

## ARIZONA HONORS ITS LAST UNION CIVIL WAR SOLDIER

*Submitted by David A. Swanson, Camp Commander, Picacho Peak Camp #1, Arizona Camp-at-Large*

Brothers of Picacho Peak Camp #1, Arizona Camp-at-Large, proclaimed Private Parker Louis Gordon to be Arizona's Last Union Civil War Soldier during a ceremony on November 19, 2005, at the Greenwood Cemetery, Phoenix, Arizona.

Representatives from the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War, the National Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Sons of Confederate Veterans and an honor guard composed of members from the Arizona Civil War Council were present along with SUVCW Brothers from Picacho Peak Camp.

Private Gordon's great-grandson and Brother of Picacho Peak Camp, Richard McNeil, along with his wife Jamie and his sister Susan Cheyney, were guests of honor. Dick had the original drum Parker used during the war on display in front of his crypt.

Private Parker Louis Gordon, son of Henry S. Gordon of Franklin, Pa., and Rebecca Young Gordon, from the United Kingdom, was born at Steelville, Ill. On Sept. 1, 1847.

He ran away from home several times during the Civil War in an attempt to join the Union Army and finally became a drummer boy with an unknown military unit at age 16.

On February 15, 1865, he officially entered military service with the 154<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Illinois Volunteer Infantry, where he stayed for the remainder of the war.

After the Civil War he eventually moved to Phoenix where he retired as a grocer.

He died in Phoenix on December 5, 1946, at the age of 99 and was interred in the original mausoleum at Greenwood Cemetery in Phoenix.

Parker L. Gordon was a member of the Long Beach California GAR Post number 181 and was a delegate to the reunion of Union and Confederate veterans at Gettysburg, Pa, in 1937. Before his death, he was one of two surviving members of the post.



From left to right: Janice Swanson (ASUVCW member), David A. Swanson, Camp Commander, Brother Richard McNeil (Gordon's great-grandson), his wife Jamie and his sister Susan Cheyney.



Private Parker L. Gordon (far left with his drum) in an undated reunion photo



Camp Picacho Peak Brothers Al Harrica and David Kampf (from left to right) were two members of the seven man honor guard at Gordon's crypt (with red rose). His drum and a picture of him taken later in life are between the guards.

