

THE CALIFORNIA COLUMN



Vol XVII The Newsletter of the Department of California and Pacific

June 2020

The California Column

In 1862, the California Column commanded by Colonel Carlton was ordered to send over 2,000 men to the Rio Grande River in New Mexico – over 900 miles away – to drive invading Texan rebels out of Arizona Territory. These men traveled by foot, from April to August, through the desert – with 120 degree temperature in full wool uniforms. They traveled in groups of 400 to conserve water for the men and horses and stayed in a series of forts spread out between the Drum Barracks, Wilmington, California and the Rio Grande.

The journey consisted of about 2350 men and was done largely by foot, in summer, wearing wool uniforms and carrying heavy rifles and knapsacks. In a very hot and dry environment, not one man was lost due to non-battle causes. The hike from Wilmington, California to El Paso, Texas has been reported to be the longest infantry march in infantry history. *Source - Drum Barracks –*

Commanders Corner



Brothers,

Welcome to this edition of the “California Column.”

Here we are in the middle of the “Ups” and “Downs” of a very unique virus pandemic, but we are steadily moving forward, figuring out ways to right the ship.

Camps in our Department have been successful recently, using video communications for their camp meetings. I have seen this first hand having been lucky enough to be invited to attend virtual meetings that, because of distance, I would not have been able to attend.

The virtual meeting for the 134th Department of California and Pacific Encampment held on June 6th was a success. We had up to 44 Brothers attending and on screen at any given time during the video meeting. We also had the pleasure of having SUVCW Commander-in-Chief Ed Norris and

National Council of Administration Brother Kevin Martin attend from the East Coast.

Unfortunately, we were prevented from observing Memorial Day in the grand ways that we have become accustomed to but we did not let our Union ancestors go unremembered. Brothers as individuals or small groups of two or three stopped by Civil War Soldiers’ graves or Memorials to leave flowers and recall the requirement of their service. I am sure that those who could not get out took time to offer a silent prayer in honor of those who have gone before us in the service of our country. Our Brothers are getting the job done.

The Department of California & Pacific continues to be a leader in our Order and as a Department, we strive to honor the memory and sacrifices of the Boys in Blue.

I will pass along a quote from National Chaplain Peter Preble, “the important thing to remember is that it does not matter the size of the gathering, what matters is that we remember.”

Thank you, Brother Owen Stiles for taking on the job of Department Newsletter Editor. Brothers, please pass along any camp news to Brother Stiles for our Department newsletter when you can and together we can make the California Column a success.

In Fraternity, Charity & Loyalty,

Rudy Velasco
Commander – Dept. of California & Pacific

Historical Monuments – G. O. #27

Series 2019-2020

16 June 2020

1. Due to the current political climate the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War has seen an increase in the number of requests for comment concerning historical monuments.

2. I want to remind our Brothers of two documents which should be reviewed:

a. Past Commander-in-Chief Mark R. Day's General Order No. 2, Series 2017-2018

1. I hereby direct, with the concurrence of the members of the Council of Administration, that all departments, camps, and individual brothers refrain from acting as a Media spokesmen or agent for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War or to become involved in the pursuit of any civil actions (legal proceedings), on behalf of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, regarding the removal of veteran's monuments, without first contacting the Commander-in-Chief and receiving authorization from him.

a. Acting as a spokesman is defined as making statements written or oral using the organizations name, symbols, letterhead, or while in the branded attire of the organization to include SVR uniforms and symbols.

b. This Order in no way is intended to preclude the exercise of your rights as an individual outside of the SUVCW.

2. The Commander-in-Chief will serve as the primary point of contact on all media inquiries involving the removal of veteran's monuments. Media outlets should be directed to forward their inquiries to the SUVCW National Headquarters at 1 Lincoln Circle at Reservoir Park, Suite 240, Harrisburg, PA 17103-2411 Telephone: (717) 232-7000 Fax: (717) 412-7492.

b. Battlefield Flag and Monument Policy (August 2017) at <http://www.suvcw.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Battlefield-Flag-andMonument-Policy.pdf>.

Memorial Day in Hawaii



Grave site of J R Kealoha, Hawaiian who served in the Civil War

Brother Arthur Tulak in Hawaii conducted research on the G.A.R. George W. DeLong Post #45, and the commemoration of Decoration Day and Memorial in the State, which may be published in the Banner. Post #45 was

established in Honolulu on September 12, 1882 under the authority of the Department of California. This was the first G.A.R. post to be formed in a foreign land, which was at the time the Kingdom of Hawaii, and had the King's blessing. Before the Union Veterans living in Hawaii united to form the post, the assembled to carry out the first Decoration Day in Hawaii earlier that same year. The G.A.R. Post grew and in time established a burial plot for all Union Veterans in Hawaii. Comrades from Post #45 conducted Decoration Day, and later Memorial Day observances all the way to 1917, and then the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and later the American Legion and other Veterans organizations took up the responsibility of organizing these observances, which the G.A.R. men continued to attend. The locus of the ceremonial observances was the G.A.R. burial plot until 1931, when it moved to the Hawaii WWI Memorial in Waikiki. During the pandemic of 2020, all the major Memorial Day ceremonies were cancelled, and while there is no SUVCW Camp in Hawaii, there are brothers there, and candidates for membership who have Union Civil War ancestors.



Young boy in CW Uniform, Tory Latilla and Eric Mueller

Brother Tulak and the Veterans Organization, the Military Order of World Wars, coordinated with a group of Civil War Historians, the Hawaii Civil War Round Table (HI CWRT) to carry out a combined Memorial Day event, observing social distancing and face mask requirements, and staying under the maximum of ten person assembly, to honor America's War Dead over the Memorial Day Weekend at the G.A.R. plot where many Union Veterans are buried, near other Veterans also buried in the same cemetery before the plot was established. In addition to paying tribute to these Veterans, they marched to another part of the cemetery to pay tribute to one of the men from the Kingdom of Hawaii, who fought for the Union, Private J. R. Kealoha, a citizen of the Kingdom of Hawaii who fought for the Union in the Civil War in the 41st Regiment US Colored Troops.

Arthur N. Tulak, Ed.D.
COL, U.S. Army, Ret.
Patriotic Instructor
Henry C. Veatch Camp #30

139th National Encampment

At this time, the National Encampment is being held as planned.

The 2020 National Encampment is hosted by our Brothers in the Department of Georgia and South Carolina.

Atlanta Marriot Buckhead Hotel and Convention Center
3405 Lenox Road North East,
Atlanta, GA 30326

Dates: August 13 – 16, 2020

Registration is available on the SUVCW website.

Brothers who signed up during our Virtual Encampment are listed as delegates to the upcoming National Encampment. Delegates will receive their credentials after July 15th.

All other brothers in Good Standing are elected as Alternatives to the National Encampment. If you plan to attend please notify the Department Secretary prior to July 31st to receive your credentials.

The Vacant Chair

The “Vacant Chair,” a sentimental Union song, was written in 1861 by Henry Washburn. Washburn was visiting a family of a Lieutenant who had been killed in the Battle of Ball’s Bluff. After Washburn wrote the lyrics, the popular composer of many Civil War musical works, George Root wrote music to accompany them. The song lyrics create the image of a family sitting around their table with one vacant chair for their fallen soldier. The powerful imagery that the song lyrics inspire is perhaps one of the reasons the song became a very popular funeral song for veterans (Waller et. al (2011) p. 150). “The Vacant Chair,” is another song that is applicable to us well beyond the time period for which it was written. When listening to the music and allowing the images that complement the lyrics to be created in our minds, we can relate to the same emotions that people listening during this time period felt with respect to death and loss in our own lives.

Passing of Brother Billy G. Ogan
Passing of Brother Oscar Randall Braman
Passing of Brother David E. Allyn
Passing of Brother Ernest L. Powell Sr
Passing of Brother Richard T Burns, PCC
Passing of Brother Paul F Washeleski, PCC

GAR Highway

I've been a bit apprehensive to drive near LA County due to protesters and rioters.

I made a roundtrip up I-5 to Route 14 to Mohave and back home.

I located two GAR Highway signs in Mohave (Kern County), the GAR Highway sign on Route 14 in LA County but did not find the final sign on I-5 at the LA City limits.



The two signs in Mohave are adjacent to each other like the ones south of Bishop, CA.

I'll contact CalTrans and see if I can get a better location of the sign I didn't find. There was some major widening construction in a possible area, so the sign might have been temporarily taken down?

Charles Beal, PCC
GAR Highway Officer

WANTED! WANTED! WANTED!

The Department is looking for a brother who would be willing to be our Department Patriotic Instructor.

If you are interested in this prestigious position, please contact the Department Commander, Rudy Velasco, DC at rev03@dc.rr.com

Editor's Note: Our intention is to publish the California Column quarterly – March 30 June 30, September 30 and December 30. We are always looking for interesting articles that can be published. Contact the Editor – Owen Stiles when you have something. ostiles45@gmail.com

Around the Department

Generals Sedgwick-Granger Camp 17



PCC Charles Beal, JVC Scott McKee and CC Steven Steinberg

Brothers from the Sedgwick-Grange Camp 17 gathered at the GAR monument at Santa Ana Cemetery for a wreath laying ceremony on Memorial Day.

General George Stoneman Jr Camp 18

Like other camps in the Department, Stoneman Camp 18 has, for the most part, been shut down. Observing Local and State mandates, the Camp as a whole did not participate in a Memorial Day ceremony. There were a couple of Brothers who braved the conditions and made sure that Grand Army of the Republic graves were decorated



Michelle and Sarah Morris, daughters of Brother John Morris

For Memorial Day weekend Brother John Morris placed 90 flags at the graves in the G.A.R. circle at Evergreen Memorial Historical cemetery in Riverside. On May 30th Brother Steve Doyle placed flowers at the headstones in the same G.A.R. circle.

The Camp has kept in touch and conducted business through having normal Camp meeting dates using video – Zoom meetings.

We have received requests and mailed out 4 JROTC Award packages in the past couple of months for local high schools in Riverside County. There haven't been any JROTC Award ceremonies scheduled to attend but we are sending out the awards when requested for the Cadets.

General William Passmore Carlin Camp 25



Charlotte Dietrich placing flowers on grave of CW veteran.

In support of Department Order No. 8, on Memorial Day Monday, Camp 25 Commander Kurt Dietrich and SVC David Davis, PCC, traveled to Wadsworth, Nevada to place flowers on Union Veteran graves that may have otherwise been forgotten this year. Pictured is Kurt Dietrich's 4-year-old daughter, Charlotte Dietrich. She is decorating the grave of James Shapley, a Private who served in Company E, 35th Wisconsin Infantry. Private Shapley enlisted February 15, 1864, discharged March 15, 1866.

Private Henry C. Veatch Camp 30



Commander Stiles, Aaron Burks from American Legion Post 210, Nathaniel Jones, Sgt Kyle Jones and Yvette Jones holding young Andrew Jones

The Henry Veatch Camp 30 honored Civil War veterans at the Marysville Cemetery, CA GAR plot on Memorial Day, 2020. From there the group went to both the Sutter Cemetery and the Biggs-Gridley Cemetery where they repeated a short ceremony.

SVR 6th Military District



Greetings Brothers! I was honored to present a report at the Department Encampment regarding the current status of the 6th Military District. As a recap, we were saddened by the passing of Commander, Major Steve Betschart in May 2020. Steve was a remarkable man, and served our district well as Commander. National SVR Commander Major General Robert Grimm has appointed me as Interim District Commander until a new permanent Commander is appointed at the National Encampment in August 2020.

Each of our units was able to meet our annual deadline by submitting unit applications, dues, and IRS notifications by our April deadline to Adjutant, Captain Mark Stevens. For that, Mark and I are grateful, as we struggle with meeting this deadline every year. Currently, the 6th Military District, SVR has six (6) active units with 136 members. As opposed to five years ago, in 2015 the district had eight (8) active units with 238 members. This is an alarming trend and the District must be diligent in our recruitment and retention efforts. I have attended three virtual camp meetings in the last two months to get the word out about the SVR. If you would like me to attend your camps virtual meeting, please feel free to contact me at jerseyartillery@gmail.com. If you would like more information about the SVR, visit our National webpage at <http://www.suvcw.org/svr/svr.htm>.

Dr. Wayne L. Eder
Interim Commander - Captain
6th Military District SVR

Auxiliary to the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War



We had 12 people in attendance at our Department Auxiliary Virtual Encampment on June 20th including our National President, Wanda Langdon. Four other National officers were in attendance as well.

This was the first ever virtual Department Encampment, and while it wasn't the same for camaraderie and fun, it did get the job done. Elections and installation took place. Some important business discussions took place and hopefully, some great goals were set.

Dept of California ASUVCW Officers:

Rebekah Thomas – President
Beverly Graham – Vice Commander
Rachelle Campbell – Secretary/Treasurer
Cindy Eddy – Council #1
Cindi Menzies – Council #2
Beverly Graham – Council #3
Paige Mitchell – Chaplain
Patriotic Instructor - VACANT

SUVCW Department Officers

Commander Rudy Velasco, PCC
Senior Vice Commander Frank Avila, PCC
Junior Vice Commander Stephen Doyle, PCC
Secretary/Treasurer Owen Stiles, PCC
Councilman Daniel Earl, PCC
Councilman Kurtis Dunphy, CC
Councilman Wayne Eder
Camp Organizer Owen Stiles, PCC
Chaplain Allen Davis, OCC
Civil War Memorials Officer Dean Enderlin, PDC
Color Bearer Kurt Dunphy, CC
Counselor Daniel Earl, PCC
Eagle Scout Certificate Coordinator Randall Hawkins, CC
GAR Highway Officer Charles Beal, PCC
GAR Records Officer David Davis, PCC
Graves Registration Officer Kenneth Felton, PCC
Guard Kenneth R Walker
Guide Brian Stephens
Historian David Davis, PCC
Newsletter Editor Owen Stiles
Patriotic Instructor - VACANT
Signals Officer/Webmaster Tad Campbell, PCinC