

# *The Belo Herald*

*Newsletter of the Col. A. H. Belo Camp #49*  
And Journal of Unreconstructed Confederate Thought Presents...



# Christmas in the Confederacy



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# Chaplain's Corner

## The Other Christmas Story



The story of Christmas has been told and retold, taught and taught again. A mountain of books have been written and thousands of sermons have been spoken about that first Christmas so long ago. We sing songs about peace on earth and joy to the world. And we love to hear about Mary, Joseph, and the birth of the Christ Child in Bethlehem. But, there is the other Christmas story, a story that is often overlooked.

When Christ was born in Bethlehem, the Bible tells us that an angel was sent to announce His long awaited arrival. (Lk. 2: 10, 11) It is important for us to notice that when the angel came, he did not come to the priests serving in the great Temple of God in Jerusalem. Nor did he come to the Rabbis who taught people about the coming Messiah, or to the Scribes who knew so much about the prophecies concerning the Messiah. The angel did not come to the very religious Pharisees or Sadducees, or make his announcement to the Sanhedrin, the judges of Israel. And the angel did not appear to King Herod.

When the angel of the Lord came to bring the "good tidings of great joy," he passed by all of the religious leaders, rulers, and men of influence and power, and made the long awaited announcement to simple shepherds "keeping watch over their flock by night." (Luke 2: 8-20) Of course, this is not to say there is anything inherently wrong with being a leader, or having knowledge and influence. But it does tell us that God is not impressed with our degrees, titles, rituals, or position in the church or community. God looks at our heart.

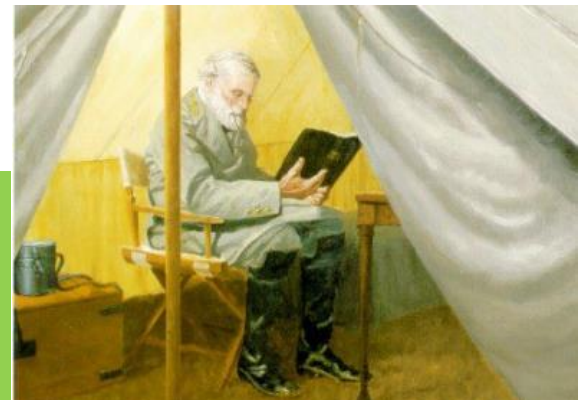
There was an old Bible teacher at a very large seminary who was highly regarded for his scholarly work, knowledge of Scripture and spiritual wisdom. One day some of his Bible students came to him and asked, "Professor, after all your years of study and great accomplishments in the field of Theology, what is the most important thing you've learned?" Without hesitation he answered, "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

The Apostle Paul writes, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." (2Cor. 11: 3) God's word is not, nor was it intended to be, complicated. True Christianity is having simple faith in the simple truth.

So, as we celebrate this Christmas, let us enjoy the old, old stories, and the well known Christmas songs. But, we should also be mindful of the other Christmas story. If a person asks Christ to come into his life in simple faith, He will come, and He will come as surely to a shepherd as He will a king.



Bro. Len Patterson, Th.D  
Past Chaplain, Army of Trans-Mississippi  
1941-2013



*Peace on Earth and Goodwill among Men*

*Jesus*

Hope of the nations  
God's righteousness revealed  
Light of the world

*May God bless  
you this Christmas!*

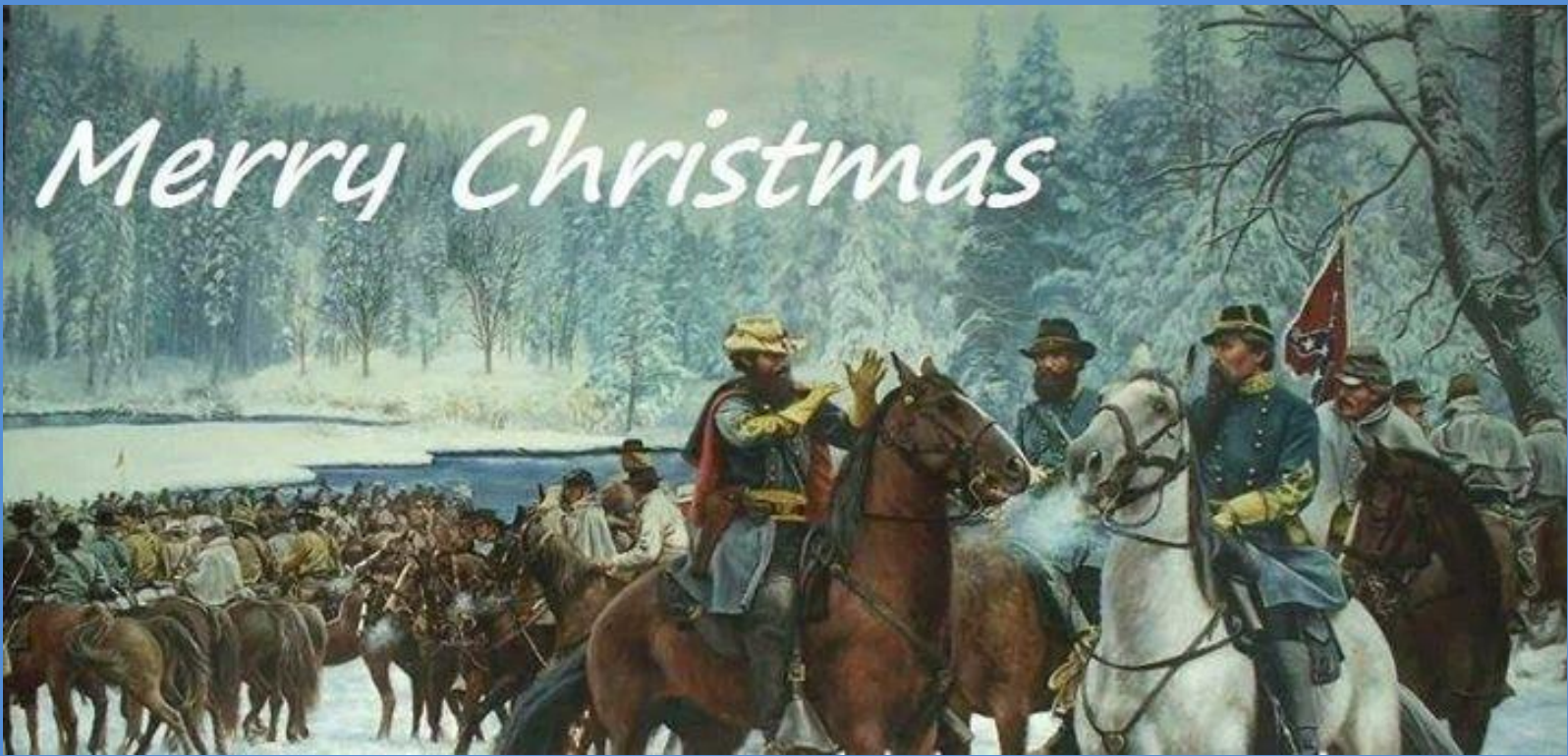
**"IN ALL MY PERPLEXITIES AND DISTRESSES, THE BIBLE HAS NEVER FAILED TO GIVE ME LIGHT AND STRENGTH."**

**-GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE**

# *Special Christmas Issue!*

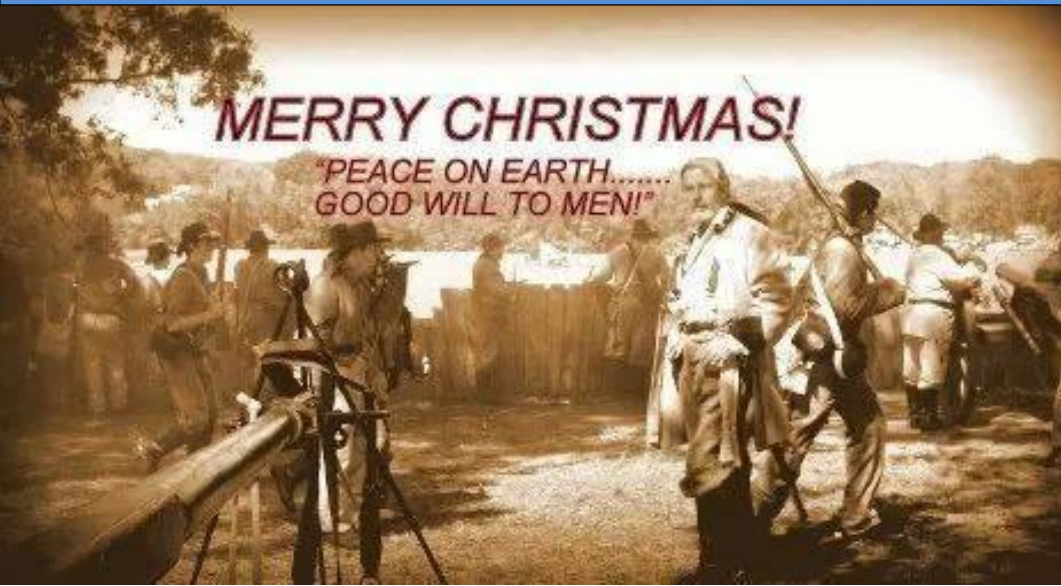
*This Belo Herald special issue features a compilation of many new and past articles about Christmas in the Confederacy – all in one place!!*

*Merry Christmas*



**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

"PEACE ON EARTH.....  
GOOD WILL TO MEN!"





**“A short time before the Christmas holidays in 1862 the scouts had brought information that quite a cavalcade of sutlers’ wagons under military escort had left Washington or Alexandria for Burnside's Army in front of Fredericksburg moving down the Telegraph Road. The wagons were loaded with Christmas things for the army at Fredericksburg and General Hampton decided that the sutlers’ quartermasters and commissaries from Washington ought to make a fair and liberal division with the d\_ \_ \_ ed rebels as we were affectionately called in those days...” This post shares a veteran's account of the first Dumfries Raid.**

## **DUMFRIES RAID # 1**

**The following is an account of the first Dumfries Raid given by a Ulysses R. Brooks, a veteran of Butler’s Cavalry, many years after the war.**

**“A short time before the Christmas holidays in 1862 the scouts had brought information that quite a cavalcade of sutler wagons under military escort had left Washington or Alexandria for Burnside's Army in front of Fredericksburg moving down the Telegraph Road. The wagons were loaded with Christmas things for the army at Fredericksburg and General Hampton decided that the sutlers’ quartermasters and commissaries from Washington ought to make a fair and liberal division with the d\_ \_ \_ ed rebels as we were affectionately called in those days; accordingly he crossed the Rappahannock late in the evening, bivouacked for the night and about midnight set out for Dumfries on the Telegraph Road.**

**“The weather was intensely cold and the night as dark as Erebus. Reaching the neighborhood of Dumfries before daylight Hampton detached Butler with his own regiment the Second South Carolina and the First South Carolina to move into the Telegraph Road at or below Dumfries and attack any force in the town, while he made a detour to the left to strike the road above Dumfries towards Occoquan. As that would be the only avenue of escape for the enemy if defeated by Butler; he expected to cut them off and bag the game between the two fires.**

**“When Butler charged into the old town about the dawn of day he found everything and everybody asleep. The wagons were packed in vacant lots with their teams, the teamsters and escort of about twenty five troopers sound asleep under a large shed near the principal street. The first salutation they received was a volley from Butler's force which had charged up and surrounded wagons teamsters escort and all. To be thus rudely awakened was no doubt regarded as a very unceremonious performance. The stationing of videttes some distance in all directions from the town to keep a look out while the prisoners and wagons were cared for was the work of a very short space of time.**

**“Butler immediately dispatched a courier to Hampton, informing him of the result of his onslaught and General Hampton very soon joined him from three or four miles up the road with the other regiments and battalions of his brigade. Butler had picketed along the Telegraph Road and Potomac River in the fall of 1861 and winter of 1862 while in command of the four companies of the Hampton Legion Cavalry and was therefore very familiar with the highways and byways of the country.**

**“The wagons were loaded down with almost every variety of goods: eatables, drinkables, confectionaries, buckskin gauntlets, boots, shoes, hats, choicest underwear, etc. As soon as General Hampton joined Butler from up the road a division of spoils began and whatever could not be carried off was destroyed. Of course the animals, wagons, prisoners, and as much of the plunder as would not impede the return march were brought safely out.**

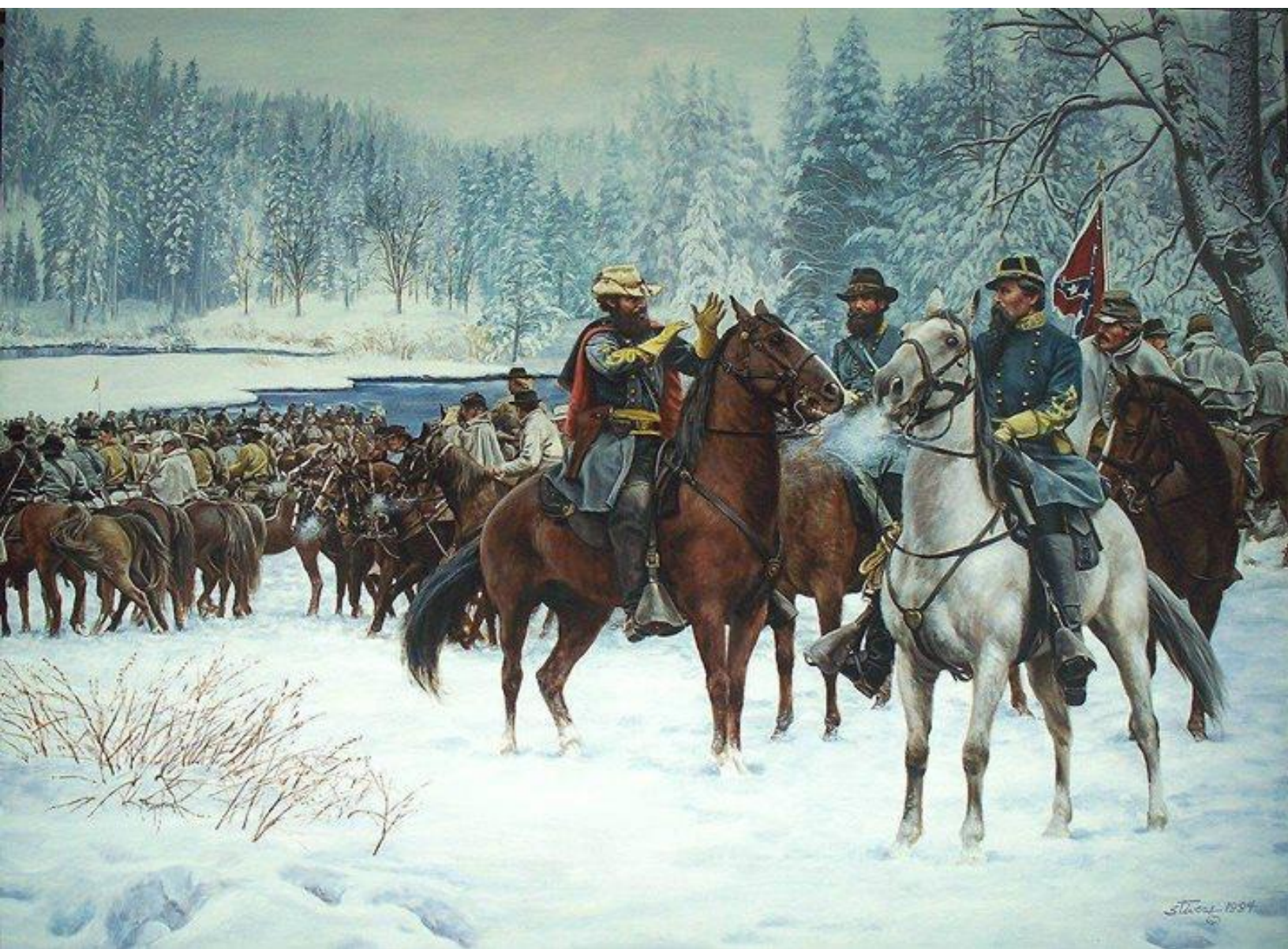
**“It is never safe to linger long so close to the enemy after an escapade like that and as little time as possible was taken in getting back to the crossing of the Rappahannock. The next day there was a division of the spoils and the Rebel Cavalry had never been so well supplied with gloves, boots, shoes, nicknacks of all kinds. Where Burnside's cavalry was while this mischief in his immediate rear was going on, nobody has ever found out.”**

Travis [ >< ]

Source: Butler and His Cavalry 1861-1865, By Ulysses Robert Brooks, published 1909, page 85

Link to free e-book: <https://books.google.com/books?id=dxFCAAAAIAAJ&pg>

Photo used: Artwork of Don Stivers, The Christmas Raid ([www.donstivers.com](http://www.donstivers.com))



The Christmas Raid  
Painting by Don Stivers

December 26, 1862.

J.E.B. Stuart leads his cavalry across Kelly's Ford looking for Federal supplies to liberate.

On this fine mission, Stuart took over the railroad telegraph and sent a message to the Union quartermaster general, informing him that the quality of the Yankee mules was very poor and interfered with moving the wagons his cavalry had just captured. He politely requested that next time; they have better mules on hand.

# *"Christmas letter from General Robert E. Lee to his wife, Mary"*

by Chaplain Bob Slimp

A very Merry Christmas to all of our compatriots.

I want to share with all of your Camp members and friends this very lovely Christmas letter from General Robert E. Lee to his wife, Mary. It gives us many insights into Lee's thoughts and priorities:

Fredericksburg  
December 25, 1862

I will commence this holy day dearest Mary by writing to you. My heart is filled with gratitude to almighty God for His unspeakable mercies with which He has blessed us in this day, for those He has granted us from the beginning of life, and particularly for those He has vouchsafed us during the past year. What should have become of us without His crowning help and protection? I have seen His hand in all the events of the war. Oh if our people would only recognize it and cease from their vain self-boasting and adulation, how strong would be my belief in final success and happiness to our country. For in Him alone I know is our trust and safety. Cut off from all communication with you and my children, my greatest pleasure is to write to you and them. Yet I have no time to indulge in it. You must tell them so, and say that I constantly think of them and love them reverently with all my heart. They must write to me without waiting for replies. I shall constantly think of them and love them feverently with all my heart. They must write to me without waiting for replies. I shall endeavor to write to Mildred from whom I have not heard for a long time. Tell dear Charlotte I have received her letter and feel greatly for her. I saw her Fitzhugh this morning with his young aid, riding at the head of his brigade on his way up the Rappahannock. I regret he could not get to see her. He only got her letter I enclosed him last evening. She ought not to have married a young soldier, but an old "exempt" like her papa, who would have loved her as much as he does. Fitzhugh and Robert were very well. But what a cruel thing war is war. To separate and separate and destroy families and friends and mar the purest joys and happiness God has granted us in this world. To fill our hearts with hatred instead of love for our neighbors and to devastate the fair face of this beautiful world. I pray on this day when "peace and good will" are preached to all mankind, that better thoughts will fill their hearts of our enemies and turn them to peace. The confusion that now exists in their counsels will thus result in good. Our army was never in such good health and condition since I have been attached to it and I believe they share with me my disappointment that the enemy did not renew the combat on the 13th. I was holding back all that day, and husbanding our strength and ammunition for the great struggle for which I thought he was preparing. Had I divined that was to have been his only effort, he would have had more of it. But I am content. We might have gained more but we would have lost more, and perhaps our relative condition would not have been improved. My heart bleeds at the death of every one of our gallant men. Give much love to everyone. Kiss Chass and Agnes for me, and believe me with true affection.

Yours, R.E. Lee



THE UNSUNDERED BANNER  
OF THE SOUTHERN PEOPLE  
1865-PRESENT



# CHRISTMAS IN THE CONFEDERATE WHITE HOUSE

FROM: *The New York WORLD*, Sunday, December 13, 1896 (p. 26):

Written especially for the *Sunday World Magazine* by Mrs. Jefferson Davis.

NOTE: The left margin of this clipping is ragged in places.

Missing or fragmentary words that could not be puzzled out are indicated as "[missing]."

While looking over the advertisements of the toys and everything else intended to make the children joyful in the columns of the city papers, I have been impressed with the contrast between the present time and the con-[missing] of the Southern country thirty-one years ago, but not withstanding the great facilities of the present time, have been unable to decide whether for the young it was not as gay then as now.

For as Christmas season was ushered in under the darkest clouds, everyone felt the cataclysm which impended but the rosy, expectant faces of our little children were a constant reminder that self-sacrifice must be the personal offering of each member of the family. How to satisfy the children when nothing better could be done than the little makeshift attainable in the Confederacy was the problem of the older members of each household. There were no currants, raisins or other ingredients to fill the old Virginia recipe for mince pie, and the children considered that at least a slice of that much-coveted dainty was their right and the price of indigestion paid for it was a debt of honor [missing] from them to the season's exactions. Apple trees grew and bore in spite of war's alarms, so the foundation of the mixture was assured. The many excited housekeepers in Richmond had preserved all the fruits attainable, and these were substituted for the time-honored raisins and currants. The brandy required for seasoning at one hundred dollars a bottle was forthcoming, the cider was obtained. Suet at a dollar a pound was ordered -- and the [missing] seemed a blessed certainty -- but the eggnog -- [missing] were the eggs and liquors to be procured -- without which Christmas would be a failure to the negroes.

## EGGNOG FOR THE NEGROES.

"If it's only a little wineglass," said the [missing], dusty-looking negro rubber in the stables who [missing] in the back log (our substitute for the [missing] eggnog). "I dunno how we gwine git along without no eggnog." So, after redoubled efforts, the liquors and other ingredients were secured in





admirable quantities. The little jackets, pieced together out of such cloth remaining when uniforms were turned out by the tailors, were issued to the children of the soldiers, amid the remonstrances of the mothers that the pattern of them "wasn't worth a cent."

Rice, flour, molasses and tiny pieces of meat, most of them sent to the President's wife anonymously to be distributed to the poor, had all be weighed and issued, and the playtime of the family began, but like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky came the information that the orphans at the Episcopalian home had been promised a Christmas tree and the toys, candy and cakes must be provided, as well as one pretty prize for the most orderly girl among the orphans. The kind-hearted confectioner was interviewed by our committee of managers, and he promised a certain amount of his simpler kinds of candy, which he sold easily a dollar and a half a pound, but he drew the line at cornucopias to hold it, or sugared fruits to hang on the tree, and all the other vestiges of Christmas creations which had lain on his hands for years. The ladies dispersed in anxious squads of toy-hunters, and each one turned over the store of her children's treasures for a contribution to the orphans' tree, my little ones rushed over the great house looking up their treasure eyeless dolls, three-legged horses, tops with the upper peg broken off, rubber tops, monkeys with all the squeak gone silent and all the ruck of children's toys that gather in a nursery closet.



## MAKESHIFT TOYS FOR THE ORPHANS

Some small feathered chickens and parrots which nodded their heads in obedience to a weight beneath them were furnished with new tail feathers, lambs minus much of their wool were supplied with a cotton wool substitute, rag dolls were plumped out and recovered with clean cloth, and the young ladies painted their fat faces in bright colors and furnished them with beads for eyes.

But the tug of war was how to get something with which to decorate the orphans' tree. Our man servant, Robert Brown, was much interested and offered to make the prize toy. He contemplated a "sure enough house, with four rooms." His part in the domestic service was delegated to another and he gave himself over in silence and solitude to the labors of the architect.

My sister painted mantel shelves, door panels, pictures and frames for the walls, and finished with black grates in which their blazed a roaring fire, which was pronounced marvelously realistic. We all made furniture of twigs and pasteboard, and my mother made pillows, mattresses, sheets and pillow cases for the two little bedrooms.



Christmas Eve a number of young people were invited to come and string apples and popcorn for the trees; a neighbor very deft in domestic arts had tiny candle moulds made and furnished all the candles for the tree. However the puzzle and triumph of all was the construction of a large number of cornucopias. At last someone suggested a conical block of wood, about which the drawing paper could be wound and pasted. In a little book shop a number of small, highly colored pictures cut out and ready to apply were unearthed, and our old confectioner friend, Mr. Piazzi, consented, with a broad smile, to give "all the love verses the young people wanted to roll with the candy."



## A CHRISTMAS EVE PARTY

About twenty young men and girls gathered around small tables in one of the drawing rooms of the mansion and the cornucopias were begun. The men wrapped the squares of candy, first reading the "sentiments" printed upon them, such as "Roses are red, violets blue, sugar's sweet and so are you," "If you love me as I love you no knife can cut our love in two." The fresh young faces, wreathed in smiles, nodded attention to the reading, while with their small deft hands they glued the cornucopias and pasted on the pictures. Where were the silk tops to come from? Trunks of old things were turned out and snippings of silk and even woolen of bright colors were found to close the tops, and some of the young people twisted sewing silk into cords with which to draw the bags up. The beauty of those home-made things astonished us all, for they looked quite "custom-made," but when the "sure enough house" was revealed to our longing gaze the young people clapped their approbation, while Robert, whose sense of dignity did not permit him to smile, stood the impersonation of successful artist and bowed his thanks for our approval. Then the coveted eggnog was passed around in tiny glass cups and pronounced good. Crisp home-made ginger snaps and snowy lady cake completed the refreshments of Christmas Eve. The children allowed to sit up and be noisy in their way as an indulgence took a sip of eggnog out of my cup, and the eldest boy confided to his father: "Now I just know this is Christmas." In most of the houses in Richmond these same scenes were enacted, certainly in every one of the homes of the managers of the Episcopalian Orphanage. A bowl of eggnog was sent to the servants, and a part of everything they coveted of the dainties.



At last quiet settled on the household and the older members of the family began to stuff stockings with molasses candy, red apples, an orange, small whips plaited by the family with high-colored crackers, worsted reins knitted at home, paper dolls, teetotums made of large horn bottoms and a match which could spin indefinitely, balls of worsted rags wound hard and covered with old kid gloves, a pair of pretty woolen gloves for each, either cut of cloth and embroidered on the back or knitted



by some deft hand out of home-spun wool. For the President there were a pair of chamois-skin riding gauntlets exquisitely embroidered on the back with his monogram in red and white silk, made, as the giver wrote, under the guns of Fortress Monroe late at night for fear of discovery. There was a hemstitched linen handkerchief, with a little sketch in indelible ink in one corner; the children had written him little letters, their grandmother having held their hands, the burthen of which compositions was how they loved their dear father. For one of the inmates of the home, who was greatly loved but whose irritable temper was his prominent failing, there was a pretty cravat, the ends of which were embroidered, as was the fashion of the day. The pattern chosen was simple and on it was pinned a card with the word "amiable" to complete the sentence. One of the [missing] received a present of an illuminated copy of Solomon's proverbs found in the same old store from which the pictures came. He studied it for some time and announced: "I have changed my opinion of Solomon, he uttered such unnecessary platitudes -- now why should he have said 'The foolishness of a fool is his folly?'"

On Christmas morning the children awoke early and came in to see their toys. They were followed by the negro women, who one after another "caught" us by wishing us a merry Christmas before we could say it to them, which gave them a right to a gift. Of course, there was a present for every one, small though it might be, and one who had been born and brought up at our plantation was vocal in her admiration of a gay handkerchief. As she left the room she ejaculated: "Lord knows mistress knows our insides; she jest got the very thing I wanted."

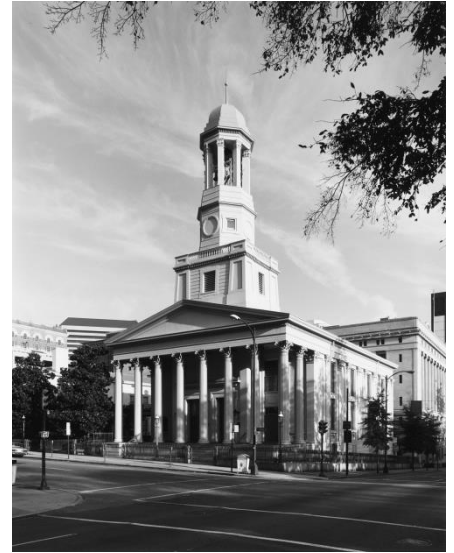


## MRS. DAVIS' STRANGE PRESENTS

For me there were six cakes of delicious soap, made from the grease of ham boiled for a family at Farmville, a skein of exquisitely fine gray linen thread spun at home, a pincushion of some plain brown cotton material made by some poor woman and stuffed with wool from her pet sheep, and a little baby hat plaited by the orphans and presented by the industrious little pain who sewed the straw together. They pushed each other silently to speak, and at last mutely offered the hat, and considered the kiss they gave the sleeping little one ample reward for the industry and far above the fruit with which they were laden. Another present was a fine, delicate little baby frock without an inch of lace or embroidery upon it, but the delicate fabric was set with fairy stitches by the dear invalid neighbor who made it, and it was very precious in my eyes. There were also a few of Swinburne's best songs bound in wall-paper and a chamois needlebook left for me by young Mr. P., now succeeded to his title in England. In it was a Brobdinagian thimble "for my own finger, you know," said the handsome, cheerful young fellow.



After breakfast, at which all the family, great and small, were present, came the walk to St. Paul's Church. We did not use our carriage on Christmas or, if possible to avoid it, on Sunday. The saintly Dr. Minnegerode preached a sermon on Christian love, the introit was sung by a beautiful young society woman and the angels might have joyfully listened. Our chef did wonders with the turkey and roast beef, and drove the children quite out of their propriety by a spun sugar hen, life-size, on a nest full of blanc mange eggs. The mince pie and plum pudding made them feel, as one of the gentlemen laughingly remarked, "like their jackets were buttoned," a strong description of repletion which I have never forgotten. They waited with great impatience and evident dyspeptic symptoms for the crowning amusement of the day, "the children's tree." My eldest boy, a chubby little fellow of seven, came to me several times to whisper: "Do you think I ought to give the orphans my I.D. studs?" When told no, he beamed with the delight of an approving conscience. All throughout the afternoon first one little head and then another popped in at the door to ask: "Isn't it 8 o'clock yet?," burning with impatience to see the "children's tree."



## DAVIS HELPED SANTA CLAUS

When at last we reached the basement of St. Paul's Church the tree burst upon their view like the realization of Aladdin's subterranean orchard, and they were awed by its grandeur.

The orphans sat mute with astonishment until the opening hymn and prayer and the last amen had been said, and then they at a signal warily and slowly gathered around the tree to receive from a lovely young girl their allotted present. The different gradations from joy to ecstasy which illuminated their faces was "worth two years of peaceful life" to see. The President became so enthusiastic that he undertook to help in the distribution,

but worked such wild confusion giving everything asked for into their outstretched hands, that we called a halt, so he contented himself with unwinding one or two tots from a network of strung popcorn in which they had become entangled and taking off all apples he could when unobserved, and presenting them to the smaller children. When at last the house was given to the "honor girl" she moved her lips without emitting a sound, but held it close to her breast and went off in a corner to look and be glad without witnesses.

"When the lights were fled, the garlands dead, and all but we departed" we also went home to find that Gen. Lee had called in our absence, and many other people. Gen. Lee had left word that he had received a barrel of sweet potatoes for us, which had been sent to him by mistake. He did not discover the mistake until he had taken his share (a dishful) and given the rest to the soldiers! We wished it had been much more for them and him.





## OFFICERS IN A STARVATION DANCE




The night closed with a "starvation" party, where there were no refreshments, at a neighboring house. The rooms lighted as well as practicable, someone willing to play dance music on the piano and plenty of young men and girls comprised the entertainment. Sam Weller's soiry[sic], consisting of boiled mutton and capers, would have been a royal feast in the Confederacy. The officers, who rode into town with their long cavalry boots pulled well up over their knees, but splashed up their waists, put up their horses and rushed to the places where their dress uniform suits had been left for safekeeping. They very soon emerged, however, in full toggery and entered into the pleasures of their dance with the bright-eyed girls, who many of them were fragile as fairies, but worked like peasants for their home and country. These young people are gray-haired now, but the lessons of self-denial, industry and frugality in which they became past mistresses then, have made of them the most dignified, self-reliant and tender women I have ever known -- all honor to them.

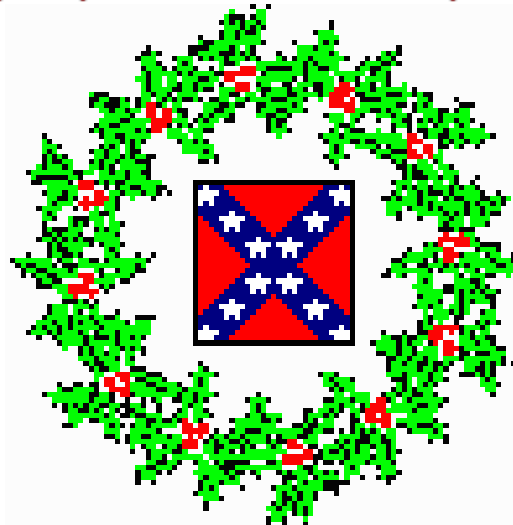

So, in the interchange of the courtesies and charities of life, to which we could not add its comforts and pleasures, passed the last Christmas in the Confederate mansion.



VARINA HOWELL DAVIS



This newspaper clipping is included among the Jefferson Davis Papers at Rice University.



This appeared as an article in the November/December 1995 issue of the Camp Chase Gazette. Excerpts of the above appear in an excellent book called "We Were Marching on Christmas Day" by Kevin Rawlings (ISBN 0-9612670-4-6 \$24.95 Toomey Press; P.O. Box 122; Linthicum, MD 21090 410-850-0831).





# CHARLESTON MERCURY

EXTRA:

*Passed unanimously at 1.15 o'clock, P. M. December  
20th, 1860.*

## AN ORDINANCE

*To dissolve the Union between the State of South Carolina and  
other States united with her under the compact entitled "The  
Constitution of the United States of America."*

*We, the People of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and  
it is hereby declared and ordained,*

That the Ordinance adopted by us in Convention, on the twenty-third day of May, in the  
year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the  
United States of America was ratified, and also, all Acts and parts of Acts of the General  
Assembly of this State, ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed;  
and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of  
"The United States of America," is hereby dissolved.

THE

# UNION

IS

# DISSOLVED!



# The Crisis Begins:

<http://www.newsinhistory.com/blog/crisis-begins-south-carolina's-secession-opens-path-civil-war>

## South Carolina's Secession Opens Path to Civil War

When South Carolina became the first of the future Confederate States of America to secede from the Union, on Dec. 20, 1860, few were surprised. Secessionist talk had been heating up in South Carolina for months, and the nation had been lurching toward division ever since the [Compromise of 1850](#) only partially checked the momentum leading to civil war. Slavery and states' rights were two irreconcilable differences dividing North and South. It was perhaps fitting that South Carolina, first to secede, fired the first shots that started the Civil War when Confederate forces in Charleston Harbor attacked [Fort Sumter](#) on April 12, 1861.

On the day South Carolina seceded the *Albany Journal* (Albany, New York) printed this article, in its Dec. 20, 1860, issue:

The South Carolina Convention has appointed a Committee to report what property belonging to the United States should be demanded by the State after it shall secede. So soon as a conclusion is reached, a Commissioner is to be sent to Washington to procure the title deeds. If Gen. Jackson were President, he would send him home with a halter about his neck.

That which will press most crushingly upon the fame of President Buchanan, in the estimation of coming generations, will be his refusal to interpose the authority of the Government to prevent South Carolina from consummating her treasonable purposes.

The indications are that Georgia will not follow the blind lead of South Carolina. Unless she does, secession will be a sickly fizzle.

The *New York Herald* (New York, New York) printed the news about South Carolina's secession on the front page of its Dec. 21, 1860, issue:

**Important from the South.**

## Actual Secession of South Carolina.

**The Unanimous Passage of the Secession Act in the State Convention.  
The Ordinance of Separation. Great Rejoicings in the Streets of Charleston.**

### The Secession of South Carolina.

Washington, Dec. 20, 1860.

The news from Charleston of the passage by unanimous vote of the ordinance of secession, although expected, causes great excitement here.

In the House the members of the Gulf States gathered in numbers, and with joyful expressions at the information. Among others it produces various comments. The general feeling, however, seems to be one of painful regret that in the midst of so great efforts and proposed sacrifices to save the Union South Carolina should have been launched upon her solitary career. It is thought that she has exhibited but little consideration for those of her sister States, who, with equal cause for secession, defer their action for joint consultation and procedure.

It was supposed the Convention would hold off until the 22d of February, at the request of some South Carolina members of Congress.

Members of Congress who had paired off, with the intention of going home to pass the holidays, have reconsidered their determination, and some will remain, as they believe the moment for decisive action for weal or woe will be reached within a few days.

The city is filled with rumors from Charleston about the capture of forts, &c., none of which are well founded.

## Ten O'clock P.M.

The excitement consequent upon the reception of the first report of the passage of the secession ordinance by South Carolina has partially subsided, and the city is unusually composed tonight. The goodbyes of retiring South Carolina members of the House were distinguished for their excellent humor, and the occasion seemed more like a departure of friends than of persons bound on a revolutionary mission.

### **An Ordinance to Dissolve the Union between the State of South Carolina and Other States United with Her under the Compact Entitled "The Constitution of the United States of America"**

We, the people of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained, that the ordinance adopted by us in convention on the 23d day of May, in the year of our Lord 1788, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also all acts and parts of acts of the General Assembly of this State ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed, and that the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of the United States of America, is hereby dissolved.

The ordinance was taken up and passed, by the unanimous vote of 169 members, at quarter past one o'clock.

As soon as its passage was known without the doors of the Convention it rapidly spread on the street, a crowd collected and there was immense cheering.

Mr. Miles moved that the clerk telegraph to the members at Washington. Carried unanimously.

...At forty minutes past three the Convention took a recess, to meet at Institute Hall at half-past six o'clock, for the purpose of signing the ordinance.

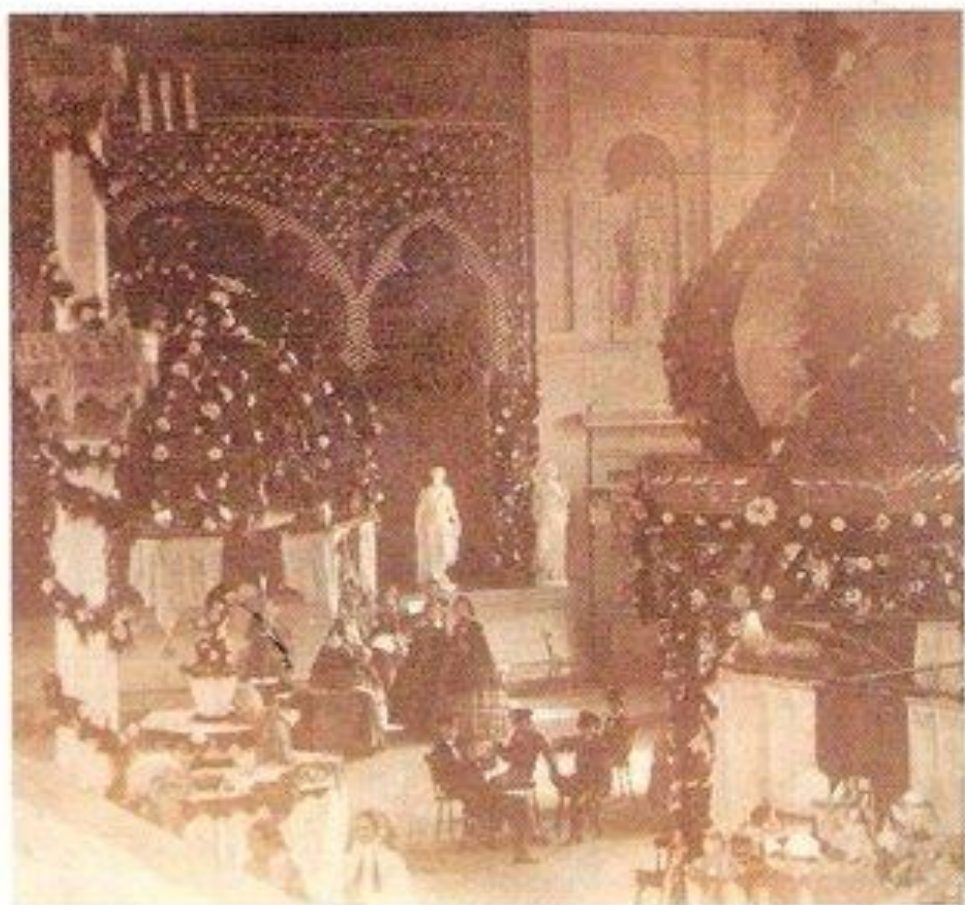
As the Convention were leaving St. Andrew's Hall the chimes of St. Michael's Episcopal church pealed forth "Auld Lang Syne" and other tunes.



*South Carolina Institute Hall, where Secession Ordinance was signed*



## SECESSION FOR CHRISTMAS



**F**estively decorated Secession Hall in Charleston, S.C., was photographed in December 1860. Just before 7 p.m. on December 20, the 169 South Carolina delegates who earlier that day had voted unanimously for secession assembled in the hall. One by one, in alphabetical order of their districts, they signed the parchment document that made the Palmetto State the first to leave the Union. The *Charleston Mercury* commented the next day: "The State of South Carolina has recorded herself before the universe. In reverence before God, fearless of man, unawed by power, unterrified by clamor, she had cut the gordian knot of colonial dependence upon the North—cast her fortune upon her right, and her own right arm, and stands ready to uphold alike her independence and her dignity before the world. Prescribing to none, she will be dictated to by none willing for peace, she is ready for war. Deprecating blood, she is willing to shed it. Valuing her liberties, she will maintain them. Neither swerved by frowns of foes, nor swayed by timorous solicitations of friends, she will pursue her direct path, and establish for herself and for her posterity, her rights, her liberties and her institutions. Though friends may fail her in her need, though the cannon of her enemies may belch destruction among her people, South Carolina, unawed, unconquerable, will still hold aloft her flag, 'ANIMIS OPIBUSQUE PARASTI' (the South Carolina state motto: "Ready in soul and resource")." **104**



# Learn True History



The Great Snowball Battle of Rappahannock Academy, February 25, 1863

## Great Confederate snowball fights!

Two back-to-back snowstorms in February of 1863 provided the ammunition for a friendly snowball battle amongst rival divisions of Confederate troops near Fredericksburg, Virginia. On February 19, eight inches of snow fell on the region. Two days later, nine inches of snow fell. On February 25, sunny skies and mild temperatures softened the deep snow cover, providing ideal conditions for making snowballs.

During this time, the Confederate Army was camped near Fredericksburg. Some of the Divisions of the army had been reorganized, which had created friendly rivalries between the Confederate brigades and regiments. This helped spark a huge snowball battle near Rappahannock Academy in which approximately 10,000 Confederate soldiers participated. One soldier who participated in the snowball battle described it as one of the most memorable combats of the war."

The battle started on the morning of February 25, 1863, when General Hoke's North Carolina soldiers marched towards Colonel Stiles' camp of Georgians, with the intent of capturing the camp using only snowballs. The attacking force, composed of infantry, cavalry and skirmishers, moved in swiftly. Battle lines formed and the fight began with "severe pelting" of snowballs. Reinforcements arrived from all sides to assist the brigade under attack. Even the employees of the commissary joined the snowball battle. Soon, the attacking soldiers were pushed back.



Gen. Robt. F. Hoke, North Carolina

Hoke's beaten soldiers retreated back to their camp. Colonel Stiles then held a Council of War on how best to attack the retreating force. He decided to organize his men and march directly into their camp, with snowballs in hand. When Stiles' forces finally arrived in Hoke's camp, they were quite surprised to find that their adversaries had rallied and filled their haversacks to the top with snowballs. This allowed Hoke's soldiers to provide an endless barrage of snowballs "without the need to reload." The attacking force was quickly overwhelmed and many of their soldiers were captured and "whitewashed" with snow. The snowball battle came to an end and both brigades settled back into their respective camps. The captured prisoners were quickly paroled and returned to their camp, to much heckling from fellow soldiers. It was noted that General Stonewall Jackson had witnessed the snowball battle. One soldier remarked that he had wished Jackson and staff had joined the fight so he could have thrown a snowball at "the old faded uniforms."

The weather turned mild and rainy in the following days. Other snowball battles were documented during the Civil War – including a snowball fight at Dalton, Georgia – but The Snowball Battle of Rappahannock Academy was unique in size, strategy and ample snow cover. The depth of the snow cover on the day of the battle was documented in a soldier's diary to be 12 inches. from:<http://www.weatherbook.com/Snowball.htm>

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## Great Snowball Fight of 1864: Dalton,GA

From: Stonewall of the West Patrick Cleburne and the Civil War



Occasionally the unpredictable March weather broke routine of camp life and interrupted the training schedule . On rare occasions it snowed and like children released from school , the troops treated any snowfall as an occasion for play. On March 22 dawn revealed a fresh 5 inches of new snow, and a spontaneous snowball fight broke out all across the camp. The men threw themselves into the fracas with enthusiasm. One arkansas soldier recalled, "Such pounding and thumping, and rolling over in the snow, and washing of faces and cramming snow in mouths and in ears and mixing up in great wriggling piles together." (Stephenson, Civil War Memoir)

In Cleburne's Div. , Lucius Polk's Brigade attacked Govan's Brigade, pitting Arkansas against Arkansas, and Cleburne could not resist getting involved. He placed himself at the head of his old brogade and led the attack on Govan's campsite. The snowballs flew thick and fast , and Govans's men Were getting the worst of it when they desided to launch a counterattack. They charged Forward, no doubt yelling for all they were worth and Cleburne suddenly found himself a prisoner of war. After some tongue -in-cheek deliberation, his captors desided to parol their commander, and claburne was released.

The snowball fight contined and claburnes once again entered the fray. Atlas he was captured a 2nd time .. and this time his captors confronted him with mock solemnity about his violation of parole. According to one veteran, "Some called for a drumead court martial; others demanded a sound ducking in the nearby creek. Still others mindfull of Cleburne's reputation as a stern disciplinarian, insistedthat the general be meted out his own customary punishment. The idea caught on and soon the whole brigade took up the familiar order: 'Arest that soldier and make him carry a fence rail!' " Cooler heads prevailed, with Claburne's defenders arguing that after all this was the 1st occasion on which he had been known to break his word and once again his captors granted him parole. When it was all over, Cleburne

authorized a ration of whiskey to the troops , and they stood around great bonfires singing and yelling "at the top of their lungs" {Steve Davis "The Great Snowbattle of 1864" CWTI (June 1976) }

More snow fell on the 23rd of March, provoking yet another snowball fight and rain and snow continued through the rest of the month. On the 31st a more serious sham battle occurred when Joe Johnston organized a mock engagement involving Hardee's Corps. Cleburne's and Bates's Div. Squared off against those of Cheatam and Walker. It was a fine weather for a charge, and the troops entered the spirit of the drill, firing off a blank cartridges each, thrilling the small audiences of ladies who had driven out from Dalton to watch. One veteran recalled, "The noise was terrific and the excitement intense, but nobody was hurt. . . except perhaps one of the cavalry men who was dismounted while charging a square of infantry." That night, back in camp , it was peaches and cornbread again for dinner. (John S. Jackson Diary of A Confederate Soldier)

from: <http://americancivilwar.50megs.com/stories04.html>

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## THE BATTLE OF THE SNOW

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Winter quarters for the troops during the Civil War were often a welcome relief from the constant marching and fighting of the spring, summer, and fall. Soldiers would make log huts and spend their time relaxing, writing letters home, and generally recuperating from a season of battle. Life in winter quarters was also monotonous and boring.

However, on March 23, 1864, while in winter quarters in Virginia, the Twenty-seventh North Carolina broke the boredom of the winter lull by initiating The Battle of "The Snow." The Twenty-seventh challenged the Forty-sixth North Carolina (both regiments in Cooke's Brigade) to a snowball fight. However, just as they were prepared to begin, Kirkland's Brigade appeared and made a challenge of their



own. The other regiments in Cooke's Brigade were called to duty and a full-scale battle between the two brigades erupted.

For over an hour, the two brigades pelted each other with snowballs, finally "ending in the utter route of the brave Kirklandites who were driven pell mell out of their quarters. . . ." The victorious Cooke's brigade plunder Kirkland's living quarters, acquiring "all the cooking utensils to be found . . . ."

Company commanders were ordered to retrieve all the ill-gotten cookware and return it, but every man found in possession of any cookware swore "he had owned it for many months."

Kirkland's Brigade, not satisfied with the outcome of the day's results, challenged Cooke's Brigade again the next day, and, in front of "an immense crowd of onlookers, including a number of general officers with their staffs from other commands[,] the battle continued. This time, Kirkland's brigade prevailed, "capturing" a large number of Cooke's officers and men, holding them for the ransom of cookware.

Night finally put an end to the festivities, "and all hands returned to their hut, good friends."

Thus ended The Battle of "The Snow."

NOTE: At this time of the war, Cooke's Brigade was composed of the Fifteenth, Twenty- seventh, Forty-sixth, and Forty-eighth regiment. Kirkland's Brigade was made up of the Seventeenth, Forty-second, Fiftieth, and Sixty-sixth North Carolina Regiments. from: <http://www.ehistory.com/uscw/feature...fm?NationId=65>



# Deep Freeze Fight

BY JASON H. SILVERMAN FEBRUARY 2018 • [CIVIL WAR TIMES MAGAZINE](#)

## The Army of Northern Virginia went to war with itself in February 1863

Missiles filled the air, and Confederate troops soon began to falter under their blows. Rebel Yells echoed off the hillsides as desperate charges and countercharges swept the fields. But the missiles were made of snow, not deadly iron or lead, and both sides issued the Rebel Yell as Robert E. Lee's troops fought each other in what was "probably the greatest snowball fight ever fought," according to a veteran of the battle.

**W**inter camp, while often free from actual combat, could still be brutal and boring for Civil War soldiers.

Impassable, muddy roads and the constant inclement weather made active military operations impossible. Disease ran rampant, killing more men than battles. Soldiers suffered grievously when confined to close quarters with poor sanitary conditions that lacked the appropriate systems to provide clean water and clear away waste.

Boredom was also an ever-present problem and an insidious enemy. It was mandatory that officers keep their men moving and active during the winter months to try and stave off both psychological and physical maladies. Drilling was surely one form of activity, but the incessantly mundane and repetitive aspects of it numbed body and mind.

Historians have written that the experience of being in battle tended to exaggerate the aggressive aspects of the Southern male culture. Indeed, there was an obvious pride in one's fighting ability, and the free time, the ongoing desire to prove themselves to one another, the absence of women, and the tension, anxiety, and angst about forthcoming battles, all meant that the soldiers took with them their combative and "fighting spirits" into their leisure time. When possible, the shared experience of team sports in camp helped unify the troops. These activities not only relieved the monotony of camp life, but also engendered a sense of community among the soldiers and gave them a shared purpose.



Toasty: Families often sent mittens, like this pair that belonged to a Union soldier, to troops in winter camp. (Heritage Auctions, Dallas)

Commanding officers and soldiers alike sought to establish regular routines and work schedules to alleviate the boredom. Camp maintenance and upkeep, religious services, letter writing, card games, story-telling, musical, poetic, and dramatic presentations all became an integral part of camp life. Because the winter encampments were in essence solitary villages, complete with crisscrossing streets, there were makeshift churches and sutler shops. And despite the hardships, the winter months allowed the soldiers an opportunity to bond and enjoy their more permanent camps. They were always looking for the opportunity to have a little fun and break the tedium.

On a daily basis, from the first arrival of snow until the melting of the last flakes in the warmth of the spring, soldiers were eager to pelt each other with densely packed snowballs. No one, including officers, was spared. "I knew that I would have to be snow balled at some time," recounted South Carolina Colonel C. Irvine Walker, "for the men did not let off any one in the brigade....So I thought it would be best to go down and take part in the fight and be snow balled....The men made however a regular Pandean frolic of it. All distinctions were levelled and the higher the officer the more snow balling he received."

"As if unable to satisfy his martial urges by fighting Yankees with guns and sabers in regular season," the eminent historian Bell Wiley wrote, "Johnny Reb now armed himself with snowballs, formed regiments and brigades from his own ranks, dubbed opposing comrades 'the enemy,' raised a yell, and charged with a realism that quickened the pulse of participants and spectators." "Prisoners of war" were also captured in the sham battles, and sent to the rear to be paroled or exchanged in POW swaps. Once the bombardments began and battle formations were drawn, officers rode the lines exhorting their troops and barking out orders. The mounted figures made conspicuous targets and the men eagerly besieged them with snow. Soon the long-range artillery of snowballs yielded to hand-to-hand combat as the soldiers responded with resounding cheers and jeers.

On rare occasions the soldiers' snowball battles even drew spectators. Visitors from nearby towns and from the neighboring countryside would happen by to observe the maneuvers. In at least one instance, the presence of females turned the tide in battle. "We all commenced snow balling," a participant in the battle wrote home, "Gen Wright, his wife and daughters & other young ladies came to see the fight. We got whipped but the ladies were the cause [since] the boys all stopped to look at them and the other side fought so our party kept giving back until the others got the general and the girls prisoners." That group of battle-tested Confederate veterans allowed victory to slip through their fingers due to the attendance of female onlookers.

The winter of 1862-63 in Virginia was quite cold, and the season came in like a lion. On February 22, Jefferson Davis' clerk and diarist J.B. Jones wrote from the Confederate War Department in Richmond that "it was the ugliest day I ever saw. Snow fell all night and was falling fast all day, with a northwest wind howling furiously. The snow is nearly a foot deep and the weather very cold." A soldier in the Confederate camps near Fredericksburg awakened to find that "about eight inches of snow had fallen and covered us during the night" and that some of the horses had died from exposure to the frigid conditions. "That winter in Virginia was one of the most severe known in many years," wrote D. Augustus Dickert of Kershaw's South Carolina Brigade, "but the soldiers had become accustomed to the cold of the North, and rather liked it otherwise, especially when the snow fell to the depth of twelve to sixteen inches, and remained for two to three weeks."



Dreary Tedium: Photographers Alexander Gardner and James Gibson took this image of the Confederate army's abandoned 1861-62 winter camp. Snowball fights helped shatter the solstice blues. (Library of Congress)

All that snow prompted a major snowball fight on February 25 in the Army of Northern Virginia's camps. In many respects it was a typical Civil War battle with common tactics. Confederate cavalry, infantry, and skirmishers moved quickly and stealthily along the white covered landscape, the dense snow muffling their approach as they sought to overtake their enemy's camp. But this was a battle not quite like the countless others that occurred during the Civil War. The ammunition on this occasion was snowballs and the entire maneuver could be considered a great case of friendly fire. Some estimates put the number of participants in this great snowball fight at 10,000.

Brigadier General Robert F. Hoke's North Carolina soldiers launched the attack, moving swiftly toward Colonel W.H. Stiles' camp of Georgians. Dickert, one of the participants that day, provides the most comprehensive account of the battle. "The fiercest fight and the hardest run of my life," Dickert wrote, "was when Kershaw's Brigade under Colonel [William] Rutherford, of the Third challenged and fought Cobb's Georgian's....When the South Carolinians were against the Georgians, or the two Georgia brigades against Kershaw's and the Mississippi brigades, then the blows would fall fast and furious."



Adapt and Overcome: Brigadier General Joseph Kershaw commanded six South Carolina units whose tenacity at winter war belied their prewar inexperience with snow. (The American Civil War Museum)

Colonel Rutherford apparently loved such activities as snowball fights and he enjoyed the sport as much as his men. Dickert observed that Rutherford assembled his men for battle by the beating of drums and the sounding of the bugle. "Officers headed their companies, regiments formed, with flags flying," recorded Dickert, "then when all was ready the troops marched down the hill, or rather half way down the hill, and formed [a] line of battle, there to await the coming of the Georgians." As one author has written: "Despite the element of surprise, the attackers were pushed back, as their targeted brigade had been swiftly reinforced by nearby soldiers."

Ammunition was stockpiled in great pyramids of snow built and organized to the rear of the newly formed battle line as the soldiers awaited the rapidly advancing enemy. The cheering was deafening and gave new meaning to the famed and feared Rebel Yell. Officers beseeched their men to stand fast and defend the honor of their states "while the officers on the other side besought their men to sweep all before them off the field."

With all the adrenaline and anxiety of battle, Dickert describes his comrades in arms as standing "trembling with cold and emotion, and the officers with fear," for the penalty of being captured was the fate of being whitewashed with snow. Rufus King Felder of the 5th Texas wrote home to his wife that "the boys had a fine time...fighting battles with snowballs...the storm of battle raged with the utmost fury.... When we got [them] in sight they had the



long roll sounded and their officers leading them out in force. We did not succeed in effectually subduing them but held our ground. It is indeed a grand sight to see several thousand men drawn up in line of battle fighting with snow & with as much earnestness as if the fate of our country depended upon the contest....it is more interesting to look at these battles than a real one as there are no lives lost & but little blood shed.”

There were “head on assaults and flanking attacks, authentic generals, and colors, signal corps, fifers and drummers beating the long roll, couriers and cavalry,” wrote one participant, “and showed that ‘men are but children of larger growth....’ If all battles would terminate that way it should be a great improvement over the old slaughtering plan.”



Ready for Winter: These overcoat-wearing Confederates are prepared for the cold. On the opposite page, Rebel troops stock ammunition for their allies as an oncoming battle line—also of Confederate soldiers—lets its snowball missiles fly. (Bettmann/Getty Images)

The pandemonium and excitement was vividly described by a Georgia private in a letter home to his family. “Some time the hole brigade forms, and it looks like the sky and the hole elements was made of snow and a hole had broke right through the middle and it is no rare thing to see a Cpt or a Col with his hat nocked off and covered in snow. Gen Longstreet and his agitant took the regs the other day and had a fight with snow balls but the Gen charged him and took them prisners.”

When the Georgians approached, the command was given to fire. “Then shower after shower of the fleecy balls filled the air.” Dickert observed that “cheer after cheer went up from the assaulters and assaulted—now pressed back by the flying balls, then the assault again.” After several minutes of fierce fighting the Georgians broke through the Carolinians’ line. “The fierce looks of a tall, muscular, wild-eyed Georgian, who stood directly in my front,” Dickert wrote, “seemed to have singled me out for sacrifice.”

Kershaw’s Brigade attempted to hold its ground, but eventually gave way. “I saw the only chance to save myself from the clutches of that wild-eyed Georgian was in continual and rapid flight.” Dickert, “a boy seventeen years old, and never yet tipped the beam at one hundred” recalled that “in the grasp of that monster, as he now began to look at me, gave me the horrors.” The Georgians pressed on and Kershaw’s Brigade came under heavy assault. It became an all-out fight to the finish as the “broad expanse that lay between the men and the camp was one flying surging mass, while the earth, or rather the snow, all around filled with men who had fallen or been overtaken, and now in the last throes of a desperate snow battle.” Having experienced the horrors of real battle, the cathartic enjoyment of fighting a battle where the injuries would be, for the most part, limited to black eyes, skinned heads, sprained ankles, and other minor injuries, completely engulfed the thousands of soldiers frolicking in what had become, for a fleeting few moments, the winter wonderland of Virginia.

“The men who had not fallen in the hands of the reckless Georgians had distanced me, Dickert recalled, “and the only energy that kept me to the race was the hope that some mishap might befall the wild-eyed man in my rear, otherwise I was gone.” Dickert’s Georgian pursuer followed him all the way into his tent, only to confess to Dickert that he “would rather have caught that d—n little Captain than to have killed the biggest man in the Yankee Army.”

So important was this much needed, and even more enjoyed, event in the Rappahannock Valley that apparently it was witnessed by Robert E. Lee, who himself was struck by several snowballs, and by Stonewall Jackson and his staff. Jackson, however, refrained from participating in the merriment. One of Jackson’s senior staff officers remarked that he had very much wished that they had participated in the fight so he could have aimed snowballs at “the old faded uniforms.” With such excitement in winter camp, the Richmond newspapers even covered the battle by devoting several columns to the accounts of the fight, treating it as both the frolic that it was as well as an ersatz battle, with tongue in cheek, of some military importance.

Despite the seriousness and somberness with which the soldiers approached their snowball wars, the most important aspect was the respite it provided from winter camp life. And minor injuries notwithstanding, there was little lingering resentment from the day’s fighting. Thousands of men, from virtually every regiment in the army, participated in what surely was one of the largest snowball fights in history. Though the Confederates thoroughly enjoyed the merriment of February 1863, and additional snowball fights of major magnitude would occur again before the guns fell silent, what lay immediately ahead for the boys in gray were the bloody battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg; grisly reminders that their snow fight had been only a brief interlude between nightmarish acts of war.

*Jason H. Silverman recently retired as the Ellison Capers Palmer, Jr. Professor of History at Winthrop University and grew up not far from the scene of the Rappahannock Valley snowball battles of 1863.*

## Don't Pelt Old Pete



(Library of Congress)

During the winter of 1862-63, Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's wife came to visit him and stayed close to the First Corps camps. Because she did not stay in the military camp proper, Longstreet rode to see her every morning. Longstreet's ride carried him through the huts of the famed "Texas Brigade." Every day that there was snow, the men of the brigade lined the officer's street, where they "saluted him with a shower of snow-balls." At first "Old Pete" took it in stride. But after a number of these occasions, he grew tired of the barrages. After the next snowfall, Longstreet approached the camp and found the Lone Star troops ready to let fly with their icy bombs. Before the Texans could unleash their volleys, "he reined up his horse, and said to them very quietly: 'Throw your snow-balls men, if you want to, as much as you please; but if one of them touches me, not a man in the brigade shall have a furlough this winter. Remember that!'" According to his aide, "there was no more snow-balling for General Longstreet's benefit." –**Kristopher D. White**



**Battlefield Prayer** by JOHN PAUL STRAIN  
Generals Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and J.E.B. Stuart  
Fredericksburg, Virginia - Near Hamilton's Crossing,  
December 12, 1862

The momentous day was nearly at hand. On the morrow two great armies would clash along the hills of Fredericksburg, Virginia. The results of the battle might possibly decide the course of the war. Massive numbers of men in gray and blue had been gathering for weeks to engage in an epic battle to defend their homes, traditions, and honor.

Weather over the past several days had been pleasant with temperatures rising to the 50's during the day. An inch or so of snow from the storm of December 6th and 7th still remained in the shadows and valleys, but much of the snow had melted.

In the hills south of the city, near Hamilton's Crossing, three generals in gray reconnoitered enemy positions and formulated plans to meet the challenge that lay ahead. A tremendous weight of responsibility lay on the shoulders of these men, for thousands of men's lives and the future of their country now rested with their decisions. No one knew this more profoundly than Generals Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and J.E.B. Stuart.

With the sounds of battle preparation echoing through the woodland hills and valleys, the three generals paused a moment to rest from their morning ride and water their horses. Stonewall Jackson knelt before the Lord and the men prayed for the Lord's blessing and guidance to help them with their great task. Many men would turn to their God before battle, if not for themselves, then for their families. The Almighty would hear thousands of battlefield prayers that day.



# Merry Christmas, General Lee

Moss Neck, Fredericksburg, Va., December 25, 1862

Artwork by Mort Kunstler

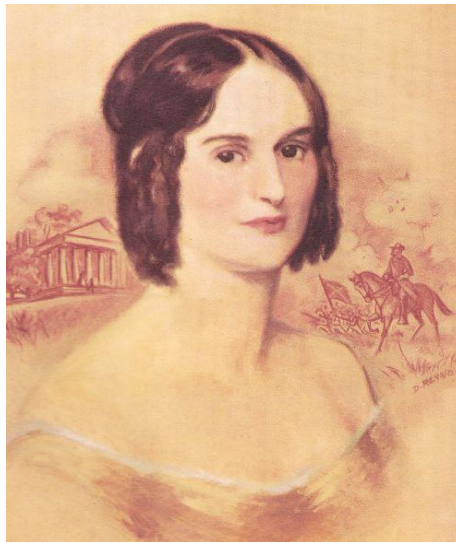
It was a passing moment of cheer amid the harsh realities of war.

On Christmas day of 1862, General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, attended a holiday dinner hosted by his valued "right arm" - General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson. Lee and some of his officers were invited by Jackson for a Christmas meal at an outbuilding at Moss Neck, where Jackson had established winter headquarters near Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Surely it was a rare respite from the severities of warfare. Just three months earlier, Lee's army had been sorely pressed at the battle of Antietam -- and Lee's attempt to take the war to the North had been turned back in the bloodiest day of the war. And less than two weeks earlier at the battle of Fredericksburg - in one of his most decisive victories - Lee had his army overwhelmingly defeat the Army of the Potomac. So shocking were the harsh realities of war at Fredericksburg that Lee had observed: "It is well that war is so terrible; lest we grow too fond of it."

Lee left the warm environment of General Jackson's hospitality to return to his headquarters and matters of war. He passed some guests that were arriving for a holiday party at the manor house and was momentarily refreshed by the events of the day and the warm wishes of "Merry Christmas General Lee."

# An Unusual Holiday Punch from Mrs. Robert E. Lee



If you're looking for something different to serve at parties this holiday season, take a page out of Mrs. Robert E. Lee's book and try Roman Punch. This unusual recipe comes from *The Robert E. Lee Family Cooking and Housekeeping Book*, by Anne Carter Zimmer, a great-granddaughter of the Lees.

Like many women of her era, Mrs. Lee and her daughters used a small notebook to record recipes as well as household inventories, shopping lists, and formulas for home remedies. Anne Zimmer has tested the recipes and adapted them to modern kitchens in this charming volume that is part cookbook, part culinary history, and part family history.

Zimmer speculates that this punch could have been served frozen in small glasses at multicourse Victorian meals as a palate cleanser. The cassis flavor comes from currant jelly. Black rum gives it depth, while sugar adds smoothness; the sweetness diminishes with cold. It is sensational frozen to a slushy consistency and served in a showy punch bowl. Make ahead to allow time to ripen.

## Roman Punch

Juice of 5-6 lemons

3 cups sugar

1 cup (8 ounces) currant jelly

2 quarts minus 1/2 cup water

1 cup brandy

2/3 cup black rum

About 5-6 tablespoons or bags of green (or black) tea

Heat about half the water with sugar and jelly, stirring to dissolve. Make tea with the rest. Combine the two mixtures. Cool, add lemon juice, brandy, and rum. Ripen overnight at room temperature or up to 3 days in refrigerator, then freeze if you like. Makes about a gallon.



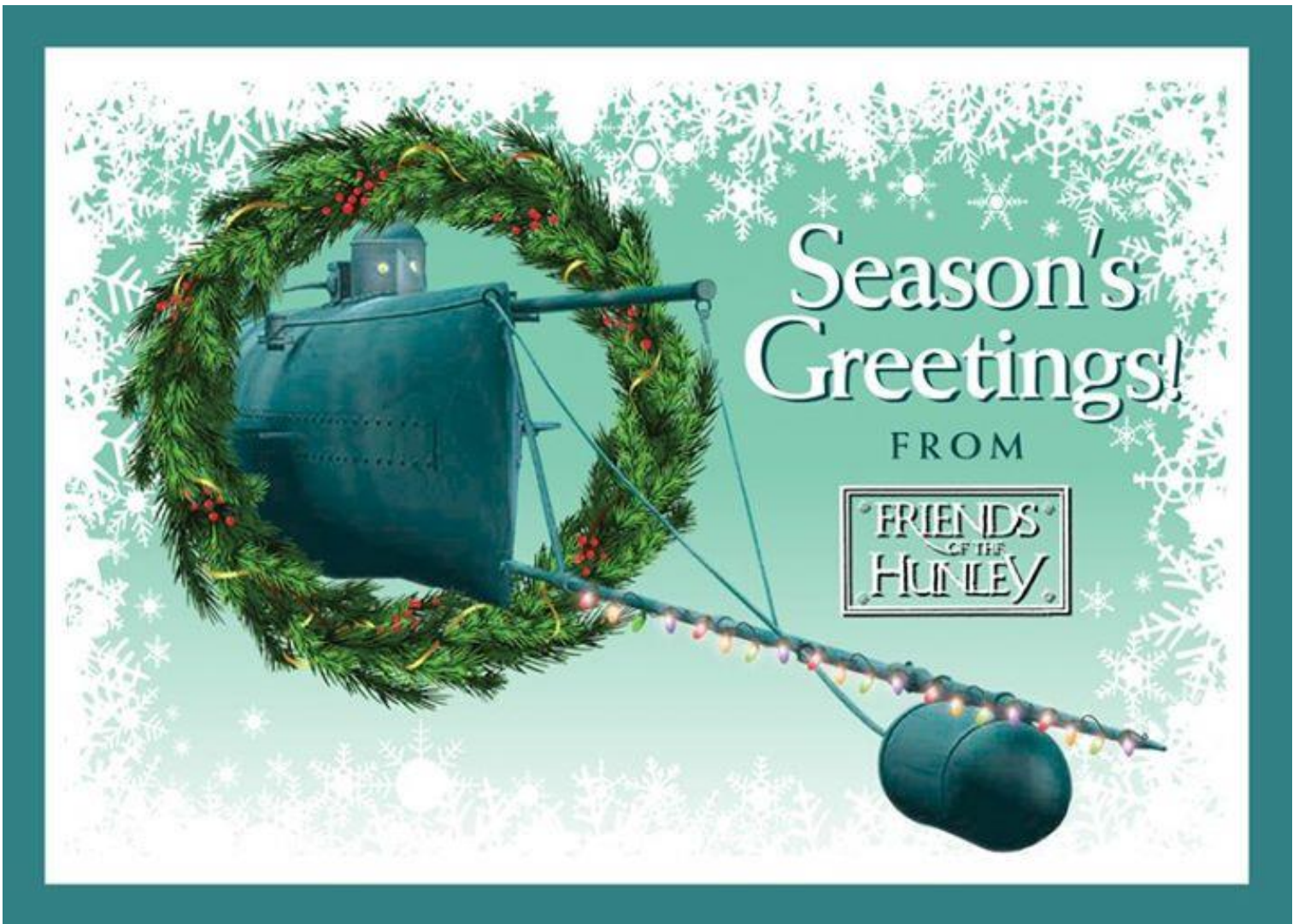
The Robert E. Lee Family Cooking and Housekeeping Book is available at bookstores or from the University of North Carolina Press. 1-800-848-6224.



**LEE'S CHAPPEL**

**Merry Christmas !**







## Appeal for Fredericksburg .



*The citizens of Fredericksburg have been great sufferers by the horrid devastation inflicted upon that town by the Yankees. Not only have their dwellings been destroyed, or rendered uninhabitable, but, in almost every instance, their furniture, clothing, and personal effects of every kind, have been torn to pieces or stolen, so that a community in which such a thing as poverty was once unknown is now homeless, comfortless, and, in the case of many of its inhabitants, actually requiring the assistance of others for food and lodging. The rich inhabitants, though much impoverished, may not be thus destitute; but the rich are but a small minority of any community. The great mass of them who have been dispossessed of their habitations and homes by the sudden convulsion which, like an earthquake, has swallowed up Fredericksburg, have no surplus means to provide against such an exigency, and must, therefore, either perish for want of the absolute means of subsistence, or be relieved;--we will not say by the charity — but by the justice and humanity of their fellow-citizens.*

*We invoke all just and humans people to contribute every dollar they can spare, and all the influence they possess, to the relief of the community of Fredericksburg . On this Christmas day, what better Christmas gift can we lay upon the altar of Almighty God, what better thank- offering for the great deliverance which He has just effected for us at this same Fredericksburg and by which we ourselves, perhaps, have been saved from being rendered houseless and homeless, than a literal and universal donation in all the churches to the relief of the Fredericksburg people?*

**----- Richmond Daily Dispatch, Dec. 25, 1862**

### *Christmas Letters from Confederate Soldiers*

#### **Confederate Letter of John W. Hagan A Confederate POW**

To Mrs A. Hagan, Cat Creek, Lowndes County, Ga-  
I send you a Stamp  
#15--Barracks 16 Prison 3 Camp Chase Ohio--

**December 25th, 1864**

My Dear Wife...

Again I write you a short letter which leaves myself, James D. Pounds, A. Mattox, M. F. Giddins & Wm. Anderson in good health & hope you & familley are enJoying the Same blessing I have nothing new to write you.

I am very anxious to hear of and [an] Exchange but have very little hopes of being Exchanged during the War. we are permitted to receive the papers now & have a chance of Knowing what is going on. The late arrangement entering [entered] into by the C.S. & U.S. will not lead to & Exchange. Brig Gen Beall on the part of the C.S. is now in N.Y. on Parole to carry out the arrangements on the part of the C.S. to furnish we prisoners of War with all the nessary supplies to make us comfertable. & we have Elected Col Josie of Ark & Col Healkine of Tenn & Capt Smith of Va to make a report of what we need to Gen Beall in N.Y. & Issue the Same when it arrives here. So you may not give your self any uneaseyness about us we are fairing very well now & will do better when our supplies is encreast. I havent heard from Anderson yet & do not expect to Soon. let me Know when you write if J.M. Griffin have been heard of at home. I am still corresponding with my friend in Nashville " Tenn & will not suffer for any thing. your Uncle John Roberts is in Prison at Rock Island Ills & Bryant his son is with me & in good health Give my love to all at home & Kiss Reubin for me. I will close hoping to hear from you soon as my last was dated Oct 8th.

I Remain your Affectionate Husband  
John Wm. Hagan

P.S. this is a dull Crissmass day



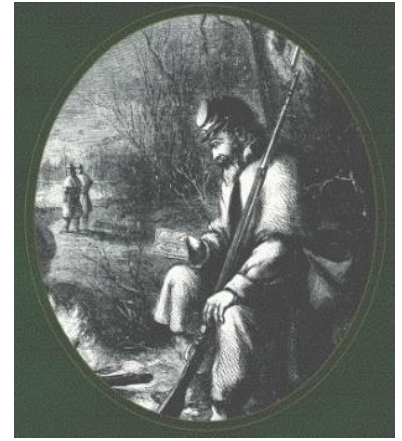
CHRISTMAS DINNER





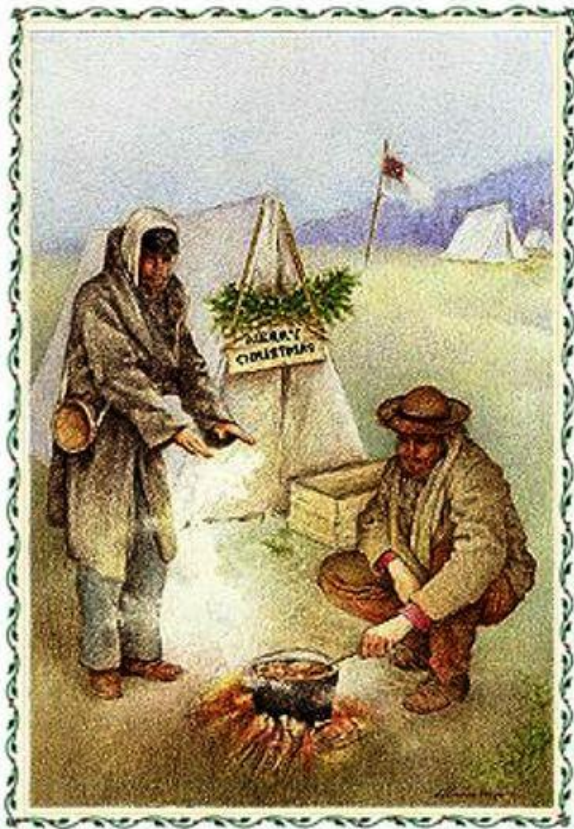
**Author of the following unknown to me  
Christmas, December 25, 1863**

Bright Merry Christmas is here again, and so am I, right in the breezy woods to enjoy it, unhampered by the restraints of custom, the fetters of fashion, and thralldom of etiquette, ready and willing to hide away a first-class Christmas dinner if I had it. I am glad I am alive and whole, for during this year many a poor soldier whose sun of life glowed in the very zenith of manhood and glory was cut down and immolated on the altar of his country, like the full blown rose that sacrifices and casts its beauteous and fragrant petals on the altar of the passing storm. At sunrise thismorning we fired two rounds from our guns in commemoration of the birth of Him who said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth."



The menu of our Christmas dinner was composed wholly of beef with gravy and corn bread. Our mess was afraid to try anything new, as it might throw us headlong on the sick list in the busy season of house building. I was hard at work all day, getting raw material for the business end of our culinary department.

**A Gunner in Chew's Battery, Stuart's Horse Artillery, Army of Northern Virginia  
December 25, 1862**



This is Merry Christmas. This morning we resumed our march early and moved down the Valley nearly to Kernstown, where we encountered the Yankees and gave them a Christmas greeting in the shape of a few shell. We took the same position we held at the battle of Kernstown last spring. About sixty sharpshooters advanced on our position and attempted to drive us away. We opened fire on them with two guns and fired three rounds, which thoroughly settled the sharpshooting business for this Christmas. Their line fell back in a rather stirred-up mixture, and that was the last I saw of the sharpshooters. We remained in battery till sunset, to see whether the Yanks intended to advance on us in force. Their infantry camp was not far away, for I heard their drummers beating the long roll immediately after we opened fire on their sharpshooters. After dark this evening our cavalry kindled camp-fires all around the place we held to-day, to make the Yanks believe that we were many, and still holding the position. We fell back to Middletown and camped.-----





# Christmas Dinner

## When Fiction Became Fact

By

WILLIAM MEADE DAME, D. D.

One bright spot in that “winter of our discontent”—lives in my memory. It was on the Christmas Day of 1863. That was a day specially hard to get through. The rations were very short indeed that day—only a little bread, no meat. As we went, so hungry, about our work, and remembered the good and abundant cheer always belonging to Christmas time; as we thought of “joys we had tasted in past years” that did not “return” to us, now, and felt the woeful difference in our insides—it made us sad. It was harder to starve on Christmas Day than any day of the winter.

When the long day was over and night had come, some twelve or fifteen of us, congenial comrades, had gathered in a group, and were sitting out of doors around a big camp fire, talking about Christmas, and trying to keep warm and cheer ourselves up. One fellow proposed what he called a game, and it was at once taken up—though it was a silly thing to do, as it only made us hungrier than ever. The game was this—we were to work our fancy, and imagine that we were around the table at “Pizzini’s,” in Richmond. Pizzini was the famous restaurateur who was able to keep up a wonderful eating house all through the war, even when the rest of Richmond was nearly starving. Well—in reality, now, we were all seated on the ground around that fire, and very hungry. In imagination we were all gathered ’round Pizzini’s with unlimited credit and free to call for just what we wished. One fellow tied a towel on him, and acted as the waiter—with pencil and paper in hand going from guest to guest taking orders—all with the utmost gravity. “Well, sir, what will you have?” he said to the first man. He thought for a moment and then said (I recall that first order, it was monumental) “I will have, let me see—a four-pound steak, a turkey, a jowl and turnip tops, a peck of potatoes, six dozen biscuits, plenty of butter, a large pot of coffee, a gallon of milk and six pies—three lemon and three mince—and hurry up, waiter—that will do for a start; see ’bout the rest later.” This was an order for one, mind you. The next several were like unto it. Then, one guest said, “I will take a large saddle of mountain mutton, with a gallon of crabapple jelly to eat with it, and as much as you can tote of other things.”

This, specially the crabapple jelly, quite struck the next man. He said, “I will take just the same as this gentleman.” So the next, and the next. All the rest of the guests took the mountain mutton and jelly. All this absurd performance was gone through with all seriousness—making us wild with suggestions of good things to eat and plenty of it. The waiter took all the orders and carefully wrote them down, and read them out to the guest to be sure he had them right. Just as we were nearly through with this Barmecide feast, one of the boys, coming past us from the Commissary tent, called out to me, “Billy, old Tuck is just in (Tucker drove the Commissary wagon and went up to Orange for rations) and I think there is a box, or something, for you down at the tent.” I got one of our crowd to go with me on the jump. Sure enough, there was a great big box for me—from home.

We got it on our shoulders and trotted back up to the fire. The fellows gathered around, the top was off that box in a jiffy, and there, right on top, the first thing we came to—funny to tell, after what had just occurred—was the biggest saddle of mountain mutton, and a two-gallon jar of crabapple jelly to eat with it. The box was packed with all good, solid things to eat—about a bushel of biscuits and butter and sausage and pies, etc., etc. We all pitched in with a whoop. In ten minutes after the top was off, there was not a thing left in that box except one skin of sausage which I saved for our mess next morning. You can imagine how the boys did enjoy it. It was a bully way to end up that hungry Christmas Day. I wrote my thanks and the thanks of all the boys to my mother and sisters, who had packed that box, and I described the scene as I have here described it, which made them realize how welcome and acceptable their kind present was—and what comfort and pleasure it gave—all the more that it came to us on Christmas Day, and made it a joyful one—at the end, at least.



WILLIAM MEADE DAME  
PRIVATE FIRST COMPANY OF RICHMOND HOWITZERS  
1864



Near Chesterfield Station  
Caroline Co. VA.  
Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1863

Dear Sister

Your last kind favor came safely to hand on X-Mas eve with the box of clothes and eatables; thanks, many thanks for the very acceptable good things as well as the promptness in sending them. Two other boys in my tent got boxes and I tell you we had a jolly good time the next day at dinner, just think of a dinner consisting of a ham, round beef, steak, fowls, spare rib, Chine, Mutton, sweet potatoes, winding up with pies, Tarts, Cakes, apples. To a soldier who has been living on fat bacon or beef and bread for months.

The watch and clothing were all right and while I think of it, the tube to the watch came off so I will trouble you to buy me a new one i.e. key and send in your next. I am glad to see that your finger is well or better. I received Louisa's letter telling me to keep the \$30

But not till after I had sent it. Tell Ma that I am under many obligations but did not wish her to deprive herself, but that I am owing Mr. Card \$16.83 which I wish were paid but am not able, tell her that she is welcome to the blankets.

As you see we have made another move, on last Sunday we left behind us our Yankee friends & old Fredericksburg, and are now settle in it is thought for the winter, only the Artillery came down. I do not know if the infantry will come or not. We have a very pleasant place in the pines for our camp and are busy building log cabins, though it is rumored that we will leave in about three weeks for North Carolinian. You say write what sort of Christmas I have spent, well I have spent a very pleasant one for camp life, but not as agreeable as the last, when we were at Leesburg and enjoyed the society of ladies. I am very glad to know you are all enjoying yourselves. Is the boarder still with you? You must write me and tell me what kind of time you have spent. Tell Ma I condole her on the loss of her turkeys and hope she was not depriving herself in sending me the fowls.

Ask Pa what he thinks of peace prospects. Much love to all

William

Address Care Capt. McCarthy 1<sup>st</sup> Co Howitzers  
Ruthes Glenn P.O. Caroline VA.





## "Lee's Lieutenants" by Mort Kunstler

On a foggy Saturday morning, December 13, 1862, Lee and his principal lieutenants rode forward to meet a massive assault from the Union Army of the Potomac.

"A dense fog hung over the city that morning as Lee moved to confer with his commanders on a hill overlooking the city. Stonewall Jackson attended the meeting in a new uniform, which was a gift from General J.E.B. Stuart. Jackson's devoted soldiers, who were accustomed to Stonewall's worn uniform, were bedazzled by the gold braid and crisp look of the new uniform. They spontaneously broke into wild cheers. It was then, in the words of Douglas Southall Freeman, that "drab daylight began to soften into gold under the rays of a mounting sun." Fredericksburg's church steeples emerged in the distance above the morning mist. It was a lighting effect I had observed myself on visits to Lee's Hill at Fredericksburg - and I was delighted to have an opportunity to paint it." - Mort Kunstler



# Card of Thanks.

In consequence of a Donation, given unto us prisoners confined in Gratiot prison, by the Citizens of St Louis Dec 25, 1864 we the prisoners of said prison do this 26<sup>th</sup> of Dec 1864, think that it is our duty as a grateful people to hold a meeting for the purpose of showing our gratitude unto the Donors, and all those that have used their efforts in distributing the same. On motion of J. C. Couzens M<sup>r</sup> J. M. Northcutt was called to the Chair, the Chairman was requested to state the Object of the meeting which was made known by a few brief remarks. On motion of M<sup>r</sup> T. H. Beckett M<sup>r</sup> John C. Foote was appointed secretary, on motion of J. C. Couzens a committee of 20 was appointed to draft resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting. Whereupon the Chair appointed the following named persons, J. C. Couzens, D. Horn, T. H. Beckett, D<sup>r</sup> John Hart, John Moffitt, Jas Hogge, David Hampton, R. E. Wild, John S. Lowry, O. C. Flern, M. J. Wright, A. J. Mc Lain, John Hall, J. M. Lessenberry, M. M. Herrington, George Bobbitt, John Brewer, Robt Merced, W. H. Leatherberry, Frank Dodd,

The Committee made following Report  
Whereas we the Committee in behalf of the Prisoners of Gratiot would Respectfully Report as follows that having been the recipients of a most magnificent Christmas Dinner, Donated to us by the Citizens of St Louis,

## The Price of Christmas Cheer

National Archives, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands, 1821-1920

In December 1864, local citizens provided Confederates held at Gratiot Prison in St. Louis, Missouri, with Christmas dinner and gifts. The prisoners passed this resolution of gratitude and sent it to the head of the prison. The U.S. commandant refused to send on this resolution. What's more, he demanded to know the names of the civilians who provided the meal. He suspected them of disloyalty.



Therefore Be it Resolved, 1<sup>st</sup> That we tender our thanks unto the Donors of this Christmas repast of which we the prisoners of Gratiot have been the Recipients,

2. Resolved! That we also tender Our sincere thanks unto, Major Genl Dodge Commanding the Dept of the W<sup>o</sup> Col W C Davis, Provost Mar Genl of the same, and Lieut Col. Hendricks Inspector Genl and Superintendent of Military prisons, for permitting us to be the recipients of this most Magnificent repast,

3. Resolved! That we return respectfully our kindest regards unto Capt Allen, and all of his subordinate officers, for the ample facilities which were afforded us, in enjoying this rich luxury,

4. Resolved! That we return our most sincere and heartfelt thanks, to the Sisters of Charity and Mercy, for their uniform kindness and generosity towards the prisoners of Gratiot, And more especially for their liberal exertions in distributing the same unto us on the day above named,

5 Resolved! That the City papers be requested to publish the foregoing preamble and resolutions

On Motion The Meeting adjourned

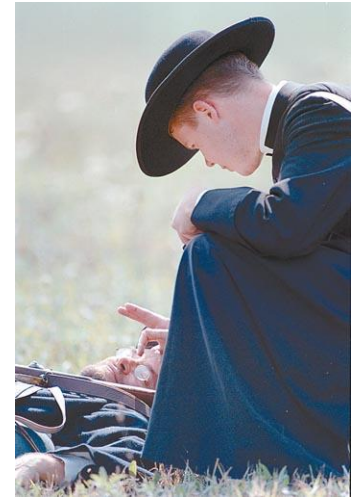
J. M. Northcutt,  
Chairman

John C. Foote  
Secy

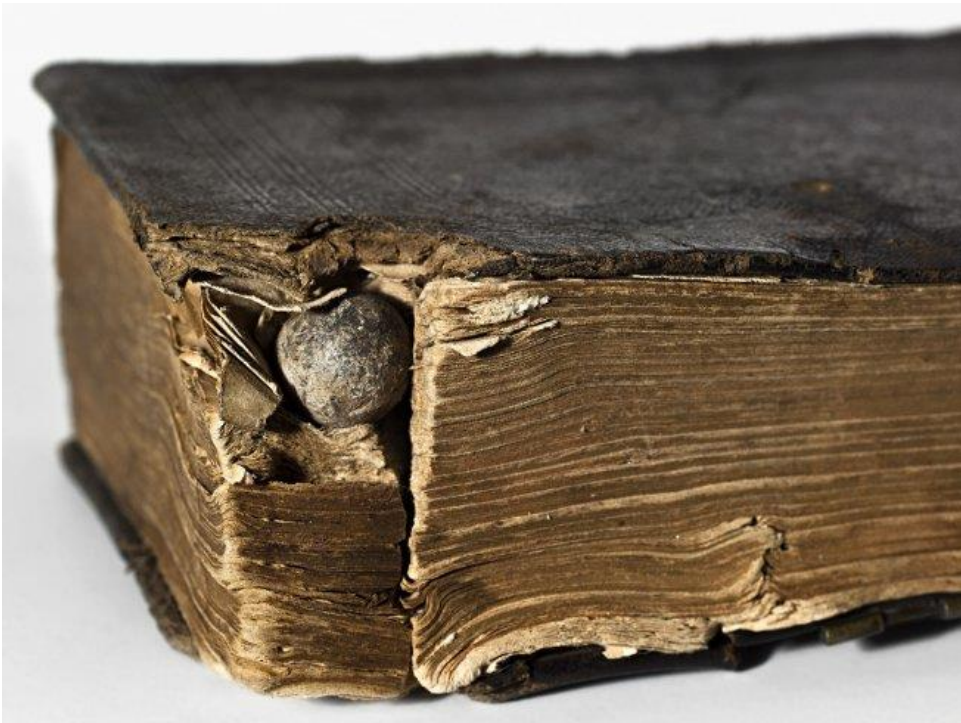


# A Confederate Soldier's Prayer

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve,  
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.  
I asked God for health, that I might do greater things,  
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.  
I asked for riches, that I might be happy,  
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.  
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men,  
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.  
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life,  
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.  
I got nothing that I asked for but everything I had hoped for.  
Almost despite myself my unspoken prayers were answered.  
I am among man, most richly blessed.

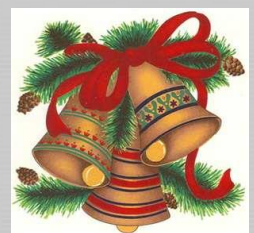
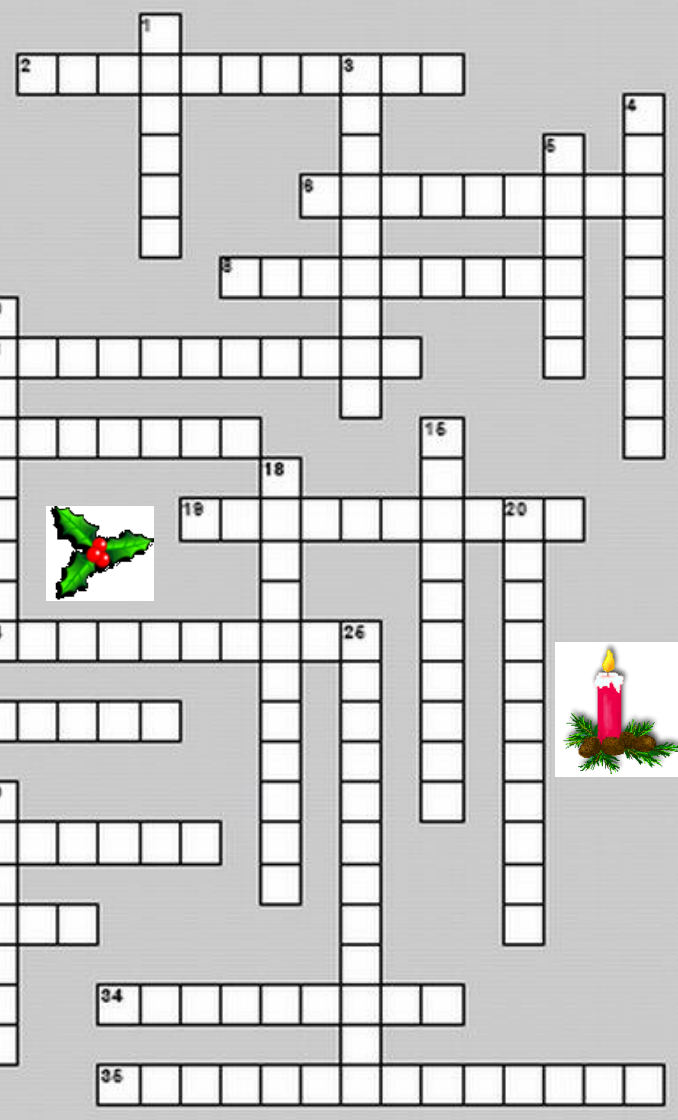


Found on the body of a valiant Southern soldier  
killed during the Battle of Fredricksburg, December 1862



A musket ball lodged  
in the pages of a  
Bible, which saved  
the life of the soldier  
who carried it.





# "Christmas in the Confederacy"

## Crossword Puzzle

### Across:

- 2 - Another word for "approval"; it describes the young people's reaction to the toy house.
- 6 - These are small tops used in a game of chance called "put-and-take". According to the author, their bottoms were made of horn and they "spun indefinitely".
- 8 - Another word for crabby, cranky or grouchy.
- 9 - This man made the prize toy: a four room house to be given to the "honor girl".
- 11 - This word means "not identified by name", it is how rice, flour, molasses and meat were sent to the president's wife.
- 13 - This is a fancy word for "clothing". It described the officers' full dress uniforms.
- 14 - This item was used to hold the small pieces of candy. It is a "horn of plenty", or horn shaped open container.
- 16 - This long word means "exchange". The author says that they were unable to add comforts and pleasures to the exchange of the "courtesies and charities of life".





19 - This is a sweet dessert usually made out of sugar and cornstarch. The sugar-hen sat on a nest full of eggs made of this "substance".

22 - This word, pinned on the cranky man's necktie, means "friendly" or "good-natured".

24 - This word describes phrases which appeal to the emotions." One example is "roses are red, violets blue..."

26 - This is a piece of music performed at the beginning of a church service.

28 - A type of cake which was served on Christmas Eve.

30 - When the children were allowed to stay up late and be noisy it was a luxury, or, an "\_\_\_\_\_"

31 - This is an assigned amount given to someone as their fair share. One present was allowed for each orphan.

32 - This describes someone who is very sparing with how they use their resources. The author says the "bright-eyed girls" learned lessons in self-denial, industry, and this.

33 - This word means "skillful with one's hands"; the neighbor was skilled in "domestic arts".

34 - This describes behavior which is socially acceptable in public. The children were "driven" to this by the sugar-hen.

35 - This word means "incredibly large". It describes the author's gift thimble. The word comes from the land of giants in Gulliver's Travels.

## Down:

1 - The cranky man received one of these, with the word "amiable" pinned onto it. It is a type of necktie.

3 - Ink is often described as this, meaning it cannot be erased or washed away.

4 - This word can mean either "having indigestion" or "bad-tempered". The young people were described this way while waiting for the "children's tree".

5 - Neither of the baby-hat-makers wanted to be the first to speak, so they gave their present \_\_\_\_\_, or without talking.

7 - Place where the president's new embroidered gloves were made. "During the winter of 1862, the Union navy and its ground troops occupied Fortress Monroe, Hampton Roads and Newport News..."

10 - The president received a pair of these, or gloves, which were embroidered.

12 - This is an old-fashioned way to spell "burden" - a heavy load or something that causes a lot of worry.

15 - This type of party was given in the evening; it had no food or drinks (refreshments).

17 - This is an overused - and often silly - remark. "The foolishness of a fool is his folly" is given as an "unnecessary" one.

18 - **This person is the author of the puzzle.**

20 - The author's gift soaps were made out of this three word substance.

21 - A barrel of these items was mistakenly delivered to Robert E. Lee instead of the Confederate president.

23 - This is another word for "busy"; the baby-hat-makers were described this way.

25 - Aladdin's orchard was this, or, underground.

27 - This word means "eating to excess".

29 - The whips and the baby hat were braided, another word for \_\_\_\_\_.

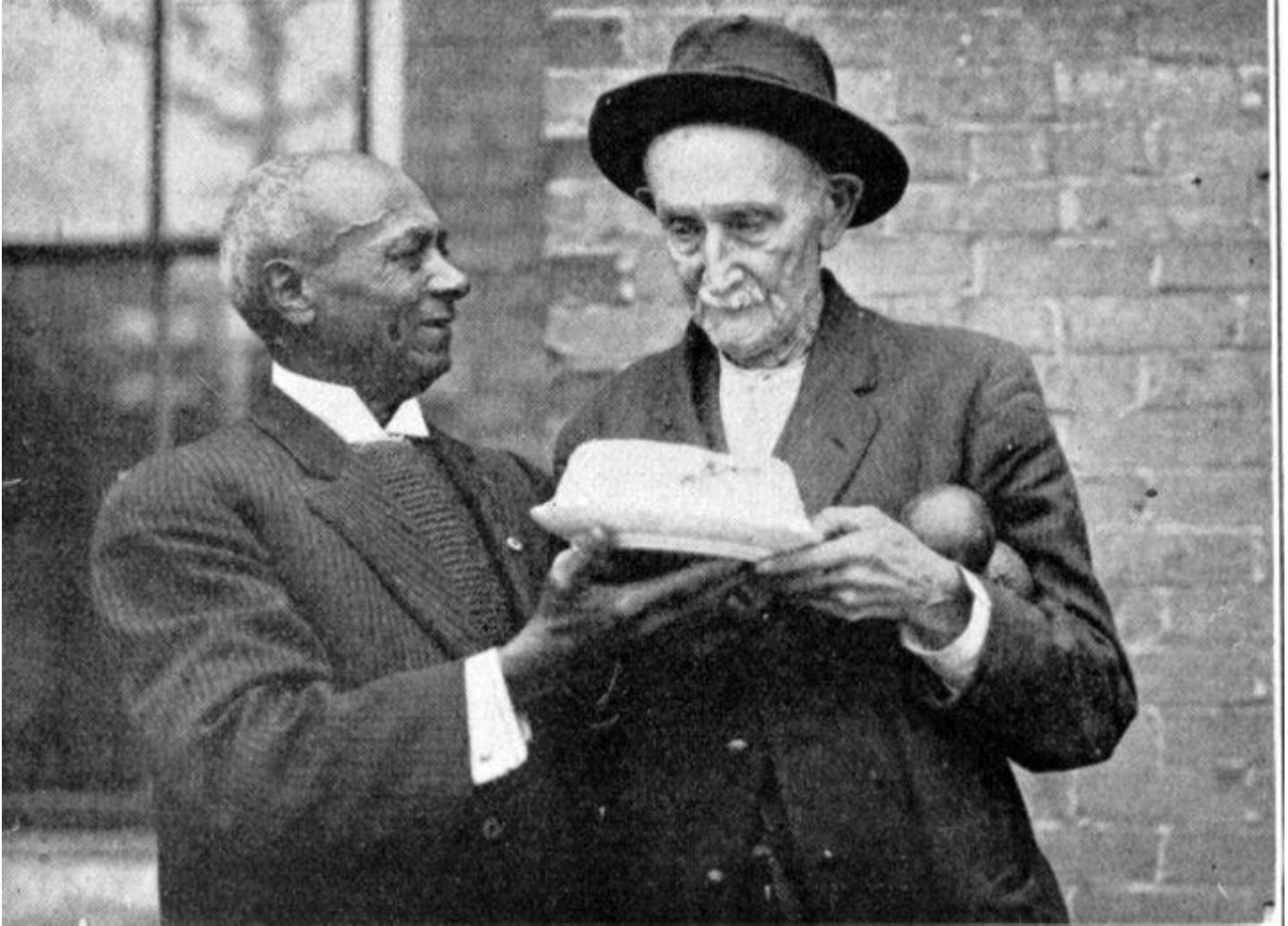


## Possible Answers:

ALLOTTED, AMIABLE, ANONYMOUSLY, APPROBATION, BLANCMANGE, BROBDINGNAGIAN, BURTHEN, CORNUCOPIA, CRAVAT, DEFT, DYSPEPTIC, FORTRESSMONROE, FRUGALITY, GAUNTLETS, GREASEOFHAM, INDELIBLE, INDULGENCE, INDUSTRIOUS, INTERCHANGE, INTROIT, IRRITABLE, MUTELY, PLAITED, PLATITUDE, PROPRIETY, REPLETION, ROBERTBROWN, SENTIMENTS, SNOWYLADY, STARVATION, SUBTERRANEAN, SWEETPOTATOES, TEETOTUMS, TOGGERY, VARINADAVIS

# A Soldier's Story of Christmas Past

By: Calvin E. Johnson, Jr.,  
Speaker, Writer, Author of book "When America Stood for God, Family and Country"  
Member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.



**Bill and Thomas Yopp at Confederate Veteran's Home**

**Why do some merchants and media call it just a holiday?**

**People stand in line at malls after Thanksgiving and rush through the doors to buy, buy and buy.**

**Is this Christmas?**

**Partly, but the true meaning of the Christmas Season is about the birth of Jesus Christ.**

**Christmas is also about helping people.**

**During the year of our Lord 1919, the folks of Atlanta, Georgia were preparing for Christmas. This holy day was a special time for family, friends and children. People went to church or synagogue and gave thanks to God for their many blessings.**

**There were, however, some who were not as fortunate!**





The aging veterans of the Confederate Soldier's Home were proud men who had braved many a battle in the 1860s. One of these men was former Captain Thomas Yopp who saw battle in such places as Fredericksburg, Virginia where a cannon ball shell knocked him unconscious.

The man who stayed with him until he recovered was his servant who had also joined the 14th Georgia Regiment. Bill Yopp was more than a servant; he and Thomas Yopp were friends who hunted and fished together.

Bill Yopp, a Black Confederate veteran, was sympathetic to the men of the Atlanta's soldiers home who had been his compatriots in arms over 50 years earlier.

During the War Between the States, 1861-1865, Bill Yopp was nicknamed "Ten Cent Bill" because of the money he made shining shoes. He did this for the soldiers at a dime a shine and ended up with more money than most of his comrades. The soldiers did not mind him doing this and took care of him when he was sick.

During the Christmas of 1919, Bill wanted to pay back the kindness that was shown him. He first caught a train to Macon, Georgia where he was offered help by a newspaper editor. He then took a train to Savannah where he raised Christmas money for the veterans.

Just weeks before the Christmas of 1919, Bill had raised the money and Georgia's Governor Hugh Dorsey helped him distribute envelopes of three dollars to each veteran. This was a great deal of money in those days.

The old Confederates were speechless. Tears were shed because of Bill Yopp's good heart and kind deed. Many of those men had little or nothing. Bill was invited to come into the home's chapel to say a few words.

Bill Yopp was presented a medal of appreciation for his support of the soldiers and was later voted in as a resident of the Confederate Soldier's home where he spent his remaining years.

Bill Yopp died on June 3, 1936, the birthday of the Confederacy's President Jefferson Davis. Bill was buried at the Confederate Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia.

Christmas is about love, forgiveness, old friends, family and the child who became Savior of the world.

**Please read Charles Pittman's book "Ten Cent Bill" for more about Bill Yopp.** (Order On Next Page)

Merry Christmas!

[http://spofga.org/flag/2010/christmas\\_past.php?SessionID=2324265](http://spofga.org/flag/2010/christmas_past.php?SessionID=2324265)



The grave of 10-cent Bill Yopp



A native of Georgia, Calvin Johnson, Chairman of the National and Georgia Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Confederate History Month Committee—Scv.org lives near the historic town of Kennesaw and he's a member of the Chattahoochee Guards Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans. He is the author of the book "When America Stood for God, Family and Country." Calvin can be reached at: [cjohnson1861@bellsouth.net](mailto:cjohnson1861@bellsouth.net)





# "TEN CENT" BILL YOPP

By Scott B. Thompson, Sr.

Bill Yopp was born in Laurens County, Georgia. Like his parents he was a slave belonging to the family of Jeremiah Yopp. Bill was the fourth of eight children. The Yopp family owned two major plantations. One was located in the western part of Dublin centered around the Brookwood Subdivision. A second was located along the eastern banks of Turkey Creek near the community known as Moore's Station. Other small plantations were scattered over the county. Jeremiah Yopp assigned Bill to his son, Thomas. Bill later said that he followed Thomas like "Mary's little lamb." The two instantly became friends. They fished, hunted, and played together. Bill's childhood, while stifled by slavery, was molded by education and religion within the plantation, which included regular church services.



**CLICK ON PHOTO TO BUY**

On January 16, 1861, Jeremiah Yopp attended the Convention of Secession at the capital in Milledgeville. Laurens Countians voted to side with the Cooperationists who favored remaining in the Union. Yopp, the largest plantation owner in western Laurens County, was joined by Dr. Nathan Tucker, a wealthy plantation owner from northeastern Laurens County. Dr. Tucker, a northerner by birth, voted to remain in the Union. Yopp cast his vote with the majority who voted for secession.

The first company of Confederate Soldiers in Laurens County were organized on July 9th, 1861 as the Blackshear Guards. The company eventually became attached to the 14th Georgia Volunteer Infantry Regiment. Thomas Yopp was elected First Lieutenant. Nine days later Thomas Yopp was promoted to Captain when Rev. W.S. Ramsay was elected Lt. Colonel of the regiment. Bill wanted to join Lieutenant Yopp. Bill enlisted in the Blackshear Guards as the company drummer. In those days the position of company drummer was not an easy assignment. Marching in front of company going into battle was not the best place to be. The company went to Atlanta for training and then to Lynchburg, Virginia, just after the Battle of the First Manassas. The company was sent to West Virginia in August where they fought under the command of Gen. John B. Floyd, a former Secretary of War in the Buchanan Administration. Gen. Robert E. Lee was in overall command of the West Virginia campaign.

Bill often found himself between the battle lines. He often said "I had no inclination to go to the Union side, as I did not know the Union soldiers and the Confederate soldiers I did now, and I believed then as now, tried and true friends are better than friends you do not know." On several occasions Private Yopp was sent out on foraging missions. Bill ceased to forage for food because his Captain and friend found it to be "wrong - doing." Bill obtained a brush and box of shoe blackening and shined the shoes of the men of the regiment. He soon began performing other services for the men. Bill charged ten cents, no matter what the service was. The nickname of "Ten Cent Bill" was penned on Bill. Bill often had more money than anyone in the company. His fellow company members took delight in teaching him to read and write and when he was sick, took care of him. Bill had a case of home sickness. Captain Yopp paid for his trip home. Bill realized that his place was back with Captain Yopp in Virginia. During the winter of 1861 the company became part of the Army of Northern Virginia.

The first battle of the peninsular campaign of 1862 took place on May 31st. The 14th Georgia under the command of Gen. Wade Hampton got into a bloody fight with the Federal forces. Four Confederate Generals were wounded or killed. Captain Yopp was also wounded in the Battle of Seven Pines. Bill comforted Captain Yopp and accompanied to the field hospital and after a short stay in a Richmond Hospital, Bill went back to Laurens County with the Captain. Capt. Yopp recuperated from his injury and went back to join the company by the fall of 1862.

At the bloody siege of Fredericksburg, Captain Yopp fell when a shell burst over him. Again Bill was there coming to the aid of his friend. Captain Yopp recovered during the winter. The company saw Stonewall Jackson being carried off to a

field hospital at the Battle of Chancellorsville. Bill witnessed the pure carnage of Gettysburg from the company's position on Seminary Ridge. The Blackshear Guards missed most of the fighting those three days in July, 1863.

On August 31, 1863 Capt. Yopp cashiered, or bought out his commission. He returned to the ranks as a private until April 2, 1864. Captain Yopp then transferred to the Confederate Navy on board the cruiser "Patrick Henry." Bill was not allowed to go with Thomas Yopp.

By some accounts Bill returned home until the close of the war. By others, he was present at Gen. Lee's surrender at Appomattox. In May of 1865, he learned of Captain Yopp's return home. He left just in time to see the wagon train of Confederate President Jefferson Davis in his attempted escape through Laurens County. Times were hard - for people of both races. Bill worked as a share cropper until 1870. Bill went to Macon taking a job as a bell boy at the Brown House. There he became acquainted with many of the influential men of Georgia. Bill accompanied the owner of the hotel back home to Connecticut. After his duties were finished Bill was given train fare to return home. Bill became fascinated with New York City and worked there for a short time. In 1873 Bill returned home for a short time before taking a position with the Charleston and Savannah Railroad. Bill fell ill with yellow fever and returned home to recuperate and spend some time with Captain Yopp.

Bill returned to New York where he worked as a porter in an Albany Hotel. There he again met the influential men of the state. He briefly served a family in California. In his travels, Bill visited the capitals of Europe. He worked for ten years as a porter in the private car of the president of Delaware and Hudson Railroad. Bill then worked for the United States Navy aboard the "Collier Brutus". His travels amounted to a trip around the world.

Bill then realized that old age had crept upon him. He returned home. He shortly found his friend Captain Yopp in poverty. Captain Yopp was about to enter the Confederate Soldier's Home in Atlanta. Bill took a job on the Central of Georgia Railroad. During World War I, Bill was given a place to live at Camp Wheeler near Macon. He made regular visits to the Soldier's Home providing Captain Yopp with some of his money along with fruits and other treats. Bill won the admiration of the officers at Camp Wheeler, who presented him with a gold watch upon his departure.

Bill's generosity toward Capt. Yopp soon spread to all of the soldiers in the home. He enlisted the help of the editor of "The Macon Telegraph" for aid in a fund raising campaign. Bill and his friends were able to raise funds for each veteran at Christmas time. The campaign became more successful every year. "The Dublin Courier Herald" contributed to the campaign in 1919 when the amount given to each veteran was three dollars. Bill took time at each Christmas to speak to the veterans in the chapel of the home. The veterans were so impressed they presented him a medal in March of 1920. Bill had a book published about his life. The books were sold with the proceeds going to the soldiers in the home.

By this time, Capt. Yopp was failing. The Board of Trustees voted to allow Bill a permanent place at the home. Bill stayed at his friend's side, just as he had done in the muddy trenches of Virginia nearly sixty years before. Captain Yopp died on the morning of January 23rd, 1920. Bill, now in his eighties, gave the funeral address. He reminisced about the good times and his affection for his friend.

Bill was a popular member of the Atlanta Camp No. 159 of the United Confederate Veterans, who held their meetings every third Monday at the capitol. Bill died sometime after the 1933 reunion. He was buried with his fellow soldiers at the Confederate Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia. After the body of Amos Rucker was disinterred to be laid next to the body of his wife, Bill became the lone African - American soldier of the Confederate Army to lie in the cemetery. His gravestone provided by the State of Georgia reads:

**DRUMMER BILL YOPP, CO. H, 14TH GA. INF., C.S.A.**

SOURCE MATERIAL: History of Bill Yopp, R. de T. Lawrence, Atlanta, Ga., 1920; The Forgotten Confederates, by Charles Lunsford, "The Confederate Veteran," Nov./Dec., 1992, pp. 12 - 15, Dublin Courier Herald, January 27, 1920, p. 4.









**In the vicinity of Martinsburg, General Jackson was directing his men to tear up as much of the B&O Railroad as possible. While he and his staff were making a reconnaissance of enemy positions, a beautiful young woman who had heard of the General's presence, ran out to meet him carrying her 18-month-old child. The young mother then handed the child up to the General and asked him to bless it for her. As the young woman placed her hand on Little Sorrel and bowed her head, the two joined in prayer as the Great Stonewall Jackson gave a Christmas blessing.**

## Deep South Gardening:



### **The Angel's Trumpet Blows Beautiful Flowers at Christmas**

By Leslie Ann Campbell **The flowers of the Angel's Trumpet are upward of 9 inches long.**

If you are new to the Deep South, you might this Holiday season see for the first time the glorious Angel's Trumpet bush. Actually, the plant is considered a perennial, not a bush, but because it grows so large many people think of it as a bush.

It seems absolutely fitting that the plant bloom during the Christmas season since its blooms do resemble long trumpets of the angels. However, it isn't that the plant naturally wants to bloom at Christmas; rather, it is because it is a tropical plant that likes warm days and cool nights that we see so many blooms in the month of December.

A healthy Angel's Trumpet, in full bloom, really is a sight to be seen. The flowers on my plant grow over nine inches long. The plant usually starts sporadically blooming in September which is just

perfect for the hummingbirds here on the Gulf Coast. The tiny birds need flowers such as the Angel's Trumpet in order to fatten themselves up for the flight across the Gulf.

My Angel's Trumpet is yellow. However, the plant comes in many colors, including pink, purple, and apricot. The most common flower color is white.

As stated earlier, the Angel's Trumpet is often called a shrub because of its size but actually it is a perennial. Once the weather gets below freezing, which it usually does for a week or so each year here in Mobile, the plant dies back and then must be cut back to a stump. Never fear, the Angel's Trumpet will blow its horn again! As the weather warms in spring, new growth will emerge, and the Angel's Trumpet will begin again.

However, it must be noted that the plant is very tender. While it can accept the weather of zone 8 south where the nights go below freezing but the days do not, planting an Angel's Trumpet in any higher zone would most likely require that the plant be placed in a pot and moved indoors during the winter.

Another point worth noting is that the plant is highly poisonous. While the tiny hummingbird may eat the Angel's Trumpet's nectar, we humans must be very careful around this plant. It comes from the "deadly nightshade" family, thus, it would behoove a gardener to wear gloves when working with it because the leaves alone are poisonous. I have heard the tale of a woman who had saved some seeds from one Angel's Trumpet on her window sill. The seeds fell in her cake batter. She saw what had happened and picked out all of the seeds. Nevertheless, the family became gravely ill. Obviously, this is not a plant to have around small children or animals.

The only problem I've ever had with this plant is that it attracts grasshoppers and other bugs. Its foliage is often bitten full of holes by insects. So while the "deadly nightshade" factor will even kill a human, insects thrive upon it. Since I am one to forgo the use of insecticides, I just live with the plant being full of holes much of the time. Sometimes I spray it with soap which does seem to help. Another thing which helps is to keep the area around the plant clean of leaves and debris in the springtime so that the baby grasshoppers won't use the area as a place to hatch or thrive. We in the Gulf Coast area have our share of problems with those giant grasshoppers - the kind that don't die even when hit by a brick - and the Angel's Trumpet leaves are caviar to this pest.

Otherwise, it is a very low care plant. Hack it down once it freezes over, and it will return in spring. I suggest planting spring bulbs at its feet to bloom as it returns. You will get years of enjoyment from an Angel's Trumpet, especially in late fall here in the Deep South where the Angel's Trumpet herald's in the Christmas season.

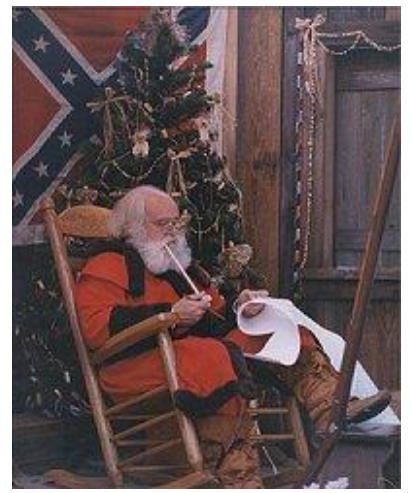
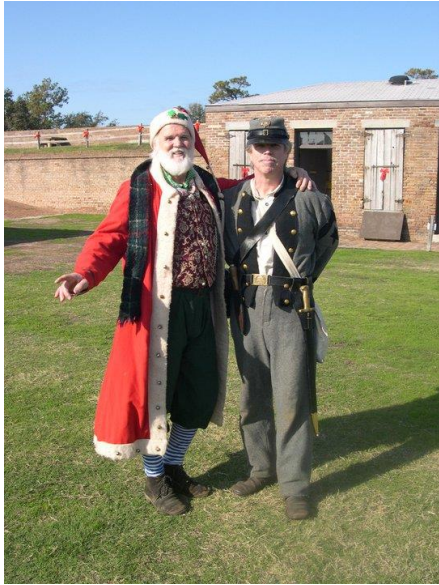
Source: Personal Knowledge as a Gardener

[http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/6062620/deep\\_south\\_gardening\\_the\\_angels\\_trumpet.html?cat=32](http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/6062620/deep_south_gardening_the_angels_trumpet.html?cat=32)



*Santa has been making his list and checking it twice.....for good little Southron boys and girls, and then there are “those people” .... those dreadful Yankees who will get coal in their stockings and switches !!*

***Here are some recent sightings of Old St. Nick checking on things!***





## "Janie Corbin and 'Old Jack'" by Mort Kunstler

It was a side of mighty "Stonewall" Jackson known only to a few. For a fleeting time in 1863, Jackson's inner heart was revealed to all who were in his presence. In the winter of 1862-63, Jackson made his headquarters at Moss Neck Plantation on Virginia's Rappahannock River. The plantation was owned by Richard and Roberta Corbin, who had a young daughter named Janie, known for her friendly, delightful personality. While visiting with Janie's parents, Jackson and the child developed an endearing friendship — encouraged, perhaps, by the fact that Jackson had a newly-born daughter he had not yet seen or by the barren conditions of Jackson's own childhood.

Jackson oversaw the writing of battle reports, took the lead in promoting religious activity inside his corps, and became almost an adopted father to five-year-old Corbin. The child visited Jackson's office daily. In the attention he gave her was the love and yearning he felt for the infant daughter he had

not yet seen.

Jackson willingly put aside his duties whenever Janie appeared at his headquarters. He laughed and played with the child —much to the surprise of officers and troops who knew only the formal, professional demeanor of “Stonewall” Jackson. Little Janie’s visit became the daily routine that brightened the famous warrior’s days. In March, when the looming spring campaign drew Jackson and his troops away from Moss Neck, he paid a farewell call on his five-year-old friend, only to learn that she was stricken with scarlet fever. He was reassured by her mother, who cited the doctor’s predictions for a rapid recovery.

The story of Jackson’s tender, cheerful moments with delightful little Janie Corbin would remain as enduring evidence of “Stonewall” Jackson, the man.



# Report of Maj. Gen. Nathan B. Forrest, C.S. Army, Commanding Cavalry, Of Operations In North Alabama and Middle Tennessee Relating to The Battle of Nashville

## December 24-25, 1864

On the morning of the 24th I ordered the infantry back toward Columbia on the main pike and my cavalry on the right and left flanks. After advancing about three miles the enemy was met, where a severe engagement occurred and the enemy was held in check for two hours. I retreated two miles, where I took position at Richland Creek. Brigadier-General Armstrong was thrown forward in front and General Ross on the right flank. Chalmers and Buford formed a junction, and were ordered on the left flank. Brigadier-General Armstrong was ordered to the support of six pieces of my artillery, which were placed in position immediately on the main pike and on a line with Buford's and Chalmer's divisions and Ross' brigade, of Jackson's division. After severe artillery firing on both sides two pieces of the enemy's artillery were dismounted. The enemy then flanked to the right and left and crossed Richland Creek on my right, with the view of gaining my rear. I immediately ordered Armstrong and Ross, of Jackson's division, to cross the bridge on the main pike and move around and engage the enemy, who were crossing the creek. Both Buford and Chalmers were heavily pressed on the left, and after an engagement of two hours I ordered them to fall back across Richland Creek. I lost 1 killed and 6 wounded in this engagement. The enemy lost heavily. Brigadier-General Buford was wounded in this engagement, and I ordered Brigadier-General Chalmers to assume command of Brigadier-General Buford's division together with his own. I reached Pulaski without further molestation.

On the morning of the 25th, after destroying all the ammunition which could not be removed from Pulaski by General Hood and two trains of cars, I ordered General Jackson to remain in town as long as possible and to destroy the bridge at Richland Creek after everything had passed over. The enemy soon pressed General Jackson, but he held him in check for some time, killing and wounding several before retiring. Seven miles from Pulaski I took position on King's Hill, and awaiting the advance of the enemy, repulsed him, with a loss of 150 killed and wounded, besides capturing many prisoners and one piece of artillery. The enemy made no further demonstrations during the day. I halted my command at Sugar Creek, where it encamped during the night.

December 24, 1864

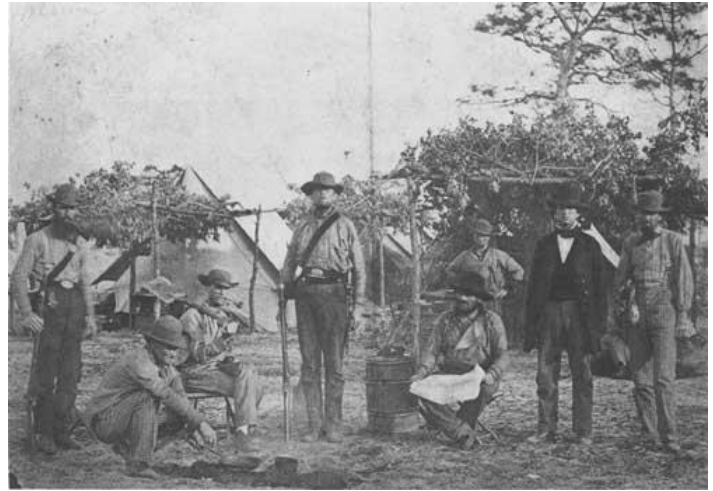


**My dear sister Ann Clare,**

**I take pen in hand and sit myself a little closer to the campfire. My regiment is in camp near Lacey Springs, Va. As you are now aware, it's becoming a great task to keep the invading Yankee out of our beloved valley. Everywhere we see fatherless families, poor widows crying and doing what little they can to feed their starving, tattered children.**

**All the fences along the Pike have been burned as firewood by both armies.**

**Seeing livestock, even a humble hen, is a uncommon site. We are hoping for rations tomorrow, if the supply wagons can reach us.**



**An yet, here on this snowy Christmas Eve, my thoughts fade back to our dear Mama and our gentle grandma. Oh, the work those ladies did to make our Christmas always joyous for the entire family. Times were more settled than they are now.**

**Of course, my dear sister, you have always done a superb handling of making holidays memorable.**

**Once the war is over, and most feel the end is now very near (unless we can get more and better supplies).**

**My sincere and deepest wish, if it be God's will, is to be home with my loving family and gaze out daily on beautiful green pastures. It's snowing harder now and I fear my paper will become wet. My health is tolerable, but my spirits are low. I close now as the snow is wet and heavy. Take care, dear sister, and may Providence bless you this Christmas and all through the coming year.**

**I am your deeply grateful brother,**

**Theodore**

**Co. B, 51st Va. Infantry CSA**

NOTES: , Capt. William Hanson Tate, had commanded Co. B of the 51st Virginia Infantry, the company of the author of this letter, but he had been killed in action at the Battle of New Market, a little over seven months before this letter is dated.

Most of the regiment, and quite likely this soldier, along with most of, the battered, depleted, and severely outnumbered 51st Virginia and the rest of Wharton's division would be overwhelmed by Sheridan's Federal cavalry under Gen. George Custer at Waynesboro, Virginia on March 2, 1865.

The majority of the regiment was captured and sent to Fort Delaware or Elmira, N.Y. The few soldiers of the 51st who escaped served briefly under Gen. John B. Gordon at Petersburg. The beloved battle flag of the regiment was captured on March 25, 1865, in the attack on Fort Stedman. The sad remnant of this proud regiment who weren't killed or captured at Fort Stedman dispersed and scattered for home on April 10, 1865, upon receipt of the news of Gen. Lee's surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia.



# Diary of Nimrod Porter, December 24, 1864.

"Nothing is safe, no help is anywhere" the emolument of war in Maury County, an excerpt from the diary of Nimrod Porter

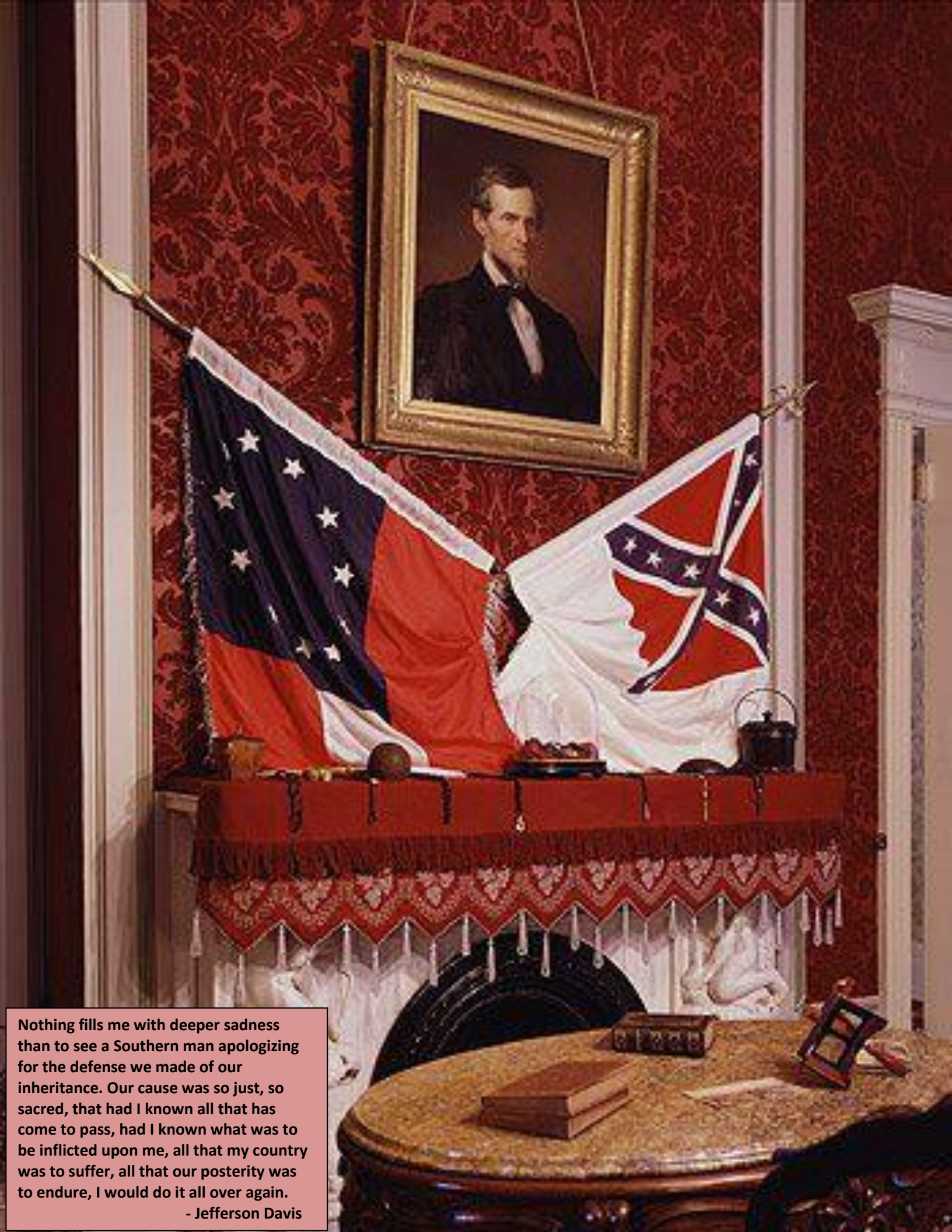
Gen. Croxton's headquarters is in our house, with his whole brigade camped all over out yard, lots, lane and everywhere they can get near enough a fence to keep them in wood. With reluctance the Gen. Ordered the provost guard to station out their guards all around the house, but it only gave the guards a better opportunity for marauding than the common soldiers, and they made the best of it. They took all the apples out of the cellar. They broke the weatherboarding off the house for fires, burnt the yard fences, went in our smoke house and took the meat. They cooked the last old gobbler and all the chickens over a fire in the yard. They even took the boots off the blacks [i.e., slaves]. Considerable fuss over that. They should not rob the blacks. Last night they took all black Sukey's money, all my corn and what little oats I have left.

There is great tribulation in the country, stealing horses, mules, hogs, breaking in houses. The soldiers are very insulting and impose on everybody, stealing and encouraging the blacks to steal and do every manner of rascality. Nothing is safe, no help is anywhere for our unfortunate condition. All, all that we have is nearly gone. How will we live? What will we eat? I wish there was a river of fire a mile wide between the North and the South that would burn with unquenchable fury forever more and that it could never be passed to the endless ages of eternity by any living creature.

Is there no hope for this dying land?

Tomorrow is Christmas day, a bitter one for us, black or white. A grey fox ran under the kitchen walk. I shot it for dinner. We have a little parched corn.





Nothing fills me with deeper sadness than to see a Southern man apologizing for the defense we made of our inheritance. Our cause was so just, so sacred, that had I known all that has come to pass, had I known what was to be inflicted upon me, all that my country was to suffer, all that our posterity was to endure, I would do it all over again.

- Jefferson Davis



*"It is now December and there is plenty of snow, and it is very cold. Captain Reilly and some of the other officers called out the men for a snow-ball fight. There must have been at least ten thousand men engaged in the battle. Snow flew in every direction. Reilly's battery was attached to Hood's Brigade. Captain Reilly was on his horse and had the appearance of a 'Lager Beer Dutchman.' The men piled snow upon him until it was almost impossible to tell the color of his horse, but still he seemed to enjoy the sport. The next day we went down on the banks of the Rappahanock on picket. The Federals were on the opposite side. We sat there and talked to them all day. One of them said, 'Boys, can't you throw me over some tobacco?' 'All right,' was the answer. 'Throw us over some late papers, and we'll throw you some tobacco.' This we did by tying a rock to it, but General Lee soon heard of this and stopped it."*

Winkler's Company, Company I, 4th Texas Volunteer Infantry, The Navarro Rifles

**James M.  
Polk**

**J. M. Polk, Memories Of The Lost Cause: Stories And Adventures Of A Confederate Soldier In General R.E. Lee's Army, 1861 to 1865 (Austin, 1905), 10-11.**

# 1895 - THE CHRISTMAS CANNON

The dark clouds of War eventually passed from the land and Americans, particularly those in the South, regained the Christmas spirit that had grown so cold. A local newspaper of December 26, 1895 informed that, *"nearly all of Macon, Georgia came out in holiday attire yesterday. Everyone felt good and some, even better."*



In the years after the War, it had been the custom with the residents *"of East Macon to haul out a big ol' cannon, around which clusters memories of violent days gone by and make the rusty throat speak to the startling of the people of neighboring counties."* It was said that the cannon, now only used for celebrating, had been captured at Walnut Creek, near Macon, during the famous Stoneman Raid of the late War for Southern Independence. A day or before this Christmas the local boys decided to mount the piece of artillery at a familiar spot called Cutler's Green and make the old piece speak as it never had before. *"Christmas was in their bones and they rejoiced that the past year had been so much more prosperous than several years previous."* In their exuberance, they wanted *"to make a greater holiday demonstration than ever before and shock East Macon"* into the Christmas spirit. Proceeding with their plan, a huge load of powder was rammed into the cannon and upon that was packed great quantities of mud until the barrel was full. At 8 o'clock on the morning just past, before any celebrations could commence, *"an explosion was heard echoing and re-echoing along the river until the stream almost shook from its bed. The monster gun had blown to pieces! The load was just too much. Only the butt and the fractured part of one wheel remained. The wonder is that no one was killed by the explosion. Huge fragments of iron were thrown in all directions. One large piece was found near the Methodist parsonage, having cut its way through the fence. Still another piece was found along the Clinton road. Of course no one knew and no one will ever know who caused this explosion. It was simply suggested that some tramps must have been responsible. The tramps have not denied involvement but possibly all of them have not been questioned. One thing is for certain - East Macon lost a War relic that had been highly prized for more than fifty years."* Submitted by: Wayne Dobson



# Onward Christian Soldiers

By John Paul Strain

During the winter of 1863 a "Great Revival" took place in the Army of Northern Virginia. Many believed after the Battle of Fredericksburg that the Lord had blessed the Southern cause with a great decisive victory, possibly changing the course of the war. As so often happens in times of war and great struggle, men turn toward their creator for understanding, insight, and guidance for their uncertain future. General Stonewall Jackson used the winter respite as an opportunity to increase the spirituality of his men. Jackson believed his army's religious character was an integral part of being successful on the battlefield.

The Stonewall Brigade built a number of log chapels around Fredericksburg to serve the men, while General Jackson endeavored to enlist as many chaplains as he could find. One of Jackson's aides described one of the emotional services. "The crowded house, the flickering lights, the smoke that dimmed the light, the earnest preaching, the breathless attention, broken only by sobs of prayers.... made an occasion never to be forgotten."

After Sunday afternoon services the leaders of the Army of Northern Virginia headed back through the snow draped countryside in a joyous mood. General Stuart's close friend and horse-drawn artillery commander, Major John Pelham of Alabama, often accompanied the leaders. The idol of many southern belles, the gallant and dashing 24 year-old Pelham had proved his bravery at Fredericksburg and would fight in more than 60 engagements. His daring skill and ability to keep up with his commander's fast moving cavalry raids refined the concept of flying artillery.

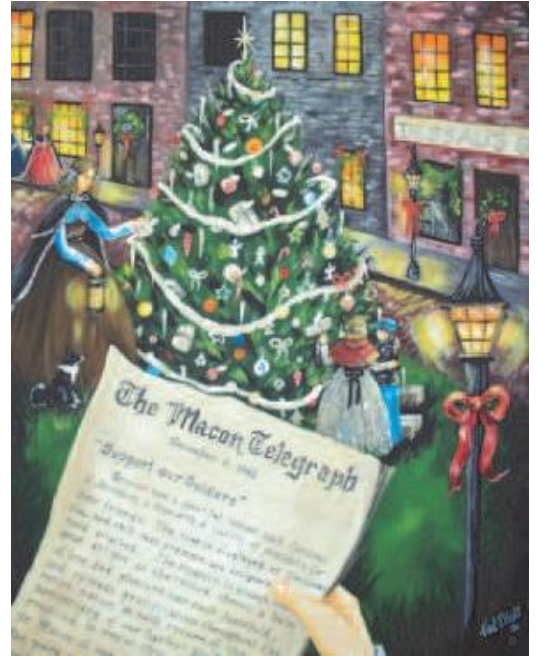
Leaders such as Lee, Jackson, and Stuart would call on many such men to sacrifice and give all for their country. It was also their hope and prayer that if the day came when they did not return to camp with their companions, the Lord would embrace them and say, "Well done my brave Christian Soldier."

# 1861 - FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE



It seems hard to imagine American culture without the annual Christmas tree trimming. However, history details that the Germans initiated the custom back in the 15th Century and immigrants imported it to America.

In Macon, Georgia, where I hail from, a local newspaper carried a story during the tumultuous holiday season of 1861 that told of the arrival of the first Christmas tree in my home town. As it would happen, the first time a Christmas tree was raised in Macon, Georgia, it was for the benefit of Confederate soldiers.



*The Macon Telegraph reported, "Germans have a beautiful custom each Christmas of decorating a tree with a variety of presents for their friends. The tree is displayed on Christmas Eve and each one's presents are designated by a card attached. The occasion is always one of great delight as the custom throws a halo of love and pleasure over each household, and spreads gratification throughout the entire nation at each return of the anniversary of our Savior's birth. It is proposed to revive this custom in Macon at our approaching holidays, to please the young people and at the same time make a fund for the relief of our beloved soldiers. A small fee of admittance will be required and each person will be allowed the privilege of taking a chance of getting a gift from the tree. The entire community, especially the little girls, are invited to furnish articles of handiwork or beautiful, useful ornamental presents for this purpose. Contributions may be left at Mrs. Dessau's store."*

**On the night before Christmas the same newspaper advised the children of the City to attend the Christmas tree ceremony instead of hanging up their stockings. The managers of the Christmas tree event secured beautiful and commodious rooms on the second story of the Ayer's Building. Ladies of the area were asked to send pieces of evergreens for decorating the rooms. A telegram from Santa Claus said that the jolly ol' soul had been *"filled with patriotism this Christmas but due to the consequences of war he would not be visiting firesides and adding that sliding down chimneys would greatly soil his suit of clothing. Instead, Santa would drive directly to the Christmas tree at Ayre's to deposit his presents."***

Submitted by: Wayne Dobson

# Christmas in one Confederate household in Warren County

Civil War Journal of Lucy Virginia French.

Christmas Dec. 1864

Tonight I have but one thought—the cause of the South has gone down. The news all around us is evident of the fact. For my part I freely acknowledge that I can see no brightness now for the Confederacy. Hood has been beaten at Nashville and is now endeavoring to get out of the state, and Sherman's rapid [march] through Ga. has been successful. He being now at Savannah if he has not possession of the city. . .

~ ~ ~

Yesterday Martha and myself worked the love long day making cakes, molasses candy, egg nogg etc. for the children must have something. I felt it a drag, all the time,—I did it from necessity. The children saw their odd cake elephants, horses, birds, old women etc. while in the process of cooking, and therefore they would not do for the nice white stockings that were put up to tempt good Santa Claus. I never was so put to it to get up something for the stockings, but I had a set of tiny coffee cups and saucers and some other little affairs which they had never seen, or forgotten—these I filled up the little girls with, and put in the boys, paper, pen, pencils, and some greenback [dollars].



They all seemed highly pleased, and enjoyed their good old pensioner used to bestow upon them. Oh! God give us peace, peace on any terms! It may be weak, but if so, Heaven forgive us! We have borne the strain so long. I took down my prayer-book and read the service of Christmas Church, with our good Bishop or Dr. Page officiating—to recall the wreaths and emblems, to fill my soul once more with the melodious flood of the organ—the grand Te Deum—the exulting Gloria—ah! how vain! how vain! I could have wept but my tears are few nowadays, and their springs lie deep, deep. I had the same feeling today that I had when poor Capt. Spurlock was brought home dead from the slopes of Stone River. It is a strange feeling—with a depth of sadness "too deep for easing tears."

Oh! Will this strife ever be ended, or will I never be able to get out of it? Mollie came yesterday to spend her Christmas with us—I was very glad she came. Tho it is not at all like the old days—yet I wanted to have her with us. She has seen some merry Christmas days in the Forest [family] Home—will she ever see another as gay?

No! I cannot hope it. We did not hear the news of Hood's retreat until this evening—when Malone came over and told it. He has slept here every night since his fright by those bushwhackers. I do not think him in any danger from them now, but his wife is ill, and insists upon his not remaining at home at night, and I have told him he ought by all means do as she wishes..

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LUCY VIRGINIA FRENCH [HERE](#).**

# Civil War Christmas Memories of Mary Chestnut 1863-64 in South Carolina

Mary Chestnut's [A Diary From Dixie](#):



Mary Boykin Miller Chesnut, 1823-1886, was born in Stateburg, South Carolina, in the High Hills of Santee, to Mary Boykin and her husband, Stephen Decatur Miller. Her father had served as a U.S. Representative (1817-19). He later became the governor of South Carolina (1829-30) and a U.S. Senator (1831-31). She was educated in Charleston at Mme. Talvande's French School for Young Ladies, where she became fluent in French and German and received a strong education. On April 23, 1840, Mary Boykin Miller married James Chesnut, Jr., a lawyer and politician eight years her senior. Like her father, he became a U.S. Senator from South Carolina and served from 1858 until South Carolina's secession from the Union in 1860. Once the Civil War broke out, James Chesnut, Jr. became an aide to

President Jefferson Davis and a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. Mary Boykin Chestnut began her diary on February 15, 1861, and ended it on August 2, 1865. During much of that time she lived at Mulberry Plantation in Camden, South Carolina, in the midst of thousands of acres of plantation and woodland but with many visitors. The diary was of her impression of events as they unfolded during the Civil War. She analyzed the changing political fortunes of the South and its various classes. She also portrayed southern society and the mixed roles of men and women, and complex situations related to slavery. See *Documenting the American South* (DocSouth.unc.edu), a digital publishing initiative of the University Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## Christmas Day, 1863.

**Yesterday dined with the Prestons. Wore one of my handsomest Paris dresses (from Paris before the war). Three magnificent Kentucky generals were present, with Senator Orr from South Carolina, and Mr. Miles...Others dropped in after dinner; some without arms, some without legs; von Borcke, who can not speak because of a wound in his throat...Poor fellows, they laugh at wounds. "And they yet can show many a scar." We had for dinner oyster soup, besides roast mutton, ham, boned turkey, wild duck, partridge, plum pudding, sauterne, burgundy, sherry, and Madeira. There is life in the old land yet!**

## 1864 December 27th.

**Oh, why did we go to Camden? The very dismalest Christmas overtook us there. Miss Rhett went with us - a brilliant woman and very agreeable. "The world, you know, is composed," said she, "of men, women, and Rhetts" (see Lady Montagu). Now, we feel that if we are to lose our negroes, we would as soon see Sherman free them as the Confederate Government; freeing negroes is the last Confederate Government craze. We are a little too slow about it; that is all.**

**READ HER "A DIARY FROM DIXIE" [HERE](#).**



# Civil War Christmas Memories of Mary Jeffreys Bethell 1861-1862 in North Carolina



Diary of Mary Jeffreys Bethell, January 1st 1861 - Dec. 1865:

Mary Jeffreys Bethell, born in 1821, was the daughter of Phereba Hinton Jeffreys and farmer and Methodist preacher George Washington Jeffreys (1794-1849). She married William D. Bethell in 1840 and spent most of her life in Rockingham County, North Carolina. Mary Jeffreys Bethell's diary has infrequent entries beginning on 1 January 1853 and ending 6 January 1873. Diary entries discuss Bethell's home and neighbors; her religious activities; the activities of her children, several of whom died young, and children in the Torrien family, whom Bethell referred to as nieces and nephews and who lived in the Bethell household for many years. There are frequent mention of Bethell's journeys with her husband to Louisiana, Tennessee, and Arkansas, and thoughts of moving the family out of North Carolina. During the Civil War, the diary also includes the activities of sons Willie and George in the Confederate Army, including George's adventures with the 44th North Carolina Regiment and his capture and imprisonment at Johnson Island. Bethell's husband joined the Army in 1864, after which Bethell wrote of the difficulties she endured in her husband's absence, including the departure of their slaves. See *Documenting the American South* (DocSouth.unc.edu), a digital publishing initiative of the University Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## **December 25, 1861**

**This is Christmas day, a beautiful day but very cold, how different this Christmas from last, now our Country is filled with armies to defend our country from the Northern army, many bloody battles have been fought, hundreds have been killed on both sides, and a great many soldiers have died in the camp from disease and want of attention while sick, it is sad to contemplate, perhaps the Lord is chastising his church, I believe he permits it for our good. I have two sons in the army, they have enjoyed fine health, the Lord has blessed them, I thank and praise him for it. I hope and pray that they may get home safe to my arms.**

## **December 25, 1862**

**This is Christmas day, a most lovely day for the season, it is almost like Spring. I hope 'tis a token of good, that the Lord is going to bless us if it is his will. I hope the war will soon close and that we may have peace.**

<http://bjws.blogspot.com/2011/12/civil-war-christmas-memories-of-mary.html>

**READ HER DIARY ONLINE [HERE](http://bjws.blogspot.com/2011/12/civil-war-christmas-memories-of-mary.html).**

# Civil War Christmas Memories of Meta Morris Grimball 1862 in South Carolina

Journal of Meta Morris Grimball: South Carolina, December 1860-February 1866: At the Grove Plantation, St. Paul's Parish, South Carolina



Margaret Ann "Meta" Morris Grimball, 1810-1881, was a descendent of Lewis Morris, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. In 1830, she married John Berkley Grimball (1800-1892), who owned a rice plantation near Adam's Run, South Carolina. They had nine children, whom they brought up at the plantation and in Charleston. During the Civil War, the family sought safety in Spartanburg, South Carolina. The plantation was confiscated by federal troops but returned to the family in 1866. The Grimballs were unable to continue mortgage payments and lost the house

in 1870. Meta kept a diary before, during, and immediately after the Civil War. In it she records the major events of the day and their effect on her family's life. Grimball juxtaposes common domestic concerns with larger issues related to the Civil War, including slavery, personal safety, and religion. See Documenting the American South (DocSouth.unc.edu), a digital publishing initiative of the University Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## 1862

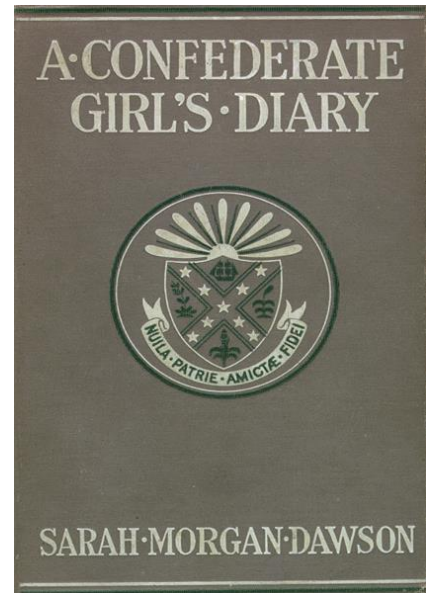
Daughter Elizabeth had a charming Christmas day...She was invited to spend the day with Mrs Dawkins, at Union, where there is a very nice Episcopal Church...There was a plentiful breakfast on their arrival, and then the Christmas tree for the children, with little gifts made by kind hands. After the tree they practised the Church Music, then went to Church, where E. took her place in the Choir, they returned to Mrs D's, had a real Christmas dinner...We went to hear Mr Whiteford Smith preach in the morning, had a fine sermon...came home to a dinner of Roast pig and a pudding, which we all enjoyed...In the evening short cake, and a great deal of pleasant talk. - Just now we have some sausages, and I am glad Mr Grimball is with us to enjoy them.

Son Berkley writes that his Christmas passed very pleasantly, they had a fine breakfast, of Opossum, Partridges, corn bread, & butter. A dinner with company. - In the Evening Theatricals a burlesque on the Ghost Scene in Hamlet. The dying scene of Lady Macbeth, and then a piece called the stolen pig, a man comes to the Captain of the Company complaining of having lost a pig, & says his negro, Cuffy, saw who took it. The Court Martial is arranged and the whole company called out, and Cuffy is made to point to the man who stole the pig. The part of the negro is played by Simons; and to the great delight of the negroes present, composed of teamsters, & servants there was music between the acts. Berkley lead the Orchestra, which consisted of 2 Violins, a triangle, bones, a drum. The end of the play is that the man is sentenced to death, and dies like Othello.

<http://bjws.blogspot.com/2011/12/civil-war-christmas-memories-of-meta.html>

**READ HER JOURNAL ONLINE [HERE.](http://bjws.blogspot.com/2011/12/civil-war-christmas-memories-of-meta.html)**

# Civil War Christmas Memories of Sarah Morgan Dawson 1862 in Louisiana



A Confederate Girl's Diary: Sarah Morgan Dawson

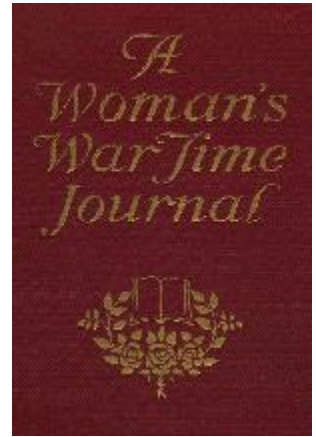
Born into a wealthy New Orleans family, Sarah Morgan, 1842-1909, was the daughter of an influential judge who moved his family to Baton Rouge when Sarah was eight. Morgan began her diary in 1862 at age 20. Her family became divided, as some broke from regional loyalty to support the North. When Union soldiers captured New Orleans in 1862, Morgan was at first impressed with civility of the officers, but when Baton Rouge experienced the same fate, her attitude changed dramatically. Morgan and her widowed mother were forced to move back to New Orleans, where in 1864, they learned that two of her brothers died of disease in Confederate ranks. Morgan never returned to Baton Rouge. In 1874, she married Frank Dawson, a newspaper owner, who died 10 years later, leaving Morgan with two children. In her later years, Morgan moved to Paris, where she died on May 5, 1909. See *Documenting the American South* (DocSouth.unc.edu), a digital publishing initiative of the University Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## 1862

Yesterday, being a beautiful day, I was carried down in honor of Christmas, to meet Captain Fenner and Mr. Duggan who were to dine with us...We had an exquisite Christmas gift the night before, a magnificent serenade, a compliment from Colonel Breaux...While all goes on merrily, another rap comes, and enter Santa Claus, dressed in the old uniform of the Mexican War, with a tremendous cocked hat, and preposterous beard of false hair... It was a device of the General's, which took us all by surprise. Santa Claus passes slowly around the circle, and pausing before each lady, draws from his basket a cake which he presents with a bow, while to each gentleman he presents a wineglass replenished from a most suspicious-looking black bottle which also reposes there. Leaving us all wonder and laughter, Santa Claus retires with a basket much lighter than it had been at his entrance. . .Then follow refreshments, and more and more talk and laughter, until the clock strikes twelve, when all these ghosts bid a hearty good-night and retire.

**READ HER DIARY ONLINE [HERE](#).**

# Civil War Christmas Memories of Dolly Sumner Lunt 1864 in Georgia



*A Woman's Wartime Journal: an Account of the Passage over Georgia's Plantation of Sherman's Army on the March to the Sea, as Recorded in the Diary of Dolly Sumner Lunt (Mrs. Thomas Burge) :*

Dolly Lunt Burge, 1817-1891, was born in Maine in 1817. As a young woman, moved from Maine to Georgia with her physician husband in the 1840s. By the time she began her diary at age thirty, Dolly had lost her husband and her only living child to illness. A devout and self-sufficient schoolteacher, she soon married again, to Thomas Burge, a planter and widowed father of four. In 1855, she gave birth to their daughter, Sarah, called Sadai. Upon her second husband's death in 1858, Dolly independently ran the plantation, located in Mansfield. She remained there during the Civil War, witnessing Sherman's march through the area. Dolly married a final time, in 1866, to Rev. William Parks, a prominent Methodist minister. Dolly's diary is filled with news about her daughter, her struggles, and her slaves. See ***Documenting the American South*** (DocSouth.unc.edu), a digital publishing initiative of the University Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## **DECEMBER 24, 1864.**

**This has usually been a very busy day with me, preparing for Christmas not only for my own tables, but for gifts for my servants. Now how changed! No confectionery, cakes, or pies can I have. We are all sad; no loud, jovial laugh from our boys is heard. Christmas Eve, which has ever been gaily celebrated here, which has witnessed the popping of fire-crackers [the Southern custom of celebrating Christmas with fireworks] and the hanging up of stockings, is an occasion now of sadness and gloom. I have nothing even to put in Sadai's stocking, which hangs so invitingly for Santa Claus. How disappointed she will be in the morning, though I have explained to her why he cannot come. Poor children! Why must the innocent suffer with the guilty?**

## **DECEMBER 25, 1864.**

**Sadai jumped out of bed very early this morning to feel in her stocking. She could not believe but that there would be something in it. Finding nothing, she crept back into bed, pulled the cover over her face, and I soon heard her sobbing. The little negroes all came in: "Christmas gift, mist'ess! Christmas gift, mist'ess!" I pulled the cover over my face and was soon mingling my tears with Sadai's.**

<http://bjws.blogspot.com/2011/12/civil-war-christmas-memories-of-dolly.html>

# **READ HER JOURNAL HERE.**

## Ex-Slave Alice Houston's Christmas Memories



Alice Houston was born October 22, 1859. She was a slave of Judge Jim Watkins on his small plantation in Hays County, near San Marcos, Texas and served as house girl to his wife, Mrs. Lillie Watkins for many years after the Civil War. At Mrs. Watkins' death she moved with her husband, Jim Houston, to San Angelo, Texas, where she continued her services as mid wife and nurse:

**"On Christmas and New Year we would have all de good things old marster and ole missus had and when any of de white folks marry or die dey sho' carry on big. Weddin's and funerals, dem was de biggest times."**



## Ex-Slave Eda Rains' Christmas Memories



Eda Rains was born a slave in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1853. In 1860 Eda, her brothers and mother, were bought by a Mr. Carter and brought to Texas:

**"Now, I mus' tell you all 'bout Christmas. Our bigges' time was at Christmas. Marster'd give us maybe fo'-bits to spend as we wanted and maybe we'd buy a string of beads or some sech notion. On Christmas Eve we played games. 'Young Gel Loves Candy,' or 'Hide and Whoop.' Didn' know nothin' 'bout Santa Claus, never was larned that. But we allus knowed what we'd git on Christmas mornin'. Old Marster allus call us togedder and give us new clothes, shoes too. He allus wen' to town on the Eve and brung back our things in a cotton sack. That ole sack'd be crammed full of things and we knowed it was clothes and shoes, 'cause Marster didn' 'lieve in no foolishness. We got one pair shoes a year, at Christmas. Most times they was red and I'd allus paint mine black. I's one nigger didn' like red. I'd skin grease off dishwater, mix it with soot from the chimney and paint my**

shoes. In winter we wore woolen clothes and got 'em at Christmas, too."

## Ex-Slave Nicey Pugh's Christmas Memories



Nicey Pugh was born a slave to Master Jim Bettis in Alabama:


**"At Christmas time, Massa would have a bunch of niggers to kill a hog an' barbecue him, an' de womens would make' lasses cake, an' ole massa Jim had some kinda seed dat he made beer outen, an' we-alls drank beer 'roun' Christmas."**



## Ex-Slave Mary Reynold's Christmas Memories



Mary Reynolds was born in slavery to the Kilpatrick family in Black River, Louisiana:

"They give all the niggers fresh meat on Christmas and a plug tobacco all round. The highes' cotton picker  
suit of  gits a  
and all the women what had twins that year gits a  
outfittin' of clothes for the twins and a double,  
warm blanket."

## Ex-Slave Molly Ammond's Christmas Memories

Ex Alabama Slave Molly Ammond:



**"Us was treated fine. Our folks was quality. We had plenty somp'n t'eat, but dem slaves hadda work powerful hard though. Atter dey come home fum de fields dey was so tired dat dey go right to sleep, except when de massa had barbecues. Christmas was de big time; dere was several days to res' an' make merryin'..."**



Photos & quotes from The Slave Narratives, a collection of over 20,000 pages of typewritten interviews with more than 3,500 former slaves, collected over a 10-year period. In 1929, both Fisk University in Tennessee & Southern University in Louisiana began to document the life stories of former American slaves. Kentucky State College continued the work in 1934. In the midst of the Depression between 1936-1939, these narratives continued to be collected as part of the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration. They were assembled & microfilmed in 1941, as the 17-volume Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in the United States from Interviews with Former Slaves. The collection includes photos of the interviewees taken in the 1930s as well as their full interviews. Those whose voices are included in the collection ranged in age from 1 to 50 at the time of emancipation in 1865; more than 2/3 were over 80 when they were interviewed.

The obvious problem is the language as reported by the interviewers. The Library of Congress explains on their website, "The narratives usually involve some attempt by the interviewers to reproduce in writing the spoken language of those interviewed...The interviewers were writers, not professionals trained in the phonetic transcription of speech...by the 1930s, when the interviews took place, white representations of black speech already had an ugly history of entrenched stereotype dating back at least to the early nineteenth century." What most white interviewers assumed to be "the usual" patterns of their informants' speech was unavoidably influenced by the 1930s preconceptions & stereotypes of the interviewers themselves. "The result, as the historian Lawrence W. Levine has written, "is a mélange of accuracy & fantasy, of sensitivity & stereotype, of empathy & racism" that may sometimes be offensive to today's readers. Yet whatever else they may be, the representations of speech in the narratives are a pervasive & forceful reminder that these documents are not only a record of a time that was already history when they were created: they are themselves irreducibly historical, the products of a particular time & particular places..."

D. Request for funding for a sculpture Confederate Veteran Richard Payne for an historical park in Winston County, Alabama. Funding approved contingent on agreement with the historical park board regarding conditions of the sculpture being donated.

E. Request for funding for the Confederate Plaza in Palestine, Texas was approved. The plaza has been donated to the General Organization of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

12. Past Commander In Chief McMichael spoke about upcoming Sesquicentennial Events, the next at Beauvoir on March 16, 2013. He also addressed issues regarding The Confederate Museum.

13. CIC Givens made closing comments, including announcing the next GEC meeting will be at Beauvoir in conjunction with the Beauvoir Sesquicentennial event.

14. Meeting ended at 3:35 singing of Dixie!!



PM with prayer and the  
Posted by Chuck Rand

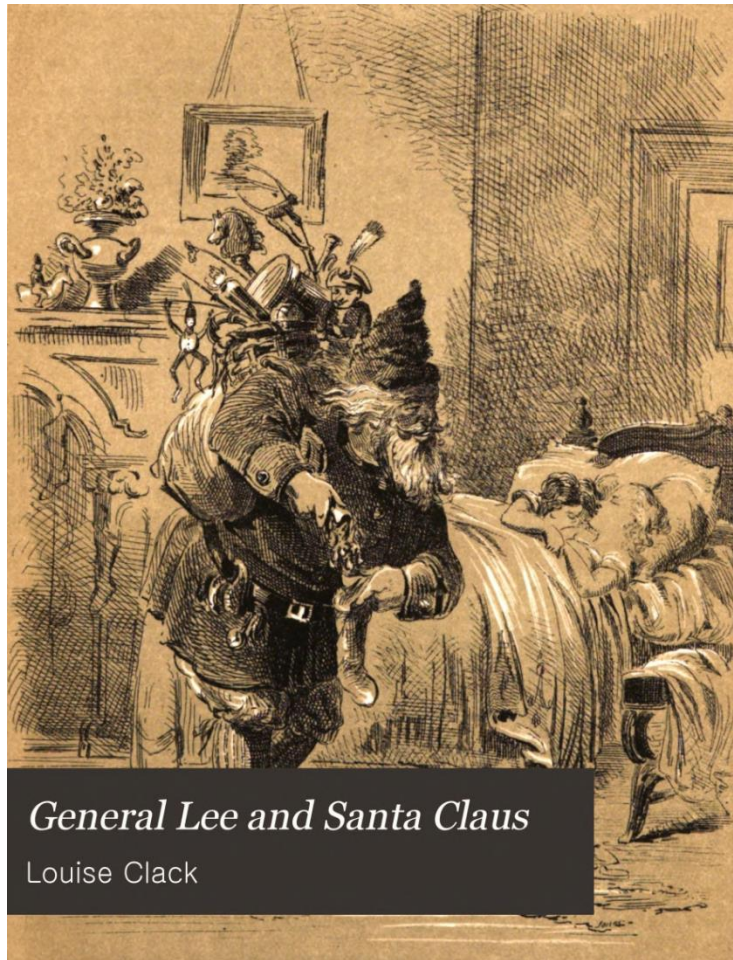




## Gen. John Hunt Morgan escape from Columbus, Ohio

November 27, 1863, General Morgan had escaped from the Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus, and was on his way south to be reunited with his wife, Mattie. By December, he was in South Carolina, where they spent a peaceful Christmas together in Columbia.





## *General Lee and Santa Claus*

Louise Clack

# General Lee and Santa Claus

*Is this authentic? Who cares? Merry Christmas! -*

From the book *General Lee and Santa Claus*, originally published in 1867, pages 32-35.

DOWNLOAD FREE [HERE](#)

Dear General Lee:

We think you are the goodest man that ever lived, and our auntie says you will go right straight to heaven when you die; so we want to ask you a question, for we want to know the truth about it, and we know that you always speak the truth.

Please tell us whether Santa Claus loves the little rebel children, for we think he don't; because he did not come to see us for four Christmas Eves. Auntie thinks you would not let him cross the lines, and we don't know how to find out unless we write and ask you. We all love you dearly, and we want to send you something; but we have not any thing nice enough; we lost all our toys in the war. Birdie wants to send you one of our white kittens--the one with black ears; but auntie thinks maybe you don't like kittens. We say little prayers for you every night, dear General Lee, and ask God to make you ever so happy. Please let us know about Santa Claus as soon as you can; we want to know for something very, very, very particular; but we can't tell even you why until Christmas time, so please to excuse us.

Your little friends,

Lutie, Birdie, and Minnie





The above letter was sent the following day, and in about a week the answer was received:

My dear little friends:

I was very glad to receive your kind letter, and to know by it that I have the good wishes and prayers of three innocent little girls, named Lutie, Birdie, and Minnie.

I am very glad that you wrote about Santa Claus for I am able to tell you all about him. I can assure you he is one of the best friends that the little Southern girls have. You will understand this when I explain to you the reason of his not coming to see you for four years.

The first Christmas Eve of the war I was walking up and down in the camp ground, when I thought I heard a singular noise above my head; and on looking to find out from whence it came, I saw the queerest, funniest-looking little old fellow riding along in a sleigh through the air. On closer inspection, he proved to be Santa Claus.

Halt! Halt!, I said; but at this the funny fellow laughed, and did not seem inclined to obey, so again I cried Halt!. And he drove down to my side with a sleigh full of toys. I was very sorry for him when I saw the disappointed expression of his face when I told him he could go no further South; and when he exclaimed, Oh, what will my little Southern children do! I felt more sorry, for I love little children to be happy, and especially at Christmas. But of one thing I was certain--I knew my little friends would prefer me to do my duty, rather than have all the toys in the world; so I said: Santa Claus, take every one of the toys you have back as far as Baltimore, sell them, and with the money you get buy medicines, bandages, ointments, and delicacies for our sick and wounded men; do it and do it quickly--it will be all right with the children. Then Santa Claus sprang into his sleigh, and putting his hand to his hat in true military style, said: I obey orders, General, and away he went. Long before morning he came sweeping down into camp again, with not only every thing I had ordered, but with many other things that our poor soldiers needed. And every Christmas he took the toy money and did the same thing; and the soldiers and I blessed him, for he clothed and fed many a poor soul who otherwise would have been cold and hungry. Now, do you not consider him a good friend. I hold him in high respect, and trust you will always do the same.

I should be pleased to hear from you again, my dear little girls, and I want you ever to consider me,

Your true friend,

General Robert E. Lee



# "Jonkonnu" or "John Kunering" at Christmas

Cape Fear Historical Institute Papers

[www.cfhi.net](http://www.cfhi.net)



*“The John Kuners were a chief attraction of the  
Christmas season since colonial times.”*

*Dr. James Sprunt*

An old Christmas tradition of Wilmington called “John Kunering” is still remembered, with one similar in Edenton referred to as “John Canoeing.” This was a tradition practiced mainly by black slaves, a custom that would find noisy and gaily-dressed processions “singing strange tunes accompanied by banjo, accordian, tamborine and other instruments.” Some of the participants would dress as women, and they festooned themselves with shreds of cloth sewn to their daily attire. In Wilmington, the “John Kuners” would dance throughout the town to the rhythmic chants of:

*“Hah! Low! Here we go!*

*Hah! Low! Here we go!*

*Hah! Low! Here we go! Kuners come from Denby!”*

*“With the rattles of bones, the blowing of cow’s horns, and the tinkling of tambourines, the singing slaves, grotesque in their “Kuner” costumes, would halt whenever an appreciative crowd gathered. Strips of brightly colored cloth sewn to their clothes fluttered gaily as the John Kuners danced merrily. They were bedecked in horned masks, beards, staring eyes and enormous noses with grinning mouths. All were men, but some would dress as women. After a few songs and dancing, the Kuners would approach the spectators with hat extended to collect a monetary reward for the antics. The Kuners would then depart for another crowd to dance and sing for and the usual reward”(Johnson).*

Slave Harriet Brent Jacobs described the custom (Cashman, p.51)

"Every child rises on Christmas morning to see the John Kannaus. Without them Christmas would be shorn of its greatest attraction...a box covered with sheepskin is called the gumbo box. A dozen beat on this while others strike triangles and jawbones to which a band of dancers keep time. For a month previous they are composing songs."

"John Kunering" was a way in which blacks, free and slave, would imitate the Christmas traditions in their own manner, and an opportunity to parade in gaily-dressed musical groups around the city and request Christmas gifts and treats from white families. The custom fell into disuse in the 1880's after being tabooed by black residents, it was seen "as tending to lower them as a race in the eyes of the public (Moore)." Though usually viewed as a black custom, historians note that the processions was not limited to blacks, as many white youths would dress and march as well, joining in the Christmas gaiety.

### **Slaves Granted Liberty at Holidays:**

Wilmington historian Louis T. Moore wrote that "At Christmas seasons especially, a greater degree of real liberty was enjoyed by the colored people...and they were permitted to band themselves together in groups and from Christmas Eve through the advent of the New Year, Wilmington verily rang with the chants, songs and merry-making of the John Kuners. As the groups would stop in front of the different handsome homes, or

pass into the gardens and spacious yards of the stately houses, they would always expect some type of Christmas cheer or gift. Invariably, the Kuners were fed on the substantial viands and appetizing desserts with which the groaning tables were filled during the Christmas season.”

There was substantial support for granting slaves the freedom to enjoy time away from their labor, and antebellum North Carolina’s Chief Justice Ruffin typified this with his view that:

*“It would really be a source of regret, if, contrary to common custom, it were denied to slaves, in the intervals between their toils, to indulge in mirthful pastimes...”*

Christmas as celebrated by white Wilmingtonians was a quiet and reflective

time with families at home, and author Guion Johnson relates in “Antebellum North Carolina” that:

*“Christmas in North Carolina was celebrated without official ceremony, and the town authorities ordinarily made no occasion of the day, “leaving it to quiet church services, visiting parties and pleasant family reunions.” The Wilmington Daily Journal wrote on December 23, 1851: “Christmas is coming...and were it not for the little and big (Negroes) begging for quarters, and the “noise and confusion” and the “Kooners,” ...and the fire-crackers, and all the other unnamed horrors and abominations, we should be much inclined to rejoice thereat...” In 1859 the same Journal wrote that “Christmas is past...A crowd on foot preceded by an ox team was quite amusing. John Kuner was feeble. John Barleycorn retained his usual spirit...our town authorities on Christmas generally let the boys have their way so far as mere noise is concerned....much firing of crackers, rockets, sapients, etc...”*

*It was customary to give slaves considerable freedom on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and on general holidays such as the 4th of July and Christmas. The old Southern custom of ladies staying indoors on Saturday afternoons arose from the great numbers of slaves in town at that time.*

*Christmas was the time that slaves enjoyed more than others, and it was a general custom to give the workers a rest from the field labors for several days at least, and often the period between Christmas and New Year Day. The masters were liberal in issuing passes so the slaves could visit relatives and former masters on neighboring plantations. The slaves would have more money at this time as masters seldom forgot to give coins and presents on Christmas morning as “the slaves gathered about happily shouting “Chris’ mus gif!”*

*The gifts received were usually gay head-cloths for the women and “hands of tobacco” for the men, plus barbequed pork, molasses and weakened liquor. The Negroes (in Edenton) arose early Christmas morning, singing their John Canoe songs and shouting “Chris’ mus gif” at their masters’ doors. With liquor on their breaths and money in their pockets, they spent to day in one long jubilee.”*

Antebellum slaves in the South were not alone in having annual celebrations. New York slave owners in the late 1700's permitted their bondsmen several days of recreational release in an event called "Pinkster," a transformation of the Dutch celebration of Pentecost. During "Pinkster, the New York slaves gathered to "make music, dance, and play games."

*Another local Wilmington tradition is revealed in Nicholas Schenck’s diary regarding an antebellum*

*vacant lot on the north side of Dock Street between Front and Water Streets, that “was used Christmas holidays by Negroes to strike at turkeys – suspended on pole – opposite side of street – paying a small fee – the striker was blind [folded] – turned around three times [and] given a street pole – 6 feet long – faced the*

*hanging turkey – now walk straight ahead – if he killed the turkey or knock[ed] him down “he won” the turkey.*  
(UNCW web collections, page 58)

### **The Origins and “John Canoeing” in Edenton:**

The tradition was known by several names and there is no certainty to the origin of the "John Kuner" custom other than it being possibly misty African tribal memories and chants mixed with European traditions, or derived from French, Provencal or Anglo-Norman minstrels called "Jongleurs," and the name "Jonconners," "Jonkunnu," "Jonkonnu," or "Junkanoo" being various corruptions of this. The term "Jonkonnu" is more a Bahamian term (there called Junkanoes) and the spelling in Nassau has been "John Canoe" or "John Connu." A more familiar and local identification of the tradition was "John Kuners" or "Kuners," and it is firmly believed that the tradition began in Wilmington.

In January, 1926 Dougald MacMillan of Chapel Hill, North Carolina wrote an article in the Journal of American Folklore entitled "John Kuner" and noted that his research "traced the custom to only a few other coastal towns of North Carolina, and to Nassau, where these men were called “John Canoes.” In Wilmington, the custom apparently died out in the 1880’s." It is also reported that the "John Kuner" activities of blacks were in evidence at Somerset Plantation in the Albemarle region, with some participants dressed bizarrely in rags and animal skins. They would parade to the master's house drumming, chanting and dancing for money, food and gifts.

If the tradition is a product of coastal North Carolina, “Kunering” was most likely derived from black experiences in the New World, absorbing the new culture of the West, and imitating the many European traditions they found themselves influenced by. The African influence in “Kunering” cannot be discounted as nearly-forgotten remembrances of tribal dancing may have been at work; and slaves recently brought from Africa on New England slavers certainly would have brought their memories with them. The high point of the New England slave trade was about 1750 as it surpassed Liverpool in prominence as a slave-trading center; and their ships were still being caught in the 1850’s.

The tradition in nearby Edenton, North Carolina was explained by Dr. James Norcom in 1824 and he credits the white community for allowing the custom to flourish:

*“During the season of Christmas our slaves...have been in the habit of enjoying a state of comparative freedom; of having dances & entertainments among themselves; & of celebrating the season in a manner peculiar to this part of the world. These festivities are not only tolerated by the whites, but are virtually created by them; for without the aid voluntarily contributed by their masters, the servants would*

*be destitute of the means of making or enjoying them.*

*At such a season, instead of driving these wretched creatures, with cold and unfeeling sensibility from our doors, the heart of charity dilates towards them, & the angel of humanity whispers in our ears that they are entitled to a part of the blessings which their labor has procured us...Although trifling evils sometimes result from these extraordinary indulgences, they continue to be tolerated and practiced. It is to be regretted that drunkenness is too common on these occasions; but this also is habitually overlooked and never punished, unless it becomes outrageous or grossly offensive.”*

### **John Kunering in Turn of the Century Wilmington**

Emma Woodward MacMillan was born in Wilmington in 1893, her family home was at 210 North Second Street. Her published (1961) recollections (A Goodly Heritage) inform us that:

"Under our Christmas tree were always many tarleton bags of various colors filled with nuts and candies. The hard candies had come in wooden tubs in our box from Macy's. These bags had been made by us for the "Kuners" who came in droves to our house each Christmas day. Most of them were the Negro boys from the [cotton] Compress, all of them knew Papa and lots of them knew us. Generally their faces were marked with

the color of the marking ink, a reddish orange, used on the cotton bales. How exciting it was to have them sit on our geegoggle and sing their tuneless songs. I confess I was rather afraid of those grotesque dirty looking figures, but the family took them in as a matter of course.

Here are two of their songs:

*"Ha! low, Here we go, Ha! low, Here we go,*

*Ha! low, Here we go, Kuners are coming.*

*Sit still, ladies, and don't take a chill,*

*While the Captain of the horses ties up big Bill."*

There are many more verses I do not recall. Our Aunt Nellie could keep us amused indefinitely with the ones she knew. They were so lacking in melody that you could hardly tell one from another. They were monotonous, more like chants than songs. It was not until I was at Greensboro at college that I found that the term "Kuner face," as I used it for the word "mask" had no meaning that part of North Carolina. Old John Kuner and his slaves were characters in only three towns---Wilmington, Hillsboro and Edenton. My older sisters can remember when the Kuners came on horseback. It is of interest to note three separate ways of spelling the word--Kooners, Kuners and John Canoes."

As with many customs and traditions of old, "Kunering" is a thing of the past in North Carolina, though it is still practiced in Jamaica and the Bahamas in their own particular style, called by their name: "John Canoeing." But even if faintly-recalled African memories might have somehow influenced the antebellum "Kunering," black residents of the 1890's would use the tradition as simply an occasion to dress grotesquely and parade for gifts and treats from white families. Perhaps it is better recalled as a cultural relic of the African slavery a British colonial system placed in America before the American Revolution, and time had eventually erased its relevance.

#### **About the Author:**

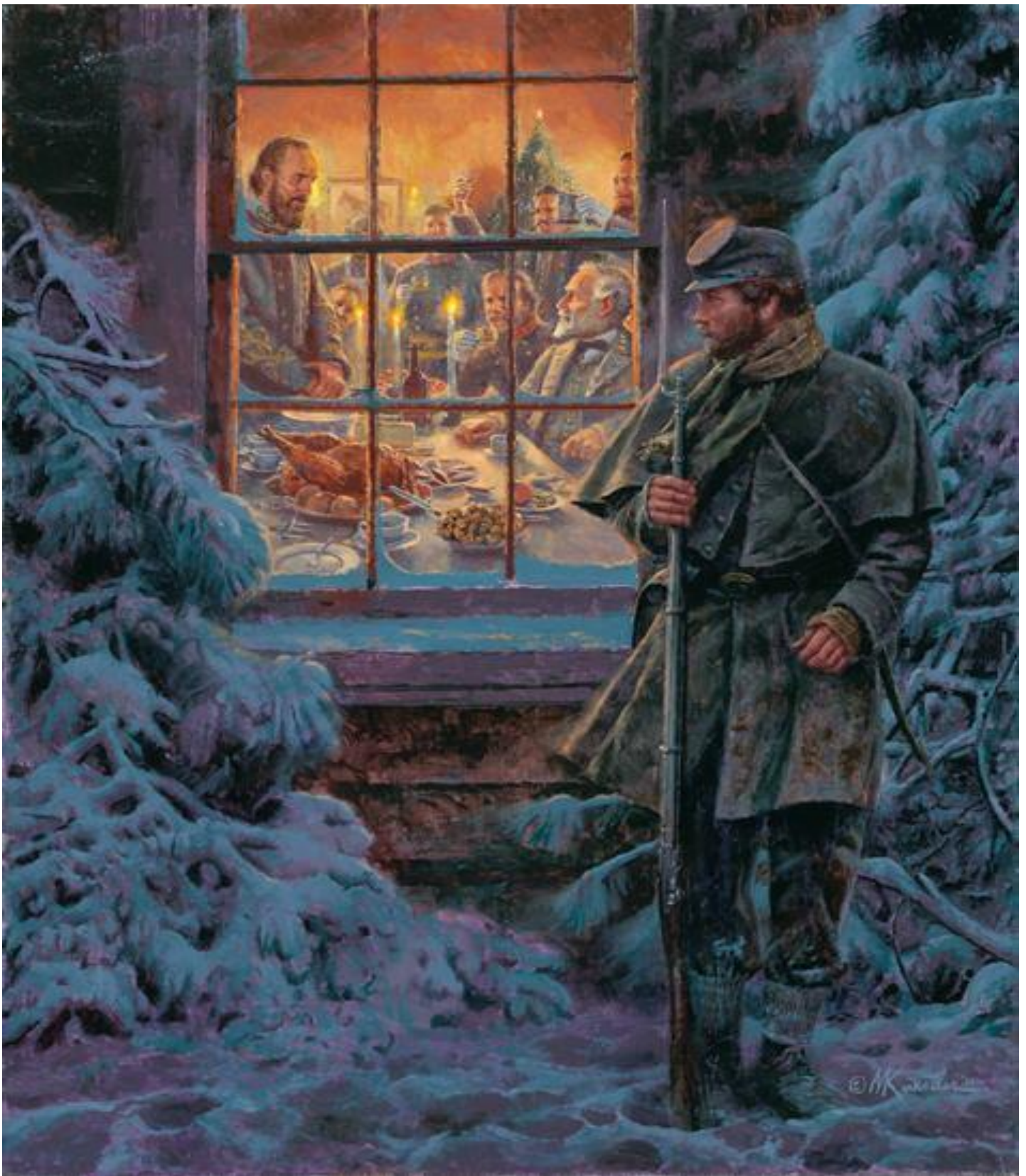
*Bernhard Thuersam is the Executive Director of the Cape Fear Historical Institute in Wilmington. A native of the Niagara Falls, New York area, he has been a devoted student of world history since 1958, and is a former Chairman of the Cape Fear Museum Board of Trustees. Contact him at [bernhard1848@att.net](mailto:bernhard1848@att.net).*

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# How Real Soldiers Live

Jackson and Lee, Moss Neck, December 25, 1862

Artwork by Mort Kunstler

In December of 1862, Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia bedded down for winter quarters in and around the town of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County. After defeating their Federal adversaries in one of the most lopsided victories of the entire Civil War, the victorious but weathered army looked to the Christmas season as a welcome reprieve. Celebrations around the campsite were especially joyous during this time, as the daily stress of combat was put aside in favor of high spirits.

The officers expressed this sentiment as well and they often held private holiday dinners for their senior commanders. One such meal was hosted by General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, who was staying in nearby Caroline County. Although he was not the most socially adept of Lee's lieutenants, Jackson extended a warm invitation to his commander and staff to enjoy an evening of hospitality at his headquarters at Moss Neck Plantation.

Upon his arrival, General Lee was treated to a traditional holiday meal, as well as the welcome company of his most trusted subordinates. The evening went well as conversational merriment replaced the usual discussions of tactics and attrition. Laughter filled the room and, for a few brief hours, the war in Virginia was but a distant memory. For this Christmas night, it was a group of Southern gentlemen, not seasoned soldiers, who came together to celebrate and share a taste of home.

# **The Private Infantryman. The Typical Hero of the South.**

**[From The Times-Democrat's Christmas Edition, 1892.]**

The Old South has grand memories and the New South has splendid anticipations. The spirit which moved the Old leads the New South.

It is that spirit which seeks truth through roughest paths and heeds no danger in its pursuit. It is that spirit which warmed the hearts and steeled the nerves to bear the burdens of both the Old and the New South. My ideal hero embraced it with superb unselfishness.

Some would say he should be Robert E. Lee, whose great heart and lofty leadership enchained the everlasting affection of the South.

Some would say he should be Stonewall Jackson, whose magic power so often awakened the wonder of the world. Some would say he should be Jefferson Davis, whose polished manhood held with unyielding nerve the pearl of Southern pride.

Some would say he was among the hosts of cavalymen and artillerymen, who flashed their swords and pulled their lanyards in battles often won.

Yes! These are the jewels of the South, and there are honors and memories for them; but I would take away the stars and trimmings and titles, for there was charm and inspiration in them.

I would eliminate, too, the higher grades of service.

The purest spirit, the deepest love, the greatest hero, the noblest manhood, was in the infantry private of the South. He was reared when the "irrepressible conflict" quickened the pulse of the people. He was inspired by the intellectual gladiators of the South.

He gloried in the heroism of his ancestors, which had won the republic from England.

He shouldered the burden of his convictions, he grasped his musket for his cause, he inhaled the smoke of battle, he felt the sting of bullet, he bled from shot and shell.

He dared to die when he could foresee his unurned ashes scattered on the soil of his enemies.

Where is loftier heroism?

Where is nobler patriotism?

Where is truer manhood?

Where is grander chivalry?

Where a more ideal hero?

For principles, he carried the heaviest cross.

For principles, he courted an unknown grave.

He touched elbows in the unwavering line of charge.

He gained victory with the point of the bayonet.

He dauntlessly rushed over earthworks.

He stood like a "stone wall" on the field.

He was strongest in battle.

He was gentlest in victory.

He was most powerful in the face of menace.

He was tenderest to the captured.

His pride was grand, his bravery exalted, his heroism majestic!

His marvelous simplicity of conduct was consonant with his beauty of heart?

His life in camp was characterized by praiseworthy endurance.

He met his privations with the calmness of a philosopher.

He enjoyed the pastimes of his tent with the guilelessness of a child.

He doted on his faded uniform and jeered at the "slick" silk hat, even on the head of a Confederate congressman.

When the first year of his service had passed he was bright with hope.

Fort Sumter had fallen and Manassas had emblazoned his bayonet with glory!



The second year passed with five hundred and sixty-four battles and engagements, including Shiloh, the seven days' battle, which made the dark waters of the Chickahominy run red, Second Manassas and Fredericksburg, and his prowess was proved to the civilized world.

The third year passed with six hundred and twenty-seven battles and engagements.

It saw his pride at the highest and his hope brightest when, fresh from the victories of Chancellorsville, he invaded the soil of Pennsylvania.

Alas! for human hopes!

Gettysburg turned backward his footsteps and started anxiety in his breast.

How long could these bloody years last?

Surely, not longer than seven, as his ancestors' revolution had cost!

Then the fourth year passed, with seven hundred and seventy-nine battles and engagements.

His anxiety was over.

He saw the inevitable end.

Hope of success was gone.

It was only a question of the days he might be spared before the bullet pierced his heart.

He saw the end before the statesmen in the Capitol at Richmond. He knew overwhelming numbers would crush out the soldiery of the South.

His comrades were falling, and no recruits came to fill their places. He saw the end and felt it in the summer of 1864, but his allegiance to the army, his duty to himself and his family bade him go almost daily to a hopeless slaughter, and often he marched to battle for his personal honor, without the slightest hope for his country's independence.

Can you imagine heroism more sublime than the private infantryman's who held the front lines of the Confederacy during the last half of 1864 and the winter and spring of 1865?

Around Petersburg along the disastrous line of retreat to Appomattox, and even there he shouldered his musket and yielded ready obedience to the order for a charge, until his matchless commander said his duty to his country had been "faithfully performed," and further resistance would be a useless sacrifice.

He had enlisted as a private, he fought as a private, he surrendered as a private, and then he returned to private life to battle for bread. His country was lost, but a dauntless spirit directed him in the evolution to another citizenship. He guided the plow, wielded the axe, and did whatever his hand found to do, with the same unassuming fortitude which marked his career in the army.

He inspired courage in the young. He gave life to the weak, and grappled the new order of things with masterly mind. Napoleon said: "True heroism consists in being superior to the ills of life in whatever shape they may challenge him to combat."

The infantryman not only felt as the illustrious warrior when he uttered this sublime sentiment, but he has demonstrated its truth by rising superior to all the evils of disaster, imbuing his associates with that resolute endurance which made him the breakwater of the Confederacy, and has made the bone and sinew of the progress and prosperity of the New South.

As his is the glory of the past, so his is the strength of the present. Whenever you find him, whether laboring on your streets, building your ships or tilling your fields, pause and lift your hat, for the Confederate private infantryman is the typical hero of the South.

He is entitled to the absolute respect of the grandest in the land. Already many stately granite shafts commemorate our hero leaders, but shall there not be one higher by an hundredfold and a thousand times more beautiful in design than any of these, dedicated to the infantry privates of the South?

Aye! I wish a shaft of burnished gold could lift its head from Virginia's valley, in which sleep the remains of Lee and Jackson, in memory of the private infantrymen of the Confederacy, emblazoning their glory to coming generations, for their heroism is the grandest type of all the thousand bloody fields which heralded Southern valor.

The private infantrymen were lowest in rank, yet highest in their loyalty to the finest sense of honor the human mind can conceive--grandest in humility, greatest in sincerity, purest in purpose; and never can temples of fame enshrine the memory of knightlier souls!

WILLIAM H. STEWART,

Late Lt.-Col. 61st Va. Infantry, C. S. A.,

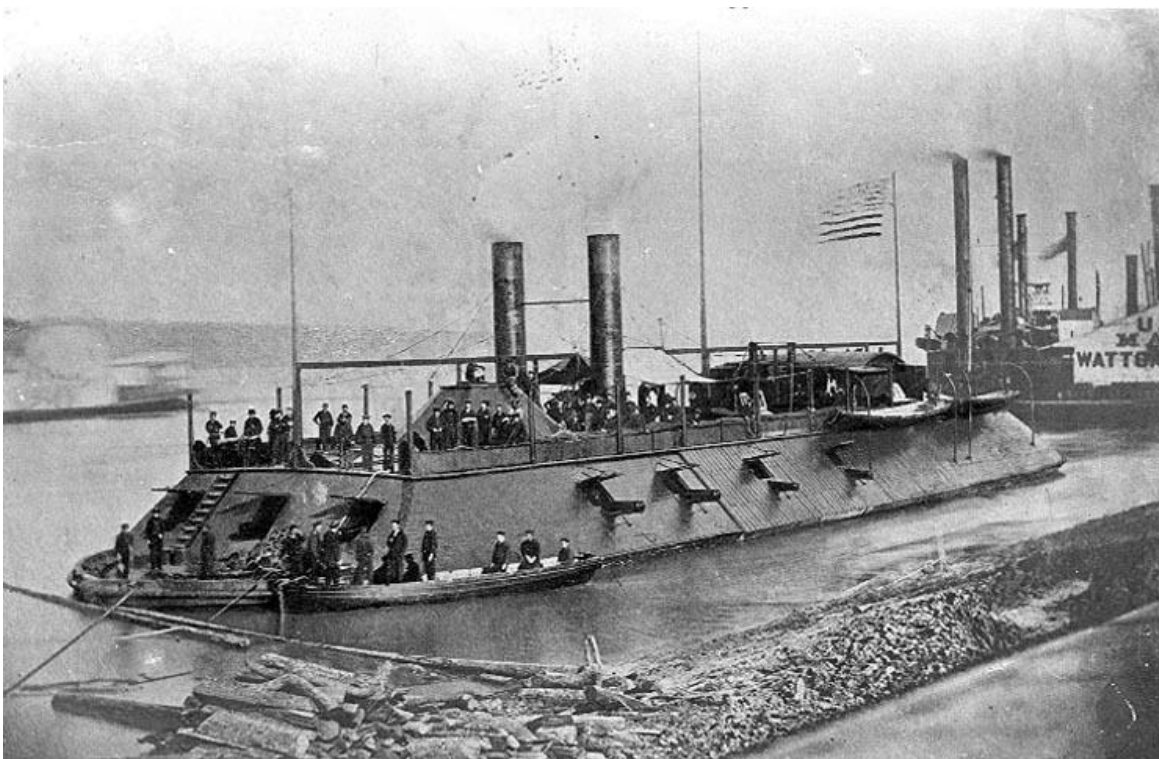
Portsmouth, Va.

Source: Southern Historical Society Papers, Vol. XX. Richmond, Va., January-December. 1892



## The Sinking of the U.S.S. Cairo

December 12, 1862. This print depicts the story of the first gunboat ever sunk by an underwater mine...another Southern innovation. Lt. Commander Selfridge, Jr. knew the Yazoo River was "mined" but apparently thought his vessel was invincible. The Cairo hit the underwater mine and sank in less than 15 minutes with no loss of lives. If you look closely at the left bottom of the print you will observe a stump from which a cable leads toward the explosion.



# CHARLESTON MERCURY

EXTRA:

*Passed unanimously at 1.15 o'clock, P. M., December  
20th, 1860.*

## AN ORDINANCE

*To dissolve the Union between the State of South Carolina and  
other States united with her under the compact entitled "The  
Constitution of the United States of America."*

*We, the People of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and  
it is hereby declared and ordained,*

That the Ordinance adopted by us in Convention, on the twenty-third day of May, in the  
year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the  
United States of America was ratified, and also, all Acts and parts of Acts of the General  
Assembly of this State, ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed;  
and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of  
"The United States of America," is hereby dissolved.

THE

# UNION

IS

# DISSOLVED!

The "fire-eaters" in the South had made it clear: the election of the "Black republican" candidate Abraham Lincoln meant the end of the Union. One South Carolinian told a London journalist "Nothing on earth shall ever induce us to submit to any union with the brutal blackguards of the New England States!" (McPherson, *Battle Cry*, 234-35) In vain did Northerners and Southern Unionists try to point out the differences between Lincoln and the more radical abolitionists. Amidst a mood of revolutionary carnival, the Carolinians called a convention to consider secession. Outside bands marched, fireworks flared, and eager soldiers declared themselves neo-Minute Men. Only a single vote was taken, and the momentous ordinance was passed unanimously, 169 to 0. Within fifteen minutes this broadside announcement--probably set in type while the Convention met--was in circulation on the streets of Charleston.

"EXTRA: Passed Unanimously at 1.115 o'clock, P.M., December 20th, 1860. An Ordinance to Dissolve the Union between the State of North Carolina and other States united with her under the compact entitled 'The Constitution of the United States of America.' We, the People of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained, That the Ordinance adopted by us in Convention, on the twenty-third day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also, all Acts and parts of Acts of the General Assembly of this States, ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed; and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of 'The United States of America,' is hereby dissolved."

This began the avalanche. Within weeks six other states joined: Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas. The more cautious states in the upper South wavered, but the momentum towards disunion ultimately carried them into the Confederacy as well. According to the *Charleston Mercury* itself, 200 copies were initially printed, with another 200 to cover its high demand amongst the populace. This probably comes from the second 200, as an error was fixed: a comma added after "P.M."



## CHRISTMAS MISHAP

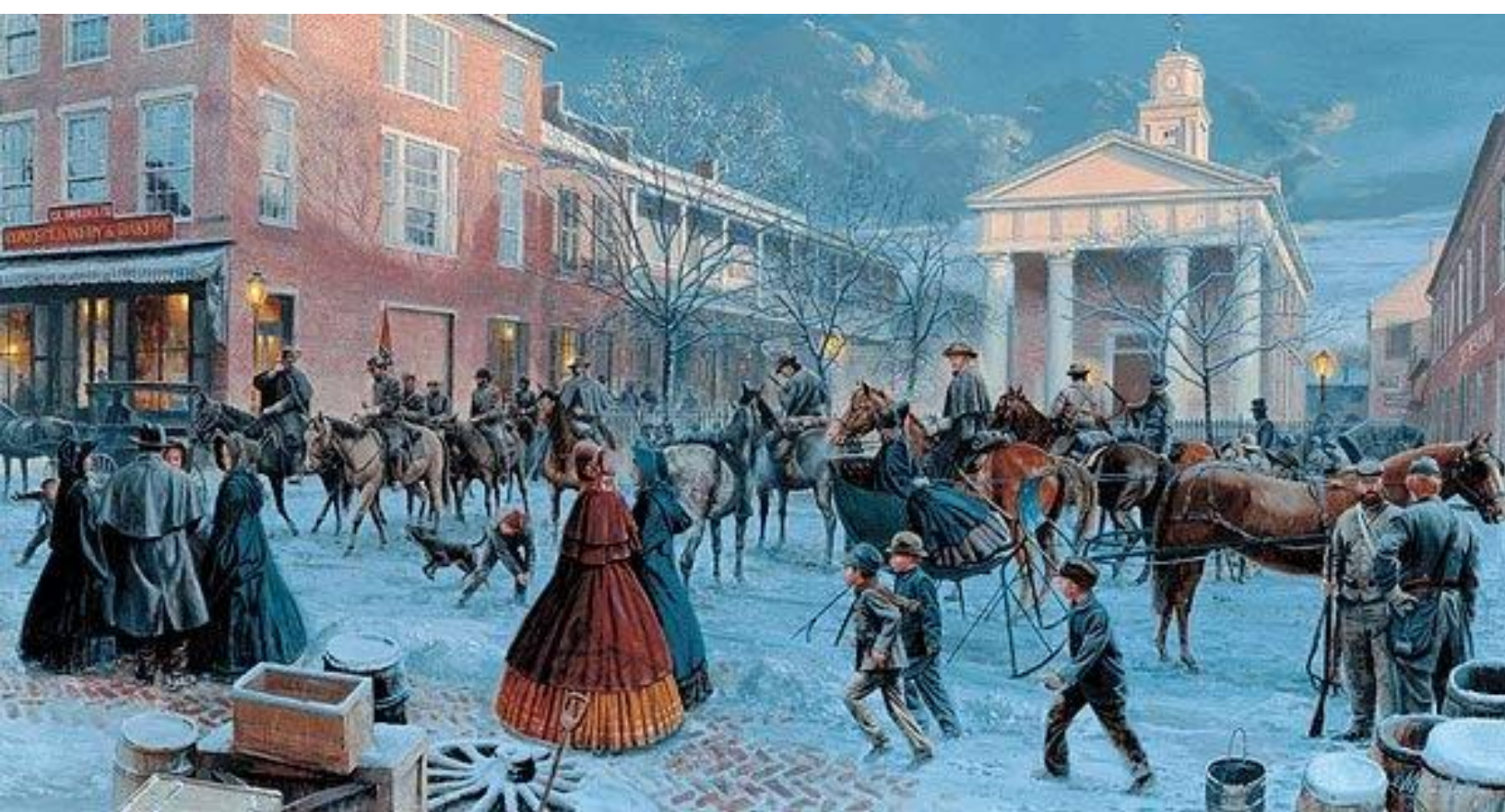
On Dec. 24, 1862, main body of Morgan's Raiders made camp south of here. Capt. Quirk and scouts entered town although USA troops patrolled area. CSA scouts wished to celebrate Christmas Eve, and dismounted at tavern. A patrol of 2nd Mich. Cavalry, USA, rode up with same desire. After skirmish, with slight losses, both parties stampeded without a celebration.







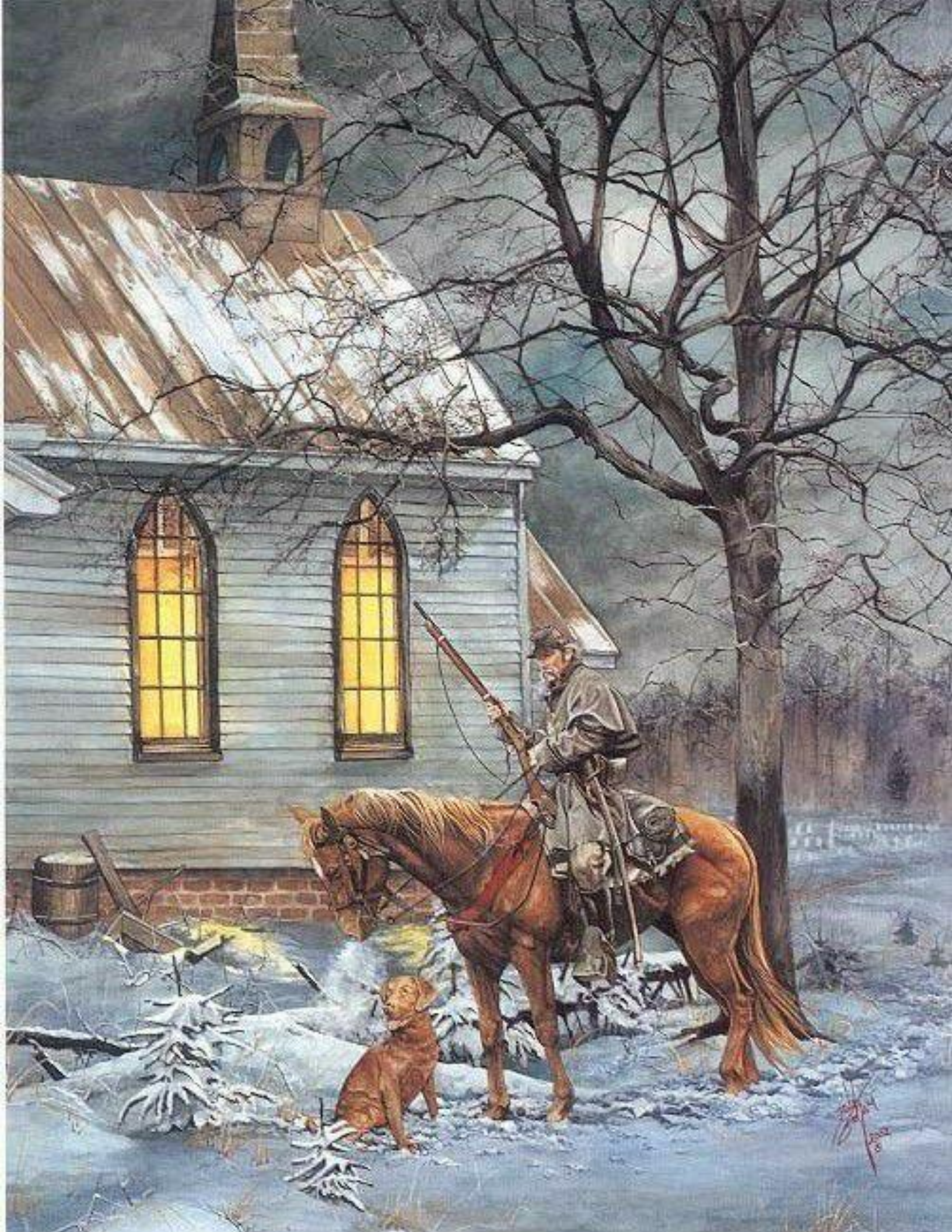




# After the Snow by Mort Kunstler

"It was a brief interlude of peace and security amid the long winter of war. Located at a critical point on the North-South invasion route through the Shenandoah Valley, historic Winchester, Virginia was repeatedly occupied by invading armies. Happily for the residents of the town, the New Year of 1862 found Winchester in Confederate control. Under the protection of friendly forces, Winchester's citizens could strive to make the days of war as normal and tolerable as possible. Bedecked by a fresh mantle of snow, Winchester's courthouse looked much as it did in the days of pre-war peace. Children were free to romp in the snow. Women could gather unafraid outside Loudon Street's shops. Passing troops, however, were a constant reminder that the peace was fragile and fleeting.

Winchester's wartime tranquility would end in the spring of this year, when Northern troops under General Nathaniel P. Banks would occupy the lower Shenandoah Valley. Although Banks and his Federal army would be vanquished by General "Stonewall" Jackson and his Confederates at the First Battle of Winchester, the blue-uniformed forces would return. Bloody battles would be fought at Winchester again in 1863, and 1864. Always, the invading armies returned. Finally, in devastation - a harsh blow against the civilians of the Valley - so brutal that Winchester residents would describe it for generations simply as "the Burning." In early January of 1862, however, the cruelest wages of war were still unimaginable in the Southern states. Like the residents of Winchester, Virginia, most Southerners still held high hopes for an early peace and a happy homecoming for the sons of the South."



## CHARLESTON MERCURY, December 30, 1861, p. 1, c. 3 Richmond, December 25.



Christmas, the fire-cracker Sunday of the year, dawns as brightly as heart could wish. There is anything else than "peace on earth and good will to men," yet the present situation and the prospect before us afford ample cause for gratitude. We are not perhaps so well off as we might have been, but are intact as a nation, and after many months of war with a people much superior to ourselves in numbers and resources, have proved our ability to maintain our independence. Of course, there were egg-nog parties all

over the town last night. "It was the custom of my ancestors," said a friend, at whose foaming bowl your correspondent presented himself, "and I intend to keep it up, whether I am able or not, war or no war." Military Christmas gifts are all the go among children, judging from the number of little boys in the street this morning with drums swung from their necks. . . . Hermes.

## SAVANNAH [GA] REPUBLICAN, December 25, 1863, p. 2, c.1



"A Merry Christmas?"

Ah! no. We cannot find it in our heart to utter such a wish in these solemn times. The day for merriment wish to [illegible] a people has passed. We are dealing with the fearful realities of blood. We are in the midst of a revolution and the angel of death and desolation stalks abroad through the land. Brother is in arms against brother, a deadly and terrific strife, on the part of one for liberty and his own fireside—on the part of the other for vengeance, subjugation and a remorseless tyranny. Nearly every household in the land is clad in mourning for dear ones departed; want and distress extend their bony arms and embrace thousands upon thousands of a once happy and contented people; avarice wields its might sceptre among us and bring low the widow and the orphan, the naked shoulders of our brave troops are bared to the rude blasts of winter, and their shoeless feet crimson the frozen earth on the battle-field and the march.

Verily, this is no time for rejoicing, for present making, for the revelry usually [illegible line in fold of paper] the sun of 1863 goes down in blood, and the stoutest heart must grow sad when it sees his sickly lingering rays cast athwart a land [illegible] by the tread of hostile armies and resounding with the lamentations of the [illegible]. We hope nobody will have or desire a merry Christmas.

The close of another year is an occasion for reflection, for good deeds to the public, for repentance of our manifold shortcomings, for resolutions of amendment, less selfishness and more patriotism for the future—and for solemn invocation of the Most High to watch, [illegible], reform, protect, and guide us in all our struggles to come.

Thus improved, the Christmas of 1863 will rise upon a precious incense to Heaven, and call down its mercies and blessings upon this suffering land of the South. In the stead of jollification and mirth, we wish for all our readers that quiet but happy contentment of having discharged their whole duty at a time when God and our country required no [illegible] at their [illegible].



**The soldiers in the Confederate Army were so in support of their cause that they went without many of the creature comforts that were afforded to the Northern Union Army. Most of the factories and companies existed in the North so the supplies were few and far between and many things were homemade.**

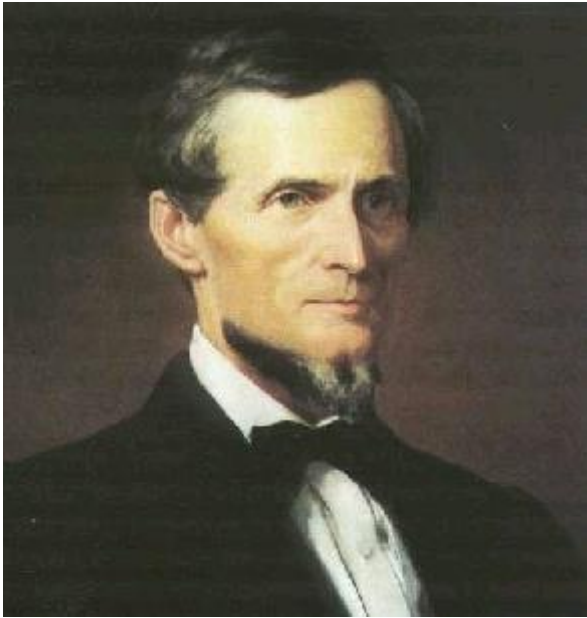
**Christmas for the Confederate Army consisted of the possibility to rest and have a hot meal. If they were extremely short of supply, they may have only received extra hardtack, mule jerky or Sassafras Tea. Many did not receive anything but the extra rest provided and possibly some companionship and good music.**



# Death of Jefferson Davis Remembered –

## The Christmas of 1889 was a sad time in the South.

By Calvin Johnson Jr.



Jefferson Davis - AuthenticHistory.com

December 6th, is the 123<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the death of a great American Hero---Jefferson Davis.

The "Politically Correct" would have you forget the past...But do not forget the history of the men and women who made the USA great.

Caution, this is a family friendly story to be shared.

The Sons of Confederate Veterans have declared 2008, the "Year of Jefferson Davis." Remembrance events will include the re-opening of "Beauvoir" on Jefferson Davis' 200th birthday---June 3, 2008. This was Davis' last home that was damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and Museum will be rebuilt and

re-open about two years after the house. Beauvoir is located on the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast. See more at: [www.beauvoir.org](http://www.beauvoir.org)

The New York Times reported the death of Jefferson Davis;

New Orleans, December 8, 1889---Quote

"A careful tally of the visitors shows that about 40,000 persons, mostly women and children, viewed the remains today. This crowd included, in solemn and respectful attendance, all conditions of Whites, Blacks, ex-Confederates, ex-Federals, and even Indians and Chinamen." ---Unquote

Davis' Death was also the page 1 story in Dixie;

December 1889, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution; ----Quote

"The Great Chieftain passes over the river...and rests with Jackson under the shade of the trees. The hearts of a great and loving people, crushed by the death of a great leader. The Hero of hard-fought fields in Mexico. The peerless Statesman in Federal Councils. Jefferson Davis is no more!!!" --- Unquote

Who was Jefferson Davis?

Jefferson Davis graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, served valiantly during the War with Mexico, served as Secretary of War under President Franklin Pierce, served as United States Senator from Mississippi and was President of the Confederate States of America.

Jefferson Davis was a Christian father and husband. He and wife Varina were blessed with seven children who were; Margaret, Jeff, Jr., Varina Anne, Bill, Joseph, Samuel and their adopted African-American son--Jim Limber.

During November, 1889, Jefferson Davis left his home to attend to family business at Brierfield Plantation. On his way through New Orleans the weather turned colder and he was exposed to the rain and cold. He came down with a severe cold and bronchitis that was further complicated by Malaria.

Milo Cooper, a former servant of the Davis family, traveled a great distance to be by Davis' side. It has been written that when Copper entered Davis' sick room in New Orleans, he fell on his knees in tears and prayed God would spare the life of Jefferson Davis and bless his family.

Varina was by her husband's side when Jefferson Davis died at a friend's home on the morning of December 6, 1889.

All New Orleans newspapers led with praises and tributes that echoed throughout the South; ---Quote

"Throughout the South there are lamentations and tears; in every country on the globe where there are lovers of liberty there is mourning; wherever there are men who admire heroic patriotism, dauntless resolution, fortitude, or intellectual power and supremacy, there is sincere sorrowing. The beloved of our land, the unfaltering upholder of constitutional liberty, the typical hero and sage, is no more; the fearless heart that beats with sympathy for all mankind is stilled forever, a great light is gone---Jefferson Davis is Dead!" ---Unquote

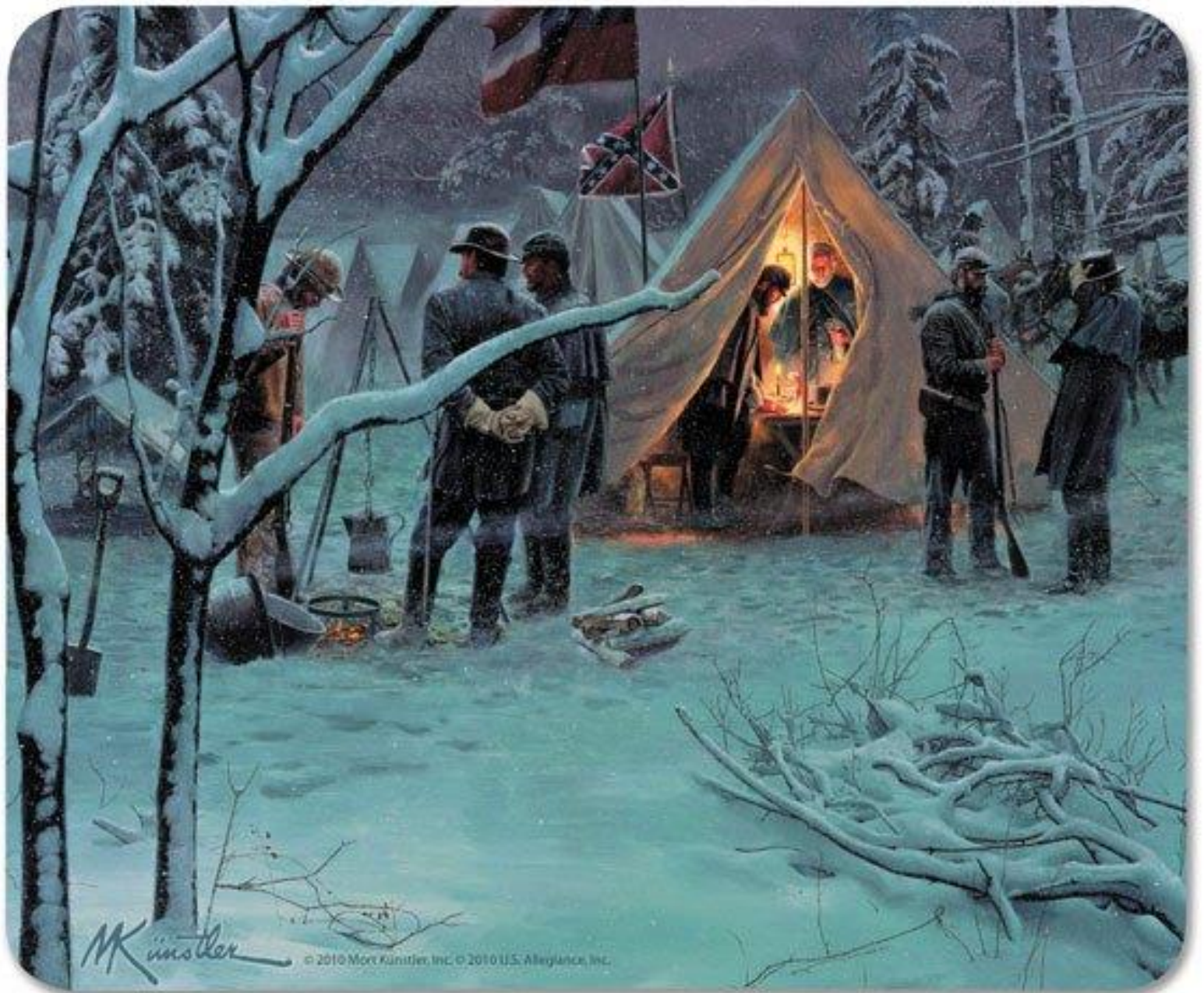
The mortal body of Jefferson Davis lay in state at the City Hall of New Orleans from midnight on December 6th to the 11th, 1889. The US and Confederate flags hung from the walls.

It is written that two hundred thousand people lined the streets of New Orleans when the funeral procession carried Davis' body to Metairie Cemetery for temporary burial.

On December 13, 1889, the New York Times reported the Davis Funeral being the grandest ever seen in the South. The Sermon at Metairie Cemetery was delivered by Bishop Thompson of Mississippi. Bishop Gallaber delivered a brief sketch of Jefferson Davis' life...And a Church Choir sang an old time favorite "Rock of Ages" to end the service.

Lest We Forget!!!

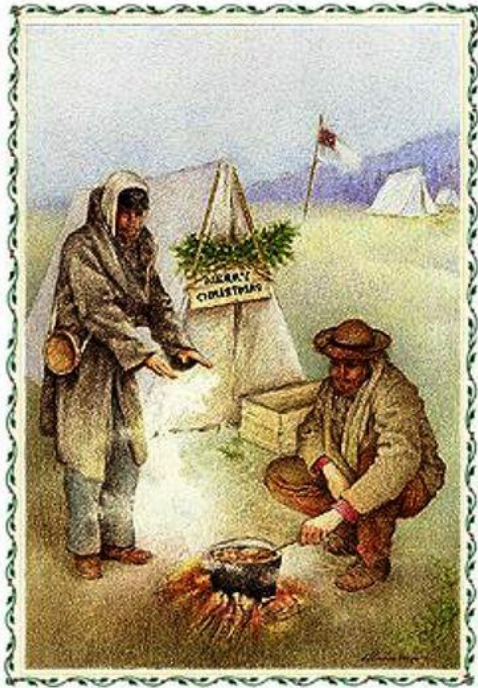






# A Yankee War "Night Before Christmas," or, A Visit From St. Sutler

by Celia Mater



'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the camp  
The rations were scarce, and the firewood was damp.  
Wet stockings were hung by the firesides with care  
In hopes that by day they'd be dry enough to wear.

The soldiers were nestled all snug in their tents  
While visions of Christmas feasts danced through their heads.  
The General in his wall tent, and I with nightcap  
Had just settled ourselves for a long winter's nap.

When out on the picket line there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my cot to see what was the matter.  
Away to the provost I flew like a flash,  
Grabbed pistol and leathers and officer's sash.

When what to my wondering eyes did appear  
But a miniature wagon and eight Army mules.--Queer!--  
And a little old driver so lively and quick.  
By the way that he cussed he sure wasn't St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his Army mules came,  
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name:

Now, Stonewall, now, Mudwall, Now, Longstreet and Baylor!  
On, Stuart, on Forrest, On Lee and Dick Taylor!  
To the top of the A-frames and the top of the tent wall,  
Dash away, dash away, dash away all!"

As Yanks that before the wild Rebel charge fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, manage to shy,  
So through company streets the "coursers" they flew  
With a wagon of goodies--and the old sutler too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard vocal jewels:  
The musical hee-haws of eight Army mules.  
As I drew in my head and was turning around,  
Into the tent the man came with a bound.

He was dressed all in wool from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with mud and with soot.  
A bundle of canned goods he'd flung on his back,  
And he looked like a sutler just opening his pack.  
(That's what he was, of course.)



His eyes--how they twinkled! His whiskers, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow  
And the beard on his chin was a white as the snow.

The stump of a stogie he held in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.  
He had a broad face and a little round belly.  
He'd brought vittles for us--fresh pies, cakes, and jelly.

He was chubby and plump--no diet of hardtack.  
And I was quite interested in the food in his backpack.  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know he had brought some soft bread.

He spoke not a word, but unloaded his treasures:  
Roast turkeys and hams and bottles in full measures.  
Then laying a finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a salute, to his feet he then rose.

He sprang to his wain, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
And I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight:  
"Happy Christmas to y'all and to all a good night!"



## VERSIONS

Now, Stonewall, now, Mudwall,  
Now, Longstreet and Baylor!  
On, Stuart, on Forrest,  
On Lee and Dick Taylor!

Now, Ewell, Now Trimble,  
Now Barksdale and Kemper!  
On, Pickett, on Pillow,  
And on, Dorsey Pender!

Now, Price, and now, Hindman,  
Now, Marmaduke, Van Dorn!  
On, Holmes, Strahl, and Morgan,  
On Gist, Pike, and Cleburne!





# Sunrise Service

By Mort Kunstler

Despite a hefty measure of scoundrels, shirkers and skeptics, the ranks of the Civil War soldier were thoroughly leavened with believers. Nineteenth century American society was firmly founded on the Judeo-Christian worldview and a Biblical faith was openly expressed in the ranks – even in official military reports. Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote, whose river-borne naval forces helped open the Southern heartland to Federal advances, was a faithful Christian who conducted worship services for his sailors aboard ship. General Stonewall Jackson personally distributed salvation tracts to his soldiers. General Oliver O. Howard, a Federal corps commander, earnestly discouraged gambling and drunkenness among his troops, and his concern for freed slaves led to the establishment of Howard University. General Robert E. Lee personally insured that Jewish troops in his command were excused for Sabbath worship, and issued orders calling for periods of prayer and fasting in his army. Said Lee: “I am nothing but a poor sinner, trusting in Christ alone for salvation.”

**“I derive great comfort from the precious promises of Our Lord & Savior,” wrote a Southern infantryman in 1862 – sentiments repeated in countless soldier letters. “May God give me faith to sustain me under every trial....” In a typical letter written the same year, a Northern cavalryman agreed: “I am trying to become a more devoted Christian, a better Man – and the best Soldier I am capable of becoming.” More than a quarter-million copies of a Gospel tract called Parting Words were distributed through the Southern armies, and the U.S. Christian Commission donated more than a half-million Bibles to Northern troops during a single year of the war. In 1862 and 1863, the Southern armies were transformed by a revival akin to the Colonial-era Great Awakening. It produced tens of thousands of new Christians, spurred a wave of campground worship services, and launched countless prayer meetings. In the Confederate Army of Tennessee, an average of 40 soldiers a night professed newfound faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in a single two-week period. On the Virginia front, a joint baptism organized by Southern soldiers on the Rapidan River attracted a group of Northern troops to the opposite bank. Spontaneously, men from both sides joined in a hymn-singing at water’s edge. From the front lines to the backwaters of the war, soldiers North and South regularly paused from the ways of war to open the Lord’s Day with a sunrise worship service – expressing a common faith amidst an uncommon conflict.**

**Mort Kunstler’s Comments:**

**What a remarkable people they were – that generation of Americans who faced the Civil War. The more I study and paint events from that difficult era, the more I ask myself – “How did they bear it?” And, of course, the answer for so many was their faith. You can’t study the soldiers of the Civil War and their families without being impressed by the depth and dedication of their devotion. It really was the heart of that generation. For many years, as I routinely considered subjects for our annual “Snow Print,” my good friend Rod Gragg – Civil War historian and author – continued to suggest that I paint a morning worship service. I admit that I feared it would be a boring picture, and dismissed the idea for years. Then I discussed the idea with another good friend – Civil War historian James I. Robertson, Jr. – author of Stonewall Jackson – who supplied me with extensive information on Civil War camp life and worship services. I realized that both my historian friends were right. The potential for a great picture awaited me.**

**The Southern countryside draped by a mantle of snow is, of course, a spectacular setting for any painting – and numerous snowy Sundays are on record during the war. Add to that the gorgeous tones of a winter sunrise – and a memorable stage is set for the painting. I also learned about the very moving personal elements of 19th century outdoor worship services in America – the different characters and poses that would have been seen at such an event. As I made preliminary sketches of the scene, I was able to include many of these elements – such as the typical praying poses of the “hat over heart” and the “crossed arms.”**

**My annual snow scenes usually take place in the evening, so it was a nice change to paint an early morning sunrise. The focal point of the painting is the Southern chaplain, and I painted his dark figure against the lightest background. This design element, using the biggest contrast, brings the eye of the viewer right to the chaplain – and immediately tells the story I want to convey. Another design element, using tree branches as pointers, brings the eye to the focal point as well. For color accents, I have shown the South’s First National flag and the Southern battle flag – both of which came in use in General Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia in the winter of 1861-62. During winter camp, some of the officers were visited by their wives, and this gave me the opportunity to include some women and an infant.**

**What has emerged here in Sunrise Service is a wonderful, meaningful painting. It’s an artwork that truly expresses the heart of that exceptional generation of 19th century Americans – both Southern and Northern – and I think it’s also one of the most attractive pictures that I’ve ever had the opportunity to paint. Thank you, Rod and “Bud.” Without your suggestions and input, Sunrise Service would not have come to be – and I’m so glad to have painted it.**





**Lincoln grossly underestimated the resolve of the Southern people and gambled that 75,000 troops, for a period of only 90 days would be sufficient to subdue the South.**

**Union General Piatt who was around Lincoln enough to know said that “Lincoln’s low estimate of humanity blinded him to the South. He could not understand that men would fight for an idea. He thought the South’s movement a sort of political game of bluff.”**

**“The men of the South won’t give up their offices. Were it believed that vacant places could be had at the North Pole, the road there would be lined with dead Virginians.” Lincoln**

**Hannibal Hamlin said “the South will have to come to us for arms and come without money to pay for them.” “And for coffins,” said John P. Hale with a laugh.” “The South can’t fight, she has no resources” said another.**

**“To put a regiment in the field costs more than the entire income of an entire Southern State.” Former Speaker of the house Prentice Banks (Also Governor of Massachusetts)**

**It wasn’t long before the men off the North found that the South’s soldiers supplied themselves with arms and clothing captured from Union Soldiers and were quite capable in using them.**

**Actually it took Mr. Lincoln 3 million troops, 4 years of all-out war, over 6 hundred thousand dead and unbelievable devastation and hardship to force the South back into the Union.**

*The below article is a short story of an actual event, which occurred in the late 1970's, while on active duty with the military; I was many years younger and had only one thing in mind, making it home for Christmas. Back then there were still some rudiments remaining throughout our homeland, as to what it meant to be Confederate and Southern. A sentiment, which will be rekindled all in due course of time, and let there a big amen to that!*



## My Journey Home

It was nearly half a lifetime ago, I was still on active duty, in the middle of one of my many military assignments, stationed in Yankee land at New York City; it had become clear very early on that I was stranded in what seemed like a foreign country. A leave of absence was applied for and thankfully approved! The morning of my departure finally arrived and none to soon for sanity sake! When just before departing a Yankee fella who was planning to head south on a new assignment, asked if he might ride approximately half the distance to my Florida home. Since he insisted on sharing the expenses, it seemed mannerly to accommodate a fellow traveler, particularly given this the time, so we both entered my then blue 1976 Dodge, figuring he being Yankee, he would surely love the color.

Anyhow we departed west on route 84 out of the oversized metropolis, known as the Big Apple! Then turned south on route 81, which would take us straight down the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. While I knew this particular Yankee fairly well, still, what does one say to a Yankee, when there are few if any points of mutual interest? We had little in common, we didn't like the same food, music, literature, and certainly our politics were as different as night and day. We disagreed on just about every aspect of life! As for myself, I ever did understand how 'those people' got their heads so screwed on backwards.

Somewhere in their history or genetic code, which ever of these or both, those people got turned around in the worse possible way. I figured it would take more wisdom than was possessed by King Solomon himself to put them back on course! Anyhow, this being the season for commemorating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I thought it proper to show a little Southern Hospitality, so I decided to keep the conversation light and on the topic of Christmas. Nonetheless a few hours later we were nearing the Mason-Dixon Line, and about to cross into what I believed to be God's Country. My Yankee co-traveler couldn't help notice my spirits rising by the minute!

So he had to ask, "What is it about the South and you Southerners that no matter what the calendar says or the changing times, you are still so different?" I thought for a moment, the answered with a question, in answer to his question! "Please tell me if you would, how far is it to the nearest battlefield from your home in upstate New York?"

"We ain't got any battlefield anywhere near where my family lives!" "How about cotton fields, cornbread or traditional country music and whalin' guitars?" "You got to be nuts man," he said, "You know we ain't got any of them things, New York is a northern city!" "How well do I know that my Yankee friend!" I said.

"That's why the South is so far south, cause it ain't anything like up north! When the Almighty God walked across heaven and earth, he took it slow and careful down in Dixie. He put his entire heart into creating the land of Dixie! It's a place that is truly our home my friend, in every sense of the word!"

"I thought you said your home is in Florida?" "It most certainly is, but you Yankee folks just don't understand; when a returning Southerner crosses the Mason-Dixon Line and reenters the Southland, he or she is already home."

While we spent the hours heading further south, the Yankee continued to ask questions about my Southern Homeland, the kind of questions not found any of their history books, and I done my best to answer. Finally I began to open up my heart

just a wee bit, as much as one could in the company of foreigners! "My homeland is not just mud, grass, flowers, trees, cotton fields and buildings, it's all that clear enough, and might I say that when God created Dixie, he did His finest work. But the Southland is also a state of mind! Oh the years have exacted a heavy price upon the South, but the essence of what it means to be southern remains unique to our homeland.

And it still shines through, even in the midst of our modern day political and social smog, waiting for that hour when it will be reborn in all her splendor. "Our Southland is a storybook land of knights in shining armor, Christian Gentlemen Warriors and Ladies Fair, a land where grace and charm rides together with honor. A place where little boys can still carry a cane fishing pole down a dirt road, and enjoy an old fishing hole or ride an imaginary chariot to the stars. We produce more preachers, priests, singers, teachers, writers, and poets than the rest of the world combined. Our people can tell more stories, create more laughter, and tears, with more gusto than any people who ever lived.

We still produce more and better military officers and men of valor, than anyone else on earth civilization, based on the percentage of our population. The Southland still produces an abundance of heroes with tactical genius and prowess, and then instills within them a sense of grace and humbleness. Heroes who, in spite of all the modern day political correctness and anti-Christian sentiments, still bow the knee at the feet of the King of Kings, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "My home sir, is a place where religion isn't a Sunday morning exercise, but a way of life, and we don't mind at all quoting the Holy Scripture and speaking His precious name.

The Southland is a place where our Confederate and Anti-bellum Southern history, heritage, culture and nationhood are still center stage issues; all these generations after northern armies aggressively conquered and subjugated us. A land that if free and independent today, would among the top three nations on earth, in economic terms, and within five years we'd be first among the military power of the earth. If the thirteen Southern States were allowed to depart in peace today, it would cause the United States to be reduced to a third-world status, merely by our absence from their Union. Such is our contribution, and thus the reason we are not permitted to regain our independence and national identity!

My home sir is a land, which flows with milk and honey, but most of all a land bathed in the blood of our forefathers, and they did so in defense of our right to be a free and independent nation and people. Were this not the case, the crowds of tourist and Yankee immigrants would be flocking north, rather than crowding our highways heading south. And highway 95 running from the heart of Yankee Land to Miami would never have been built! Since two thirds of the highway was constructed so as to accommodate northerners who dislike us so much, they have chosen to up root and move among us.

"My homeland has been abused, over built and over populated, then paved, and concreted over by illegal northern as well as Mexican immigrants, even so its loveliness shines through. The Southern States created the greatest civilization ever to exist in 2000 years, and buried deep within the heart of every Southerner is the collective memory of a time and a place, a paradise not really present and not completely done gone. Our people wait that glorious day wherein our just and honorable cause, shall have been vindicated! After which, our land shall once more be restored to her splendor, charm, grace and rightful place among the nations of the earth.

"My Yankee friend, this is my home and to walk across her soil, is to walk on holy ground! It is upon this precious Southern soil where I will live my life, make my stand, and should our Lord tarry in his coming, I will take my final rest." My Yankee guest could only gaze at me in amazement at what he had heard! "You Southerners really believe these things deep within your hearts don't you?" he questioned? "Yes Sir, this is why as you also properly stated, no matter what takes place, we really are as different as night and day!

These things are the summation and contents of my heart, for my roots like the oak tree, grow deep in the history of the Southland and of the Confederacy. For being Southern and Confederate is not only born with me, but is a state of mind. And this sir, is why we still honor the Almighty God, in Christ Jesus, the Holy Scripture and Prayer, and it all centers around the babe, born in a manger in a manger so long ago" And to that my Yankee friend could only say, Amen!

[http://www.confederatelegion.com/Home\\_for\\_Christmas.html](http://www.confederatelegion.com/Home_for_Christmas.html)



# ADMIRAL COD

49% GENTLEMAN, 51% DISSIDENT

# Christmas in the Old South



## Christmas in the Early South

Many in the tidewater region of the Southern colonies enjoyed enough wealth and leisure to



celebrate the ancient holiday of Christmas in grandest fashion. Largely English, French, and German, often aristocratic, and usually unencumbered by the stern moral earnestness that afflicted their Puritan cousins in the North, these first Southerners thoroughly enjoyed Christmas when they could.

For centuries their European ancestors had observed the 14-day-long season of Christmas-tide, which began on Christmas eve and continued through January 6th, the "Twelfth Day" after Christmas called Epiphany. The Christmas spirit sailed across the Atlantic with them and even during the harsh early years, they often managed to celebrate the Yuletide in the New World with traditional English merrymaking: visiting, music, fireworks, cannon shooting, bonfires, feasting, parties, hunts, games, dances and weddings all before an enormous glowing and blazing Yule log. It had been carefully selected and lighting it on Christmas eve signaled the beginning of holiday merriment. "Carefully selected" in this case meant that servants found the largest, most water-soaked log available since tradition held that the merry season of leisure would last as long as the Yule log burned. Another tradition was to save a small portion to kindle next year's Christmas log.

In New England, the Puritan fathers looked with grim disdain on Christmas. To them, this holiday was a notorious occasion for celebrations in Catholic Europe, and they thus strictly forbade its observance. Work continued on this day unless it fell on Sunday. "Anybody," so ran the enactment by the General Court of Massachusetts, "who is found observing by abstinence from labor, feasting, or any other way, any such day as Christmas day, shall pay for every such offence five shillings." Elders also found it necessary to "Forbid all traffic in plum puddings and the like." For some reason the plum pudding was viewed as a symbol of the whole evil affair. The settlers of the middle colonies held somewhat less dreary views and were not so much bothered by feelings of religious guilt. Many of them enjoyed Christmas with the merriment of their "old country" traditions.

The wealth of our Christmas customs, however, came from the Southern colonies. As the years went by and colonists there increased in wealth, so did their celebrations increase in elaborateness. By the last half of the 18th century Christmas time had become the social as well as religious season for Southerners. Many Southern settlers during early colonial days considered Christmas primarily a religious festival; and although the religious meaning of the season was never neglected the observances leading up to "Twelfth Night" or Epiphany, which commemorates the visit of the Three Wise Men to the Christ Child, were often the most popular and written-about times of the season, even outshining Christmas Day toward the end of that period all the traditional English merrymaking customs and revelry were widely and heartily observed.

The Christmas tree was soon borrowed from German Moravian and Lutheran colonists; but from the beginning Southerners gathered evergreens such as holly, smilax, pine, cedar, laurels, magnolia, and mistletoe to "deck the halls." Wreaths were woven and mantelpieces and pictures festooned. Tidewater Christmases were rarely white, but always green. Juniper or incense might have been burned to protect the household from harm. Another aroma of the season came from the kitchen where Christmas cakes and cookies were baked from long-standing "recipes" passed down from mother to daughter. Gifts were exchanged and carols sung; and specially made huge "Christmas candles" illuminated the whole house.

At the center of all the celebrating was "Father Christmas," from earliest times called "The Lord of Christmas." In tidewater Carolina, his flowing hair and beard were made of Spanish moss. In one hand he carried mistletoe, in the other a black wand or staff with a silver crook at its top, and with

which he delivered his gifts to all. Southerners did not take readily to what they called "the dapper little Manhattan goblin called Santa Claus." Father Christmas was large and regal, with features bold and expressive, yet gentle. He was, all in all, the emblematic representative of the classic Jupiter, rather than the quick, merry, and elfish figure Santa Claus has come to be.

Christmas tipping was widespread. Servants' employment contracts stipulated a bonus for Christmas drinking. Slaves had leisure time for dancing and singing around holiday-long bonfires. Usually, new clothes and extra food were furnished them during this season. "Christmas gift" was a cry heard on every plantation as servants claimed their yearly tip. The old English "Boxing Day" custom of bringing "Christmas boxes" to the master to collect gifts had been transplanted to the South and it thrived even though gifts here were less often money than was usual in England.

The main event on Christmas day, of course, was Christmas dinner. It was as festive as could be managed, set before a roaring fire. On this much-anticipated, once-a-year occasion, Southern cooking reached the heights of early American quality and quantity. Traditions in Christmas fare varied from house to house, but a large colonial plantation Christmas feast that required days or weeks to assemble and prepare might include: eggnog, oysters on the half shell, scalloped oysters, clear soup, roast stuffed goose with sauce, baked country ham with mustard sauce, lamb, roast wild turkey with cornbread stuffing, venison, and several other wild game dishes, including, perhaps a grand "Christmas pie." The recipe for this special treat called for a turkey stuffed with goose and chicken and pigeon and seasonings, with rabbit and quail set around, all inside a heavy crust. There were brown and white breads, Brussels sprouts with chestnuts, turnips and greens, baked sweet potatoes and apples, beans and peas, Mary Randolph's salad, fig and plum puddings, orange tarts, bourbon pecan cake, fresh fruit, walnuts and pecans, cider, Port wine, and syllabub.

Christmas was also celebrated with the Wassail bowl, another English tradition familiar to all of us because of the popular verses in the old carol "Here We Come A Wassailing." Wassail, or wes hal (be whole) in Anglo-Saxon, was a toast or greeting which is associated with celebrations of Christmas and New Years from the earliest days. According to tradition, the head of the household invited his family to gather around the bowl of hot spiced ale with roasted apples floating on it. After drinking to their health and prosperity in the coming year, the bowl was passed around to each member of the family who returned toasts to joy and happiness for all. Gradually, this ale became known as wassail; and the Wassail bowl, usually decorated with garlands of greenery, particularly holly, was a popular custom in America from the beginning. Eggnog was widely substituted for spiced ale in the colonies by the time of the Revolution. There was much drinking of these and other cheering and warming potions at the homes of friends and neighbors over the holidays.

Our observances of Christmas represent a rich mosaic of customs based on the winter festivals of many ancient cultures merged with Christian tradition. The lion's share of the credit for preserving and enhancing this universal holiday in America, like so many of the other good things in our unique cultural inheritance, belongs to the traditional Old South.

J.O. Bledsoe

<http://admiralcod.blogspot.com/2010/12/christmas-in-old-south.html>



# RANGER FAREWELL

John S. Mosby - The Old Chapel Cemetery  
Shenandoah Valley - Winter of 1864  
Artwork by John Paul Strain

The early years for Mosby's Rangers had been filled with exciting raids and adventures. The commander of the 43rd Battalion of

Virginia Cavalry, John Singleton Mosby, had filled the Partisan Ranger ranks with bold and daring young men from the local community. These men, many in their teens and twenties, were friends before hostilities began in 1861. Raised in the rural environment of the Shenandoah Valley, they were all skilled horsemen and crack shots. It was said that a Ranger could be riding at full gallop and fire 3 rounds into a tree before he passed. These skills accounted for many empty Federal saddles and brought notoriety to this elite force of scouts and guerrilla fighters.

The camaraderie of Mosby' Rangers manifests clearly in the old period photographs of the group. Earlier in the war Ranger losses were few and sporadic, but as the war progressed and casualties occurred more regularly, Mosby and his Rangers felt great sadness with the loss of each of their friends. The bond of brotherhood was like none other during times of war.

During the winter of 1864 Federal patrols were very active during the day searching for Rangers in the Shenandoah Valley. So it was under a moonlit sky that Mosby and a few of his men performed a secret nocturnal burial for one of their own at the Old Chapel Cemetery. Reading from the "Good Book", the fallen soldier was given a Ranger farewell.

"No human being knows how sweet sleep is but a soldier."

- John Singleton Mosby

# Christmas Trees, the Confederacy, and Colonial Williamsburg

by Harold B. Gill Jr.

No account of a Williamsburg Yuletide is satisfactory without the story of the city's first Christmas tree. At least the first the community's history records. Told now for 163 years, it goes like this:

European political refugee Charles Minnigerode moved to Williamsburg in 1842 to take up a professorship at the College of William and Mary. He became close to Judge Nathaniel Beverley Tucker, a professor of law, and boarded with him on Nicholson Street in what Colonial Williamsburg named, after the judge's father, the St. George Tucker House. At Christmas, Minnigerode entertained the Tucker children by sharing a homeland custom. They cut down a small evergreen, brought it inside, and raised it on a parlor table to decorate. There being no ready-made ornaments, he helped the children create their own, including popcorn strings. The next December, most Williamsburg families had Christmas trees in their parlors. A small tree, emblematic of the occasion, is now left each Yuletide on the Tucker House porch.

Who was this Minnigerode? What became of him? The story of his life is as interesting as the tale of his tree—even to the history of the restored colonial capital.

Born Karl Minnigerode in 1814 at Darmstadt in the state of Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, at fourteen he entered the *Gymnasium*, or high school, in Darmstadt, where he and the future playwright Georg Büchner met.

In 1831, Büchner entered the medical school at Strasbourg—the favorite city of expatriate German radicals, safely just on the French side of the Rhine. He became an intimate of the secret Society for the Rights of Man.



Hessian statutes required Büchner to complete his studies at a home university, which happened to be at Giessen. There, Minnigerode was studying law. They became the closest of friends.



Williamsburg's first Christmas tree, raised 163 years ago by Charles Minnigerode, portrayed by Tim Sutphin, at the Tucker House, may have looked something like the one at right.

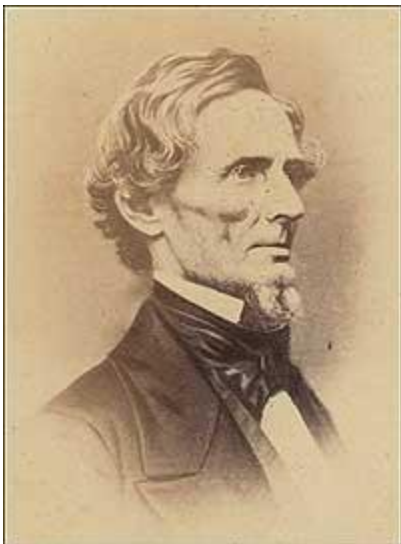
The mists of memories shroud Colonial Williamsburg's St. George Tucker House, now a reception center and way station for donors.



In the spirit of Charles Minnigerode, each Yule season St. George Tucker House volunteers raise a Christmas tree for guests to enjoy.



Captured here in the prime of his ministry, Minnigerode pastored at churches in Williamsburg, Norfolk, Prince George County, and Richmond.



Jefferson Davis depended on Minnigerode for spiritual counsel.

Minnigerode, pastor of St. Paul's in Richmond, was preaching when Petersburg fell.



In the congregation was President Davis, who lived in the White House of the Confederacy.



He ministered to Davis there, and later in a makeshift prison cell.

Another Tucker House Christmas tree.





Minnigerode's grave in Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery.



The minister as a seminary teacher during the years that W. A. R. Goodwin was a pupil.

It was the time of the rise of nationalism in Europe east of France. In the wake of the French Revolution, the values of liberalism and nationalism swept through Western Europe with Napoleon's armies. Those values found support among the small but growing urban middle classes, especially in the western German states.

Reaction inevitably set in, and those sovereignties reverted to feudalism. By the 1830s, free expression and liberalism had been killed. Enraged by the tyranny of the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt, Büchner formed a Giessen branch of the Society for the Rights of Man, and in 1836 wrote a radical pamphlet, the *Hessian Peasant Courier*. A police informant fingered the society. First arrested was Minnigerode, who had pamphlets in his possession. After a failed attempt to break Minnigerode out of jail,

Büchner fled to Switzerland. In 1839, Büchner wrote:

**Minnigerode is dead they tell me; that is, he was being tortured to death for three years. Three years! The French butchers got you done in two hours, first the judgment, then the guillotine. But three years! What a humane government we have, they can't stand blood.**

**But Minnigerode was alive. After eighteen months' confinement, he had been released under close surveillance. As soon as he could, he got to Bremen, where, September 1, 1839, he took a boat to America.**



Minnigerode ARRIVED in Philadelphia in December and found a position teaching ancient languages and German. He anglicized his first name to Charles, and looked for work outside the German community. He saw an advertisement in a Philadelphia newspaper soliciting candidates for the chair of ancient languages at William and Mary and applied. He bested thirty other applicants. The college's board of visitors elected Minnigerode to the position in July 1842. George Blow, who supported applicant William Galt, reported to Galt's father:

Testimonials of about 30 Candidates were examined ...the Overwhelming Certificates, Letters of Recommendation and evidences of qualification, of splendid attainments and other requisites for a Professor, were so overpowering, that it left not a doubt or hesitancy in the minds of the visitors as to a choice, and on the first Ballot Mennigerode was elected...If Mennigerode deserves the tythe of what is said of him, he is one of the best educated men in this country, and unsurpassed as a Classicist, writing Hebrew, Greek, & Latin with perfect ease & elegance.

William and Mary President Thomas R. Dew wrote that Minnigerode "seems to be a very amiable little gentleman, & is deeply embrued with all the German literature." He became a popular Williamsburg citizen and an intimate of Judge Tucker's family, and made a literary name by publishing a series of articles in the *Southern Literary Messenger* on Greek drama.

Minnigerode had been in Williamsburg less than a year when he married Mary Carter, daughter of Commander William Carter. She was from North Carolina and likely not a member of the prominent Virginia Carter family. The couple married in Bruton Parish Church on May 13, 1843. They were so infatuated that Tucker wrote: "If they cannot break themselves of thinking there is nobody in the world but Mary and Cha-a-a rles (as she calls him) I could not bear to live in the same house with them." The Minnigerodes purchased the now-reconstructed east advance building at the Palace for a home.

A Lutheran, Minnigerode became an Episcopalian. In 1845, he submitted himself as a candidate for the priesthood. The following year Bishop John Johns ordained him to a Bruton Parish deaconate. He became a priest in 1847.

In the summer of 1846, Dew died. The visitors attempted to reorganize the school, causing faculty discontent. Most of it resigned, including the new president. The board decided to start from scratch, and in 1848 asked for the rest of the faculty's resignations.

Minnigerode accepted the pastorate of Merchant's Hope Church in Prince George County, where he remained until 1853, when he went to the Freemason Episcopal Church in Norfolk, the largest congregation in the Diocese of Virginia. In 1856, he was appointed rector of Richmond's St. Paul's Church, where he had occasionally preached as early as 1852.

In July 1852, Marianna Saunders of Richmond wrote her friend Sally Galt in Williamsburg that her mother wanted to go to St. Paul's because she had heard Minnigerode preach so often in Williamsburg that she wanted a change. She said:

Soon after we reached the church, who should come in dressed in his black gown, but the Minnigerode! *I was de-lighted*, for I never care to hear a more interesting preacher...It really did me good to listen to him preaching. I could almost imagine myself seated in our own quiet church.

**Minnigerode stayed at St. Paul's for thirty-three years, years that embraced the War between the States, Reconstruction, and the rise of the New South.**

**IN 1860, England's visiting Prince of Wales attended a Minnigerode sermon. On Thanksgiving, a year later, Minnigerode conducted a solemn service for a congregation of Confederate walking wounded. Later he would say graveside rites at the city's Hollywood Cemetery for J. E. B. Stuart, commander of the rebel cavalry, and presided at the reinterment of President James Monroe in the same place, a graveyard that would be Minnigerode's place of eternal rest, as well as of his parishioner, President Jefferson Davis.**

**Richmond became the capital of the Confederate States of America on May 20, 1861, when the provisional Congress of the Confederacy moved from Montgomery, Alabama. St. Paul's stood, as it stands today, four blocks from the White House of the Confederacy, and across the street from the grounds of the new nation's capitol, a building states' rights advocates and presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison had helped design for Virginia's legislature.**

**When Davis arrived, he was feted with a Spotswood Hotel reception, where he and Minnigerode met. Minnigerode wrote:**

**Our acquaintance thus began, soon grew into friendly intercourse that became closer and closer, till an intimacy sprung up which ripened into companionship in joy and sorrow, and bound us together in the terms of mutual trust and friendship.**

**At the urging of Davis's wife, Varina, Minnigerode discussed church membership with Davis shortly after the inauguration. Minnigerode wrote:**

**He spoke very earnestly and most humbly of needing the cleansing blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit; but in the consciousness of his insufficiency felt some doubt whether he had the right to come...All that was natural and right; but soon it settled this question with a man so resolute in doing what he thought his duty. I baptized him hypothetically, for he was not certain if he had ever been baptized. When the day of confirmation came it was quite in keeping with this resolute character, that when the Bishop called the candidates to the chancel he was the first to rise.**

**Minnigerode maintained a close relationship with Davis, and his support of the Southern cause earned him such titles as Father Confessor of the Secession, Father Confessor of the Confederacy, and the Rebel Pastor. He wrote:**

**The secession of the Southern States was in defense of their constitutional rights, which were threatened by the aggressive and unconstitutional policy of the Government. That Government was a union of the separate Colonies as sovereign States, which delegated certain powers to the Central Government as the central agent of the sovereign States. The debate about their mutual relation was long, and the two views of the centralized union and a union of sovereign States existed from the beginning. But there would have been no United States at all if the State's rights had not been established by the Constitution.**

**His services were past standing-room-only popular. So many government officials attended that St. Paul's came to be called the Cathedral of the Confederacy. Diarist Mary Boykin Chestnut wrote that on a**

Sunday in March 1864 fourteen generals sat in Minnigerode's pews. Nevertheless, he attempted to walk a line between church and state. He said:

God forbid that I should speak as a mere man and not as the minister of Christ, that I should introduce politics where Religion alone should raise her voice, discuss measures and men where only principles can be laid down. It is as God's messenger that I speak and preach his gospel in faith, which is the alone principle that can steady our course and raise our hearts in hope. We preach to men under the circumstances in which we find them placed in God's providence.

Minnigerode often paid pastoral visits to the Davis household. But the parson wrote: "I never meddled with his policy or measures of his government; still less did I ever use his confidence for any personal purposes. Mr. Davis was not the man for that."

Minnigerode's oldest son, sixteen-year-old Charlie, entered the Confederate army without his father's consent and served on General Fitzhugh Lee's staff. Another son, James Gibbon Minnigerode, was a midshipman in the Confederate navy and participated in the Battle of Mobile Bay. After the war, he became an Episcopal minister, serving as rector of Calvary Protestant Episcopal Church in Louisville, Kentucky.

On January 1, 1865, when the future of the Confederacy was much in doubt, Minnigerode preached a stirring sermon at St. Paul's entitled, "He that believeth shall not make haste." He said to the congregation:

Reverses have followed us in many parts of our country, and the year opens with dark and threatening clouds, which have cast their shadow over every brow. What we need is *a stout heart* and a *firm, settled mind*: and oh! May we AS A NATION remember, "he that believeth shall not make haste...." I do pray and hope that God will have mercy upon us, and give us better minds and stout hearts and unflinching faith, that shall not make haste, that shall win the prize. But if we fall, let us fall with our faces upward, our hearts turned to God, our hands in the work, our wounds in the breast, with blessing—not curses—upon our lips; and all is not lost! We have retained our honor, we have done our duty to the last....

One Sunday a few months later, a messenger came in during the service and handed Davis a telegram from General Robert E. Lee at Petersburg. It said General Ulysses Grant had broken the Confederate lines and suggested the government abandon Richmond. Davis left the service and others followed. Minnigerode asked the rest to remain. After the city fell, he disputed with Union officials his right to lead St. Paul's congregation in prayer for the fleeing Davis.

Captured, Davis was imprisoned for treason—a charge eventually dropped—at Fort Monroe, Virginia, in solitary confinement. After petitioning President Andrew Johnson and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, Minnigerode was the first civilian permitted to visit, allowed two calls a month, pledging his word of honor as a gentleman and Christian minister that in all the visits I am permitted to make to Mr. Jefferson Davis at Fortress Monroe, Va., I will confine myself to ministerial and pastoral duties, exclusive of every other object; that I will in no way be a medium of communication between the said Davis and the outer world; that I will observe the strictest silence as to the interviews, and will avoid all modes of publication, not only as to what passes between us but as to the fact of the visits themselves.

When Davis was bailed at federal court in Richmond, Minnigerode was at his side. After court, when they met at the Spotswood, Davis said, "Mr. Minnigerode, you who have been with me in my sufferings, and comforted and strengthened me with you prayers, is it not right that we now once more should kneel down together and return thanks?"

IN 1868, LEE, now president of Washington College in Lexington, Virginia—today's Washington and Lee University—asked Minnigerode to conduct the baccalaureate service. He continued as rector of St. Paul's, where, on July 14, 1868, he united in marriage Frank Goodwin and Letitia Moore Rutherford, who would be the parents of William Archer Rutherford Goodwin, later rector of Bruton Parish and co-founder, with John D. Rockefeller Jr., of Colonial Williamsburg. Young Goodwin was present when Minnigerode gave the invocation at the unveiling of the Lee statue on Richmond's Monument Avenue in 1890.

Minnigerode was appointed a William and Mary visitor. He retired from St. Paul's in 1889 and moved to Alexandria to become chaplain of Virginia Theological Seminary, which Goodwin entered in 1890.

Minnigerode died October 13, 1894. Granddaughter Marietta Minnigerode Andrews was an artist and author. Grandson Meade Minnigerode Jr. co-wrote the lyrics of the "Whiffinpoof Song" in 1909. Goodwin introduced to Colonial Williamsburg the custom of Grand Illumination in 1935.

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*Historian Harold B. Gill Jr. is the journal's consulting editor. He contributed to the [Summer 2005 issue](#) "The Exchange, Revisited."*

Read more articles from the Foundation's journal, ["Colonial Williamsburg"](#).

[http://www.history.org/almanack/life/christmas/hist\\_reverend.cfm](http://www.history.org/almanack/life/christmas/hist_reverend.cfm)



**SUMMARY:** Letter written to P.H. Powers' wife wishing her a merry Christmas and informing her that the Confederates had whipped Burnside at Fredericksburg and are now hoping for a peaceful separation with the Union.

**Dec 25th 1862 Mrs P.H. Powers Care of Dr A.L. Baldwin Winchester, Virginia**

**Wife Camp Near Fredricksburg  
Dec 25th 1862**

**My Dearest Wife**

I hardly have the heart to wish you a Merry Christmas this beautiful Christmas Morning because I will know merriment is not for you this day but I can and do wish you a happy day and the same to our little dears, who I suppose must be content with very meager gifts and very few sweet things. I thought of them when I first awoke this morning about day. And wondered what you managed to put in their stockings. Memory went back to the many happy Christmas days we have shared together with them. Alas will the good old times ever return again? And you and I with our little ones dwell together in peace? I hope so. I believe so, but the heart sickens with the deferred hope.

So I have been Jim's chief cook for a week since his servant left. Not much time was given me this morning for such sad affections, with the responsibility of a Christmas breakfast on my mind. So I stirred myself from a warm bed (end of sentence deleted). A Major Quartermaster to a Captain (word missing) but necessity is a hard master. And you know I can do anything. I am a better cook than Steven. I wish you could have been present to witness my sweets and partake of my viandes, Barbecue Rabbit, Beef Hash with Potatoes, hot bread and coffee. If the darkies all learn as I shall be able to (illegible word) some assistance. We are very comfortable in camp. have good tents, and wood is in abundance to keep off the frost. I have been axcidingly busy for the last week assisting Jim in paying off the troops and really he needed it. He worries at every thing. Allows every (illegible word) to suffer his equanimity and makes himself (illegible phrase). I wish from my heart he could get out of the Department he is in. Though I see no hope for him.

He had a letter from Robert yesterday. All well. And nothing new. I have written you several times since I have been here but as yet have not heard from you. Continue to write some of your letters will (end of sentence cropped off.) I wrote you some account of the great fight. But you wil see from the papers how terribly whipped Burnside was, and what a commotion it has produced in Yankeedom. I think the sky brightens and our chances for peace improve. But still the war may bring on another year, or event to the end of Lincoln's term. It is as warm this morning as June. And every thing bright. If I only was with you for the day at leat I would have a happy Christmas. We are invited to dine with Tom Bullard. And I am (illegible word). I must now stop. With love to all.

**Very Affectionatel Yours**

**P.H. Powers**



# Miss Fannie's last Confederate Christmas

BY ROSE RYDER Special to the Daily Light | Posted: Saturday, December 22, 2012

Based on a story in Memories by Mrs. Fannie A. Beers published in 1889.



It was Dec. 23, 1864. For some time I had been considering various plans for the celebration of Christmas. I wanted some change to the diet of the wounded soldiers who were under my care. But try as I might, I couldn't see any way to achieve my goal.

We were at the Confederate hospital in Lauderdale Springs, Miss. My servant, Tempe, and I were living in one small room of a log cabin raised several feet above the ground. We occupied one side of the dog-trot style house. The doctor and his wife lived in the small room across the open central hall.

All around us as far as we could see in every direction were the hospital tents. Snow covered the tents and the towering pines. In the tents lay the sick, the wounded and the dying. Hospital supplies and rations were scarce. Items which in the first years of the war were considered necessities had become priceless luxuries. We got so few eggs and chickens that they were saved for the very sick.

Early in the morning I made my hospital visits to some wounded soldiers who had arrived during the night. In one of the bunks I found a man with his head and face bandaged and bloody. By his side was one of his comrades, also wounded but less seriously. In a tin cup he was trying to soften some corn bread with cold water and a stick. He explained that his comrade had been shot in the mouth and could only take soft foods. "Don't give him that" I said. "I will get him some mush and milk or some chicken soup." He sat down his cup and looked strangely at me saying "Yer ga-assin' now, ain't you?"

Once I finally convinced him that I was not, I went to get the soft food for his friend. As I slowly put spoons of the broth in the severely wounded man's mouth, his friend stood by with his lips quivering. I looked at him "Now, what would you like?" After a moment he replied "Well, Lady, I've been sort of hankerin' after a sweet potato pone, but I s'pose ye couldn't nowadays get that?" Then I realized just what I would get them all for Christmas.

I immediately went in search of the doctor who gave me permission to go out the next day to area farms to attempt to collect ingredients for my feast. My search was somewhat successful. I returned that evening with some sweet potatoes, several dozen eggs and butter. The driver and I carried the food into my room where it would be safe.

After my evening rounds I returned to my room for my Christmas Eve meal of corn hoecake, a little smoked beef and a cup of corn coffee. It was so cold that I did not undress but wrapped up in a blanket and lay down on my bunk. Tempe also wrapped herself up and lay down by the fire.

Before I continue with my story, I must tell you that the boards in the floor of our room were only laid down, not nailed, because there were no nails to be had. I had just fallen asleep when Tempe woke me with a scream. She jumped on my bunk, shaking me awake, and crying "Miss Fannie, yearthquake dun cum!" Sitting up I realized to my horror that the floor boards were rising and falling with a terrible noise.

Wild hogs were attempting to raid my precious sweet potatoes. A real earthquake would have been less appalling as I have always been very afraid of hogs. Seizing a burning stick from the fire, Tempe began to beat the hog that had become wedged and could not advance or retreat. Her angry cries and the hog's squeals brought help and soon all was quiet and my sweet potatoes safe.

My pone on Christmas day was a great success. All of those who were able came to my cabin for a generous helping of pone and a cup of sweet milk. That was our last Confederate Christmas.

## **Fannie's Receipt (recipe) for Sweet Potato Pone**

The improved housewife by A. L. Webster published in 1855 included the following receipt (recipe) for Sweet Potato Pone. Mix well three pounds of pared grated sweet potato, two of sugar, twelve eggs, three full pints of milk, the grated rind and juice of a lemon, four ounces of drawn butter, a spoonful of rosewater, little cinnamon and mace, a nutmeg, and a teaspoonful of salt. Bake two hours in deep pans. Eat cold, cake like.

However by 1864, a critical food shortage existed in the South. The shortage was caused by a number of factors including the following.

When the men went off to war, a major shortage of manpower to produce crops resulted. Women and children attempted to grow crops but were unable to keep up the level of agricultural production.

In areas of the South where fighting occurred, both the Union and Confederate armies impressed local supplies to feed their soldiers.

Railroads and bridges were systematically destroyed to impede the movement of enemy armies. This also prevented the shipment of foodstuffs to cities where shortages were critical and citizens were starving.

The Union blockade of Southern seaports eliminated the importation of food and supplies. The inability to obtain salt, sugar and coffee were particularly vexing to Southerners. No substitution was found for salt which had been used to preserve beef, pork and fish. This lack of preservation resulted in spoilage of meats. Once sugar was no longer available, the best substitute was molasses extracted from the sorghum plant. Citizens attempted to make "coffee" from roasted and ground corn, okra seed, sweet potato, chicory, rice, cotton seed, peanuts and beans.

Miss Fannie's recipe for Sweet Potato Pone probably consisted of the potatoes, eggs and butter provided by local farmers. If available, molasses might have been added for sweetening.

Article provided for Parsons Rose #9, Texas Society Order of Confederate Rose. For more information, visit [www.omroberts.com](http://www.omroberts.com) or [tsocr.org](http://tsocr.org).

[http://www.waxahachietx.com/news/ellis\\_county/miss-fannie-s-last-confederate-christmas/article\\_7b9931ac-4c7d-11e2-b5e6-0019bb2963f4.html](http://www.waxahachietx.com/news/ellis_county/miss-fannie-s-last-confederate-christmas/article_7b9931ac-4c7d-11e2-b5e6-0019bb2963f4.html)

## **Richmond Times-Dispatch December 16, 1934**

### **Plantation Yuletides a Century Ago**

***How Great Houses of Virginia Celebrated Christmas Festival;  
Tables Groaned Beneath Goodies and Reels Ended Day***

**By Ruth Nelson Gordon**



**Another typical Virginia mansion where Southern hospitality won fame in the merry days of December.**

*Nineteen hundred and thirty-four's varied methods of celebrating Christmas give the reveler little pause for retrospect but it is an interesting pastime to turn back the pages of history and live an old-fashioned Yuletide with Virginians of 100 years ago.*

*Perhaps one of the most graphic accounts of such a festival is that written by Charles Campbell, the Virginia historian, and published in the Southern Literary Messenger, the magazine later made famous by Edgar Allan Poe, in 1841. The author describes a*

***Christmas party, which was typical of the festivals of the great houses of Virginia at that period, which was held at Teddington in 1839.***

***Teddington, with its massive walls of brick, weather-boarded to the shingled roof, was the seat of the Lightfoot family, and its wide windows looked out on the amber waters of the James River.***

***The guests arrive in "chariots" or in the small steamboat. He pictures them to us first on the rainy Sunday gathered around "an old-fashioned oaken fire, in the huge parlor; the eldest in***



*the wing chairs nearest the blazing hearth--while the youngest sit in the deep window seats and look out excitedly for arriving guests. There is much talk of "poetry, and the features of the weather, and the probability of the arrival of the main body of visitors from Petersburg."*

*The gay youths and maidens watch the scurrying clouds and the flight of wild ducks on the stormy river. The sound of the steamboat bell rings suddenly, and off they run to the water's edge to watch five men put off in the Teddington boat to "fetch" the guests deposited at the wharf on the other side. The small boat comes rocking back and the guests jump out, hastening with laughter and chatter to the hospitable fires of Teddington.*

*In the afternoon there is a horseback ride on the frozen ground along the road shaded by dark pine trees, then across wide fields and along the banks of the turbulent James River. "Flocks of wild geese feeding in the field expand their broad wings with cries of 'Cohonk! Cohonk! and rising, sail trooping over the water."*

*At night the young people go to "Dancing Point" where witches are said to "dance their airy ringlets to the whistling wind." No witches, however, seem to be recorded on this expedition.*

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*Christmas morning they have "[Sally Lund](#)" for breakfast, and what Virginian does not know the deliciously brown crust and light golden interior of this famous bread? Country sausage and creamed oysters, light rolls and batter-bread and waffles were brought in by fleet, small boys, who ran continually from the outside kitchen with smoking delicacies, while the butler, a fringe of white wool around his bald pate, served the host of guests deftly and swiftly.*

*But the Christmas dinner is the event of the day. The shining mahogany table is stretched to its utmost capacity, and smaller tables are filled with the younger members of the family and the children.*

*The centerpiece is holly and crimson apples, spode china and hobnailed glass are flanked with heavy old silver. Ham cured on the plantation, a saddle of mutton, an enormous turkey;*



*Christmas was a gay festival 100 years ago in Virginia's great homes such as this one. Guests, feasting and dancing made the old estates merry at Merry Yuletide.*

*boiled rockfish from the river, stewed venizen with jelly, oysters stewed and baked, a round of beef--all prepared in the vast kitchen outside, in Dutch ovens and over the glowing coals in the huge fireplace or turned and basted on spits suspended from iron "pot-hooks."*

*The tablecloth is removed at last, and dessert is set on the gleaming mahogany. Pound cake baked in a fluted mould; mince pies smoking hot; cranberry tarts, lemon pudding, raspberry puffs, quivering jellies in heavy, plain cutglass bowls, syllabubs and blanc mange. Champagne was poured in crane-necked glasses and Madeira and Malaga wine served with the dinner.*

*After these things fruit was served. Beautiful apples grown at Teddington, oranges, almonds, olives, sweet meats and last but not least, brandied peaches.*

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*It is sunset when this colossal meal is over; wax candles twinkle from candleabra on the high white mantels, and the conversation falls to "slipshod" dialogue, to puns and conceits, and many a witty story.*

*In the evening more guests come from the surrounding plantations, and every one, from the grandmother in her lace cap and brocaded gown, to the granddaughter of 16, dance the Virginia Reel, and every lady is kissed heartily under the bunch of mistletoe in the great shadowy hall.*

*All these Yuletide festivities seem simple enough. If the table groans under an immense variety and quantity of food--it is all grown on the plantation, or caught in the river, or shot in the thick forests adjoining. The woods and marshes teem with game, and Virginians are bred to follow the hunt and the hounds. There are no expensive jazz bands to furnish music for their dancing--a band of Negro fiddlers pat their feet and grin joyously as they play reels, and gay jiggling tunes. The elders, ensconced in comfortable chairs, watch the festive scene with keen enjoyment. The clan is gathered, and the old house hung with running cedar and holly, echoes with warmth and mirth.*

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*Simple indeed would these festivities seem to the eye of the young modern, and unsophisticated to the point of boredom, but there were Puritans in Virginia in 1739. The Virginia Gazette said, during the Christmas holidays of that year:*

*The licentiousness of the ancient Christians is banished no doubt from our altars; but then we cannot say that we are altogether free from their luxury in other Places at the Time of the Year, or that we do not imitate that Pompous and Profuse manner wherein the old Roman Famens and Pontiffs celebrated their Feast of December in Honour of Saturn. But to be clear in what I intent to say on this Subject at this time I observe:*

- (1) That some Christians celebrate this Season in a mixture of Diety and Licentiousness.*
- (2) Others perform their offices in a pious way only.*
- (3) Many behave themselves profusely and extravagantly alone, and*

**(4) Too many who call themselves Christians, pass over the holy time without paying any regard to it at all.**

**From all of this we conclude:**

**(1) That those Persons must stand self-condemned who throw these Holy Days into the Common Portion of Time; because both Heathenish and Christian Ancients witness loudly against them.**

**(2) Little need be said to those who celebrate the Festival in extremes. 'Tis as ridiculous to do nothing but fast and mortify all Christmas, and to keep a Monkish Holiday as it is to banquet and carouse alone and make a Baccanalian Time of it.**

**What past at Bethlehem calls not for the same Behavior with what happened at Mount Calvary and tho we are to offer Wine and Frankincense and are taught to sing Gloria in Excelsis; yet we are forbid Excess in such like sacrifices, and every Degree of Rant and Riot in expressing our Exultation and Joy.**

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**The persons chiefly to be addressed to are those who stand first in my Division and who celebrate the Nativity in a method composed out of both these extremes and behave themselves both piously and impiously on the Occasion.**

**There are people who prepare themselves most religiously for the approaching Rituals, and who upon the Day perform their offertory and sacrifices in the most solemn Forms of Religion; but their Devotions end with that night, and the other world which they had so fairly bid for on Christmas Day is quite absorbed in the good things of the present world a few days after.**

**On the whole they who will be over-religious at this time must be pardoned and pitied; they who are downright criminal condemned, and the littel Liberties of the Old Roman December, which are taken by the Multitude, ought to be overlooked and excused for a Hundred Reasons which hardly any understanding can be ignorant off.**

<http://richmondthenandnow.com/Newspaper-Articles/Plantation-Christmas.html>



# CHRISTMAS NIGHT OF '62

by William Gordon McCabe  
(1841-1920)

The wintry blast goes wailing by,  
The snow is falling overhead;  
I hear the lonely sentry's tread,  
And distant watch-fires light the sky.

Dim forms go flitting through the gloom;  
The soldiers cluster round the blaze  
To talk of other Christmas days,  
And softly speak of home and home.

My sabre swinging overhead  
Gleams in the watch-fire's fitful glow,  
While fiercely drives the blinding snow,  
And memory leads me to the dead.

My thoughts go wandering to and fro,  
Vibrating between the Now and Then;  
I see the low-browed home again,  
The old hall wreathed with mistletoe.

And sweetly from the far-off years  
Comes borne the laughter faint and low,  
The voices of the Long Ago!  
My eyes are wet with tender tears.

I feel again the mother-kiss,  
I see again the glad surprise  
That lightened up the tranquil eyes  
And brimmed them o'er with tears of bliss,

As, rushing from the old hall-door,  
She fondly clasped her wayward boy--  
Her face all radiant with the joy  
She felt to see him home once more.

My sabre swinging on the bough  
Gleams in the watch-fire's fitful glow,  
While fiercely drives the blinding snow  
Aslant upon my saddened brow.

Those cherished faces all are gone!  
Asleep within the quiet graves  
Where lies the snow in drifting waves,--  
And I am sitting here alone.

There's not a comrade here to-night  
But knows that loved ones far away  
On bended knee this night will pray:  
"God bring our darling from the fight."

But there are none to wish me back,  
For me no yearning prayers arise.  
The lips are mute and closed the eyes--  
My home is in the bivouac.



Winter Quarters



# How to Be Saved

If you were to die this instant, would you go to heaven? Can we ask a more important question than that? Wouldn't you like to know for sure? The wise among us are careful to plan every aspect of their lives. Thought is given to careers, education, and retirement; much planning can go toward's vacation pursuits and how to spend the weekend! By comparison, little thought is given to our eternal destiny! The Bible makes it clear that there are but two options when the body fails and the soul moves on; every individual chooses their destiny. We can choose God and His love, or we can choose our own way, which will lead to an eternity apart from His love and His presence. Deep down, each of us knows the truth. We know there's a God, because each day he whispers the truth of His presence. He speaks to our hearts, He speaks through nature, and He speaks through His written word; we are without excuse if we choose not to listen!

Oh, if He is speaking to you now, won't you listen? Before it's too late? The choice is yours. You can choose to respond to his message of love, and to His gracious invitation, or you can ignore Him and go your own way. But, before you go your way; please consider His side of the story-

2000 years ago, our Maker became our Saviour. Think of it; He who made the heavens and the earth, and all it contains; He who has all authority and all power willingly put on mortality. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not"; He was ridiculed, mocked, and then endured a cruel death on the cross. When we consider this more carefully we realize this was the greatest injustice ever committed! He was pure, He was kind; He sought no throne, nor home. He labored to exhaustion for the needy multitudes; but evil men without mercy took Him away, because of jealousy, and because they could not stand His morality! As cruel as His physical death was, the greater pain was inflicted on His spirit. Our sin was placed upon Jesus, and the Heavenly Father poured out His wrath upon Him. Jesus experienced painful separation from the Father as He cried out; "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me"?

Jesus willingly made himself a sacrifice; he willingly took our punishment. Why? Because there was no other way! If there was a way Man could repay his guilt, or put himself back in fellowship with God; then the cross would not have been necessary.

The cross teaches us the nature of sin; sin causes pain and separates from God. Sin is nothing more, and nothing less, than not listening to God! When we go our own way we get caught up in our own selfish acts; selfishness is the cause of many hurtful things (sin). Look around you. What is wrong with this world? Why can't two people who marry, because they "love" each other, get along? How do we

think we can produce peace in the world, when we can't find peace in the individual heart? What is this sickness? It is Sin.

Maybe you have suffered evil things; if so I'm sorry, but know this Jesus has suffered with you and for you. Maybe, you have done evil things; if so it's time to repent, and know this, Jesus died for you. The sinless Son God died for Sinfull man that we might live! The Bible says; "He who knew no sin, became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" If He had to die that we might live, then we can conclude that we were all dead in sin.

So this is his story; He gave Himself for us, but he rose from the dead on the the third day, and assended up into heaven. He has sent out the invitation. He stands with His arms stretched out waiting for your reply! Yes, we are still dead in our sins unless we apply. We must turn from our way and embrace His way; we must acknowledge our guilt and accept His gift of life.

This is His invitation; "Behold, I stand at the door an knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me." (Revelation 3:21)

He is making a proposal, but you have to accept. We must turn from our own way, and we must identify with Him, His word, and His people; that's the deal.

"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21)

#### **Here's a suggested prayer:**

**Oh, Lord Jesus, Come into my life! I know that I am a sinner, and unworthy; forgive me for rebelling against you, and going my own way. Your love and patience are beyond anything I can comprehend! I believe your word; that you left heaven and came to earth to die for me; that you took the punishment for my sin on the cross. I believe that you rose again the third day; and that you love me. I believe your promise of eternal life to all who call upon you with a thankful heart. Wow! Thank you, Lord Jesus! Thank you for your salvation, the gift of your spirit, eternal life, and the assurance of Heaven! I love you Lord, and gladly accept; You, your word, your people, and your way.**

**Jesus changes lives.**

**1. The Bible teaches that when Jesus is given ownership He remodels. "Old things are passed away; behold, all things have become new" (1Corinthians 5:17). [Click here for a recent example of a changed life.](#)**

**2. Christianity is not just a way of life, it is first, and foremost a relationship with Jesus. That relationship needs to be cultivated by Bible reading, Church attendance (fellowshipping with God's people), prayer (talking with God), listening to His voice (walking with God), and living by His power; by doing these things you will discover God's purpose for your life. Christianity is an incredible adventure. Take it to the limit! Jesus said; "I came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).**

# The FIRST act of the "Civil" (sic) War



We have been told that the first shot fired in the "Civil" (sic) War was fired by the Confederacy at Fort Sumter as Lincoln's government attempted to rearm and resupply that fort. But that is not true. The first act of war was not done in the open in response to a provocation, but in the dark as a damnable piece of subterfuge which involved sabotage and the occupation of the buildings and land of a sovereign state in a sovereign nation.

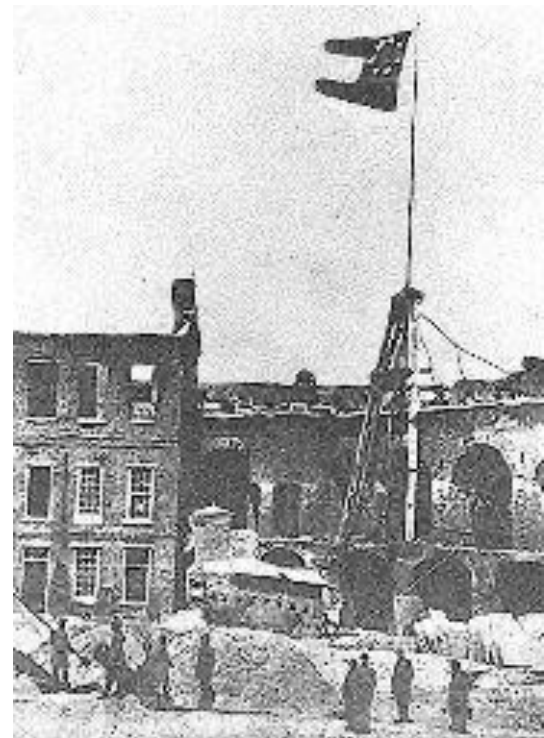
**In the darkness of the night of Christmas Eve, 1860**, Major Robert Anderson, commandant of the federal forces at Fort Moultrie in Charleston Harbor, left that fort - his assigned place according to his orders by the federal government - and after cutting down the flag pole (most probably to prevent the raising of the Confederate flag upon it), spiking the fort's guns and taking his contingent of soldiers and all munitions and supplies, stealthily made his way to Fort Sumter which was situated on an island in the harbor. This was done in secret and without any notification by the federal government that its troops would leave Moultrie and occupy Sumter, a facility which had reverted to South Carolina after the federal authorities allowed the provisions of the lease it held on the fort to lapse.

The federal government under outgoing President Buchanan - who was still in office - had signed an agreement with the State of South Carolina to make no attempt to relieve, rearm, re-supply or send more federal troops into Moultrie in exchange for the State government's promise not to attempt to remove those troops by force. Of course, Sumter was not even considered as the troops were quartered in Moultrie! By leaving Moultrie and moving to Sumter without informing the State of South Carolina or the new Confederate government of which that State was a part, Anderson was committing an act that can only be seen as hostile even if no shots were fired. This was further exacerbated by the damage Anderson did to Moultrie in spiking its guns, taking its supplies and munitions and even cutting down its flag pole a symbolic but potent rejection of the new Confederacy. Anderson moved to Sumter because it was far more easily supplied and defended by sea than was Moultrie, another evidence of the military nature of the operation. And finally, the fact that Sumter was now the property of the State of South Carolina, the federal lease having been allowed to lapse, Anderson's actions constitute an invasion, again even if no shots were fired.



So it is obvious both in law and in history, that the first act of hostility in the War of Secession was not the false flag operation of Sumter, but Major Anderson's abandonment of Fort Moultrie and his occupation of Fort Sumter. It is equally obvious that Anderson, a mere major, would hardly have done so on his own recognizance and that therefore it becomes equally obvious that his actions

were ordered from "higher-ups" on the chain of command. Lincoln had not yet been inaugurated, but he was in touch with General Winfield Scott about the military options open to him with regards to secession and the federal forts. So it is more than probable that Anderson was ordered by his superiors to abandon Moultrie - which was not easily defended or rearmed - and retire to Sumter which was more easily defended and rearmed. As that is the case, then the first act of the so-called Civil War took place on Christmas Eve, 1860 and not April 15th, 1861.



Confederate Flag flying in Fort Sumter after the 1861 surrender



Reacting to the lack of proper burial for these Southern soldiers left at Gettysburg, the Southern states launched efforts to return the bodies of their sons to their native states following the end of the War Between the States. In Richmond, the Hollywood Memorial Association started a fund drive to secure the money to bring the Confederate dead from Gettysburg to Richmond for reburial in Hollywood Cemetery.

Their efforts proved successful. On June 15, 1872, a steamship docked at the wharf at Rocketts on the James River with boxes containing the Confederate dead. The soldiers who left Virginia to fight for the cause they thought was just, had come home. No one will ever know for sure, but in one of the precious boxes were probably the unidentified remains of Brigadier General Richard B. Garnett, who was killed while leading his men in what history has labeled "Pickett's Charge."

Pickett's Charge, which took place in the afternoon of July 3, 1863, started when General George E. Pickett ordered his men forward yelling, "Charge the enemy and remember old Virginia!" Over 13,000 Confederates emerged from the woods on Seminary Ridge and headed toward the waiting Union forces on Cemetery Ridge, which was nearly a mile away.

It was described by a Union soldier as Confederates charging forward "with the step of men who believed they were invincible." Union shot and shell tore into the marchers, but still they came. It was recorded that the battle noise was "strange and terrible, a sound that came from thousands of human throats...like a vast mournful roar." With muskets firing, flags waving, bayonets fixed and swords pointing forward, the flower of Southern manhood moved forward, ever forward. The fighting was bitter as the Confederates flung themselves across a stone wall which separated the two armies. The battle was awesome, the human casualties appalling; and the Union's fate hung on the outcome. It was, however, the Confederacy that died on that stone wall as the men in gray were repulsed by the Union forces.

Their charge had failed. General Garnett, who was ill on the day of the charge, led his men into what was described as a mission to "hell or glory." As he plunged with his men through a hail storm of lead, Garnett was ripped apart by grape shot and his body was left unidentified on Gettysburg's field.

The honor these dead Confederates were denied in life, they found in death. On June 20, 1872, fifteen wagons were assembled at Rocketts to carry the boxes containing the remains of the Confederate dead. Each wagon was draped in mourning and was escorted by two former Confederate soldiers with their muskets reversed.

The funeral procession, which included both political as well as military leaders of the recently defeated Confederate nation, wound its way up Main Street as it moved toward Hollywood Cemetery. The buildings along the route were draped in black, and they echoed to the plaintive sound of the funeral march.

As the wagons passed slowly by, "many eyes were filled with tears and many a soldier's widow and orphan turned away from the scene to hide emotion." When the procession reached the cemetery, the boxes were unloaded and buried in a section known as Gettysburg Hill. The soldiers who had escorted the bodies were ordered to "rest arms" as their comrades were laid to rest in Virginia's soil.

There was nothing comparable to the Gettysburg Address for these soldiers. There were no memorable orations; only a prayer by The Rev. Dr. Moses Hoge of Richmond's Second Presbyterian Church was spoken. The prayer contained these lines: "We thank Thee that we have been permitted to bring back from their graves among strangers all that is mortal of our sons and brothers." Dr. Hoge prayed for those who had survived the war and then intoned, "Engrave upon the hearts of...all the young men of our Commonwealth the remembrance of the patriotic valor, the loyalty to truth, to duty, and to God, which characterized the heroes around whose remains we weep, and who surrendered only to the last enemy...death."

Following the prayer, three musket volleys were fired in a final tribute to those whose bodies were laid to rest for all eternity on Hollywood's sacred hill. The sounds of the muskets echoed across the cemetery, across the River James, and they still echo today across the pages of history.



Merry Christmas  
yall

# The Christmas Encampment

The story you are about to read concerns the most unusual yet at the same time delightful Christmas my family and I have ever experienced. While on a trip to visit relatives in Tennessee we were waylaid along the way; somehow we found ourselves throw backward in time. Join with us now and travel back with us to a long ago Christmas which took place in the middle of the most terrible war.

Tuesday 17 December 2002  
The Prelude to an Adventure

Christmas was eight days away on Wednesday of the coming week and my family and I decided to drive up to Jackson Tennessee from our home on the northwest Florida Gulf Coast for the Christmas Holiday. We slowly packed our luggage into a suitable car we had rented for the occasion; our own being far too old to be trusted for such a journey. It was about 7:30 when we finally loaded ourselves in the car and pulled out of the drive way heading north on highway 231 out of Bay County heading toward Dothan Alabama. After stopping a couple times for a break we found ourselves entering the Birmingham area where we had arranged to stop over for the night to visit our adult granddaughter. The evening was every so pleasant and we celebrated an early holiday since we had so very far to travel for people our age and could not make it back through Birmingham by Christmas.

We did however decide to turn to the northwest on route 157 above Birmingham and travel through Sheffield Alabama in route to Savannah Tennessee for a days visit with a few old friends. We planned to visit cross the Tennessee River into Crump and visit the Shiloh Battle Field Park before continuing onward toward Jackson which is approximately 60 miles north of Memphis. We got underway from Birmingham bright and early on the morning of Thursday 17 December stopping for a visit at the ruins of the old Moulton College, which is now a Confederate Graveyard, located ten miles to the southeast of Sheffield. Our journey continued on the morning of Friday 20 December arriving in Savannah by 1:00 P.M. on the same day where we stayed the night with friends with an eye toward visiting the Shiloh Battle Field Park on Saturday morning.

We did not hurry getting up the next morning, so by the time we had breakfast it was already 9:00 A.M. and we decided to visit the Battle Field Park across the river then continue on our way, feeling like we could still make Jackson before dark or soon thereafter. The park is off to the south a few miles after crossing through Crump on route 64 which runs between Memphis and Chattanooga. We arrived at the entrance to the park around 10:30 A.M. but paused about a half mile away, pulled over to the side of the road, just to gather our thoughts. After a half hour we continue onward toward the entrance when my wife indicated it seemed like there is a strange fog or haze blanketing the atmosphere over the park. This was extremely unusual given the hour of and that it was a bright, clear day with only a peppering of thin white clouds overhead.

It came to my mind that even if there had been a fog early in the morning, it would have cleared by this time, still as I looked over my out the driver's side window it was plain for anyone to see. I thought to myself, half out loud and half to myself; maybe it is just an optical allusion of some kind! Still it was dense enough that we both decided it was better to park just inside the entrance and off the side of the road, and then walk the remainder of the short distance to the visitor's station. We check everything to be sure our luggage was secure and out of sight, deciding not to take a camera, given the dense fog, we'd not likely find the opportunity to take many pictures. The air was chilly though not quite freezing, so we both war a medium weight coat and my wife took along a shawl to protect here head and shoulders.

## Saturday 21 December 2002

### Hurled Backward in Time

We began our walk through the fog which seemed to be getting thicker and denser with every step, even time and distance seemed to be playing tricks on us. We both had traversed the short distance from the entrance to the visitors center a number of times and having become very familiar with nearly every inch of the way. It just should take this long and even in the fog we were aware something wasn't quite right; things were different as we look down at the road to both sides and forward. Could have turn off the way and gotten lost; not likely, but we still concluded after a long while that somehow we had indeed gotten way laid walking down this very short road from the entrance to the park. After what felt like a two hours walking a distance which should have taken 20 minutes at a slow pace, we finally began to break through the dense blanket of fog.

After we had walked some 20 yards beyond the fog bank we stop and looked about us, looking at each other as we surveyed the landscape. Then we turn to each other again and both stated almost in unison; "this isn't the battle field park." We found ourselves walking on a dirt road which was curved much like an old wagon trail of the nineteenth century, and I hadn't seen anything like this since I was nine or ten years of age. Then just about the time we were totally confused our confusion was about to take on an entirely new perspective. We heard the hoof beats of horses coming around the bend in the road just ahead, so I pointed to some shrubbery off the side of the trail and waved at my wife to come with me and hide. We had found what we thought was a secure place, and just in time as about eight mounted cavalrymen rounded the bend and headed our way.

The cavalrymen paused along the trail a few feet from where we were hiding and their leader who bore the strips of a Quartermaster Sergeant called out to us; "come out y'all, let us have a look at and see what yur up to." We both exited our hiding place with a measure of confidence that we were facing Confederate Soldiers, yet at the same time a little fearful, not knowing whether we were facing some kind of police, dressed for a reenactment or by some crazy twist of fate these guys were the real McCoy. On the way out I shook my head; maybe this is a dream, if so I should be waking up just about now! We reached the edge of the trail and looked up at the Sergeant; all I could think of to say was "We're lost." Now I knew what a monkey in a zoo cage must feel like with these soldiers staring down at us and chattering in the strongest Southern accent I've ever heard.

We also found out how these troops managed to make so much racket with only eight soldiers; they had with them a supply two wagons which were filled with what appeared to be food stuffs and an odd assortment of ammunition. The sergeant looking down at us and noticing our interest in the wagons replied; a gift from Abe Lincoln. Now as for y'all, I can plainly see that you are lost or else you would be out this far from town and if my guess is right based upon the way you talk and look, you are Southerners but not from this area. However since I can be sure we must insist that both of you ride with us back to camp, we'll let General Morgan decide what to do with you; there enough room in the first wagon for you folks, so climb up and get seated. We're only a mile or so away from camp, so the ride won't take long.

## Wednesday 24 December 1862

### The Confederate Encampment

On the way to the encampment we remain in the dark as to where and might I say when we were located, but it didn't take long and we found ourselves passing amidst a sizeable Confederate Army which appeared to number around 300 men. The wagon pulled stopped in front of the command tent and we were invited to follow the Sergeant as the General exited and the two men saluted each other. General Morgan sir, and with that it was became crystal clear that we were in the presence of THE famous Confederate Raider, General John Hunt Morgan, whom I recognized from pictures, had been promoted to Brigadier General on 11 December, just 13 days ago. Which brought to my mine that we were just outside the small village of Glasgow Kentucky and General Morgan had occupied the town that very day.

However I was not prepared for what was to come next; the general called out to our escort, Sergeant McCullum. Later I ask him if he'd be so kind as to give me his full name and he replied in his strong Kentucky accent; "Sergeant George Bernard Franklin McCullum at your service saa." I knew my face must have turned pale but I tried to react in a polite but normal manner; this was may own Confederate Veterans Great-great Grandfather, whom our family knew had rode with General John Hunt Morgan. But naturally, there was no possible way I could relate to tell him of what I knew or that we were from the twenty first century. While I did not carry his name, I am his direct heir and should have born the name McCullum. It took a lot of will power to keep from starring at this him, but I also knew he would be killed three months later at the Battle of Shiloh which was something else would churn around in my mind.

The short while I had to share his presence, I became proud to be his Great-great grandson! But we also knew we couldn't remain very long with these Confederates since they would fight the 'Battle of Green's Chapel and Bear Wallow on Christmas Day. None-the-less General Morgan pulled out all the stops and shows his finest southern manners, introducing my wife and me to the officers and men of his command. Shortly general bowed out by indicating he had business to attend to and turned us over to Sergeant McCullum; the general was soon spotted riding out of camp. There was no doubt he was either heading for town or scouting for the Yankee position he knew was in the area. However to our surprise, little more than two three hours later he returned with a number of the town's folks who were all prepared to hold a short but merry celebration of Christmas. It was a cold evening still everyone had made their best arrangement to fend off the weather and enjoy the evening!

The soldiers had already begun the celebrations by the time General Morgan returned with a kind of informal worship and singing around the camp fire, so when he only added to the joy of the celebrations. The towns folks brought gifts of food and an assortment of warm clothing which were distributed to those most in need. My wife and I could not believe the pleasant and joyous atmosphere in the camp and the deep spirit of devotion to the true meaning of Christmas, particular in the middle of a war. Every man in the camp surely knew that tomorrow would bring more fighting and misery, yet they took a respite and showed their guests the finest Christmas to be experienced anywhere. As for myself had ample opportunity to socialize and fellowship not only with all these heroic Confederate Soldiers and towns' folk, but my own Great-great Grandfather Sergeant G.B.F. McCullum.

## . Wednesday 24 December 1862 Saying our Good-bys

Interestingly enough while we were in pleasant conversation the good sergeant remarked; "Haven't we meant somewhere before, it seems that I know you somehow!" I gave a big smile and replied; "Sergeant, I'd be most honored to be able to say that we have met before, but regretfully the answer is that we haven't." There was no doubt he was feeling the kinship even though there was no way he could put it in those terms! How could I possibly tell him that this old senior citizen was his 'Great-great Grandson? Equally I was aware of our family history and knew my Great-grandfather had already been born and he and my grandmother were already on the run from the Yankees. There was also another relative of mine attached to Morgan's Raiders; a Private Lambert, my Great-great Uncle, but we were informed that he was even as we celebrated involved in what the general termed 'scouting.'

While we all stood around the camp fire soldier after soldier pass by, shook our hands, spoke every so mannerly and gave special courtesies to my wife, indicating how honored they were that she had paid them a visited. Mean while we all sang in unison, swaying back and forth with the rhythm of the music. Several of the local citizens had brought instruments, most notably a couple of fiddles which added to the spirit of Christmas. While the time we spent in General John Hunt Morgan's camp was relatively short, it was a memory my wife and I shall cherish all the days of our lives, as the finest Christmas ever. We pledge ourselves to make every attempt to duplicate the joyous and reverent spirit we all shared in the camp of some very fine people, heroes of the Confederacy.

However there was a war still going on and the evening's celebrations quickly came to a close! Soon the local citizens were saying their good bys and departing the camp, General Morgan approach us touching me on my shoulder while at the same time showing the finest Southern manners to my wife. We are all so pleased that you wonder folks could come; your presence among us has brought much joy to my men, however the war continues and we have upcoming business with the Yankees in the area. The general then asked if we knew our way back from where we had come and I answered in the affirmative. General Morgan then suggested that Sergeant McCullum return you to the location where you had first appeared and we both nodded in agreement and smiled.

Seeing Sergeant McCullum not far away the general called to him, as the sergeant approached the general shook our hands, excused himself and departed in route to what we guessed was a war council with his officers. Sergeant McCullum escorted us briefly throughout the camp so we could say our good-bys, we climbed upon the wagon he had prided and was soon on our way. Very shortly we found ourselves back at the same location where we had earlier appeared. As we climbed down out of the wagon, the good sergeant helped my wife so graciously and said farewell to both of us with a kind of longing in his eyes. We knew we'd never meet again, and I had the feeling he knew we had come from a someplace very far away and would never return this way again. He asked if we could find our way back alright, we answered that we could, turned one last time waved and parted company.

## Saturday 21 December 2002 The Long Road Back

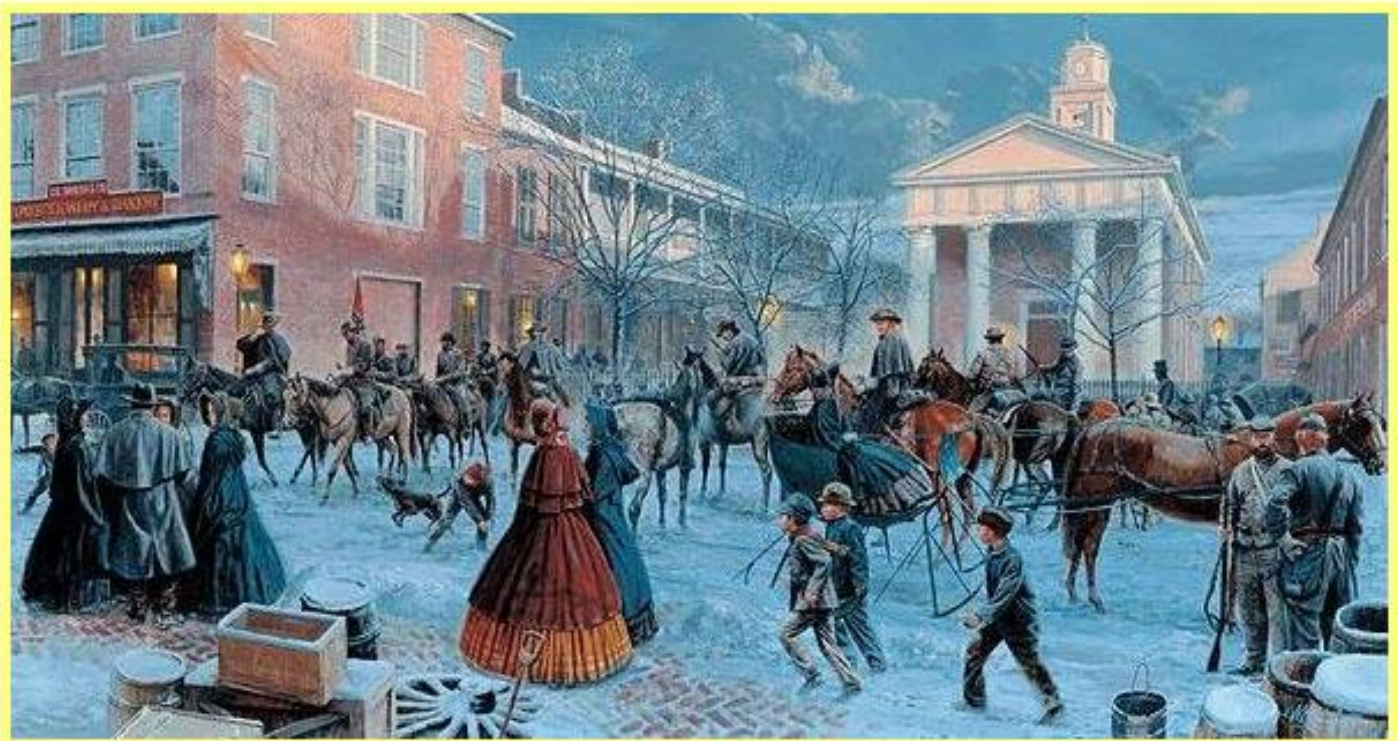
There was plenty of snow on the ground as we made our way up the small incline and back into the woods; we could hear Sergeant G.B.F. McCullum's wagon as it moved away in the distance. The woods was plenty thick enough and our dark clothing together provided plenty of cover, in the even we were wrong and found ourselves in need of hiding from the Yankee Army. However the pathway we had traverse on the way here, while narrow was visible enough to follow back through the woods. We walked along slowly but quietly as we both reminisced on the best Christmas we had every experience in our lives, and we each kept these thing in our hearts. After a while we found the fog closing in once more and the darkness was gradually giving way to what was obviously day time. The fog back grew so thick it was like solid wall of white all about us, still we kept walking down the pathway!

We soon found the fog beginning to lift and suddenly we were nearing the entrance to the Shiloh Battle Field Park, approximately 300 miles away from General John Hunt Morgan's Encampment near Glasgow Kentucky. As well walked along toward our automobile still parked where we had left it, we looked at each other and smiled my wife saying in a low tone; "We were really there, weren't we?" Yes my dear, we really were in the camp of General John Hunt Morgan and I really did get to meet my very own Great-great Grandfather. Those boys sure were gentlemen, my wife remarked! Well, fortunately we fell into the hands of our own Confederate Soldiers; I fear what may have happened had we been captured by Yankees. I am afraid it would not have been very pleasant for either of us, but particularly you, being such a fine lady.

The two of us paused to look ourselves over and realized we were now dressed as we were before we entered the fog bank. We listened to our car radio as we finished our journey toward Jackson Tennessee and discovered it was still Saturday 21 December and Christmas was four days away. It appeared as though we'd be celebrating Christmas twice this year, and just maybe the experience has given us a renewed understanding of its true meaning. We arrived at our kinfolk's house in Jackson and departed toward our Florida home on Friday 27 December, feeling it best to get home before New Years Eve. As time passed we spoke of the incident less, rather deciding to quietly cherish the sweet memories of the year we had celebrated Christmas twice, 140 years removed in time. I couldn't help think to myself; what if I had decided to remain with General Morgan!

God save the Confederacy

<http://www.confederatechristmas.blogspot.com/>





## "Lee's Lieutenants" by Mort Kunstler

On a foggy Saturday morning, December 13, 1862, Lee and his principal lieutenants rode forward to meet a massive assault from the Union Army of the Potomac.

"A dense fog hung over the city that morning as Lee moved to confer with his commanders on a hill overlooking the city. Stonewall Jackson attended the meeting in a new uniform, which was a gift from General J.E.B. Stuart. Jackson's devoted soldiers, who were accustomed to Stonewall's worn uniform, were bedazzled by the gold braid and crisp look of the new uniform. They spontaneously broke into wild cheers. It was then, in the words of Douglas Southall Freeman, that "drab daylight began to soften into gold under the rays of a mounting sun." Fredericksburg's church steeples emerged in the distance above the morning mist. It was a lighting effect I had observed myself on visits to Lee's Hill at Fredericksburg - and I was delighted to have an opportunity to paint it." - Mort Kunstler

# Nashville Dispatch, December 25, 1862.

December 25, 1862 - Season's Greetings

A Merry Christmas!--In times of peace and prosperity the whole Christian world is accustomed to rejoice and be merry on this, the birthday of The Prince of Peace. Those who have an abundance of this world's goods have been accustomed from time immemorial to give freely to those of their neighbors who have been less fortunate; while those who have had but little have given even a portion of what they had, so that all could rejoice and be glad, and sing their Christmas carols with light hearts.

Our rejoicings to-day will necessarily be mingled with sorrows; grief for relatives and friends lost to us in this world, will mar the exuberant joy which should fill our hearts under other circumstances; and sorrow and anxiety for the absent ones will necessarily detract from the general enjoyment; yet should we rejoice; do you ask why? —look around you, and see how many thousands are suffering all the afflictions you endure, and, in addition, all the pangs of hunger and cold, the burning fever, the cold chill, the racking pain, and the various heartburnings and anxieties of the widowed mother in poverty. Of your means, therefore, give freely to the poor to-day, and you will have just cause to rejoice that Almighty God has thus blessed you and enabled you to make glad the hearts of some one or more of His suffering creatures on this the annual festival of the birth of our Redeemer. That all our readers may have cause to rejoice, we fervently pray.





# A Christmas Visitation to a Confederate Sentinel



Private Valerius Giles had picket duty on Christmas day, 1861. A member of the [4<sup>th</sup> Texas Regiment](#), Giles “*had a splendid view of the river for two or three miles in each direction.*” Across the river was a Union brigade from New York.

The day was bitterly cold, with snow “*gently and silently falling, deepening the hills and valleys, melting as it struck the cold bosom of the dark river.*” Everything was calm as Val Giles stood sentry, about 100 yards from a battery of Confederate guns. Then he heard a man call out: “*Look out, Lieutenant, a gun boat is coming down the river!*”

*Private Valerius C. Giles*



Val listened as the officer in charge of the artillery, Lt. Lambert, barked orders to his men, and shells were rammed home in the cannons. Looking down on the river the Texas sentinel could see a cloud of black smoke as the boat turned a bend in the river, *“coming dead ahead under full steam.”* But the excitement was short-lived. Another cry came out, *“Oh, pshaw, Lieutenant, don’t shoot! She’s nothing but an old hospital boat, covered over with ‘yaller’ flags.”* Yellow flags were used to mark hospitals and ambulance units.

Soon Giles could read the name *Harriet Lane* on the boat, in use by the Hospital Corps of the Union Army of the Potomac. As it would turn out, its appearance was a sort of omen.

After the alarm died down, Val described that *“a melancholy stillness settled around me.”* The clouds became more leaden, the white silence ominous. He felt restless and uneasy in the oppressive stillness, and *“began to think of home and my mother and father away out in Texas, waiting and praying for the safe return of their three boys, all in the army and all in different parts of the Confederacy — one in the Tenth Texas Infantry at an Arkansas post, one in Tennessee or Kentucky with [Terry’s Rangers](#), and one in the Fourth Texas Infantry in Virginia.”*

Val was safe from any threat, but something was wrong:

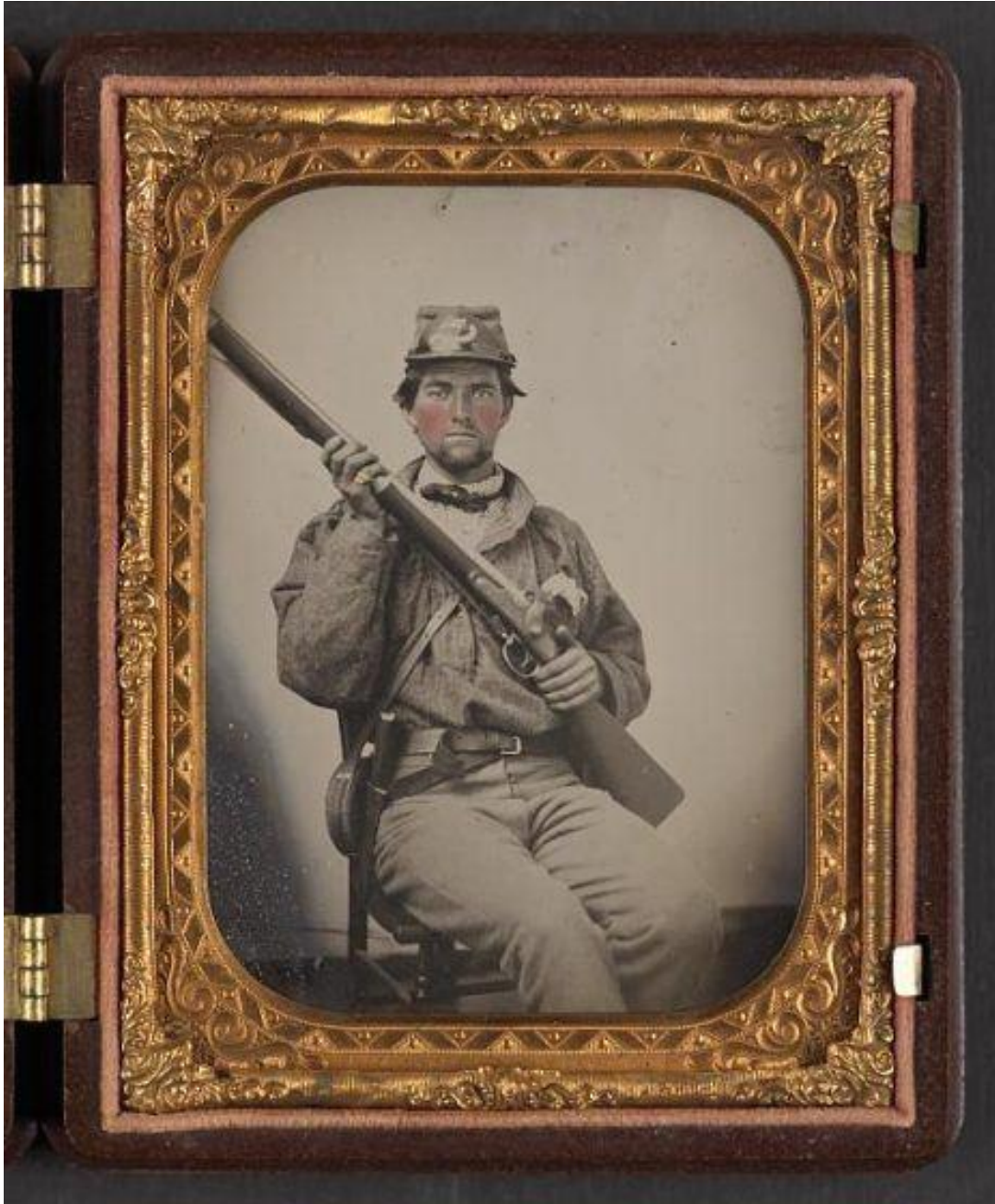
*“I tramped through the snow, half-knee-deep, although I was not required to walk my beat. I tried to divert my mind from the gloomy thoughts that possessed me, but all in vain. Suddenly I was startled from my sad reflections of home and kindred by distinctly hearing a voice I knew — my brother Lew’s voice — calling my name. I turned quickly, looked in every direction, heard nothing more and saw nothing but the white world around me and the dark river below me. He was two years my senior, had been my constant companion and playmate up to the beginning of the war.*

It was four in the afternoon of December 25<sup>th</sup>. Private Giles knew that he’d heard his brother calling to him, but then decided it must have been his imagination.

Lewis Giles was assigned to the Eight Texas Cavalry, known as [Terry’s Texas Rangers](#). On December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1861, Lewis took part in a charge at the Battle of Munfordville in Kentucky. Badly wounded, Lewis was taken to Gallatin, Tennessee, to the home of Captain John Turner, a close friend of his father. The family later received word from Captain Turner that Lewis had died, at four PM on Christmas Day, 1861, while his brother Val stood picket on the banks of the Potomac

<http://confederate.ultimateflags.com/a-christmas-visitation/>

# Confederate Christmas Letters



It may be of interest to read words from letters written home by Confederate soldiers during Christmas. The first is a letter by Henry Kyd Douglas, who was being held at Johnson's Island Prison in Ohio. Henry had been with [Stonewall Jackson](#) at Gettysburg, where he was injured and then captured. In a Christmas 1863 letter he wrote:

*There came a carload of boxes for the prisoners about Christmas which after reasonable inspection, they were allowed to receive. My box contained more cause for merriment and speculation as to its contents than satisfaction. It had received rough treatment on its way, and a bottle of catsup had broken and its contents very generally distributed through the box. Mince pie and fruit cake saturated with tomato catsup was about as palatable as "embalmed*

***beef” of the Cuban memory; but there were other things. Then, too, a friend had sent me in a package a bottle of old brandy. On Christmas morning I quietly called several comrades up to my bunk to taste the precious fluid of...DISAPPOINTMENT! The bottle had been opened outside, the brandy taken and replaced with water, adroitly recorded, and sent in. I hope the Yankee who played that practical joke lived to repent it and was shot before the war ended.***

These next words are from a letter written by John Shropshire of the [Texas 5th](#). He was camped on the Rio Grande on December 26th, 1861, and would have preferred that the enemy was there instead:

***Dear Carrie, We arrived at this place last night, our mules & oxen broke down, having been out 36 hours without water. We came a new road nearly all the way from Fort Davis. The road was very heavy, & water was very scarce. Our horses are all in as good condition as could be expected, all poor & some of them very poor. Christmas day 1861 will be remembered a long time by this Regmt, not a man of which I guess, but would have gladly been at home. I thought of you many times & hoped that you were enjoying a good time. The eggnog & good things you had to eat I sincerely hope you had the good appetite to enjoy. I could have enjoyed a dinner with you amazingly. ... I can not say how much glory we will gain, but I can say that we will have done as much hard work as any other soldiers in the Confederate service. Cavalry on the march have a hard time at best on the march but especially do they suffer when they march through a wilderness when a scarcity of every thing essential to comfort prevails. I candidly confess I never would have come this way had I imagined the country was so mean. In after years when Charlie's grand children get old this country will be used for raising sheep. If I had the Yankeys at my disposal I would give them this country and force them to live in it.***



***I intended to write you a long letter but can not write for the men around me. Send me by mail all the good news you can get through by mail. I can not write any more. As soon as we get into quarters, I will write you again Good bye. Write to me every day. God Bless you & Charlie.***

In another letter to a wife, Henry Allen of the 9th Virginia Infantry wrote these words from Hilton Head, when it was not so pleasant a place to be:

***I am quite well at this time we have had some very cold weather here we feel it much more seriously here than we would in a much colder climate and have suffered much as we have but few articles of bed clothing we are not allowed to receive money clothing or boxes of any kind and see quite a hard time generally. How are my dear little ones kiss them for me my love to all at home and to all other relatives and friends I wrote to John this morning. I know you***

***will think of the absent me while eating the Christmas dinner I have nothing but dry bread for mine. Good by and God bless you my darling from your affectionate husband Henry A Allen write soon***

The day also created some gentler, kinder feelings on both sides. One tale is told of about 90 Union soldiers from Michigan who decorated pull carts, and making reindeer horns by tying tree branches together for the mules. These men filled the carts with food and other supplies, and handed out to poor Georgia civilians who were in dire need. Some letters tell of men in both blue and gray setting aside their differences. Spencer Welch of the 13th South Carolina wrote of this story from Spotsylvania, Virginia:

***Our regiment was on picket at the river a few days ago and the Yankee pickets were on the opposite bank. There is no firing between pickets now. It is forbidden in both armies. The men do not even have their guns loaded. The two sides talk familiarly with each other, and the Yankees say they are very anxious to have peace and get home. ... While I write I hear Chaplain Beauschelle preaching at a tremendous rate. He seems to think everyone is very deaf.***

There was similar peace where Tally Simpson of the 3rd South Carolina wrote to a friend back home:

***This is Christmas Day. The sun shines feebly through a thin cloud, the air is mild and pleasant, [and] a gentle breeze is making music through the leaves of the lofty pines that stand near our bivouac. All is quiet and still, and that very stillness recalls some sad and painful thoughts. ...***

***While we were there, Brig Genl Patrick, U.S.A., with several of his aides-de-camp, came over under flag of truce. Papers were exchanged, and several of our men bought pipes, gloves, &c from the privates who rowed the boat across. They had plenty of liquor and laughed, drank, and conversed with our men as if they had been friends from boyhood.***

***Write to me quick right off. I wish to hear from you badly. Remember me to my friends and relatives, especially the Pickens and Ligons. Hoping to hear from you soon I remain  
Your bud***

***Tally Oh! that peace may soon be restored to our young but dearly beloved country and that we may all meet again in happiness.***

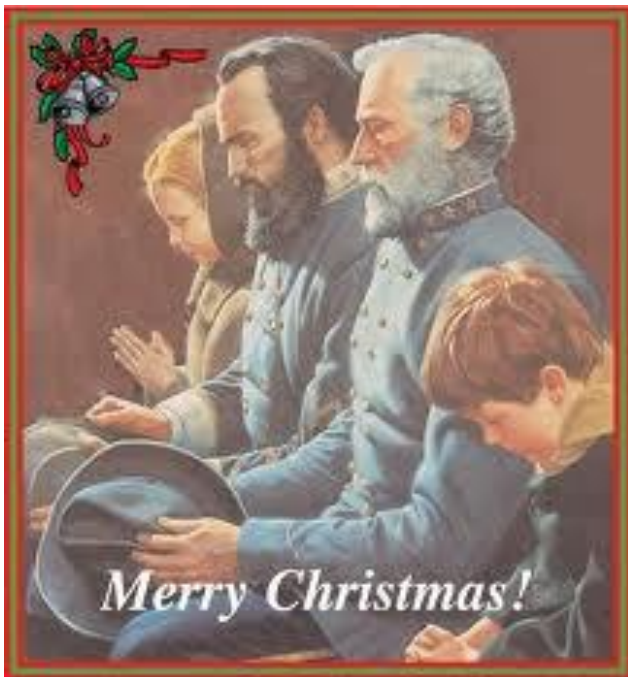


# A Confederate Christmas story

12/19/2013

## THE LAST CHRISTMAS in the Last Capital of the CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA

by: Joan Hough



It was the very last Christmas, spent in freedom by Confederates in the Heart and Soul of Dixie-- that is in Shreveport, Louisiana. The horrors of the Marxist-Republican, Reconstruction of the South would begin at the end of the next year.

Early after their marriage Herbert Hampton and his wife Lou Ann Adams had moved from New Orleans to Biloxi and then to Shreveport. Their Shreveport home was a lovely place sheltered by tall pines and towering oak trees. The house was big, sprawling and white, made of wood, adorned with eight tall pillars and a long veranda. Windows reached from floors almost to ceilings, allowing respite from the heat of Southern summers.

It was December 22, 1864. The pleasant scent of autumn still lingered in the bright sunshine of winter in north Louisiana. The evenings were cool enough for fires to be lit

in the fireplaces.

In the house were four generations of Southerners-- Mrs. Herbert Hampton, known as Mimi, her parents, Joseph and Louisiana Almond Adams, called Gramps and Granny, two of Mimi's three married daughters, Lela Adams Harris and Elizabeth Adams Sedberry and Elizabeth's three young children—"Little John," Mary Catherine and Ann Cheri.

After escaping during the invasion of Vicksburg, Lela and Elizabeth had reached refuge in their parents' home. All of the men in the family, except the great grandfather, were away in the military- the girls' husbands, their father Colonel Hampton, and their brothers. Of the brothers, one had been killed during the Battle of the Wilderness in May, another, imprisoned in Chicago, was reported being tortured on orders of the U.S. Senate, a third brother was on a Battlefield in Tennessee.

The sadness permeating the house and all of Shreveport was reflected in the black gowns of the ladies and by the absence of men belonging in most homes. The in-town troops were mostly from Texas except for some sick and wounded Louisianans paroled from Vicksburg and sent to the hospital in Shreveport.

In the big house supper was over. The slaves had washed the dishes and were pleased there would be no need for cooking by them in their own cottages. They placed a few left overs in the pie safe and with smiles and

farewells took pans of food to their own little homes.

The food was growing limited in quantity because it had to be shared with local troops. Before Vicksburg; the less perishables had been shipped east to troops, but not now that Vicksburg was lost. Because the men of the family were not home to manage the plantings, everything was less. Cotton, however, had been grown and was stored in the barn down by the river-- ready for shipment to England if it could get past the Yankees. Money for its sale was greatly needed by the family and by the South.

Luckily Mimi's gardens and orchard had done well this year. The cellar had an abundance of bottled and dried foods, including fruit. Root vegetables overflowed shelves. Before the military had cleaned out the woods Gramps and some of the male slaves had done fine hunting; venison, rabbit, ducks, geese, as well as pork, chicken and beef filled the smoke house. Over half of it would be shared with the in-town military.

Mimi had grown up in New Orleans. Her parents had remained there until forced out by Beast Butler. They moved to Alexandria and were there for General Banks' visit on November 18th 1864. Their home, like all the rest there, was burned on Banks' order. They finally reached Shreveport and safety with daughter Mimi.

The little group had collected in the parlor. Gramps was toasting small sweet muffins over the fire in the big fireplace.

Little John shifted in his chair after taking a bite of muffin. "Mama," said he. I heard that boy Bobby who visited us yesterday say that where he lived last year they got snow for Christmas—They rode horses on it. And snow is cold like ice in the river, but white and fluffy—like cake flour or maybe sugar. If you put a little milk, vanilla flavoring and sugar on it- you get ice cream! Will we get snow for Christmas? I've never seen snow."

"No son," responded his mother, "That's unlikely. It's said to snow around here about every five or ten years. I can't say that I've seen snow anywhere except twice and just a very little bit of it then. It just floated down and melted before it hit the ground.

"Bobby said they rode through the snow in a sleigh—pulled by horses with bells on—and the sleigh didn't have a single wheel—but flat things that slid over the white stuff.

"That is what a sleigh is, son. I'll bet it is great fun to ride in one. "

"Bobby told me that kids covered up with quilts and put their feet on hot bricks as they rode along. The horses' feet made no noise even when going fast and the little bells rang. The kids on the sleigh ate popcorn, drank hot chocolate even while the snow plopped down on their faces. I wish we could do something just like that."

As the two carried on their little conversation, over on the other side of the big fireplace sat John's great grandfather, Gramps, taking it all in as he popped little buns on a metal rod. Gramps quickly closed one eye and looked at Granny Mimi. Bobby decided Gramps had a speck in his eye.

Immediately upon hearing the word "horses," John's two little sisters had looked up from the carpet and their paper dolls. Putting Gramps tiny bits of sweet muffin in their little rosy mouths, they smiled: "We want to see snow, ride behind horses and hear bells, Mimi."

Mimi frowned," Darlings, if I could produce snow for y'all and a sleigh and horses with bells, I would. But all of my horses except Old Tom have joined the Army. We're lucky to have enough mules left for plowing. And, of course, there can be no snow.

“Oh, I know that,” Little John said quietly, “I know what can’t be—just wanted to tell you about it. It’s something so fine—so exciting.”

Mimi looked up from the blanket she was knitting for a soldier son, “Maybe someday, honey, you’ll get to visit somewhere there’s snow.

“And maybe get to ride on a sleigh, Mimi?”

“Of course my fine fella.”

“Oh,” the little boy turned to his mother, “Bobby lived up north you know until he says his folks saw the light - -whatever that means.

““That means they learned the truth, son, that the South is the best of places to live,”

Mimi added, “True, you can’t have snow this Christmas, but sweetie, you’ll have something just as special. A big surprise! Fourteen years ago in 1850, we got something here in Louisiana that was wonderful. It’s here every Christmas now. You’ll see it Christmas Eve.”

“Daughters,” Mimi turned to her big girls, “We need to make some popcorn.”

John frowned, “Oh, I’ve seen lots of popcorn.”

“But not like this,” responded Mimi.” And popcorn is not the surprise. And will you be .....

His mother interrupted, “John, you’ll have to wait to see the surprise, because it’s time for all of you little rascals to put your heads on pillows and start dreaming happy Christmas dreams of lolly pops and lemon drops, sugarplums, peppermint sticks, sugar cane sticks, and pralines

Mimi grinned, “just four days from now your Christmas surprise will appear. That’ll be the day of Christmas Eve. You’ll get a big surprise then and the next day also “

With eyes bright John shouted, “Hurrah! “

“Hurrah and Hurrah,” echoed his two little sisters.

And with the ladies scheduled to do magic things in the kitchen, as a special treat the children were taken off to bed by Gramps who said, “Granny and I are to tuck you into soft feather beds, I’ll tell you a story and Granny and I will hear your prayers tonight.” “Goody, Goody!” said the little girls..

Alone with her two grown up daughters, Mimi said, “I know y’all want to know about all the surprises. Because of the Yankee’s blockades we haven’t been able to get but a little chocolate for hot drinks, much less much of anything else. Getting wool blankets for your husbands, brothers and Papa, has taken nearly a miracle.

Elizabeth asked, “But Mother, what exactly are all these surprises you’ve promised my little ones? I know you- -You won’t disappoint them. “

“Of course not,” laughed Mimi. “But I don’t think I’ll share that information yet even with you girls. It is something that Gramp and Granny and I thought of. We’ll have the help of Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Bub.”



“Our slaves?” Elizabeth questioned,  
“Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Bub? They are always doing something nice for us.”

Mimi smiled, “That’s because they’ve loved you since you were born. Actually, they’ve already accomplished a great deal of their part. Now you and your sister should get some rest. Sweet dreams, sweet hearts.”

December 24th, 1864.

All had attended to morning ablutions and then devoured hot breakfasts. MIMI lined up everyone, including Gramps at the front door, jackets and hats on-- big jugs of Southern hot cider standing by. Soon the neighbors’ children joined them—even Little John’s new friend Bobby was there. They went to the *porte- cochere* and what to their wondering eyes should appear, but a big wagon loaded to high heaven with hay. Two huge mules pulled it with tinkling bells jangling on their manes and tails.

Every person was given a little sack containing rounded balls of popcorn held together with syrup, an apple, a sandwich, a tall mug holding a small amount of hot chocolate. Big sacks of chicken and cookies were also put aboard. Paper thin potato chips—recipe invented in 1853-- filled several sacks. The substitute sleigh ride had begun!

Uncle Bub led the singing as he skillfully drove the team and its burden over hills and dales, and down country roads. Songs and laughter streamed through the air along with the happy squeals of children.

Returning home a few hours later, new friends were returned to their homes. Back at the big house, the children and Gramps climbed down from their “sleigh” and entered the front hall. The children were hurried to their room to be washed, dressed in clean clothes and ushered to the doubled doors of the parlor. They were told to sit in the hall by the doors and listen and see if they could guess what was going on behind closed doors.

“What’s going on in there?” the curious little children asked. But their mother did not know and neither did Aunt Lela. The voices of Mimi, Gramps and Granny could all be heard at times- and even the easy to identify mellow voices of Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Bub. Occasionally laughs and chuckles were also heard.

The kids and their mother and aunt were growing more curious by the moment.

After awhile they heard the porch door to the room open and close and heard a rather loud dragging sound and people moving about in the room and coming in and going out the porch door.

Mimi came out and informed them. We will have supper this evening in the Morning Room. Afterwards you’ll wait a few minutes and then you can meet me in the parlor and see your wonderful surprise.

Finally, it seemed forever to the children, it was five o’clock and suppertime. The family sat down together in the Morning room—the children at their special little table.

Gramps said the blessing, his voice falling warm and soothing on the ears of his loved ones. A single pair of tears drifted down out of the green eyes of Granny, but everyone else looked happy despite the fact that places with silver, glasses and china had been set at an extra long table at the back of the room and the chairs there remained unoccupied.

And then it was time to enter the closed room. This was so exciting. The little girls could not keep from wiggling all over. Two familiar black folks, Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Bub, quickly joined the group of white folks.

The doors were flung open. And wonders of wonders! Before the long, tall windows with their indoor wooden

shutters folded back stood what seemed to the children to be a giant, beautiful tree—its top, a perfect point. On it were dozens of glowing candles. Its green limbs were decorated with long strings of popcorn and pieces of silver paper.

The children's eyes were dinner plate size. Never had they seen anything so startling—so bright—so beautiful.

“We've never seen such a thing! Why it's a tree! How beautiful it is. Why those lights look like stars,” cried the little boy. “It's like a starry, starry night,” said one of the little girls. “It's wonderful,” said the other.

“It's a Christmas tree. Look under it,” said Gramps. “Trees at Christmas are really new things to have.”

Three pairs of young eyes aimed down. Immediately two little girl mouths formed big o's as all three children spied three little packages wrapped in pretty red tissue paper. “Are these for us? What funny, pretty paper. Can we open them now?” said the excited little children.

“No, darlings,” answered Mimi. “You open these in the morning on Christmas Day—before we go to church. They will be here waiting for you.

Gramps spoke, “Do you know that a Christian preacher, a monk, left Devonshire, England and went to Germany to teach people the word of God. He used a tree like this to teach the people about the Holy Trinity of God—the blessed triangle--the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Germans became Christians and hung their trees as a symbol of Christianity-- upside down from the ceilings of their houses

Then in the year 1510 in Europe in a country called Latvia a Christian Protestant like us, named Martin Luther decorated a little Christmas tree with candles and decorating trees became the thing to do. ”

“When our family lived in New Orleans, our church was St. Paul's Episcopal Church. In the year 1855, for the first time, the pastor put up a tall Christmas trees with brilliant candle lights and lots of little presents on it for the Sunday school children. That was probably the very first Christmas tree in Louisiana. In Texas, a little later, a bunch of ranchers put up Christmas trees—they got the idea from England's Queen Victoria and Prince Albert who put a tree in the 1840s.”

Little John, nodded, “And this is our first Christmas tree. We'll never forget that Mimi, Gramps, Aunt Lizzy and Uncle Bub put it up for us. We heard y'all, but couldn't guess what was going on.”

Great Grandma looked at her girls, “The year 1853 was when I saw my first red tissue paper. It has just been invented. I was thrilled to see it, so I bought a bit and put it away for a special occasion. When I moved from New Orleans, it moved with me. And now that special occasion is here. Three of my precious great grand-kids will open three presents all wrapped up in red tissue paper. I've waited a long time for this to happen.

Mimi, with a pat for each child, murmured, “And I've waited a long time for y'all to hang up these stockings I made for you. In the morning you'll find candy in them if you've been good---if not, look for switches!”

Then Mimi smiled her widest smile and taking her granddaughters by the hands, led them to the piano. “Now we'll celebrate this Christmas of ours with music. It is time to sing, to dance, and to be gay and happy. Mama, I'm glad you made me practice the piano all those hours!”

Soon the music bounced about all over the room. Smiles wreathed the happy faces of the young and the old and the white and the black. There was singing and even a little dancing by the little girls during some of the jolly tunes. And then came the heavenly Christmas carols.

Mimi finally folded down the cover over the piano's ivory keys and said,

“Before this wonderful evening is over, I've a special story to read to you. It was written by one of our Episcopal preachers--the minister in the Protestant Episcopal Church in New York City. He was a Professor of Oriental and Greek Literature, Divinity and Biblical Learning at the Theological seminary of the church. In the year 1822 he introduced Americans in the north to a wonderful man named Santa Claus. He did it with a poem he wrote called “A Visit from St. Nicholas”—and also called, “Twas the Night Before Christmas.”

“Now Santa Claus has many names. He is also called St. Nicholas. He was named after St. Nickolas because St. Nickolas was a kind and good man, a Christian bishop who did good works, helped people, gave money to the needy and taught the word of Jesus Christ. Because he gave so much, St. Nick's name was also given to Santa Claus. Santa Claus gives gifts to good little Southern boys and girls if he can get through the blockade. And, my little darlings, a little mouse told me that Santa Claus is coming to our house tonight after we're all fast asleep.”

“And now let me introduce y'all to Santa Claus.” This will be your bedtime story.”

Then to the delight of children and the adults- they heard for the first time in their lives the words, beginning an amazing story—T'was the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.”

After the story, time came for beds and sleep and dreams. As expected the earliest of morning's light saw the adults awakened by the children.

Then it was back to the Parlor and to the now lit once again Christmas tree. But this time there was a difference—instead of just three little wrapped in red presents under the tree, there were numbers of presents—some wrapped in cloth that looked familiar. It was made of feed sacks and made possible by the invention of the sewing machine by Elias Howe and Isaac Singer in 1850. Some gifts were wrapped in old newspapers tied with pretty ribbons. They all looked wonderful to six little eyes.

Gramps declared, “Quite obviously, Santa Claus came here during the night. Because your Granny remembered to put milk and cookies out for him, Santa remembered to leave a lot of Christmas presents here for our gang.”

“He had to go on delivering presents other places, so now I'll just take his place and if he put names on these gifts, I'll give them out. Well, look here, look here—there are names, so—“

Everyone received something. Uncle Bub and Aunt Lizzy were thrilled with the gifts they received and danced off taking all the food they could carry. Later Mimi would distribute the usual gifts of goodies and new clothes to the rest of the slaves who were already enjoying happy holidays.

The family's presents were home made things—with the exception of a shiny Confederate belt buckle and a hat like his Daddy's for Bobby and two real little silver spoons for his sisters and some fancy hair ribbons with lace. The socks hanging from the mantel were loaded with candies the grown ups had gathered for months.

The kids' mother and their Aunt received engraved mirrors, which pleased them enormously.

Santa left Grandpa a brand new pipe and special tobacco.

Great Grandmother received many balls of bright colored wool and a fine basket to hold them.

After the unwrapping of the gifts, the papers were carefully folded to be used again next year.

Then in the full light of morning, each person dressed, ate a small breakfast, piled into a family wagon and off to St. Mark's Episcopal Church they went--their wagon followed by those holding the family's house servants. The field hands would have their own services in a chapel on the place.

At one o'clock, home again, the family had dinner in the formal dining room while the sun beamed through the windows and lit on the long buffet where all the food was placed. The grown ups served all the plates. On this special occasion the children were invited to eat at the big table with the adults.

Gramps said the blessing, his voice falling warm and soothing on the ears of his loved ones. A single pair of tears drifted down from the green eyes of Mimi, but everyone else looked happy despite the fact that six chairs sat empty before a long table at the back of the room on which six place settings of silver, crystal and china remained unused.

Then came playtime for the children busy with their presents. This was followed by suppertime and more ohs and ahs and admiration of presents and then it was get ready for bedtime.

Kisses and hugs were shared, goodnight prayers said—missing husbands, fathers and brothers were given special blessings. God was asked to hold those dearly beloved men in the palm of his hand and bring them home safely. The dear brother already in Heaven was told again of the love held for him by all in his family still on earth.

Tired heads lay down on fluffed pillows. Tired bodies sank down into feather beds and were covered by quilts hand made with love.

Brains dreamed and slept. Strength was rebuilt. Each member of this little family through sleep prepared to survive--to live to love, to laugh, to cry, to lose and to win on yet another Southern day.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE AUTHOR: TO ALL FELLOW CONFEDERATE DESCENDANTS:

Fortunately for you and me and ours-- they and other families just like them, bravely survived through times, which grew progressively harsher, grew tougher. Unwanted, hateful interlopers arrived -- foreigners, cruel-mean, and totally controlling- bringing with them Reconstruction designed to remake the minds of Southerners and turn them into good, patriotic Americans—or at least into good Yankees believing the big lie that the war was fought by the north to free the slaves and that the Constitution was still the Law of the Land.

Our families surviving through those evil filled yesterdays made possible all our joy filled todays and the tomorrows of our children. That's the truth we should hold tight to forever-- not only in our minds, but also in our Southern hearts. We must always honor our ancestors and honor the principles for which they fought. We must remember that we are honor bound to tell their truths to all who will listen.

The little story I've shared here with you is one that, although fictitious, is typical of the time, and the people throughout our Confederate States of America. Its truth is found in thousands of Southern lives. The family's happenings were much like those, which occurred in my own family and in other Confederate homes where the men of the South were away fighting for our freedom, our God, and our country.

<http://deovindice.org/the-confederate-society-blog/archives/12-2013>



**For Christmas**



**Remember them.**



North Carolina Confederates

**Letter written by Walter Battle, of the 4th North Carolina, to his mother, Christmas day, 1864.**

**CAMP THREE MILES NORTH OF PETERSBURG,  
Christmas Day, Dec. 25, 1864.**

**My Dear Mother:**

**"I intended to have written the day after getting here, but it rained all day and the coldest kind of rain too. The next day we received orders to move. We had almost completed our winter quarters and the boys hated to leave very much. We did not think at the time we should ever come back again, though some men from each company**

was left in camp to take care of the things. I was the one from our company left.

Last Thursday about sunset the division left and camped in a mile or two of Drury's Bluff, some ten miles from here. Last night about 9 o'clock they returned. We shall complete our quarters in two or three days now. To-day being Sunday and Christmas too, the boys think we should rest. It is the gloomiest Christmas that I ever saw. We not only miss the extras which we have had heretofore, but we have not got as much meat or bread as we can eat.

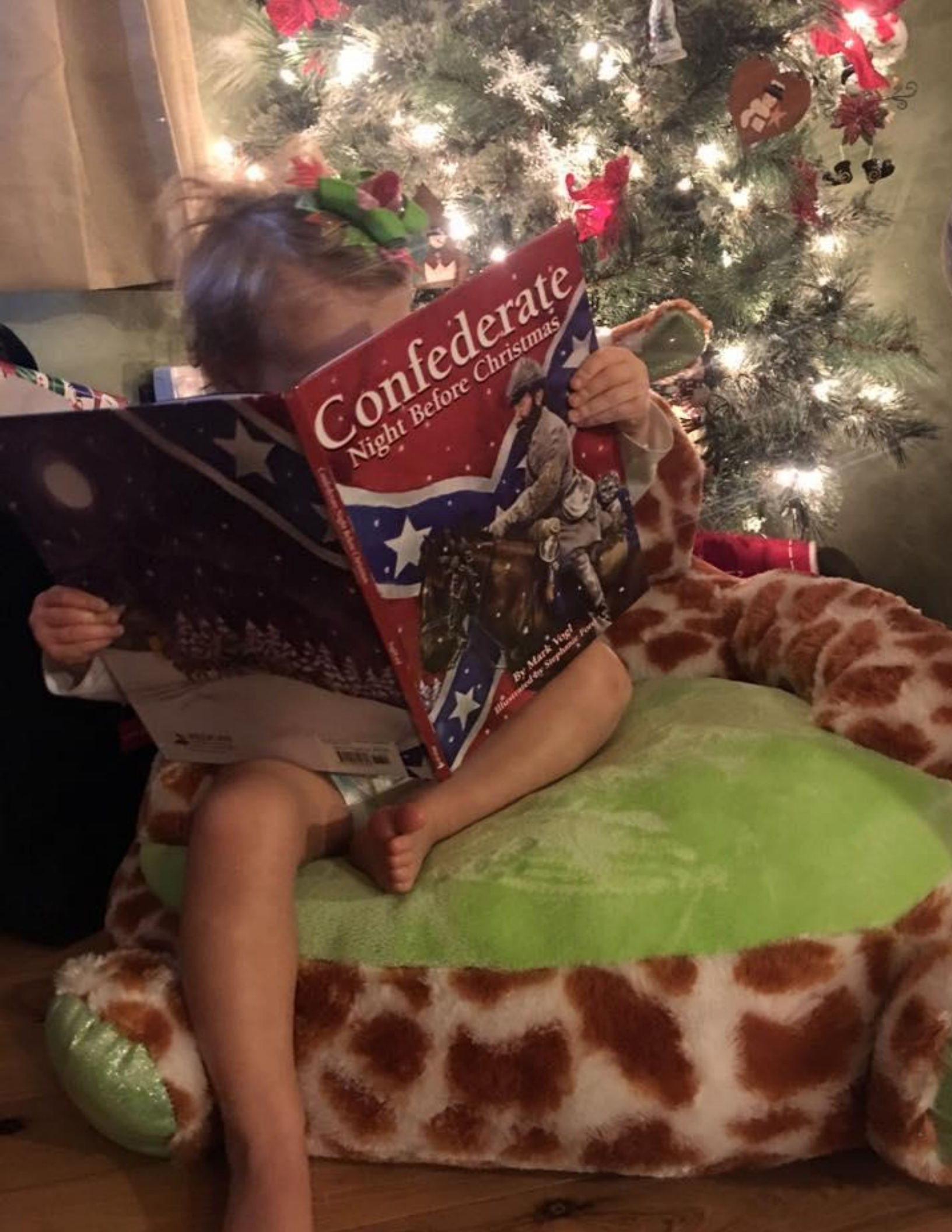
The Christmas dinner promised to Lee's army, I see in the papers, has been postponed until New Year's day. I doubt then whether we get any as we are not in the entrenchments, though I think we deserve it as much as they do. We have done as much hard fighting and as for marching we have done all. The boys were all glad to see us.

Gen. Grimes happened to ride by as I arrived and was pulling my things off. He stopped and had quite a long chat, he seemed right glad to see me back. Col. Venable, one of Gen. Lee's staff, told Gen. Grimes, who is in command of the division now, to make the men as comfortable as possible, that we would in all probability remain here all winter, unless something turned up unforeseen at present. I am in hopes it may be so, for I think our division needs rest if any troops in the army do.

I understand we came here to relieve some of the troops in the fortification, but as they had made themselves comfortable, they would not be relieved. They preferred to remain in the works on the front line. I think they are sensible too, for I expect they will have us running all around, just as we did the past two or three days, all winter. I almost wish we had been sent South instead of Hoke's division. In passing through Raleigh I stayed all night at the Way-Side-Inn. Next morning in rolling up my blankets I forgot to put my socks in and came off and left them. I never hated anything so bad in my life. Just think they were the only extra pieces of clothing I took along, and then should lose them.

If McBride has not left before you receive this please send me another pair. If you have any extra butter at the time just wrap a rag around a small ball and get him to bring that along. It is the best way to send it in cold weather. He will have to walk about a mile from where the cars stop to our camp. The cars stop two miles this side of Petersburg, for fear of being shelled. Blake has gone to Petersburg today on pass. He is looking very well. I called to see Uncle Richard while in Raleigh, the only relative I saw. Give my love to all the family."

Your affectionate son, WALTER.



# Confederate Night Before Christmas

By Mark Vogt  
Illustrated by Stephanie Powell



# Christmas with the 18th Mississippi Infantry

Posted on [December 24, 2015](#) by [championhilz](#)

The following account of Christmas in the 18th Mississippi Infantry was taken from a letter published by the *Memphis Daily Appeal* on January 7, 1862. At the time this account was written, the 18th was camped at Leesburg, Virginia, and the men of the regiment were spending their first Christmas away from home:

*While I now write, preparations are going on for 'winter quarters,' and the sounds of axes and falling timber are resounding through the weeds on every hand. Game cocks tied to the tent by one leg, are crowing defiantly in all directions – chicken-fights are progressing in every sunny spot, while violins and circles of dancers are scattered in every warm and dry location, while others roar out bachanalian and war-like strains from every tent. It is Christmas! Far away from friends and home, these brave and simple-hearted volunteers make the welkin ring with their boisterous mirth – huge logs are crackling and roaring on camp fires – pots are boiling and bubbling, and hissing for egg-nog, beef and pork are frying, and bread is baking – the regimental band has been imbibing, and is now playing away with great gusto, while some have formed sets for quadrilles to be danced by the fire light.*



*It is Christmas! Groups are reading the newspapers and deciding the fate and progress of the war, officers and men are hobnobbing over the social glass; negroes are busy and gaseous over a pyramid of pots and pans, while the ear-splitting laughter and incessant rolling of eyes gives positive assurance that they have made acquaintance with something stronger than water. Boxes, bales, and trunks, and parcels have come from 'home' – coats, and blankets, and boots, and hats are hawked about, and swapped, and sold, and tossed about, while long letters from the 'Governor,' and short ones from 'sweethearts' are read, and praised, and laughed at, while 'payday' coming on the morrow, cheers are given for the quartermaster, and stentorian groans for the inartistic or tardy cash.*

“Christmas Boxes in Camp” By Winslow Homer – Harper’s Weekly, January 4, 1862

*It is Christmas! Friends with mysterious bundles and parcels, hid under the coat, arrive from town, and dive therewith into the depth and recesses of the tent, and hide them under the straw – friends with turkeys and fowl, and a hundred other things, meet together and do hungry justice to the same, while songs and stories go the rounds of tents and camps, and everybody laughs, and everybody is 'jolly' except the poor and unfortunate frost-covered sentinel, who, with muffled form and a very red nose, walks his lonely rounds and grins at what he cannot then enjoy.*



“Christmas Eve” by Thomas Nast, published in the January 1863 edition of Harper’s Weekly

*It is Christmas time, and even the lean, lank, solemn looking parson unbends in dignity for the occasion, and while forming one of a circle round the blazing logs, cup in hand, essays to joke, but being ‘coughed down’ for the attempt, winks ominously at the egg-nog, and apostrophises largely on the vanity of things generally. The colonel too, and the lieutenant, and the shrill-toned, brisk and soldierly adjutant smoke their Havanas on the portico of ‘headquarters’ with solemn dignity, while the French band-master electrifies a knot of youngsters with all sorts of ‘impossibilities’ on the trombone.*

*It is Christmas time, and coming but once a year none care for expenses. The*



Offering a toast with Egg Nog – <http://www.historickansas.org>

*Yankees are the last persons thought of – cock-fighting and egg-nog, and egg-nog and cock-fighting interspersed with songs and egg-nog and story-telling are the prime order of things just now, and despite all the parson says, and notwithstanding the ‘starchiness’ of full-blown officials, rye and ‘egg fruit’ are decidedly in the ascendant, and more than that has no baneful effect, since it simply lends to revive old associations and strengthen those bonds of brotherhood which has indissolubly linked us for ever to the fortunes of our country.*

The above letter was only signed T.E.C., but fortunately I was able to figure out this these initials stood for Thomas E. Caffey, a private in Company D "Hamer Rifles," 18th Mississippi Infantry.

Caffey enlisted in the Hamer Rifles at Yazoo City in May 1861 for 12 months service. The 25 year old was a native of London, England, and listed his occupation as teacher. At the end of his year's enlistment, he applied for a discharge, stating he had to return to England to take care of the estate of his deceased parents. In 1864 Caffey published a book about his experiences in the war titled *Battlefields of the South From Bull Run to Fredericksburg*. This book is available for free download from the Hathitrust.org website.

On a personal note I would like to thank everyone who reads and enjoys my blog – your kind comments make it all worthwhile I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas!

<https://mississippiconfederates.wordpress.com/2015/12/24/christmas-with-the-18th-mississippi-infantry/>

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**Remember DIXIE! She needs your help his Christmas more than ever!**

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# Morgan's Christmas Raid of 1862

January 30, 2011 in [1862](#), [Guest article](#) from Byron S. Bush

After the Battle of Perryville, Kentucky on October 8, 1862, Union General Don Carlos Buell was relieved of command and replaced with William S. Rosecrans. Rosecrans renamed the Army of the Ohio and changed the name to the Army of the Cumberland. With his new Army, Rosecrans pushed into Southern territory. In order to keep his army fed and well supplied, he needed to keep the Louisville & Nashville Railroad operating at full capacity. Rosecrans made sure that the Louisville & Nashville Railroad was heavily defended with stockades at the tunnels and bridges.

Confederate General John Hunt Morgan, the "Thunderbolt of the Confederacy", was a Kentucky native and knew the Louisville & Nashville Railroad well. He decided that the best place to disrupt Rosecrans supply line was at a pair of one hundred foot high trestles that ran for about five hundred feet. They were located below Louisville, Kentucky, just north of Elizabethtown, and ran through Muldraugh's Hill. After consulting with Confederate General Braxton Bragg, commander of the Army of Tennessee, Bragg gave Morgan permission for his raid.



Confederate raider John Hunt Morgan

On December 22, 1862, Morgan left Alexandria, Tennessee with 3,100 cavalymen and seven pieces of artillery. The effective force was divided into two brigades, the first brigade was under the command of Col. Basil Duke of the Second Kentucky Cavalry and the second command was under the command of Col. W. C. P. Breckinridge of the Ninth Kentucky Cavalry. Four pieces of artillery; two twelve pounder howitzers and two six pounder guns of Palmer's

battery were assigned to Col. Duke. Col. Breckinridge's brigade had one three inch Parrott Rifle commanded by Captain White and two mountain howitzers under Lt. C. C. Corbett.<sup>1</sup>

When Morgan's men left Alexandria, four hundred of his men had no arms and performed duty as horse holders. There were no sabers among any of the men. The men in ranks were equipped with one or two Colt army pistols, a few had cavalry carbines, a large number of the troopers carried double barreled shotguns. Most of the men carried long barreled Enfield, Austrian, or Belgian rifles, which were used mostly by the infantry. The average of Morgan's men were between 18 to 35 years old. Every cavalrymen carried his own ammunition, two extra horseshoes, twelve nails, one blanket in addition to the saddle blanket, and an oil cloth overcoat.<sup>2</sup>The men carried three days cooked rations.

By December 24, Morgan's men had traveled ninety miles and was within six miles from Glasgow. As the men entered the town, they encountered the advance guard of a battalion of the Second Michigan Cavalry, Company C, under Lt. Darrow. A skirmish broke out between the forces and Morgan lost Captain W. E. Jones of Company A, Ninth Kentucky Cavalry and a private in Breckinridge's regiment were mortally wounded, and Lt. Samuel O. Peyton, of Duke's regiment was seriously wounded and about seven of his men taken prisoners. The Second Michigan Cavalry lost one man killed, one wounded, and sixteen captured. Not only did Morgan's men manage to capture sixteen men from the Second Michigan, they also managed to capture a number of Christmas turkeys.

On December 25, Christmas Day, Morgan passed through Glasgow and took Bear Wallow turnpike toward Munfordville, Kentucky. About ten miles from Green River, Morgan's scouts reported that a battalion of cavalry was drawn up and awaiting Morgan's approach. The battalion of Federal cavalry were two companies each of the Fourth and Fifth Indiana Cavalry, under the command of Col. Isaac Gray. Fifty of Morgan's advance guard rode forward and when then approached within two hundred yards from the Federal line, Captain Quirk of Morgan's scouts, halted the men, dismounted and advanced on foot. Reaching the top of the rise in the lane with a high fence on either side, the Federals opened fire, which Quirk's men returned from the fence corners. The Federals had set an ambush and the or Fifth Indiana or 12<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry, depending upon which report you read, rushed up to an adjoining rail fence and began to fire upon Morgan's men. Several of Morgan's men were wounded, including Captain Quirk. The erupting battle stampeded Morgan's horses, leaving Quirk's scouts on foot. Five members of Morgan's men were captured. The rest of the scouts jumped over the fence and ran for a scrub oak thicket, which was located one or two hundred yards across a field. By this time, the leading regiment of the main column of Morgan's men arrived, rounded up the stampeded horses, and rescued the scouts. The scouts and the regiment charged the Federals and after a few minutes the Federals were surrounded and forced to surrender. Union Col. Edward Hobson, commanding the Munfordville, only reported one killed, two prisoners, and several horses killed, with no loss to the 12<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry.

On the chance that the Federals might have guessed that Morgan was going to attack the trestles, he decided that Lt. Col. John B. Hutchinson and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky Cavalry should attack the Bacon Creek Bridge, while the rest of his regiments would approach Elizabethtown. The Yankees had constructed a massive stockade within a hundred yards of the Bacon Creek Bridge. The entire length of the bridge could be covered by rifle fire. Hutchinson arrived and ordered the Parrott gun, which had been captured at Hartsville, Tennessee, and a mountain howitzer to fire at the stockade, while he sent a detail to fire the bridge. Several fires were started on the bridge, but the incessant cold rain put out the flames. Hutchinson himself tried to put lighted brands on the railroad, only to be shot away by the Federal sharpshooters. Hutchinson severely shelled the stockade, but the stockade held out. A number of the shells burst within the stockade and some of the shells penetrated the walls and an old barn, which had been left within the earthworks. The barn was blown apart, with many of the timbers falling on the Federal soldiers within the stockade.<sup>3</sup> Morgan arrived and sent a flag of truce and demanded an unconditional surrender. Captain James, who commanded the stockade, finally decided to surrender. Ninety three men of the Ninety First Illinois Infantry surrendered. Hutchinson made sure that the telegraph lines were cut and the poles torn down. For a few days, Rosecrans Nashville base was cut off from Louisville. Hutchinson also made sure that the tracks were torn up for several miles. Col. Basil Duke arrived at Nolin and sent a flag of truce to the commander of the stockade. The commander agreed to surrender if Col. Duke would show him the number of pieces of artillery. Col. Duke showed the Union commander his two mountain howitzers, which Col Duke temporarily borrowed, but when Col. Duke pressed him to comply with his part of the agreement, the Union commander hesitated, and said he would return and consult with his officers. While the Union commander returned to his officers, Col. Duke made sure that he saw the artillery was planted closer to the stockade and his riflemen in position to have a better command of the ground. The Union officer came back to Col. Duke and surrendered. Col. Duke took the stockade at Nolin without a fight and captured three officers and 73 privates of the Ninety First Illinois Infantry. The stockade and bridge were destroyed.

By December 27, Morgan's advance regiments were within six miles of Elizabethtown. Morgan had been informed that seven or eight Federal companies were stationed at Elizabethtown. When he arrived at the town, a message arrived, scrawled in pencil on the back of an envelope, which read:

To the commander of the Confederate forces:

Sir: I demand an unconditional surrender of all your forces. I have you surrounded, and will compel you to surrender. I am, sir, your obedient servant, Col. H.S. Smith.

To Morgan's amusement, he replied that the positions were reversed and Morgan had Smith surrounded and called for Smith's surrender. Smith wrote back that as an officer in the Union forces he would fight and not surrender.

Morgan ordered Col. Duke to deploy his command to the right and Col. Breckinridge to deploy his command to the left of the town and to throw skirmishers forward to discover the positions of the enemy. The Yankees had taken possession of several brick houses on the outskirts of town and Morgan soon realized the Yankees decided to make a street fight. Morgan placed his artillery in position on a hill a little to the left of the road, which completely commanded the town and sent Captain C. C. Corbett, with one mountain howitzer, to attack the town on the right. According to Basil Duke, the Parrott gun was placed in the pike and Palmer's four guns "roared out from the hill on the left of the hill six hundred yards from the town, where General Morgan himself was superintending the fire."<sup>4</sup> Captain Palmer's artillery struck every house occupied by the Union soldiers. According to Col. Duke, Palmer concentrated his fire upon the building where "the flag floated and the enemy seemed thickest, and moved his six pounders into the very edge of town."<sup>5</sup> While under heavy fire from the houses, Captain Corbett ran his howitzer into town. Lt. Col. R. G. Stoner, commanding Breckinridge's regiment, charged into town. After Morgan shelled the town for about half an hour, the town surrendered, including 652 Union soldiers, including 25 officers.

On December 28, Morgan approached his major objective: the two wooden trestles at Muldraugh's Hill, each protected by a stockade. Morgan divided his ranks into two lines. Morgan sent a truce party to offer the Yankees a chance to surrender peacefully. The offer was refused and Morgan began a simultaneous artillery barrage on the two stockades. Col. Duke's brigade moved against the upper trestles and Col. Breckinridge's brigade moved against the lower trestle. After almost three hours of bombardment from the Confederate artillery, the 71<sup>st</sup> Indiana Infantry ran up white flags and both Union stockades surrendered. Morgan captured 650 prisoners. After the surrender of the Union troops, the Rebels burned the two trestles. After the capture of the Union prisoners, Morgan's men were equipped with the .577 Enfield rifles.

Morgan and his men accomplished their mission. General Morgan reported that: "he had the satisfaction of knowing that the object of the expedition was attained, and the railroad was rendered impassable for at least two months. These two trestles are the largest and finest on the whole road, being, each of them, some sixty feet in height and from 300 to 350 yards in length. Neither of them had ever before been destroyed during the war. Seven hundred prisoners, including 27 officers, were captured, and a large and valuable amount of medical, quartermaster's and commissary stores were destroyed." Morgan's estimate was conservative, rebuilding the bridges and trestles and restoring service on the L&N would not start until mid March 1863.

Now that Morgan's mission was accomplished, he had to figure a way to get his men back into Tennessee. Union Col. Edward Hobson was hot on Morgan's trail. To make matters worse, the weather had become extremely hazardous. Freezing rain, ice and sleet pummeled Morgan's men. On December 29, Morgan sent Col. R. S. Cluke's regiment, with one piece of artillery, to attack and burn the bridge over the Rolling Fork; Col. D. W. Chenault's regiment of the 11<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry and one piece of artillery were to burn the stockade at Boston and three companies of Col. Breckinridge's regiment and one mountain howitzer were to attack New Haven. Morgan gave his orders and the regiments moved out towards their objectives. Just Morgan's rear regiments were crossing the Rolling Fork, a large Union force comprising of five regiments of infantry and cavalry, under Col. John Harlan, came up and began to shell the ford. Morgan sent Col. Duke, who was in the rear, to send a courier to Col. Cluke, ordering him to rejoin the command and hold back the enemy until the entire command had crossed the ford. Col. Duke and Breckinridge places seven companies in position, with five in reserve. The Union force was repulsed several times, until a Union artillery shell severely wounded Col. Duke. Col. Duke fell unconscious from his horse, blood flowing from the side of his head. Duke's men thought that their commander was dead. Captain Tom Quirk, who had been assisting Duke, ran forward and lifted the apparently lifeless body upon his horse, guided the horse into the stream and carried Col. Duke and himself safely across the river to the opposite bank. Quirk managed to find a carriage at a farm house and filled the carriage with feather mattresses and blankets.

Meanwhile, Col. Breckinridge took over command and maintained his position until Col. Cluke's regiment had crossed the river. Morgan ordered Col. Cluke to fall back. While the battle was raging at Rolling Fork, Col. Chenault managed to capture and burn the stockade at Boston. The force sent to burn the stockade at New Haven was not successful. The Yankees at the Rolling Fork bridge were within hearing range of the Confederates and heard that Col. Duke was dead and Col. Hobson reported to President Lincoln that Col. Duke was dead.

When Morgan and Col. Duke arrived in Bardstown, Col. Duke was taken to Dr. Cox's two story brick house and up the stairway to the north end room where he was laid on a thick pallet on the floor. Dr. Thomas Allen, surgeon of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kentucky attended Duke. The wound was on the right side of the head, a piece of skin and bone behind the ear

was gone. As Dr. Allen washed the wound, Col. Duke opened his eyes and said cheerfully: "That was a pretty close call."

The next morning Morgan rode out of Bardstown, Col. Duke rode in a feather bedded buggy. By mid afternoon, Morgan's men were in Springfield. Morgan approached Lebanon, but the town had become a concentration point for eight thousand Union troops. To make matters worse, Morgan reports came in stating that ten thousand Federals were between Glasgow and the Cumberland River crossings. Quietly, Morgan and his men rerouted through Campbellsville, avoiding Lebanon.

While marching around Lebanon, the weather had turned bitterly cold and the freezing rain turned to sleet. A strong wind made the conditions ever worse and icicles began to form on the horses bridles and halters. The men's mustaches and beards even had icicles hanging from them.

On New Years Eve, December 31, 1862, Morgan spent the day at Campbellsville. The next day, Morgan's men marched toward Columbia, Tennessee. On that same day, Confederate General Braxton Bragg and Union General William Rosecrans were fighting a major battle at Stone's River, Tennessee. By January 1, the Battle of Stone's River had ended with Bragg pulling out of Murfreesboro and heading towards Tullahoma.

On December 5, Morgan's men rode into Smithville. During Morgan's Christmas Raid, he had managed to capture 1,887 Union soldiers and destroyed at least two million dollars worth of Union property, with only two dead and 24 wounded. Morgan's command returned well armed and better mounted than when they had left. Union Major General Horatio Wright, commanding at Cincinnati, was trying to deliver one million rations to Rosecrans army, but Morgan had managed to destroy the railroad preventing any supplies by rail. Wright tried to send the supplies by river, but the river was too low to transport the badly needed supplies. Wright was afraid that Rosecrans army would starve. Because of the damaged to the railroads, Rosecrans was forced to send out forage expeditions to gather food for his men. His army would not be able to move out from Murfreesboro for six months.

Although Morgan's raid was a great success, his raid drew his cavalry away from Bragg, when Bragg needed every man on the battlefield to fight General Rosecrans at the Battle of Stone's River. Morgan's men, along with Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest's three thousand men, who had been sent to destroy the railroads in the rear of Union General Ulysses S. Grant's army in western Tennessee and northern Mississippi, might have been just enough men to help turn the tide of battle and turn an indecisive battle for Bragg into a Confederate victory and could have altered the war in the Western Theater. ■

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<sup>1</sup>Basil Duke, *History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 1867.

<sup>2</sup>Wyeth, John, Allen, Morgan's Christmas Raid, 1862-1863, Robert Lanier, editor, *Photographic History of the Civil War: Armies and Leaders* (New York: Random House Publishing, 1983, 1997) 144.

<sup>3</sup>Basil Duke, *History of Morgan's Cavalry*, 1867.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

# GERMAN CHRISTMAS PICKLE HAS CIVIL WAR ROOTS

Posted on [December 22, 2014](#)

Did you know that the German Christmas Pickle Tradition has Civil War roots? It truly does!

The so called “German tradition” of the Weihnachts-Gurke or Christmas Pickle is one that most native Germans have never heard of in their homeland, however across the pond it became an immediate hit with children and their families all across America.



To think the result of today’s “German Christmas Pickle Tradition” actually all started in a US Confederate POW camp in the 1860’s in Georgia. It was inspired from a little act of kindness by a Confederate Prison Guard to a desperate, near death Union Prisoner of German nationality. That gesture actually fortified a will for that POW to survive and live to see another day and to pioneer the Christmas Pickle.





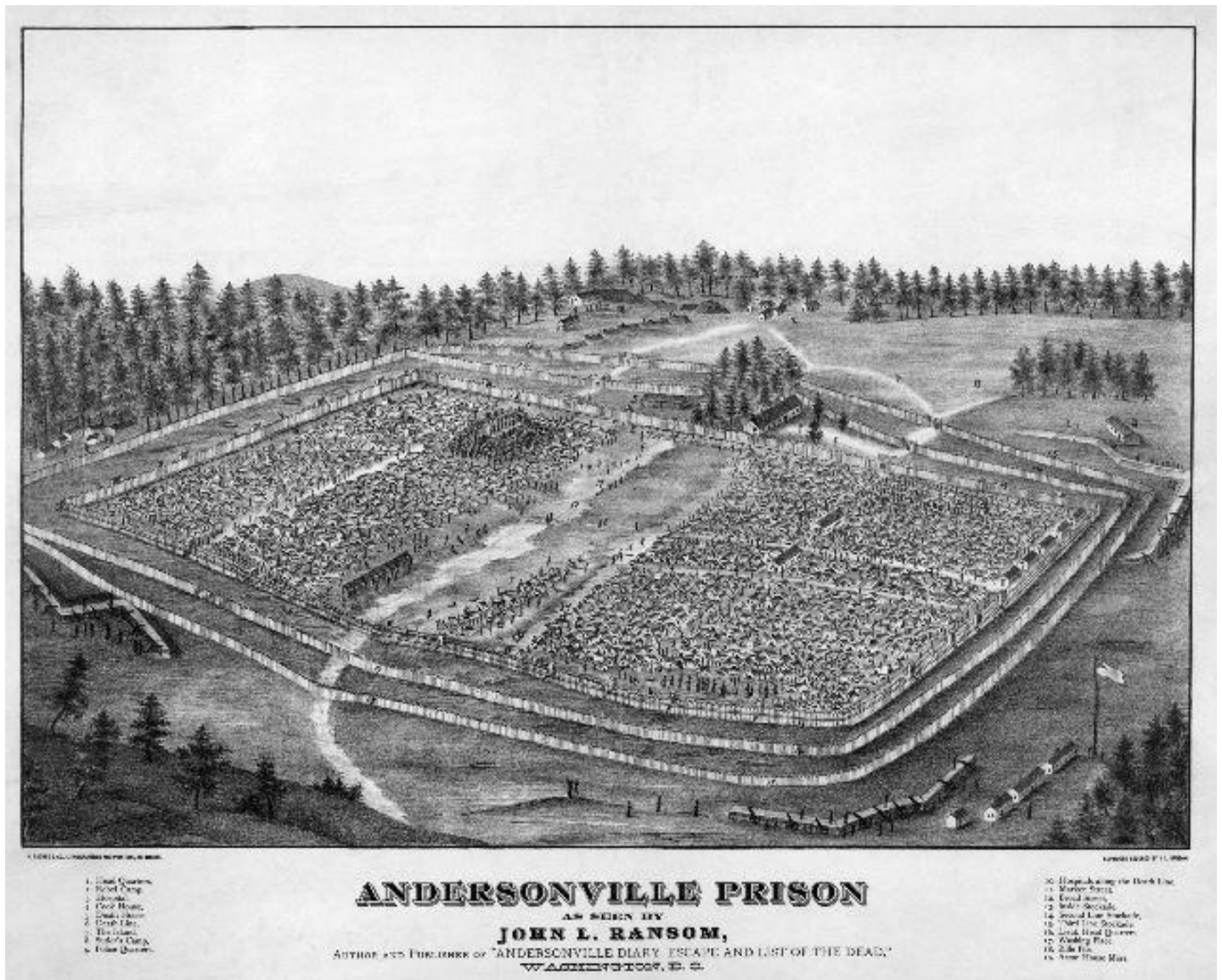
In the spirit of Christmas, many children across America are captivated each yule tide season by participating in a newly discovered family tradition of being the first child to find a unique Christmas ornament that looks like a pickle and is hidden deep in the boughs of their Christmas tree a few days earlier by their parents.

After the excitement of opening gifts is long over, the trash is all picked up and the initial thrill of playing with the new toys have subsided somewhat, the last thing on the Christmas morning agenda for the children to accomplish is to race each other to the now stripped Christmas tree... and find that pickle! The winner that finds the special Christmas pickle will often receive an additional present, a special consideration or even some extra money plus the certainty of guaranteed good-luck over the upcoming year.

John William Lower, formerly known as Hans Wilhelm Lauer of Ernstthal, Germany was in Philadelphia visiting family when he decided to join forces and serve the Union Army during the Civil War as a civilian wagon and forage master.

John Lower was eventually captured by southern confederate forces and was sent to prison in Andersonville, Georgia at a POW camp named Camp Sumter which was the largest Confederate military prison during the American Civil War. Camp Sumter was a place that out of approximately 45,000 Union prisoners of war, 12,913 prisoners died on location from a variety of causes that including starvation, malnutrition, diarrhea and disease.





It was now in the winter of 1864. The Civil War between the States would not end until the late summer of the next year in 1865. John Lower himself was now faced with starvation and certain death as his health and mental faculty deteriorated with each passing day. It was on a crisp Christmas morning that John noticed a confederate prison guard eating a pickle and begged for one for himself. The compassionate guard took pity on John Lower and gave him a pickle in a most sincere act of kindness.

John confessed to close family and friends that it was indeed that pickle that ultimately saved his life. It was symbolic gesture of kindness and more or less gave him hope, strength and determination to make it through a very horrific period of his life in captivity.

It was back home in Germany years later that Mr. Lower purchased a custom made and ordered Christmas Pickle Ornament to bring back to America when visiting relatives in Philadelphia Pa. His plan was to share it with his USA based German-American family too.

John's German Christmas Pickle Tradition, that he started himself with his very own children in Germany was huge success! The process is simply hiding a special pickle ornament on the Christmas tree to bring blessed good fortune and luck to the child who found it on Christmas morning... in addition to receiving another special gift.

You may be wondering now if this is a true story or not? Let's take a look at the facts as they present themselves and allow you the reader of the story to make up your own mind.

- There was a German emigrant family under the name of John Lower from the 1800's census residing in Philadelphia Pa.
- There was a Confederate military prison during the American Civil War named Camp Sumter located in Andersonville, GA. where 12,913 POW prisoners there died in captivity.
- Hans Wilhelm Lauer (John William Lower) was again himself from Ernstthal, Germany and Lauscha, Germany is interestingly less than 20 miles away form Ernstthal, Germany that is now located in the German state of Thuringia.

Let it be also known that the glass blower craftsmen in Lauscha, Germany was known for producing the first (German made) glass ornaments in 1597. It was in 1847 when the craftsmen produced ornaments in the in the shape of fruits and nuts and were freely exported across parts of Europe, England and some in the United States as well!

In 1880 F.W. Woolworth began importing these glass ornaments to the USA and beyond and eventually monopolized the market making a fortune!

It's quite amusing sometimes how traditions actually start and most people have no idea the real story behind the story. In the land of St Nick, the Christmas tree, fruitcake and candy canes, you now have to throw in a pickle as well. The question will now always be, "Is the actual pickle be a dill or a sweet one?"

<http://www.pureleverage.com/ilikesbybrian/german-christmas-pickle-has-civil-war-roots/>





# Moss Neck Manor .....



## Christmas Day 1862

General Stonewall Jackson used Moss Neck Manor as his winter headquarters from December 1862 through March 1863. They arrived in mid-December, cold and hungry, but elated by the Confederate victory at Fredericksburg a few days earlier. The general declined an invitation to stay in the mansion, and was quoted as saying that it was "too luxurious for a soldier." Tens of thousands of soldiers camped on the rolling hills of the plantation, and they felled many of the estate's trees, which they used as firewood and to make log huts.

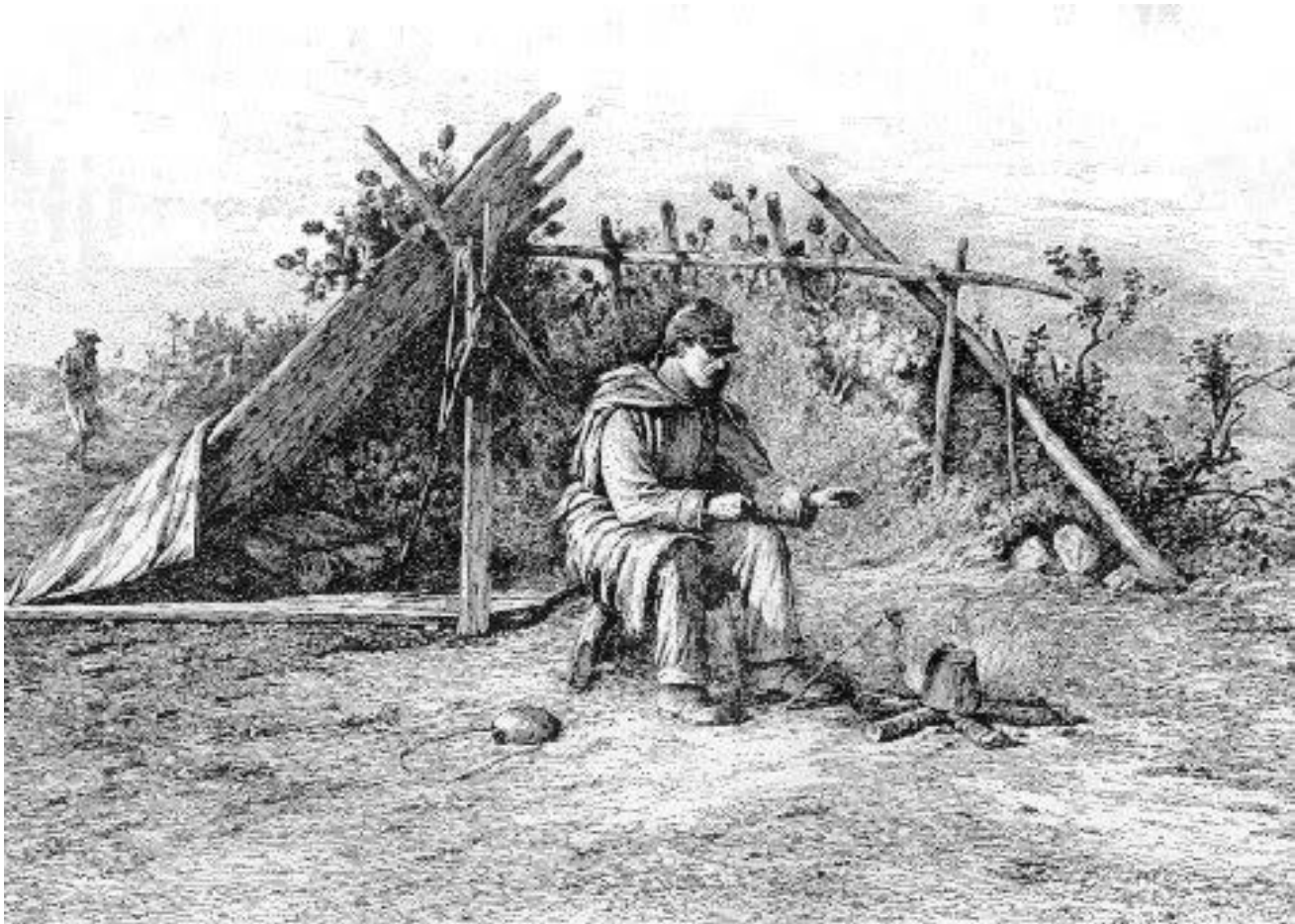
On Christmas Day 1862, General Robert E. Lee accepted an invitation to dine with General Stonewall Jackson at his winter headquarters on the grounds of Moss Neck Plantation. After sharing a meal at the outbuilding Jackson used as an office, General Lee bid his host farewell and headed back to his own headquarters.

# Christmas of 1863

Private Philip D. Stephenson, Co. K, of the 13th Arkansas, recalled his Christmas of 1863 in his memoirs: "It was a typical Christmas Day - snow and ice and keen cold. Spent by the camp at large in the cabins toasting their feet before blazing fires, smoking, and talking of home, and what they used to have for dinner on Christmas, and what they would like to have then, and wondering when the war would end.

Some of the officers of the various regiments were favored with an invitation from the Division and Brigade Headquarters to a Christmas Dinner. None of the men. That wouldn't do! After the rest were gone, we resolved to have a Christmas Day too!"

Stephenson explained how they "borrowed a little here and there and gathered together some rice, brown sugar, whiskey, spice, flour and corn meal," out of which they concocted a rice pudding and an oven cake of "batter bread." "The cooking of that dinner! Shall I ever forget it. Neither of us knew anything about cooking, nor had any "turn" for it. We did other needed things in the mess...The batter bread was reasonable enough to look at, but the Rice Pudding was a sight to see, ominous, threatening to play havoc with our insides. But that Rice Pudding did not know soldiers' stomachs. We ate that pudding, all of it. It was vile, but we ate it and laughed as we ate it until the tears ran from our eyes and our sides ached! We shook as we sat turn fashion, around it, and reeled in our seats, and shouted over it."



A CHRISTMAS DINNER.



## Detour Along the Way

# Merry Christmas

*"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)*

It was Christmas Eve, and we were still a few hours away from our destination! We had planned to spend the holiday with kinfolk now living in Mississippi just south of Memphis Tennessee, so we turned onto route 157, which intersects north Birmingham Alabama running northwest toward Sheffield and heading toward the little community of Moulton. As we passed through the general area we decided to pause for a respite along the way, stopping at a the location of a little known Confederate College to the southwest on Bowersox Drive.

Afterward we'd resume our journey onward toward northwestern Mississippi; it was still late afternoon, and we were somewhat reluctant fearing we'd not make our destination at reasonable hour. The Moulton College was burned to the ground by Yankees during 'the war' and is now a memorial park and Confederate Cemetery.

We made our approach to Bowersox Drive, slowed down and turned left toward the small Confederate Memorial Park, which lay at the far end of a narrow backcountry road. The park contains a few log cabins, a visitors building as well as signs posted about describing what happened in the various locations.

Then the Confederate Graveyard can be found by continuing along the road past the entrance gate to a separate location. This delay would mean we'd never make our destination until the late hours of the night, but for some reason it seemed urgent that we make the stop over.

We realized that we couldn't stay very long but we decided to visit the park now believing we might not get back this way anytime soon. We were about a quarter mile from the park entrance when we came upon a heavy fog bank, and were forced to turn on our automobile lights, and slow to a crawl.

Then suddenly we found we had left the pavement! I pulled to a quick stop, and got out to survey the situation! Had we gone into the ditch or into revenue? No we had not; the ground was flat and forested round about, still there was no sign of the paved road we had just left. It was as if the pavement had just stopped!

I ask my wife to lock the car doors, whereupon I walked back about another half mile, well past the point where I figured we left the road. I could easily spot my tire tracks for some distance, until suddenly they just ended for no reason! I had spent many years in and around this area, and was very familiar with the terrain!

Upon returning I discovered several landmarks along the way, and reported to my wife who was waiting inside the car, that we should be at the entrance to the park. And the park was obviously here, but all the signs of modern life are gone. I decided to drive further back into this stand of trees, so as to assure myself of our location, rolling down my car window as I drove, for better side visibility.

Maybe perhaps I could also hear something, which would give me a better sense of nearby civilization. However I soon discovered we were driving on what was obviously a wagon trail, and we were beginning to hear noises in the distance, human noises. As we got closer to the

origin of those noises we decided it would be best to park the car, and walk the remaining distance.

Where upon we soon spotted a flat place surrounded by bushes, just large enough a space for our medium size car. So we pulled off the trail, parked and preceded on foot! We walked a little further and saw lights some distance away, and found they were coming from campfires.

However not being sure as to who these people might be, we hide behind some shrub, close enough to see, yet far enough away so as not to be spotted. We were pleasantly suppressed; these people appeared at first glance to be re-enactors camped out for a Confederate style Christmas celebration.

When suddenly we were approached from behind: "Hands in the air or y'all are dead where you stand! Now slowly turn around where I can get a good look at you folks." We both raised our hands and slowly turned around, just as the voice had ordered! I gasp: If this was a re-enactor, this was the most realistic rendition ever portrayed.

I was convinced; I was looking into the face of a real live Confederate Soldier! "Who are you and what are y'all doing here?" the soldier asks. We come up from Florida, and got lost, I replied! Come with me; let's see what the Colonel has to say! We could both hear the soldier mumbling to himself: "Looks like a bunch of Yankee folks to me - sure don't sound like anyone from around here."

We were 'herded' into the light of the campfire, and in the general direction of a tent, which appeared to in use as a command headquarters. Given its size, and all the coming and going from within! As we come near the tent the commotion we had stirred up among the troops, caused the commander, a Confederate Colonel to exit and look over the situation.

"What have you hear private! Don't rightly know sir, appears like Yankees to me - least of all they sure don't seem to be from anywhere around here. Found them snooping around sir!" Our modern Southern accent, didn't match his ole style Southern draw!

About that time I looked at my wife, then at myself, and it startled me to discover we were no longer dressed in modern cloths, but in the attire normal to the period of the War for Confederate Independence. I didn't dare say anything, for fear we would be thought of as crazy or something.

My wife looked at me, at herself and at me again: I signaled to her not to say a word! "They're obviously not armed: did they have any weapons with them private? No sir, just standing back yonder looking like spies! Explain yourselves," the Colonel commanded! I did my best to explain, leaving out anything, which might indicate we came from some future time.

Since I seemed to be left no other option, then to believe we had somehow veered off a paved road, and into the middle of the War for Confederate Independence. I could see from where we stood, numerous cannon, stacks of arms and supply wagons round about, even more could be seen further down the trail, where there was obviously more troop encampments.

The Colonel asks us several questions then addressing the private who had brought us here: "Return to your post private, I will tend to these people!".After the private had departed the Colonel turned to us saying: "I am convinced that as unlikely as your story sounds, you are telling the truth, and have gotten lost along the way.

That being the case please joins us as we pause during this war, take a respite and celebrate

Christmas." We formally introduced ourselves and simply stated we were from Panama City, a small village along the northwest gulf coast of Florida, and were traveling toward Jackson Tennessee when we lost our way.

The good Colonel then escorted us about the encampment, introducing us to his staff as well as many of the troops. Each seemed to have a brief comment to make: every one of which pointed to home and family! Soon things became much lighter in spirit as the campfire singing began and what little food was available was brought forward.

Several lucky hunters added some game, which makes a pleasant Christmas Meal, howbeit very meager. We knew the troops in this camp were in hard straights, but didn't dare turn down the hospitality, so we just munch very slowly, giving polite thanks. Everyone soon got into the spirit of the singing and smiles.

An officer who was obviously a Chaplain came forward in the middle of the merry making and read from the Holy Scriptures: The O so familiar story of the Birth of our Lord Jesus in a Manger so long ago. We mingled among the troops, and both seemed to lose ourselves in the middle of all that was going on. Soon we began to feel comfortable, as if we belonged here!

Indeed, I would have loved to have staying, joined these troops and fought alongside them, but I felt time was calling us back across the years. The colonel was even then approaching us for one last time, and I believe he sense also, the time had come for our departure.

The Colonel approached my wife, and saying in the tone of a Christian Gentleman of that period. "May I extend my warmest thanks, for the privilege of sharing the company of such a fine and beautiful lady? Taking her hand gently, then bowing down and place a kiss upon it, all in the form of the gentleman he had proven himself to be! He then said to her: "Your presence has brought a moment of pleasant joy into this camp!"

Afterward he turned to me and said: "My good sir, may you find your way and let that way be pleasant; of good health and a long life to you both!" We shook hands and soon found ourselves being escorted by another private, out of the encampment. Looking back at the Colonel, I had a feeling he knew, we had come from a lot further away than Florida, an entire world away!

As we walked along the pathway out of the encampment, the private paused with us at the outer edge of his patrol area, very briefly said his good byes, and disappeared into the woods. What seemed like a hundred yards further we passed back through the same fog bank where we had first entered, and spotted our automobile just up ahead.

It was parked by the edge and down the road from the Moulton Confederate College Park. As we approached our automobile we both looked down at ourselves: we were once more wearing modern attire.

Had we truly went through some kind of fog bank and a doorway into the world of yesteryear, or had we allowed our imagination to get the best of us? All I know is that upon getting into our automobile, we found only 30 minutes had passed, while we had been in that encampment all evening. What must have been several hours!

*God save the Confederacy*

<http://www.confederatechristmas.blogspot.com/>





## **HERE IS A SOLDIER'S TALE OF STOLEN SHOES AND A SNOWY DAY...**

**I CAN'T IMAGINE WALKING TO THE MAILBOX BAREFOOT... LET ALONE WALKING SEVERAL MILES...**

Here is a soldier's tale of stolen shoes and a snowy day...

On my guard detail was a young North Carolinian by the name of Hobbs. We reached Petersburg late in the afternoon, and I decided to camp on Boiling's Hill, near the city, for the night and get my prisoners early next morning. We built a good fire near a spring of water, ate our hard tack and lay down for our night's rest. It was very cold and snowing fast. Hobbs took off his shoes and placed them under his head as a pillow. When he awoke next morning someone had stolen his shoes. When he made the discovery his language was more forcible than elegant. In fact, he got so hot that he was not aware that the snow was six inches deep and he was shoeless. I made no effort to stop him, thinking it was warranted by the circumstances and provocation. When we reached Richmond on our return trip I succeeded in getting him another pair, after he had trudged all day through the snow, which was a pretty severe ordeal, though he was a "Tar Heel."

Travis [><]

Source: A Sketch of the War Record of the Edisto Rifles, 1861-1865, by William Valmore Izlar, 1914.

Link to free e-

book: <https://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=Y7EdAQAAMAAJ&pg=GBS.PP7>

Photo used: CDV of Confederate shoes attributed to the State of South Carolina



Teresa Roane

Letter written by a former servant of the Davis family to Varina Anne "Winnie" Davis. Winnie was the youngest daughter. Later she will be known as the Daughter of the Confederacy. I am posting the letter as written.

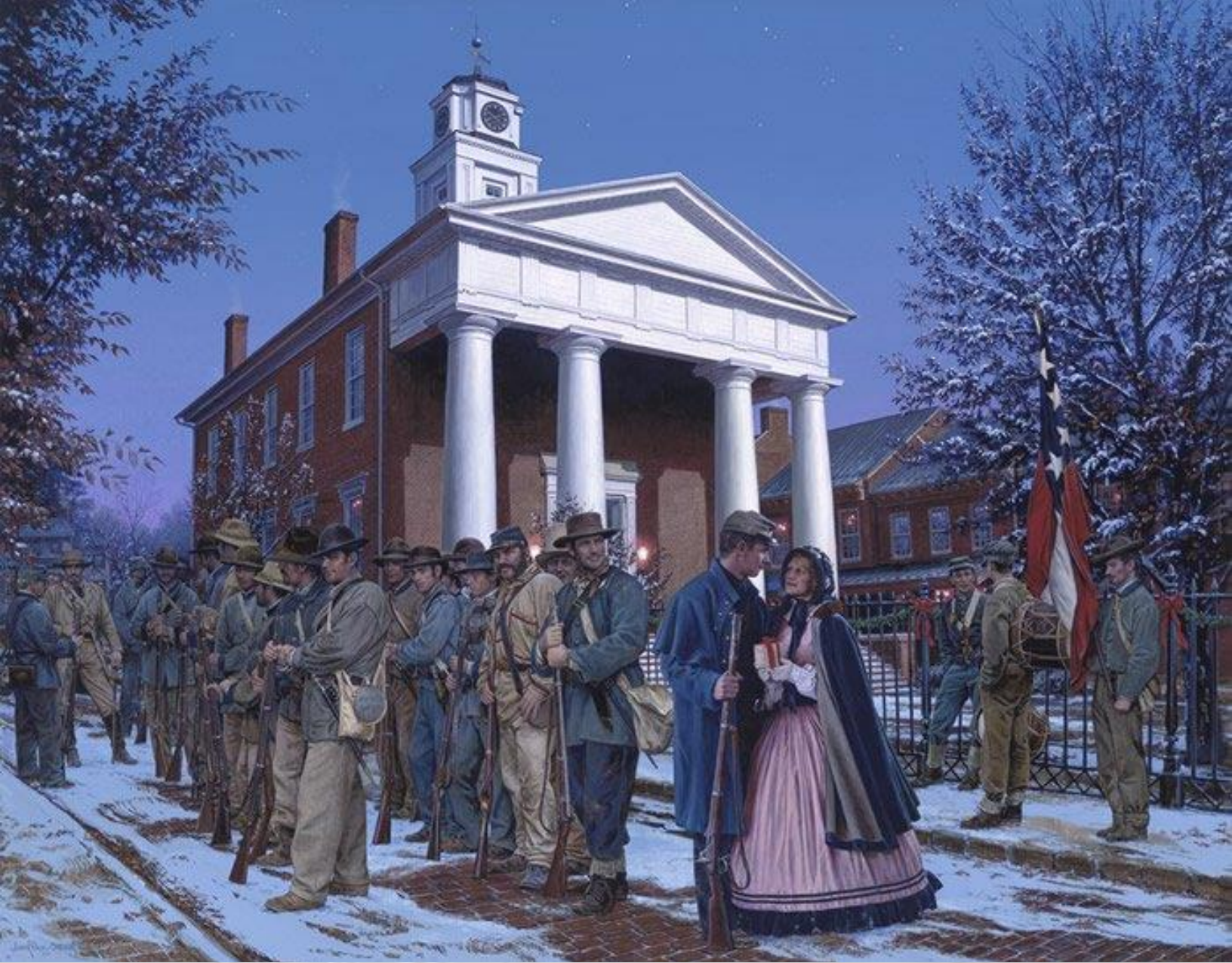
Savannah, Georgia Dec the 16 1872

Dear little Anny

How are you sweat little duck Why dont you write a few lines to your old Maim & tell her what you are doing I know you can write now as good as any little girl I wrote a long letter to you last week and then I did not like it after and I burned it I was going to have my likeness taken & send it to you but it has been so rainy I could not go out So little woman rite me a big long letter & tell me how all the family is Where is brother Jeff How I would like to see him & where is dear sister Maggie. I don't hear a thing about her Surely she is not going to school yet Tell her I say she is too big duck I will close for the present answer this & I will write you a long one The next time I am going to send you some little thing for your New Year Give my kind regards to your ever Father and Mother & tell them that I simpathise with them with all my heart & I have tryed three different times to write to them but I cant as soon as I begin bitter tears flows but I hope they wont not think anything the wors of me for not writeing for not writeing One thing they may be sure that there is not a person outside their own family that feels for them then I do now But I will say I wish you a Happy Christmas & New Year A great many of them

Your same Old Maim





MERRY  
CHRISTMAS



*The winds may be calm, but thunder rolls in the distance...  
Confederate Thunder, Southern Soul... Dixie on the rise.  
Deo Vindice*

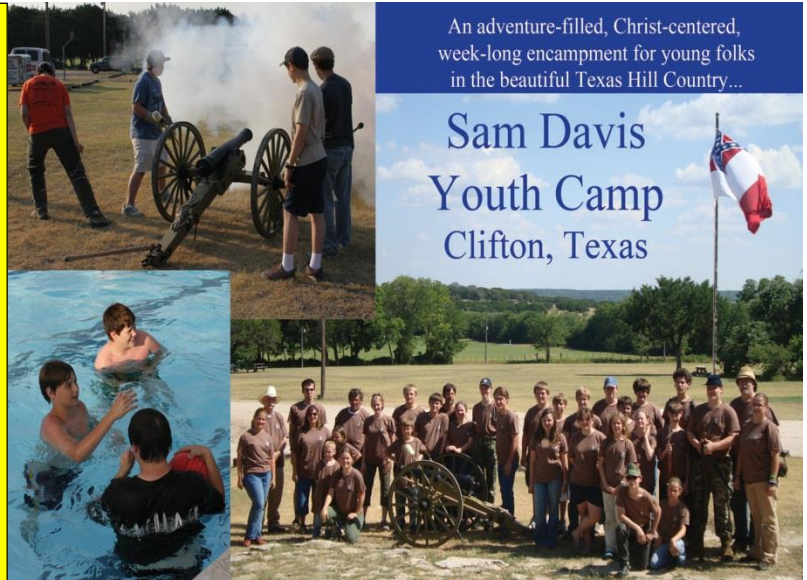
*The strength of a nation is derived  
from the integrity of its history.*

**HONOR  
PRESERVE  
PROTECT**



**Do your kids and grandkids know whose side the murderous yankee general Sherman was on?**

**Send them to Sam Davis Christian Youth Camps to learn the truth about their heritage and why it is important!**





TO THE SOUTHERN SOLDIERS  
WHO FIGHTED FOR THE  
UNION AND THE CONFEDERACY  
1861-1865

CONFEDERATE

**Don't Forget  
the true meaning  
of the Christmas Season.**



Winter Quarters

# “...please furnish better mules...” — JEB Stuart’s 1862 Christmas Raid

Posted on December 26, 2014 by Rob Orrison



Maj. Gen. JEB Stuart, Courtesy LOC

*This is the first of [a two-part series](#) on Jeb Stuart’s 1862 Christmas Raid.*

After the Battle of Fredericksburg, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia settled in the area south of the Rappahannock River near Fredericksburg. On Christmas day, Gen. Robert E. Lee ordered Maj. Gen. JEB Stuart to lead a daring raid on the rear of the Federal Army of the Potomac (then encamped in Stafford County). Lee wrote to Stuart “penetrate the enemy’s rear, ascertain if possible his position & movements, & inflict upon him such damage as circumstances will permit.” Taking with him 1,800 cavalrymen and a battery of horse artillery, Stuart set off on December 26<sup>th</sup> and set out looking for Federal supply depots and trains. Crossing the Rappahannock at Kelly’s Ford, Stuart ordered Brig. Gen. Wade Hampton to take his brigade and move on Occoquan while forces under Brig. Gen. Fitz Lee and Brig. Gen. W.H.F Rooney Lee moved eastward toward the Federal base at Dumfries.





Col. Charles Candy, Courtesy LOC

Defending the old colonial port town was Col. Charles Candy and a mixed force of infantry and cavalry, mostly Ohio and Pennsylvania troops. Due to several previous raids in the area by Wade Hampton, Candy was reinforced by an infantry brigade. Candy and his men were on the lookout for raiding parties as two previous raids on Dumfries were successful in capturing supplies and wagons. As the Confederates approached from the south, Stuart ordered a two prong attack on the garrison. Led by Gens. Fitzhugh Lee and W.H.F. Rooney Lee, the Confederates assaulted Dumfries from the north and south. Stuart's Horse Artillery bombarded the town, destroying many buildings, but Candy's Federals repulsed numerous attacks. The losses on both sides were relatively light.

Stymied at Dumfries, Stuart's cavalry continued on to Occoquan to join Hampton's brigade in search of supplies. The pro-Unionist town sat along the Occoquan River and was familiar to many of the Confederates as it served as their winter encampment the previous December. Hampton's men quickly charged into town and cleared the picket post, capturing several unsuspecting Federals. With their presence now alerted to Federal cavalry, Stuart sent out various reconnaissances. Stuart also needed to weigh the benefit and risk of remaining so deep behind enemy lines. On December 28th Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry brigade encountered 250 men of the 2nd and 17th Pennsylvania Cavalry on a reconnaissance and drove them back to Selecman's Ford. The Confederate cavalry with Maj. John Pelham's horse artillery charged single file across the ford and pursued the Federals two miles into Fairfax County where they sacked and burned a Union camp. The outnumbered Federals lost 2 officers killed, 10 enlisted wounded, and 100 men captured.



The Christmas Raid  
By Don Stivers

Early on the morning of December 29<sup>th</sup>, Stuart and his men approached Burke's Station along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad in Fairfax County. Easily capturing the unprotected station and telegraph office. Stuart and his scouts spent time reading all the dispatches between Federal commanders along the telegraph – giving him valuable intelligence on where Federal forces were and how they perceived Stuart's raid. Stuart learned where the Federal commander, Gen. Edwin Stoughton, was sending men to thwart the raid. Before leaving Burke's Station, Stuart sent one of the more famous and funny messages of the Civil War. In a personal message to Federal Quartermaster Gen. Montgomery C. Meigs, Stuart wrote "General Meigs will in the future please furnish better mules; those you have furnished recently are very inferior." Now with all of Federal forces within Fairfax and Prince William Counties alerted, Stuart had to find a safe way out for his 1,800 cavalymen and return to Lee's army south of the Rappahannock River. In true Stuart fashion, his route would be daring and unpredictable and would give birth to one of the most mysterious characters in American history.



Stuart's Christmas Raid, by John Paul Strain

After sending his famous message to Gen. Meigs, Stuart decided to confuse the Federals. Instead of heading south toward the Occoquan and safety, he headed north towards Fairfax Courthouse – the heart of the Federal command structure in northern *Virginia*. In moving northward, Stuart ordered rails removed from the Orange and Alexandria RR and ordered Gen. Fitzhugh Lee to take 12 men to burn an important trestle bridge that carried the railroad over Accotink Creek. Although termed an "inconsiderable structure" by the northern press, the raid was alarming to many because of its close proximity to Alexandria. Though they were able to destroy portions of the bridge, it was quickly rebuilt.

The Confederates rode for the Little River Turnpike, just east of Fairfax Courthouse. The Confederates made the decision to attack the village and see if it could be captured. But by now, the Federals were reinforced and prepared for the raiders. The Federals attempted to draw Stuart into a trap, but the Confederates could tell the earthworks nearby were full of Federals. Stuart ordered his men to set campfires to give the impression that they were encamping along the turnpike. Meanwhile the Confederate cavalry column headed west to Frying Pan. Here Stuart visited his longtime acquaintance Laura Ratcliffe – a friend of many Confederate officers and a local spy. The Confederates would rest in the fields around Frying Pan and Sully Plantation near Chantilly. Here Stuart, Hampton, Fitz and Rooney Lee breakfasted at Sully at the "pleasure" of local Unionist Maria Barlow. Barlow was forced to run the farm with all the men fleeing to Alexandria in fear of the Confederate raiders. As they departed Sully, the Confederates left several Federal wounded in the care of Barlow.



Laura Ratcliffe, Courtesy Stuart-Mosby Historical Society

With the Federal cavalry confused on where Stuart was heading, the Confederates left Fairfax County and headed west into Loudoun County arriving near Middleburg on December 30<sup>th</sup>. Brig. Gen. Edwin Stoughton and Brig. Gen. Percy Wyndham attempted a pursuit but unsuccessfully brought the Confederate cavalier to battle. While staying at the home of Hamilton Rogers (Oakham), Maj. John S. Mosby approached Stuart about staying behind with a select group of men to operate in the rear of the Federal lines. Mosby was one of Stuart's most trusted scouts and successfully led Stuart's raid through northern Virginia. The past few days taught Stuart that the Federals in the area were ripe for continuous raids and harassment. Trusting Mosby as he did, he agreed and when he left Middleburg, Mosby and nine men were left behind to temporarily operate as partisans. After a few raids, Stuart made Mosby's assignment permanent on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

By way of Culpeper Courthouse, Stuart and his men returned to the Army of Northern Virginia winter camps on New Years Day 1863. The military success of the raid is questionable. Other than a few hundred prisoners, some horses, mules, supplies and one funny telegram, Stuart only accomplished a moral victory. However, the raid launched the career of Mosby as a partisan and proved the superiority of the Confederate cavalry. It would be a few more months before the Federal cavalry could match their counterparts on the battlefield. For now the Confederate cavalry could enjoy a short rest and celebrate the Christmas and New Years season.

<https://emergingcivilwar.com/2014/12/26/please-furnish-better-mules-jeb-stuarts-1862-christmas-raid/>

# ECW Weekender: JEB Stuart's Christmas Raid

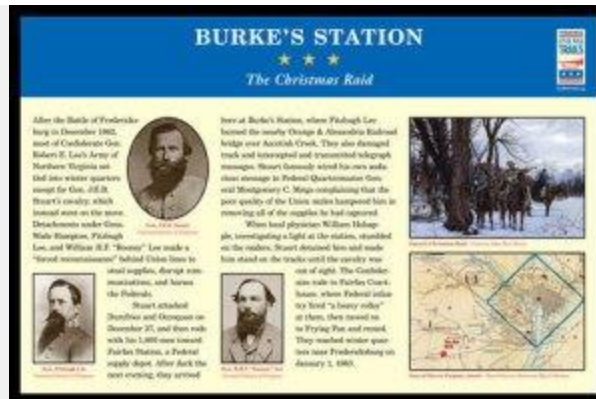
Posted on January 2, 2015 by [Rob Orrison](#)

It is easy today to follow in the footsteps of JEB Stuart's cavalry on their 1862 Christmas Raid. The route is well known and there are several historic markers and Civil War Trail interpretive signs along the way to guide you.



Williams Ordinary

The first stop should be at the Williams Ordinary in Dumfries (17674 Main St., Dumfries). The ca. 1760 tavern now serves as the administrative offices of the Prince William County Historic Preservation Division. Outside the Civil War Trails sign explains the Battle of Dumfries, which was the first of many skirmishes during the Christmas Raid. Here in Dumfries, the Union supply base was the target of Fitz and Rooney Lee's cavalry while Wade Hampton's wing continued northward towards Occoquan.



Burke Station Civil War Trails Marker

Moving northward your next stop should be the Mill House Museum in the Town of Occoquan (413 Mill St., Occoquan, VA). This early industrial town was a hot bed of pro-Lincoln sentiment. The Civil War Trails marker next to the museum describes the town's Civil War history. Here Hampton flushed out Union cavalry on the night of December 28<sup>th</sup>. Several historic markers throughout town also explain the town's history and its role in the Civil War. The fords used by Stuart's cavalry are no longer accessible due to the Occoquan River being dammed to create the Occoquan Reservoir. There are a few historic markers for both Selecman's Ford and Wolf Run Shoals Ford on both sides of the Occoquan. The location of the Selecman's Ford historic marker on the Prince William County side of the river is (38° 41.639' N, 77° 17.799' W) on Antietam Road.

After visiting Occoquan and the nearby historic markers, Burke will be your next stop. To get to the historic site of Burke Station drive to the intersection of Burke Road and Old Burke Lake Road, in Burke, VA. There are several historic markers in the vicinity explaining not just the Christmas Raid

and Stuart's famous telegram but also other Civil War history of the area. The white building at the intersection was once a train station on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad when the tracks ran through here (they are now a few hundred yards north).



After Stuart telegraphed Meigs about his mules, he detailed Fitz Lee and twelve men to burn a large trestle bridge along the railroad over Accotink Creek. The location of railroad bridge is preserved at Lake Accotink Park (7500 Lake Accotink Park Rd., Springfield). The modern railroad runs over the creek at the same location on a modern bridge. At this location is a Civil War Trails marker and a Fairfax County historic marker detailing the Civil War history of the crucial railroad span.

A well over-looked location in the area is the grave of Laura Ratcliffe. Ratcliffe was a confident and friend to many Confederate leaders including JEB Stuart and John S. Mosby. Her letters provide and a wonderful look into the personalities of both men and life in northern Virginia during the war. Her grave is located in the parking lot of the Dulles Marriott near the intersection of Centreville Rd and the Dulles Toll Road. The cemetery can be hard to find as it is over grown with shrubs. Just a mile south of her grave stands her home "Merrybrook," now surrounded by development.



The final stop is at Sully Historic Site (3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly). This ca. 1794 historic home was built by Richard Bland Lee, the uncle of Robert E. Lee. By the time of the Civil War the farm was the home to the Barlow and Haight families who emigrated from New York to Virginia in the 1830's. Here, on their way westward, JEB Stuart, Fitz and Rooney Lee and Wade Hampton dined inside, much to the chagrin of the pro-Union lady of the house, Maria Barlow. The Confederates left their wounded in Barlow's care and rode westward to Middleburg, then south across the Rappahannock River.

# I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

You guessed it, here we go again. Southerners are probably unaware of the meaning of this song as well; or the verses that have conveniently been removed from the original piece AS it was TRULY written. **BAN this song** as well.

In the propaganda warfare against the South, the writers and poets of the religio-social self appointed **liberal** elite took every opportunity to blame the South for the national tragedy of war. In 1861, **Henry Wadsworth Longfellow** wrote a poem during a time of personal depression, after the tragic death of his second wife and while worrying about his son in the Union Army. In this poem, he again expressed **his feelings of blame toward the South**. This poem was later set to music and became a popular **Christmas carol**, *I Heard The Bells on Christmas Day*. Some of the original verses which are quoted below are generally omitted from modern hymn books.

...*Cultures In Conflict* by Rev. Charles A. Jennings

## 'I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day'

*I heard **the bells** on Christmas Day,  
Their old familiar carols play,  
**Then from each black, accursed mouth**  
**The cannon thundered in the South,**  
And with the sound,  
The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good will to men!*

*It was as if an earthquake rent  
The heath stones of a continent  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good will to men!*

*And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said:  
"For hate is strong,  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men!"*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!"  
**The Wrong shall fail, (South)**  
**The Right prevail, (North)**  
With peace on earth, good will to men!*











# Jingle Reb

## From a newspaper somewhere...

SAVANNAH, Ga. Dashing in the sun, through oaks and Spanish moss / Sleigh riding's no fun, when there's no snow to cross ...

Could "Jingle Bells" really be a song of the South?



It's not hard to see why balmy Savannah has a tough time selling the Christmas carol as a native creation. Or why the claim makes folks in Medford, Mass. hometown of the song's composer cry humbug.

This much is known for sure: James Pierpont was the organist at Savannah's Unitarian Universalist Church in 1857 when he copyrighted the song "One Horse Open Sleigh," a title later changed to "Jingle Bells."

Arguably the most popular American Christmas song, "Jingle Bells" made Pierpont a pre-Civil War one-hit wonder. But did he write it here as a piece of homesick, holiday nostalgia? Or did he compose it years before in Medford, not seeing the tune as a moneymaker until he drifted south?

"No one really knows where he was when he wrote it that's the rub," said Constance Turner, Pierpont's great-granddaughter in Coronado, Calif. "Evidently, James was quite the free spirit, and he published some bad songs and one, at least, we know of that's a

very good song."

Medford, just outside Boston, got to claim the carol without challenge until 1969, when Milton Rahn, a Savannah Unitarian, revealed he'd linked the song's composer to coastal Georgia.

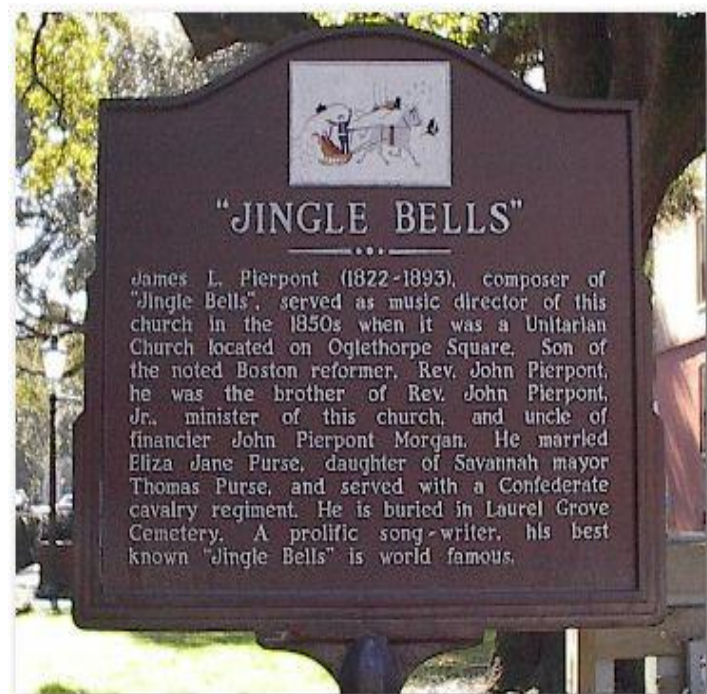
Mr. Rahn had been researching the church's Savannah roots years earlier when the epiphany struck. Mr. Rahn was listening to his daughter play "Jingle Bells" at the piano when he glanced at the sheet music and noticed the composer's name: J. Pierpont. He soon tracked down the writer's full name.

Mr. Rahn already had found letters that John Pierpont Jr., the church's pastor from 1852 to 1858, had written home to Medford saying his brother, James, had come to Savannah as an organist and music teacher. Further research found that the composer had married in Savannah in 1857, weeks before he copyrighted "Jingle Bells."

I said to my wife and daughter, 'This is something that's like pay dirt,' " Mr. Rahn said.

"I saw this as something to help us get publicity for the church."

Mr. Rahn dove into Pierpont's past. His search took him from Pierpont's grave in Savannah's Laurel Grove Cemetery to the Pierpont-Morgan Library in New York. He went to the Library of Congress for a copy of the original sheet music and located the old church organ in Tallahassee, Fla.



Pierpont, who lived from 1822 to 1893, was said to be a wanderer who ran away to sea at 14 and later went to California during the Gold Rush. During the Civil War, Pierpont joined a Confederate cavalry regiment in Savannah, bucking the staunch abolitionist views of his family.

His other songs included several touting the Confederate cause, with titles such as "We Conquer Or Die" and "Strike for the South." But none struck a chord like "Jingle Bells" did.

After Savannah erected a "Jingle Bells" marker in Troup Square across from the church in 1985, then-Mayor John Rousakis declared the tune a Savannah song.

To folks in Medford, that made Mr. Rousakis and Mr. Rahn a pair of grinchers out to steal their Christmas history. A series of not-so-jolly exchanges followed.

"In the words of Shakespeare, it is our intention to keep our 'honor from corruption,' " Medford Mayor Michael McGlynn wrote in a 1989 letter to Mr. Rousakis. "We unequivocally state that 'Jingle Bells' was composed ... in the town of Medford during the year 1850!"

Mr. Rousakis fired back with an equally strong, unyielding letter.

James L. Pierpont is still here with us," Mr. Rousakis wrote, noting the composer's Savannah burial. "I am sure [Pierpont] will join us in spirit when we finally and formally proclaim Savannah, Georgia, as the birthplace of 'Jingle Bells.' "

Mr. McGlynn, who still is the Medford mayor, said the debate resurfaces every few years. The city Web site includes pages on Pierpont and "Jingle Bells" that both take swipes at Savannah. But Mr. McGlynn insists he bears no grudge toward the city or toward Mr. Rousakis, who died in 2000.

"It's part of our history, so of course it's important to us," Mr. McGlynn said. "I think the debate will go on for many years. We feel comfortable here with our position. There are much bigger things in life to get excited about."

The "Jingle Bells" story, according to Medford, and largely accepted elsewhere, goes like this: Around 1850, inspired by the winter sleigh races down snow-filled Salem Street in Medford, Pierpont wrote the song at the Simpson Tavern, a boardinghouse that had the only piano in town.

That account was told to the Boston Globe in December 1946 by Stella Howe, the grandniece of Mary Gleason Waterman, who ran the boardinghouse when Pierpont lived in Medford.

Back in Savannah, Mr. Rahn still doubts that story. Though Pierpont came from an aristocratic family his nephew was the financier John Pierpont (J.P.) Morgan he never made much money himself.

So why would he hold onto "Jingle Bells" for years before publishing it?

"It's an anomaly," Mr. Rahn said. "You had this free spirit, never made much money, living hand-to-mouth. A person down and out as he was, if he had something, he was ready to market it for \$20 or whatever he could get."

But Ace Collins, author of the 2001 book "Stories Behind the Best-Loved Songs of Christmas," says he found more proof of Medford's being the rightful birthplace while researching his chapter on "Jingle Bells."

Mr. Collins said he found a New England newspaper from the early 1840s that mentioned "One Horse Open Sleigh" debuting in Medford at a Thanksgiving church service. The song proved so popular, he said, that Pierpont gave a repeat performance at Christmas. Then it comes to which city deserves the bragging rights, Mr. Collins gets diplomatic. Pierpont might have written his song in Medford, he says, but Savannah made him realize its universal appeal.

"Savannah was the key. If it can play in Savannah, where snow was a novelty, it can play anywhere," Mr. Collins said. "It's kind of like Elvis may have been from Tupelo, but Memphis was where he had to go to become famous.

[http://www.wesclark.com/jw/jingle\\_reb.html](http://www.wesclark.com/jw/jingle_reb.html)

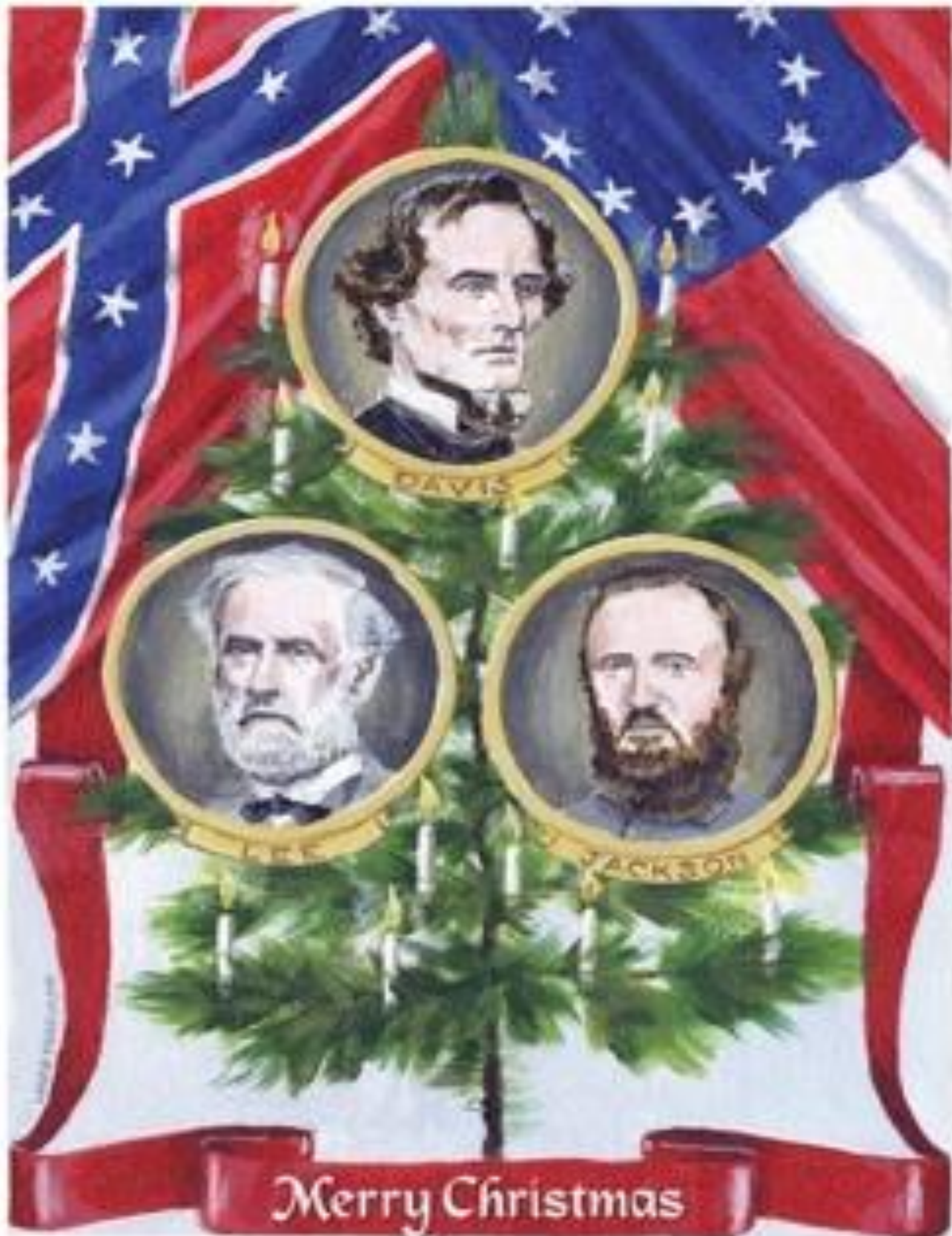




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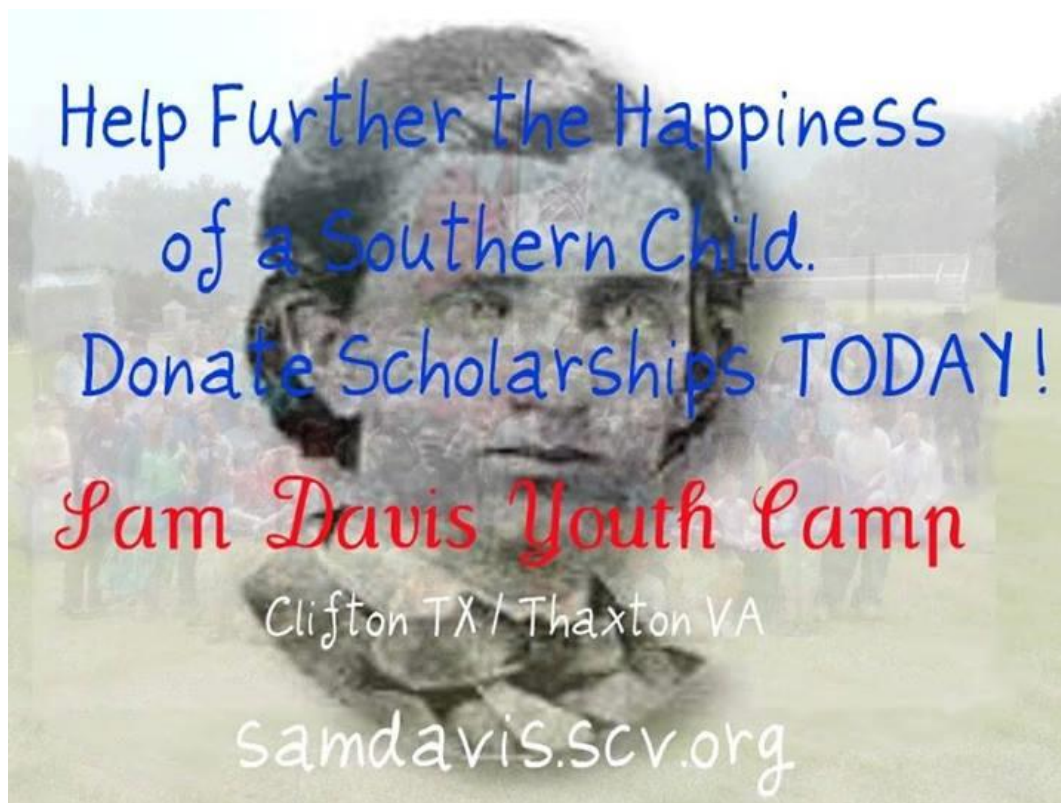
Merry Christmas

~ Jefferson Davis Funeral Procession ~

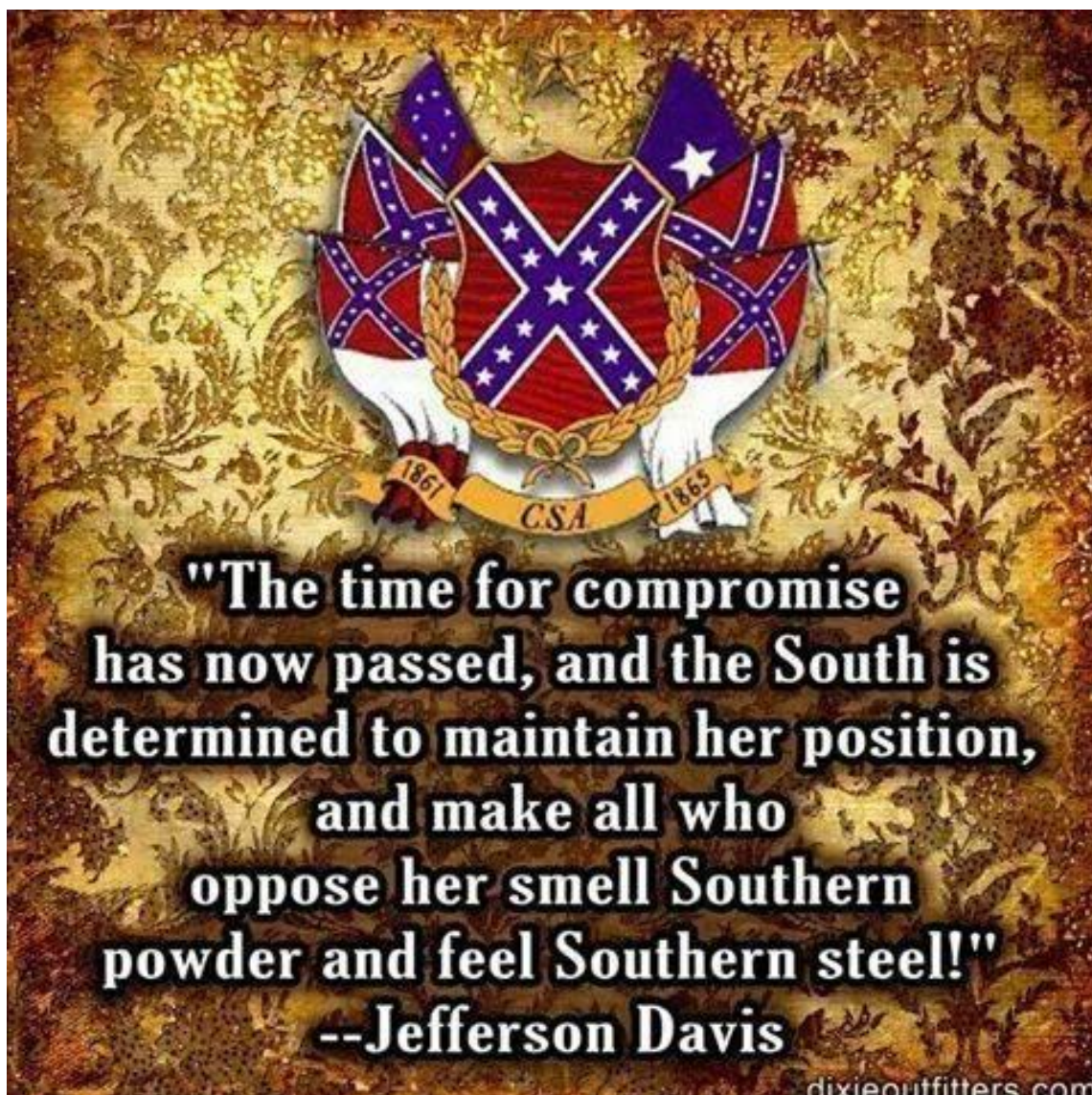
--New Orleans, Louisiana ~ December 6th, 1889--



"Throughout the South are Lamentations and tears; in every country on the globe where there are lovers of liberty there is mourning; wherever there are men who love heroic patriotism, dauntless resolution, fortitude or intellectual power, there is a sincere sorrowing. The beloved of our land, the unfaltering upholder of constitutional liberty, the typical hero and sage, is no more; the fearless heart that beats with sympathy for all mankind is stilled forever, a great light is gone----**Jefferson Davis is dead!**"



**Send your kids to Sam Davis Christian Youth Camps!**





# Moss Neck Manor .....



## Christmas Day 1862

General Stonewall Jackson used Moss Neck Manor as his winter headquarters from December 1862 through March 1863. They arrived in mid-December, cold and hungry, but elated by the Confederate victory at Fredericksburg a few days earlier. The general declined an invitation to stay in the mansion, and was quoted as saying that it was "too luxurious for a soldier." Tens of thousands of soldiers camped on the rolling hills of the plantation, and they felled many of the estate's trees, which they used as firewood and to make log huts.

On Christmas Day 1862, General Robert E. Lee accepted an invitation to dine with General Stonewall Jackson at his winter headquarters on the grounds of Moss Neck Plantation. After sharing a meal at the outbuilding Jackson used as an office, General Lee bid his host farewell and headed back to his own headquarters.

~Robert~

# December 25, 1862 - Christmas Day

**December 25, 1862: Christmas Day.** Yankee Gen. Rosecrans calls a meeting of his corps commanders to plan the route the army would take in the coming campaign. At the meeting's end, he shocks everyone by announcing that the advance would begin tomorrow---that the army would step off toward Murfreesboro tomorrow.

---George Michael Neese, of Chew's Battery in the Confederate Artillery, writes in his journal of his unit being part of a reconnaissance in force down the Shenandoah Valley:

December 25 — This is Merry Christmas. This morning we resumed our march early and moved down the Valley nearly to Kernstown, where we encountered the Yankees and gave them a Christmas greeting in the shape of a few shell. We took the same position we held at the battle of Kernstown last spring. About sixty sharpshooters advanced on our position and attempted to drive us away. We opened fire on them with two guns and fired three rounds, which thoroughly settled the sharpshooting business for this Christmas.

---Isaac Adams Howard, of the 5<sup>th</sup> Texas Infantry Regiment, writes home to his father in Gonzalez, Texas, with news about the Fredericksburg battle and of a Christmas spent in camp:

I suppose you will have heard of the great battle of Fredericksburg before this letter reaches you. The Yankees sustained the most utter and terrible defeat probably that they have experienced during the war. It was the most glorious victory we have ever gained. Our loss is trifling in comparison with the enemy according to Gen. Lee's report of the battle our loss was 1800 killed wounded and missing while that of the enemy according to their own Statement was 15,500 and many of their papers place it as high as 20,000. Not more than one half of our forces were engaged [our?] brigade didn't fire a gun. . . . I think that we will go into winter quarters soon, as the Yankees seem to be disgusted with their ill success of this winters campaign & they are said to be going back to the Potomac to go into winter quarters. The Yankee scoundrels almost completely destroyed Fredericksburg. They vented their malice & spleen in the most wanton manner. Breaking up and destroying whatever they could not remove. Nothing was too pure or sacred for their unbridled lust. The very churches were pillaged of whatever value or ornament they contained. The retribution they received for their iniquitous proceedings was sudden and terrible. The town was literally choked with [their?] dead. There was 5,000 dead bodies of Yankee soldiers lying stiffening on that [?] field the day after the fight. . . . The Yankee army would have been nearly annihilated. . . .

The weather for the last few days has been admirable and to day it is mild and beautiful as any Christmas I ever remember having seen in Texas.

Tell Ma not to be the least uneasy about my personal comfort. I have plenty of good clothes and blankets and have been in excellent health ever since the fall set in.

There aint much preparation for Christmas in camp. The boys are in excellent spirits however not much doing in the eggnog line but with butter, molasses, sugar, confederate [cake] and apples from the sutlers and peas [?] roast-beef and hot biscuit from our own [?] we managed to make out a pretty good dinner. I wish I could send some apples. Nice red rosy cheeked fellows to Nellie and Susie. Bless their little hearts.

Sergeant Howard will be killed in battle seven months later at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.





# Christmas at Greenpoint

By Clinton Martin Bissell on Dec 22, 2017

*This story was originally published in the Spartanburg Herald-Journal in December 1930.*



Well, the old mill closed down on us Tuesday night at 6 P.M. for the rest of the week, so as to give us a holiday for Christmas, which came this year on December 25th inst. And so when I came out of the shop and started home it was sunset, and all back to the west was the prettiest 1 ever did see, with the sky all red and gold and sorter mingly like and the old Blue Ridge Mountains standing out blue and cold, and I knew that we were in for some sort of weather by Christmas.

That morning when I got up I told Mrs. Goodloe that we were going to have a change in the weather by the way my old joints hurt and popped and she said she hoped it would hold off till the children all got in for Christmas, and I said 1 did, too.

You see, all our children are grown up and gone now. Mary, our oldest girl, is teaching school way down in the lower part of the state, and she wrote us that her bough, or bow, whichever it is, was coming to bring her home in his auto. Then Ruth, our next girl, is married to a Methodist preacher, and they are preaching out in Alabama, and they have two of the

cutest little grandchildren I ever saw, and we were sure looking for them, for we hadn't seen them since last Christmas on account of it being so far out to Alabama and on account of his being a Methodist preacher and not having any money.

Then the boys are in business and they all get home on Christmas Eve and we have a reunion and several other things about that time.

Well, when I got home Mrs. Goodloe- was just taking out the last cake and as soon as I got washed up she called me to see them. She surely did have a fine mess of them, too. She had Chockerlate and Carimel and Jelly and Fruit, both white and black, and Lemon cake, and two just plain cakes. You know, I never could understand, why it is that-at Christmas we all have to haul off and try to eat ourselves to death. I bet most of the deaths that die along about January first of each year are on account of eating too much at Christmas. You take old stummucks that have not had anything all the year except plain feed and suddenly you lam them full of cake and pie and cranberries and turkey and dressing and mashed potatoes and candied potatoes and nuts and raisons and such like and it just simply scares the tar of of them an' they lay down and die on your hands.

So we sat down to supper and I saw that Mrs. G. had her hair all frizzed up and I knew that something was going to happen and so she said that she hoped I had not forgot that tonight was the night for us to go to the church and deccerate and practice the Christmas Anthuns and I said no, I had not forgot, but I had, and so as soon as I had shaved and changed my shurt and she had bathed the dishes and sorter primped up herself we lit out and there was a lot of other folks going, too, some to the Methodist and some to the Baptist Church, for we both have Christmas trees on Christmas Eve night. We used to have them on separate nights, but so many folks got to repeating on us till we have to have them the same night now and it nearly runs the, Presbyterians crazy trying to decide which one to go to as they do not have any church here.

So when we got to the church they had the old stove red hot and it was kinder shimmying all over and the crowd was there at work, and old Bill Frisbee was there, and he sure was having a time, dad-gum his old hide! I never did like old Bill. He's one of these here old flirts. About 6 months ago his poor old wife worked herself into a streak of paralysis or something and died and since, then old Bill has been trying to set-up to every girl in Greenpoint and ain't got sence enough to see that they all are making fun of him, but thinks they are all crazy about him. And so there he was all swelled out and the girls all running up to him to ast his advice about things and so they had just about got all the wreaths and streamers made out of cedar and holly and popped corn and they were ready to fasten them up so they wanted one fixed, right over the pulpit to the ceiling and they got the step ladder and ast for someone to go up and fasten it, and before any of the young men could say a word out hopped old Bill and grabbed the wreath and the hammer and filled his mouth full of tacks and started up the ladder, and just as he started to make the first stroke the old ladder bucked on him, just like I was hoping and praying it would, and down come Bill, wreath, hammer and all, and old Bill hit on top of the organ and broke off about 25 or 30 little doo-dads off the organ and about the same number off hissself and the old wreath fell down over his head and the hammer hit old Aunt Jane Peasley in the head and knocked her cold and the ladder hit the stove pipe and knocked it down and the fire was shooting up about 6 feet high and you never saw such a mess in your life.

Well, we got old Bill down off the organ, and then he disclosed the fact that he swallowed the tacks he had in his mouth and so we carried him out to the front steps and left him out there in the cool breeze trying to cough up tacks, and so we went on back and got things straightened out again and then Miss Electa Weeks, our organder and choir leader, said we had better run over the Christmas Anthun and so the choir got together.

There was Miss Iona Ford, Miss Amazing Grace Smith and Mrs. Bill Jones on the soprano; Old Miss Tibitha Ticklewood and Mrs. Goodloe on the alto; Jack Snelling and old Bill Friesbee (who had coughed up about half, his tacks by now) on the tenner, and Bub Hanksby and me on the baste, and so we all got a piece of the music and sailed in on that Anthun. It was called Christmas Anthun No. 5. Well, all I've got to say about that Christmas Anthun No. 5 is that the fellow that wrote it up was, and still is, a nut. There wasn't a thing to it but a lot of hallerlujahs and amens. The soprano started off the hallerlujan, and after they had just about hallerlujahed themselves to death, the alto took it up and when they done the same thing quite a spell, the tenners go to hallerlujering like a man with hiccups and they were all of them going it and then the baste got to amening and amened all over the upper end of the school district, and then the thing stopped and it was one of the biggest messes I ever heard. I told old Bub Hanksby his baste sounded like old lady Dillings' old cow, and Bub got mad an' said mine sounded worsen hell, which I do not think he ort to have said in the church, and so Miss Electa said that Christmas Anthun No. 5 would require more time and that we would practice it all next year and get it ready for next Christmas, and so we all fell back on the old stand-bys, "O Little Town," "While Shepherds Watched," "There's a Song in the Air," etc., which are the sweetest and prettiest songs that ever has been written or sung or that ever will be, either, and so we all went home then, the women folks in front all talking about the new preacher and his wife and we old fellows along behind smoking and talking.

And so-up at Smith's corner we all disbanded and old Bill said he believed he'd go by old Doc Tatum's and see what old Doc could do about tacks he hadn't got up, and so we all went home just as the old mill clock struck 10 P.M., December 23, 1930.

Well, it didn't seem like we had hardly got in bed till Mrs. Goodloe had me up again to help her get things fixed up. First I had to go down in the cellar and bring up the old cot and take it up in the hallway upstairs for some of the boys to sleep on, and of course, going down the cellar steps I had to run into a lot of jelly an mama-laid and chow-chow that Mrs. G. had set out on the cellar steps and so I fell all over the place and got jelly and stuff all over me and broke 4 or 5 jars of the stuff and skinned one perfect good shin all the way up as far as it went, and if it hadn't been Christmas and the children all coming home I would have sailed in and cussed everything out and Mrs. G. would have got mad and said I done it on purpose, but as it was I limped back upstairs and Mrs. G. got a wrag and wiped most of the mess off, and the rest, in, and then got the iodine and fixed up the old shin so as I could make out with it for awhile, and so we both laughed fit to kill about it all, which shows what a blessed thing Christmas is anyhow.

Well, after we got the house all set, Mrs. G. had me to kill two hens and a ruster and one ham and she put the hens and ruster on in the kitchen and took the ham out behind the garage and made a fire under the wash pot and put me out there to see that the ham didn't stick to the pot, and I hadn't been out there but a few minutes before along comes old Pat Murphey and his wife, Kate, all dolled up and going to the county seat to their church.

You see, Pat and Kate are Catholicks — the only ones we have in this village and though they have a mighty funny religion there ain't no better folks ever lived than old Pat and his wife, and nobody ever gets sick or in trouble here in Greenpoint that they ain't there to help all they can. Old Pat says he has to go to church once in ever so often to confess his meanness to the priest, which is why I am glad that I am not a Catherlick as the priest would have me locked up, sure, and I would be ashamed to let him or anybody else know all my meanness — I'm almost ashamed for the dear, good Lord to know it sometimes.

Well, then along comes George Waters, our next door neighbor. Well, I got to braggin to George about the fine little grandchildren coming that morning, and I seen old George's eyes fill up with tears and I seen right away that I had said the wrong thing. You see, George and Sue, his wife, never had but one child, little Paul. He surely was a fine little fellow, too, tho he never was right strong. They lived right next to us and the little fellow use to come over to our house nearly every day and he'd sit out on the steps with me in the evening and talk his baby talk to me and his big blue eyes would just glisten as he'd tell me of things that had happened and I'd look at his pale little face and wish that he had more blood in his vanes then he did have, and most every day I'd see him sitting there on his back porch watching for his daddy at noon, and so along about the middle of August little Paul got sick one day and by Sunday morning he was dead, and it sure did break me all up, too, for I had got used to the little fellow, but what it did to me was nothing to what it did to George and Sue. It like to have run them crazy. And so when I thought about it all I tried to change off on something else, but George just had to tell somebody and so he said that the thought of Christmas coming was about to ruin him and Sue. He said he got to tell somebody and so he said he got to thinking about last Christmas when little Paul was just 3 years old and how happy they all were and he would never forget how on Christmas morning the little fellow got up and saw that old Santa had come and left him a little red wagon and a boy doll and a book and how, as he stood there looking at it all, he just trembled all over like he was having a chill and how they dressed him in the little britches that Mrs. Goodloe had made for him out of one of my old ones, and how happy and proud they all were.

And then, George said, late that evening he took the little fellow out for a little walk and as they were coming back home and turned into the gate little Paul threwed his thin little arms around George's neck and kissed him and said I loves my daddy, and poor old George just busted and had to leave and I stood out there and shed enough tears into that pot to pickle that old ham for life, and I said to myself, well, it certainly does take a whole lot of joy, sorrow, happiness, misery, laughter and tears all mixed up together to make out a life.

So along about 3 P.M. in comes Mary and her bough. He was a fine, humble, meek looking little fellow and acted like he was scared to death. Every time I made a move he kinder drawed up like he was expecting a swift kick or some other form of assault and batter. We went out in the front room and then Mary and her Ma went up stairs to straighten things out and me and the bough was left to entertain each other and I done my best. I remarked in his hearing about 18 times that we certainly was having a plumb pretty spell of mighty nice, open weather at this time (tho it was looking right then like it was going to start snowing any minute), and he said 17 times that we certainly did have a mighty cozy little village and outside of those few, well chosen remarks, we didn't get anywhere, and I reckon we'd been going on that way till now if the bough hadn't got all excited and mixed up and hauled off and said my piece about the weather which left me nothing else to say.

Well, just about dusk up drove Ruth and her folks in the old Ford and it was hitting on about 2 cyl. and the steam was just a boiling out and all of them covered with mud but mighty happy, and Ruth looked mighty nice in her new clothes and the grandchildren looked like little angels all dolled up in their sweaters and caps, but I noticed Ruth's husband didn't have any new clothes and his old hat looked like it had fought thru the Civil War, and I knew right straight that things had been sorter tight with them down in Alabama.

Well, it wasn't long till we were all sitting down to supper — and home again. And say, boy, that was the best Christmas present anybody could have bought me with a million dollars — with those boys and girls of mine and those blessed little old grandchildren and Mary's bough all sitting around that old dining table that they had been raised on and all well and hearty and happy. And how we did laugh and talk and told jokes to each other about things that happened years ago, and Mary's bough got to where he could swallow soft food without choking up, for which I was mighty thankful.

And so after supper and after we had got things done up we all lit out to the church, and when we got there everything was about ready to begin and' the church was full and it surely did look nice with all the wreaths and fixings and the Christmas tree all decerrated up with electric doo-dads, and so we all sang the Anthuns and the preacher made a mighty nice talk about the first Christmas Anthun that the angels sung two thousands years ago, and he said that if we would only keep our hearts right and our ears cleaned out we could still hear that Anthun of peace and goodwill ringing through the earth and just about the time he finished in comes Bubber Hill, old Aunt Hill's half-wit son, just a bawling because some of the bad boys out in front of the church had told him old Santa Claus wasn't coming this Christmas on account of having the jake paralysis, or something, and we had to call off the extrasizes till we got him pacified and then we give out the presents and most everybody got one or more. Old Bob Jones got the same mustache cup he got for the last 20 years. That old cup has certainly held out well. The preacher got 4 testaments, 16 handkerchiefs, 2 ties, a bottle of beet pickle, and a peck of dried peaches. I got 2 ties, a pair of socks, 1 testament and something done up in a paper, and so after all the presents was give out we all stood and sang, "It Came Upon a Midnight."

And so we went home and when we got out of the church it was snowing a little and so we all went home and I opened the bundle I got off the tree and it was a pair of knit bedroom slippers that poor old blind Aunt Sallie Peasley had knitted for me with her own hands. Say, that sure did make me feel mighty humble and the Lord knows I did appreciate them, but there never has been a foot created that would fit them slippers or them slippers fit, either. They were knitted and sewed onto a paseboard soul and the heel part run out behind just about as far as the foot part run out in front and the main entrance was right in the center and all you had to anchor them to your leg with was a puckering string, and so while I would not have been found dead in the woods with them on, yet I surely did appreciate old Aunt Sallie making them for me.

Well, after so long a time we got the grandchildren off to bed and then the rest of the folks kinder gave out of anything else to say and they went to bed and left just me and the two little stockings hanging on the mantel piece in the room, and so I put on my old hat and went out in the yard to look around like I always do, and it was snowing to beat the band, and I stood out beside the garage and watched her come down, and I thought how well the good Lord had treated me the past year, and I was thankful for it, too. I was thankful that we were all at home together again, well and hearty and broke.

Well, I knew I was getting older and 1930 had been a hard year on me, with money scarce and my joints getting sorter stiff and hurting lots and the old mill curtailing all over herself and me, too, but still there was lots to be happy over as I thought of them 11 cakes, 2 hens, 1 rustur and 1 ham all ready to be eaten up tomorrow, to say nothing of the cranberry sauce and the dressing and gravy.

And so I went back to the house and stood on the back steps just a moment and I saw poor old George and Sue come out on their back porch and they stood together and George had his arm around Sue's waist and they was both standing there looking through the driving snow out toward old Bide-A-While cemetary where, under a whitening mound, their Christmas lay asleep. And so I took off my old hat and I ast God to please kinder soften the thing down for George and Sue, and then I wound it up with the prayer of Tiny Little Tim: God Bless Us Everyone, and then the old mill bell struck the hour and it was 12 o'clock, December 25th, 1930, and it was snowing, and so I went to bed.

## **About Clinton Martin Bissell**

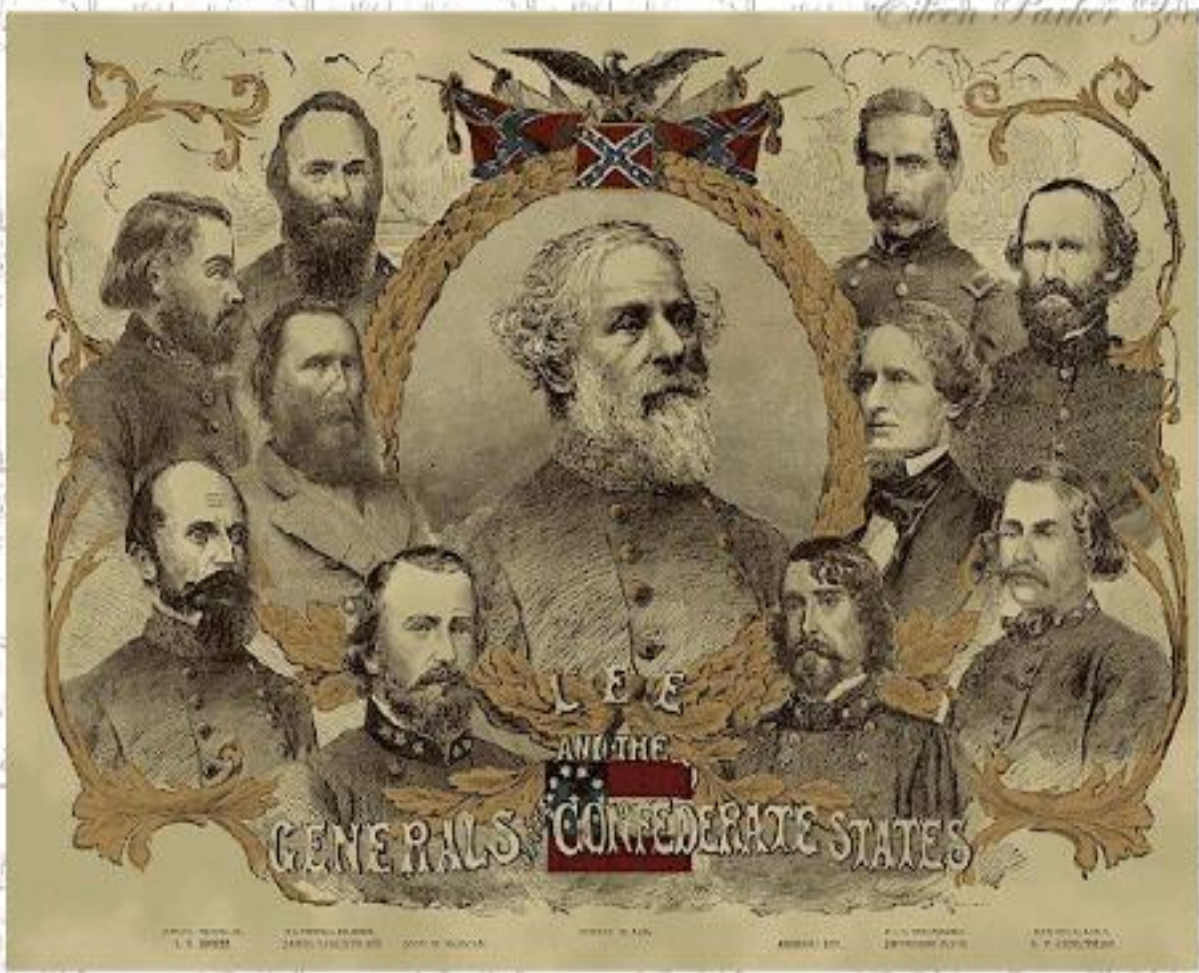
Clinton Martin Bissell (1877-1934) wrote a popular column in Spartanburg, SC in the 1920s and 30s under the name Eph Goodloe. He was the secretary of the Saxon and Chesnee mills until his death in 1934.

<https://www.abbevilleinstitute.org/blog/christmas-at-greenpoint/>

You say  
The war is over  
Yet our

HERITAGE

Is still under attack!





Don't blame us  
Southerners  
for the mess  
we're in.

**WE VOTED FOR  
JEFFERSON DAVIS!**



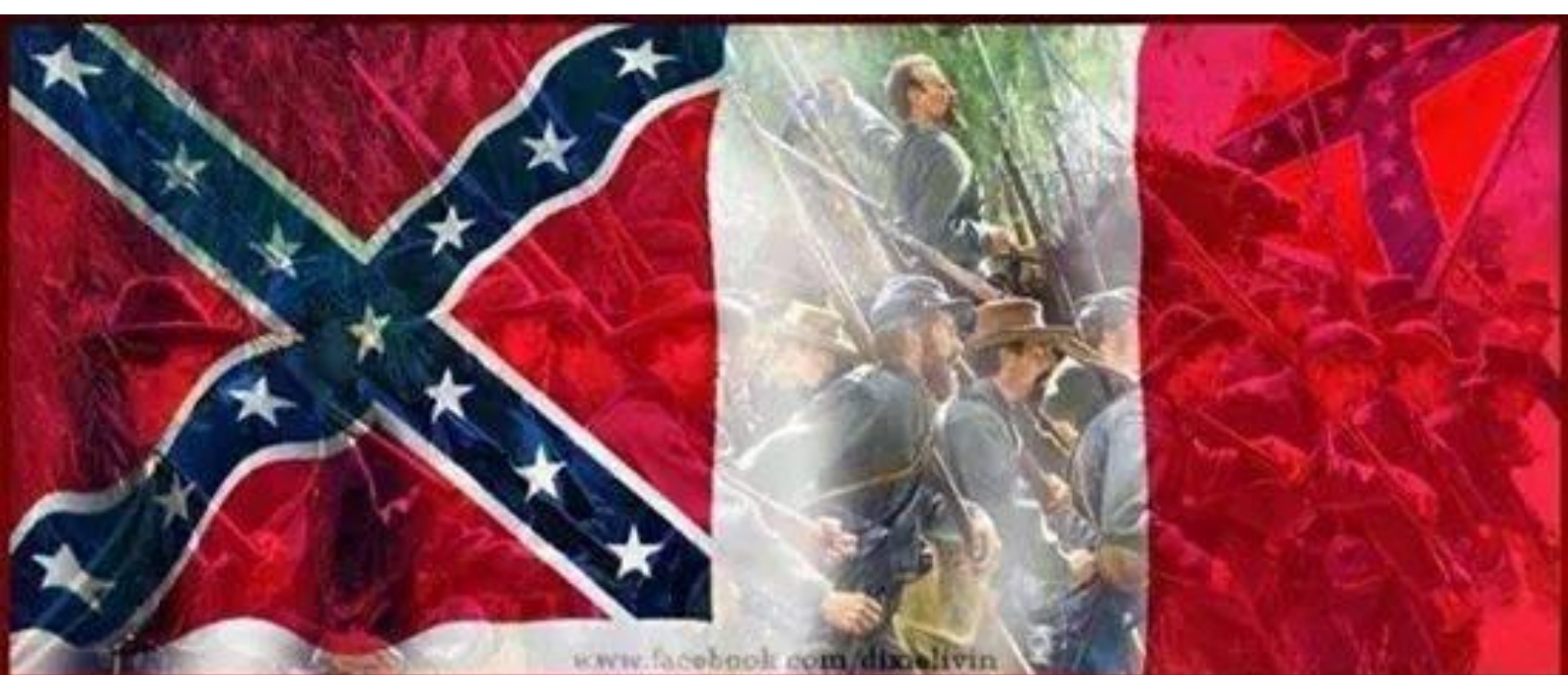
Southernisms from Sea Raven Press,  
the world's #1 South-friendly book publisher





Merry Christmas





*Bright banner of freedom with pride I unfold thee;  
Fair flag of my country, with love I behold thee  
Gleaming above us in freshness and youth,  
Emblem of liberty, symbol of truth;  
For this flag of my country in triumph shall wave  
O'er the Southerner's home and the Southerner's grave.*







# Southern Legal Resource Center

Defending the rights of all Americans  
Advocating for the Confederate community

Follow Us

The Southern Legal Resource Center is a non-profit tax deductible public law and advocacy group dedicated to expanding the inalienable, legal, constitutional and civil rights of all Americans, but especially America's most persecuted minority: Confederate Southern Americans. **SLRC NEEDS OUR HELP !!!**

## Company Overview

Non-profit tax deductible public law corporation founded in 1995, dedicated to preservation of the dwindling rights of all Americans through judicial, legal and social advocacy on behalf of the Confederate community and Confederate Southern Americans.



## Mission

A return to social and constitutional sanity for all Americans and especially for America's most persecuted minority: Confederate Southern Americans.

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Thank you,  
Kirk D. Lyons, Chief Trial Counsel

# Join SLRC Today!



# Sons of Confederate Veterans

"DEFENDING THEIR HONOR SINCE 1896"



[www.scv.org](http://www.scv.org) ★ 1-800-MySouth

## What is the Sons of Confederate Veterans?

The citizen-soldiers who fought for the Confederacy personified the best qualities of America. The preservation of liberty and freedom was the motivating factor in the South's decision to fight the Second American Revolution. The tenacity with which Confederate soldiers fought underscored their belief in the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. These attributes are the underpinning of our democratic society and represent the foundation on which this nation was built.

Today, the Sons of Confederate Veterans is preserving the history and legacy of these heroes, so future generations can understand the motives that animated the Southern Cause.

The SCV is the direct heir of the United Confederate Veterans, and the oldest hereditary organization for male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Organized at Richmond, Virginia in 1896, the SCV continues to serve as a historical, patriotic, and non-political organization dedicated to ensuring that a true history of the 1861-1865 period is preserved.

## Events & Functions

Memorial Services • Monthly Camp Meetings • Annual Reunions • Grave Site Restoration  
Educational Programs • Parades & Festivals • Heritage Defense • Honoring Our Veterans



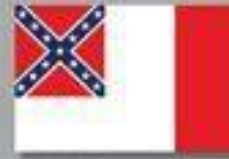
Rattle Flag



1st National Flag



2nd National Flag



3rd National Flag



Bonnie Blue Flag



*They took a stand for us.  
Now, we stand for them.*

*May God bless our efforts to  
Vindicate the Cause of the  
Confederate South.*

Michael Givens  
Commander-in-Chief  
Sons of Confederate Veterans

**NEVER APOLOGIZE**



**FOR BEING RIGHT!**

About our namesake: [www.belocamp.com](http://www.belocamp.com) [www.facebook.com/belocamp49/](https://www.facebook.com/belocamp49/) [belo.herald@yahoo.com](mailto:belo.herald@yahoo.com)

Colonel A.H. Belo was from North Carolina, and participated in Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. His troops were among the few to reach the stone wall. After the war, he moved to Texas, where he founded both the Galveston Herald and the Dallas Morning News. The Dallas Morning News was established in 1885 by the Galveston News as sort of a North Texas subsidiary. The two papers were linked by 315 miles of telegraph wire and shared a network of correspondents. They were the first two newspapers in the country to print simultaneous editions. The media empire he started now includes radio, publishing, and television. His impact on the early development of Dallas can hardly be overstated.

The Belo Camp 49 Websites and The Belo Herald are our unapologetic tributes to his efforts as we seek to bring the truth to our fellow Southrons and others in an age of political correctness and unrepentant yankee lies about our people, our culture, our heritage and our history. **Sic Semper Tyrannis!!!**

# Do you have an ancestor that was a Confederate Veteran?

Are you interested in honoring them and their cause?

Do you think that history should reflect the truth?

Are you interested in protecting your heritage and its symbols?

Will you commit to the vindication of the cause for which they fought?

If you answered "Yes" to these questions, then you should "Join Us"

*Membership in the Sons of Confederate Veterans is open to all male descendants of any veteran who served honorably in the Confederate armed forces regardless of the applicant's or his ancestor's race, religion, or political views.*

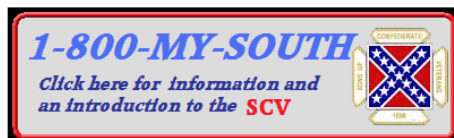
## How Do I Join The Sons of Confederate Veterans?



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*Membership in the Sons of Confederate Veterans is open to all male descendants of any veteran who served honorably in the Confederate States armed forces and government.*



Membership can be obtained through either lineal or collateral family lines and kinship to a veteran must be **documented genealogically**. The minimum age for full membership is 12, but there is no minimum for Cadet Membership.

<http://www.scv.org/research/genealogy.php>

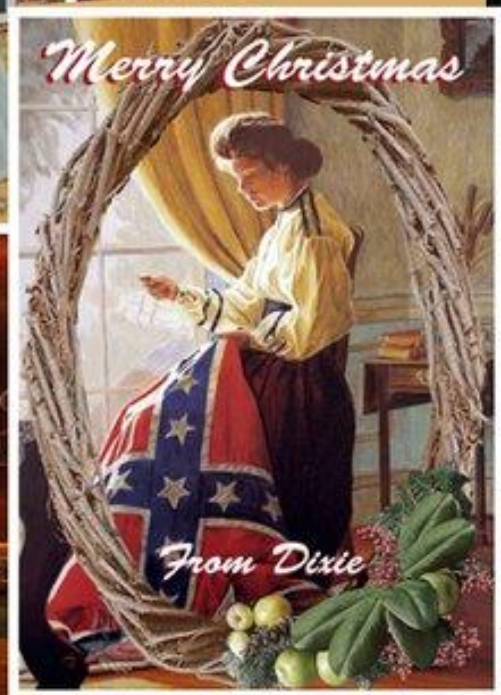
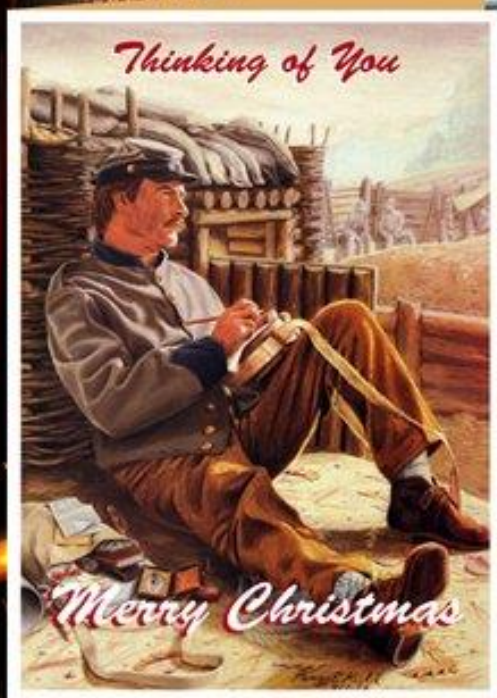
### CHARGE TO THE SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS

*"To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish." Remember it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations".*

Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee,  
Commander General

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# Merry Christmas

Sons of Confederate Veterans

