

CEREMONIES AND SERVICES

This is an adaptation of a part of the "Book of Ceremonies" of the United Spanish War Veterans. Many members of the Sons of Veterans, USA were also members of the United Spanish War Veterans, and the two groups are remarkably similar. The "Annual Muster Day" ceremony commemorated the beginning of the war with Spain which was declared on April 21st 1898. Although not a formal ceremony of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, this adaptation is offered here for use by Camps for its historic interest and continuing sentiments.

ANNUAL MUSTER DAY

Annual Muster Day will be observed on the 15th day of April (*the day Lincoln made his first call for troops*) of each year or on the nearest date convenient thereto. On the evening of the designated day, the members of the Camp will assemble, in stated or special meeting, and renew their pledge of allegiance to our country and its flag and in like manner pledge themselves anew to support and carryout the objects and principles of the Order. A special effort should be made to secure the presence of every Brother in the Camp, to the end that Annual Muster Day shall be a "Rally Day" of the organization.

Public exercises may be arranged and it is recommended that invitations shall be extended to those eligible to and not included in our membership, to all war veterans, to patriotic societies, and to public officials. The exercises will include addresses of a patriotic nature noting the founding date of the Grand Army of the Republic (April 6th), Lincoln's Death Day (April 15th), U.S. Grant's birthday (April 27th), and in regard to the work of the Order and the value of membership in it.

The renewal of the obligation should be made by members of the Camp in concert on each Annual Muster Day. During the renewal of the obligation the Chaplain shall read that portion of the Ritual assigned to him with the exception that the words "*renewal of your*" shall be placed in front of "*obligation.*" The obligation will be repeated in the prescribed form, with the exception that the last paragraph shall be rendered as follows before "*So help me God*":

"This obligation I voluntarily renew and promise to fulfill on my honor as a man and as a Brother of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War."