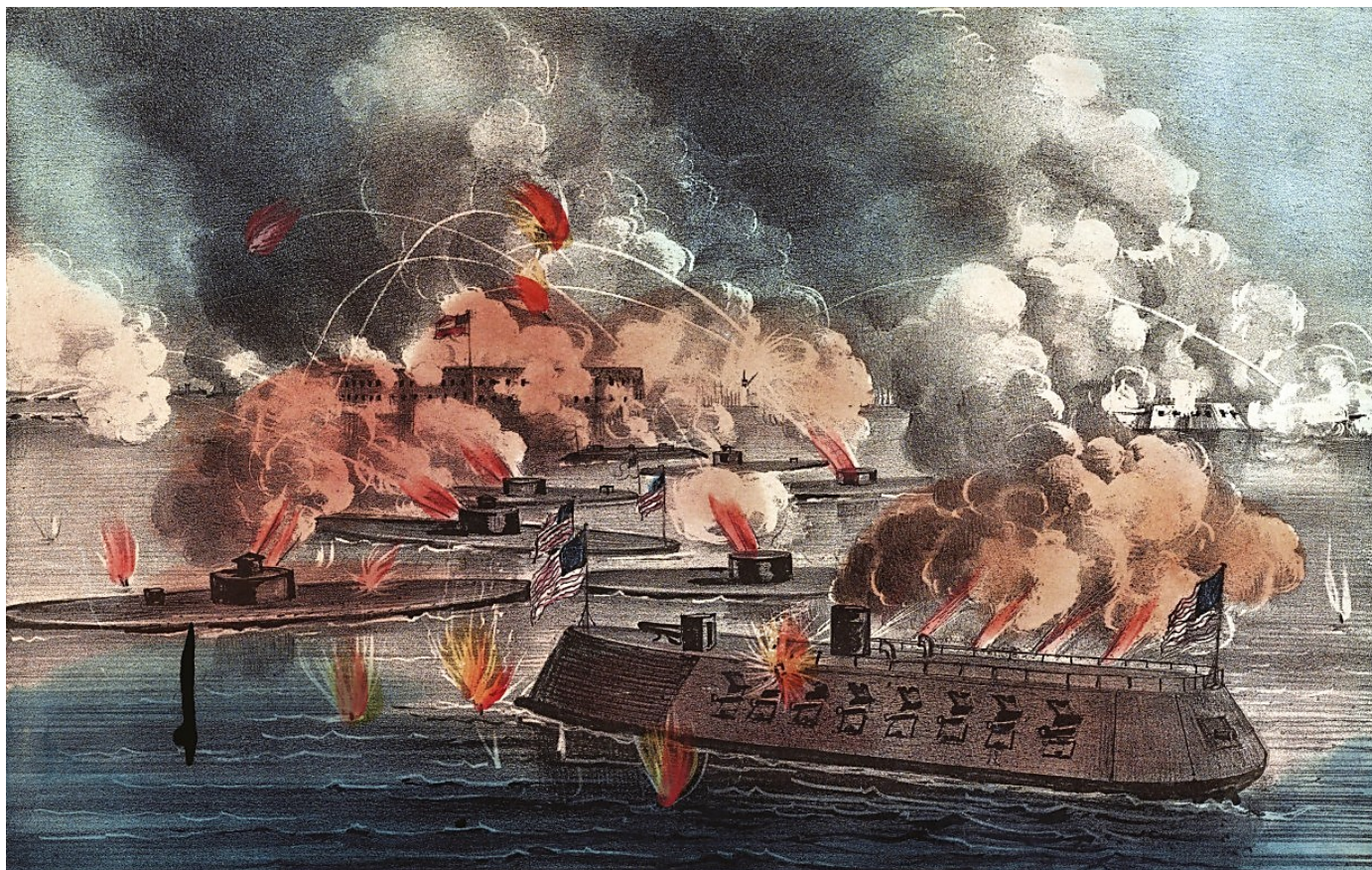
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR



Sep 2026

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Cover Image – “**Bombardment of Fort Sumter**” – By Union ironclads on April 7, 1863. - *artwork by unknown contemporary artist, image: WikiCommons, The Past.com*

The Harriet Lane is the official newsletter of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN Camp No. 2

Sons of Union Veterans Of the Civil War, Houston, Texas

Published quarterly in March, June, September, and December.

Send questions or comments to the Editor at: mlance387@gmail.com

To view previous issues, visit: <https://www.camplea.org/camp-newsletter/>

Welcome to the Ranks

Richard J. Kohlbrand – Nov 15, 2025



Since our move from California in 2020, my wife Paulette and I have resided in Huntsville, Texas. I practiced law in California for almost 50 years, and hold membership in both the Texas and California Bar. I retired from full-time practice in 2018. We have 5 children scattered from California to Texas to Cambridge, England. We are blessed that they are all terrific people.

I have had a passion for Civil War history for many years and consider myself an amateur historian. I especially enjoy the biographies of the soldiers and leaders. My Civil War ancestor was my third great-grandfather on my mother's side, Private Mathew Siegel/Seagle.

My lineage, as well as Private Siegel's lineage, are almost all from Cincinnati, Ohio. He was born in Germany in 1846 and moved to Cincinnati with his parents in 1848.

In 1864 he enlisted with Company K of the 47th Ohio Infantry Regiment. The 47th was part of the 2nd Brigade and the 2nd Division in the 15th Corps (*under John Logan*) in Sherman's army. Private Siegel was in the *Battle of Atlanta* and in particular, the *Battle of Peach Tree Creek*. In August 1865, he mustered out of the army as a Private.

I also learned that I had a 3rd great-uncle named Charles Kohlbrand/Kohlbrandt who served in the 47th Ohio as well. I am excited to be part of an organization that values the heritage, the service, and the memory of those brave soldiers.....[*John Kohlbrand*](#)

Brother John H. Scott – June 27, 2026

John H. Scott is a 6th generation native of Shelby County Tennessee. Both sides of his family have origins in the British Isles, with the paternal line immigrating in the early 19th century, and the maternal line in the early 18th century. Both lines came in through North Carolina and Virginia, and migrated through eastern Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Alabama to end up joining in Memphis, Tennessee. The first generation of his father's direct line apparently went straight from Ireland to Memphis, and acquired a farm from the original land grant for the county.

The Civil War generation of his family includes three Confederate soldiers (*16th Alabama Infantry, 51st Tennessee Infantry, and 18th Tennessee cavalry*) and one Union soldier (*3rd Tennessee Cavalry, U.S.*). The Union ancestor bore the name of John C. Carter after one of his paternal great-great grandfathers. He was born in eastern Tennessee about 1831, Carter mustered into the Tennessee Unionist cavalry in March 1864, just in time to be captured in the Atlanta campaign and spend the remaining months of the war surviving Andersonville Prison. He then set up as a carpenter in McMinnville, Tennessee and (*per a family a story*) died a murder victim about 1880.

I was educated in Memphis' Catholic parochial schools and Christian Brothers High School (*LaSallian*), where I began to learn French. I earned a BS in Mechanical Engineering at Rice University, earned an MS in Nuclear Engineering and an MBA (*along with my wife of 38 years!*) at UCLA, and began a career in aerospace in southern California. I went on to serve 38 years with NASA at the Johnson Space Center, retiring last January. My wife and I live in the Rice/Medical Center area of Houston and have four children: a daughter working in Austin and a set of triplets, now all in college.

My interest in the Civil War began with hearing family stories as a child. A lifelong amateur scholar of Civil War history, I joined a Houston reenacting group in 2013 (*1st Texas/13th Maine*). My favorite part of the reenactments and living history events is talking to school children. As a member of *Camp Lea*, I hope to enjoy more discussions about this critical part of America's history. I look forward to getting to know you all and working with you over the coming years.

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Welcome to the Ranks *(continued)*

Brother Robert Smith – August 22, 2026

Hello Brothers,

My name is Rob Smith. I am the SVP of Finance for Tauber Oil Company. I was born in Miami, but raised in Cincinnati. My wife (*Lisa*) and I met in College USF (*University of South Florida*). We have moved multiple times over the years having lived in Tampa, Atlanta, Tulsa, Houston, Dallas, and now Houston again. We have one daughter (*Nicole*) who is heading back to Indiana U next month for her senior year.

Meanwhile, my wife and I are starting to think about our retirement plans. I have been interested in genealogy over the years. My mom's side of the family had been fairly well researched, so that part was easy from the period in the early 1800's when they immigrated from Europe to Indiana.

My Dad's side is much more complicated. I located at least one relative having lived in New Amsterdam in the 1600s. In 2021, I was inducted into the *Sons of the American Revolution* from my relative Elijah Smith (7 generations ago) who fought under General Washington and General Wayne. As for the Civil War, my mom's side was in the U.S. by then. In researching her side, I was able to confirm that my great-great-grandfather, Private Frederick Beckman, served in the Indiana Infantry during the Civil War. I want to learn more about what he did during the war that fundamentally changed so much in our country and the world.

I look forward to getting to know you all and working with you over the coming years.... *Rob Smith*.



Welcome to the Other Ranks

SAR Registrar General

Dear Compatriot Terry, Congratulations! Your application to the National Society Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) has been accepted and you are now a full member of the SAR

"Thank you, all my Sons of the American Revolution Compatriots. I am a full member! Todd Wyldbar, I could not have done this without your help! We did it! Bill Myers, thank you for your encouragement! Thank You, Simon Whipple, my Revolutionary War Ancestor. I am a very happy man!" ...*Terry T. Sutton*

Congratulations, Brother Sutton! Being accepted as a compatriot of the Sons of the American Revolution is a special way of honoring both family and country. It means you have traced your family tree back to a patriot who supported the American cause during the Revolutionary War. That connection makes history a little more personal - you are not simply reading about the men and women who helped create the United States; you can call one of them your ancestor.

Membership in the SAR provides an opportunity for you to learn more about those who came before us and to share their stories with family and friends. It also gives you the opportunity to meet others who share an interest in genealogy, American history, patriotism, and good citizenship.

Perhaps the most rewarding part for you is knowing that your ancestor played a part, however large or small, in the struggle that helped establish our nation. Becoming a SAR compatriot is therefore more than a genealogical accomplishment. It is a proud connection to the past, a celebration of family heritage, and an invitation to help keep the stories of America's patriots alive. Huzzah!.... *Editor*.



July 4th Parade

Saturday, July 4, 2026 – The Woodlands, Texas

Lea Camp #2 mustered a Color Guard to participate in the 50th Annual South County 4th of July Parade in The Woodlands. The theme for the event was 'Celebrating America250'. The event was very well attended as spectators thickly lined the entire route. Camp Commander Daniel Pourreau led the 7-man Color Guard.



Color Guard Assembles

L-R: Michael Lance, Robert Riley, Ryan Hall (guest), Jason Hoffman, Arthur Porras (guest) and Herbert Powers – with Daniel Pourreau in front.

The parade route seemed exceptionally long on this very hot day, although the size and enthusiasm of the crowds helped keep the marchers moving along smartly. The Color Guard was closely followed by other members of the Camp, including: Stephen Schulze, Harrold Henck, and Henry Henck – and also Lisa Riley of *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1*. One fly-in participant was Captain Kiki. The Captain, sporting an unusual orange vest arrived to inspect uniforms and weapons. Fortunately, he cut us a little slack since, after all, it was a holiday!



**Left: Stephen Schulze
being inspected**



**Right: Daniel Pourreau
being inspected**

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July 4th Parade (continued)



Robert and Lisa Riley



**Michael Lance endures a weapons inspection
as Herbert Powers waits his turn.**



The Color Guard salutes as it passes the parade reviewing stand.

*... by Michael L. Lance, PDC – Lea Camp #2, Houston
... additional photo on page 24*

145th Annual National Encampment

Thursday-Sunday - July 30- August 2, 2026 – Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea Camp #2 was well represented at the 145th Annual National Encampment of the *Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*. Of the twelve-man delegation from the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*, six were members of the *Lea Camp*. These included: Robert Riley, John Vander Meulen, Jason Kyle, Daniel Pourreau, Stephen Schulze, and Michael Lance. They gathered at the Aspire/Eisenhower Hotel complex in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, joining the other members of the Texas-Louisiana delegation to represent our Department.

The other members of the Texas-Louisiana delegation were: Clifford 'Butch' Durham, Brian Glass, Beau Moore, and Todd Wilber from *Byrne Camp #1* of Fort Worth; and John Schneider, Sr. and William Swafford from *Ellsworth Camp #18* of Dallas. In addition, three members of *Sarah Emma Seelye Auxiliary #1*, Jana Marsh, Jill Schneider, and Lisa Riley, were present to attend the concurrent National Encampment of the *Auxiliary* at the hotel complex.

The proceedings of the business sessions were once again fully documented by both video and audio recordings. For the third consecutive year, the man behind the recording console was National Assistant Secretary for Recordings, John Vander Meulen of *Lea Camp #2*. He was expertly assisted by roving recorders Todd Wilber of *Byrne Camp #1* and Robert Riley of *Lea Camp #2*. Brother Vander Meulen also provided several video presentations on two large projection screens during the sessions, as well as musical interludes. As Department Commander, he also acted as spokesman for our delegation.



Delegation from the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*

Front row L-R: William L. Swafford, Robert G. Riley, John C. Vander Meulen, Brian R. Glass, Daniel B. Pourreau, Stephen D. Schulze, Michael L. Lance, and Todd Wilber.

Back row L-R: John E. Schneider, Sr., Beau B. Moore, Clifford F. 'Butch' Durham, and Jason M. Kyle.

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145TH ANNUAL NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT OF THE SUVCW (CONTINUED)

Butch Durham of *Byrne Camp #1* managed the vendor table that was rented by the Department for the occasion. Various items were offered for sale on the table, including Clara Barton brooches, the fundraising item of the *Lea Camp*. Sales of the brooches and other items provided a tidy sum for the treasuries of the Camp and Department.

The encampment host committee provided excellent entertainment for the Friday evening Campfire festivities. A talented 4-piece ensemble provided musical accompaniment for an acting troupe that presented a dramatic portrayal of the tragic assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. The Texas-Louisiana delegation then joined several other Departments in offering congratulations and gifts to Commander-in-Chief Kevin Tucker and Auxiliary National President Danielle Michaels in appreciation of their outstanding leadership during the 2025-2026 term.



Left: Recording aides Robert Riley and Todd Wilber beside one of the several video recording cameras.

During the award presentations on Saturday, Robert Riley of *Camp #2* was presented with a Memorial University certificate and pin for successfully completing the M.U. online training program. In addition, Daniel Pourreau of *Lea Camp #2* received a National Aide Award for recruiting five or more new members during the year. And Michael Lance stepped forward to accept the Meritorious Service Award on behalf of Frank Kebelman of *Ord Camp #3*, who was unable to attend. Congratulations and a tip of the kepi to these deserving Brothers!

The formal banquet was another highlight of the encampment. In addition to a solemn 'Missing Man Ceremony', the program included a formal 'Doctor Mary Edwards Walker Award' presentation, and SCV Commander-in-Chief, Anthony Griffin, offered a cordial greeting. Recent past Commander-in-Chief Kevin Tucker held everyone's attention with an inspiring farewell address.

The *Department of Texas and Louisiana* will continue to be represented in the ranks of the National officers. Two members of *Lea Camp #2* were re-appointed to National positions for the 2026-2027 term. John Vander Meulen will again serve as Assistant National Secretary for Recordings and as a member of a National Committee. Michael Lance will repeat as Assistant National Secretary for Transcriptions.

Congratulations are extended to the dedicated members of *Lea Camp #2* and the other members of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana* who represented our Department at the National Encampment in Gettysburg this year. Their attendance demonstrated the importance of active participation, fellowship, and helped ensure that our Department has a strong voice within the National Order. We also extend heartfelt congratulations to Brother Daniel W. Murray of the *Department of New Hampshire* on his election as our new Commander-in-Chief. Finally, we offer our sincere appreciation to our recent Past Commander-in-Chief - and friend of the *Department of Texas and Louisiana*, Kevin Tucker, for his outstanding leadership and job exceptionally well done.



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

DISCHARGE RETURNS TO FAMILY

My story: Michael L. Lance – Several years ago, while researching and expanding my Lance family tree, I discovered that my Civil War ancestor, gr-gr-grandfather Finas Euen Lance, had a nephew who also served as a Union soldier from Indiana.

Early in the war, John Wesley Lance was 18 years old when he enlisted as a Private with *Co. B, 58th Indiana Volunteer Infantry*. During the *Battle of Chickamauga* in southern Tennessee, he was severely wounded in the left arm and side. After recuperating somewhat from his wound, he re-enlisted as a veteran and served until the end of the war. Then, on July 25, 1865, with the war over, John was promoted to Corporal and honorably discharged with his company

In January 2023, I added a photograph of John sitting with his younger brother to his [Find A Grave memorial](#).

Then in July 2026, I received a message through Find A Grave from Thomas Damkjaer. He wrote that he had purchased a lot of three

Civil War discharge certificates online. He mentioned that one of them had been issued to John W. Lance, and asked if I would be interested in seeing it. Of course, I said “Yes”, so he sent me an image via email. I confirmed that it was, in fact, my 1st cousin (*thrice removed*) John Wesley Lance. Since I was a family member of the veteran, Thomas graciously offered to return the old document to me. But soon, another pleasant surprise occurred. I will let Thomas introduce himself and explain what happened next.

His story: Thomas Damkjaer – I am 58 years old (*born in 1968*), Danish, and live in the southern part of Denmark close to the German border. I married Mette in 1987 and we have 4 children. I have been with the Danish armed forces since 1987 (*Royal Danish Air Force - RDAF since 1990*) and expect to retire in 6-8 years.

For approximately the last nine years, my interest has been metal detecting. I use my spare time (*wife permitting*), searching for relics and returning them to the Danish National Museum, thereby adding to the history of Denmark. My oldest finds go back to the Bronze age, 2000/1750–500 BC (*fragment of a Sword or Knife*), but my favorite finds are Viking age, 800–1050 CE, due to their beautiful ornaments.

Right: **Thomas Damkjaer**



As a boy, I played with toy soldiers. I assembled kits of military equipment and painted them. I found it fascinating. It was for my final essay in High School (1987) that I chose to write about the American Civil War. That part of history caught my interest.

Many years passed. Movies like *Glory*, *Gettysburg*, and *Gods and Generals* kept my interest alive. They fascinated me and kept alive my dream of someday visiting some of the historic Civil War sites.

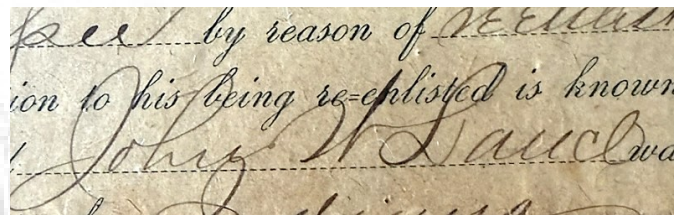
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DISCHARGE PAPERS RETURNED (CONTINUED)

Fast forward in time to 2026. I am on a four-month deployment to Shaw AFB (*South Carolina*) in support of ongoing missions - working during the day and bored when off duty. What to do? eBay and Google became my new best friends. "When in Rome" why not spend some time buying things that I find interesting as well as searching for and visiting close-by Civil War sites and World War II monuments, etc. Apparently, my brain had been out of order for quite some time, since it took me about two weeks to realize that I live in Sumter, approximately two hours from Fort Sumter in Charleston where it all started! It had been on my bucket list. Not only that, but also at the same location is CV-10 USS Yorktown, CSS H.L. Hunley, etc. Bored I shall be no longer!

While scrolling on eBay through Civil War memorabilia, I came across some Civil War Discharge papers (*three in the lot*) which I thought could be interesting. I wanted to see if I could find out some interesting facts about the persons, engagements, etc. Upon receipt, I initially was fascinated by the fact that I now had in my hands pieces of American history. But after a few hours, I start looking at the names and wanted to find out more about the person, his service records, and whether any relatives might be found. I did not, however, have high hopes because the writing was old and not all that clear to me.

Picking at random, I chose John W. something (*I couldn't read the surname*). I took a picture of the name with my phone and used the built-in photo tools to adjust the clarity of the picture. I just couldn't get the last name into my brain. I uploaded the name into Chatbot, which resulted in some suggestions, with Lance being one of them. As I worked my way through John W. with the suggested surnames, they didn't add up, as the names did not match with regiment and dates. That is until John Wesley Lance was searched and a whole new world came to life - regiment, company, dates everything online matched with the Discharge paper - as well as quite a bit of data about battles, wounds and even pictures. I thought this would be a great story to bring back to Denmark to place in my "Man Cave" for me to look at and others to ask about.

A close-up photograph of a handwritten name on a piece of aged, yellowed paper. The handwriting is in cursive and appears to be "John W. Lance". The paper has some creases and discoloration.

Handwritten name on Discharge

Wanting to know if any relatives were to be found, I searched the website "Find A Grave", where a simple search provided more info and pictures. Wonderful! One thing I noticed was the name Michael Lance below a picture of John and his brother. I had, via my friend "Google", earlier found a three-page writing about John done by Michael Lance, but at that time I had nowhere to find contact info for him. I was, however, able to send a message via "Find A Grave" to Michael to verify the relationship, as well as ask if he was interested in having the Discharge paper in his belongings - because for me, that seemed important.

Michael did, indeed, have great interest in receiving the piece of wood to which the Discharge paper was attached. Game over.....well not quite! I had the package ready to be sent off when I, by accident (*or luck*), glanced at the last Discharge paper, which I really hadn't read yet. It was also attached to a piece of wood. When I looked at it, it was John W. Lance....again? Wait, What? As I read it, it all came together; the first Discharge paper was from John's first enlistment (*three years*) and the second Discharge paper was from John's reenlistment - same regiment, same company, same everything, except he was now a Corporal, had survived for 4 years in countless battles, severely wounded in his arm during his first enlistment period, but still signed up for a second period. Respect!

Anyway, a package containing the original Discharge papers concerning John Wesley Lance, Company B, 58th Volunteer Indiana Infantry Regiment, are now enroute to Texas where a part of John's history will be taken well care of by Michael Lance. I am now working on my next project. I feel good!

... submitted by Michael L. Lance, PDC – Lea Camp #2 and Thomas Damkjaer, RDAF
... see bio sketch of John W. Lance in the March 2018 issue of the *Harriet Lane*, v. 24, no. 1, p. 7.



Patriotic Instructor Minute

A Promise for the Future – Our nation's official birth began with the adoption of the *Declaration of Independence* on July 4, 1776. But declaring for independence and achieving it were two different things. By the time the *Declaration* was adopted, America, particularly the colony of Massachusetts, had already been at war with Britain for over a year.

On April 19, 1775, General Thomas Gage, the overall British military commander in North America, dispatched 700 regulars under the command of Lt. Colonel Francis Smith and Major John Pitcairn from Boston to Concord because he had received information the Colonists were storing a large cache of weapons and gun powder there. Gage tasked Smith with seizing and destroying all of it.

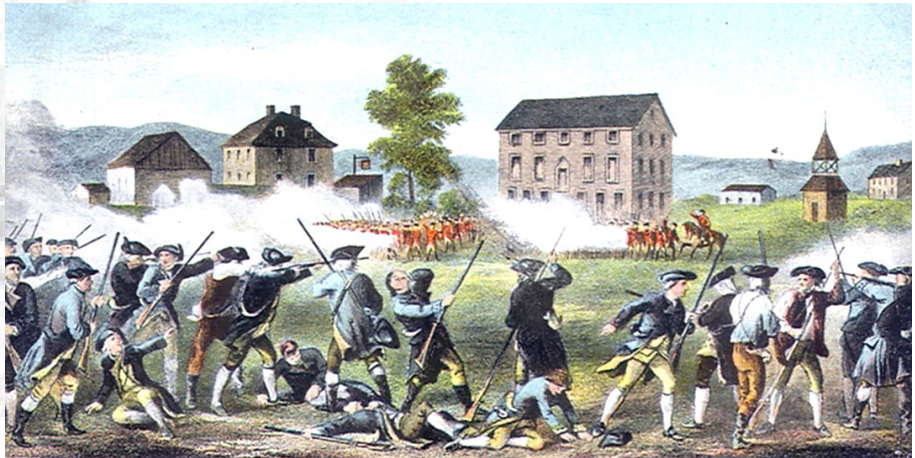
They left under the cover of darkness to avoid being seen. However, the patriot group, *The Sons of Liberty*, having eyes everywhere, detected them. As a result, Dr. Joseph Warren Scott sent Paul Revere, William Dawes, and other riders throughout the countryside raising the alarm that "The regulars are approaching!"

Dawes and Revere were met on the road to Concord by Dr. Samuel Prescott. The three were stopped a short while later by a British patrol. While Dawes and Prescott managed to escape, Revere was detained, questioned, and had his horse taken from him, forcing him to walk back to Lexington.

Just before daybreak on April 19th, two companies of British regulars arrived at Lexington. They were under the command of Major John Pitcairn. To their surprise, they were met by 77 colonial militiamen (*Minutemen*) under the command of Captain John Parker. It is here that history records Parker uttering his famous phrase, "Stand your ground, don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here!"

Pitcairn ordered the militia to disperse – at which time a shot of unknown origin rang out. This was followed by volleys from both sides. By the time the smoke cleared, 8 colonial militiamen had been killed and 10 wounded. The British suffered one soldier wounded.

Depiction of the Battle of Lexington



The British continued on to Concord where they found that most of the weapons they had come to destroy had already been moved to a safer location. By this time, the militia ranks had swelled to several hundred. At Concord Bridge, 400 militiamen faced off with about 100 British.

After a brief skirmish, the British fell back to Lexington and then to Boston, being harassed by colonial militia the entire way. By the time the British limped into Boston that night, their casualties on the day numbered 73 killed, 174 wounded, and 53 missing. By comparison, the militia suffered 49 killed, 39 wounded, and 5 missing.

On June 17, 1775, the *Battle of Bunker Hill* took place. Fought primarily on Breed's Hill in Charleston, Massachusetts, it was a pivotal battle of the Revolution. The British, being the British, and having little regard for colonial militia, decided to launch a frontal assault against the colonial positions on top of the hill. The colonials had dug their entrenchments during the night right under the nose of the British. It is here that militia leader, William Prescott, uttered his famous line, "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes."

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Patriotic Instructor Minute

It took three assaults and some savage hand-to-hand fighting before the colonial militia retreated. But their retreat was mainly because they had run out of gunpowder to fight with. Even though it was a British victory, it had been costly for them. They suffered over 1,000 casualties; nearly 40% of their entire force. Several officers had also been killed, including Major Pitcairn. After the battle, General Henry Clinton, who had opposed the frontal assault, stated: "A few more such victories would have shortly put an end to British dominion in America."

At the end of June and the beginning of July 1776, and the Continental Congress was debating the issue of independence. One of the main problems they were dealing with was slavery! Surviving correspondence between several of the delegates indicates a large portion of them wanted slavery abolished. Thomas Jefferson had even included an anti-slavery clause in his original draft of the Declaration. The Southern delegates, especially those from Georgia and South Carolina, vehemently opposed the anti-slavery clause – as did some northern delegates. A compromise was struck and the entire 168-word clause was removed from the document to ensure unanimous support for the revolution. The delegates were all aware of the contradiction of keeping people in bondage while at the same time advocating for the position that it was self-evident that "all men are created equal."

So the Congress chose to postpone the issue of slavery rather than risk failing to declare independence. Basically, they just didn't know how to abolish slavery while at the same time prioritizing colonial unity and achieving independence above all else. The issue of slavery would have to wait for another day!

Fast forward to 1861-1865. Now had come the reckoning; the supreme test that would decide whether a nation founded on liberty could survive the terrible strife of men's passions. During the first two years of the Civil War, the majority of Union soldiers believed they were fighting to preserve the Union and uphold the Constitution. The issue of slavery was the furthest thing on their minds. In fact, many Northerners were against emancipation because they believed freed slaves would migrate north and create competition for northern jobs.

But as the war shifted to the Southern states, Union soldiers witnessed slavery firsthand and their attitudes began to change. Now the vast majority of soldiers began to believe they were fighting not just to preserve the Union, but for something greater; the emancipation of millions of enslaved people. This belief became even more prevalent after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. In the end, they would actually and finally fulfill the idea set out in the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal.



So, as we celebrate our country's 250th birthday, let's not forget the men who stood up against the greatest military power on earth at the time and said "No more." Were they perfect men: no, but they were great men who saw a vision for the future and founded a nation against overwhelming odds.

At the same time, let's not forget our Civil War ancestors who helped fulfill the promise of the Declaration of Independence and helped preserve the Union our founding fathers established; the greatest nation on earth, the United States of America!



... by Ronald 'Steve' Brock, Camp Patriotic Instructor – a transcription of the presentation he gave during the June 2026 business meeting of Lea Camp #2.

From the Chaplain's Desk

West Virginia Leader

Gordon Battelle was born November 14, 1814, in Newport, Ohio, to Ebenezer and Mary "Molly" Greene Battelle. As a young man, he attended Marietta Collegiate Institute at Meadville, Pennsylvania, where he formed a lifelong friendship with fellow student Francis Pierpont, who would later become known as the "Father of West Virginia." Battelle continued his education at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania, graduating first in his class in 1840.

Battelle settled in western Virginia after graduation and taught school in Clarksburg. After becoming a Methodist minister, he moved to what was then Virginia, where he taught, served as an academy principal, and eventually devoted himself entirely to the ministry. He married Maria Louise Tucker, and they raised a family, although the loss of their young son James Waldo Battelle in 1854 was a family tragedy.



Rev. Gordon Battelle

As threats of civil war loomed on the near horizon, he moved to Wheeling to accept a leadership position with the church. By the late 1850s, Battelle was still serving in Wheeling and had become an outspoken opponent of slavery and secession. He was elected as a delegate to the constitutional convention for the new state of West Virginia. He proposed language for the gradual emancipation of slaves, which was not adopted.

In October 1861, Francis H. Pierpont, now governor of the Restored Government of Virginia, turned to his old college classmate, Gordon Battelle, to inspect and report on the conditions at Union military camps. He made an excellent choice. The Ohio-born educator and minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, had service and patriotism in his blood. His grandfather, Ebenezer, had volunteered at Lexington in 1775 and served throughout the Revolution. Battelle reported on poor medical conditions and shortages of doctors and nurses.

Before the end of 1861, Battelle received a new assignment as chaplain of the 1st West Virginia Infantry. His service ended prematurely the following year when he contracted typhoid fever while investigating military sanitary conditions near Washington, D.C. His remains were carried to his native Ohio and buried in Newport Township.

Left: Battelle Monument - erected by Ross Newport Post #489, Grand Army of the Republic.



In 1913, a memorial to honor the sons of Newport who served in the Civil War was dedicated. The monument is topped with a statue of Battelle, a teacher, patriot, and leader in the formation of the state of West Virginia.



... submitted by Stephen D. Schulze, PDC - Chaplain

Spotlight on a G.A.R. Veteran – Captain William Kelly

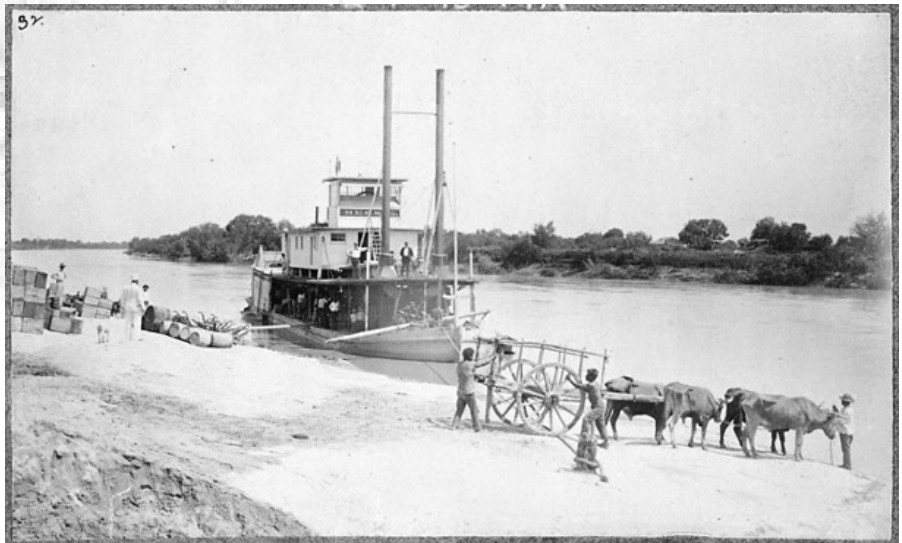
William Kelly was born April 2, 1840 in Downpatrick, a historic town in County Down, Northern Ireland. His parents were John Kelly and Rose McBride, both natives of Ireland. "A graduate of Trinity College in Dublin, he and a classmate on a visit to the United States were at Niagara Falls when Civil War was declared. The two friends returned to the city of New York, good horsemen that they were, and enlisted in the 71st Mounted Rifles."... (daughter Geraldine Kelly, 1893).

Records indicate William actually mustered as a Private with *Company M, 1st Mounted Rifles* on September 16, 1862. Less than a month later, on October 1, 1862, he was promoted to Corporal. He served for three years and moved up in rank to 1st Lieutenant. Because of his reported background in maritime transport and logistics, William was transferred to the Quartermaster Department, and assigned as a Brigade Quartermaster. His assignments took him down the Mississippi and Gulf Coast waterways as federal forces established control over key southern ports.

In early November 1863, Union forces launched a campaign in southern Texas at Brownsville. Their objective was to disrupt the Confederate cotton smuggling trade across the Rio Grande. William arrived in South Texas during the Union occupation of Brownsville. While there, he seems to have recognized the commercial possibilities presented by the Rio Grande, the Gulf Coast, and Brownsville's strategic position along the international border. He was eventually breveted as Captain to lead *Company B, 8th Infantry Regiment* of United States Colored Troops.

William was honorably discharged February 2, 1865, and settled in Brownsville. He went to work for King, Kenedy & Company (*Richard King, future Texas icon and owner of the 825,000-acre [King Ranch](#)*), who operated a fleet of steamboats on the Rio Grande. Eventually, William obtained steamboats of his own, carrying freight from Brazos Santiago to Brownsville and towns further inland.

Right: William's stern-wheel steamboat, "Bessie," loading at Fort Ringgold en route to Brownsville.



On May 10, 1870, he and widow Mary Anne Gallagher-Thornham obtained a marriage license in

Cameron County, Texas. She was born in 1842 at Fort Jesup, Sabine Parish, Louisiana. Her first husband, Captain Jesse Thornham, Sr. was lost at sea during the 1867 hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico. William and Mary were united in matrimony four days later, on May 14, 1870. She brought her two young Thornham sons into the marriage with William: Jesse Simeon Thornham and Alfred Thornham. Eventually, she and William became the parents of five children of their own.

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Spotlight on a G.A.R. Veteran – Captain William Kelly *(continued)*

On June 10, 1893, eleven Union veterans living in the Brownsville area organized *Gen. Albert M. Barney Post #67* of the *Grand Army of the Republic*. William Kelly was one of those eleven Charter Members and was elected by his peers as the first Post Commander. In fact, surviving records of the *Department of Texas, G.A.R.* show that William served multiple 1-year terms as Post Commander between 1893 and 1908. He was apparently the driving force within the Post.

William was civic-minded and continuously worked to promote and improve his community. For twelve years, he served as chairman of the public School Board. During his tenure, many improvements in accommodations and methods were made in the Brownsville school system. He became highly esteemed for his business integrity and social skills, becoming quite prominent and influential in Brownsville.

He was one of the founders of the First National Bank of Brownsville, and is vice president and director of the concern. He is also a leading spirit in educational matters, and the splendid public school building which Brownsville boasts was erected chiefly through his influence and activity. Most undoubted evidence of Mr. Kelly's enterprise and desire for the development of this section has been furnished by the zeal and vigor with which he has entered into the present railroad move, giving most liberally of his own means toward it, and devoting his time to the cause unsparingly. Mr. Kelly is looked up to as one of the most highly educated and thoroughly progressive gentlemen of Brownsville, and he will prove one of the most potent factors in assuring the future prosperity and development of this section....(The Brownsville Herald, Dec 27, 1893).

William's varied interests also included roles outside of business and family. He was a Freemason. In June 1897, he served as "district deputy grand master [who] conducted the installation ceremonies" of the newly elected officers of *Rio Grande Lodge, No. 81, A. F. and A. of Brownsville*.

**Right: Historic Rio Grande Lodge
No. 81 in 2018**



William continued to be a strong promoter of the Rio Grande country. On a trip to Washington, DC, he spoke with a reporter from the *Washington Post*, once again extolling the virtues of the Rio Grande country. The reporter described William as: "Mr. William Kelly, a banker of Brownsville, Tex., is at the Hotel Barton. Mr. Kelly is a gentleman of wealth and much influence on the border, where he settled after the close of the Civil war. He is heavily interested in silver mines in Mexico, and on the Texas side has large plantations and cattle ranches."

During the interview with the newspaper reporter, William exclaimed:

My town of Brownsville is for its importance perhaps the most isolated place in the United States, as we are 160 miles from the nearest railroad station. The country about it, on both sides of the Rio Grande, is

...continued on next page

Spotlight on a G.A.R. Veteran – Captain William Kelly *(continued)*

in the semi-arid district, and often the lack of rainfall brings distress on our people. But the future of the region looks bright, and everybody is in good spirits. The outlook is that our entire valley, including many hundred thousand acres of land, will at no distant day be one of the great rice-producing belts of the Union. This year, as my agent informs me, we are going to produce twenty-two to twenty-four bags of rice to the acre, which is far in excess of the yield of that crop in Louisiana and Eastern Texas. There is nothing to do but to take the water from the river and put it on the land; irrigation is the magic word that is going to make this part of our State blossom like the rose.

Socially, the Kelly's hosted the local Euchre Club meetings and games in the parlor of their home. Mary was a member of the Club, and daughters Geraldine and Annie regularly competed in the card games. However, sometimes, business was mixed with pleasure:

Captain William Kelly, president of the First National Bank of Brownsville, Tex., has been enjoying a few days' sojourn in Galveston visiting friends. He is returning from a trip to New York and stopped over to see and study more of this city and port. As the guest of Mr. M. B. Kingsbury, general agent for the Southern Pacific at Galveston, Mr. Kelly was taken on a trip on the bay on board the Juno. A view of the shipping and the harbor and a visit to the Southern Pacific docks were included in the itinerary. At the Southern Pacific docks, the party, which included a number of prominent Galvestonians, boarded the Morgan liners and were given a most welcoming reception by the officers. Mr. Kelly is delighted with Galveston and her people and will return to Brownsville thankful for having lingered in this city long enough to learn something of the business of this port...(Galveston news, Nov. 9, 1902).

As a leading figure in the town, William was sometimes drawn into unsavory entanglements. One such entanglement occurred in 1906, known as the [Brownsville Affair](#). During the night of August 13, unidentified shooters reportedly fired over 100 rounds into Brownsville homes and businesses, killing a bartender and wounding a police officer. The local residents immediately blamed the Black soldiers of the 25th U.S. Infantry stationed at nearby Fort Brown. The shootings were mischaracterized as an armed uprising, causing terror among the residents.

Right: Fort Brown barracks of the 25th U.S. Colored Infantry

As chairman of the local Citizens' Committee, William was compelled to write the following appeal to authorities in Austin:



The excitement among our people is not subsiding. The fears of our women and children cannot be allayed by argument. They feel unsafe while the negro troops are in our midst. We cannot stand the

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Spotlight on a G.A.R. Veteran – Captain William Kelly (continued)

tension arising from their fears, and the constant watchfulness it makes necessary. We implore you to act at once for our relief, and to answer this immediately.... By order of The Citizens' Committee, William Kelly, Chairman.

This affair must have been especially galling for William, for he had formerly led Black troops as an officer during the Civil War. One can only wonder about his state of mind after he heard accounts indicating that the soldiers were sleeping in their barracks at the time of the attack, and that spent rifle shells had been planted to frame them. At any rate, the investigators believed the townspeople. When the infantrymen maintained their innocence, and refused to name nonexistent culprits among their ranks, President Theodore Roosevelt accused them of a "conspiracy of silence." He ordered 167 Black soldiers - including decorated veterans - dishonorably discharged without a trial, stripping them of pensions and military careers. Decades later, historical investigations definitively proved the innocence of the Black troopers. In 1972, the U.S. Army and Congress officially reversed the Roosevelt order, posthumously granting honorable discharges and clearing their names.

During the following month, on the morning of June 14, The *Brownsville Affair* came back to haunt William and his family. On that day, his step-son, Jesse Thornham, was exiting William's office just as a Samuel Wreford was passing by. At close range, Jesse fired two rounds of buckshot, wounding Wreford in the arm and abdomen. Wreford died within minutes - after identifying Jesse as the shooter. Jesse immediately turned himself in and admitted his crime. The reason for the shooting might possibly be explained by the following account: "It appears that when Mr. Kelly was testifying before the senate committee at Washington, in regard to the negro soldier raid, he referred to Samuel Wreford. The latter took exception to Mr. Kelly's remarks and yesterday circulated a paper around Brownsville in which he spoke in bitter terms of Mr. Kelly." It appears to have been a tragic revenge shooting.

Also, in 1907, *Barney Post #67, G.A.R.* of Brownsville disbanded due to declining membership as the old veterans passed away. As mentioned, William was the first, and now became the last Commander of the venerable G.A.R. Post. However, he continued to honor and remember his deceased comrades each year on Decoration Day.

1908 was also a stressful year for William and Mary Kelly. In February, they received word by cablegram that their 28-year-old son, John Washington Kelly, had died in La Paz, Bolivia in South America. There was no knowledge "to his being ill, and the news was a terrible surprise." John had traveled to Bolivia "to accept a position as manager of the Bolivian Supply company, which is connected with the work of constructing the railroad now being built by the Bolivian government. Having found that the high altitude at La Paz affected his health, [he] last summer resigned the position to take a position on the coast of Bolivia. About a month ago, he wrote home that his former position at La Paz had been offered him again, and that he would return there to accept the place. That was the last letter received from him, and he was at that time in his usual health." No further details about John's death are available.

As late as 1908, William was still engaged in maritime shipping. In April, at nearly age 70, he "brought a cargo of 50,000 feet of lumber and 75,000 shingles to Tarpon Beach [Florida] from Orange, Texas" on his schooner *George Locke*. The *Brownsville Herald* noted the voyage and mentioned William as "one of the best known sea captains on this coast, and none know the ins and outs of this part of the Gulf coast better than he."

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Spotlight on a G.A.R. Veteran – Captain William Kelly (continued)

Plans to begin construction of a sewage system in Brownsville began in earnest in June 1909. Naturally William, as a mover and shaker in the city, was instrumental in moving the project forward. "... the meeting of the sewer committee held at the Commercial Club room Saturday afternoon, in response to the call of Capt. Wm. Kelly, chairman of the general sewerage committee."

Meanwhile, the health of William's wife, Mary, had been declining for several years. In early 1914, she traveled to San Antonio for a "serious operation" and remained for several months to recover. At first, her condition worsened, but from April through June, while recuperating at the Santa Rosa Infirmary and then St. Joseph's Sanitarium, she seemed to rally. She finally returned home to Brownsville in late August, but her days were numbered. She passed away at home at 8 p.m. on November 12, 1914 at age 72. Her funeral was held at her residence after "services at the Church of the Sacred Heart", and she was then laid to rest "in the city cemetery."

In 1917, William observed Decoration Day on May 30 in the City Cemetery at the gravesite of his late G.A.R. comrade, Emmitt H. Goodrich. William was one of the three surviving members of his disbanded G.A.R. Post. He had summoned the other two surviving former-members, Mr. Sedgwick and F. A. Sandborn, and they both responded to the call. "A firing party and an escort" were obtained from Fort Brown, which enabled "full military honors, the volley and the sounding of Taps, to be accorded the dead. The veterans and their friends" met "at the office of Captain Kelly on Levee street at 4:30 o'clock", and proceeded "to the grave of Comrade E. H. Godrich [sic], the last member of the camp [Post] to pass away." During the program, William read President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and six graves were decorated.

On Decoration Day in May 1919, William again spearheaded a formal memorial ceremony at the City Cemetery. Fort Brown again supplied a firing party, which along with members of the *Sons of the G.A.R.*, escorted William to the gravesite of comrade E. H. Goodrich. William was the only survivor of former *Barney Post 67* able to attend. Seven graves were decorated.

The following month, on June 14, William again exhibited his patriotism by participating in a Flag Day ceremony at Fort Brown. During the program, he gave an address entitled: "The Flag of Yesterday and Today."



The 1920 federal census enumerator visited the Kelly household on January 2. William was a 79-year-old widower living at 706 Washington St. in Brownsville. His two unmarried daughters were still with him: Nora, age 48, a nurse and Superintendent at Charity Home which she had established, and Anna, age 42. The enumerator also noted that William was a 'capitalist', who immigrated in 1860, was naturalized in 1861, was literate, and owned his house free and clear.

Left: Nora Kelly (1871-1964), daughter of Captain William Kelly

Even though William was entering his final days, he continued to be active and civic-minded, serving as president of the Brownsville Public school board as late as September 1920. That position became vacant about three months later; William passed away at home just after midnight on January 28, 1921. He was 79 years, 9 months, and 26 days old. After his funeral, he was laid to rest in Old City Cemetery in Brownsville beside his late wife, Mary.

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Spotlight on a G.A.R. Veteran – Captain William Kelly *(continued)*

Several decades later, in May, 1964, William's granddaughter, Mrs. E. J. McGoohan, applied to the Department of Veterans Affairs for a new grave marker. Approximately two months later, a flat marker with a bronze plate was shipped from a foundry in Florida and placed at his grave. It is inscribed with a Latin cross and:

"WILLIAM KELLY – 1ST LT 8 REGT US CLD TRP – CIVIL WAR – APRIL 2, 1840 – JAN 28, 1921"

"My father owned six thousand acres of land on the river below Brownsville and he invested heavily in mines owned by people of the [Porfirio] Diaz regime. When Don Porfirio was overthrown and exiled, these holdings were confiscated.

"For years he carried as a talisman one of the sixty-dollar gold pieces that Emperor Maximillian presented to the five soldiers of the firing squad that executed him [in 1867].

"In 1872, he bought Dr. Augustus Watson's home from his widow. The house had four rooms, a wine cellar, and a porch built of lumber salvaged from the wreckage of Clarksville. Through the years it grew to thirteen rooms and two baths. It had porches around three sides, six open fire places, five cisterns and its own gas machine. He got ice in hogsheads from Galveston, via steamer to Point Isabel and thence by Rio Grande Railroad here. He had a very fine library that he used continually and loved. One of the outstanding memories of our home were the Christmas trees and dinners for the poor in our back yard.

"With G. M. Raphael, a native born Russian, and others, my father organized the First National Bank of Brownsville in the early nineties [1891] and was vice-president. When Mr. Raphael died a few years later, he succeeded as president in which capacity he served until he retired in 1907.

"Father was a director of the Rio Grande Railroad, one of the organizers of The Philharmonic Society, that built the opera house in the seventies, and of the Literary Club. He organized the Grand Army of the Republic Chapter and was a member of The Loyal Legion. For more than twenty years he was president of the board of City Schools during which time the two story brick school house was built near Washington Park."...(daughter Mary Geraldine Kelly).



R.I.P. COMRADE KELLY!

[Note: To read the full biographical sketch for William Kelly, visit the [website of the Department of Texas](http://www.state.texas.gov/aboutstate/departmentofveteransaffairs).]



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Sep 2026



Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 42)

The *Medal of Honor* is the highest military honor awarded by the United States 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: Navy Version of the original Medal of Honor (1862)

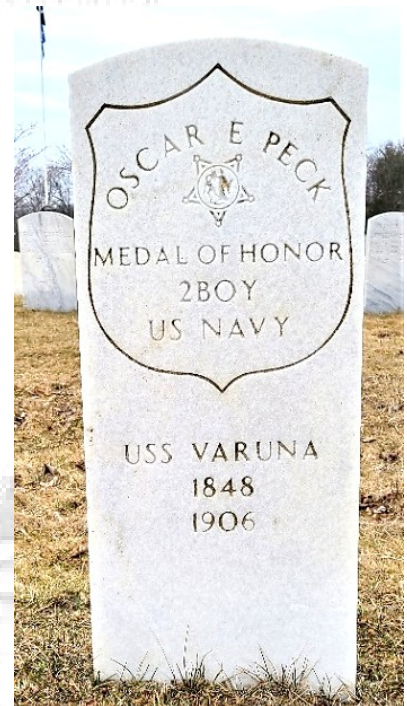
Editor's note: With this issue of the Harriet Lane, in honor of Lt. Cmdr. Edward Lea, USN - the namesake of our Camp, I am continuing to present a review of the recipients of the Medal of Honor who served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War.



- **Oscar E. Peck – 2nd Class Boy** – Oscar Edward Peck was born in March 1847 in Bridgeport, Connecticut. He was still living in Bridgeport when he joined the U.S. Navy, serving as a 2nd Class Boy on the *USS Varuna*. At the Battle of Forts Jackson and St. Philip near New Orleans on April 24, 1862, the *Varuna* was rammed twice by the Confederate steamer *CSS Governor Moore* (formerly known as the *Charles Morgan*), and eventually sunk. Peck acted as a powder boy and "served gallantly" throughout the close-range fight. For this action, he was awarded the *Medal of Honor*. Peck died in October 1906 in Noroton Heights, Connecticut at age 59.

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 Second Class Boy Oscar E. Peck, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving as Second Class Boy on board the U.S.S. Varuna during an attack on Forts Jackson and St. Philip, Louisiana, 24 April 1862. Acting as powder boy of the after rifle, Second Class Boy Peck served gallantly while the Varuna was repeatedly attacked and rammed and finally sunk. This was an extremely close-range action and, although badly damaged, the Varuna delivered shells abaft the Morgan's armor.



- **William Pelham – Landsman** – William R. Pelham was born in December 1847 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy from New York City and took part in the Civil War as a Landsman on Rear Admiral David Farragut's flagship, the *USS Hartford*.

On August 5, 1864, during the *Battle of Mobile Bay*, Farragut's fleet forced its way past Fort Morgan and into the bay, engaging Confederate gunboats and the powerful ironclad *CSS Tennessee*. Pelham was serving at one of *Hartford's* guns when the fighting became especially intense. He helped carry the wounded below deck and then voluntarily returned to the gun deck and took the place of a sailor who had been struck down at an adjoining gun and continued fighting. Five months after the battle, on December 31, 1864, Pelham was issued the *Medal of Honor* for his conduct in that action.



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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 42 continued)

After the war Pelham joined the New York Police Department and was a member for about thirty-five years. He died in Brooklyn, New York in 1933 at about age 86 and was buried in Holy Cross Cemetery in Brooklyn. 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 Landsman William Pelham, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving on board the flagship U.S.S. Hartford during successful actions against Fort Morgan, rebel gunboats and the ram Tennessee in Mobile Bay, Alabama, 5 August 1864. When the other members of his guncrew were killed or wounded under the enemy's terrific shellfire, Landsman Pelham calmly assisted the casualties below and voluntarily returned and took his place at an adjoining gun where another man had been struck down. He continued to fight his gun throughout the remainder of the battle which resulted in the capture of the Tennessee.

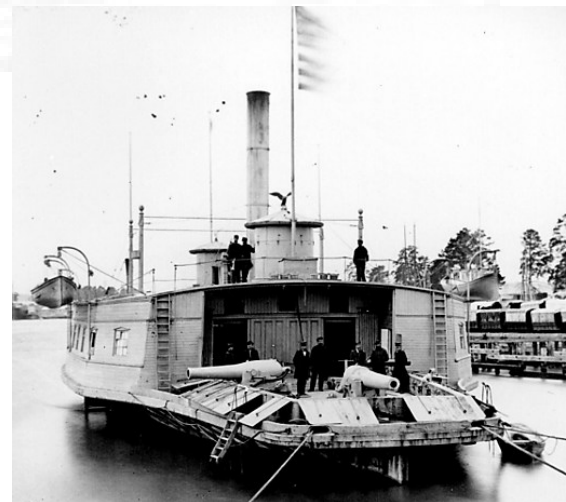


- **Thomas Perry – Boatswain's Mate** – Thomas Perry served as boatswain's mate on board USS Kearsarge when she destroyed the raider *Alabama* off Cherbourg, France on June 19, 1864. Further details not available. His *Medal of Honor* citation reads:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Boatswain's Mate Thomas Perry, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action as Boatswain's Mate on board the U.S.S. Kearsarge when she destroyed the Alabama off Cherbourg, France, 19 June 1864. Acting as Captain of the No. 2 gun during this bitter engagement, Boatswain's Mate Perry exhibited marked coolness and good conduct under the enemy fire and was recommended for gallantry by his divisional officer.

- **Alfred Peterson – Seaman** – Alfred Peterson was born in Sweden and served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War, serving as a Seaman on the converted wooden steam ferry gunboat USS Commodore Perry. Further details not available. 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 Seaman Alfred Peterson, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving on board the U.S.S. Commodore Perry in the attack upon Franklin, Virginia 3 October 1862. With enemy fire raking the deck of his ship and blockades thwarting her progress, Peterson remained at his post and performed his duties with skill and courage as the Commodore Perry fought a gallant battle to silence many rebel batteries as she steamed down the Blackwater River.

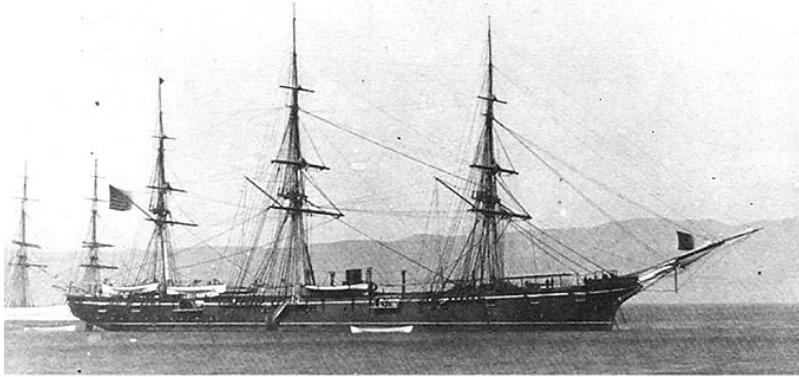


USS Commodore Perry

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Civil War Medal of Honor Recipients – U.S. Navy (Part 42 continued)

- **William Phinney – Boatswain's Mate** – William Phinney was born in 1824 in Norway and immigrated to the U.S., settling in New York. In 1848, he was roughly 24 years old and still living in New York when he joined the U.S. Navy. He served during the Civil War as a boatswain's mate on the screw-propelled sloop-of-war, *USS Lackawanna*. At the *Battle of Mobile Bay* on August 5, 1864, *Lackawanna* engaged the *CSS Tennessee* at



USS Lackawanna

close range and Phinney distinguished himself as captain of an artillery gun. Four months later, on December 31, 1864, he was awarded the *Medal of Honor* in recognition of his actions in battle. Phinney remained in the Navy after the war, and as late as November 1874 he held the rank of Quarter Gunner. At that time he was admitted to the naval hospital at the Brooklyn Navy Yard for *adynamia (severe lack of strength or mental energy)*. He was discharged two days later for "injuries

received in the performance of duty". 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 Boatswain's Mate William Phinney, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action while serving on board the U.S.S. Lackawanna during successful attacks against Fort Morgan, rebel gunboats and the ram, Tennessee in Mobile Bay, Alabama, 5 August 1864. Serving as a Gun Captain Boatswain's Mate Phinney showed much presence of mind in managing the gun, and gave much needed encouragement to the crew during the engagement which resulted in the capture of the prize rebel ram Tennessee and in the damaging and destruction of Fort Morgan.

- **William B. Poole – Quartermaster** – William B. Poole was born in Cape Elizabeth, Maine in 1833. On June 19, 1864, he was serving as a quartermaster on the sloop-of-war *USS Kearsarge* when she sank the commerce raider *CSS Alabama* off the coast of Cherbourg, France. He had remained at the helm of the ship, steering the *Kearsarge* while the two ships maneuvered in a roughly circular course, each attempting to gain a position from which it could deliver devastating fire against the other. For his actions, he was awarded his Medal of Honor for gallantry under fire. Poole died in Lynn, Massachusetts in 1904 at age 70 or 71, and was buried in Pine Grove Cemetery in Lynn. 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 Quartermaster William B. Poole, United States Navy, for extraordinary heroism in action and service as quartermaster on board the U.S.S. Kearsarge when she destroyed the Alabama off Cherbourg, France, 19 June 1864. Stationed at the helm, Quartermaster Poole steered the ship during the engagement in a cool and most creditable manner and was highly commended by his divisional officer for his gallantry under fire.

.. Additional Navy Medal of Honor recipients will be portrayed in the next issue with Part 43

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Camp Council	John Vander Meulen, PCC	
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Historian	Michael L. Lance, PDC	Color Bearer/Drummer William D. Myers
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Webmaster	Robert G. Riley	G.A.R. Records Officer Herbert W. Powers
Guard	Richard J. Carson	Public Relations Officer Richard J. Carson
Genealogist	Daniel B. Pourreau, PCC	
Website	Houston Camp	Website Department of Texas & Louisiana
Facebook	Houston Camp	Facebook Department of Texas & Louisiana

Trivia – Portable Pontoons

Rivers could be as formidable as enemy armies. The Union Army overcame these obstacles with portable pontoon bridges - ingenious floating roads that could be transported with advancing troops and assembled wherever needed.

Wooden pontoon boats were carried on wagons, along with beams, planks, ropes, and anchors. Once at a river, engineers launched the boats, secured them in position, and laid a roadway across them.

Right: **Wooden pontoon boat on wagon (top) and pontoons deployed as a bridge**

In February 1862, engineers built an 840-foot bridge from 41 pontoons at Harpers Ferry, allowing thousands of soldiers to cross the Potomac despite strong winds, ice, and debris.

In June 1864, when engineers constructed a 2,170-foot pontoon bridge across the James River using 101 boats and trestlework, it enabled infantry, artillery, wagons, animals, and supplies to safely cross.



Signature Photo – 4th Of July Parade (continued from page 6)



Patriotic Participants

Front row L-R: Stephen Schulze, Henry Henck, Harrold Henck, and Lisa Riley.

*Back row L-R: Michael Lance, Robert Riley, Ryan Hall, Jason Hoffman,
Arthur Porras, and Herbert Powers.*

***“For one moment of most intense suspense all was still — then
a pull — a jar — a clang — and
we were flying away on our perilous journey.”***

Corporal William Pittenger

Co. G, 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry

Andrew’s Raider and Medal of Honor Recipient
1863

William Pittenger, one of Andrews’ Raiders, afterward describing the moment when the *General* was finally seized at Big Shanty on April 12, 1862 to begin The Great Locomotive Chase.