



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
Pennsylvania Department
Office of the Patriotic Instructor
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The Fourth of July has always held a significant meaning to all of us as its the day the Continental Congress declared that our new Country was created, dedicated to the self-evident truths of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This year marks the 250th Birthday of the United States of America, The Semiquincentennial invites every American to reflect not only on the birth of the Republic in 1776, but on the long and often costly struggle to preserve it.

For the men of the Union Army, the meaning of Independence Day was deeply personal. They fought to defend the very nation their Grandfathers fought to create. And for Pennsylvanians, the connection between 1776 and 1863 is especially meaningful. The Union victory at Gettysburg won on the eve of Independence Day 1863, ensured that those ideals would endure, meanwhile one-thousand miles away from Gettysburg, the City of Vicksburg surrendered the following day to General Grant, marking a decisive turning point in the war. Independence Day thus became, for the “Boys in Blue”, both a celebration of the nation’s birth and a reminder of the sacrifices required to keep it whole.

On this the 250th Anniversary of American independence, let us honor the Founders who declared liberty, the members of the Continental Army who fought for it, the Union soldiers who preserved it, and the generations who carried it forward. May our observance of this day reflect the devotion they showed preserving it for future generations.

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty

Bill Dixon

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