

# MARY CHESEBRO LEE

## DETACHED TENT #23

<https://www.marychesebroleewi23.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/duvcwmarylee>



**Burial of Federal Dead at  
Fredericksburg, VA, 1864**



**Civil War Field Hospital**



### EPIDEMICS OF THE CIVIL WAR

In an era before germ theory, outbreaks of dysentery, typhoid fever, smallpox, yellow fever, and cholera plagued the Civil War. The high rates of illness and mortality during the war resulted from a range of factors, including the unsanitary conditions of army camps, polluted waterways, unburied bodies of animals and soldiers, overcrowded populations, dislocation, and the medical profession's uncertainty about how to respond to the many outbreaks of disease.

During the Civil War, a group of women reformers established the US Sanitary Commission, which was modeled after the British Sanitary Commission from the Crimean War. While these reformers earnestly attempted to prevent the further spread of disease by preaching a gospel of cleanliness, their efforts proved ineffective in response to the smallpox and cholera epidemics that broke out during the war. Even when they managed to whitewash camps with lime and quarantine infected patients to isolated quarters, the huge dislocations of former slaves and the migrations of soldiers that the war produced exacerbated the spread of disease. Disease and sickness had a more devastating and fatal effect for emancipated slaves than for white soldiers, since they often lacked the basic necessities to survive.

Article excerpted from The Lancet, "Emancipation. Sickness and Death in the American Civil War" by Jim Brown

### FRATERNITY, CHARITY, LOYALTY

The next meeting of Tent #23 will held at  
The Delavan Community Centre  
on Tuesday, April 28 at 6:30pm



### MEET CALEB SMITH, The 4<sup>th</sup> Great Grandson of Mary Chesebro Lee

Hello Ms. Blackmer,

I am descended from Mary Lee by her son Elon. Elon's daughter was named Maude Lee Wood. I've attached an image of Elon's family. (Maude "center", Anna Bastin "left", and Elon "right". missing Elon jr.) I believe she was part of the DUV at some point in her life. I am attaching a photo of a medal in my family's possession that we think comes from the early days of your organization. We are not sure who owned the medal but it has always been assumed it was Maude. Anyway, Maude's son Elon Lee Wood is my great grandfather. He lived with his grandfather (Elon N Lee, son of Mary Lee) in Webster city Iowa from a very early age until the 1930s just before his grandfather died. After Elon N Lee's death, his house and all of his things sat in storage for a time. My great grandfather eventually came back to Iowa and moved all of his stuff to Oregon. In the 1960s my great grandfather took it upon himself to type out all of the family letters from the early 1800s to the 1940s. He eventually completed these volumes. I believe there are 23 in total. There are several thousand pages in these books. He did the original set on his 1920s Royal typewriter. He passed away in 1994 and his wife passed away recently in 2016. Unfortunately, I never met my great grandfather. My great grandmother (his wife) developed dementia when I was at a young age. My great grandfather had a passion for preserving the history and the stories of days gone by. After his wife passed in 2016, his collections were divided up between the siblings and many of the stories have been lost. These things happen when people pass, you cannot take these things with you.

I am the second of four brothers. The oldest is 20, I am 18, the next one is 14, and the youngest is 12. We live in a small town in the center of Oregon called Prineville. This is the same town my great grandfather brought all of his grandfathers (Elon N Lee) stuff to. I have been working for the last several years to piece back together the family story. I wasn't old enough to be able to see my grandfather's family history collection in its full. It doesn't seem like my family has a passion for family history. That is why I am trying to piece back together what I can. I believe he had many artifacts from Mary Lee including her diary. He also had many photos from the 1850s to the 1880s of the family.

I would love to stop by one of your meetings and give a presentation. Unfortunately, due to my distance from Wisconsin, this will not be possible for a while. If I ever plan to head that way for anything, I will see if I can stop by a meeting. I would be happy to write a piece on Mary or give a presentation by way of video chat or phone.

I would be happy to share all of the information I have on Mary. As I mentioned we have 23 volumes of letters from the family. This will finally give me an excuse to digitize the books so they can be preserved. This may take me some time. I will look into starting the first two books next week. Those would be the most interesting to you because they are on early frontier life and Civil War (~1828-1865). I do have the original letters for these two books as well. I am also actively working to track down Mary and Elon's original diaries. I am sure that one of my extended family has them. I will also work to digitize the photos of the family. I am aware of which family member has all of the early photos and will work with him to get them documented. They include the Lee family album, the Chesebro family album, Bastin photos, and more. I believe there to be more non-letter paper pieces (away papers, discharge papers, etc.) from the civil war period. Many of these are not in the letter books but in someone's collection here in Prineville. I will ask around and see what I can find.

Editor's Note: Caleb had been investigating Mary Lee and happened upon our web site. He contacted me and a dialogue began. This is his second email. In the first, he shared the letter from Mary's son, Elon, who was in the 10<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin. Mary went south to care for her son as well as nursing other soldiers back to health. The poignant letter relates the trials and tribulations of the Civil War.



Photo on left: Mary Chesebro Lee, our namesake (family photos shared by Caleb Smith)  
Photo on right: Civil War Soldier, Elon Smith, his wife Anna Bastin and daughter, Maude

**DUE TO THE CURRENT PANDEMIC AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE CDC FOR SOCIAL DISTANCING, THE MEETING SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup> HAS BEEN CANCELLED. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO MEET IN APRIL!**





### NATIONAL VETERAN GOLDEN AGE GAMES

JUNE 22-27, 2020

Madison, Wisconsin

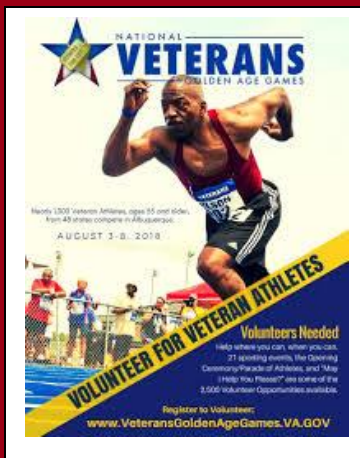
The National Veterans Golden Age Games is the premier senior adaptive rehabilitation program in the United States, and the only national multi-event sports and recreational seniors' competition program designed to improve the quality of life for all older Veterans, including those with a wide range of abilities and disabilities. The National Veterans Golden Age Games is one of the most progressive and adaptive rehabilitative senior sports programs in the world.

**MISSION** The Games provide eligible senior Veterans with the opportunity to engage in rehabilitative sport and recreation competition.

**HISTORY OF THE NVGAG** In 1985, the first NVGAG took place in Albany, GA with 115 competitors representing VA medical facilities across the United States. This outstanding program has grown from 115 competitors to almost 800.

**COMPETITION** Competitive events include: air pistol, air rifle, badminton (singles and doubles), basketball (3- on-3, free throw), blind disc golf, boccie (singles and doubles), bowling, cycling, field (discus, javelin, shot put), golf, horseshoes, nine ball, pickleball, power walk, shuffleboard, swimming, table tennis and track. Local exhibition event(s) are typically offered each year.

**ELIGIBLE VETERANS:** Veterans must be 55 years of age and older, and eligible for VA health care. There are eight age categories: 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80-84, 85-89, 90+. There are three divisions: Ambulatory, Visually Impaired and Wheelchair.



Photos: (top) Veterans Affairs Logo (second from top) Jack Faust, 101 year old WWII Navy Veteran (third) Unidentified Poster Woman for Games (bottom) Recruitment Poster 2020

Several opportunities will be available to help with everything from sporting events to hospitality services.

Events will take place at the Alliant Energy Center, Marriot Madison West hotel and surrounding community venues, to include the Dane County Regional Airport and Madison and Middleton Hotels.

**VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION AT: [NVGAGVolunteers@va.gov](mailto:NVGAGVolunteers@va.gov)**