

Lore of the Corps

“It’s a Family Affair”¹:

A History of Fathers, Daughters and Sons, Brothers, and Grandfathers and Grandsons in the Corps

Fred L. Borch

Regimental Historian & Archivist

The recent promotion to colonel of Nicholas F. “Nick” Lancaster by his father, Colonel (COL) (Retired) Steve Lancaster, both Army lawyers, raises the question of just how many fathers and daughters and sons, as well as brothers and sisters, and even grandfathers and grandsons, have served as lawyers in our Corps. What follows is a quick look at our version of “It’s a Family Affair.”

Earliest Family Relationships

Truly the most remarkable family connection in our history is that of the first Army lawyer, William Tudor, and his direct descendant, Thomas S. M. Tudor.



William Tudor was The Judge Advocate General (TJAG) from 1775 to 1777; his great-great-great grandson, Tom Tudor, served as an Army lawyer from 1975 to 1978.

Colonel William Tudor was the first Judge Advocate General and served under General George Washington from 1775 to 1777.² Two hundred years later, in 1975, his great-great-great grandson, Captain (CPT) Thomas “Tom” Tudor, joined our Corps. Captain Tudor served one tour of duty with 3d Armored Division in Germany and left active duty in 1978. Tudor subsequently joined the U.S. Air Force

¹ With a tip of the hat to SLY AND THE FAMILY STONE, *Family Affair*, on FAMILY AFFAIR, (Epic Records 1971), available at <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/slythefamilystone/familyaffair.html> (last visited Aug. 27, 2014). *Family Affair* was the number one single on the Billboard Top 100 in late 1971. The author thanks the members of the Retired Association of Judge Advocates (RAJA) for their help in gathering information for this Lore of the Corps, with a special thanks to RAJA members Major General (Retired) William K. Suter and COL (Retired) Barry P. Steinberg.

² For more on the first Judge Advocate General, see JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL’S CORPS, U.S. ARMY, *THE ARMY LAWYER: A HISTORY OF THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL’S CORPS, 1775–1975*, at 7–10 (1975).

Judge Advocate General’s Corps. He served as an Air Force lawyer from 1980 to 2002.³

Another early family connection in our history is Columbia Law School professor Francis Lieber, author of the famous General Orders No. 100 (“Lieber Code”) and his son, Guido Norman Lieber, who served first as the Acting Judge Advocate General (1884 to 1895) and then as the Judge Advocate General (1895 to 1901). Although the Liebers technically do not qualify for this *Lore of the Corps* since Francis Lieber was a civilian law school professor who never wore an American uniform, they are worth mentioning because of their significance in the history of Army law.⁴

Fathers and Daughters



Major General George S. Prugh was already retired (he left active duty in 1975) when his daughter, Virginia “Patt” Prugh, entered the Corps. She retired as a LTC in 2006.

The earliest father and daughter pair is Major General (MG) George S. Prugh and his daughter, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) (Retired) Virginia “Patt” Prugh. General Prugh’s distinguished career culminated with his service as TJAG

³ The lineage for this remarkable Tudor connection is as follows: William Tudor (1750–1819); Frederic Tudor (1783–1864); Frederic Tudor (1845–1902); Rosamund Tudor (1878–1949); Tasha Tudor (1915–2010); and Thomas Tudor (1945–present). E-mail, Thomas Tudor, to author, subj: Great-great-great grandson (8 Sept. 2014, 9:58 AM) (on file with author).

⁴ For more on Dr. Francis Lieber and his son, see *THE ARMY LAWYER*, *supra* note 2, at 61–62, 84–86 (1975). While Francis Lieber never served in the U.S. Army, he did see combat as a soldier in the Prussian Army during the Napoleonic wars. He was badly wounded during the Waterloo campaign, and was left for dead on the battlefield. See http://www.loc.gov/r/rfd/Military_Law/Lieber_Collection/pdf/francisbio-more.pdf (last visited Sept. 25, 2014).

from 1971 to 1975.⁵ His daughter served in the Corps from 1982 to 2006. After retiring from active duty, she joined the U.S. State Department, where she serves today.



Colonel LeRoy "Lee" Foreman and Colonel Mary "Meg" Foreman

Colonel (Retired) LeRoy F. "Lee" Foreman and COL Mary M. "Meg" Foreman are the first father-daughter pair to reach the rank of COL as judge advocates. Lee Foreman served on active duty from 1963 to 1992, including overseas assignments in Germany, Vietnam, and Korea. His daughter graduated from the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) in 1988, and entered the Corps through the Funded Legal Education Program (FLEP). Colonel Meg Foreman is now assigned to the Department of Defense General Counsel's Office.

Finally, Brigadier General (Retired) M. Scott Magers, who entered the Corps in 1968 and retired from active duty in 1995, and his daughter, Eleanor Magers (later Eleanor Vuono), served on active duty at the same time at the Pentagon. Then-CPT Magers has the unique distinction of being the only judge advocate to begin her career in the Army General Counsel's Honors Program⁶ and then switch to active duty after completing the Judge Advocate Basic Course. Eleanor left active duty from Fort Carson, Colorado, in 2000.

Other father and daughter combinations include Michael B. "Brett" Buckley, who served as a CPT in the Corps in the early 1980s and his daughter, CPT Michele B. Buckley, now on active duty at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Similarly, Keith W. Sickendick, who served as a CPT at the Defense Appellate Division in the late 1980s, has a daughter, CPT Katherine E. Sickendick. She also is now on active duty at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

⁵ For more on Major General George S. Prugh, see *THE ARMY LAWYER*, *supra* note 2, at 256-57.

⁶ The Army General Counsel's Honors Program provides young attorneys with a unique opportunity to help advise the Department of the Army's senior civilian and military leadership on a wide variety of legal and policy issues. These attorneys generally apply for the program in their third year of law school. If selected, they are invited to work alongside highly experienced career civilian and military attorneys in one of our four main practice groups. OFFICE OF THE ARMY GENERAL COUNSEL, http://ogc.hqda.pentagon.mil/Carrers/honors_program.aspx (last visited Oct. 9, 2014).

Fathers and Sons

There are at least nineteen father-and-son pairs. In alphabetical order, known pairs include: John and John E. "Jeb" Baker; Steven E. and John T. Castlen; Dean Dort Sr. and Dean Dort, Jr.; Charles P. and Douglas A. Dribben; Gregory and Cameron Edlefsen; Thomas and John T. Jones; Ward and Ward D. King; Steven F. and Nicholas F. Lancaster; Thomas and Dustin J. Lujan; John and Kevin Ley; James Edgar, Jr. and James Ennis Macklin; Talbot Nicholas and Talbot Nicholas, Jr.; William S. and William J. Ostan; Joseph and Edward Piasta; Robert S. Poydasheff and Robert S. Poydasheff, Jr.; Paul and Paul Robblee; James "Jim" and Frank Rosenblatt; and Gary and Gary Thorne.



Colonel John Baker (shown here as Coast Artillery Corps captain) is one of only a handful of judge advocate colonels to have a son (Colonel "Jeb" Baker) reach the rank of colonel in the Corps.

John Baker, a 1942 USMA graduate, entered the Corps after graduating from Yale's law school in 1951. His career as an Army lawyer took him to a variety of assignments and locations, including service as Staff Judge Advocate, U.S. Army South, U.S. Canal Zone, from 1966 to 1969. When COL Baker retired in 1970, he returned to the Canal Zone to serve as a U.S. Magistrate judge until 1982.⁷ His son, John E. "Jeb" Baker, also received his commission through USMA (Class of 1972) and started his career as a judge advocate in 1979 with the 193d Infantry Brigade in the U.S. Canal Zone (his father was still serving as a U.S. Magistrate judge). The younger Baker retired as a COL in 2002.⁸

Steve Castlen entered the Corps in the 1980s. He retired as a COL and his last assignment was with the Army Trial Judiciary. His son, CPT John T. Castlen is currently serving in Germany.

Colonel Dean Dort Sr. and his son, Dean Dort, Jr., both served in the Corps. While the elder Dort stayed for a career and retired as a COL, the junior Dort resigned his commission when he was a major (MAJ).

⁷ ASS'N OF GRADUATES, REGISTER OF GRADUATES AND FORMER CADETS 3-77 (2004).

⁸ *Id.* at 3-398.

Charles P. Dribben retired as a COL; his last assignment was with the U.S. Army Judiciary. His son, Douglas A. “Doug” Dribben, entered the Corps in 1990 through the FLEP; the younger Dribben had graduated from USMA in 1983. Major Doug Dribben retired in 2003.⁹

Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Lee Edlefsen served in the Corps from 1971 until he retired in 1993. His last assignment was Staff Judge Advocate, 7th Signal Command, Fort Ritchie, Maryland. His son, MAJ Cameron R. “Cam” Edlefsen, is on active duty and currently serves as a trial attorney, Contract & Fiscal Law Division, U.S. Army Legal Services Agency. The younger Edlefsen graduated from the USMA in 2000 and entered the Corps in 2007 through the Funded Legal Education Program.

Colonel Charles Grimm and his son, Paul Grimm, both served in the Corps. The senior Grimm served his entire career as an active duty Army lawyer. The younger Grimm served some active duty and retired as Reserve LTC. He is now a U.S. District Court judge in Maryland.

Colonel John Thomas Jones graduated from USMA in 1946 and entered our Corps after completing law school at Columbia University. He was a judge on the Army Court of Military Review before retiring in 1982.¹⁰ His son, John Thomas Jones, Jr., served in the Corps in the 1980s and 90s and retired as a LTC; the younger Jones’ area of expertise was contract law, and he headed the Contract Law Division at The Judge Advocate General’s School, U.S. Army (TJAGSA) prior to his retirement.

Colonel Ward King and his son, Ward D. King, both served in the Corps. The younger King graduated from the USMA in 1971 and, after service as a Field Artillery officer, completed law school at the University of Texas and entered the Corps in 1977. Lieutenant Colonel King retired in 1996.¹¹

John P. Ley, Jr. entered the Corps in 1977. He served in a variety of locations, including overseas duty in Germany, Italy, and Korea. When COL Ley retired in 2008, he was serving as the Acting Commander, The Judge Advocate General’s Legal Center and School (TJAGLCS). His son, MAJ Kevin M. Ley, serves in the Corps today.

Colonel (Retired) Thomas R. Lujan served more than twenty-five years before retiring in 1998. His son, CPT Dustin Lujan, was commissioned as an Infantry officer and later entered the Corps through the FLEP. He is now stationed at Fort Hood, Texas.

James Edgar Macklin, Jr., a USMA graduate who entered the Corps in 1955 after graduating from Columbia Law School, retired as a COL. His son, James E. Macklin, was commissioned after graduating from USMA in 1980 and entered the Corps through the FLEP. He retired as a LTC.¹²

Colonel Talbot Nicholas and his son, Talbot Nicholas, Jr., both served in the Corps. The younger Nicholas left active duty as a CPT.

The senior William Ostan served at Fort Dix, New Jersey from 1976 to 1979; his son, CPT “Bill” Ostan, entered the Corps in 2007 and is on active duty today.

Colonel Joseph Piasta and his son, Edward Piasta, both served in the Corps.

Colonel (Retired) Robert S. “Bob” Poydasheff served in a variety of assignments in the Corps from 1961 to 1979. When he retired from active duty, Poydasheff was the Staff Judge Advocate at Fort Benning, Georgia. His son, Robert S. Poydasheff, Jr., served in the Corps from 1986 to 1991, when he left active duty.

Colonel Paul A. Robblee and his son, Colonel Paul Robblee, both served full careers as Army lawyers and retired as colonels. The senior Robblee received his law degree from the Minnesota College of Law in 1935 and, after serving as an Infantry officer in World War II, entered our Corps in 1947. He retired in the 1960s.¹³ The junior Robblee first served as an Infantry officer in Vietnam (with the 101st Airborne Division) before going to law school at Washington and Lee University. He entered the Corps in 1972 and then served in a variety of assignments including Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, 82d Airborne Division and Staff Judge Advocate, U.S. Army Japan and Third U.S. Army. The younger Robblee retired in 1992. The Robblees were the first father-son pair in our Corps’ history to both attain the rank of COL.



Then-Captain Paul A. Robblee, Jr. (left) and Colonel Paul A. Robblee, Sr. (right), ca. 1970.

⁹ ASS’N OF GRADUATES, *supra* note 5, at 3-562.

¹⁰ *Id.* at 3-126.

¹¹ *Id.* at 3-385.

¹² ASS’N OF GRADUATES, REGISTER OF GRADUATES AND FORMER CADETS 403, 786 (1992),

¹³ Department of the Army, Army Register (1961).

Colonel James “Jim” (but also called “Rosey” by those who knew him well) Rosenblatt retired after a distinguished career and was the Dean, Mississippi College of Law for many years. His son, MAJ Franklin Rosenblatt, entered the Corps through the FLEP and is on active duty in Hawaii today.

Colonel Gary Thorne served as a judge advocate in the 1950s; his son, also named Gary, served as a captain in our Corps in the 1970s. The younger Thorne “is one of the most recognizable voices in sports broadcasting, having covered Major League Baseball, the National Hockey League, the Olympics, NCAA basketball, football and hockey” during a more than a thirty-five-year broadcasting career.¹⁴

A final father-son pair, albeit like the Liebers, not exactly in the category of father-son judge advocates, is William S. Fulton, Jr. and Sherwin Fulton. Colonel Fulton served as a judge advocate for many years (after seeing combat as an Infantryman in World War II and Korea), and finished his service to our Corps as an Army civilian employee and Clerk of the Army Court of Criminal Review (the forerunner of today’s Army Court of Criminal Appeals). His son, Sherwin, was a paralegal in our Corps and retired in 1995 as a sergeant first class.

Brothers

There have been at least ten sets of brothers in the Corps: the Camerons, Comedecas, Cooleys, Goetzkes, Hudsons, Lederers, Mackeys, Russells, Warners and Woodruffs.

Dennis S. Cameron served in the 1970s and his brother, Michael K. Cameron was on active duty in the Corps in the 1980s and 1990s.

The Comedeca brothers, Peter J. (senior) and Michael P. (junior), were on active duty at the same time in the late 1980s. Pete Comodeca graduated from USMA in 1977 and entered the Corps through the FLEP after completing law school at Harvard. He resigned his commission in 1990. His brother, Mike, likewise graduated from USMA (class of 1979) and entered the Corps through the FLEP. Lieutenant Colonel Mike Comodeca retired in 2000.¹⁵

Robert and Howard Cooley were brothers who served in the Corps in the 1970s and 1980s. Robert “Bob” Cooley left active duty after several tours of duty and began a career as a state court judge in Virginia. His younger brother, Howard, remained in the Corps for a career and retired as a COL.

¹⁴ Baseball Assistance Team, MLB.ORG, http://www.mlbcommunity.org/programs/baseball_assistance_team.jsp?content=new_board_2014 (last visited Aug. 27, 2014).

¹⁵ ASS’N OF GRADUATES, *supra* note 5, at 3-471, 3-501.

The Cooleys are apparently the only African-American brothers to have served as judge advocates in our Corps.

Karl M. and Kenneth H. Goetzke, Jr., both served in the Corps at the same time. Karl retired as a COL; Ken left active duty as a MAJ.

William A. “Bill” Hudson, Jr. and Walter M. “Walt” Hudson, both served in the Corps at the same time. Bill Hudson entered the Corps in 1984 and retired as a COL. His younger brother, Walt, is on active duty in the Corps today.

Colonel (U.S. Army Reserve Retired) Fredric I. “Fred” Lederer and his younger brother, COL (Retired) Calvin M. “Cal” Lederer likewise were on active duty at the same time in the 1970s. The older Lederer finished his active duty at TJAGSA (teaching in the Criminal Law Division) before beginning an academic career as a law school professor at the College of William and Mary. His younger brother, Cal Lederer, served a full career as an Army lawyer and retired from active duty in 2002. He then assumed duties as the Deputy Chief Counsel for the U.S. Coast Guard. When the Coast Guard became a part of the Department of Homeland Security in 2003, the Secretary of that department designated Cal Lederer as Deputy Judge Advocate General for the U.S. Coast Guard.¹⁶

Patrick J. and Richard J. Mackey were identical twins who entered the Corps in 1974 and served full careers; both retired as COLs. They are likely the only identical twins to have served in our Regiment.

George and Richard “Rich” Russell both served in the Corps at the same time; both retired as COLs. George was the older sibling and is deceased.

Colonel (Retired) Karl K. “Kasey” and LTC (Retired) Andrew M. “Mac” Warner entered the Corps in the 1980s. Both were USMA graduates who pinned the crossed sword and quill insignia on their collars after completing the FLEP. Kasey Warner retired in 2001; Mac Warner retired in 2000.¹⁷

Finally, William A. “Woody” Woodruff and his younger brother, Joseph A. Woodruff, both served on active duty in the Corps. The older Woodruff joined the Corps in 1974 and retired as a COL. He is now on the law faculty at Campbell University’s law school in Raleigh, North Carolina. The younger Woodruff entered the Corps after graduating from the University of Alabama’s law school. He left active duty as a MAJ and now practices law in Tennessee. A final note: Cedric Woodruff, their father,

¹⁶ Calvin Lederer, *U.S. Coast Guard, Dep’t of Homeland Security*, <http://www.uscg.mil/flag/biography/CalvinLederer.pdf> (last visited Aug. 27, 2014).

¹⁷ ASS’N OF GRADUATES, *supra* note 5, at 3-434, 3-472.

served as a warrant officer in the Corps from 1962 to 1972 and retired as a Chief Warrant Officer Three.

Grandfathers and Grandsons

To date, there have been two situations where a grandfather and his grandson were Army lawyers. Major General Ernest M. “Mike” Brannon served as TJAG from 1950 to 1954.¹⁸ Almost thirty years later, his grandson, Patrick D. “Pat” O’Hare, entered the Corps on active duty. The younger O’Hare retired as a COL in 2005 and now serves as the Deputy Director of the Legal Center at TJAGLCS.

Colonel Edward W. Haughney was a judge advocate from 1949 until his retirement in 1972. He subsequently joined the faculty at the Dickenson School of Law and taught for more than thirty years. His grandson, LTC Chris Jenks, recently retired from the Corps after twenty years on active duty.

Just as this Lore of the Corps gave a ‘tip of the hat’ to the Liebers, who do not quite fit the mold, it is only appropriate and fair to mention a father and daughter-in-law: Brigadier General (Retired) Richard “Dick” Bednar and his daughter-in-law, MAJ Yolanda A. Schillinger.

Brigadier General Bednar entered the Corps in 1954 and retired from active duty in 1983; Major Schillinger recently completed the 62d Graduate Course and remains on active duty. The only thing missing from this ‘family affair’ story is mothers, sons, and daughters, and sisters. With the ever increasing number of female judge advocates in the Corps, however, the day will soon come when sons and daughters join their mothers in wearing JAG brass on their collars, along with sisters.

A final note: pieces of this family affair are almost certain to be missing. Your Regimental Historian and Archivist invites readers to send him information that should be included in this part of our history.

More historical information can be found at

The Judge Advocate General’s Corps
Regimental History Website

Dedicated to the brave men and women who have served our Corps with honor, dedication, and distinction.

<https://www.jagcnet.army.mil/8525736A005BE1BE>

¹⁸ For more on Major General Brannon, see THE ARMY LAWYER, *supra* note 2, at 200–02.