

**May 1868 Decoration Day-May 2012**  
**Memorial Day Their Legacy- Our Mission**  
**May 2012 Patriotic Instruction SUVCW**  
**John W. Bates National Patriotic Instructor**

The Traditional story of our Memorial Day, which honors all Veterans in all Wars, has its roots as we know in Decoration Day established in May 1868 by The Grand Army of The Republic. With the issue of General John Logan's Order Number 11, The Tradition of honoring The fallen in our country really began. It has however evolved over the years into something a little different than what we in The SUVCW believe it should be. To Many Americans, Memorial Day is simply a long "Holiday" weekend without much thought of what it truly means. Its true significance is VERY IMPORTANT to all of us in our organization, and I hope to a majority of Americans. The very blessings we all enjoy have been given to us by a divine providence and a lot of blood, sweat and tears and lives. Millions of our Veterans have served our Nation, and the vast majority of them are unknown to anyone except their families and friends. From The American Revolution (1776-1783) to the Conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guard have protected who we are and our way of life from would be tyranny and oppressors. The threat of aggressors has always been suppressed by the sacrifice of our National Defenders. We as a Nation must Honor and remember those who gave, as President Lincoln so eloquently penned "The Last Full Measure of Devotion". As Americans it should be a Natural Event in our Lives to Pay tribute and Honor to all those who have served our cause. It is our DUTY in The SUVCW to participate in as many Memorial Day activities as we can. March in Parades, attend Cemetery services, place remembrance's at graves and all other things we can to honor our fallen heroes. It is also our charge to spread the word about these things to all we know. Let everyone you know that these men and women have paid the ultimate price to give us all our freedoms. This is our Duty, and it shall always be so.

Recently, I had the honor to receive a poem from a friend of mine that to me, summed up what The SUVCW and its mission honors. The following was written on August 3, 1956, right after the passing of Comrade Albert Woolson, the last surviving Member of The Grand Army of The Republic. My Friend, Mr. James Boyd wrote the following, and it has never been published before:

The Blue Line passes over the Hill  
The din that was theirs has long been still  
She watched them march-men in their prime  
Saw their steps slow with the passing of time  
Heard them slow to a shuffling gait  
As each rendezvoted with fate