

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION
SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

PLEASE:

- Type or print, using a ball-point pen, when filling out this form. Legibility is critical.
- Do not guess at the information. An answer of, "Unknown," is more helpful.
- Include a photograph of each viewable side and label it with name & direction of view.

- Thank You.

Type of Memorial

X Monument *with* Sculpture (Eagle) Monument with *Cannon*
 Monument *without* Sculpture Historical Marker Plaque

Affiliation

X G.A.R. (Post Name & No. John Sedgwick #17 & Gordon Granger #138) M.O.L.L.U.S.
 W.R.C. (Corps Name & No. _____) Other Allied Order
 SUVCW (Camp Name & No. _____) (Please describe below)
 X DUVCW (Tent Name & No. Mary A. Logan Tent #3 & Sara A. Rounds Tent #10)
 Other: _____

Original Dedication Date May 31, 1915 (Monday) Please consult any/all newspaper archives for a local paper's article that would have information on the *first* dedication ceremony and/or other facts on the memorial. Please submit a copy of your findings with full identification of the paper & date of publication. Thank you.

Location

The Memorial is *currently* located at: Santa Ana Cemetery
 Street/Road address or site location 1919 E. Santa Clara Ave.
 City/Village Santa Ana Township California County Orange

The front of the Memorial faces: North X South East West

Government Body, Agency, or Individual Owner (of private cemetery that Memorial is located in)...

Name Orange County Cemetery District Dept./Div. _____
 Street Address 25751 Trabuco Road
 City Lake Forest State CA Zip Code 92630-4348
 Contact Person Sam Randall Telephone (949) 951-9102

If the Memorial has been moved, please list former location(s)...

Physical Details

Material of Monument or base under a Sculpture or Cannon = Stone Concrete Metal X Undetermined
 If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) _____

Material of the Sculpture = ___ Stone ___ Concrete ___ Metal Undetermined
 If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) _____
 If the Sculpture is of metal, is it solid cast or "hollow?" Hollow _____

Material of Plaque or Historical Marker / Tablet = None _____

Material of Cannon = ___ Bronze ___ Iron - Consult known Ordnance Listing to confirm
 Markings on muzzle = _____
 Markings on Left Trunion _____ Right Trunion _____
 Is inert ammunition a part of the Memorial? ___ If so, describe _____

Approximate Dimensions (indicate unit of measure) - taken from tallest / widest points
 Monument or Base: Height Abt. 6' Width 33" Depth _____ or Diameter _____
 Sculpture: Height Abt. 2' Width _____ Depth _____ or Diameter _____

For Memorials with multiple Sculptures, please record this information on a separate sheet of paper for each statue and attach to this form. Please describe the "pose" of each statue and any weapons/implements involved (in case your photos become separated from this form). Thank you!

Markings/Inscriptions (on stone-work / metal-work of monument, base, sculpture)
 Maker or Fabricator mark / name? If so, give name & location found _____

The "Dedication Text" is formed: cut into material ___ raised up from material face

Record the text (indicate any separation if on different sides...) Please use additional sheet if necessary.
 South Facing Side: TO THE UNKNOWN DEAD OF THE CIVIL WAR 1861-65 U.S.A.
 West Facing Side: ERECTED BY DAUGHTERS OF VETERANS

Called the "Soldiers' Monument" in the "GAR Plot" by the local newspaper. Plot bought by the Trustees Mary A. Logan Tent for \$200.00 on June 30, 1904. Document was recorded on July 1, 1904 in book 108 page 26 of Deeds in the Orange County Recorder's Office. The location is identified as Lots No. 1 & 4, Block 10 and Lots No. 2 & 3, Block No 11, Section S of Record of Survey Map Book 4 page 67 of Misc. Maps of L.A. County. Change of ownership identified in OR Vol. 272 page 207 of deeds (Orange County) recorded on March 3, 1916 and then OR book 6434 page 400 granting that land to the Orange County Cemetery District No. 1, recorded on Feb. 15, 1963 as a memorial to the dead of the Civil War and not to be sold, alienated or transferred, and that all patriot orders shall have the right to hold memorial services upon said lots.

Environmental Setting

(The general vicinity and immediate locale surrounding a memorial can play a major role in its overall condition.)

Type of Location

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cemetery | <input type="checkbox"/> Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Plaza/Courtyard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> "Town Square" | <input type="checkbox"/> Post Office | <input type="checkbox"/> School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Municipal Building | <input type="checkbox"/> State Capitol | Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Courthouse | <input type="checkbox"/> College Campus | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Circle | <input type="checkbox"/> Library | _____ |

Surface Coating

Does there appear to be a coating? Yes No Unable to determine
If known, identify type of coating.
 Gilded Painted Varnished Waxed Unable to determine
Is the coating in good condition? Yes No Unable to determine

Basic Surface Condition Assessment (check one)

In your opinion, what is the general appearance or condition of the Memorial?
 Well maintained Would benefit from treatment In urgent need of treatment Unable to determine

Overall Description

Briefly describe the Memorial (affiliation / overall condition & any concern not already touched on) .
Daily Evening Blade (later known as the Santa Ana Register) newspaper articles mention a monument that was decorated by the GAR flagpole by the GAR prior to Memorial Day services, 1915. It is unknown at this time what the previous monument was. Daily Evening Blade articles indicate that a monument was there prior to 1900.

Supplemental Background Information

In addition to your on-site survey, any additional information you can provide on the described Memorial will be welcomed. Please label each account with its source (author, title, publisher, date, pages). Topics include any reference to the points listed on this questionnaire, plus any previous conservation treatments - or efforts to raise money for treatment. Thank you.

Inspector Identification

Date of On-site Survey April 18, 2001
Your Name Charles Beal
Address 21820 Kern St. City Yorba Linda
State CA Zip Code 92887-3719
Sgt. William Pittenger Camp 21, Dept. of California & Pacific

Please send this completed form to:

Thank you for your help, and attention to detail.

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
National Civil War Memorials Committee



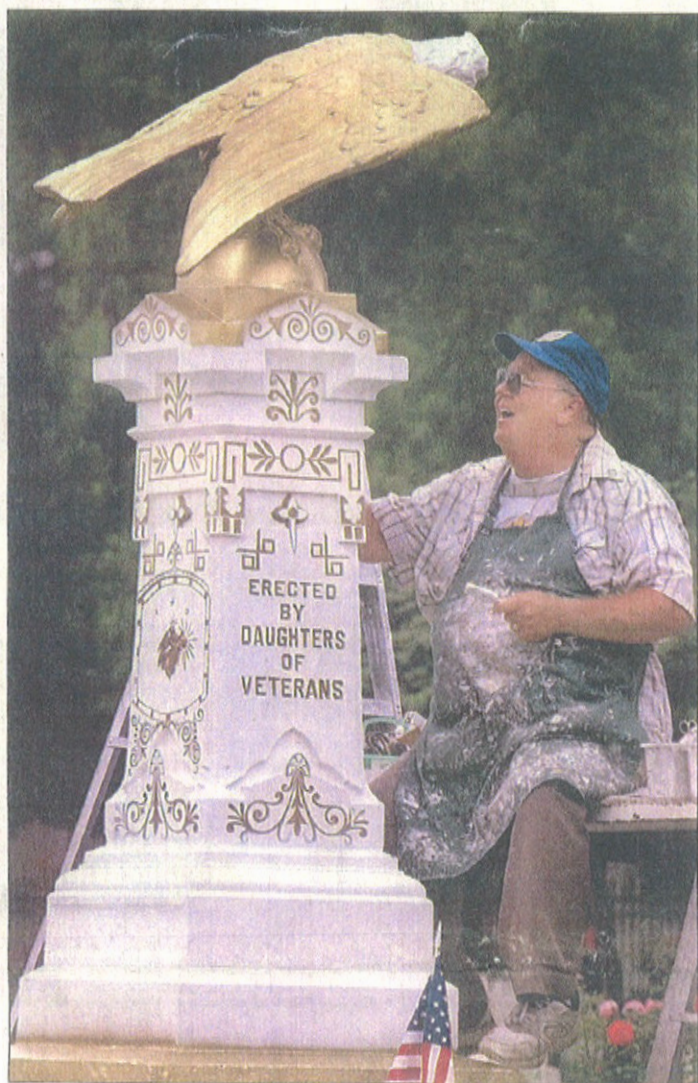


**Santa Ana Cemetery
Santa Ana, California
Looking Northerly at Monument**



**Santa Ana Cemetery
Santa Ana, California
Looking NorthEasterly at Monument**

*"When I saw these monuments, it just hit me:
It's such a crime to see our history go."*



MARY COONEY / Los Angeles Times

Gene-o Platt works on a tribute to the Civil War's unknown dead for Memorial Day.

One Man's Monumental Undertaking for History

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Memorial Day: Santa Ana Cemetery volunteer pays tribute to Civil War vets one tombstone at a time.

By JEFF GOTTLIEB
TIMES STAFF WRITER

The Civil War goes on for Gene-o Platt.

For the past three years, he has set up his tools at the Santa Ana Cemetery and gone about restoring the markers of the 483 graves of Civil War veterans. Christmas, New Year's, Thanksgiving, it doesn't matter. He's out there with his drills, brushes and sealer, scraping off the dirt,

the fungus and the lichen from the Georgia marble tombstones of John Purtteman, Company L, 7th Illinois Cavalry, or Capt. LaFayette Harlan, Company B, 9th Kentucky Infantry.

He might be out there just a couple of hours a day, maybe 14, depending on how he feels, bringing history back to life. Leaning on his sheepskin-covered footstool, he painstakingly brushes layer upon layer of white-pigmented sealer—"don't call it paint"—until he has turned the monuments—"don't call them tombstones"—white, with the lettering and the base in gold.

It's more than a full-time job, but he's not paid for the work and has spent thousands

of his own dollars. It's just something he thinks has to be done. "I think the Lord sent me here because no one could do this for three years without cracking up," he said.

The Civil War was not an obsession of Platt's, not like it is to the buffs who collect memorabilia or dress up in blue and gray uniforms to reenact the battles of Shiloh or Bull Run. His closest connection to the war was that his grandmother's house in Bunker Hill, Md., was a stop years earlier on the Underground Railroad for escaped slaves.

As a kid growing up in Granite, Md., he spent hours watching a tombstone maker

Please see CEMETERY, B6

CEMETERY: 483 Civil War Veterans' Graves

Continued from B1

who worked nearby, learning how to produce them and perhaps whetting his appetite for what was to come.

He served seven years in the Air Force as a radar technician and later owned a grocery store and a business that remodeled restaurants.

Ask his age, and the answer is "over 50." He's not old, he says, he's "mature." How did he get the name Gene-o? "People just call me that."

Platt discovered the deteriorating gravestones when he and his grandson visited the grave of Platt's wife, Jean, who died in 1998. Some of the vintage stones were so beaten up they looked as though shotgun pellets had pummeled them.

"When I saw these monuments, it just hit me: It's such a crime to see our history go," he said. "Ninety percent of the kids don't even know what the Civil War was about."

Ohio Vet's Headstone Was the First Restored

Without asking, Platt refurbished the monument of Isaac McBurney, Company H, Ohio Infantry, 1840-1920, whose grave was not far from Jean's. He figured if the cemetery authorities didn't like it, he could easily remove the white and gold sealer with solvent.

He showed his handiwork to Bill Stetler, then the cemetery manager, who gained approval from his bosses for the Santa Ana resident to continue.

Platt works on 10 monuments at a time, not only sprucing up the stones, but refurbishing the silver

stars with the letters GAR emblazoned on them, for Grand Army of the Republic, a Civil War veterans organization. "This one here probably took a month," he says. "You stay on one monument too long, you don't care. It gets the best of you." Each time he returns, he sees something new to be done.

He works only on government-issued Union markers, not those of the Confederate soldiers, who, he points out, lost the war, after all.

He has received awards from Rep. Loretta Sanchez, D-Garden Grove, and from the Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society, but the praise has not been unanimous. Some people have complained that Platt's efforts will cause the stones to deteriorate, and others think they should remain in their natural state.

"I've been concerned that paint is putting the longevity of those stones at risk," said Lou Carlson of neighboring Fairhaven Memorial Park and Mortuary, who voiced his concern to heritage organizations. "But his heart, obviously, is in the right place."

Carlson, a member of the Historical Preservation Society, was won over and among the board members who voted to recognize Platt.

Things heated up so much that supporters gathered more than 200 signatures on a petition supporting his work this year.

"Here's a fellow that instead of everybody complaining about what they're seeing—and not doing anything—has taken it upon himself with his body and money to do something very nice," said Ed Cote of the Orange County Historical Commission.



MARY COONEY / Los Angeles Times

Stars of the GAR, the Grand Army of the Republic veterans organization, stand along the hundreds of Civil War headstones in Santa Ana Cemetery. The graveyard was established in 1870.

Bob Lowe, head of the state chapter of Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, said he knew of no one who was performing work similar to Platt's. When his organization learns of markers that have deteriorated, it receives new ones from the federal government.

Monument to the Unknown Dead

Late last week, Platt had turned away from the monuments to finish work on the 8-foot high memorial "To The Unknown Dead of the Civil War" at the cemetery entrance in time for Memorial Day.

Platt sat on a makeshift scaffold, a paint brush in his fleshy hand. His green apron was splattered

with white and gold and a blue Air Force cap sat atop his head. His tanned arms attest to his hours in the sun.

His drills and bits sat on the ground behind him as he leaned forward to swab another coat of sealer onto the monument. He goes through three or four grinding bits a week to define the recessed letters.

He had painted the bald eagle atop the monument gold, with a white head. He had replaced a missing corner and a friend repaired the steps leading up to the monument, which was dedicated in 1915. The choice of colors for the eagle wasn't easy. He tried copper, silver and white, but none of them worked.

"I prayed to the Lord to show me the right way," he said. "It just came."

Platt takes a break and ambles slowly through the cemetery, pointing out his work and marveling at the stories the monuments tell. He greets the groundsmen he passes by name and waves at those in the distance.

He comes to the grave of Sgt. Elijah E. Henry, Company A, 54th Indiana Infantry. He cut his hand three times restoring that marker. "I told him, 'Elijah, you cut me again, I'm not going to do your monument.'"

He stops at the tombstone of C.L. Hewitt, Company I, 7th Infantry, Minnesota and points out a few extra flourishes on the lettering. "Can you tell I got carried away a little?"

He walks to the marker of JNO., Corp'l, 19th Infantry Iowa. He was born in 1855, which would have made him 11 years old maximum at the end of the war.

Platt has 35 tombstones to complete. He's a modest man who insists on giving credit to those who have helped him, keeping his spirits high, helping him pack up and sometimes bringing food, even Christmas dinner.

When he's finished at the Santa Ana Cemetery, Platt says he's done. "I hope this will start a copycat situation."

Maybe, he says, he'll leave a note explaining how to do it.

But it's hard to see him quitting. After all, although his goal was to refurbish the Civil War markers, when he spotted six markers from World War I veterans, well, they were in such bad shape, he just had to fix them.