



# THE TELEGRAPH KEY

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

Vol. 24, No.

March 2023

## Major Thomas J. Key Officers



Commander – *Walt Schley*



1st Lt. Commander- *Dan Peterson*



2nd Lt. Commander- *Paul Allen*



Adjutant- *Lawson Rener*



Chaplin – *Walt McKenzie*



Editor- *Rick McPherson*

## The Confederate's Corner

*By Rick McPherson*

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

Next **Sunday**, March 5<sup>th</sup>, **Compatriot Lane Smith** will be appearing in the Bleeding Kansas Series held in Lecompton, Kansas. If you have not been to there, at the First Territorial Capitol building, you may want to take the opportunity to visit and listen to and support Lane.

Check out the flyer on page 3 for more information.

**March 4<sup>th</sup> is Confederate Flag Day**  
**Join us Saturday 10:00**  
**Gen. Joseph Shelby Marker**  
**Forrest Hills Cemetery**  
**KCMO**

Attendance at our 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Lee-Jackson Day Banquet included 48 members and guests.

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

# Miscellaneous



Due to the late January, Lee-Jackson Banquet, the Major Thomas J Key Camp did not meet in February. Our next meeting will be Thursday March 2<sup>nd</sup> with newly elected Commander, **Walt Schley** presiding. We are not a camp without you. Please join us at our next meeting. We look forward to seeing you.



Bleeding Kansas Program Series 2023 **Sunday, March 5, 2023 – 2:00 p.m.** Constitution Hall State Historic Site, 319 Elmore Street, Lecompton, KS. **Lane Smith** Costumed Historical Interpreter: “An 1869 Conversation with General Robert E. Lee.” Special Introduction by Dr. Herschel L. Stroud, Capt. (Retired) & Civil War Union Officer Costumed Historical Interpreter. Suggested donation is \$3.



There is no way to progress to a better tomorrow if we forsake the values and traditions passed onto us through the ages.

Tradition is, therefore, not an impediment to progress and improvement but a handrail to guide your actions so that you never fall short of the standards of courage and conduct handed down to you.

So, my brothers, I urge you:  
Become the man and woman your ancestors could only dream of becoming.  
Become the heroes of your future descendants will look upon for guidance.

It is your duty and responsibility.  
It is the only way to ensure a better tomorrow.



Key Camp Web Page Hits from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2023 to date 57 (Feb. – March +33)

# BLEEDING KANSAS

## PROGRAM SERIES 2023

CONSTITUTION HALL STATE HISTORIC SITE | HISTORIC LECOMPTON

2 p.m. Sundays • Suggested donation \$3 adults

A series of talks and dramatic interpretations on the violent territorial and civil war of Kansas and the nation, 1854-1865

### CAMP 1920

*Staring our own Lane Smith as General R.E. Lee*

MARCH 5

**"An 1869 Conversation with General Robert E. Lee"**

by Lane Smith, costumed historical interpreter.

*Special introduction by Dr. Herschel L. Stroud, D.D.S., O.D., Capt. (Retired)*

*2 Civil War Union officer costumed historical interpreter.*



Constitution Hall State Historic Site

319 Elmore St. | Lecompton, KS 66050

785-887-6520 • [www.lecomptonkansas.com](http://www.lecomptonkansas.com)

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

# The man who conned the Confederacy



“Save your Confederate money, boys, the South shall rise again” is an old Southern saying.

And a good many Southerners saved lots of Confederate currency back in the day. Now, 160 years later, some of it is valuable. But not all of it is genuine. Because a surprisingly large quantity of bills were produced by an enterprising Yankee. Here’s the story of the man who conned the Confederacy.

One February day in 1862, Samuel Upham had a “Eureka!” moment. The 42-year-old Philadelphia shopkeeper had led a colorful life. He grew up on a Vermont farm, served a hitch in the Navy, and then became a miner during the California Gold Rush. Though he didn’t find his fortune, he did launch Sacramento’s first daily newspaper.

But he soon grew homesick and settled in Philly, where he opened a store that sold stationery and toiletries. He was doing OK;

not great, but he was paying the bills while always on the lookout for new ways to make a quick buck.

Business picked up when the Civil War started in 1861. Sam utilized his printing experience to produce and sell a variety of colorful mail envelopes that appealed to customers during the initial outburst of wartime patriotism. But by early 1862, flag-waving fervor was fading. Sam needed a new gimmick.

That was when the idea hit him. He noticed Northerners were fascinated by pieces of newly printed Confederate money sent home by Union soldiers. Sam realized he could print copies of the captured currency and sell them as souvenirs.

He took an actual \$5 Confederate note and made 3,000 copies of it, which he sold for a penny each. In a matter of days, his supply had sold out. Sam knew he was on to a good thing.

So he produced a bigger batch of bogus bills and advertised them nationally in leading publications such as Harper's Weekly. He dutifully printed "Facsimile Confederate Note — "Sold wholesale and retail by S.C. Upham 403 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia" on the bottom of each copy" Again, they sold like the proverbial hotcakes.

Because Sam's notes were so carefully printed, criminals involved in illegally buying cotton from the South and smuggling it North snatched up the counterfeit cash. They cut off the "facsimile" line and paid for the illicit cotton with Upham's counterfeit bills, which then circulated around the Confederacy.

Within 90 days, Sam's idea had mushroomed into a full-blown cottage industry. In April alone, he sold 80,000 pieces. By May he was selling more than one dozen different Confederate bills and stamps. Demand was so brisk he upped the price from a penny to a nickel and reminded customers in his advertisements, "Beware of Base Imitations!"

However, Sam's bright idea caused heartburn in Washington. Some authorities worried the Confederacy might retaliate by flooding the North with counterfeit Yankee money. Others thought Sam was somehow breaking the law. But a review of the statutes found Sam wasn't violating anything. He wasn't producing bills for use by the Confederate government; he was only making souvenirs. And while it was illegal to trade with Confederates, there was no law against making copies of the enemy's money and stamps, which bad guys then used in their schemes. Sam's hands were clean.

At that point, something interesting happened. Its possible Secretary of War Edwin Stanton may have decided, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." Because Sam's notes began appearing on genuine banknote paper. There is no evidence one way or the other, yet some historians suspect Stanton may have secretly provided Sam with the paper to help destabilize the Confederate economy.

If that were the case, he needn't have bothered; the South printed so much paper money it triggered runaway inflation, thus severely damaging their economy all by themselves. By war's end, CSA notes were only worth pennies on the dollar, if that. Sam said he printed a total of 1.56 million fake Confederate notes with a face value of around \$15 million. He claimed to have made \$50,000 from his venture or about \$1.3 million today. And that's not whistling Dixie.



# 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Kansas Division Sons of Confederate Veterans Reunion Army of Trans Mississippi



**Saturday June 17th, 2023**  
**Kansas Museum of the National Guard**  
**8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.**

## Guest Speaker



Mr. Jim Dick  
Co-Site Administrator  
Mine Creek Battlefield  
State Historical Site

State Commander Lawson Rener and officers; invite you to the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual, Kansas Division Sons of Confederate Veterans Reunion on June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the Museum of the Kansas National Guard in Topeka, Kansas.  
125 SE Airport Drive Topeka, KS 66619

Our guest speaker will be Mr. Jim Dick of the Mine Creek Battlefield in Pleasanton, KS. Elections, presentations of awards and auction will follow.  
A catered lunch is included. \$30 per reservation due by June 15<sup>th</sup>

Send your reservations/checks to Dick Croft  
11017 S 151<sup>st</sup> St. West, Clearwater, KS 67206

## Kansas Division Camps

Colonels Lewis & Harrison Camp #1854  
Topeka, KS

Brigadier General William Steele Camp #1857  
Leavenworth, KS

Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920  
Lenexa, KS

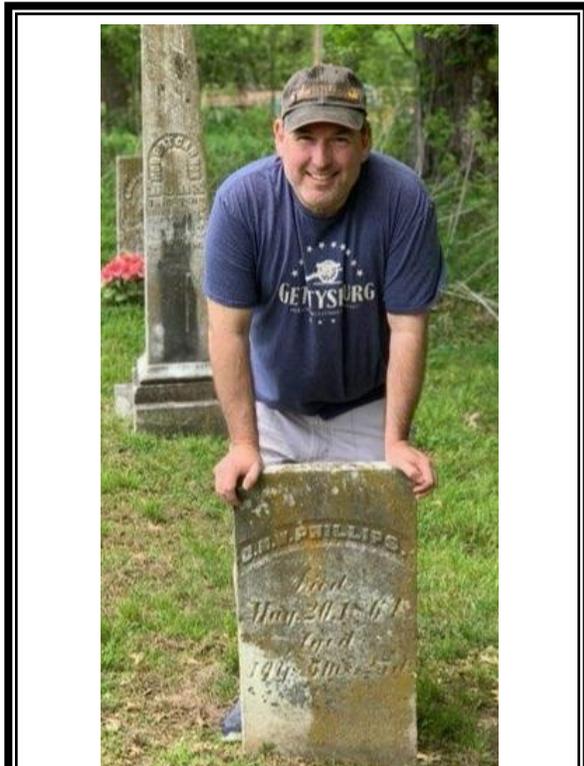
South Kansas Camp #2064  
Wichita, KS

Brigadier Generals Buckner & Chilton Camp #2227  
Dodge City, KS

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

# Murdered by Bushwackers

Submitted by **Adjutant Lawson Renner**  
(Where's the beard?)



Lawson's 3X great grandfather



The article reads:

Our county was thrown into great excitement by the murder of a well known and respectable citizen of this county. As near as we have been able to ascertain the facts, they are as follows:

Elder C.M. W. Phillips, formerly Chaplain of the 334<sup>th</sup> regiment E.M.M. was in his shop late in the evening on Friday, the eighth, repairing a pistol for one of his neighbors, when suddenly two men on horseback rode up and inquired if they could stay all night. Mr. Phillips said he did not know and asked them where they were from. They said they were from Brunswick. He then asked them their names. They told him if he would come to the door he would know them. He then stepped to the door, when they demanded he surrender. Mr. Phillips knew the men and knew them to be bushwackers, and being a man of great courage, drew his revolver, but instead of offering it to them, he gave one of them the contents of one of the barrels, which passed through the left breast. The bushwackers then fired on Mr. Phillips, the ball passing through his head, killing him instantly.

The bushwackers then ran off at full speed, and after getting about a quarter of a mile, the wounded man fell from his horse and died immediately. This ended a most bloody affair. The bushwacker killed was known by the name of Walker. We regret the death of Mr. Phillips.....

Editor: Mr. Phillips died May 20, 1864



Major

# Thomas J. Key Camp

#1920



Johnson County, Kansas  
Camp Activities

**Confederate Flag Day - March 4th**

**Lane Smith appearing as General Lee – Lecompton, KS March 5th**

**Confederate History Month - April**

**Park Day at Mine Creek Battlefield – May 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Fayetteville Cemetery Memorial Service – June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Kansas Division SCV Reunion – June 17<sup>th</sup> – Topeka, KS**

*As always, we encourage your participation in your Camp's activities.*

*Email **Commander Schley** for more information on any events you are interested in assisting*



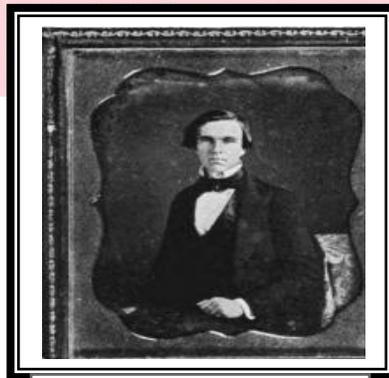
## \*\*\*\*\*NEXT CAMP MEETING\*\*\*\*\*

**April 6th 2023**

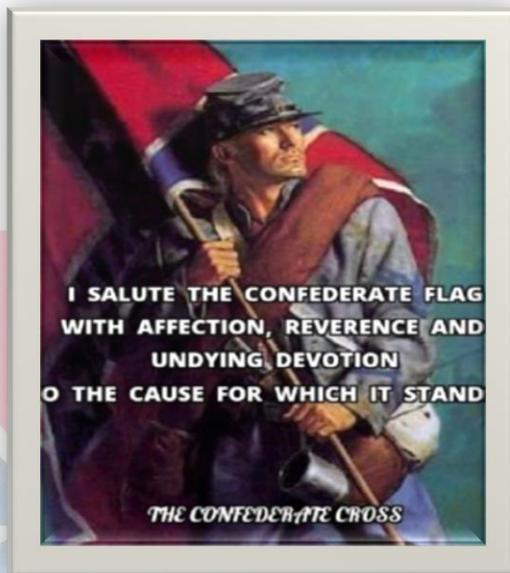
The Key Camp will meet on Thursday April 6th at Zarda's Bar B-Q on the southwest corner of 87th and Quivera in Lenexa, Kansas with the official meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. You are invited to arrive early (6:00 p.m.) for BBQ, conversation and camaraderie.

### **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.



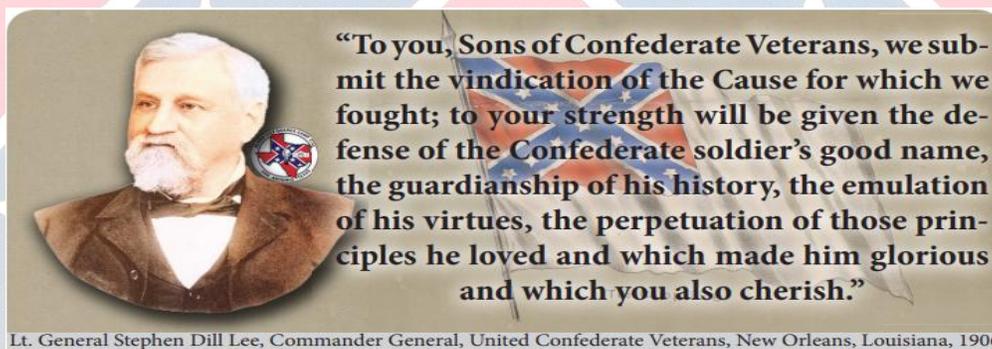
Major Thomas J Key



**Key Camp Web Page: [www.majorthomasjkeycamp1920.com](http://www.majorthomasjkeycamp1920.com)**

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

**National SCV Web Page  
[www.scv.org](http://www.scv.org)**



*Individuals attending events hosted by the **Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920** and the **Sons of Confederate Veterans**, by virtue of their attendance, agree to the usage of their likeness in the any Camp Newsletter, any **SCV/Camp** website and/or on any **SCV/Camp** Social Media outlet, or any other **SCV/Camp** material.*