



**Edward J. Norris
Commander in Chief
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War**



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**General Order #24
Series 2019-2020
5 May 2020**

1. On May 5, 1868, General John A. Logan, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic, issued his General Orders No. 11 which became the basis of Memorial Day. In it, he wrote: “Brothers, that is our great commission, we are the voice of those long gone, we are the ones who must teach the names and fan the flames of remembrance now and into the future” and “Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime.”
2. The following year, in General Logan’s General Orders No. 21 he wrote: “If our organization had no other object, that alone of keeping the resting-places of our nation’s defenders, by this annual commemoration, would be motive enough to hold us together in fraternal band.”
3. On June 28, 1968, Congress passed the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, which moved Memorial Day to the last Monday in May, which this year will be May 25th. This Act did not change our sacred obligation to remember and honor the memory of our nation’s defenders.
4. These words spoken by a Commander G. C. Sears of the George Wright Post No.1 of Portland, Oregon on May 30, 1882 still hold true today: “Let us recall their toils, their sufferings, their heroism, their supreme fidelity in camp, in prison pen, on the battlefield, and in the hospital, that the flag under which they fought, and from the shadow of whose folds they were promoted, may never be dishonored. That the country for whose union and supremacy they surrendered life, may have the fervent and enthusiastic devotion of every citizen. That as we stand by every grave as before an altar, we may pledge our manhood that the memory of our dead shall encourage and strengthen in us all a more loyal patriotism.”
5. I’ve read and heard that some Memorial Day ceremonies are being canceled due to the pandemic. My sincere wish is that most ceremonies will take place. If you can attend, please take the necessary health protection precautions. If not, find a grave of a Civil War veteran and remember his service.
6. On either the last Monday in May or on May 30th, consider purchasing a flower and placing it on the grave of a Civil War veteran whose resting place is undecorated. We certainly cannot decorate all of their graves but thousands would not be forgotten this year. Encourage family and friends to do the same. I hope our Brothers make this small remembrance of a Civil War veteran a yearly commemoration.

Ordered this 5th Day of May, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. J. Norris". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "E" and "N".

Edward J. Norris
Commander-in-Chief
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Attested:

Jonathan C. Davis, PDC
National Secretary
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War