

Pictures of the Past

Lanfare received Medal of Honor

Branford Hero - Aaron Lanfare

Aaron Steven Lanfare was born 1824 in Branford, one of 15 children born to Oliver Lanfare (1783-1873) of Short Beach. Aaron's grandfather, Oliver Lanfare (1749-1812), served in the Revolutionary War as master of the ship "Chloe Ann" which patrolled the coastal waters throughout the conflict. Like his ancestors, Aaron took to the sea and before the Civil War was master of the barque "Reindeer" out of New Haven. In 1860 he was given a telescope by Queen Isabella of England for his service to the British brig "Dominica." The telescope was later donated to the James Blackstone Memorial Library by the Lanfare family.

At the outbreak of the Civil War Aaron Lanfare at the age of 37 enlisted in Company B First Connecticut Cavalry. The cavalry division saw action in Virginia at Cedar Creek, Winchester, Sailor's Creek and Appomattox. During the battle at Sailor's Creek, Aaron Lanfare captured the flag of the 11th Florida

Infantry on April 6, 1864. On the day he was mustered out May 3, 1865, First Lt. Aaron S. Lanfare was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

After the Civil War the Lanfare family lived in New Haven and Aaron was a spice merchant and captain of vessels that traded goods to the West Indies. On one such voyage in August of 1875 he was lost at sea.

Branford has paid tribute to Aaron Lanfare on several occasions. A plaque in his memory was placed at the flag pole at the old Post Office on Montowese Street in 1961. The plaque was rededicated at the new Post Office on Park Street in 1984 with several of Aaron Lanfare's great-granddaughters in attendance. A memorial stone was placed in Center Cemetery in 1984 next to Aaron's grandfather, Oliver Lanfare (Lanphier). Aaron Steven Lanfare remains Branford's only native son to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Jane Peterson Bouley



Photo courtesy of Edith Cook Hills

LT. AARON S. LANFARE of Branford, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his service during the Civil War.