

# THE UNION INFORMER

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Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
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**Capt. Benson Henry, center foreground, serves as commander of Battery M of the US Horse Artillery during the Civil War in 1862. (Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress collection.)**

## January Camp Meeting

This Thursday's camp meeting will again be a virtual meeting. Cdr.-elect Clint Anderson will email instructions to Brothers as to how to attend the meeting. It will follow last month's pattern, and it should be easy to connect. The meeting will begin at the usual time of 6:30 p.m.

Cdr. Mike Rusk has a program prepared, which is sort of a continuation of Brother Preston's program last month, and will be about abolitionist John Brown. We're probably all familiar with this divisive character in our history, but Mike will bring it to life and probably



tell us some things we didn't know. Brown was a leading figure in the abolitionist movement in the period before the Civil War. Speeches and passive methods were ineffective, he thought, and more violent means were necessary to end slavery.

## December Camp Meeting

Acknowledging the heightened concern among camp members who fall into the vulnerable group for the COVID-19 virus, the December camp meeting was conducted as the camp's first virtual meeting. JVC Clint Anderson took charge of preparations for the virtual aspects, and emailed instructions to the camp members,

as well as to our Department Cdr. Craig McKinley detailing how to attend. In the camp's first virtual meeting, members attended without leaving their homes. Limited to 40 minutes, some of the agenda was adjusted to fit the time allowed. However, we expect this limitation will not apply to future meetings that must be held virtually. There was time for an abbreviated program, which was given by Brother Scott Preston, and it was a good one. Rushing him was an injustice we hope to avoid in the future. It's quite encouraging to see our more recent members stepping forward to make their mark in the camp and to actively participate in camp affairs. This is vital to the camp's health and survival. We applaud them for their interest and initiative. Their ancestors would be proud.

## MISSOURI WOMAN BELIEVED TO BE LAST CIVIL WAR WIDOW DIES



Helen Viola Jackson is shown this April 2017 photo.

Jackson was believed to be the last surviving widow of a Civil War soldier when she died Dec. 16, 2020 in Marshfield, Mo. She was 101. In 1936, she was 17 when she married 93-year-old former Union soldier James Bolin. She had been his caregiver and he wanted to marry her so she would receive his soldier's pension. But after he died in 1939, Jackson never applied for the pension. (Photo courtesy Nicholas Inman via AP) (Nicholas Inman)

By JIM SALTER

Updated: January 7, 2021 - 4:10 PM

**O'FALLON, Mo.** — (AP) — Helen Viola Jackson's 1936 marriage to James Bolin was unusual to say the least: He was 93 and in declining health, and she was a 17-year-old schoolgirl.

Bolin was also a Civil War veteran who fought for the Union in the border state of Missouri. Jackson was almost certainly the last remaining widow of a Civil War soldier when she died Dec. 16 at a nursing home in Marshfield, Missouri. She was 101.

Several Civil War heritage organizations have recognized Jackson's quiet role in history, one that she hid for all but the final three years of her life, said Nicholas Inman, her pastor and longtime friend. Yet in those final years, Inman said, Jackson embraced the recognition that included a spot on the Missouri Walk of Fame and countless cards and letters from well-wishers.

"It was sort of a healing process for Helen: that something she thought would be kind of a scarlet letter would be celebrated in her later years," Inman said.

Jackson grew up one of 10 children in the tiny southwestern Missouri town of Niangua, near Marshfield. Bolin, a widower who had served as a private in the 14th Missouri Cavalry during the Civil War seven decades earlier, lived nearby.

Jackson's father volunteered his teenage daughter to stop by Bolin's home each day to provide care and help with chores. To pay back her kindness, Bolin offered to marry Jackson, which would allow her to receive his soldier's pension after his death, a compelling offer in the context of the Great Depression.

Jackson agreed in large part because "she felt her daily care was prolonging his life," Inman said.

They wed on Sept. 4, 1936, at his home. Throughout their three years of marriage there was no intimacy and she never lived with him. She never told her parents, her siblings or anyone else about the wedding. She never remarried, spending decades "harboring this secret that had to be eating her alive," Inman said.

After Bolin's death in 1939, she did not seek his pension. She also realized the stigma and potential scandal of a teenager wedding a man in his 90s, regardless of her reason. In an oral history recording in 2018, Jackson said she never spoke of the wedding to protect Bolin's reputation as well as her own.

"I had great respect for Mr. Bolin, and I did not want him to be hurt by the scorn of wagging tongues," she said. Inman and Jackson were longtime friends. She was a charter member of the Methodist church where he serves as pastor. One day in December 2017, she told Inman about her secret marriage to a much older man.

She mentioned in passing that he fought in the Civil War.

“I said, ‘What? Back up about that. What do you mean he was in the Civil War?’” Inman said.

Inman checked into her story and found that everything she told him was “spot on.” Officials at Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield sent him copies of Bolin’s service information. She identified where he was buried, in Niangua.

She also kept a Bible that he gave her — in which he wrote about their marriage. Those written words were good enough for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and other heritage organizations to recognize Jackson’s place in history.

After a lifetime of avoiding her past, Jackson embraced it in her final years, Inman said. She spoke to schoolchildren and had a Facebook page dedicated to her. She enjoyed getting cards and letters.

She also found new peace. A stoic nature that kept her from shedding tears at her own siblings’ funerals seemed to evaporate.

After Bolin’s relatives found out about Jackson’s role in his life, they went to the nursing home and presented her with a framed photo of him.

“She broke down and cried,” Inman recalled. “She kept touching the frame and said, ‘This is the only man who ever loved me.’”

## Camp Business

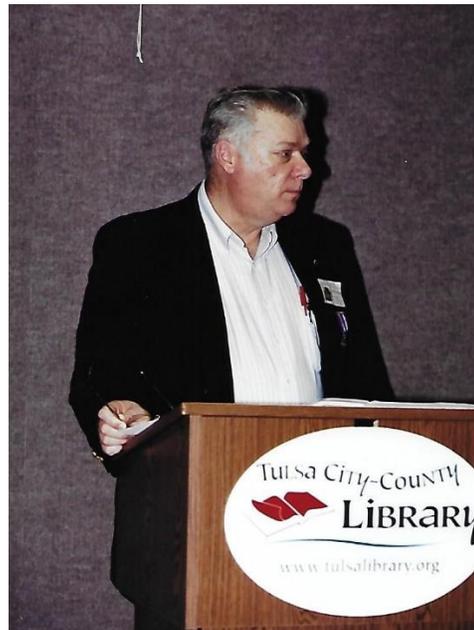
We have a new camp member joining this month: He is Ray Walker, Brother Charlie Walker’s sibling. Ray is planning to submit his membership application and dues check, which we expect will be accepted at the January meeting.

To prepare our new incoming camp commander for his duties, Cdr. Mike Rusk and SVC Carl Fallen met with him at a local park picnic table on January 15<sup>th</sup> to explain what is required and passed along documents and other items held in the camp commander’s possession. As JVC, Clint has performed admirably and shown his leadership in a variety of ways – never turning down a request to help the camp. For this meeting, Clint broke away from his duties at his steel company’s booth at the Chili Bowl races, so Clint is a busy guy.

All Indian Nations camp members should have gotten the OK Dept. General Order 1, designating our camp as

the host for the 2021 Department Encampment, which is to be shared with the Jacob Overturf Camp # 4. It is scheduled for May 8 and may be either an in-person, or a virtual meeting, depending upon the circumstances at the time.

Cdr. McKinley announced that there would be a Dept. planning meeting would be held on February 13, - possibly virtual - but further details are forthcoming.



**Indian Nations Camp Cdr. Carl Smith conducting a camp meeting in 2004.**

## PDC Carl Daggett Smith, II Obituary

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the death of Carl Daggett Smith II (Owasso, Oklahoma), born in Waltham, Massachusetts, who passed away on January 9, 2021, at the age of 75, leaving to mourn family and friends. You can send your sympathy in the guestbook provided and share it with the family. You may also light a candle in honor of Carl Daggett Smith II.

He was predeceased by his parents, Carl Daggett Smith and Florence Harriett Smith (Coburn). He is survived by: his wife Imogene "Jeannie" Smith (Young); his grandchildren, Dylan, Misty, Sarah, Isaac, Joseph, Anna, Mina, Charles and Evelyn; and his siblings, Cynthia Pickard (Bud) and Steven Smith (Karen).

A funeral service will be held on Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 1:00 PM.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Carl's memory to Oklahoma Firefighters Burn Camp, P. O. Box 287, Owasso, Oklahoma 74055.

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Carl Daggett Smith II, 75, was a U.S. Navy Veteran, Retired Tulsa Police Department Officer and Limestone Fire Department Chief.

Carl has been a continuous member of Indian Nations Camp almost since its inception in 1999. He is a Past Camp Commander, and a Past Oklahoma Department Cdr. His grandson, Dylan Goode, was our first and only junior camp member, who continued his membership long after he became an adult member. Brother Smith was well respected, and kept the camp's best interests uppermost in mind in all that he did. Obviously, he also had a strong interest in his family, guiding his son, Edward, also a camp member, toward good citizenship and a strong foundation for a career. Those of us who knew Carl will miss him and the support he so unselfishly gave Indian Nations Camp.

We salute Carl for his service to our country, our camp, and the Oklahoma Department, SUVCW. We wish to express our deepest sympathies to his widow, Florence Harriet, and the rest of his family.

## **Eulogy for our Departed Brother James Lewis "Jim" Orebaugh**

December 13, 1939 – December 18, 2020  
By William J. Andrews, PhD, PCC, PDC

Brothers, we join together in sadness upon hearing the news of the passing of our longstanding Brother, Jim Orebaugh. Jim was a font of knowledge about Civil War history, sharing many details about battles and persons who helped to shape our Nation through the tragic period of 1861-65. He had a deep understanding of perspectives of soldiers and sailors who served both the Federal and Confederate causes and often gave us enlightened perspectives and details about the conflict that deepened our understanding. When Jim attended a monthly meeting of the Jeremiah Smith #1 Camp of the SUVCW, we knew that the meeting would be interesting and informative. We will greatly miss Jim's gentle humor and wisdom which enriched our lives.

We send our deepest condolences to Jim's family and wish them peace and comfort during this difficult time. Mourning is a normal part of the time of loss of a family member. We hope that the cherished memories that he left them with during the course of his life will lift their spirits and help them to celebrate his life and remember him fondly.

We ask our Lord in Heaven to welcome our Brother Jim Orebaugh to rejoin with the spirits of his departed friends and family in a joyful eternal communion. As written in Psalms 23:6, "Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

We will miss our Brother Jim and can take comfort from the time that we were able to spend with him and the fact that his soul has gone to a better place where there is no pain, suffering, and sadness, there is only Joy. Please take comfort from these words of hope.

Editor's Note: Jim was also the current Commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Oklahoma Division.

## **Brother Gary Dean Tucker Obituary** December 11, 1948 - January 1, 2021

An obituary for our recently passed Brother Gary Dean Tucker Sr., a member of the Jeremiah Smith Camp, can be found at:

[Obituary | Gary Dean Tucker of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma | Buchanan Funeral Service](#)

I again wish to share our deepest condolences to his wife Barbara, his sons and our Brothers Gary Jr., Christopher, and his grandson Zachary and their wives and children.

Brother Gary Sr. was with the SUVCW for a short time. I'm sorry if you didn't get to meet him. He was a fine, upstanding man with a keen interest in history. His passing is a loss to Jeremiah Smith Camp #1, the Oklahoma Department, and the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War as a whole.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,  
Brother Bill Andrews



## **Camp Calendar**

Jan. 28	Camp Meeting – Zoom Video
Feb. 13	Dept Planning Meeting – Location TBA
Feb. 25	Camp Meeting – Zoom Video
May 8	Department Encampment – Location TBA

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