

A FINAL TRIBUTE TO THE G.A.R.



PHOTOGRAPH OF EIGHTY-THIRD ENCAMPMENT
Left to right: THEODORE A. PENLAND, *Commander in Chief*; CHARLES L. CHAPPEL, *Senior Vice Commander in Chief*; ALBERT WOOLSON, *Chief of Staff*; JOSEPH CLOVESE, ROBERT BARRETT, SR.; JAMES A. HARD, in wheel chair.

As we prepare for our own National Encampment — the 144th — let us remember the Boys in Blue and recall the “final tribute” delivered to them at their final National Encampment in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1949. The total membership of the G.A.R. at the time numbered only 16, and of those, only 6 Comrades were able to attend the Encampment. The following lines are taken from the official proceedings of the Encampment:

*Chairman Watkins*¹: The final tribute will be given by Mrs. Lena G. Barrett², national president of the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans.

Mrs. Barrett: The others have given you a history of the Grand Army of the Republic and a memorial. Mine is just a little bit different. Mine is a greeting.

Greetings to you comrades who are present today and a fervent wish that more could have made the trip for the encampment, the eighty-third.

As national president of the Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and a daughter of one of your comrades in arms, 1861-65, I want to wish for you a very happy encampment in Indianapolis.

¹ John A. Watkins (1898-1973) was Lieutenant-Governor of Indiana at the time and a veteran of both World Wars. He served as the presiding officer at the final Encampment of the G.A.R.

² ASUVCW National President Lena May (Gulick) Hewitt-Barrett (1875-1965) was a long-time member of Gen. W. S. Rosecrans Auxiliary in Los Angeles, California. She was the daughter of Cpl. James Harvey Glick (1844-1924) of Company A, 112th Illinois Infantry, and the wife of SUVCW Commander-in-Chief Dr. Ralph Raymond Barrett (1874-1954).

SUVCW National Patriotic Instruction - August 2025

You are few in number but your works as an organization stand out as the most prominent in our history since the Revolutionary period.

The comrades have creditably filled all offices of Government work they have been granted. They have performed all civic duties and have been home builders.

Your principles of government have been to carry on those laid down to us by those in authority in previous years.

We have not outgrown the letter of the law you gave to us. We will follow and not only recall, but remember, the teachings that you have given to us.

May you have health while here and on your way home, and may the Great Commander in Chief above keep for the generations to come the principles for which you made a voluntary sacrifice of your lives, be granted, and we remain the glorious Republic you fought to maintain.

May we never lose a plot of ground once dedicated to these loyal men who once tramped across those fields to preserve our Union. Those were the boys in blue, now our comrades of Civil War days.

You have been our guiding light in our years as well as in the duties you gave us to perform. We still hear that "Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching" and "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground."

We won't forget those "little green tents" on Memorial Day, nor all they mean to us or to our Nation. You are our "guiding light," the Grand Army of the Republic.

The final words from the official proceedings are as follows:

With the beautiful rendition of Taps and the echo of "God Be With You 'Til We Meet Again," the crowd, who had witnessed the final campfire of the Grand Army of the Republic, went back to their homes with a feeling of sadness in their hearts, but with the knowledge that God had been good to spare these men and permit them to attend one more encampment here on earth before they join that mighty throng who have gone on before.

The final gavel has sounded for the business sessions of the national encampment, but the organization will live until the last man silently folds his tent and steals away.

Old soldiers never die,
They simply fade away.



**We, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War,
carry on from year to year to ensure that the nation
never forgets their deeds and sacrifices.**

Remember the Boys in Blue!

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,
Tad D. Campbell, PCinC
National Patriotic Instructor

