

# A SESQUICENTENNIAL ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ MOMENT

---

JUNE 8 – 14, 1863

---

***The Civil War is often referred to as “the end of the medical Middle Ages,” so it speaks volumes when members of the 10th West Virginia Infantry honored an assistant surgeon from Upshur County with a sword, medal, sash and belt on June 10, 1863.***

---

“The sacrifices you have made in studying our comfort instead of your own, has been duly appreciated by the recipients, and they are sorry that they are unable to make a substantial demonstration of the gratitude they feel; but of one thing you can always rest

assured – the esteem of the boys of the 10th.”

The men of the 10th pooled money from their paychecks to buy the items for Dr. J.R. Blair of Buckhannon.

When Blair practiced medicine, most gunshot wounds were treated by amputating arms and legs. It also was a time when little was known about infection, so without antibiotics, antiseptics and much concern for sanitation, relatively minor wounds often proved fatal.

As a result, nearly two-thirds of the 620,000 casualties of the Civil War were victims of disease, not gunshot wounds.

---

*This sesquicentennial moment is brought to you by the  
West Virginia Sesquicentennial Commission and the  
West Virginia Division of Culture and History, Archives and History Section.*

**For more information, visit [www.wvculture.org](http://www.wvculture.org)**