



Pvt. James M. Karmany, a Civil War vet who lived here, will be honored Saturday in Glenwood Cemetery.

Pvt. James M. Karmany to receive headstone dedication Saturday

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As a military man, Gary Carlberg understands the importance of giving a proper burial and recognition to soldiers who fought for their country.

And with the United States as close to civil war as it has been since the 1860s when North was pitted against South, he feels even more strongly that Minnesota should recognize soldiers from that conflict.

On Saturday, Carlberg returns to his native Mankato to recognize Pvt. James M. Karmany, the last Union Civil War veteran from Blue Earth County, in a headstone dedication at Glenwood Cemetery. The public is welcome to attend the 11 a.m. ceremony.

The Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, Col. William Colvill Camp 56, is heading up the dedication with assistance from Friends of the Boy in Blue of Mankato. Afterward they will travel to Wells for a 2 p.m. ceremony recognizing Pvt. Washington W. Kelley at Rosehill Cemetery.

Carlberg, a graduate of Mankato West High School, worked for 13 years at the Pentagon. His

IN HONOR

Blue Earth County Civil War veteran to receive recognition



Photos courtesy Julie Schrader

James Karmany joined his brother in operating the Karmany Meat Market on South Front Street following the Civil War.

great-grandfather was in the 20th Wisconsin Infantry, which marched in such battles as Pea Ridge and Vicksburg.

With SUVCW, research is being done to find and recognize the last Union veteran in each county, many of whom were unrecognized at the time or were buried under a headstone that has succumbed to nature and needs replacing.

“We’re doing this research, one county at a time, to do Minnesota as part of a national project to find where every Union soldier is buried in the United States,” he said. To succeed in such an endeavor, county historical societies and organizations such as Friends of Boy in Blue are essential.

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GRAVES: Families are invited to the ceremonies

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And within those organizations, people like Julie Schrader of the Friends group do the grunt work. She helps a modern populace understand and learn about what these soldiers did in service and when they returned home, and why they deserve recognition.

James Manassah Karmany was born in East Hanover Township, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, on May 19, 1847. His family moved to Lebanon until he was 17, Schrader discovered. He was in that city during an invasion by the Confederate Army on June 17, 1863, enlisting in Company E, 2th Pennsylvania Militia, and was sent to Gettysberg where

he was taken prisoner and later paroled.

On Feb. 24, 1864, he reenlisted at Reading, Pennsylvania, in Company A, 93rd Infantry as a private. Among the battles he participated in were the Battle of Wilderness, where he was wounded, and at Cold Harbor and Petersburg, marching with Gen. Philip Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley.

Karmany was important to the post-Civil War Mankato in that he worked with his brother, Uriah, in the meat and grocery business, according to Schrader's research. He arrived in Mankato July 10, 1866, then helped his brother provide crews from the Omaha Railroad while they constructed tracks west of Mankato.

The J.M. Karmany Meat Market was on South Front Street until he retired in 1921. He died on Sept. 6, 1935, at his home at 110 Broad St. that he shared with his wife, Susan, with whom he had celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary the day before. They had three sons and three daughters.

Generally, a dedication such as this would include Carlberg working with the local VFW and American Legions to provide military honors; Mankato's has another funeral on the schedule. In working with these groups, Carlberg said, there is also the opportunity to compare and share veteran lists.

"And by doing that, everybody's smarter; we're increasing our history,"

he said. "A lot of times, the cemetery knows that this person is buried here but didn't know he was a Civil War veteran," for example.

Just as importantly, in recognizing these veterans they're helping a family — descendants are always invited to the ceremony — learn about an ancestor they likely knew little about.

One VFW participant shared this story with Carlberg:

"I wasn't watching the speakers as they talked. I watched the descendants. This was moving to them. You'd think that a ceremony for their great-great-grandfather, who they've never met, would not be a big deal. Oh, no. It was important."