

Sheridan's Dispatch

*Phil Sheridan Camp 4
Department of California & Pacific
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War*

Volume 5, Issue 4

San José, California

August-October 2004

Graves Registration Program



Members of Phil Sheridan Camp 4 & Dr. Mary E. Walker Auxiliary 52 at grave of Union soldier Daniel McCarthy

On October 2, 2004, twenty people gathered at the Calvary Catholic Cemetery to conduct a survey of Civil War graves. The cemetery, located at Alum Rock Ave. and Capitol Ave. in east San José, yielded dozens burials of Union veterans. Of particular interest was the grave of Daniel McCarthy, which featured a modified GAR badge. Afterward the group retired to the Flames Restaurant in Milpitas for refreshment and camaraderie.

Front L-R: Dave Schleeter, Dan Bunnell PDC, Paul Lavrischeff, Karen Lavrischeff.

Back L-R: Bob Kadlec, Bill Pope, Frank Avila, Ann Schleeter, Dan Earl, Sebastian Nelson

President Bush Increases Funding for Battlefield Preservation

(Hallowed Ground, Summer 2004, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 3)

In his annual budget request to Congress, President George W. Bush included \$5 million in federal matching grants for Civil War battlefield preservation. The \$5 million provision is more than double the White House's previous request of \$2 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004. The White House unveiled its FY 2005 budget on February 2, 2004.

The President's budget request sets aside \$5 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for the Civil War Battlefield Preservation

Program (CWBPP). If approved by Congress, this would represent the most money ever available in a single year for the program. Congress has appropriated a total of \$21 million for the program during the past six fiscal years.

The CWBPP was first established by Congress in 1998 and was formally authorized as part of the Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act of 2002. It provides federal grant money for Civil War battlefield land outside National Park Service (NPS) boundaries. Nearly 11,000 acres of high-priority battlefield land in 15 states have been saved as a result of the program. Among the battlefield sites that have benefited from the program are Antietam,

Any letters, articles, etc., published in *Sheridan's Dispatch* do not necessarily represent the views and/or opinions of the SUVCW Inc., the Dept. of CA & Pacific, camp officers, membership, guests, or the editor/publisher.

MD; Bentonville, NC; Chancellorsville, VA; Fort Donelson, TN; and Harpers Ferry, WV.

Note: At a Camp meeting earlier this year, Bro. Crit Bell passed around a petition asking to increase the

budget allocation for the CWBPP. The petition was signed by all those present and forwarded by Bro. Bell. Thus, the Phil Sheridan Camp 4 had an important hand in ensuring that more funds were set aside for this worthy cause.

Commander's Column

It looks like summer is over and we can now prepare for our participation in this year's Veterans Day Parade. Before the Parade, a number of us will be participating in the National Park Service tour of the old Civil War fort on Alcatraz. Also, do not forget that November 20th is our annual election meeting. If you are interested in supporting your Camp, you need to let us know of your desires to accept either an elected or appointed position.

The 123rd annual National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War was held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa between August 13-15. Of the fifteen Department of California and Pacific Delegates to the Encampment, five were from Phil Sheridan Camp Number 4. Your Department was second only to Michigan with their eighteen delegates. A good time was had by all. Plan ahead for next year in New Hampshire.

The annual Civil War reenactment in Fresno was held over the weekend of September 25-26. From all that I have heard, the event went quite well with over twenty representatives from throughout the Department working the SUVCW information booth.

A Graves Registration project, led by Camp JVC and Graves Registration Officer Dan Bunnell (PDC), was conducted at the Calvary Catholic Cemetery in San José on the 2nd of October. Twenty members from the Phil Sheridan Camp and Dr. Walker Auxiliary participated in this effort. Following the registration, we adjourned to the Flames Restaurant in Milpitas for refreshments and comradeship.

On the 17th of October, a group of us will be participating in a private tour of the remains of the old Civil War fort on Alcatraz Island. Past Department Commander Brad Schall has organized this tour through the U.S. Park Service, which is in the process of restoring the old fort. This will be an all day tour and will include a tour of the prison as well. I think that the Park Service is eager to sign up volunteers to work as docents on the island once the fort is restored.

Preparation at the United Veterans Council (UVC) are ongoing for this year's Veterans Day Parade. The Council has selected Leon "Woodie" Spears to be this year's Grand Marshall. Woodie is a Tuskegee Airman who flew a P-51/Mustang fighter on bomber escort missions over Germany during World War II. He was shot down over Berlin and spent a brief period in a Prisoner of War (POW) camp in Poland during the closing days of the War. The Russians liberated his camp and, because they were in a hurry to get to Germany, told him to walk east to find his way home. He met up with other former POWs and they made their way to a port on the Black Sea. They commandeered a former French ship and sailed back to Europe just as the War came to a close.

Everyone who would like to participate in the Veterans Day Parade on the 11th of November should meet at the American Legion Post 564 parking lot on Saturday, October 23rd at 10:00 AM for practice. To march in the Parade, the UVC requires that all participants be in uniform or period dress. They do not want informal "marchers" strolling along the route. Last year we had eighteen participants in the Parade and picked up a second place trophy. I hope that we might do it a bit bigger this year. Members of both the American Civil War Association and the National Civil War Association will again join your Camp, the Dr. Walker Auxiliary, and members of our two Sons of Veterans Reserve units -- Company C of the 8th California Volunteer Infantry and Battery A of the U.S. 3rd Artillery. You do not have to be in uniform for the practice on the 23rd, but if you have a musket, bring it.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,
Bob Kadlec, Commander

The 2005 Department Encampment is Coming!

Start making plans now to attend the 119th Annual Encampment of the Department of California and Pacific!

The Encampment will be held on Friday and Saturday, **March 11-12, 2005** at Elks Lodge #322,

located at 222 Elks Lane, in San Luis Obispo, California. This is the same location at which the Encampment has been held over the past several years. Plans are still underway and further details will be announced as they become available.

Gen. U. S. Grant Camp Chartered in Modesto



On Saturday, September 18, 2004, the newest Camp in the Department of California and Pacific received its Charter during a ceremony held at the McHenry Museum in Modesto, California. Officially established on June 16, 2004, the Gen. U. S. Grant Camp 9 was named for the local Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) post of the same name and number. The GAR Post was in turn named for Gen. Ulysses Simpson Grant (1822-1885), Civil War general and 18th President of the United States (1869-1877). Bro. **CHARLES GARDALI** will serve as the Camp's first Commander. The Chartering ceremony was officiated by Department Commander **LINN P. HOADLEY**. Representing Phil Sheridan Camp 4 was Past Camp Commander, **TAD D. CAMPBELL**. Members of the Dr. Mary E. Walker Auxiliary No. 52 in attendance were President **RACHELLE M. CAMPBELL** and **JEAN HOADLEY**. Congratulations are extended to all of our Brothers in this new Camp!

Final Bugle Call

Condolences are extended to Brother **PAUL WASHELESKI** and family over the loss of his wife. **BETTY WASHELESKI** passed away July 13, 2004, on her eighty-first birthday, after a lengthy illness. During World War II, Betty was employed in a bomb factory and as a nurse. In addition to her husband, she is survived by two sons, one daughter, six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. One son preceded her in death. Brother Washeleski, of Gardnerville, Nevada, is currently serving as Commander of the Gen. Wm. Passmore Carlin Camp 25.

It is with sadness that we also report the death of Past Commander-in-Chief **RICHARD C. SCHLENKER** on August 20, 2004. A member of the Department of Maryland, Bro. Schlenker was elected Commander-in-Chief at the 101st National Encampment held in Providence, Rhode Island on August 15-18, 1982.



My Civil War Ancestor

HENRY CLAY THOMAS

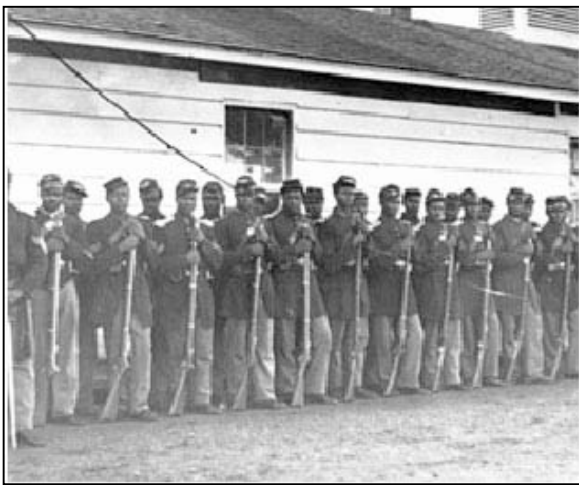
CO. G, 23RD U.S. COLORED TROOPS

Great-grandfather of Bro. Crittenden Bell

Henry Clay Thomas was born in Concordia Parish, Louisiana in 1844. He was raised just across the Mississippi River in Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi. His father is believed to have been William Thomas of Natchez.

Henry grew up in Mississippi as a farm laborer. When the Civil War began in 1861 Henry was seventeen years old. By some means, Henry made his way from Mississippi to Washington, D.C. and enlisted in the Union Army on the 4th of April 1864. He was nineteen years old.

Henry was immediately sent to Camp Casey, just outside Washington, D.C., where he joined the 23rd United States Colored Infantry Regiment as a Private. The regiment had been organized at Camp Casey just over five months earlier.



Whatever army training Henry received was extremely brief, less than a month, because his regiment was ordered to combat about the first of May and reported to Brigadier General Edward Ferrero at Manassas, Virginia, in preparation for General Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign in Virginia.

Because the 23rd U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) was newly formed and had no combat experience, their first assignment was escort duty

for the thousands of supply wagons of the Union Army of the Potomac. The extensive wagon trains transported weapons, ammunition, food, clothing, medical supplies, engineer equipment, and everything else an Army would need to conduct military operations in the field.

Wagon trains were prime targets for Confederate attacks and had to be protected at all costs. The loss of the wagons and their critical cargo could mean the loss of battles, territory, and precious lives. There were 4,000 to 6,000 Union wagons.

The Virginia Overland Campaign was the last major fight of the Civil War. It began at the Battle of the Wilderness on May 5, 1864, and ended at Appomattox on April 9, 1865. A lot happened between those two dates and places, and Henry Clay Thomas was a participant in, and witness to, much of it.

After the Battle of the Wilderness, the 23rd USCT was next engaged at Spotsylvania from May 15 to May 17, 1864. From there the regiment was involved for nearly a month in numerous skirmishes and movements trying to maneuver around the right flank of General Robert R. Lee's Confederate Army of Northern Virginia.

Although the Union Army was thwarted again and again, they never took a step backward. There were terrible battle casualties on both sides but General Grant's Army of the Potomac had the advantage by being able to replace its losses more easily and in greater numbers than the Confederate Army.

After fighting its way south for over a month, the Army of the Potomac reached the outskirts of Petersburg, Virginia about June 12, 1864, and began an assault on that city on June 15th. The 23rd USCT was part of the battle, which in the end became a siege of Petersburg. The capture of Petersburg was considered essential to cutting the supply lines into Richmond, the Confederate capitol.

Union forces tried repeatedly to break through the Confederate Army's defense of Petersburg, but were unsuccessful throughout the summer and fall of 1864. One of the more famous fighting engagements outside Petersburg was the Battle of the Crater. During July 1864, Union troops

who had been coal miners in Pennsylvania dug a 500 foot tunnel under a Confederate stronghold and placed nearly a ton of explosives there. The plan was to break through the enemy's defense and seize the city of Petersburg.

The Union troops were rehearsed and in place for the assault and the explosives were set off on the night of July 31, 1864. Because of last minute changes in the assault force, the planned attack was executed poorly and the operation failed badly. Henry Clay Thomas and the 23rd USCT were part of the attacking force.

The Confederate Army knew well how important it was to hold Petersburg and they hung onto it throughout the winter of 1864, and right up to April 1, 1865. It was on this date that General Robert E. Lee began to move a large portion of the Army of Northern Virginia toward Appomattox with a destination of Leesburg, Virginia. On April 2nd, Petersburg was attacked and fell to Union forces. At the same time, the Confederate troops heading for Leesburg became engaged in a fight called the Appomattox Campaign.

After an exchange of messages between Generals Grant and Lee, a meeting was arranged between the two, followed by the Confederate surrender on April 9, 1865.

On May 15, 1865, Henry Clay Thomas and the 23rd USCT embarked on the steamship *Richmond* and later sailed from waters just off the coast of Virginia to Brazos-Santiago, Texas. The 23rd USCT served on Texas border duty for six months until the regiment was officially mustered out of Federal service on November 30, 1865. How Henry moved from Texas to Tennessee is unknown, but he is next found in the 1870 United States Census living in Brownsville, Tennessee.

Henry applied for a Civil War pension in 1899 and was denied compensation because it was determined that his disability did not result from his Civil War service. Henry was persistent and applied several times.

Finally, in 1907 he was granted a Federal pension of \$12.00 per month. There is pathetic information in his pension application. On one line there is the question which asks, "Were you ever a slave?" There was not answer to that question. The next line asked the question "Who was your

owner?" The answer was "I think it was my father, William Thomas." How sad it must have been for Henry to know that he was considered a slave to his own father.

Henry Clay Thomas died in Arlington, Tennessee on March 17, 1919 at the age of 74 years, and was buried there in the Hayes Cemetery.

National Encampment Held in Iowa



The 123rd Annual National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War was held August 13-14, 2004 at the Collins Plaza Hotel in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The newly elected National Officers are: Commander-in-Chief **STEPHEN A. MICHAELS** (Franklin, WI), Senior Vice Commander-in-Chief **DONALD E. DARBY** (Chillicothe, OH), Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief **JAMES B. PAHL** (Mason, MI), National Secretary **MICHAEL S. BENNETT** (White Plains, NY), National Treasurer **MAX L. NEWMAN** (Owosso, MI), and National Quartermaster **DANNY L. WHEELER, PC-IN-C** (Ithaca, NY).

The number of seats on the National Council of Administration was expanded and our own Past Department Commander, **D. BRAD SCHALL** of Lincoln, CA, was successful in his bid for a three-year term on the Council. This is an important position that will certainly be beneficial to the Department of California and Pacific.

Our Department also received appointments to the following positions: National GAR Highway Officer **GARY PARROTT**, of Mammoth Lakes, CA; National Graves Registration Officer **BOB LOWE, PDC**, of El Cajon, CA; National Committee on Americanization and Education - **JERRY R. SAYRE** (member) of Fallbrook, CA; National Aides to National Committee on Civil War Memorials - **KIRBY R. MORGAN** of Coarsegold, CA and **D. BRAD SCHALL, PDC**, of Lincoln, CA; National Committee on Communications and Technology -

BOB LOWE, PDC (member) of El Cajon, CA; National Committee on Fraternal Relations - **D. BRAD SCHALL, PDC** (Chairman) of Lincoln, CA; National Committee on Graves Registration - **BOB LOWE, PDC** (Chairman) of El Cajon, CA; National Committee on Legislation - **DANIEL R. EARL** (Chairman), of Gilroy, CA and **GARY PARROTT** (member) of Mammoth Lakes, CA.

The Phil Sheridan Camp 4 was well represented at the National Encampment by the majority of the Camp Officers, namely, Camp Commander **ROBERT J. KADLEC**, Senior Vice Commander **DAVID C. SCHLEETER**, Junior Vice Commander **DANIEL M. BUNNELL, PDC**, Secretary-Treasurer **DANIEL R. EARL**, and Patriotic Instructor **TAD D. CAMPBELL, PCC**. Members of the Dr. Mary E. Walker Auxiliary No. 52 in attendance were **JEAN HOADLEY, LORI PARROTT**, and **ANNE SCHLEETER**.

A great deal of business was accomplished and camaraderie enjoyed by those in attendance! A special "Thank You" is extended to our Brothers in the Department of Iowa who helped make this year's National Encampment such a success!



A Unique Buffalo Soldier

Cathay Williams was born into slavery near Independence, Missouri in 1842. She grew up and worked as a house-girl for wealthy planter William Johnson in Jefferson City, Missouri. During the Civil War, Union soldiers liberated Williams and she spent the remainder of the war as a paid servant of the Union Army. On November 15, 1866, shortly after her job with the Union Army ended, Cathay Williams disguised her gender and joined Company A of the 38th Infantry, in St. Louis. This regiment was among the newly formed regiments that consisted of troops of African-American descent. Cathay was 22 years old and was 5'9" tall. At the time, there was no requirement for a physical examination and she enlisted using the name William Cathay. She was discharged from the Army at Ft. Bayard, New Mexico on October 14, 1868. After leaving the army, Cathay worked as a cook for an officer at Fort Union, New Mexico Territory. From Fort Union, she went to Pueblo, Colorado. She stayed there for two years and worked in a laundry for a Mr. Dunbar. From Pueblo, Cathay moved to Las Animas and lived there about a year, again working as a laundress. In 1891, she was living in Trinidad, Colorado.

Cathay Williams was not the only woman to join the army before 1948 - the year that women were allowed for the first time to officially enlist in the peacetime army. Many a romantic girl dreamed of being a second Joan of Arc - a heroine - a savior. For example, it has been estimated that approximately 400 women posed as soldiers during the Civil War. Many of these women enlisted with their husbands, brothers, and fiancés and most were not found out unless they required hospital treatment. There is no record of how many women enlisted in the army during the Indian Wars. In all likelihood there were others like Cathay Williams that served their country.

"Cathay Williams' Story" from the *St. Louis Daily Times*, January 2, 1876

"My Father a was a freeman, but my mother a slave, belonging to William Johnson, a wealthy farmer who lived at the time I was born near Independence, Jackson county, Missouri. While I was a small girl my master and family moved to Jefferson City. My master died there and when the war broke out and the United States soldiers came to Jefferson City they took me and other colored folks with them to Little Rock. Col. Benton of the 13th army corps was the officer that carried us off. I did not want to go. He wanted me to cook for the officers, but I had always been a house girl and did not know how to cook. I learned to cook after going to Little Rock and was with the army at The Battle of Pea Ridge. Afterwards the command moved over various portions of Arkansas and Louisiana. I saw the soldiers burn lots of cotton and was at Shreveport when the rebel gunboats were captured and burned on Red River. We afterwards went to New Orleans, then by way of the Gulf to Savannah Georgia, then to Macon and other places in the South. Finally I was sent to Washington City and at the time Gen. Sheridan made his raids in the Shenandoah valley I was cook and washwoman for

his staff I was sent from Virginia to some place in Iowa and afterwards to Jefferson Barracks, where I remained some time. You will see by this paper that on the 15th day of November 1866 I enlisted in the United States army at St. Louis, in the Thirty-eighth United States Infantry Company A, Capt. Charles E. Clarke commanding.

"The regiment I joined wore the Zouave uniform and only two persons, a cousin and a particular friend, members of the regiment, knew that I was a woman. They never 'blowed' on me. They were partly the cause of my joining the army. Another reason was I wanted to make my own living and not be dependent on relations or friends. Soon after I joined the army, I was taken with the small-pox and was sick at a hospital across the river from St. Louis, but as soon as I got well I joined my company in New Mexico. I was as that paper says, I was never put in the guard house, no bayonet was ever put to my back. I carried my musket and did guard and other duties while in the army, but finally I got tired and wanted to get off. I played sick, complained of pains in my side, and rheumatism in my knees. The post surgeon found out I was a woman and I got my discharge. The men all wanted to get rid of me after they found out I was a woman. Some of them acted real bad to me. After leaving the army I went to Pueblo, Colorado, where I made money by cooking and washing. I got married while there, but my husband was no account. He stole my watch and chain, a hundred dollars in money and my team of horses and wagon. I had him arrested and put in jail, and then I came here. I like this town. I know all the good people here, and I expect to get rich yet. I have not got my land warrant. I thought I would wait till the railroad came and then take my land near the depot. Grant owns all this land around here, and it won't cost me anything. I shall never live in the states again. You see I've got a good sewing machine and I get washing to do and clothes to make. I want to get along and not be a burden to my friends or relatives."

For further information on Cathay Williams, visit the following website:
<http://www.buffalosoldier.net/CathayWilliamsFemaleBuffaloSoldierWithDocuments.htm>



Dr. Walker's Remedies

News from Dr. Mary E. Walker Auxiliary No. 52

A note of appreciation is extended to all of the Auxiliary members who helped staff the SUVCW recruitment booth at the Fresno Historical Society's annual "Civil War Revisited" event in September. We managed to distribute all of the Auxiliary brochures we had on hand and made some very good contacts with the public and other patriotic organizations. Our Auxiliary also contributed much to the recent grave registration project at the Calvary Catholic Cemetery in San José. Thank you all for your efforts and keep up the great work!

Auxiliary No. 52 will be participating with the Phil Sheridan Camp 4 in the 86th Annual Veterans Day Parade in downtown San José on November 11th. In accordance with the wishes of the United Veterans Council, participants must be in period attire. If you are interested in taking part, please let me know, or contact Camp 4 Commander Bob Kadlec.

Our next Auxiliary meeting will be held Saturday, November 20, 2004 at 10 am at the American Legion Hall, 2120 Walsh Avenue in Santa Clara. This meeting, to be held in conjunction with a meeting of Camp 4, will be extremely important, as it is our annual election meeting. At that time you will be able to elect your officers for the next year. Those officers elected on November 20th, and subsequently appointed by the President-Elect, will be sworn in at an installation banquet in January 2005. Make your vote count and help decide the direction your Auxiliary will take in the next year!

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

Rachelle M. Campbell, President
Dr. Mary E. Walker Auxiliary No. 52

Phil Sheridan Camp Officers 2004:

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| • <i>Commander</i> | Robert J. Kadlec
philsheridan4@aol.com | • <i>Graves Reg. & Memorials Ofcr.</i> | Daniel M. Bunnell, PDC
philsheridan4@msn.com |
| • <i>Sr. Vice Commander</i> | David C. Schleeter
KnifeGuy@aol.com | • <i>Counselor</i> | Daniel R. Earl
danearl64@earthlink.net |
| • <i>Jr. Vice Commander</i> | Daniel M. Bunnell, PDC
philsheridan4@msn.com | • <i>Guard</i> | Rick T. LaRosa |
| • <i>Secretary-Treasurer</i> | Daniel R. Earl
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| • <i>Camp Council</i> | Tad D. Campbell, PCC
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Rick T. LaRosa | • <i>Guide</i> | Steven J. Welch
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| • <i>Historian & Patriotic Instructor</i> | Tad D. Campbell, PCC
tadcamp@earthlink.net | • <i>Eagle Scout Cert. Coordinator</i> | Crittenden Bell
critbell@aol.com |
| • <i>Chaplain</i> | Rev. Clark D. Seum | • <i>Signals Officer & Newsletter Editor</i> | Tad D. Campbell, PCC
tadcamp@earthlink.net |
| • <i>Assistant Chaplain</i> | Daniel M. Bunnell, PDC
philsheridan4@msn.com | • <i>Musician</i> | James Welch |

Next Meeting: Saturday, Nov. 20, 2004, 10 AM
American Legion Hall, 2120 Walsh Ave., Santa Clara, CA

Phil Sheridan Camp 4 Web Site
<http://home.earthlink.net/~suvcw/sheridan4.html>

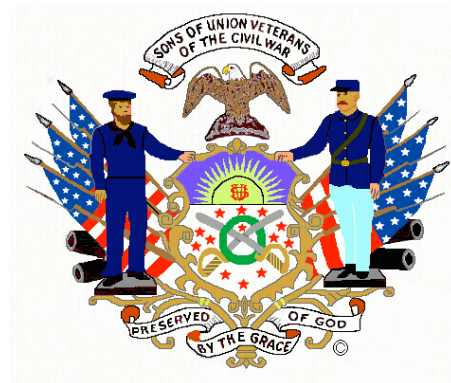
Department of California & Pacific Web Site
<http://home.earthlink.net/~suvcw/deptca.html>

National SUVCW Web Site
<http://www.suvcw.org>

Dr. Mary E. Walker Auxiliary, No. 52 Web Site
<http://home.earthlink.net/~asuvcw/walker52.html>

Mailing Address: Phil Sheridan Camp 4
9327 Lariat Drive
Gilroy, CA 95020-8123

Telephone Number: 408-267-3249



Membership Eligibility:

A male descendant, whether through lineal (direct ancestor) or collateral line (uncle) and not less than 14 years of age (6 to 14 years for Juniors), who: (1) is a blood relative (descendant or nephew) of a Soldier, Sailor, Marine or member of the Revenue Cutter Service, who was regularly mustered and served honorably in, was honorably discharged from or died in the service of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Revenue Cutter Service of the United States of America or in such state regiments called to active service and was subject to orders of United States general officers, between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865; (2) has never been convicted of any infamous or heinous crime and (3) has, or whose ancestor through whom membership is claimed has, never voluntarily borne arms against the government of the United States.