

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Today in Texas History

By Bandera Spirits of Texas
The Bandera Prophet

On this day in 1861, Sarah Seelye enlisted in Company F, Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment, under the alias Franklin Thompson. She was one of a number of women who disguised themselves as men to enlist in the Civil War.

She had run away from home at age 17, disguised as a boy, to avoid an unwanted marriage. After enlisting in the Union army in 1861, she served for nearly two years as a male. Ironically, in her secret-service duty she penetrated Confederate lines "disguised" as a woman.

She deserted the army and resumed life as a female in 1863. She later published a fanciful, but highly successful, account of her experiences in the army, *Nurse and Spy in the Union Army* (1865).

She and her husband moved to La Porte, Texas in the early 1890s. On April 22, 1897, Sarah Seelye became a member of the McClellan Post, Grand Army of the Republic, in Houston. She was the only woman member in the history of the GAR.