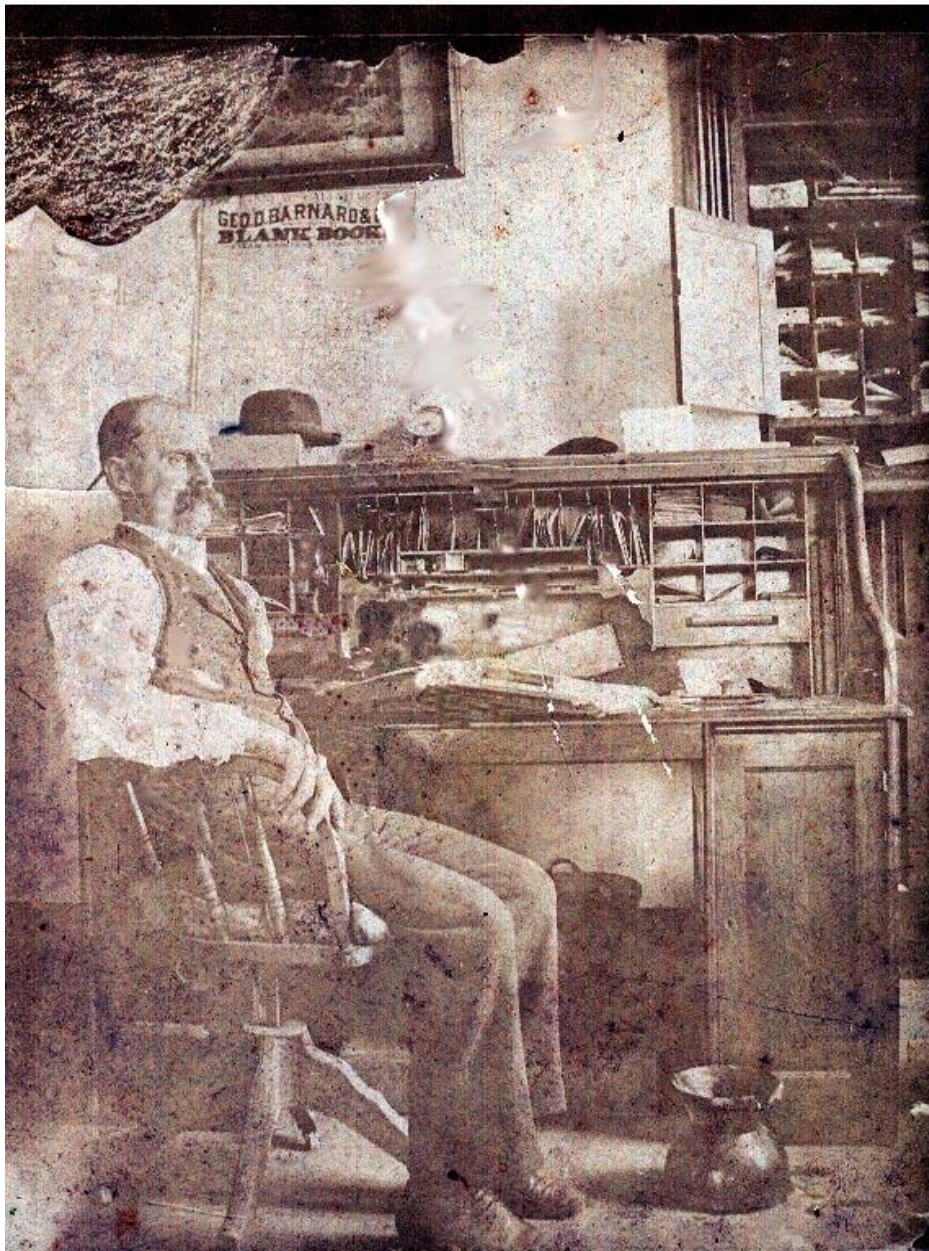


## Laclede County

**Turner, William Henry** (20 Feb 1841/1845 – 8 Jun 1941) Attended the last Missouri GAR encampment in 1940 representing post 48. He records his service as 2nd Connecticut Heavy Artillery Co. E. Buried at Lebanon MO.



## Civil War Vet Recalled

By JANE COLLINS

The observance of Memorial Day and Decoration Day in Lebanon originated with an organization of veterans belonging to a group called the Gen. George G. Mead, Post 48 G.A.R. It was organized Dec. 29, 1882.

The members always held a Memorial Sunday service in a local church on a Sunday afternoon. While their remembrances became so small, they adopted the custom of worshiping with some congregation on Sunday morning without a special prayer.

Their program of Decoration Day was always the same. The veterans in their uniforms marched from their hall to the cemetery, where they performed a ritual at the grave of the last deceased comrade. There would be an address by a local or an outside speaker. There was the sounding of taps and members would then decorate the graves of dead comrades. The Lebanon Band always headed the parade and patriotic citizens and school children wearing national

He served Laclede County as Recorder of Deeds, Justice of the Peace and Police Judge. He traveled with a medicine show, sold "Wahoo Indian" medicine, and entertained young and old alike with his sword swallowing. He was a Republican and was indeed proud of the fact that he once voted for Abraham Lincoln.

Uncle Billy was born Feb. 20, 1845, in the state of New York. On Sunday morning, June 8, 1941, he sat on his Lebanon porch listening to the choir of the Christian Church across the street. He quietly and peacefully died. The Gen. George G. Meade Post of the Grand Army of the Republic no longer had a comrade.

Uncle Billy left memories that many treasure. It had been said, "there has never been or ever will be another like him." His creed and his humorous experiences of his life touch many hearts as they remember him on this Memorial Day.

## Dentists Work

## He Was Medicine Man

By PAUL DILLARD

Uncle Billy (W.H.) Turner was, among other things, a medicine man, in that he purchased the rights to a patent medicine which cured, among other things sciatica, rheumatism, cancer, kidney trouble, etc.

This medicine consisted of some dry herbs, and, when mixed with water, would be converted into a vile tasting substance.

Uncle Billy would make all of the circuit courts, and at that time there were very few radios, of course, no televisions, and the circuit court attendance was tremendous. It was at these circuit court meetings that he would sell most of his medicine, which he called Wahoo.

One time he took his medicine bottles with the dry herbs in each bottle to Hartsville and just before he got to Hartville he stopped at a creek and filled each bottle to sell at the circuit court meeting.

Allen arrested Socks, who was still in the automobile, and the next day brought Socks before Uncle Billy, who was a Justice of the Peace of Lebanon Township at the time, and Uncle Billy, after giving him a stern lecture on the evils of drinking, fined him.

The foregoing two incidents were told to this writer by Uncle Billy, one of the legendary characters of Laclede County.

One evening at a political meeting in Sleeper, after Uncle Billy had thrilled the gathering with his feat of sword swallowing, a gentleman of the neighborhood challenged him on the ground that he didn't think he swallowed the sword. This angered Uncle Billy, and he gulped a cheese sandwich, swallowed it, and talked to the man for a few minutes, then again put the sword down his throat and brought forth a piece of the cheese sandwich. This satisfied the person, who had challenged Uncle Billy in his sword swallowing act.