



# THE TELEGRAPH KEY

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

Vol. 22, No 9

September 2021

## Major Thomas J. Key

### Camp Officers

#### Commander

Matt Sewell

#### 1st Lt. Commander

Vacant

#### 2nd Lt. Commander

Dan Peterson

#### Adjutant

Lawson Rener

#### Chaplin

Walt Schley

Newsletter 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 Business of August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021*



**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander Dan Peterson** presided over a full house attending our August meeting. **Adjutant Lawson Rener** reported that we had 43 members that had paid their dues to date. He also updated our financial report and was made aware of the previous vote to send a \$500 financial gift toward the "Re-interment celebration" of Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest to be held September 18th.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander Peterson** reminded the members gathered of our upcoming Camp Activities and passed around signup sheets for those willing to assist.

In addition, **Compatriot's Tim Peterson** and **Walt Schley** spoke briefly on the just completed SCV National Convention in Kenner, Louisiana of which they both attended.

Those that have seen the program for next year's [127th Sons of Confederate Veterans National Reunion](#) in Georgia should really get excited about attending it. Among the highlights are four battlefield tours. This would be an excellent time to plan ahead for participating. We will have updates for you as that event draws near.

The floor was then turned over to **Compatriot Lane Smith** who gave an entertaining and informative presentation on the Trial of Jefferson Davis. **Compatriot Smith** portrayed both Judge and Lawyer in his presentation and dressed in period clothing.

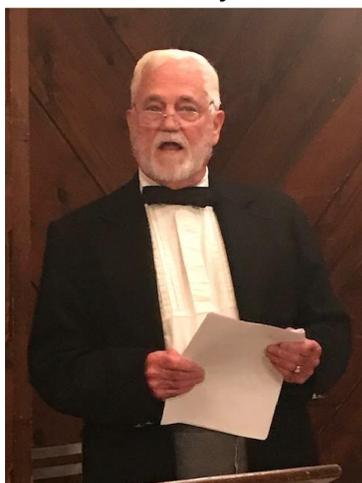
The intent of the trial was to find Davis guilty of treason and to hang him with the hope that swift justice would prevail. However, Jefferson Davis was denied a speedy trial and in his defense the Constitution, the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention and the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions written by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison would all prove the government's case to be lacking.

**Lane** asserted each of these documents protected the states as sovereign, free and separate of a "Central Government" and that it derives its power first from the states and then from its citizens.

Jefferson Davis would be released after more than two years in confinement without ever coming to trial. Bail of \$100,000 was raised for his release after which Davis would relocate to Montreal, Cuba, Europe and Scotland. Eventually in 1868, he was given a Presidential Pardon and the following year (1869) his case was dismissed.

On November 6, 1889 Davis fell ill while he was embarked on a steamboat in New Orleans and later succumbed of bronchitis and malaria on December 6, 1889 at his Beauvoir home. Initially entombed in New Orleans, he was later re-interred at Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia.

President Jimmy Carter restored Davis's United States Citizenship on Oct 17, 1978.



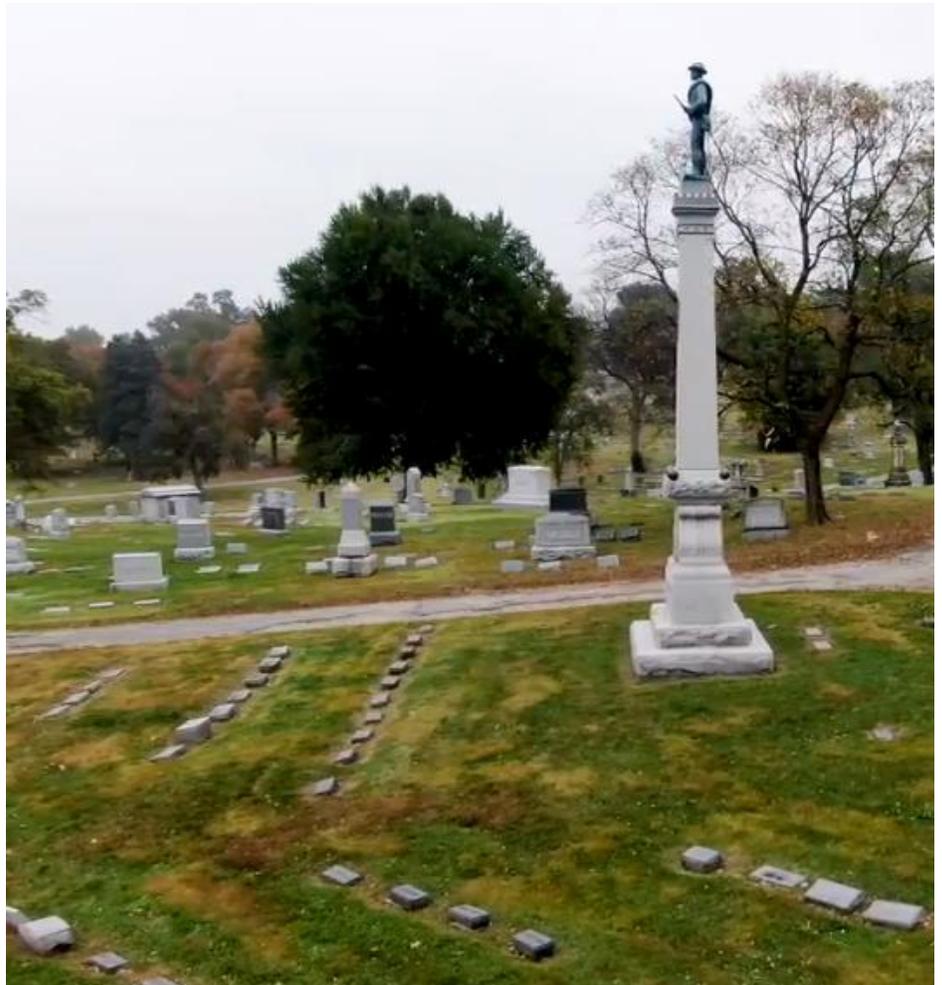
<<< This is **Compatriot Lane Smith**, not  
Jimmy Carter  
( just in case you didn't know)

"If you bring these [Confederate] leaders to trial it will condemn the North, for by the Constitution secession is not rebellion. Lincoln wanted Davis to escape, and he was right. His capture was a mistake. His trial will be a greater one."  
Chief Justice Salmon P. Chase, July 1867

**Thank you Lane - Great performance!**

In Forest Hill Cemetery, located at 69th and Troost, 75 unmarked graves are a part of this area's Civil War history. This Confederate burial ground wasn't their first resting place; they were first buried where they fell, then moved to a small burial ground and finally made their way to an area marked with a monument.

Among those buried (and marked) here is Brigadier General Joseph O Shelby who led a cavalry division during Price's invasion of Missouri. Following the collapse of the Confederacy, rather than surrendering, Shelby led part of his force to Mexico where he unsuccessfully offered their services to each side of that conflict.



### **The Confederate Monument in Forest Hill Cemetery**

The healing process post-war for those a part of "The Lost Cause" was to memorialize their fallen soldier's memories in speeches and in stone. During Reconstruction, no one had the money to invest in the proper burial of so many that fell on the battlefields.

Around 1866, a local man named George W. Briant told some of his friends that if they

would remove the bones of these Confederate soldiers from the trenches, he would give them a proper burial place.

Briant deeded a small fraction of his land to the Byram's Ford Internment Association so that men hastily buried along the battleground could be placed in a proper cemetery. The cemetery

was on the southeast corner of current-day Troost Ave. and Gregory Blvd.

On May 20, 1871, thousands gathered at the little burial ground to honor five bodies that had been removed from local farms that were part of the Battle of Westport. They had been interred without known names or ranks.

Joining these unknown soldiers at the Confederate cemetery was one colonel idolized for his service. Colonel Upton Hays, a 30-year-old local man-turned-militant, had fallen in Newtonia, Mo. in 1862 with a bullet through the head. It was at his family's wishing that he be re-interred at the Confederate cemetery. Those present when he fell were able to identify the grave, dig him up and carry him back to Jackson County, Missouri.



Col. Upton Hays

As the crowd gathered, words of honor were bestowed upon the fallen Confederate colonel. *“Col. Upton Hays was a Missourian. He was a man that never knew an hour of fear. . . He was brave, generous, true, devoted, noble- a patriot.”*

By 1890, as roads were being widened, the cemetery that had simple rocks marking those buried there was being threatened. It was

proposed in the Kansas City Star that they “may move bodies to Forest Hill and erect an appropriate monument.” Forest Hill Cemetery, started in 1888, was just across the street from the infringed-upon cemetery and held 320 acres of land between Troost Ave. and Prospect Ave.

By this point, at least 70 unidentified bodies had been moved to the little space. Many of these soldiers were said to have served under Gen. Jo Shelby.

Rather fittingly, Forest Hill sat on the site of Gen. Shelby's last battle against the Union troops. Today, there is a marker inside the cemetery commemorating “Shelby's Last Stand.” It was stated that the Confederate cemetery held the remains “among the best and bravest in Shelby's command.”

Between 1893 and 1894, around 70 bodies of Confederate soldiers along with Col. Hays were moved for a third and final time to lots donated by Forest Hill Cemetery.

The bodies had been moved together inside Forest Hill, but there still was no monument to mark them. At the turn of the century, the Daughters of the Confederacy moved to change this. They hosted balls, concerts and lectures to raise the \$5,000 needed.

Memorial Day 1902, thousands gathered, including several hundred ex-Confederate soldiers, near the southeast corner of Forest Hill to see the monument “In Memory of Our Confederate Dead” unveiled. The project was backed by some of the most prominent men of the city.

They had talked of placing the monument on The Paseo or another spot on the battlefield; however, many men, including former mayor of Kansas City Turner Gill, believed Forest Hill was

the most appropriate place because “that is where the bodies lay of the men whose memory it is proposed to perpetuate.”

It’s hard to miss the monument inside Forest Hill Cemetery, yet so many don’t know it is there. Perched upon the top of a granite shaft high above the air is a Confederate soldier.

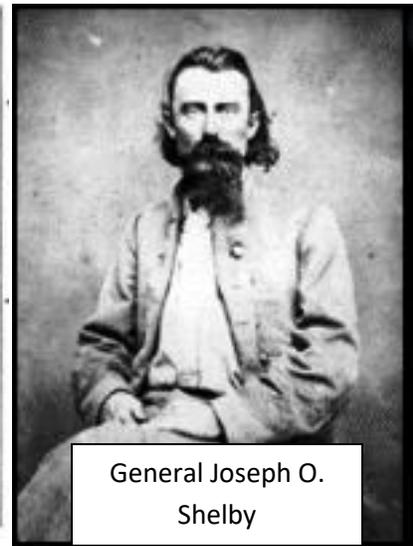
Situated in highly public places, such as parks and cemeteries, monuments aren’t just history, a remembering of what had happened in a particular place, but also a conscious celebration.

This monument is not the only remaining marker to Confederate soldiers in the area, but it holds importance in the fight to save those unmarked graves of fallen men left in the trenches of the battlefield.

Just weeks before his death Jo Shelby asked, “have you any room for me in that burying ground out at Forest Hill for me? When I die, I want to be buried there among my old soldiers.” In February of 1897 he was laid to rest among his fellow soldiers



CHILDREN WHO UNVEILED THE CONFEDERATE MONUMENT AT FOREST HILL CEMETERY, KANSAS CITY.



General Joseph O. Shelby

*Children who unveiled the Confederate monument at Forest Hill Cemetery, Kansas City.*

# Morning Dawns upon the Battlefield

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On October 25, 1864, on the banks of Mine Creek, two Union brigades of approximately 2,500 troops defeated approximately 7,000 Confederates from General Sterling Price's Army of Missouri. Federal Colonels Frederick W. Benteen and John H. Philips led the attack in one of the largest cavalry battles of the Civil War and a major battle fought in Kansas. Their dramatic story comes alive at Mine Creek Battlefield.



As sun slowly rises as the start of another hot, summer day in a Kansas field that runs along a small creek named Mine Creek, Union soldiers prepare their morning coffee in preparation of what will be the largest cavalry battle to be fought west of the Mississippi.



A line of Confederate Infantry get their orders from their commander as they prepare to march toward the Union line. Soon line of Union cannons come alive firing upon the approaching Confederate cavalry.





The Union infantry fires the first shots as Gen. Lee (**Lane Smith**) visits with the troops.



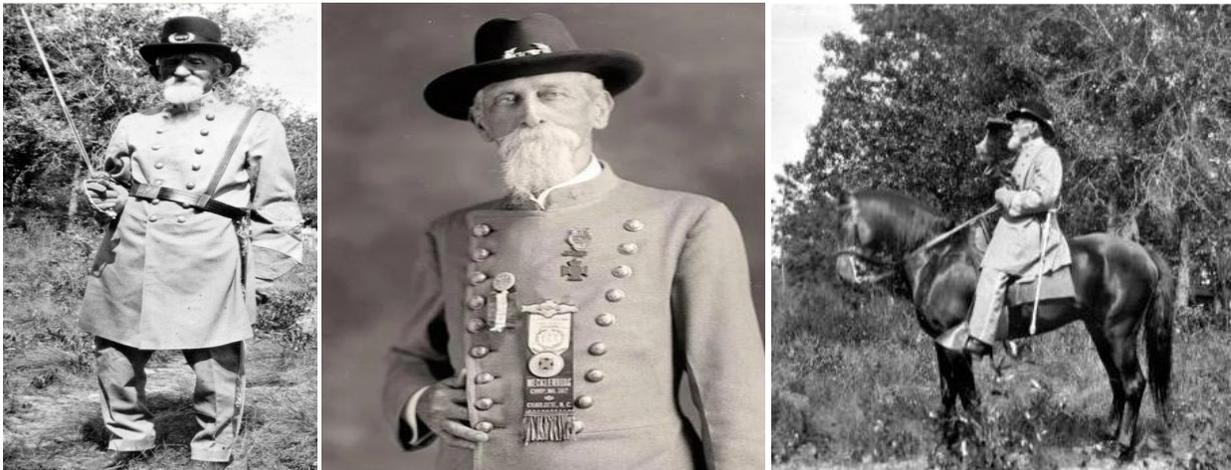
Watching all the actions from an air conditioned position were **Compatriots Paul Allen, Larry Tatum and Dan Peterson** (why are you sweating?) while General's Lee (Lane Smith) and Grant read their fan mail. Who knew they were such good buddies? **Compatriots Gary Foster and Rick McPherson** were also participating with the Key Camp at the Mine Creek Military Park.



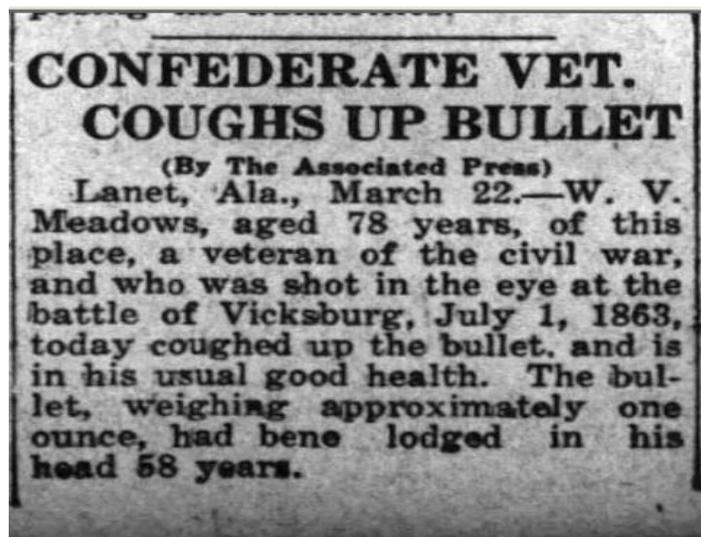
Meanwhile, a group of local town people sat comfortably inside the Mine Creek media room as General's Lee and Grant re-enacted the famous surrender of Confederate forces at Appomattox.



In April of 1917, 81 year old, Civil War veteran, Captain Edward Camden of Volusia County, Florida, put on his uniform and attempted (unsuccessfully) to enter the draft on the first day of World War 1. Lots of Confederates viewed themselves as American patriots. No doubt he would have scared the living daylights out of the German's running around waving his sword.



#### In Other News





Remembering our Confederate Ancestors

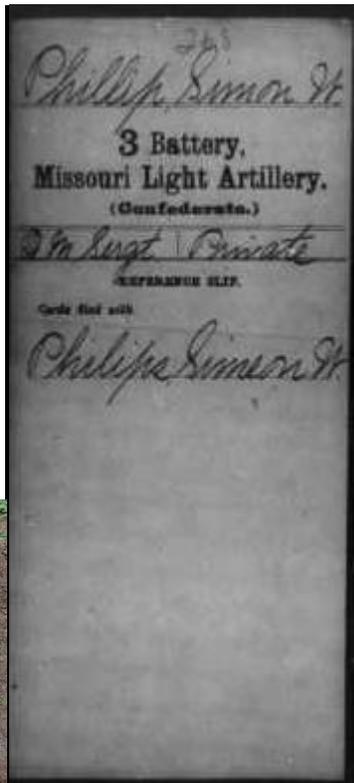
“Every soldier’s grave made during the unfortunate civil war is a tribute to the American valor. And while when those graves were made and we differed widely about the future of the Government, those differences were long ago settled by- the arbitrament of arms— and the time has now come in the evolution of sentiment and feeling under the providence of God, when, in the spirit of fraternity, we should share with you in the care of the graves of the Confederate soldier.”

Sacramento Dailey Union-December 1898

“If You Speak Their Name, They Are Not Gone”



**Compatriot Lawson Rener** recently replaced a marker for one of his kin born in Hardy, West Virginia and served in the C.S.A. The new marker replaced one that had deteriorated over time. Rener made this happen through the VA and placed the marker himself. What a great way to honor his memory and your own family heritage.





## Tell us About Your Ancestor

Submitted by **Compatriot Walt Schely**

Private Elihu Baker served in Company A, Fain's 63<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee Infantry and was **Walt Schley's** 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandfather. Elihue was born in Washington, Tennessee in 1818 and married Morning Ann Read in April 1838 in Claiborne Co., TN. Together they had 13 children.

In July 1862 Elihu joined Fain's Regiment (later the 63<sup>rd</sup> Regiment and the absorbed by the 74<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Regiment) where they would fight at Chickamauga, the Knoxville Campaign, then become a part of the Northern Army of Virginia. His regiment participated in the *Key River Defense* overlooking the James River at Drewry's Bluff in Chesterfield County, Virginia where numerous steamers, schooners and sloops were sunk, essentially blocking the river to repulse the Federal gun boats including the famous Monitor from their attack of the fort.



1865 View



Same view in 2012

The view above came from a 1965 postcard that had the caption, "One reason why we did not go to Richmond" as indeed, guns like the one shown above at were formable deterrents to wooden ships advancing upon Richmond. However, the iron clads like the Monitor tried but their guns couldn't elevate high enough to reach the top of the 90-foot cliffs.

Elihu's regiment would continue to fight into the Appomattox campaign but unfortunately much of the records of this regiment have been lost or destroyed as is all too common and it is unsure when Elihu's service was completed.

Elihu died in February, 1880 in rural Worth County, Missouri (between Maryville and Bethany)



Published in "Harper's Weekly", January-June 1862, depicting USS *Galena* at the head of the attacking force with USS *Monitor* off her starboard quarter. Among the other ships, the gunboat *Naugatuck* is identifiable in the lower right. The city of Richmond, Virginia, is shown in the left center distance.

### Pea Ridge National Military Park: Courtesy of **Compatriot Lawson Renner**



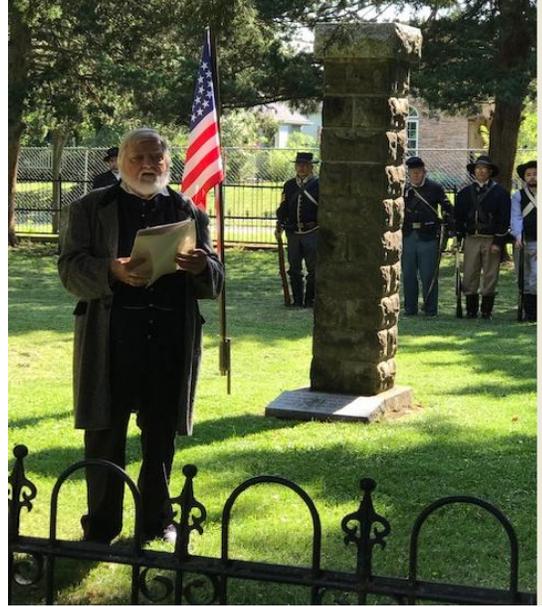
Above: Taken at Pea Ridge National Military Park in Benton County, Arkansas (aka Elkhorn Tavern) by **Compatriot Lawson Renner**. Lawson was passing through during his trip to Central Arkansas where his daughter attends college. The battle was fought March 7 and 8, 1862 to which the fate of Missouri was decided. The battle proved to be a turning point in the war in the West. Over 23,000 soldiers fought and died on these grounds, many of the Union dead are buried at the Fayetteville National Cemetery while the Confederate Cemetery, also in Fayetteville is the final resting place for the soldiers of the South

The Lone Jack Civil War Battlefield, Museum & Soldier's Cemetery is the only Civil War Museum in Jackson County, Missouri and one of the few battlefields where the soldiers, who perished during the battle, are still buried on the battlefield.



The Confederate Color guard prepares to fire in salute to those who fell on the battlefield at Lone Jack, Missouri August 16, 1862.

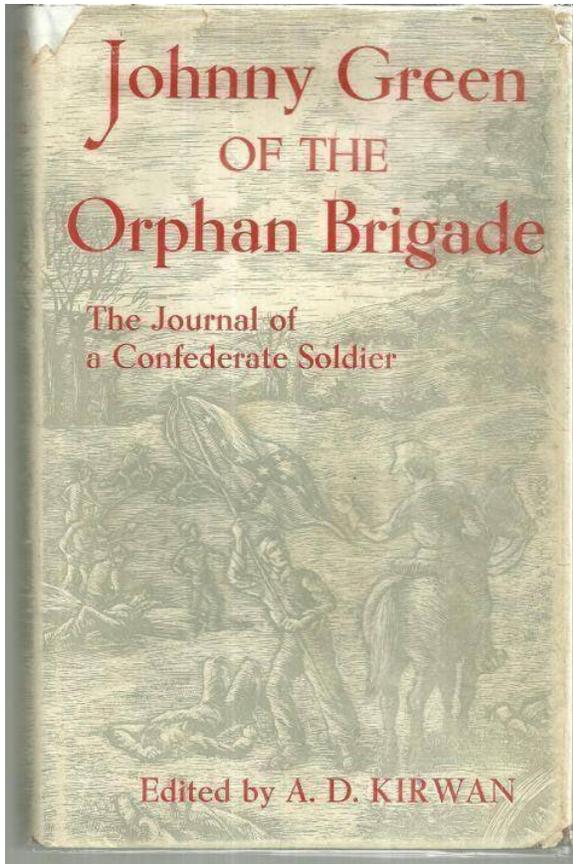




Civil War artifacts displayed by the Sons of Confederate Veteran's **Major Thomas J Key Camp** were viewed by many folks and especially by young families who all said they were very interested in their history. Above a young fella posed wearing one of the uniforms on displayed. In discussing mutual genealogy, this boy's family was a distant cousin to **Compatriot Rick McPherson** that trace back 1635 Connecticut (small world indeed).



*Many thanks to **Paul Allen, Rick McPherson, Dan Peterson, Walt Schley and Gary Foster (not pictured)** for giving your time to represent your **Major Thomas J Key Camp** at Lone Jack on Saturday August 14<sup>th</sup>. In addition to displaying period artifacts they answered questions of numerous visitors to the site throughout the day. Perhaps even more enjoyable was the camaraderie and conversation.*



"Our baptism of fire was a terrible ordeal; about one third of our entire army was killed or wounded. Many of the flower of the manhood of our country lay cold in death. Ben Weber was shot through the heart while standing touching my left elbow; he fell and called out "Uncle Nat goodbye; give them all my love at home" turned over once in his agony and was dead.

Henry Vickers on my right was shot through the elbow and said: "Johnnie I'm afraid I will bleed to death." I said "No. I will take your handkerchief and tie it around your arm so as to stop the bleeding. I fired at a man ready to fire at us and then tied up his arm so as to staunch the flow of blood. Then he said to me "I can't shoot with my arm in this fix; do you suppose it would do for me to go to the rear?"

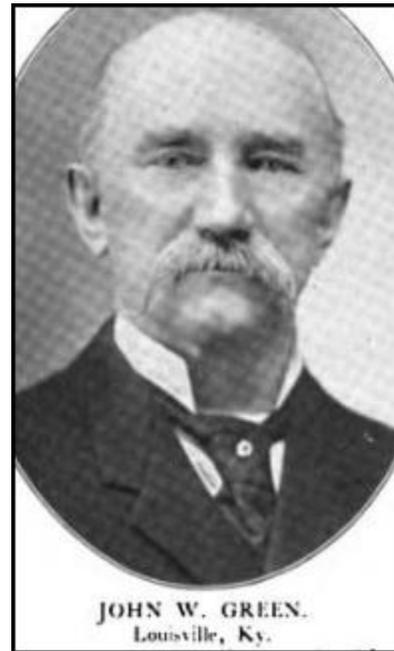
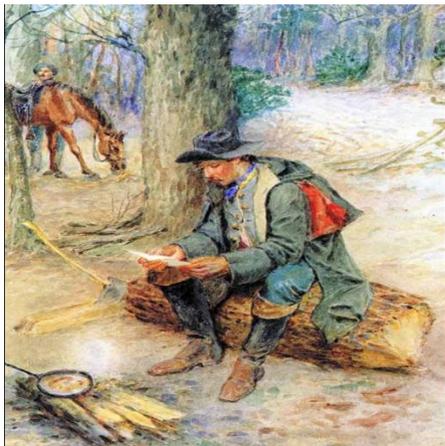
Just then, Corporal Casey, a color bearer was shot through the head and dropped dead, never uttering a word."

Shiloh

Sergeant Major Johnny Green

Kentucky Orphan Brigade

**Each Month's newsletter I will include an excerpt of Johnny Green's journal which I find to be an excellent, firsthand account of the struggles and horrors these civil war soldiers experienced.**





## Compatriots and friends

Today August 26, 2021, while finishing this month's news letter, 13 Marines were killed in Kabul, Afghanistan and numerous others were wounded. This is truly a sad day in our nation's history so I have chosen to devote one page specifically to honor the sacrifice and memory of these brave soldiers and to all of our veterans.

Our nation will soon be remembering the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11, and not only those that died in the attacks on New York and Washington D.C., but also those that perished in a heroic and unselfish act in the skies above of rural Pennsylvania. It's believed that plane was destined for the US Capitol building. Within that building were the politicians who would send our country's finest to serve in Iraq and ultimately Afghanistan over these past twenty years. Our military always deserves the full support and protection from our government from their first day to their final day of deployment. Bringing them home safely is the very least we can do for them.

The *Sons of Confederate Veterans* organization proclaims within our purpose the words, (that we will) "*perpetuate the hallowed memories of brave men*". And though it is meant to refer to our Southern ancestors, I hope y'all will allow me to suggest that we will always do the same for all of those that have served in our countries military.

I want to thank all of our members that served our country in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan and other places across this globe, both at home and abroad and especially those of you who are **Purple Heart** recipients. We are all grateful to you, for your service, sacrifice and patriotism and are honored to be among you. *Rick*



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



## *Coming Up Next*

### *Major Thomas J Key Camp Annual Picnic*

September 11, 2021 11:30 a.m.

Shawnee Mission Park Shelter #5

Join us for our annual camp cookout- sign up next meeting or contact *Commander Sewell*



### *General Nathan Bedford Forrest Re-interment*

September 17 - 18, 2021

SCV Headquarters in Columbia, Tennessee

*(Reservations to attend closed on August 31<sup>st</sup>.)*

### *35<sup>th</sup> Shawnee Indian Mission Festival*

October 9 – 10, 2021

Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site

3403 W. 53rd St. Fairway, KS 64070

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 pm. Saturday

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sunday

**Lee – Jackson Banquet**

January 2022

Abdullah Shrine Temple

5300 Metcalf Avenue Overland Park, Kansas 66202

*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\*\*\*\*\***

**Our Speaker - Matt Sewell on Civil War Folk Figure  
Emma Sanson, the "Sunbonnet Heroine" who rode with  
Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest**

**The Key Camp will meet on Thursday September 2<sup>nd</sup> at Zarda's Bar B-Q on the  
southwest corner of 87<sup>th</sup> and Quivera in Lenexa, Kansas with the official  
meeting starting at 7:00 p.m.**

**You are invited to arrive early for dinner, conversation and camaraderie.**

**The Telegraph Key**

*The Telegraph Key* is a newsletter published for the Major Thomas Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The SCV is a non-profit organization with a patriotic, historical, and genealogical orientation and is not affiliated with any other organization. Opinions in this newsletter reflect the views of the writers 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 Website Resources**

Key Camp: [www.MajorKey1920ksscv.org](http://www.MajorKey1920ksscv.org)

SCV National: [www.SCV.org](http://www.SCV.org)

Kansas Division: <http://www.ksscvc.org/>





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