

THE HOWLING DAWG

December 2020

16th Georgia Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Company G
"The Jackson Rifles"



Goodbye 2020

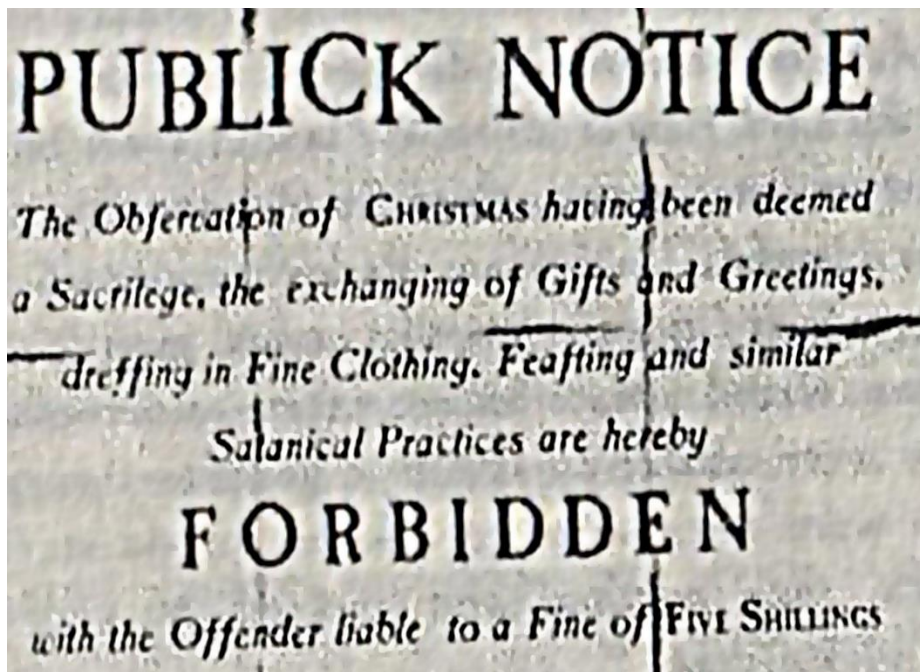
THE WAR THAT CHANGED CHRISTMAS



By War's end Christmas had gone from a relatively unimportant holiday to a day rooted in an idealized vision of home. The way Americans observed the holiday changed too, setting the stage for the more modern Christmas observance we know today...

THE WAR THAT CHANGED CHRISTMAS (continued)

Many current Christmas traditions actually started during the War era. Although Christmas wasn't an official holiday until President Ulysses S. Grant made it one in 1870. Many Americans had already been observing the holiday throughout the War as a way to find comfort and bond with family members. Christmas was widely celebrated in Europe for centuries but when the Puritans came to the New World they brought with them their distaste for the holiday. Instead of the joyful, family-oriented holiday that it is today, they turned Christmas into a solemn occasion that involved praying and reflecting on sin. Feeling that it was more of a European pagan holiday than a Christian celebration, Puritans officially banned



Christmas in Boston for over 20 years during the mid-1600s. Even after the ban was lifted it was still viewed with suspicion and dragged on as a dull, muted holiday over two centuries later.

In the early 1800's, a growing religious revival spurred the return of Christmas celebrations in many states. In 1830, Louisiana

became the first state to make Christmas a holiday. Other states followed suit and soon families started sending Christmas cards, singing carols, preparing special holidays meals and attending winter dances. Children received small, homemade gifts such as hand-carved toys, fruit and cakes. Families had small Christmas trees, which sat on top of a table, decorated with strings of dried fruit and popcorn.

During the War, soldiers had celebrated by decorating their camp with Christmas trees with hard-tack and salt-pork and singing carols such as "Come All Ye Faithful" and "Silent Night." After Sherman captured Savannah in December of 1864, his soldiers dressed their horses up like reindeer by attaching branches to their headgear. Abraham Lincoln and his family celebrated Christmas during the first year of the war by holding a Christmas party at the White House. Some soldiers, especially Union ones, at the beginning of the War, enjoyed special Christmas dinners of turkey, oysters and pies. Others made do with an "oyster can full of coffee, a quarter ration of hard-tack and some sow-belly." (The Story of a Common Soldier of Army Life in the Civil War, 1861-1865). -2-

THE WAR THAT CHANGED CHRISTMAS (concluded)

In the mid-19th century, the holiday's importance—and distance from religious tradition - grew. Songs and carols like "Jingle Bells" (1857) and poems like "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (1823) set the stage for a fun, secular holiday that revolved around gift-giving and celebration with food and drink.

In the antebellum South, plantation owners used the holiday to give slaves



passes to marry, food, alcohol, and other gifts. Enslaved people also incorporated some traditions from Africa. The War disrupted not just the relations between plantation owners and the people they enslaved, but those within families and communities. As both sides shifted their resources to War, the ability to give gifts and celebrate was dramatically curtailed.

People cast their decision to have more modest, patriotic Christmas celebrations and children got in on the act, too. Instead of giving and receiving store-bought gifts, they made more humble gifts like popcorn balls or crude homemade toys. They also learned to temper their expectations of Santa. *"A crotchety slave told the Howell Cobb children not to expect a visit from St. Nick because the Yankees had shot him,"* writes historian James Alan Marten, *"while other parents offered more sensitive explanations. As a Yankee, Santa would be held up by Confederate pickets or perhaps Union blockading vessels had interrupted his journey."* Mothers, aunts and sisters experienced Christmas as an agonizing reminder of the danger faced by men who had gone to War. Diaries and letters from that time document how many women felt anxiety, grief and depression around Christmas. In 1861, Margaret Cahill wrote to her husband, Thomas, a Union officer, that she felt so *"nervous and lonely"* that she could not write to him on Christmas. *"Will you say, why did you not write to me on Christmas Day"* she wrote. *"Well to tell you the truth I was not able."* *"Never before had so sad a Christmas dawned upon us,"* wrote Sallie A. Brook, a Confederate woman from Richmond, of Christmas 1861. By the end of the War in 1865, Christmas had gone from a relatively unimportant holiday to the opposite—a day rooted in an idealized vision of home. The way Americans observed the holiday changed too, setting the stage for the more modern Christmas holiday we know today. (Source: History.com)-3-

1861 - MACON'S 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 a local newspaper carried a story during the tumultuous holiday season of 1861 that told of the arrival of the first Christmas tree. As it would happen, the first time a Christmas tree was raised in Macon, 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. 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 that we revive this custom in Macon during our approaching holidays, to please the young people and at the same time make a fund for the relief of our beloved soldiers. 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."



Val Elliott Art

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 go to the tree at Ayre's to deposit presents." -4-

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 "clustered 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



Val Elliott Art

Stoneman Raid of the late War for Southern Independence. A day 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 breech and the fractured part of one wheel remained. It's a wonder no one was killed by the explosion. Huge fragments of iron were thrown in all directions; near the Methodist parsonage and along the Clinton road. Of course no one knew and no one will ever know who caused this explosion, but East Macon lost a War relic that had been highly prized for more than 50 years.-5-

DID IT REALLY HAPPEN JUST THE WAY THEY SAID? WAR TIME FAKE NEWS & ELECTION FRAUD



"Reading the War News on Broadway, New York," June 15, 1861 (Getty Images)

In the run-up to the 2020 election, American life was full of misinformation about everything from the security of mail-in voting to the causes of West Coast wildfires. Despite efforts to help citizens guard against "fake news," curtailing misinformation remained a controversial and difficult task. But, while the platforms that help today's untruths snowball and spread are often decidedly modern, the problem itself is nothing new. (Elizabeth Mitchell)

Either/Or - Lincoln Would Crush or Spread Political Misinformation

On May 18, 1864, U.S. troops marched into lower Manhattan and entered the offices of two key New York City newspapers. Soldiers leveled guns at staff members' heads. They blocked the doors with bayonets. Abraham Lincoln had ordered the arrest of the editors and the seizure of the newspapers. That particular May morning, the papers had run a presidential proclamation announcing a draft of 400,000 new soldiers. The problem: Lincoln had issued no such proclamation. Although Lincoln declared the bogus proclamation a complete fabrication, "*false and spurious*," which the newspapers had passed "*wickedly and traitorously*" to the American people, he had in fact written and signed an order for 300,000 new soldiers that very same day. He just hadn't sent it out. His outrage—and the likely constitutionally illegal act of arresting the editors and stopping the newspapers—covered up what was at its core a leak.

During the War, Americans furiously sifted false from true during a time of extreme partisan divisions, even among those who wanted to abolish slavery. -6-

FAKE NEWS & ELECTION FRAUD (continued)

War-era folks even had their own version of the Internet—the telegraph—which had exposed such stark partisan divisions in the country, that its inventor Samuel Morse founded an organization to rebuild national unity. In 2020 we have one key advantage over our predecessors. War-time newspapers rarely listed a reporter's name on an article. In the 1800s, each newspaper was considered a collective voice and reporters contributed anonymously to that perspective. The lack of personal accountability made it easy for reporters to slip a fake article into the columns. Readers had no idea if the shocking piece had been written by one of their most trusted correspondents, a rascal or even a spy. Lincoln himself used anonymity to great advantage. His staff members, either anonymously or under pseudonyms, reported on the excellence of his administration as if unbiased. Correspondence between a Philadelphia newspaper editor and the Secretary of War suggests Lincoln himself likely contributed anonymously to that newspaper while in the White House. "Lest you not see the President's article in the Press today, I enclose it to you," the editor wrote. Now, with bylines and Twitter-handle links, we can track authorship and weigh the article against a record of accuracy.

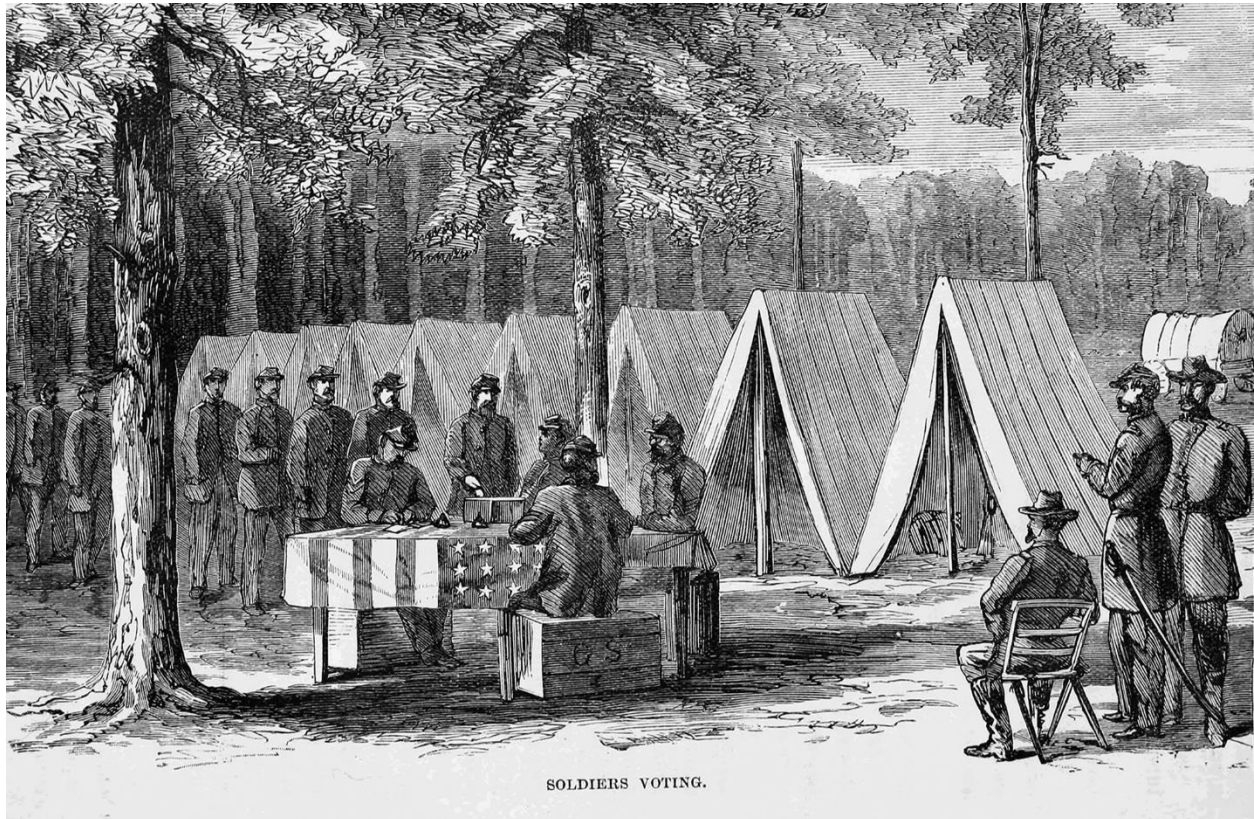
During the War, newspapers ran a slug over reports from the front: "This is important if true." Readers understood it to be breaking news from a single source. The information was worth considering but not final. Readers were grateful for glimpses from the frontlines, however hazy, but were reminded to wait for confirmation. (Elizabeth Mitchell - Oct. 2020)

"Dead or alive, they all had cast a good vote."

Traveling to Baltimore in the fall of 1864, Orville Wood uncovered the most elaborate election conspiracy in America's brief history. Wood was a merchant from Clinton County, New York. As a supporter of Lincoln, he was asked to visit troops from his hometown to "look after the local ticket." New York legislators had only established the state's mail-in voting system in April with the intent of ensuring the votes of white troops battling the Confederate Army. Troops from New York were allowed to authorize individuals back home to cast a vote on their behalf. Along with their mail-in ballots, troops would assign their power of attorney on slips that required four signatures: the voter's, the person authorized as a recipient, a witness to the signed affidavit and a fellow officer. These documents would be sealed in an envelope and shipped back home to be counted in the final vote. This was the process that Orville Wood intended to uphold, he would testify in court later. He arrived at Fort McHenry in Baltimore to visit with the 91st New York Regiment. There, an Army captain suggested that there had been irregularities when it came to the gathering of soldiers' mail-in ballots. These suspicions of fraud were echoed when Wood visited wounded men at the Newton University Hospital. The rumors of wrongdoing led Wood to the office of Moses Ferry in Baltimore.-7-

"Dead or alive, they all had cast a good vote." (continued)

Ferry had been selected by New York Gov. Horatio Seymour (who ran against Ulysses S. Grant in the 1868 presidential election) to help oversee the voting process for New York's enlisted men. Ferry told Wood that the votes from New York's 91st Regiment had already been tallied: 400 for McClellan and 11 for Lincoln. Wood returned to the office later and, following Ferry's instructions, began forging signatures of the 16th New York Cavalry. Meanwhile, a clerk sat across the room signing ballots from the roster of names Wood had brought with him from home.



An 1864 sketch by William Waud of Pennsylvania soldiers voting. (LOC)

Wood asked to personally deliver these fraudulent ballots, but Ferry said they would have to receive final approval from his colleague in Washington — Edward Donahue Jr. Donahue soon arrived in Baltimore and met with Wood. It was revealed during this conversation that around 20 co-conspirators were already at work in D.C. to aid in the plot to deliver votes to McClellan. The following day Wood watched as Donahue and his crew formed a sort of assembly line, passing blank papers along to one another to be signed with the names of active enlisted men, wounded and dead soldiers, and officers who never existed. Also discovered in Ferry's office was a list of around 400 names belonging to sick and wounded soldiers under treatment at a nearby hospital. In reference to the roster, Ferry joked, "Dead or alive, they all had cast a good vote."

Special Thanks to Dr. Renee Sullivan who offered the idea for this article. -8-

"Dead or alive, they all had cast a good vote." (concluded)

Ferry, Donahue, and their fellow conspirators found humor in their work. One accomplice mocked the outcry he expected from abolitionist newspapers following the corruption of the election. The men bragged about their past successes in fixing local elections back home.

Together, the men had shipped crates of fraudulent votes back to New York. But their scheme was over. Wood reported the operation to authorities. Ferry's office was searched, and on the morning of Oct. 27, 1864 — less than two weeks before the election — he and Donahue stood trial before a military commission.

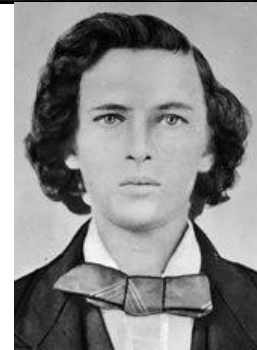
Arrests in New York and Washington continued to mount as Donahue was on trial, following Wood's testimony and supporting evidence. In the months following Lincoln's victory (Abe won with 221 electoral votes to McClellan's 21) anti-abolitionist newspapers attacked his legitimacy, calling the trial another aspect of a conspiracy conducted by the president to ensure his reelection. (Dustin Waters Aug. 2020)

Anything for a Story

Alexander Gardner had worked for famed photographer Matthew Brady, thus, many of his most earnest efforts were credited to his boss. In the interest of his own notoriety, Gardner tried to communicate both pathos and patriotism with his photographs, reminding his



audience of War's tragedy without forgetting the supposed superiority of his side's Cause. Photographs of Union dead are much more rare than Confederate. Certainly, one effective means of elevating one's own Cause while demeaning the other was to create a scene - by posing bodies - and then draft a dramatic narrative to accompany the picture. A burial party, on the borders of the Gettysburg battle-field, found, in a secluded spot, a sharpshooter lying as he fell when struck by a bullet. His cap and gun (left) were evidently thrown behind him by the shock, and the blanket, partly shown, (right) indicates that he had selected a permanent position from which to fire on the enemy. Gardner and his associate Timothy O'Sullivan have long been accused of moving this body 72 yards and restaging it to look like a Confederate sharpshooter. This is one of his more famous acts of sacrilege. Gardner (who was with Sherman's March to the Sea) had achieved acclaim for his pictures of the dead at Sharpsburg and in this immoral act sought to gain further acclaim and money. Even contemporaries were critical. Indeed, it was a dark and bloody business which was sure to appeal to the morbid curiosity of human nature. Brady also traveled to Gettysburg and began taking images around July 15 after most bodies had been buried. To meet public expectation of the gruesome, Brady had posed an assistant as a dead soldier. His fakes received more recognition than Gardner's. The dead sharpshooter's story appeared in a 1925 issue of Confederate Veteran and may have wrongly identified him as Andrew Hoge of the 4th Virginia. 2014 research may have more correctly identified: 23 year old John Rutherford Ash, of Co. A of the 2nd GA (Benning's Brig), KIA July 3.-9-



QUOTES & OPINIONS

I rarely talk politics – such is my disdain for it - but it is a sad, discouraging and frightening time in OUR (and yes it belongs to Southern people, too) County. My years may not be much longer upon this earth – who knows but GOD - so my concern is not so much for myself as for my children and grandchildren who must live under un-GODLY leadership. All we ever asked was to have decent, honest leaders, regardless of gender or ethnic origin – we have not gotten our wish. In some cases we did not even get intelligent ones.

After all the unfounded impeachment attempts, all the slander and ridiculous liberal lies, it still took widespread election fraud and even recount cheating to remove President Trump from office, if he indeed, goes. I thank him and Vice President Pence for their service to America – it was a job well done. Who knows who the scurrilous media will find to constantly bash now – they must be at a total loss.

Still, in all of this, I believe that we will be okay because GOD will look after HIS people. As much as I admired the job that was done by the outgoing administration, my trust was never in them but in GOD.

To you, my beloved fellow Americans I offer this reminder of the encouraging words of our GOD who rules over everything:

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy GOD: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."
– Isaiah 41:10 – Duke

"LORD keep me in YOUR will so I won't be in YOUR way." – *Jessica King*

"Stay in prayer, stay in the BOOK – GOD will work it out." - *Dr. Pete Ruckman*

The wonderful worldly joys of Christmas are temporary. We may love sitting by a Christmas tree with family or friends. Churches have special seasonal programs and oh, the children. There is so much hope in their bright eyes. These are some of the very good things of life. However, if we try to use them a shield from the brokenness of this year, our hope is forlorn. No amount of hot chocolate or Hallmark movies can make us truly rejoice. We cannot make artificial joy and peace. That's where the LORD JESUS CHRIST comes in. HE knows how tired we are this year – even afraid at times - and that we need something to give us true hope. JESUS reminds us through HIS WORD that the only thing we can cling to for hope is HIM. Romans 6:23 says that *"the wages of sin is death, but the gift of GOD is eternal life in CHRIST JESUS our LORD."* - *Bethany Pyle*

Where did the term "GOING SOUTH" come from? It is invariably used to describe something that went bad or that is inferior. Is that because the SOUTH is bad? I even hear Southern folks saying things like "THAT SURE WENT SOUTH". In this age when everyone seems to be offended by something or other, well, I am too, by the remark, "GOING SOUTH." The South is where GOD planted me. It is the duty station I was assigned to and I LOVE IT – especially Georgia. I prefer "GOING SOUTH" to "going North or West" – no offense. I can't go very far "East" from here. It has often been said, as a joke that, "The War of Northern Aggression" was when the North invaded America." There is a lot of underlying truth in that. The fact is that the North has always borne the burden of justifying their act of invading the sovereign South. If the North had not tried to treat the Southern States as mere subjects, there would have been little need for a War. Theirs was not a Holy Cause – anything but. It was not any different from their land-grading tactics before The War Between the States and the continuation of them in the Native American's homeland that they could conquer after 1865.

- *Duke*

LOOKING FORWARD TO THESE 2021 EVENTS

Middle Georgia Civil War Round Table Meeting

January 19, 2021 - 6:30 pm

We are confirming a speaker for our next meeting. As we enter our second year of existence, it will be time to elect our 2021 officers. In 2020, I served as President, Johnny Mack Nichols as Treasurer and Cheryl Aultman as Secretary. Please be thinking about who you would like to nominate and elect. While our officers are bound by no term limits, it is often NOT best for the organization to elect the same people time after time. Our quarterly meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday at The Cannonball House on Mulberry Street in Macon, GA. We begin with a session of fellowship and light refreshments at 6:30pm and would appreciate any and all contributions of snacks and beverages for this. At 7pm our meeting begins by covering a few necessary items of Roundtable business before enjoying a program by our selected guest speaker. There is no "official" membership, so everyone is welcome. Pass the word and invite someone to come with you,

- John Wayne Dobson, President

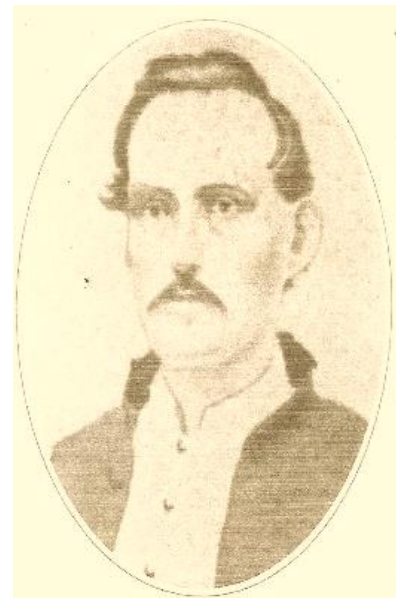
The Cannonball House Annual Membership Meeting

January 26, 2021 - 5 pm

The Cannonball House Annual Membership meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 26 at 5:30pm. This meeting is open to anyone who would like to attend. Executive Director Cheryl Aultman has scheduled, as our guest speaker, Daniel Cone, author of "Last To Join The Fight", a Mercer University Press publication about the 66th GA Infantry. Mr. Cone will present a brief program and will have books for sale afterwards. In addition, this meeting will be VERY special occasion because we will unveil the newly conserved frock coat of Lt. Colonel Algernon S. Hamilton, who is one of the main subjects in Mr. Cone's book. Hamilton is buried in Old Clinton Methodist Church Cemetery.

We will have a wine & cheese reception afterwards. It's going to be a wonderful evening!

Merry Christmas



Lt. Colonel A.S. Hamilton

IN DEEPEST SYMPATHY

Lorene Richards Cross

Lorene Richards Cross, age 80, died Monday, November 23, 2020 at Royal Care in Cochran, GA. Funeral services were held Friday, November 27, 2020, at 10:00 A.M. in the chapel of Mathis Funeral Home. Burial was private in Pulaski-Bleckley Memorial Gardens. Mrs. Lorene was a lifelong resident of Cochran. She was the daughter of the late Charlie Paul and Ruth Dykes Mullis and the wife of the late Bill Richards and Ray Dean Cross. She was retired from L&H Shirt Factory and was a certified daycare operator and was "Ren Ren" to many children. Mrs. Lorene was a member of Bethany Baptist Church. Survivors are her sons, **1 Sgt. Alan (Nina) Richards (16th GA)** of Cochran, Stevie (Janice) Richards of Chauncey and Billy Wayne (Stacy) Richards of Cochran; seven grandchildren and eight great grandchildren; her brother, Leo (Peggy) Mullis of Cochran; several nieces and nephews. The family greeted friends after the service at Mathis Funeral Home.

Michael H. Gardner



Michael H. Gardner, 64, of Gray, went to be with the Lord Sunday, November 29, 2020. Funeral services were held Wednesday, December 2, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. at Elam Baptist Church with the Reverend Gary Thomas officiating. The family greeted friends on Tuesday, December 1, 2020 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at Hart's Mortuary, Jones County [Georgia] Chapel. Private burial was held at Elam Memorial Gardens Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to DAD'S Day (Dollars Against Diabetes), Central Georgia Federation of Trades & Labor Council AFL-CIO, P.O. Box 2565, Macon, GA 31203. Mr. Gardner was the eldest son of Vic and Joanne Gardner, Mr. Gardner was born in Macon and lived in Jones County for the past 64 years. He was a very active leader in organized

labor. He started his union career in 1976 by joining the United Paper Workers while working at Inland Container. After going to work at Brown & Williamson Tobacco Corp., his first elected union position was as a shop steward for the Baker, Confectionery, & Tobacco Workers Union Local 362-T. Mr. Gardner then served once as vice president and then financial secretary for Local 362 for 20 years. He was elected to serve on 5 contract committees, plant safety committee, and was a registered labor lobbyist for Local 362-T for 12 years. After retiring from Brown & Williamson, Mr. Gardner went on staff as a lead organizer for Service Employees International Union Local 1985 for 5 years. He was then employed by the -12-

IN DEEPEST SYMPATHY (concluded)

(Gardner) International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1316 as the Membership & Business Development Director until August 2012. Mr. Gardner had served as president or secretary – treasurer for the Central Georgia Federation of Trades & Labor Council AFL-CIO for 25 years. He was a proud 22-year member of IBEW 1316. Mr. Gardner had served in the past on the Georgia State AFL-CIO Executive Board, Executive Committee for United Way of Central Georgia, Middle Georgia Community Food Bank, Bibb County Democratic Executive Committee, and Chairman for the Bibb County Board of Elections. One of Mr. Gardner's greatest honors was to be inducted into the Georgia State AFL-CIO Hall of Fame in 2017. Mr. Gardner was a baseball and softball coach at West Macon Little League for several years. A ball player himself, he was a part of the 1984 and 1985 ASA Industrial National Championship Teams and the 1986 ISA World Champions. Mr. Gardner is a Christian and a member of Elam Baptist Church in Gray, Georgia. He served as a Past Worshipful Master for Fort Hawkins F&AM Lodge #418 and a member of Sincerity F&AM Lodge #430 and a noble in the Al Sihah Shrine Temple. **Mr. Gardner is a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp #2218, The Camp of the Unknown Soldier, Gray, Georgia.** Mr. Gardner is survived by his parents, Vic and Joanne Gardner of Jones County; son, Stewart Dustin Gardner (Stacy); daughter, Michael Tara Gardner; and brother, Rusty Gardner (Rhonda). He was the proud grandfather, "Papa", of 6 grandchildren, Cheyenne, 16, Hunter, 14, Eli, 11, Evan 9, Kennedy, 8, and Savannah, 5. He is also survived by his niece, Dr. Lacy Gardner-Hattaway (Jeremy); nephew, Russ Gardner; and great-nephews, Phoenix Hattaway and one on the way. Please visit www.hartsmort.com to express condolences. Hart's Jones County Chapel, Hart's Mortuary and Cremation Center, 307 Pecan Lane, Gray, GA 31032 had charge of the arrangements.

CHRISTMAS IN DIXIE

By now in New York City, there's snow on the ground
And out in California, the sunshine's falling down
And, maybe down in Memphis, Graceland's all in lights
And in Atlanta, Georgia, there's peace on earth tonight
Christmas in Dixie, it's snowin' in the pines
Merry Christmas from Dixie, to everyone tonight
It's windy in Chicago. The kids are out of school
There's magic in Motown. The city's on the move
In Jackson, Mississippi, to Charlotte, Caroline
And all across the nation, it's the peaceful Christmas time
Christmas in Dixie, it's snowin' in the pines
Merry Christmas from Dixie, to everyone tonight
And from [The 16th Georgia]

God bless why'all...We love ya...Happy New Year...Good night
Merry Christmas...Merry Christmas tonight

Songwriters: Jeff Cook / Mark Herndon / Randy Owen / Teddy Gentry



150 Years Ago – By Larry Upthegrove

Friday, December 2, 1870: Thanksgiving is not yet the wide-spread holiday that it will become in future years. Through the Atlanta papers, we hear from the "Augusta Constitutionalist:" *"Thanksgiving.—There was no general observance of Thursday in this city in accordance with the thanksgiving proclamations. Business was not suspended. Services were held in several of the churches. Banks, public offices and newspaper offices closed. but aside from these suspensions, things went on much as usual. A portion of the day was particularly gloomy, raw, cold, and rainy."*

Wednesday, December 7, 1870: In Atlanta, today is Election Day for City Officials. There has been heated campaigning in the local papers, ad nauseum ...The new City Council will be 6 Democrats: Charles Webb, Cornelius Cassin, Robert Lowrey, Nick McLendon, Frank Rice, and Alfred Fowler; two white Radicals: Samuel Grubb and Daniel Snyder; and two Negro Radicals: William Finch and George Graham. This will be the first time Negroes have ever sat on Council and the last time for many years to come. There are reports of fighting in the streets. There are no forms of identification these days, so pollsters watch faces to make sure they only vote once. Radical negroes are bragging about voting in each ward.

Monday, December 12, 1870: In Atlanta, there is good news for the citizens of Georgia. The Western and Atlantic Railroad is no longer run by the State of GA. Ex-Governor Brown and thirteen other top businessmen of the State have leased it for \$25,000 per month. If it is well run, they can make a handsome profit and the State can rely on a steady income instead of a ball and chain around the neck ...



From Romancoke Plantation, in Virginia, Robert E. Lee Jr. writes to his mother a document of sadness and lamentation. His is a sad and guilt-ridden life.....He writes *"...I try to do my duty to myself & to my neighbor but am sure I do not try hard enough or I would succeed better. It is a great sorrow to me, & a cause of despising myself & my selfishness & weakness, when I find out how much my father loved me, how much he did for me & what an example of true manliness he set me all through his life; that I should have done so little for him, tried too little to follow in his footsteps & appreciated so slightly the blessing GOD gave me, in making me the son of such a father & such a mother.....I have tried and do try to*


do better, but it seems I always fail, preferring the world & the devil to all the blessings of belief & love in a Merciful God...." "Rob" Lee is 27 now and will be married next year but she will die the following year. It will be another twenty-two years before he marries again.

That marriage will be fruitful with two daughters. He will continue to farm the plantation left to him by his Maternal Grandfather and become a respected writer in his later years, recording his memories of his family and life as the son of the great warrior.....When his end comes at age 70, he will lie down with his father and mother in Lee Chapel on the grounds of Washington and Lee University. When both Lee men were in Confederate service during the War, they met, once, briefly at Sharpsburg as "Rob" served as an artilleryman (painting above).




Tuesday, December 13, 1870: The weather in Atlanta is the same as the last few days, cold, and growing colder with rain dampening all street travel. Today's "Intelligencer" has this: "Wanted—rope bridge or canoe, to cross some of the streets."

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Col. 3:23



We Never Pray Alone

"... HE [JESUS] is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto GOD by HIM [JESUS], seeing HE [JESUS] ever liveth to make intercession for them [us] ." ... HE [JESUS] lives forever to intercede with GOD on their [our] behalf." - Hebrews 7:25

Dan & Sheri Williams - J.C. Nobles - Brandy Avery - Keith Beck - Harold & Toni Buchanan - Voncille Sark - Rob Luke - Rev. Joey Young and family - J.C. Nobles - Brenda Dobson - Madeline Sanders - Rev. Gary Berrier - Bob Holloway
Steve & Ricky Smith & family - Ben (Cooter) Jones - Cathy Wheeler - Sean Tajirian
Reba Aultman - Kasey Larson - Matt Whitehead - Will Butler - Val & Ed Elliott - Tommy Wright - Gale Red - Ethan & Crystal Bloodworth - Ty & Gina Burnsed
Jack & Jim Munday - Dale & Becky Rankin - Kay Busbee - Roy and Dana Myers - Rev. Alan Farley - Mrs.& Mrs. Burns - Richard Durham as well as, those who preach & teach The WORD, our heritage, UDC, C.S.A., U.S.A., Israel, Law Enforcement, Paramedics & Firefighters, Judges Political Leaders, Missionaries, Our Compatriots, Ministers, Travelers, The lonely, bereaved families, For America, Bibb County, Georgia, The Cannonball House Staff, Our enemies, for the unspoken requests and those I forgot to put on this list ... And for Me & You, that we witness boldly, risking awkwardness and seeming to be foolish. Especially those infected with COVID-19 and fighting for their lives and those faithfully ministering help to them. We know there are so many UNSPOKEN requests near and dear to the heart. Please, let me know of others that should be on this list. Pray with the confidence that GOD loves you so very much.

FROM DAN & SHERI WILLIAMS IN AUGUSTA 12/17/20:

"We're doing good Sheri's daddy has been in hospital for about 2 weeks. She is stressed out. Hope y'all are doing good. Will keep praying for y'all too."

Ask God to meet these needs according to HIS will ...

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the SPIRIT of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." - Isaiah 59:19



The Georgia Confederates Youth Camp Newsletter

December, 2020

Go online and get your applications for the 2021 GCYC.

You can return by USPS mail or eMail.

Registration must be received by June 14, 2021.

Tuition is due by June 14th.



Sign up today.

You won't want to miss this one !

Jubilee

Douglas Gospel
Assembly



June 28th ~ July 2nd

Monday thru Friday

2021

Douglas Gospel Assembly

Broxton, Georgia



★ *Georgia Division* ★
Sons of Confederate Veterans



**Annual General Robert E. Lee
 Birthday Celebration
 Saturday, January 16, 2021 at 11:00 am**

Jefferson Davis Memorial Park

338 Jeff Davis Park Rd, Fitzgerald, GA 31750

*Robert Edward Lee ~
 b. January 19, 1807 ~ d. October 12, 1870*

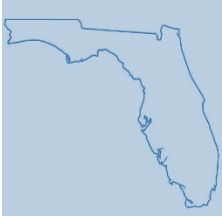
Event Agenda:

- Welcome Dan Coleman
- Honor Guard Host Camp Jefferson Davis Cowboys #682
- Opening prayer Kim Beck
- Salute to Confederate Flag/Pledges Josh Thayer
- Introduce speaker Chuck Griffin
- Poem: The Long Lonesome RoadGeorge Ray Houston
- Keynote Speaker Bo Slack
- Topic: General Lee The True American Hero that Everyone Should Emulate
- Commander's thanks Tim Pilgrim
- Announcements Tim Hawkins
- Benediction Kim Beck
- Salute: muskets & artillery

After the Event:

- ~ BBQ Dinner provided by Ga. Division Pit Master Ken Arvin
- \$5 per BBQ plate including sides and drink. (all proceeds fund the following year BBQ) Children 12 and under plates are free.
- ~ Executive Council Meeting

RE-ENACTMENT NEWS FROM FLORIDA



Greetings, fellow re-enactors/Living Historians! During the weekend of the Otter Springs re-enactment this past October, re-enactors approached myself and the main hosts of said event about the few number of events in the normally busy stretch of January through March. These conversations included our being asked if the organizers would be willing to move the Otter Springs event to replace Brooksville at least for 2021 and possibly beyond. In the weeks since Otter Springs additional similar inquiries from re-enactors followed. So with all of that in mind, the main organizers of the Otter Springs event approached the site managers, while I made inquiries among re-enactor groups. The site managers readily agreed to it; and input from re-enactors has been positive regarding this endeavor. This feedback, along with being motivated by the idea that if we don't have places to go re-enactors may be inclined to hang up their uniforms, muskets, and hoop dresses which will cause Living History to dwindle away, has resulted in the following. The organizers are embarking on a leap of faith and we shall be holding the Otter Springs event again on the weekend of the former Brooksville Raid, January 15-17, 2021. The main sponsoring groups are the 7th Brigade Florida SCV and the For Vets organization which owns and operates the Otter Springs Campground where the event takes place. I have been asked to serve again as the re-enactor coordinator and have agreed to do so. The weekend will again be similar in format to previous events here, including three battle re-enactments (two Saturday, one Sunday) to re-create all the engagements of the February 1865 Cedar Key Raid. The Ladies' Tea, Ball, etc. will likely be part of the event as before. And you never know...this is Florida... it may even be warm enough for a swim in the natural spring. However we are being prepared in the event feedback indicates a potentially larger attendance of re-enactors seeking a place to go in lieu of Brooksville. Indeed some of this is already starting to reach us about this as a handful of units have already expressed their interest. There may be some changes to the site layout, location of camps, etc. with the intention of making use of more parts of the grounds, providing a larger battlefield, etc. Much of the infrastructure, logistics, amenities, etc. are already in place from this past October's event. The location will be at the large Otter Springs Park and Campground, 6470 SW 80th Avenue in Trenton, Florida (southeast of Gainesville and north of Chiefland). Proceeds from the event go to benefit the military veterans' support efforts of the For Vets Organization. All branches of service and civilian re-enactors welcomed. Authentic and modern camping available; there are also modern camping hook up sites and cabins available in the campgrounds. Hiking trails and canoe run from the natural spring wind through the site. The event has drawn a respectable crowd of spectators and media coverage, especially the most recent one in October. I will provide more updates as the event date draws closer but this is confirmed to be taking place in January. Re-enactors contact myself at ltcol2ndbattalion@gmail.com; sutlers and vendors contact Clement Lindsey at cwpyroman@gmail.com. Please do not hesitate to request further information, details, etc. as we strive to preserve and present this part of Florida and American history. Best wishes to all and I remain, Lt. Colonel Keith Kohl 1st Brigade Provisional Army of the Confederate States -19-

The Humor of Kenny Stancil

Three police officers were standing in line at the Pearly Gates. Saint Peter asked the first officer, "What did you do with your life?"



"I was a police officer," he responded.

"What kind of police officer?" Saint Peter asked.

"I was a vice officer. I kept drugs off the streets and out of the hands of kids."

"Welcome to heaven. You may enter the gates."

He asked the second man what he did as a police officer.

"I was a traffic officer," said the man. "I kept the roads and highways safe."

"Welcome to heaven. You may enter the gates."

He asked the third man what he did as a police officer.

"I was a military policeman, sir," replied the man.

"Wonderful! I've been waiting for you all day!" replied Saint Peter. "I need to take a break! Watch the gate, will you?"

A woman was driving down the street in a sweat because she had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking space. Looking up toward heaven, she said, "Lord, take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I'll go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up drinking wine." Miraculously, a parking space opened up right in front of her destination. The woman looked up to heaven and said, "Never mind, Lord; I found one on my own."

My dog ate all the Scrabble tiles. I found strange messages around the house for days.

Merry Christmas!! Love y'all, Kenny

Those Sad ol' Stories

It is just not the deaths of men that regenerate painful memories – there are other sad ol' stories that hurt so much, too. General Nathan Bedford Forrest is said to have killed at least 30 men and had 29 horses shot out from underneath him. He once remarked "*that made him one up on them.*" On the morning of March 5, 1863 Union general John Coburn's troops



approached Confederate forces stationed near Thompson's Station, a small train depot nine miles south of Franklin, Tennessee. Skirmishing continued all day. At 10:00 a.m. the following morning, Confederate guns announced the opening of the battle. Coburn ordered a charge, but the Confederates drove them back. Forrest led a frontal attack while mounted on his favorite war horse, Roderick. The dark chestnut Saddler had a reputation among Forrest's men as being an unusually loyal horse and reportedly had often trotted after Forrest in camp like a hunting dog. Roderick even tried to come into Forrest's tent on occasion. In the

Thompson's Station fighting, the devoted steed was hit three times by enemy fire, but despite his suffering he valiantly struggled forward. Realizing the severity of Roderick's wounds, Forrest rode to the rear. He handed Roderick over to Willie before returning to the front on a fresh mount. Roderick - dutifully attracted to the sounds of battle - broke away from Willie and galloped across the battlefield in search of Forrest. The brave war horse leapt three fences on his way. Just before reaching Forrest, he received his fourth and fatal wound. He died at Forrest's side. (J.D.R. Hawkins)

After Roderick was killed at Thompson's Station, General Forrest began riding King Philip, a whiteish-gray horse with an iron grey mane and tail. It is said that King Philip despised the sight of a blue uniform and would snort and paw the ground when he saw one. It is said that Forrest was still riding King Philip as late as 1867 when the aging horse charged some blue-coated policemen. King Philip died from colic.



BRAISED RABBIT

1 cup flour 1 tsp. salt ¼ tsp. pepper
1 rabbit, dressed and cut for frying 1 egg well beaten
1 ½ cups water 1 cup dry bread crumbs 6 tbsps. Lard or bacon drippings

Mix, salt, pepper and flour and use this to coat pieces of rabbit. Dip pieces in a mixture of egg and one tablespoon of water. Coat well with bread crumbs. Brown on all sides in hot lard in skillet. Add 1 cup water slowly; cover tightly and simmer 1 hour or until tender.

CORN FRITTERS

1 egg lightly beaten ¼ tsp. salt
1 cup whole kernel corn ½ cup milk
1 tsp. sugar ½ cup flour
2 tsps. Baking powder Dash of pepper

Sift flour, baking powder, salt and pepper together. Blend egg and milk together and add sugar. Add to flour mixture gradually. Stir in corn, and drop by spoonful's into deep hot fat and fry until brown. Drain and serve with maple syrup.



THE CAMP OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER #2218 Jones Co., GA

We plan – LORD willing - to have our annual Lee-Jackson Banquet at our usual location of Chevy's Pizza in Gray, GA on Thursday, January 21, 2021. With minimal business, it will primarily consist of a musical tribute to the Generals by *Simple Heritage*. This will, of course, be at our normal meeting place of Chevy's in Gray, GA and we will be eating individually from the menu at 6:30pm.

Subsequent meetings in 2021 from February – October are planned and some guest speaker slots are still open. If interested, contact Adj. Dobson (waynedobson51@yahoo).

THE 16TH GEORGIA CO. G - "The Jackson Rifles"

Colonel (Ret.)—Steven L. "Red Bone" Smith—478-951-4863 or 478-956-3858
Honorary Colonel J. C. Nobles –
478-718-3201
Rev. Joey Young – Honorary Member - 678-978-7213

Captain Wm. "Rebel" Bradberry, *Commanding* – 404-242-7213
1st Lt. Noah Sprague – 706-491-9755
2nd Lt. Charles Whitehead –
478-986-8943
Color Sgt. Kevin Sark - 478-731-8796
Adjutant: 5th Corp. "Duke" Dobson
478-731-5531
Treasurer: 6th Corp. Earl Colvin
– 478-214-0687

1st Sgt. (RIP) James "Barefoot" Boyd (2019)
1st Sgt. Alan "Cookie" Richards - 478-308-9739
2nd Sgt. Nathan Sprague – 478-320-8748
Corp. (Ret.) Mike "Beezer" Banks – 770-467-8123
1st Corp. Brick Lee Nelson-478-986-1151/955-2074
2nd Corp. Matthew Whitehead - 478-607-0235
3rd Corp. Cody Sprague - 478-542-1802
4th Corp. Tommy Shover – 478-230-3483



Colton Charles King

February 17, 1995 - January 4, 2019

Lead Chaplain—Joel Whitehead, Jr. - 478-986-8798
Hon. Chaplain Ronnie "Skin" Neal – 478-808 8848
Assistant Chaplain – Charles Hill – 770-845-6878
Musician – Drew Edge – 478-365-1897
Musician – Chance Sprague – 706-491-9755
Musician - Aaron Bradford – 302-668-8029
Musician - Al McGalliard - 478-259-5786

ON FACEBOOK: "JACKSON RIFLES". And @ scv2218.com

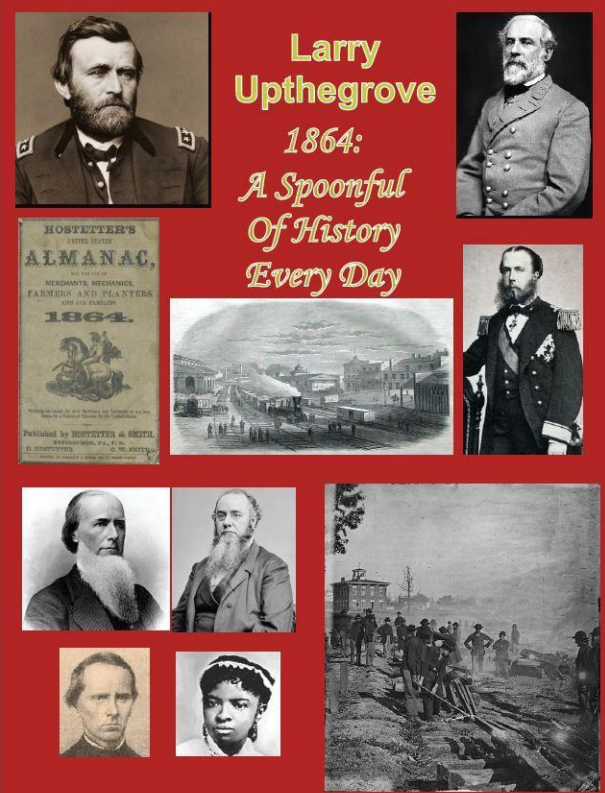
EVENTS

January 15, 2021 – Lee-Jackson Banquet – Gen. Edward Dorr Tracy SCV Camp # 18 – Macon, GA
January 19, 2021 – Middle Georgia Civil War Round Table @ The Cannonball House 6:30pm
January 21, 2021 – Lee-Jackson Banquet – SCV Camp of the Unknown Soldier # 2218 – Gray, GA
January 26, 2021 – Cannonball House Membership Meeting @ 5pm – Macon, GA
February 6, 2021 – 16TH GA Winter Drill – details to follow – Gray, GA
February 13-15, 2021 – 157th Anniversary Battle of Olustee, FL Re-enactment – **Canceled**

NEW BOOK PLANNED - About The 32nd Georgia Infantry

Attention Compatriots: We are asking for your help in compiling a regimental history of the GA 32nd Vol. Inf., a unit in which your ancestors may have served. It is our purpose to preserve the memory of our heroic ancestors for future generations. We are in need of soldier photos and any family stories or biographical info you may have about these fine men. Any information will be much appreciated and credited. Please contact either of us at the following email addresses. Daryl Hutchinson hutchinson60@gmail.com or Earl Colvin ebcolvin@windstream.net

NEW BOOK PUBLISHED




**Larry
Upthegrove**
*1864:
A Spoonful
Of History
Every Day*

\$ 39.95

***Follow Georgia's Civil War History
Every Day of 1864***

Battles rage as the United States of America fights the bloodiest war in its history. Meanwhile, life goes on, and this book documents much more than the fighting and the outcomes of the battles. The reader will get the news of the day as seen through Confederate eyes, including many entries from the diary of Carrie Berry (shown in photo at right).

About the Author




Larry Upthegrove was born and raised in Southeastern Floyd County, Georgia, on an eighty-acre farm at the end of the school bus route. He lived well away from any town, the nearest being Rome, GA, about 15 miles away so the radio quit working at sundown, and there were no televisions in most homes at that time, the 1950's.

He was able to get his homework done on the school bus, then when he arrived at home, we had 1,000 chickens to feed water and gather the eggs that had to be cleaned, weighed and candled, usually about 800 per day. After the chickens were tended, about 100 pigs to be fed, two or three yearling hogs to be fed, a horse, ten sheep and a milk cow to be fed. The cow had to be milked also.

When finished with the eggs, he usually had some time to kill before bed. Geography and history books were his entertainment. Then, in 1958 Georgia loaned him "Georgia, The Empire State of the South" for an entire school term with a class in school every day. And with that, he discovered his passion of a lifetime. He read the book, cover to cover, two times before Christmas. He has had a devotion to state, local and Civil War history ever since.

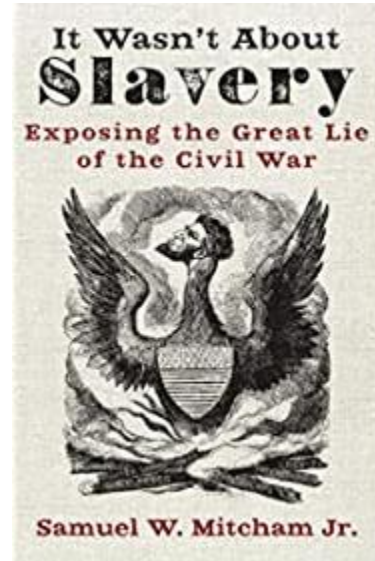
He has been in Construction Management for many years and has been a volunteer at Historic Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta, GA, for more than twenty-five years. He is on the Advisory Board of Trustees and the Chairman of the History Committee at Oakland Cemetery. Each page of this book was written on the 150th anniversary of the date. He did the research the night before and wrote the page the following morning, the only exceptions coming when traveling with his wife on the occasional long weekend.

 ThomasMax Publishing
P.O. Box 250054
Atlanta, GA 30325
thomasmax.com

It is almost Christmas and a good many of you who expressed an interest in purchasing my book before I had books. Many of you have done so, and I appreciate that - some who have not. If you had in mind that it would be a Christmas gift for someone, I suggest that the time is now to order if it is going to have a chance of reaching you before Christmas. Another possibility is that I am going to deliver several books today to folks that are home-bound, and I am happy to do that. Also, I usually hang out at Maggie's Tavern at Toco Hills Shopping Center on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays, from 5:00 to about 6:30 and always have books in my truck. It is really a handsome book and full of good stuff. The Publisher did a great job on the cover and the printing....I did the writing, editing, and indexing; I take total blame for that. <https://southernandamericanhistory.net/> If I don't hear from you, Merry Christmas! Larry

A FEW EXCEPTS FROM A GREAT BOOK

New England quickly developed a "Triangle Trade." Yankee sailors loaded their slave ships in a New England port with fish and rum. They then sailed to Africa, where they exchanged rum for slaves. The usual rate was about 200 gallons per slave. Next they sailed to the West Indies, they traded the slaves for gold and molasses. After this they returned to New England, where they sold the molasses to distillers so that they could make more rum. Sometimes they stopped at a Southern port and delivered blacks to auctioneers. This was only a minor part of their business. Only 6% of the slaves exported from Africa to the New World were destined for the 13 American colonies. The bulk of them went to the Caribbean, West Indies, Brazil, the sugar plantations of South America or the islands such as Trinidad and Tobago. When the British Parliament tried to collect a tax on molasses, the Massachusetts merchants were upset. They protested that the tax would ruin the slave trade and cause more than 700 ships to be docked for lack of work. By 1703, slavery was a respected institution in the North. More than 42% of New York households owned slaves. This was the second highest total on any city in the 13 colonies, surpassed only by Charleston, South Carolina.



In 1860, between 80 to 95% of Federal revenue came from the Southern export trade, which was largely built on slavery... Here we see the real reason that Lincoln and the more moderate Republicans did not wish to disturb slavery in the South: from its establishment until 1861, the United States government was mostly funded by Southern agriculture and especially the cotton industry, much of which depended on slave labor. If slavery were abolished, Federal funding would be eliminated with it."

Today, white Southerners are sneered at and ignorantly blamed for investing slavery. There were in fact five main groups involved in the second great era of servitude (i.e., the era of the European and American slave trader).

Africans
Arab-Muslim slave traders
Northern flesh peddlers and other Yankees
Latin-American plantation owners
Southerners

In modern times, far too many people "give a pass" to everyone except the Southerner – often without realizing it. This trend is a grievous injustice. The morally superior, sanctimonious attitude some people adopt when lecturing others concerning the sins of their ancestors isn't factual. When it comes to America's "peculiar institution," there is plenty of guilt – if that is the objective – to spread around." ("It Wasn't About Slavery by Samuel W. Mitcham, Jr., pg. 113 [Scruggs – "The Morrill Tariff" pg. 137])

JOSEPH



"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily." Matthew 1:18-19
Painting: *Joseph* by Guido Reni 1635

At Christmas our thoughts naturally turn to the CHRIST child – the gift above all gifts. We may think quite a lot of Mary, consider the Wise Men and ponder the Shepherds and maybe, just maybe, we remember Joseph. In the whole magnificent story, Joseph is definitely the man behind the scenes – oh, but what a man! It was Joseph, who guided and nourished not his own son, but that of GOD, throughout HIS childhood, providing shelter, food and the guidance of a parent as JESUS grew and *"increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with GOD and man."* (Luke 2:52)

When we first meet Joseph, in the scriptures, he is a perplexed, somewhat angry young man. He had every human right to be. His fiancé unexpectedly left town for three months and returned obviously expecting a child. Surely he felt that he had been deceived. He also had a difficult decision to make. If Joseph continued with his plans to take Mary as his wife it would make him look immoral and he could be shunned by family and friends. It would surely damage his standing in the Jewish community and he might even be thrown out of the synagogue! His carpentry business might suffer, as well. Was she worth it? He must decide.

Even when Joseph learned and accepted the truth regarding Mary, the world would not let the matter rest. "Accusations of illegitimacy followed JESUS throughout HIS life (John 8:41). In our present immoral society we barely bat an eye at what was once a shameful label. Some of what JESUS endured – for our sakes – came to HIM long before the CROSS. After the initial shock of what had seemed like Mary's betrayal, Joseph responded in a very CHRIST-like manner. Kindness and grace always leaves the door open for the wrongdoer to repent and be restored to GOD and his people – if that door closes, we do it.

When Mary's reputation was cleared, Joseph still had to deal with the mental remnants of doubting her story. His had been a natural reaction *"but the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him..."* (1 Corinthians 2:14). There had never been a virgin birth before but Joseph's faith guided him to be compassionate even when his emotions disagreed. He had decided to quietly divorce Mary and protect her from public shame. Joseph felt he would have regrets about handling the matter in this way. Love always wins.

Not only was Joseph kind but he was a very brave man. As we have already discussed, GOD spoke to Joseph about Mary and the facts that were so difficult to believe. Sure, Joseph loved her but no amount of love is sufficient without trust. Mary had told the truth. She would give birth to the very SON of GOD. However, could Joseph bring himself to raise a child that was not his own flesh and blood –

(**JOSEPH** continued) even after he knew that no other human was involved? When Joseph understood GOD's plan for him (Matthew 1:24), all other concerns melted. He put aside his fears and followed GOD in faith. Joseph didn't deny the challenges involved, but he accepted GOD's plan with courageous faith. It takes courage to follow GOD – weak and timid people just can't do it. In Joseph's case, it took a real man.

Joseph was a wise man, too. He knew enough to know what he did not know and trusted GOD to reveal all necessary details to him (Matthew 1:13-21). Sure he panicked here and there but GOD carefully warned, reassured and directed Joseph every step of the way. In the Bible, GOD does the same for us. For those who will walk with HIM, (John 16:13) and those HE directs along the path (Proverbs. 16:9).

GOD's ways are a mystery to us. They baffle us at times. If we had been in charge, as the director, of the first Christmas we might have avoided the tension and misunderstanding between Mary and Joseph. We could have sent the angel to Joseph before he ever met Mary. We could have warned Joseph about their need to flee to Egypt instead of having to do so in the middle of the night. Thankfully, GOD's ways are not our ways – they are so much better (Isiah 55:9) and so is HIS timing. GOD sent Joseph in the direction he needed to go at the right time and not before. HE will do the same for us.

Regardless of GOD's leading, Joseph and Mary had to be obedient. Mary was on board with GOD's plan long before Joseph had a clue. She told GOD "*be it unto me according to THY WORD.*" (Luke 1:38). Three times an angel spoke to Joseph in a dream and Joseph immediately obeyed. A quick response meant fleeing, perhaps on foot, leaving behind what they couldn't carry and starting over in a new location (Luke 2:13). A man of lesser faith might have waited to finish and get paid for the carpentry project Joseph was working on or made some other such human delay. His obedience showed his trust in GOD's wisdom and provision for the unknown.

Many more of Joseph's character traits could be mentioned but we will conclude with just one more. Joseph was a man who lived within his means. Today, that might be someone who does not have all their credit cards maxed out. Levitical law made provision for a man to live within the realm of what GOD had blessed him with. For example, if a person could not afford a lamb as an offering, they could bring two doves or even two young pigeons (Leviticus 12:8 /Luke 2:24). At Christmas, parents and especially grandparents have a sure tendency to spend more than they should. At the circumcision of JESUS – GOD's very SON – Mary and Joseph didn't offer a lamb, but the lesser offering of a pair of doves or pigeons (Luke 2:21-24). This may well indicate the family's poverty (Charles Ryrie).

All through our lives – especially at Christmas – we have tempted to react in a faithless manner or feel sorry for ourselves. We may delay obedience or overindulge. We do not know much Joseph – the scriptures reveal little more than we have discussed. He probably died when JESUS was a teen and Mary's uncle, Joseph (Luke 2:43) of Arimathea probably took care of the family. In a short life, Joseph, the husband of Mary sure made his mark. Maybe his example can lead us to better live our life of faith with more kindness, wisdom, courage, and obedience to the will of our SAVIOR. *Jwd* 12/15/20 – All scriptures KJV and quotes are by: Debbie W. Wilson

Special thanks to Larry Upthegrove for sharing information that inspired this ...

LUKE 2: 1-14

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.