

## Sons of Spanish American War Veterans

You'd think they'd have to be on the 'Great-Great-Grandsons of Spanish American War Veterans' by now, but it's still just 'Sons'...and the organization is still growing!...slowly.

The Society, Sons of Spanish American War Veterans, was organized in the Spring of 1927. Its tenets were to perpetuate the memories of the men who served honorably in the War with Spain, the Philippine Insurrection and the China Relief Expedition; to carry on the fight for adequate and equitable legislation for the Veterans of '98 and for those widows and dependent minors in State and National Legislatures; and to concentrate their strength behind drives to keep this a land where the ideals of Washington, Lincoln and the Veterans own McKinley might always hold sway.

The first Sons' Camp in the United States, the nucleus of today's great organization, was the Col. Rice W. Means Camp, No. 1, of New York City. The subsequent growth of the Order was slow. Practically all its early members were in their teens. The leaders of each new unit had, with but few exceptions, to learn everything in the painful and costly "School of Experience." Then a burst of enthusiasm swept the country. In all sections of the Nation units began springing up and more than thirty camps were chartered by National Headquarters of the United Spanish War Veterans. Recognition by parent groups of the potential value of the Sons was one of the prime reasons for this growth and it has continued steady over the intervening years. Over a hundred Camps had been chartered and four Departments were functioning by 1936.

At the 38th National Encampment of the United Spanish War Veterans at Saratoga Springs, N.Y., a National Administrator was set up by the Veterans with full powers to create a National Organization of the Sons if and when he saw fit. At the same encampment steps were taken to permit the Sons into the U.S.W.V. as an affiliated group. In 1937, the Sons became a national organization. Too, the Veterans had revised their constitution so as to admit the Sons into the U.S.W.V. as an affiliated group. Activities:

"Since the time of their inception the Sons of Spanish - American War Veterans have striven to be of value and assistance to the parent Order. Its members have at all times placed themselves at the command of the Veteran whenever necessity called. They have always been ready to help in Memorial Day Parades and in Memorial Services throughout the year. They have lent able support to the various units of the parent organization in the decorating of Veterans' graves. At times certain Camps have furnished the Bugler for the sounding of "TAPS" and the Firing Squads for the last rites at Veterans' Burials. They have been active in calling attention to their fathers' services in '98 and the subsequent period up to 1902 and making it known to an unaware and perhaps indifferent public. Having capable young men in their organization's Camps has enabled them to chastise whenever necessary those forces inimical to veteranism when they have dared place their derogatory remarks into public print. Camps all over the nation make visits to Veterans in the various Government Hospitals and Facilities and distribute cigarettes and cigars and other permissible items to the patients. In short, they are trying, as well as they can, to carry out their pledge to helpfulness to the Veterans and their allied groups -- the Auxiliaries."

[Courtesy of <http://www.spanamwar.com/SSAWVhistory.htm>]

