



THE TELEGRAPH KEY

THE OFFICIAL DISPATCH FOR THE MAJOR THOMAS J. KEY CAMP #1920
KANSAS DIVISION, SCV • JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS

Vol. 23, No. 12

December 2022

Major Thomas J. Key Officers



Commander - *Matt Sewell*



1st Lt. Commander- *Dan Peterson*



2nd Lt. Commander- *Lane Smith*



Adjutant- *Lawson Rener*



Chaplin - *Walt Schley*



Editor- *Rick McPherson*

The Confederate's Corner

By Rick McPherson

Greetings to all compatriots and friends of the **Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920**.

Recap of Camp gathering of November 3, 2022, our 231th meeting.



New Key Camp officers were voted in during our November meeting. Congratulations to all!

They will assume their duties following the Lee-Jackson Banquet in January.

The Key Camp welcomed 18 members and 5 guests at our November meeting. Thanks to those that attended. We hope to see you all again at our December meeting.

Compatriots are reminded that spouses, guests and especially prospective members, are always welcome to our meetings.

Meeting Recap



Membership report: 48 current members are paid. Treasury Report: \$7252.55



Compatriot **Walt Schley** has been elected to the position of Camp Commander. Walt has previously served as Camp Chaplain and is a prior recipient of the Key's Battery Award.



Compatriot **Dan Peterson** once again will serve as 1st Lt. Commander. Compatriot **Paul Allen** will serve as 2nd Lt. Commander, Compatriot **Lawson Rener** will remain Adjutant and Compatriot **Walt McKenzie** will assume the role as Chaplain.



The Lee-Jackson banquet will be held on Saturday January 21st, 2023. Donations of items to be auctioned, to benefit the Camp, are being solicited. Heading that committee will be Compatriots **Dan Peterson** and **Chris Edwards**. Our auctioneer will be Compatriot **Lane Smith**.



The monthly program was given by Historian Arnold Schofield, presenting "Confederate Guerillas and their Network".



Hits to the **Key Camp Web Page** from 10/27 to 11/25 were +53. YTD total hits are 583.



Reserve your seats now!

Lee-Jackson Banquet

January 21st, 2023

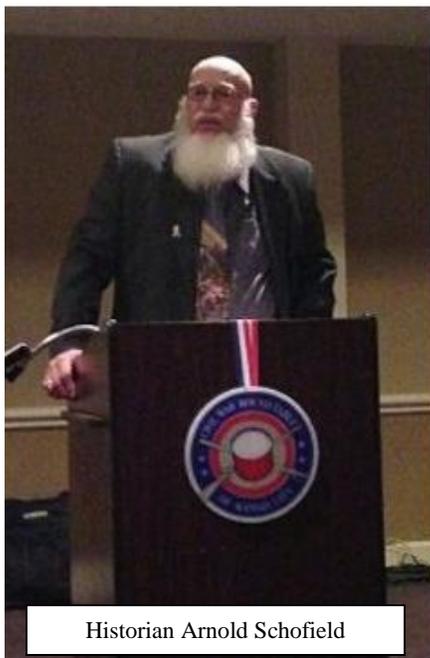
Check your mail for your invitation sent from Adjutant Lawson Rener
(Donations for the auction are also needed)

See us on Facebook – Enter Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920

Congratulations to **Parker Van Sickle**, grandson of Compatriot **Carl Linck**, pictured here receiving a Certificate of Appreciation from Commander **Matt Sewell**.

Parker, age 12, served as a member of the Color Guard at the Shawnee Indian Mission Festival in October.

In addition, a Confederate soldiers uniform Parker has previously worn has been donated to the Camp to be auctioned at the January Lee-Jackson Banquet.



Historian Arnold Schofield

Presenting “Confederate Guerillas and their Network” at the November **Key Camp** meeting was retired Historian **Arnold Schofield**. Schofield spent 50 years in Public Service include 6 years in the US Army, 10 years with the Department of Defense, 33 years with the National Park Service and 7 years with the Kansas Historical Society, as Superintendent of the Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic site near Pleasanton, Kansas.

His National Park Service career included tours of duty at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Fort Scott National Historic Site. While at Fort Scott he was the Site Historian and Cultural Resource Specialist.

Arnold has been involved with Civil War Battlefield Preservation for more than 40 years and is co-founder of the Mine Creek Battlefield Foundation, which has raised more than one million dollars, purchased 326 acres of prime battlefield land, reprinted the only book on the Battle of Mine creek, assisted in the production video on the battle by (Bill) Curtis Productions and produced a brochure on General Sterling Price’s 1864 Campaign in Missouri and Kansas.

Troublesome Bushwhackers

Arnold W. Schofield

“To say that the Confederate guerrillas/ bushwhackers who operated in Missouri and eastern Kansas during the Civil War were

“troublesome is a bit of an understatement. They were more than “troublesome.”

They were a deadly enemy who would strike swiftly, kill, destroy and disappear, if they survived, to attack again until they met the “Grim Reaper” of Death, as

many of them eventually did.

If they were troublesome, it was in the winter when their attacks were reduced, but not stopped, as were most military operations in the 19th century



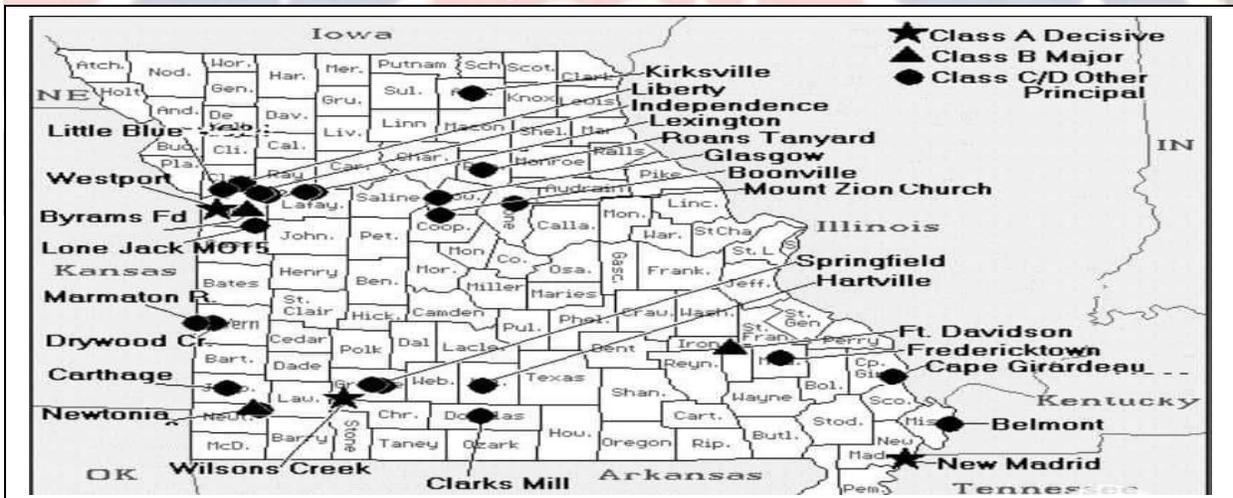
The Last Shot of the Civil War

The memorial, on the outskirts of Waynesville, N.C. commemorates the location popularly believed to be the "last shot" fired in the Civil War on May 7, 1865. The monument is constructed in a pyramid from local river or field stones and cement. A plaque, most likely of bronze, bearing the inscription in raised lettering is mounted on the front face.

Inscription:

**NEAR THIS SPOT / THE LAST SHOT
OF THE WAR / WAS FIRED / UNDER
THE COMMAND OF / LT. ROBT. T.
CONLEY / OF THE CONFEDERATE
ARMY / MAY 6, 1865
ERECTED BY / UNITED
DAUGHTERS OF THE
CONFEDERACY / FIRST DISTRICT
NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION / 1923**

Missouri Civil War Battles



Lincoln's Beard



Most people who think of President Abraham Lincoln picture him as having a beard as viewed on the \$5.00 bill, but most of his life Lincoln was clean shaven. It was not until near the end of the 1860 election campaign that he decided to grow a beard at the suggestion of an eleven-year-old girl.

Grace Bedell of Westfield, New York, was the daughter of a Lincoln supporter and was shocked by caricatures of the candidate in which his angular face was exaggerated. She told her mother:

**Mother, 'He would look better if he wore whiskers,
and I mean to write and tell him so.'**

She wrote her letter:

Hon A B Lincoln...

Dear Sir My father has just home from the fair and brought home your picture and Mr. Hamlin's. I am a little girl only 11 years old, but want you should be President of the United States very much so I hope you won't think me very bold to write to such a great man as you are. Have you any little girls about as large as I am if so give them my love and tell her to write to me if you cannot answer this letter. I have yet got four brothers and part of them will vote for you any way and if you let your whiskers grow I will try and get the rest of them to vote for you. You would look a great deal better for your face is so thin. All the ladies like whiskers and they would tease their husbands to vote for you and then you would be President. My father is going to vote for you and if I was a man I would vote for you to but I will try to get everyone to vote for you that I can I think that rail fence around your picture makes it look very pretty I have got a little baby sister she is nine weeks old and is just as cunning as can be. When you direct your letter direct to Grace Bedell Westfield Chautauqua County New York. I must not write any more answer this letter right off Good bye

Lincoln responded:

“As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a silly affectation if I were to begin it now? Your very sincere well wisher.”

Although Lincoln had been non-committal, he did begin growing a beard, and won the election. He was the first President to have a beard (John Quincy Adams and Martin Van Buren had side whiskers) on his way to the inauguration in Washington, the now bearded Lincoln stopped at Westfield to visit the little girl who had written the letter. She recalled "He climbed down and sat down with me on the edge of the station platform," "'Gracie,' he said, 'look at my whiskers. I have been growing them for you.' Then he kissed me. I never saw him again."

As President, Lincoln would continue to wear a beard. By mid-nineteenth century facial hair was growing in popularity. Several army officers, including several at Shiloh, who had previously been clean shaven, grew facial hair. Every president after Lincoln, with two exceptions, would have some type of facial hair until Woodrow Wilson in 1913. None have had facial hair since.

A Little Girl Influenced Abe To Grow a Beard

Just about 100 years ago, Abraham Lincoln sat down and wrote a gentle, good-humored letter to a little girl. Her name was Grace Bedell. Her correspondence with the successful Republican candidate was to change the face of history!

Lincoln had received a note from her suggesting he might get more votes if he would sprout a beard. From her home in Westfield, N. Y., 11-year-old Grace wrote:

"I . . . want you should be President very much so I hope you won't think me very

bold to write such a great man as you are. . . . I have got four brothers and part of them will vote for you anyway and if you will let your whiskers grow I will try and get the rest of them to vote for you.

"You would look a great deal better for your face is so thin. All the ladies like whiskers and they would tease their husbands to vote for you and then you would be President. . . . I must not write any more. Answer this letter right off. Goodby. . . . Grace Bedell."

Obviously, Lincoln gave some serious thought to this letter from a little girl. Political enemies had made fun of Abe's smooth chin, at a time when most men wore some sort of face foliage.

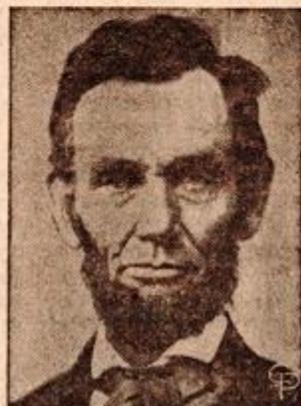
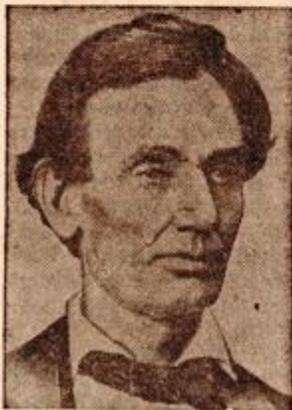
Busy as he was, Lincoln sat down and replied to Grace: "As to whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affectation if I were to begin now?"

He made a series of whistle-stop talks from the rear platform of his train as it rolled eastward toward the capital. As his train pulled into Westfield, N. Y., the Rail-Splitter announced: "I have a correspondent in this place and if she is present, I would like to see her."

"Who is she, Abe?" the crowd asked.

"Her name is Grace Bedell."

The girl was found and brought up to the train. "You see, Grace, I let these whiskers grow for you," the President-elect smiled. Then he bent down and kissed her.



Abe Lincoln—just before and after growing a beard.

Congratulations to our new Major Thomas J Key Camp, officers-elect!



Commander-elect
Walt Schley



1st LT. Commander-elect
Dan Peterson



Adjutant-elect
Lawson Rener



2nd LT. Commander-Elect
Paul Allen



Chaplain-elect
Walt McKenzie

Defending the Border



By early 1864, defending the Kansas/Missouri Border with Union forces was becoming more organized and efficient. The main reason for this was that, once again and for the duration of the war the Department of Kansas had been created from and was entirely separate from the Department of Missouri. Headquarters for the Department of Kansas was at Fort Leavenworth and the headquarters for the Department of Missouri was in St. Louis. The state of Kansas was divided into the northern and southern districts and Missouri had been divided into multiple sub-districts with the fourth sub-district along the Missouri/Kansas Border. However, the most important facet of this reorganization was that Kansans would defend Kansas from within Kansas and Missourians would defend Missouri from within Missouri. Yes, they would defend their respective states from each other because they hated each other and were fond of killing each other even though they were Union troops. The Kansans simply believed that everyone in Missouri were enemies of the United States! In retrospect, this was simply not true, but the Kansans were a stubborn lot with memories that remembered the War of Bleeding Kansas.



Thanksgiving Proclamation, 1863

In 1621, settlers in Massachusetts celebrated what has come to be regarded as the first thanksgiving in the New World. On October 3, 1789, George Washington issued a proclamation creating the first Thanksgiving Day designated by the national government of the United States of America, to be celebrated on Thursday, November 26, 1789. John Adams and James Madison similarly declared Thanksgiving a holiday. However, it wasn't until October 3, 1863, at the height of the Civil War, that President Abraham Lincoln issued a Thanksgiving Day proclamation encouraging Americans "in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea, and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens."

Thanksgiving has been celebrated in the United States ever since.



A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America.

THE year that is drawing toward its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added which are of so extraordinary a nature that they can not fail to penetrate and soften even the heart which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God.

In the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity, which has sometimes seemed to invite and provoke the aggressions of foreign states, peace has been preserved with all nations, order has been maintained, the laws have been respected and obeyed, and harmony has prevailed every where, except in the theatre of military conflict, while that theatre has been greatly contracted by the advancing armies and navies of the Union.

The needful diversions of wealth and strength from the fields of peaceful industry to the national defense have not arrested the plow, the shuttle, or the ship. The axe has enlarged the borders of our settlements, and the mines, as well of iron and coal as of the precious metals, have yielded even more abundantly than heretofore. Population has steadily increased, notwithstanding the waste that has been made in the camp, the siege, and the battle-field; and the country, rejoicing in the consciousness of augmented strength and vigor, is permitted to expect continuance of years with large increase of freedom.

No human counsel hath devised, nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and voice by the whole American people; I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea, and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. - And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, and union.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this third day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States the eighty-eighth.

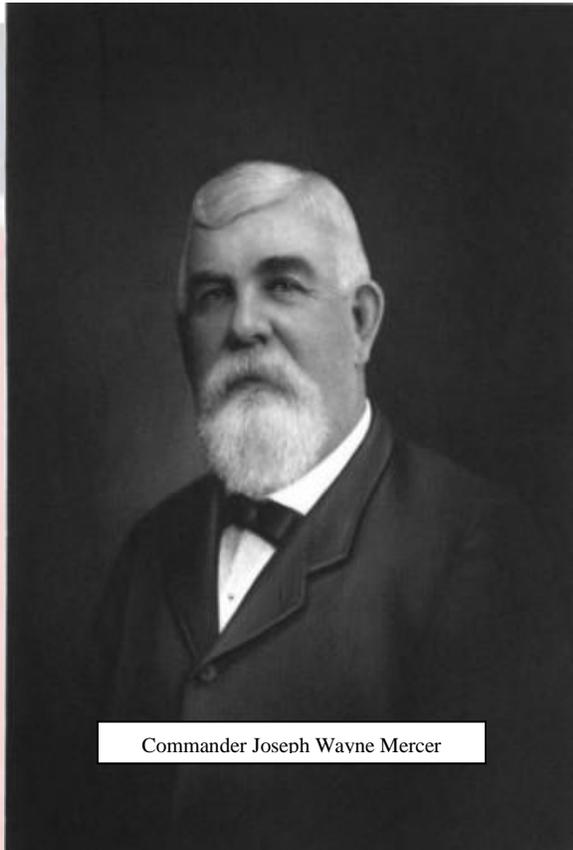
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

By the President:

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, Secretary of State.

Hope y'all had a great Thanksgiving full of fun, family and festivities.

Kansas City's 1st SCV Chapter Commander



Commander Joseph Wayne Mercer

In 1893, the state of Missouri had just one SCV chapter. The Commander was **Joseph Wayne Mercer** (1845-1906) who was born in Platte City, Missouri. During the Civil War he served in General Sterling Price's Confederate Army, was wounded at the battles of Lexington, Pea Ridge and at Pine Bluff where he would lose his right arm, incapacitating him for the duration of the war. Following the war he moved to Independence, Missouri where he was a school teacher.

Entering politics he was elected to the Independence City Council and later served as treasurer of Jackson County then as the State Treasurer for the State of Missouri.

In 1892, Mercer was elected to one term as the mayor of Independence, and then became a County Judge in Jackson County.

He is buried in Mount Washington Cemetery in Independence, Missouri



Instant Messages



Walter Schley <gunnerschley@gmail.com>
To: Walter Schley

Fri, Nov 25 at 8:27 AM ☆

I'm asking everyone to bring a new unwrapped toy to our next meeting on Dec 1, 2022.

The toys will go to the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program that covers all of metropolitan Kansas City (KS & MO).

Thank you all in advance,
Walt Schley
Chaplain, Major Thomas J. Key SCV Camp #1920
gunnerschley@gmail.com
(816) 377-9438



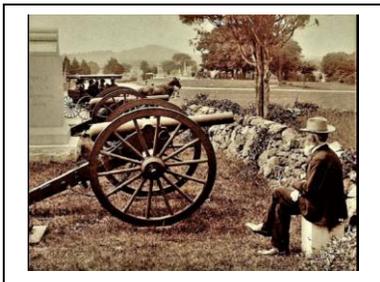
Ms Linda Curtiss, Chapter Founder/Charter President of the The Ladies of the Plains 2696, United Daughters of the Confederacy, has invited those interested, in joining them in a Zoom presentation for their February Chapter Meeting, *The Black participant in the War Between the States*, presented by Teresa Roane, Richmond, Va., and most recently, Archivist at the **Museum of the Confederacy**.

To register, email bridgetmcward@gmail.com or text your name to 785-640-2500.

Please reply prior to February 1st, 2023.

Trivia Question

How many US Army tanks were named for Civil War generals?



< Then Now >
Our forefathers
fought for a cause
they believed in.
They may be gone
but shall never be
forgotten!





Major **Thomas J. Key Camp** #1920
Johnson County, Kansas
Camp Activities



December Key Camp Meeting – December 1st
Lee- Jackson Banquet – January 21st, 2023

As always, we encourage your participation in your Camp's activities.
*Email **Commander Sewell** for more information on any events you are interested in assisting*



*******NEXT CAMP MEETING*******

Thursday December 1st

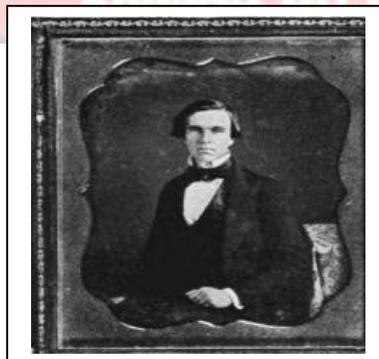
Presentation

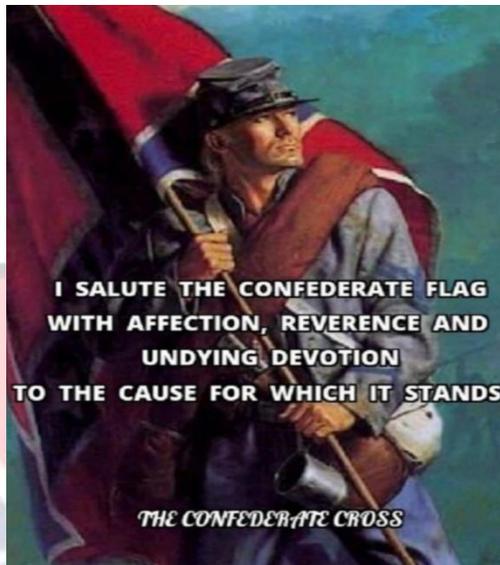
“The Man, who killed the man, who killed Lincoln”

The Key Camp will meet on Thursday October 6th at Zarda's Bar B-Q on the southwest corner of 87th and Quivera in Lenexa, Kansas with the official meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. You are invited to arrive early (6:00 p.m.) for BBQ,

The Telegraph Key

The Telegraph Key is a newsletter published for the Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The SCV is a non-profit organization with a patriotism historical and genealogical orientation and is not affiliated with any other organization. Opinions in this newsletter reflect the views of the writers and contributors and are not necessarily a statement of the views of the SCV, the Kansas Division, the Kansas Brigades, nor any other camp. Comments and articles are solicited.

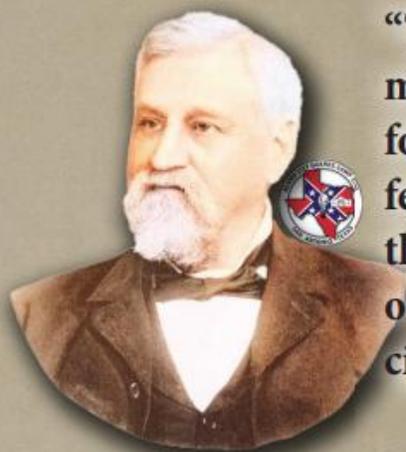




Key Camp Web Page:
www.majorthomasjkeycamp1920.com

Key Camp Facebook Page:
Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920

National SCV HQ Web Page
www.scv.org



“To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we submit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought; to your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier’s good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles he loved and which made him glorious and which you also cherish.”

Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee, Commander General, United Confederate Veterans, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1906

If you have read this issue of the Telegraph Key, tell Rick at the Thursday meeting and you will receive a free gift of unspeakable value!

See us on Facebook – Enter Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920