



Kevin P. Tucker
Commander-in-Chief
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Special Message #9
26November2025

Brothers and Sisters,

As Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, I extend warm fraternal greetings to all Brothers and Sisters of the Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic as we pause to commemorate the birthday of Dr. Mary Edwards Walker.

Dr. Walker was a true pioneer in every sense of the word—an abolitionist, a suffragist, a dedicated physician, and a tireless patriot. During the Civil War, she broke barriers by serving as a contract surgeon for the Union Army at a time when women were not permitted to serve as commissioned medical officers. She endured hardship, including capture and imprisonment by Confederate forces, yet never wavered in her devotion to the Union and to the care of its soldiers.

For her extraordinary courage and service, Dr. Mary Edwards Walker became the first woman—and one of the earliest individuals—to receive our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. Her life reminds us that love of country, moral conviction, and willingness to sacrifice are not limited by rank, role, or gender.

It is especially fitting that the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War chose to name our award for outstanding service by a Sister of the Allied Orders in her honor. The Dr. Mary Edwards Walker Award not only recognizes exemplary dedication today, but also keeps alive the legacy of a woman who refused to accept the limits others placed upon her and who lived out, in full measure, the principles for which the Boys in Blue fought.

On this anniversary of her birth, let us remember Dr. Walker not as a figure confined to history, but as a continuing inspiration to us all. May her example encourage us to serve with the same courage, conviction, and perseverance in preserving the memory of the Union soldier and in advancing the noble purposes of our Orders.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin P. Tucker".

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