

Michael A. Spaulding



A trip with a young grandson to a Civil War living history event in 2013 led Mike to Sherman Camp #93 of the SUVCW. While the grandson checked out the displays, Mike was recruited as a new member of Sherman Camp.

Mike based his membership on the Civil War service of a direct maternal ancestor, Private Jacob W. Mease (1845-1910), who served in Co. E, 17th Pennsylvania Volunteer Cavalry. Mease served at the Battle of Gettysburg and was wounded at the Battle of Third Winchester.

As a lifelong amateur genealogist, Mike discovered a remarkable coincidence. A direct ancestor on his paternal side, William R. Wolcott (1821-1876), who lived 150 miles from Mease, served in Co. D of the *same regiment*. Their names are just inches apart on the Pennsylvania Monument in Gettysburg. Wolcott was severely injured when his cavalry horse fell on him. His painful injuries never fully healed and led to his death a few years after the war.

Mike is directly descended from two other Civil War veterans. A second paternal ancestor was Private John Struhm (1843-1916), who served in Co. H, 128th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. The regiment fought in the cornfield at Antietam, and Struhm was wounded during the battle. A second maternal ancestor, Private John Field (1826-1890), served in Co. D, 93rd Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers. He also fought at the Battle of Antietam.

Mike has 7 other qualifying collateral ancestors who served in the Civil War, including Joseph M. Spaulding, brother of Mike's 4th great-grandfather. He enlisted in 1864 at the age of 59 and died five months later at Regimental Hospital in Washington, DC.

Although not a qualifying ancestor for the SUVCW, a cousin of Mike's 3rd great-grandmother was General John F. Hartranft. He won the Medal of Honor as the hero of Fort Stedman and acted as commander at the execution of the Lincoln assassination conspirators. After the war he was governor of Pennsylvania.

Mike grew up in Camp Hill, PA, named for a Civil War camp. The Gettysburg Battlefield is a short distance away, and Mike visited the battlefield countless times with his family. In 1963, Mike attended both the Gettysburg Battle Centennial and the Centennial Remembrance Day as a child.

In high school, Mike and several other history students traveled to the state capital to meet State Senator George Wade, whose district covered Gettysburg, in an effort to secure his support in blocking the construction of the hideous “Gettysburg Tower.” While this lobbying effort was unsuccessful, it opened Mike’s eyes to the need for battlefield preservation.

Mike attended Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA. Confederate General Robert E. Lee was president of the college after the Civil War and is buried on campus. Although the Lost Cause myth was still very much alive when Mike was a student, he managed to graduate *summa cum laude* with a degree in History without becoming infected with this Confederate mythology.

Mike was elected to the first of three terms as Sherman Camp Commander in 2015. In the Department of Ohio, Mike was appointed Patriotic Instructor in 2017, followed by his election to terms as Junior Vice Commander and Senior Vice Commander. He has also been the Department Eagle Scout Certificate Coordinator since 2020.

After retiring from a career in international business, Mike was elected Department Commander in June 2020. Unfortunately, his term was marked by the COVID pandemic. The National Encampment and several Camp installations had to be conducted over Zoom, and the in-person Department Encampments in 2020 and 2021 had limited attendance. Much of Mike’s time as Commander was spent trying to keep all Camps functioning despite the pandemic. Sadly, the Department lost several Brothers to COVID, but all Camps survived.

After his term as Department Commander, Mike served three years on the Department Council, including leading an Encampment-mandated 20-year audit.

In 2023, Mike was appointed National Eagle Scout Certificate Coordinator by CinC Pete Hritsko. Mike remains (2026) in this position, having been reappointed by CinCs Kevin Martin, Kevin Tucker, and Daniel Murray. Mike has also served on the National Committees for Promotion & Marketing and Vision & Planning. Mike is Life Member #1221 and recipient of the Horace Porter medal from the SUVCW Charitable Foundation.

Mike currently serves on the Sherman Camp Council, and is also a charter member of Rev. William Earnshaw Camp #89, where he wrote the bylaws and serves on the Camp Council.

Additionally, Mike has helped dozens of prospective members of Ohio Camps prove (and in several cases, *disprove*) eligible Civil War ancestors.

Mike is a proud Eagle Scout. In addition, he is a Division Color Bearer in the American Battlefield Trust, and is a member of numerous historical and battlefield preservation organizations, including Ohio’s Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation.