



# UPCHURCH & ALLIED FAMILIES ASSOC.

UAFA National Home Office | 1130 Kildaire Farm Road, Suite 120 | Cary, NC 27511-4594

## FROM THE EDITOR



**W**e'd love to hear from you! Send in your old stories or articles of interest, memories, pictures, grandma's best recipe and any comments and suggestions to the editor, Cindy Hale at

[UpchurchRoots@gmail.com](mailto:UpchurchRoots@gmail.com)

The great work of UAFA is made possible by donations, volunteers and memberships! Join us now! Thank you!

*Cindy Hale*



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## Memorial Day: A Time for Heroes - Guideposts



**Photo Credit: Jaylin Applebottoms**

The mayor was in the first, handing out programs. I didn't need to look at one. I knew my uncle Bud's name was printed on it, as it had been every year since he was killed in Italy. Our family's war hero.

And I knew that perched on the backseat of one of the cars, waving and smiling,

was Mema, my grandmother. She had a corsage on her lapel and a sign in gold embossed letters on the car door: "Gold Star Mother."

I hid behind the tree so I wouldn't have to meet her gaze. It wasn't because I didn't love her or appreciate her. She'd taught me how to sew, to call a strike in baseball. She made great cinnamon rolls, which we always ate after the parade.

What embarrassed me was all the attention she got for a son who had died 20 years earlier. With four other children and a dozen grandchildren, why linger over this one long-ago loss?

I peeked out from behind the oak just in time to see Mema wave and blow my family a kiss as the motorcade moved on. The purple ribbon on her hat fluttered in the breeze.

The rest of our Memorial Day ritual was equally scripted. No use trying to get out of it. I followed my family back to Mema's house, where there was the usual baseball game in the backyard and the same old reminiscing about Uncle Bud in the kitchen.

Helping myself to a cinnamon roll, I retreated to the living room and plopped down on an armchair.

**I** leaned against an oak at the side of the road, wishing I were invisible, keeping my distance from my parents on their lawn chairs and my younger siblings scampering about.

I hoped none of my friends saw me there. God forbid they caught me waving one of the small American flags Mom bought at Ben Franklin for a dime. At 16, I was too old and definitely too cool for our small town's Memorial Day parade.

I ought to be at the lake, I brooded. But, no, the all-day festivities were mandatory in my family.

A high school band marched by, the girl in sequins missing her baton as it tumbled from the sky. Firemen blasted sirens in their polished red trucks. The uniforms on the troop of World War II veterans looked too snug on more than one member.

"Here comes Mema," my father shouted.

Five black convertibles lumbered down the boulevard.

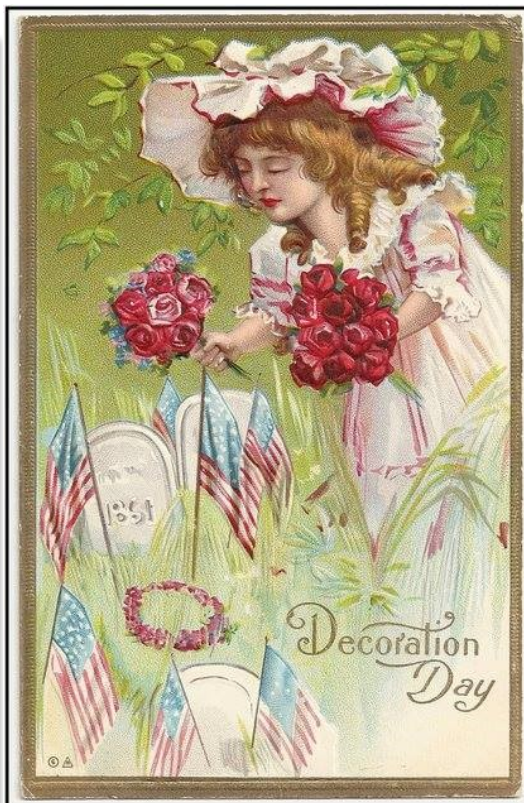


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Upchurch and Allied Families  
— A resource for linking,  
preserving, and supporting  
family history.

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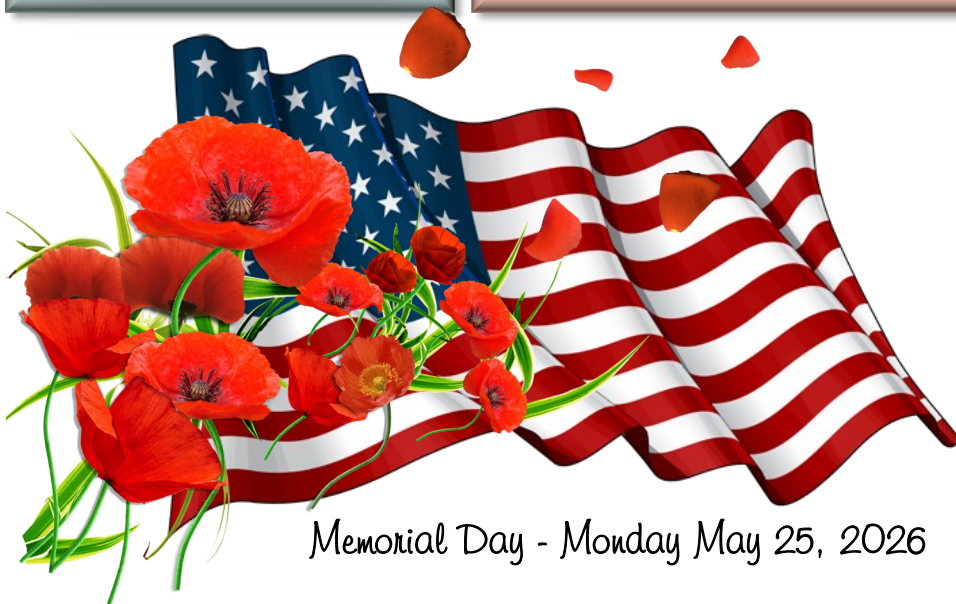
Jay Buck - Allied Family Trees  
(Families closely associated with Up-  
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info — [sdterry@ncsu.edu](mailto:sdterry@ncsu.edu)



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let them know of your interests,  
skills and availability. They will  
help you to determine where your  
skills will be best utilized and may  
even design a custom role for you.



Memorial Day - Monday May 25, 2026



# Upchurches in the News

By Jay Buck

Upchurch and Allied Families Assoc.  
P. O. Box 3856



**W**ith Memorial Day, and its stated purpose to honor and remember those who died in the line of duty while serving their county, this month's *Upchurches in the News* reflects upon the sacrifice of James "Aubrey" Upchurch. Aubrey was born November 4th, 1895 in Columbia County, Arkansas. He was the son of Annie Lena Phillips and John Allen Upchurch and was a member of the Harmon Upchurch clan #16.



James "Aubrey" Upchurch

Prior to registering for the draft, Aubrey was a student-athlete playing baseball at Southern Arkansas University. During the Great War, he served as a Bugler in the 359th Infantry, 9th Division, Texas. Six days prior to the armistice that would end the war, Aubrey was killed by a German sniper during the Meuse-Argonne sector of France. He (along with 15000 other American soldiers) is buried in the Meuse Argonne American Cemetery.

Jay

49-2-25-A  
REGISTRAR'S REPORT

1 Tall, medium, or short (specify which)? Medium Slender, medium, or stout (which)? Slender

2 Color of eyes? Grey Color of hair? light Bald? no

3 Has person lost arm, leg, hand, foot, or both eyes, or is he otherwise disabled (specify)? no

I certify that my answers are true, that the person registered has read his own answers, that I have witnessed his signature, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

*John Upchurch*  
(Signature of registrar)

Precinct 9  
City or County Lamar  
State Texas June 5 1917  
(Date of registration)

Form 1 4270 REGISTRATION CARD | No. 2001

1 Name in full Aubrey Upchurch Age in yrs 21

2 Home address Blossom, Texas

3 Date of birth Nov. 4th 1895

4 Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)? Natural Born

5 Where were you born? Waldo, Ark. U. S. A.

6 If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject?

7 What is your present trade, occupation, or office? Farm Laborer 30

8 By whom employed? Chas Larimore

Where employed? Blossom, Texas

9 Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? No

10 Married or single (which)? Single Race (specify which)? caucasian

11 What military service have you had? Rank NO branch:

12 Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)? No

I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.

CA 71 *Aubrey Upchurch*  
(Signature of registrant)

Local Board No. 2  
Lamar County,  
Paris, Texas  
551



Continued on page 4





# Upchurches in the News

Continued from page 3



File No. 62196	Last Name UPCHURCH	Army Serial No. 2225112	First name and Initials Aubrey	Cablegram No. 335
Rank Eugler	Organization TEXAS Co. E, 359th Inf., 90th Div.	Cause of death K/A	Date of Death 11-5-18	
Date of Burial	Place of Burial—Unconfirmed		Cemetery Commune	No.
Authority File No. D 5299	Place of Burial—Confirmed Grave No. 6, Isolated Grave, Bantheville, Meuse. Map 35NE	COORD E.307.6 N.287.1	Cemetery Commune	No. C-303
Authority File No. D 12424	Disinterred and Reburied: Date In: 6-12-19 Grave No. 42, Sec. 86, Plot 1, Argonne Amer. City, Remagne-sous-Montfaucon, Meuse.		Cemetery	No. 1232
Emergency Address: 511 East 3rd St., Texarkana, Ark.			Notified Emergency Address 1-13-19 3-4-20--107	
R. B. Sketch No. 5759	Photograph No. D-32521	PERMANENT AMER. CITY INTERMENT See Remarks on Form 13		
Grave Marker	Name Peg	Cross	Head Board	Bottle
		Yes		
			Ident. Tags	Buried with body
				Yes
REMARKS: F 115/4-16-21/191				4

## Casualty List

Killed in action ----- 336  
 Wounded severely ----- 831  
 Wounded slightly ----- 165  
 Missing in action ----- 376

Total ----- 1,708

Arkansans in the list are as follows:

Killed in action, Sergeant Grover C. Williams; Bugler Aubrey Upchurch, Morrilton; Everett F. Harrell, Piggott; Frederick P. Johnson, Sumners; Walter Hall, Dumas.

Wounded severely, Lieutenant Boas E. Gibson, Hoxie; John H. Major, Hope; Otis Berry, Green Forrest; James G. Shultz, Scotts; Vernon C. Bankston, Fountain Hill; Walter A. Adams, Tuckerman; Earl P. Yarbrough, Marble; Harrison Carr, Tillar.

Wounded, degree undetermined, Jim B. Heard, Greenway; Ray A. Shane, Agnos; George W. Bruce, Piggott; Otto L. Minor, Greenway; John T. Sumner, Bristow; Harry L. Wilfong, Warren.

Wounded slightly, L. B. Robinson, Gravelly; Hallie W. Morgan, Ursula.

Died of disease, Luther J. Beane, Bigelow; Charles Beard, Arkadelphia; Joseph Clannman, Altus.

Missing in action, Fellmer Davis, Leola.

Company E 359th Infantry has hit a winning streak and has won the last two baseball games by scores of 15 to 0 and 26 to 0. The hitting of Bugler Aubrey Upchurch of Blossom still continues to be a feature of the game, he having piled up a batting average of .530. Corporal John W. Rooks of Faught is also a big factor in our victories. In the game with company G of this regiment he batted the pill for an average of .300, including two home runs, a two-base hit and a pass.



By Jay Buck

Upchurch and Allied Families Assoc.  
 P. O. Box 3856  
 Chesterfield, MO 63006



## Memorial Day: A Time for Heroes Continued from page 1

There I found myself staring at the Army photo of Bud on the bookcase. The uncle I'd never known. I must have looked at him a thousand times—so proud in his crested cap and knotted tie. His uniform was decorated with military emblems that I could never decode.

Funny, he was starting to look younger to me as I got older. Who were you, Uncle Bud? I nearly asked aloud.

I picked up the photo and turned it over. Yellowing tape held a prayer card that read: "Lloyd 'Bud' Heitzman, 1925-1944. A Great Hero." Nineteen years old when he died, not much older than I was. But a great hero? How could you be a hero at 19? The floorboards creaked behind me. I turned to see Mema coming in from the kitchen, wiping her hands on her apron.

I almost hid the photo because I didn't want to listen to the same stories I'd heard year after year: "Your uncle Bud had this little rat-terrier named Jiggs. Good old Jiggs. How he loved that mutt! He wouldn't go anywhere without Jiggs. He used to put him in the rumble seat of his Chevy coupe and drive all over town.

"Remember how hard Bud worked after we lost the farm? At haying season he worked all day, sunrise to sunset, baling for other farmers. Then he brought me all his wages. He'd say, 'Mama, someday I'm going to buy you a brand-new farm. I promise.' There wasn't a better boy in the world!"

Sometimes I wondered about that boy dying alone in a muddy ditch in a foreign country he'd only read about. I thought of the scared kid who jumped out of a foxhole in front of an advancing enemy, only to be downed by a sniper. I couldn't reconcile the image of the boy and his dog with that of the stalwart soldier.

Mema stood beside me for a while, looking at the photo. From outside came the sharp snap of an American flag flapping in the breeze and the voices of my cousins cheering my brother at bat.

"Mema," I asked, "what's a hero?"

Without a word she turned and walked down the hall to the back bedroom. I followed.

She opened a bureau drawer and took out a small metal box, then sank down onto the bed.

"These are Bud's things," she said. "They sent them to us after he died." She opened the lid and handed me a telegram dated October 13, 1944. "The Secretary of State regrets to inform you that your son, Lloyd Heitzman, was killed in Italy."

Your son! I imagined Mema reading that sentence for the first time. I didn't know what I would have done if I'd gotten a telegram like that.

"Here's Bud's wallet," she continued. Even after all those years, it was caked with dried mud. Inside was Bud's driver's license with the date of his sixteenth birthday. I compared it with the driver's license I had just received.

A photo of Bud holding a little spotted dog fell out of the wallet. Jiggs. Bud looked so pleased with his mutt.

There were other photos in the wallet: a laughing Bud standing arm in arm with two buddies, photos of my mom and aunt and uncle, another of Mema waving. This was the home Uncle Bud took with him, I thought.

I could see him in a foxhole, taking out these snapshots to remind himself of how much he was loved and missed.

"Who's this?" I asked, pointing to a shot of a pretty dark-haired girl.

"Marie. Bud dated her in high school. He wanted to marry her when he came home." A girlfriend? Marriage? How heartbreaking to have a life, plans and hopes for the future, so brutally snuffed out.

Sitting on the bed, Mema and I sifted through the treasures in the box: a gold watch that had never been wound again. A sympathy letter from President Roosevelt, and one from Bud's commander. A medal shaped like a heart, trimmed with a purple ribbon. And at the very bottom, the deed to Mema's house.

"Why's this here?" I asked.

"Because Bud bought this house for

me." She explained how after his death, the U.S. government gave her 10 thousand dollars, and with it she built the house she was still living in.

"He kept his promise all right," Mema said in a quiet voice I'd never heard before.

For a long while the two of us sat there on the bed. Then we put the wallet, the medal, the letters, the watch, the photos and the deed back into the metal box. I finally understood why it was so important for Mema—and me—to remember Uncle Bud on this day.

If he'd lived longer he might have built that house for Mema or married his high-school girlfriend. There might have been children and grandchildren to remember him by.

As it was, there was only that box, the name in the program and the reminiscing around the kitchen table.

"I guess he was a hero because he gave everything for what he believed," I said carefully.

"Yes, child," Mema replied, wiping a tear with the back of her hand. "Don't ever forget that."

I haven't. Even today with Mema gone, my husband and I take our lawn chairs to the tree-shaded boulevard on Memorial Day and give our three daughters small American flags that I buy for a quarter at Ben Franklin.

I want them to remember that life isn't just about getting what you want. Sometimes it involves giving up the things you love for what you love even more. That many men and women did the same for their country—that's what I think when I see the parade pass by now.

And if I close my eyes and imagine, I can still see Mema in her regal purple hat, honoring her son, a true American hero.

A Guideposts classic story  
**by Nancy Sullivan Geng .**