

North Alabama
Civil War Generals:
13 Wore Gray, the Rest Blue



**A selection of Essays from the Authors of
the
Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table**

This book is dedicated to two previous presidents
of the
Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table

Brian Hogan who served between 1993 - 2007

and

John Allen who served between 2007 - 2012

A Message from the TVCWRT President, Carol Codori

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”

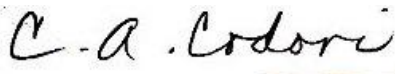
- *Margaret Mead*

This book is the work of one small group of thoughtful, committed citizens: the Little Round Table (LRT). They're a segment of our 200+ member Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table. They meet in seminar style in addition to our regular meeting, to delve deeply into the conflicts of 1861-1865.

Most participants would be too humble to say the LRT can change the world! I will say from personal experience, however, that their sessions had the power to stir me to become a more serious student. I'm sure that this well-researched record about Civil War leaders can also motivate you.

Major thanks go to LRT founder and coordinator John Allen. His excellent introduction will enlighten. I shall simply add that our entire TVCWRT appreciates his vision and devotion. We also thank Arley McCormick, a tireless worker for all of our Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table events and the person who spearheaded this project. Thanks to our editor Jacque Procter Reeves, President of the Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society and member of our Civil War Round Table. She is a model citizen-scholar who has given many hours to this work.

For the finale of the American Civil War Sesquicentennial in 2015, it seems fitting to prepare a record of these key LRT sessions from the past several years. It is my honor to invite you to share our historical legacy.



Carol A. Codori, President
Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table

Preface

This book grew out of a topic in the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table's (TVCWRT) spin-off discussion group, the "Little" Round Table. Long-time member and former president of the TVCWRT, Brian Hogan, began to notice in his research, that there were enough Civil War generals from North Alabama to form the basis of a Little Round Table (LRT) discussion. And so it was. Initially, there were a dozen generals, but further research turned up five more. The generals were assigned to individual members of the LRT group, who gave oral reports on them at LRT monthly meetings.

We were enthralled with the results. I encouraged Arley McCormick, our newsletter editor, to collect the research notes and put them into a booklet; and so, we did. But after nearly a year, that booklet grew to become this book.

Five of the seventeen generals fought for the Union during the Civil War. A few generals had been U.S. soldiers, but switched sides when the South seceded. Several others were already out of the army, but rejoined one side or the other when hostilities broke out.

Here, in alphabetical order, are snippets of the 17 generals in this book:

USA Maj. Gen. David B. Birney was from Huntsville, Alabama. Most illustrative of David Birney's seriousness and dedication to the Union and the Republican Party is one of the final episodes of his life: after Birney's health collapsed on October 8th, 1864, he was rushed by train from the York Peninsula in Virginia to his home in Philadelphia in order to convalesce. State elections were occurring at that time, and Birney had himself carried to the polls where he voted a straight Republican ticket. He died eleven days later. In his delirium, he

shouted orders and encouraged his men. His last words were “Keep your eyes on that flag, boys!”

USA Brevet Maj. Gen. William Birney, David Birney’s brother, was also from Huntsville. Our author found it ironic that William Birney’s ambition to lead U.S. Colored troops on the battlefield in all-black brigades and divisions was undone during the Appomattox Campaign. The undoing was by his own Union commander, Maj. Gen. E.O.C. Ord, who relieved Birney from command of the one U.S.C.T. division involved in the pursuit of Lee's army. His command was divided up by assigning each brigade to another division in the pursuing force. This took place two days before Lee's Army was surrounded and forced to surrender at Appomattox.

USA Brig. Gen. Thomas Turpin Crittenden was born in Huntsville, Alabama, but grew up in Texas and became a lawyer. After enlisting in the Union Army, he led his brigade in battle during the second day of Shiloh. He was a competent commander and leader, but his career and reputation were ruined when he and his entire command were captured at Murfreesboro, Tennessee, by Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalrymen.

CSA Brig. Gen. James Deshler was a native of Tuscumbia, Alabama. He graduated from West Point in the same class with J.E.B. Stuart. After secession, he joined the Confederate Army and was promoted up the ranks from Captain to Brigadier General by the time he was 30. However, at the Battle of Chickamauga, Deshler was killed by an exploding Union artillery shell while inspecting his brigade.

CSA Maj. Gen. John Brown Gordon was born in Upson County, Georgia and moved to Jackson County, Alabama to manage his family’s interest in coal mining. He had no previous military experience but his Civil War exploits could be the subject for a character study and military tactics of the era. He was involved in most of the Army of Northern Virginia’s battles and carried the scars of bravery with him till he died in 1904.

CSA Brig. Gen. John Gregg was a native of Lawrence County, Alabama, and graduate of LaGrange College near Florence. He was a newspaper man, a lawyer, and a judge. In the Civil War, he fought for the Confederacy in both the Western and Eastern Theaters. During the Battle of Chickamauga, Gregg was shot in the neck and left for dead. His body was robbed by Federal soldiers. But he recovered, despite the severe wound. His death at the age of 36 came less than one year before the end of the war at the Battle of Richmond. He was buried in his adopted home state of Texas, where a county was named in his honor.

USA Brig. Gen. Andrew Jackson Hamilton, of Huntsville, Alabama, became a lawyer and politician in Texas, where he was forced to flee to the north because of his anti-secession views. President Lincoln appointed him Military Governor of Texas, and Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, commissioned him a Brig. Gen. over volunteers. After the war, he served as a Justice on the Texas Supreme Court.

USA Brig. Gen. Daniel McCook Jr. was from the famous family of “Fighting McCooks.” Born in Ohio, he attended college in Florence, Alabama. He was a law partner in Kansas with William Sherman. At the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, he was mortally wounded, then promoted to Brig. General for his bravery. He was a poet, and was revered by his men.

CSA Brig. Gen. John Hunt Morgan, a native of Huntsville, was the leader of Morgan's Raiders, known as the “Thunderbolt of the Confederacy” for his bravery and daring exploits. He is best known for a daring attack north of the Ohio River referred to as Morgan's Raid when, in 1863, he and his men rode more than 1,000 miles covering a region from Tennessee, up through Kentucky, into Indiana and on to southern Ohio. This would be the farthest north any uniformed Confederate troops penetrated during the war. He was killed in an ambush in Greeneville, Tennessee, in September 1864. His early home in Huntsville still stands.

CSA Brig. Gen. Edward A. O'Neal, of Madison County, Alabama, was a lawyer and a dedicated leader, but was found in disfavor for actions at Gettysburg. Still, he continued to contribute to the war effort until the end. In 1882, O'Neal was elected Governor of Alabama.

CSA Brig. Gen. Edmund Winston Pettus, a native of Athens, Alabama, served as a U.S. Army lieutenant in the Mexican War, but later rose to Brig. General in the Confederate Army where he exhibited conspicuous bravery. Following the end of hostilities, he was a leader of the Ku Klux Klan in Alabama, and later was elected to the U.S. Senate where he became the last of the Confederate brigadiers to sit in the upper house of Congress. His brother, John, was governor of Mississippi.

CSA Brig. Gen. Philip D. Roddey was a favorite son of Moulton, Alabama, where he was first a tailor, then a sheriff, and then a steamboat owner. To keep the Union Army from capturing his steamboat, Roddey burned it. He then joined the Confederate Army, raised a cavalry company, and shot up the ranks to become a Brig. General, fighting under Generals Wheeler and Forrest. After the war, he was a successful businessman, first in Tuscaloosa, then in New York City, and later in London, England, where he died in 1897.

CSA Brig. Gen. Lawrence Sullivan "Sul" Ross was a Texan, but attended college at Florence, Alabama. He was an Indian fighter (and seriously wounded), a Texas Ranger, one of the youngest Confederate generals, a two-term governor of Texas, and was president of Texas A&M University.

CSA Brig. Gen. Edward Dorr Tracy Jr. moved from his native Georgia to Huntsville, Alabama, as a young man to set up his law practice. He married the daughter of a prominent architect before he answered the call to fight for the Confederacy. After surviving the battles of First Bull Run, Shiloh, and Chickasaw Bayou, the 29-year-

old Gen. Tracy was killed in action at Port Gibson, Mississippi, on May 1, 1863. His young widow followed him in death in 1868.

Leroy Pope Walker of Huntsville was the first Confederate States Secretary of War, and it was he who transmitted from Montgomery, Alabama, the orders to fire on Fort Sumter. Later in the war, he served as a Brigadier General in Mobile, Montgomery and Tuscumbia. Returning to Huntsville to practice law, he served as a military court judge and attorney in north Alabama until the end of the war. His last case, before his death, was to successfully defend a former Confederate accused of robbing the Federal payroll near Muscle Shoals – Frank James.

CSA Joseph “Fightin’ Joe” Wheeler has the rare distinction of serving as a general during wartime for two different armies: first as a noted cavalry general for the Confederate States, and later as a general in the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War. Following the Civil War, he settled near Rogersville, Alabama, and served multiple terms as a U.S. Representative.

CSA Maj. Gen. Jones Mitchell Withers, from Madison County, Alabama, participated in three wars and was rewarded with high rank for his exemplary performances. He was an attorney, a newspaper editor, a cotton broker, and a popular mayor of Mobile, Alabama.

CSA Brig. Gen. Sterling Alexander (S.A.M.) Wood was a lawyer and newspaper editor from Florence, Alabama, before the war. In the Confederate Army, he was an ambitious officer who was criticized for not controlling his troops in battle. He resigned before the Battles for Chattanooga. After the war, Wood became an Alabama legislator and a law professor at the University of Alabama.

Thanks are due to the volunteer authors of these chapters, some of whom are Civil War scholars and authors in their own right. Special

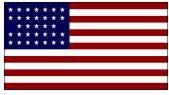
thanks are due to Arley McCormick and Jacquelyn Reeves, who helped write, edit, and coordinate this project.

- John Allen

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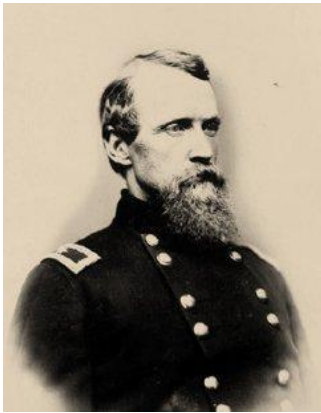
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David Birney

Political General, Abolitionist, Warrior

By David Lady



David Birney (1825-1864)

David Birney was born on a plantation outside of Huntsville, Alabama, the son of a rich Kentucky planter, newspaper publisher, and presidential candidate, James G. Birney. James became one of the most notorious of Southern abolitionists as he grew into middle age, and in 1833, the family returned to Kentucky where James emancipated his slaves. The family then moved to Ohio and Pennsylvania. Youngest son, David, was educated in

Massachusetts and practiced law in Philadelphia. Like his father, he was prominent in the abolitionist movement and the pre-war Republican Party.

In 1861, David Birney raised the 23d Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment, largely at his own expense. Initially appointed as Lieutenant Colonel, 23d Pennsylvania, he was promoted to colonel in August, 1861. Although a non-professional, he was promoted to brigadier general in 1862. He was a “political general,” and much resented within the Army of the Potomac for his support of the Republican Party, the abolitionist movement, and for being critical of Major General George McClellan. Serving as regimental and later brigade commander with the Army of the Potomac’s Third Corps, Birney was befriended by Generals Phil Kearney and Joe Hooker, who were also harsh critics of General McClellan.

Birney aggressively sought political support for his promotion, which made him very unpopular with his fellow officers – despite his proven competence. Theodore Lyman, a Federal staff officer, described him in this way:

He was a pale, Puritanical figure, with a demeanor of unmoveable coldness; only he would smile politely when you spoke to him. He was spare in person, with a thin face, light-blue eyes, and sandy hair. As a General he took very good care of his Staff and saw they got due promotion. He was a man, too, who looked out for his own interests sharply and knew the mainspring of military advancement. His unpopularity among some persons arose partly from his own promotion, which, however he deserved, and partly from his cold covert manner.

David Birney was noted as a good disciplinarian and trainer of soldiers and as a competent – even brilliant – fighting commander. He was also arrogant and contentious, followed his own counsel and disdained contrary opinions and even lawful orders. Accused by his own corps commander of disobeying orders at the Battle of Fair Oaks, a court martial found him not guilty due to testimony of his brigade commander. He was also accused of failing to support Major General Meade's assault on Jackson's Second Confederate Corps during the Battle of Fredericksburg, but was never charged with dereliction or disobedience.

Birney was promoted to major general in May, 1863 for displaying fine leadership at Chancellorsville, where his division had suffered the heaviest casualties in the Army. He was by now regarded as one of the best of the Federal division commanders, and as the Army of the Potomac marched toward Gettysburg, David Birney was identified as a potential army corps commander should there be casualties among the higher ranking officers.

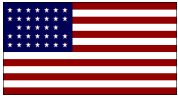
On the morning of the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, Major General Dan Sickles, commanding the Federal Third Corps, ordered his divisions forward from Cemetery Ridge to occupy the Peach Orchard. General Andrew Humphreys's Second Division was formed in line of battle along the Emmitsburg Road, and General Birney was forced to stretch his first division's line over too much territory in order to occupy the ground between Devil's Den and the Peach Orchard. He had no second line of troops and no reserve, so there was much ground to cover with his men.

Late in the day, General Sickles was seriously wounded and carried from the battlefield. Birney, as senior division commander, became the temporary corps commander, but his line of battle was already pierced by the Confederate attack at the Peach Orchard salient, and his entire division began their withdrawal toward Cemetery Ridge. Birney's attempt to hold his men firmly along a line from Emmitsburg Road toward Little Round Top was undone by the rapid advance of Barksdale's Brigade and other Confederate forces, and he was forced to withdraw the entire third corps toward Cemetery Ridge. His troops suffered heavy casualties along the way.

David Birney was himself wounded the afternoon of July 2, but returned to lead the third corps after receiving first aid. He was extremely distraught by the defeat of the third corps, and remarked that he wished he had been shot and killed like his horse. Later that evening, his spirits revived and he reorganized his corps to support the battle line along Cemetery Ridge. During General Meade's council of war that evening, General Birney was one of the officers who voted to stay on the defensive. His men were placed to help resist Pickett's Charge the next day, but were not called on to engage the Confederates.

In 1864, during General Grant's march toward Richmond, David Birney commanded a division in the Army of the Potomac's Second Corps. He led his men with distinction during the Battles of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and during the assaults on Petersburg. In the autumn of that year, General Grant appointed him to permanent command of the Tenth Corps of the Army of the James, who at that time served in the siege works opposite Richmond.

Birney's last fight was an offensive north of the James River, along the Darbytown Road on October 6 and 7, 1864. He led his Tenth Corps from the front although he suffered from malaria. By October 7, General Birney's health had deteriorated, and he became bedridden and delirious. He was rushed by train to his home in Philadelphia in order to convalesce. State elections were occurring at that time, and Birney had himself carried to the polls where he voted a straight Republican ticket. He lingered until October 19, 1864. In his delirium, he shouted orders and continued to encourage his men. His final words were "Keep your eyes on that flag, boys!"



William Birney

Scholar, abolitionist, leader of freed black

By David Lady



William Birney (1819-1907)

William Birney was the older brother of David and was also born in Huntsville, Alabama. Following the family's move north, he was educated at Yale and first worked as a lawyer. After his move to Europe, he worked as a professor of literature in England and France. William returned to United States in 1853, and worked as newspaper publisher of *The Daily Register* in Pennsylvania.

In 1861, he entered the 1st New Jersey Infantry as a captain, and led his company at the First Battle of Bull Run. He was later appointed as Major of the 4th New Jersey Infantry, but quickly became their colonel, and as such, led the regiment at Chancellorsville. Many suspected that he owed his promotion to political influence for "as a combat soldier, he was a fine linguist."

Perhaps it helped that he had influential friends in the Lincoln administration and Congress. In 1863, William Birney was appointed Colonel of the 22d United States Colored Troops (USCT), composed of newly freed slaves. He was soon promoted to brigadier general and was made one of three superintendents employed to enlist escaped slaves into Federal regiments. In less than a year, he had enlisted seven USCT regiments.

Among these regiments was the Fourth USCT, initially part of the garrison of Baltimore, Maryland. On July 20, 1863, two companies of the Fourth USCT (Companies A and B, which had been in uniform for

only five days), represented the United States Army at a garrison colors presentation ceremony. General Birney made the presentation speech. The following excerpt indicates his strong feelings for free blacks enlisting in the U.S. Army:

The flag they present you today is in token of their loyalty. Their hearts are true. Whoever else may be swayed from duty, the black remains firm. Pluck him from the very core of rebeldom and he is a true man. You may trust him. All his aspirations are for the success of the right, the triumph of the nation. For him the success of traitors is his own degradation, the dishonor of his family, the doom of his race to perpetual infamy.

In 1864, William Birney led a brigade of USCT to the Department of the South, where he became the Commanding General of the Federal District of Florida. Later, he and his brigade went with the Tenth Corps to Virginia as part of the Army of the James. He led his brigade without much distinction in the battles around Bermuda Hundred and north of the James River during the Siege of Petersburg. In December 1864, his brigade was assigned to the 2d Division of the all-USCT Twenty-Fifth Corps and he was soon appointed to command a division. In 1865, General Birney ran afoul of his corps and later Army Commander, Major General Edward O.C Ord, who considered him a mediocre commander and a poor disciplinarian. General Ord was also initially opposed to employing USCT regiments in combat.

William Birney's division was included in the detachment of the Army of the James that moved south of the Appomattox River by General Ord to strengthen the final assault of Petersburg. Following the fall of Petersburg and Richmond, Ord led these units in pursuit of the Army of Northern Virginia.

On April 7, 1865 (two days before Lee's surrender), General Birney was relieved of duty by General Ord and sent to take command of the army depot at City Point, Virginia. Ord later stated that he wanted the

black units under his best commanders for the final fight with the Army of Northern Virginia. The two brigades of Birney's former division were each assigned to other Federal divisions, and the both fought the next day in the battle line which repulsed the Army of Northern Virginia's final attack of the war near Appomattox Court House.

William Birney was later brevetted major general in the post-war mass brevet promotion of deserving officers (this "omnibus brevet" of over 500 Federal officers at one time was an honorary promotion in recognition of their good service upon demobilization, there being no military awards for distinguished service at this time). He resided in Florida and later Washington D.C. after the war, where he served as a U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia. William Birney died in 1907 at his home in Forest Glen, Maryland.



Thomas Turpin Crittenden

A Casualty of Not-So-Friendly Fire

By Emil Posey



**Thomas Turpin Crittenden
(1825-1905)**

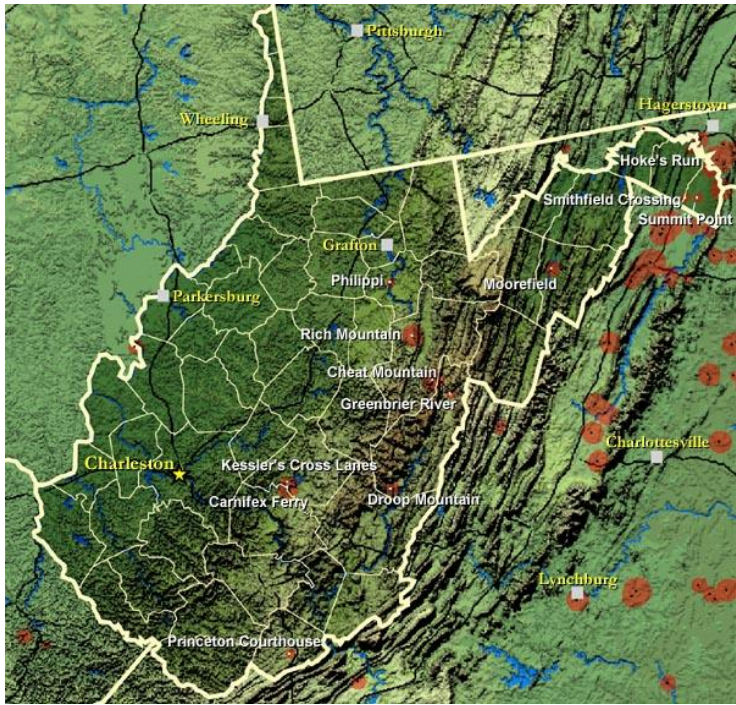
The storm clouds had been forming for months, but no Northern state was really ready for hostilities. True to tradition, when the war came, the brunt of the fight was borne by the national militia rather than the Regular Army, which was too small. Throughout Indiana, as throughout the North, men flooded to enlistment stations. In Indianapolis, the state capital, 500 volunteers showed up the first day. The next day, the number had risen to 1,000 and to 2,400 on the third day. North and South, patriotic fever was running high. On April 25, 1861, the 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, its 782 men rounding out the six three-month regiments of Indiana's initial quota, was organized at Camp Morton in Indianapolis. Four days later, on April 29, its officers were sworn in. Commanding them was Colonel Crittenden.

Thomas Turpin Crittenden was born October 16, 1825 in Huntsville, Alabama. Reared in Texas and educated at Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky, he settled in Missouri where he practiced law until the outbreak of the Mexican War. In that conflict, he served as a second lieutenant with the Missouri volunteers. Five days after the

surrender of Fort Sumter on April 14, 1861, he was appointed captain of Company A in the 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. Eight days later, on April 27, 1861, he was appointed the commanding colonel.

The 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry was one of the six three-month regiments formed in Indiana in response to President Lincoln's first call for 75,000 men. It left Indianapolis on May 30 by way of Cincinnati, Ohio and Parkersburg, Virginia for the scene of conflict in northwestern Virginia, in what was to become West Virginia. The regiments arrived at Webster, Virginia on June 2, joined other Union forces, and marched with them that same night through a drenching rain some 14 miles to an area near Philippi in Barbour County, (West) Virginia where it had its first taste of battle on June 3. (A battle history of the 6th Indiana Infantry written in 1891 says it was the first Indiana regiment to see battle, but that claim is murky since other Indiana regiments were also involved.) The Battle of Philippi was a limited engagement, often characterized as a skirmish rather than a battle. To those involved, it was a significant action. And while its effects were limited in time and space, it was the first Union victory. (The Battle of Fairfax Court House, fought June 1, considered the first land battle of the war, was truly a skirmish between a small Union Regular Army cavalry force and Virginia militia infantry with inconclusive results.)

The area in which Colonel Crittenden and the 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry would operate in this early campaign was important for the lines of communication traversing it, particularly the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad and the turnpikes that crossed it. The terrain was hilly and movement was constricted to valleys. Philippi was important as it sat astride a thoroughfare – the Beverly-Fairmont Turnpike, a gravel road completed in 1852 – which included a covered bridge over the Tygart Valley River.



Map of Civil War sites in West Virginia, courtesy of the National Park Service



The area now known as West Virginia was referred to in antebellum times as Virginia's Trans-Allegheny region. It presented much greater challenges to transportation than did less rugged portions of the state. However, there was a goal on the western side. There, at and beyond the western edge of the Appalachian plateau, the terrain became less hilly. In addition, navigable waterways like the Kanawha River and the Ohio River led to the Mississippi River,

and thence to the Gulf of Mexico.

Construction of the B&O Railroad began in 1811 at Cumberland and the road reached Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia) on the Ohio River in 1818. Just to the south, the state-funded Staunton and Parkersburg Turnpike which is today known as Virginia Route 47 and US 250, was constructed to provide a direct route for the settlements of the Shenandoah Valley to the Ohio River by way of the Tygart Valley and Little Kanawha Rivers. The Staunton and Parkersburg was maintained by fees collected at toll houses placed at regular intervals.

On May 4, 1861, Robert E. Lee, formerly a colonel in the U.S. Army, but now having resigned his commission and been appointed a major general and commanding the Virginia militia, recognized the importance of this area. He ordered Colonel George Porterfield to organize forces at Grafton in northwest Virginia to hold and protect both the main line and the Parkersburg branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at that location. Colonel Porterfield arrived in the area on May 14, 1861. He found mixed secessionist and pro-Union sentiment in the area. More importantly, he found that Virginia militia was just being formed in various locales. He organized these disparate



companies into the 25th Virginia Infantry, the 31st Virginia Infantry, and the 9th Battalion of Virginia Infantry, and occupied Grafton on May 25. On May 27, he learned that Union regiments under the overall departmental command of Major General George B. McClellan were headed toward Grafton. He decided that his position at Grafton was untenable, and on May 28, he withdrew his force to Philippi, about 30 miles to the south of Grafton. Also on May 28, McClellan placed

the entire Union force in western Virginia, about 3,000 men, under the command of Brigadier General Thomas A. Morris. On May 30, Colonel Kelley occupied Grafton.

Union forces approaching Philippi, totaling about 3,000, were under the overall command of Brigadier General Thomas A Morris, commander of Indiana Volunteers, and were organized into two “divisions,” one under the Union Colonel Benjamin Franklin Kelley (a Virginian serving in the Union Army) and the other under Indianan Colonel Ebenezer Dumont, comprising Colonel Crittenden’s 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry along with Colonel Dumont’s 7th Indiana and the 14th Ohio under Colonel James B. Steedman. Because he lost the planned element of surprise when Colonel Dumont’s advance elements were spotted by local civilians who gave alarm to Confederate forces, the Union’s assault early on the morning of June 3 did not go according to plan, and the Confederate force, some 700-800 recruits under Confederate Colonel George A. Porterfield of Virginia, were able to retire from the battlefield with few casualties. Nonetheless, it was a victory for the Union and the Indianans, including Colonel Crittenden and his 6th Indiana Volunteers.

The campaign was not over. Actions were to continue: the Battle of Rich Mountain on July 11 and the Battle of Corrick’s Ford on the Cheat River on July 13, which were both Confederate defeats. The 6th Indiana Volunteers were involved, but details are lacking.

During this campaign, the Union forces lost 37 killed and 87 wounded versus Confederate losses of 135 killed, 280 wounded, and 1,025 captured. While the 6th Indiana suffered no killed or wounded, they did participate in a campaign that effectively cleared West Virginia of Confederate forces. Major General George B. McClellan wrote to Indiana Governor O. P. Morton:

Governor, I have directed the three months’ regiments from Indiana to move to Indianapolis, there to be mustered out and re-organized for the three years’ service. I can not permit them to return to you without again expressing my high appreciation of the distinguished valor and endurance of the Indiana troops, and my hope that but a short time will elapse before I

have the pleasure of knowing that they are again ready for the field. Very respectfully...

Colonel Crittenden and the regiment returned to Indianapolis and were discharged on August 2, thus ending the 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry's service. Brigadier General Morris was equally effusive:

Officers and Soldiers of the Brigade,

The term of service for this brigade in the Army of the United States having expired, and the relations of officers and soldiers about to be dissolved, the General, in relinquishing his command, deems this a fit occasion to express his entire approbation of the conduct of the brigade, whether in camp, on the march, or in the field of battle. The General tenders to all his thanks for the soldierly bearing, cheerful performance of every duty, and the patient endurance of the privations and fatigues of campaign life, which all have so constantly exhibited. Called suddenly by the National Executive from the ease and luxuries of home life, to the defense of our Government, the officers and soldiers of this brigade have voluntarily submitted to the privations and restraints of military life; and, with the intelligence of free Americans, have acquired the arts of war as readily as they relinquished their pursuits of peace. They have cheerfully endured the fatigue of long and dreary marches by day and night through rain and storm; they have borne the exhaustion of hunger for the sake of their country. Their labor and suffering were not in vain. The foe they met and vanquished. They scattered traitors from their secure entrenchments in the gorges of Laurel Hill, stripped of the munitions of war to flee before the vengeance of patriots. Soldiers, you have now returned to the friend whose prayers went with you to the field of

strife. They welcome you with pride and exultation. To your State and country acknowledge the value of your labors. May your future career be as your past has been – honorable to yourselves and serviceable to your country!

Generals McClellan's and Morris's words were high praise, but such is understandable for troops having acquitted themselves well in their first taste of the field. The experience and field craft they learned during the course of this campaign would be sorely needed in the months and years ahead.

On September 20, the unit was reorganized at Camp Noble at Madison, Indiana, as the 6th Indiana Infantry for three years of service with Colonel Crittenden still in command. Lieutenant Colonel Hiram Prather, second in command, and a few other officers reentered service for three years with the new 6th Indiana Infantry as well. Most of the other officers transferred to other units as the expansion of the Union Army continued apace.

Numbering only about 500 officers and men (the regiment was one company short), Colonel Crittenden immediately moved the 6th Indiana from Madison to Louisville, Kentucky. Confederate forces under newly commissioned Brigadier General Simon B. Bruckner, a native Kentuckian, had moved into Bowling Green, Kentucky on September 18. (The 6th Indiana fancied themselves the first Union troops to enter that border state, and so it was in this particular area, but actually Union Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant was the first into Kentucky, having crossed the Ohio River from Cairo, Illinois to occupy Paducah, Kentucky on September 6.) The regiment moved about 40 miles south of Louisville to a point near Elizabethtown on September 22. There, it was joined by 300 more recruits that had left Madison under Lieutenant Colonel Prather's charge, thus bringing the regiment to full strength.

Union forces concentrated in this area, and the 6th Indiana Infantry was assigned to Rousseau's Brigade of McCook's Division, part of Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell's army. It was here that the regiment settled into its organization, becoming fully armed and

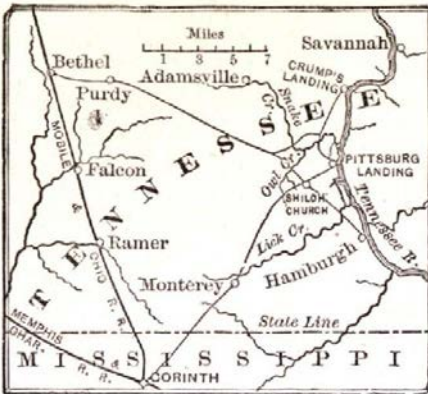
equipped, honed its field craft skills, and began its tactical and maneuver training as all new regiments do.

It was not all drill and hard work, however. On Thanksgiving Day, some 200 ladies arrived by train to treat the 6th Indiana to a “sumptuous” dinner as a way to thank the regiment for having protected them from General Bruckner’s Rebel forces that had been advancing from the south. After the dinner, the regiment was presented with a flag from the ladies on which was inscribed: “From the ladies of the Sixth Ward, Louisville, Ky., to the Sixth Regiment, Indiana Volunteers.”

On December 9, the regiment began a movement along with the rest of the Union force to Munfordsville, Woodsonville, and on towards Bowling Green, which had been the provisional Confederate capital of Kentucky. It wintered along the Green River, north of Bowling Green, until March 1862. It was a cold winter filled with drill, dress parade, and picket duty during the day; euchre, letter writing, and more picket duty evenings and nights. For most of the officers and men, boredom, tedium, and hardship were punctuated by letters and occasional packages from family and friends – always against the backdrop of remembrances of home.

But the winter passed and the war went on. In February after

Brigadier General Grant captured Fort Henry, located on the Tennessee River, and Fort Donelson, located on the Cumberland River, thus opening the way south through western Tennessee, General Buckner’s forces vacated Bowling Green and moved to join Confederate General Albert Sydney Johnston’s Army of Mississippi that was



Shiloh Battlefield and vicinity
(<http://www.sonofthesough.net>)

assembling in the vicinity of Corinth, Mississippi. Now-Major

General Grant, who had been promoted after capturing the forts, and his Army of the Tennessee began a movement south through Tennessee toward Corinth, which was an important rail intersection. Newly-promoted Major General Buell's Army of the Ohio moved southwestward in support of General Grant. A major clash was brewing, and it would happen near Pittsburg Landing on the west bank of the Tennessee River in April 1862, in what would come to be known as the Battle of Shiloh. Colonel Crittenden and the 6th Indiana Infantry would be there.

In March, the 6th Indiana Infantry marched to Nashville. It was a long, tiring march and the weary men went into camp near that city. On March 15, the movement resumed, this time towards the Duck River and then on towards Savannah on the east bank of the Tennessee River, just north of Pittsburg Landing. They arrived on the morning of April 7, the second day of the battle. The first day, April 6, had been a closely run battle for General Grant's forces, but with reinforcements from General Buell's Army of the Cumberland, which included the 6th Indiana Infantry, on the next day, the course of the battle turned around.

Colonel Crittenden and the 6th Indiana Infantry arrived in Savannah about 8:00 p.m. the evening of April 6. By 11:00 p.m., they were aboard steamers headed to Pittsburg Landing. It was raining heavily and by the time they arrived, Union soldiers were in a disorganized mass on the west bank of the river.

...we could hardly find standing room on the shore...It was simply mud and rain everywhere. I don't think our regiment got one hundred feet from the river's edge where we got off that night and I think I give the experience of every member of the old Sixth when I say that the night of the 6th of April, 1862, was the worst night of our entire three years' service...Language fails me when I undertake to describe the terrible sufferings and hardships of that night after we landed, and in giving my own experience I expect that I but voice the sentiment of every member of the regiment. My clothes

were wet to the skin, my feet and ankles were blistered, and my legs pained me so badly that to sleep would have been impossible, even had there been any chance for it; but none but the dead could sleep. Standing in the open air in mud ankle deep, and the rain simply coming down in torrents and, to make matters worse, it turned cold; the rapid heavy marching through the day had warmed us to a copious sweat, and in cooling off we passed to the other extreme, and with no possible chance for exercise; and to add to this condition, there was a hospital within thirty steps of us, where the doctors were busy dressing the wounded, extracting balls, and amputating shattered limbs. The groans and shrieks of the wounded and dying drowned every other noise except the pelting rain.

As endless as the night seemed to the regiment, it passed all too quickly. Close to 5:00 a.m., Colonel Crittenden finished his conference with the brigade commander, Brigadier General Rousseau, and gave the bugler the order to sound "Fall In!" As soon as it formed, the regiment was moved forward. Other regiments preceded it; still others followed.

General Buell's three divisions that had crossed the river throughout the night took their place in General Grant's line. They formed the left wing, with their extreme left resting on the Tennessee River: Brigadier General William Nelson's division (which had crossed the river on the evening of April 6) was on the left next to the river. Brigadier General Thomas L. Crittenden's (a cousin of our Colonel Crittenden) was in the middle, and Brigadier General Alexander M. McCook's was on the right. General Rousseau's 4th Brigade was the left-hand brigade in General McCook's line, joining General's Crittenden's right. Along with the 6th Indiana, it comprised the 1st Ohio, 5th Kentucky, and two battalions of U. S. Regulars.

By the time night fell on April 6, the Confederate forces had attacked all day, pushing General Grant's forces back toward the river, but they could go no further. Units were intermixed with little unit cohesion

above brigade level, and there was no reserve that Confederate General P. T. Beauregard, who had taken command after General Johnston was killed earlier that day (about 2:30 p.m.), could call upon. Jubilant, but exhausted Confederate troops occupied abandoned Union camps. They searched for food and other abandoned goods left by retreating Union troops. They collapsed from exhaustion when they could search no more. That night, General Beauregard slept in General Sherman's captured tent near Shiloh Church. General Beauregard planned to resume the offensive the next morning and drive the Union forces into the river. General Grant, however, had plans of his own.

Union forces started their counterattack at dawn, beginning on the Union left. General Nelson began the advance at about 5:00 a.m., but General Buell soon halted him in order to allow the other two divisions to move into the line. They did not resume their advance until about 9:00 a.m. On the other side of the line, General Sherman started his advance shortly after General Nelson moved forward. General Grant's other divisions received their attack orders by 8:00 a.m., and by 10:00 a.m., Union forces were attacking all along the line. By around 2:30 p.m., General Beauregard issued his order to retreat. The afternoon ended with Union forces back at their original encampments. The Confederates had withdrawn, relatively unmolested, back toward Corinth.

Colonel Crittenden and the 6th Indiana Infantry was involved from the beginning. General Rousseau's brigade had an advanced position in the line and repulsed two Confederate charges. They were relieved in the line only when they had to retire to replenish ammunition. They also participated in the advance as the Confederate forces withdrew to General Grant's forces' original camps and beyond.

The battle ended in an important Union victory. Union losses totaled 13,047 (1,754 killed, 8,408 wounded, and 2,885 captured or missing). The 6th Indiana Infantry's portion of this total: 7 killed, 6 wounded, none captured or missing. No officers were lost.

April 8 was given over to finding suitable campground, taking stock of the living and burying the dead (this extended to beyond those of the

regiment), and reflecting on what they had been through. Unfortunately, the rain continued for the better part of two weeks.

General Grant's and General Buell's armies consolidated under Major General Henry Wager Halleck. Near the end of April, the army began a general move toward Corinth. This included the 6th Indiana Infantry, but the regiment and Colonel Crittenden parted ways. He was promoted to brigadier general effective April 28. Shiloh had been a huge battle, and the 6th Indiana Infantry played a relatively minor, but nonetheless significant, role. It's ranks had "seen the elephant" and acquitted themselves well, as had Colonel Crittenden. Hence, his promotion.

Details on this period of now-Brigadier General Crittenden's career are obscure. The reason for his promotion is presumed to be based on the quality of his performance as a regimental commander up to this point, particularly in the movement to Pittsburg Landing and his handling of the regiment on the second day of the Battle of Shiloh. There is no record of him having been assigned another command upon his promotion or that he was given any leave of absence, so presumably he was reassigned to a staff position within General Buell's Army of the Ohio.

Following the battle, General Halleck moved his headquarters to Pittsburg Landing and assumed field command of all Union forces in the area: the Army of the Tennessee - with General Grant reassigned to become General Halleck's deputy; General John Pope's Army of the Mississippi, and General Buell's Army of the Ohio. General Halleck redesignated these as "wings" (right, center, and left, respectively). The total force, although estimates vary, was some 100,000-120,000 men, the largest army the Union had yet put into the field under a single commander. General Halleck's plan was to seize Corinth, Mississippi. He was quite cautious, however, and took about four weeks to move the 20 or so miles from the Shiloh battlefield, followed by another month of siege of the city. Nonetheless, this leviathan force, along with depletion of Confederate ranks around Corinth due to illness, prompted General Beauregard to vacate Corinth on May 29 and retire his forces further southward to Tupelo, Mississippi.

At this point, General Halleck broke up the large command – General Sherman was sent to Memphis, General Grant resumed command of the Army of Tennessee, General Pope was to hold a covering position south of Corinth, and General Buell and his Army of the Ohio was sent east to take Chattanooga. It is this direction that General Crittenden's story takes us.

General Buell's movement toward Chattanooga began on June 10. The move across northeastern Mississippi and into Alabama was easy enough, but it was slow going past Decatur, Alabama. Summer heat and a low Tennessee River forced reliance on the Memphis & Charleston Railroad which, by this time, was not up to the challenge. Confederate guerilla activity in the area contributed to the logistical burdens.

In the meantime, General Beauregard had incurred the deep displeasure of Confederate President Jefferson C. Davis and was replaced by General Braxton Bragg in Tupelo. Prompted by President Davis, General Bragg contemplated a renewed advance northward to retake Corinth, but determined it impractical. Instead, he left a covering force near Tupelo and moved some 35,000 men to Chattanooga, by way of Mobile, Alabama. General Bragg and his men arrived in Chattanooga on July 28, well before the Army of the Ohio. Beaten to his goal, General Buell spread his forces across northern Alabama and central Tennessee in preparation for his next move. As part of this positioning, General Crittenden was ordered to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to become its garrison commander. The stage was now set for the climax of his all too brief military career.

Enter Confederate Colonel Nathan Bedford Forrest, who became the instrument of General Crittenden's downfall. We must back up a bit, though, since this was not the first time Colonel Forrest was on the same battlefield as Colonel Crittenden. Back on April 8, the day after the Battle of Shiloh, Union forces under General Sherman, with two infantry brigades and some accompanying cavalry, moved down the road to Corinth and attempted to harass and reconnoiter the withdrawing Confederate forces. Colonel Forrest was charged with covering the withdrawal. In a bold move, Colonel Forrest engaged

General Sherman in what became known as the Battle at Fallen Timbers, due to the large number of downed trees on the field. In typical Forrest style, he led his 300-strong cavalry force in an attack on the 77th Ohio Infantry. The Union pickets caved in and a melee ensued. As more Union forces joined the fray, Colonel Forrest's men began to pull back, leaving him exposed. He wasn't aware of this until he found himself in the midst of Union infantrymen, all of whom seemed most intent on doing him great bodily harm. He fought his way out, but not without being severely wounded at pointblank range.

The wound was survivable, and Colonel Forrest was sent to Memphis to recuperate. He rejoined his men in June. By that time, the Battle of Corinth had occurred and Union General Buell was headed east. Colonel Forrest was relieved of his cavalry command and on June 11, with a small, handpicked escort, was sent to Chattanooga to organize a cavalry brigade. It consisted of the 8th Texas Cavalry (popularly known as Terry's Texas Rangers; Colonel John A. Wharton), the 2nd Georgia Cavalry (Colonel J. K. Lawton), and the 2nd Georgia Cavalry Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel James J. Morrison).

They were mostly green troops, but his officers and NCOs trained them up quickly, and on July 9, he led them out of Chattanooga on a raid into middle Tennessee. He moved through McMinnville, Tennessee on July 11 and arrived near Murfreesboro in the early morning of July 13 with a force totaling about 1,400 men. Coincidentally, General Crittenden arrived that day as well.

Murfreesboro was an important Union supply depot on the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad. On March 8, the 23rd Brigade, Army of the Ohio, was organized there under Colonel William Duffield. It consisted of the 3rd Minnesota Infantry under Colonel Henry C. Lester; the 9th Michigan Infantry under Colonel John G. Parkhurst; a cavalry command that included the 3rd Battalion of the 7th Pennsylvania Cavalry and the 1st Squadron of the 4th Kentucky Cavalry, and two sections of Battery B, Kentucky Light Artillery. On May 9, Colonel Lester assumed command. On June 26, he divided his command into three separate camps in and about town: the 3rd Minnesota and the artillery battery were about 1½ miles north of town on the east side of

Stones River; five companies of the 9th Michigan and Kentucky cavalry squadron were about ¾ mile east of town on Liberty Pike; one company of the 9th Michigan held the court house; three companies of the 9th Michigan had been sent to Tullahoma (and thus were out of the action), and the remaining troops occupied the center of town. Colonel Duffield returned on July 11. With him was General Crittenden.

The next day, July 12, Colonel Duffield resumed command of the brigade and General Crittenden assumed command of the post. Absent the three Michigan companies, he had about 1,700 men. This was more than the 1,400 available to Colonel Forrest, but they were scattered and not mutually supporting. The extent to which he familiarized himself with the situation is not known, but in the event he either had too little time to assess the deployments and routine or to make changes, or he did not make good use of the time he had. For example, the Union cavalry patrolled the area roads during the day, but returned to camp at dusk each day. More problematic, the unit commanders were quarrelsome, which reduced their ability and inclination to cooperate with each other.

Colonel Forrest knew of the garrison and general dispositions in Murfreesboro from his scouts. When he arrived at around 4:30 a.m. on July 13, he immediately attacked. He split his command into three groups, and the action that followed essentially was three separate actions. The 9th Michigan fought well, but surrendered about 11:30 a.m. when no support was forthcoming. The 3rd Minnesota also fought well, repulsing three Confederate charges, but they finally succumbed at about 3:30 p.m. Some time during the day (presumably in the morning), General Crittenden was captured. With less than 24 hours in command, he and the 23rd Brigade were added to Colonel Forrest's victory roll. Colonel Forrest's command captured something over 1,200 Union prisoners, four cannon, 600 horses and mules, and large quantities of weapons and stores. They also tore up railroad track in the area and destroyed Union supplies that they could not take along with them.

This incident – General Crittenden's 15 minutes of fame – virtually ended his career. General Buell remarked, "Few more disgraceful

examples of neglect of duty and lack of good conduct can be found in the history of wars.” It was strong criticism from a man with General Buell’s reputation. He was relieved of command on October 24 following the Battle of Perryville for dilatory tactics, i.e., for following the Confederate withdrawal too slowly.

It isn’t clear whether General Crittenden was sent to a Confederate military prison or if he was paroled. In any event, he was released and returned to service in October 1862.

Details after his return to duty are sparse. Early in 1863, he was given command of a brigade (possibly 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, XX Corps, Army of the Cumberland), but resigned in May. He moved to Washington, D.C., in 1868 and, in 1885, he moved to San Diego where he was a real estate developer. He died while on a vacation trip at East Gloucester, Maine, September 5, 1905, and was buried with full military honors in Section 7, Grave 8274, of Arlington National Cemetery. His wife, Elizabeth Baldwin Crittenden, was buried with him after her death two years later.

And so we have Thomas Turpin Crittenden. He did not make a big impact in the historical record of the Civil War. Still, he was a competent regimental commander that organized a solid infantry regiment, led them in their baptism of field life in (West) Virginia in the first months of the war, reorganized them into a regiment ready to serve a much longer term, subsequently moved them as part of the Army of the Ohio into Kentucky, thence to Savannah, Tennessee and the Battle of Shiloh, followed by a ponderous campaign in northern Mississippi, and then on to Murfreesboro, Tennessee and his date with destiny. It was in Murfreesboro that his career ended due to what may very well have been nothing more than frustration and lashing out on the part of his senior commander whose own career prospects were dimming. In an abrupt turn of events, General Crittenden’s career was unfairly cut short by some not-so-friendly fire. Such are the vicissitudes of war.



James Deshler

By Clarke Moore



**Brigadier General James
Deshler (February 1833 -
September 1863**

James Deshler possessed the zeal of a first-generation Southerner. Born to transplanted Pennsylvanians, the future Confederate general was fiercely proud of his Alabama home.

It was this pride that, upon the outbreak of the Civil War, led him to abandon his United States Army commission, renounce his familial ties to Northern relatives and, ultimately, lose his life along the banks of Chickamauga Creek.

James Deshler was born in Tuscumbia, Alabama, in 1833. His parents, David and Eleanor Taylor Deshler, left Pennsylvania in 1828 when David Deshler accepted a job on the Tuscumbia Railway. Through this opportunity and others, the Deshler Family prospered and became a part of the growing community of Tuscumbia.

James Deshler and his siblings were raised in the wealth and comfort afforded them by the prosperity of their father. This prosperity did not shield the family from heartache, however. In fact, the Deshler family suffered more than their fair share of sorrow. Two of the three children died prematurely. Charlotte Ann, the only girl, died in 1844, at the age of 13. Only a year later, the oldest son, David Deshler Jr, died while swimming in the Hudson River. He was a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point at the time.

Following the lead of his older brother, James was offered an appointment to West Point in 1850. The time he spent at West Point demonstrated the potential and character that would later come to

define him. While he was a cadet, James Deshler excelled in his academic course work. His hard work earned him the 7th position in the Class of 1854, ahead of fellow classmates J.E.B. Stuart, Stephen D. Lee, and Archibald Gracie, Jr. The son of General Robert E. Lee – George Washington Custis Lee – graduated first in the same class.

As an upperclassman, James Deshler befriended an underclassman that would go on to serve with distinction in the Civil War. This cadet, who would serve as chief of artillery under James Longstreet, was Edward P. Alexander. In his book, “Fighting for the Confederacy: the Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander,” he recalled James Deshler as a “...special friend to me at West Point where he was a first class man when I was a plebe...He was a rather small but very well built, active, energetic, & fine looking fellow with very attractive manners & qualities.” Alexander also attributes his life-long fear of heights to a serious fall he took while climbing Indian Falls, at the goading of Deshler, while he was a cadet at West Point.

After graduation, James Deshler was assigned to the Third U.S. Artillery in California. After serving a year, James was transferred to the Tenth U.S. Infantry. While serving in the Tenth, James saw combat in Nebraska during the campaign against the Lakota Sioux Indians. He also participated in the Mormon War of 1858 in Utah. During his time with the Tenth, James Deshler was promoted to first lieutenant.

James Deshler remained in the U.S. Army while talk of secession spread throughout the country. Alabama’s secession in January, 1861 did make an impression on him, however. In May, 1861, James took a leave of absence from his post. In stark contrast to most other officers who left the Army to serve in the Confederate States Army, Deshler never resigned his commission. When he failed to return from an authorized leave of absence, the Army followed procedure and removed his name from the rolls of active officers.

With all haste, Deshler volunteered for service in the Confederate States Army. He was given a commission as a captain and assigned to service in Loring’s Artillery in Western Virginia. During this time, Deshler served as the adjutant general of Henry Jackson’s Brigade. In this post, Deshler participated in the Battle of Greenbrier River in

September, 1861 and the Battle of Allegheny Summit in December, 1861. During the latter action, Deshler was critically wounded – shot through both thighs – and forced to take a leave of absence.

After returning to duty, Deshler was promoted to colonel and transferred to the staff of Theophilus Holmes. This service required Deshler to move to North Carolina. Deshler remained in North Carolina until Holmes was ordered to join the defense of Richmond during the Peninsula Campaign. During this campaign, Deshler served as chief of artillery for Holmes.

After the Peninsula Campaign, Holmes was given command of the Trans-Mississippi Department. Deshler accompanied Holmes on the move. Upon arrival, Deshler was given command of an infantry division, comprised of Texans, and stationed at Fort Hindman at Arkansas Post, Arkansas.

During the early part of January, 1863, Deshler participated in the Battle of Arkansas Post, where he commanded one wing of the Confederate lines that defended Fort Hindman. When the Fort was decimated and forced to surrender, Deshler refused. He was prepared to continue the fighting. General William T. Sherman, whose forces were part of the Union assault, convinced Deshler that there was no chance of victory and that he should surrender. Sherman continued to engage Deshler in conversation by inquiring if he had relatives living in Columbus, Ohio. Deshler responded rather defensively, in a tone so memorable that Sherman recorded the incident. Deshler informed Sherman that he had no relatives living north of the Ohio River.

After the surrender, Deshler and his forces became prisoners-of-war and were held in Union custody. Their confinement continued until May, 1863 when he was released in a prisoner exchange. When he reported for duty, Deshler learned that he had been promoted to brigadier general and transferred to the Army of Tennessee, currently operating in central Tennessee.

Deshler resumed command of his infantry brigade. The Texans had been joined by additional troops from Arkansas to bolster the strength of the brigade. Deshler and his brigade were part of Major General Patrick Cleburne's Division. The brigade participated in the retreat

from Tennessee and the abandonment of Chattanooga.

Deshler was an active participant in the fighting at Chickamauga. His brigade was engaged in the night assault conducted by Cleburne on September 19, which resulted in the capture of three Union field pieces and two regimental banners. Members of Deshler's brigade later said it was an unusually dark night. It was remarked that the only targets were the rifle blasts from the forces to the front.

The fighting continued on September 20. Deshler's men provided cover fire for two other brigades involved in fierce fighting. When the brigade failed to make sufficient progress, Cleburne rode to personally inspect the cause of delay. When he began to question Deshler about the reasons for his hesitancy, Deshler responded, rather fiercely, "Well, it's not my fault!" Cleburne ascertained that Deshler was positioned behind another brigade and he quickly resolved the alignment issue.

Upon taking the new position, Deshler continued to lead his brigade from the front. During an inspection of positioning and cartridge boxes, Deshler exposed himself to the Union guns. A shell struck him in the chest and killed him instantly as it literally tore his heart from his body. After the fighting, his body was buried on the battlefield by a friend.

After the war, the friend who had buried Deshler brought his father, David Deshler, to the battlefield to have his son's body disinterred. The elder Deshler carried the body back to Tusculum and had him buried in Oakwood Cemetery.

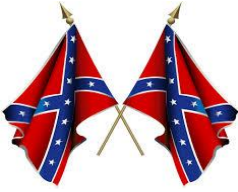
Roger Mills, who had taken over command of Deshler's Brigade after this death, later remarked about him: "...He poured out his own blood upon the spot watered by the best blood of the brigade. Amongst the host of brave hearts that were offered the altar of sacrifice for their country on that beautiful Sabbath, there perished not one, nobler, braver, or better than his. He lived beloved, and fell lamented and mourned by every officer and man of his command."

General Robert E. Lee wrote, "There was no braver soldier in the Confederate Army than Deshler."

Deshler was memorialized with a monument on the Chickamauga Battlefield. With no heirs to inherit his property, David Deshler, whose wife had died the year his son graduated from West Point, left his entire

estate to the City of Tuscumbia with the stipulation that it be used for the education of white women and that it be named for his son, James Deshler. The Deshler Female Institute opened in 1874, but it was damaged by a tornado soon after. Members of the local Masonic Lodge repaired the buildings, but due to lack of funds, the school closed in 1917.

The buildings were torn down in 1924 and a new school building was erected, and named Deshler High School. A quarter century later, the present Deshler High School was built, and continues to carry the name of James Deshler, the granted wish of a broken-hearted father.



Major General John Brown Gordon “The Miniball Magnet”

By Arley McCormick



John B. Gordon
Feb 1832 – Jan 1904

John B. Gordon was not a West Point graduate, never served in the Mexican War, and he had no previous military experience, yet he was elected captain of a company composed of unsophisticated mountain men ready and willing to fight for the entire war. It is ironic that these Confederate patriots lived in the tri-state corner of Alabama, Georgia, and Tennessee – right in the middle of the Nickajack region that is famous for organizing to secede from the Confederacy because of their Northern sympathies. From a coal mine manager to a major general and corps commander, John B. Gordon participated in almost every significant and insignificant battle in the Eastern Theater, often within arm’s reach of the immortal Robert E. Lee. John Gordon’s military career can be traced from battle to battle as General Johnson and subsequently Lee led the Army of Northern Virginia. Gordon carried the wounds of war his entire life as well as stories of near misses from nearly every engagement with the Union Army.

He was not an Alabama native, but found his way to Jackson County to manage and expand the coal mining business interests of his family. John B. Gordon was born to a plantation owner and minister, Zachariah Herndon Gordon and his wife Malinda on February 6, 1832. The plantation of his birth was situated along the banks of the Flint River in Upson County, Georgia and he was the fourth of his parent’s

twelve children. The family later moved to Walker County, in the northwestern corner of Georgia, where his father operated a coal mine.

John Gordon was a strong student and attended the University of Georgia for a time but quit to study law and became a lawyer in Atlanta. The law lost its appeal, primarily due to a lack of clients, and he decided to join his father in the coal mining business. He and his young wife, [Fannie Rebecca, had a complex living arrangement.](#) His memoirs indicate their home was in Jackson County, Alabama; his mailing address was in Tennessee, and his operating mine was in Georgia.

The corners of the tri-state area were seething with political anxiety and the sentiments of the population argumentatively divided. Although the majority of Jackson County residents clearly were not interested in secession, they found themselves bound to Alabama. Mr. Gordon, with his charismatic personality, was elected to captain a motley bunch of tough, undisciplined, poorly armed southern patriots that included mountain men and coal miners.

In April of 1861, Fort Sumter fell and the youthful banter and ridicule of their Northern cousins turned to action. John Gordon's company, without an invitation or direction, departed from home and loved ones. They abandoned their horses to join the infantry rather than the cavalry, and only because of the fear the war would be over before they had a chance to fight. They rushed to the capitol of Georgia to offer their services. John and Fanny arranged to have their children live with his parents and Fanny traveled with him throughout the war.

Arriving in Atlanta, the streets began to fill with citizens watching the grotesque, undisciplined, mob of men that Captain Gordon referred to as a mountain company. The only article of apparel that Gordon's unruly bunch had in common was a coon skin cap, including the tail dangling down the back of their neck. There was laughter and cheers as they meandered down the street. Laughter because of their unusual rough appearance and cheers because they were volunteering to fight. In a very short time the locals began to refer to them as the "Raccoon Roughs." The moniker stuck and they retained the name until the end of the war.

The Georgia Governor was probably impressed, but with insufficient arms, uniforms, and other accoutrements, his telegram to John Gordon advised the captain to return to the mountain country until called.



Gordon's Raccoon Roughs

Captain Gordon informed the Raccoon Roughs of the governor's recommendation, but they were not persuaded to wait. They decided to go to Montgomery Alabama. They walked and rode the train, and in each place they stopped, they crowded through town accompanied by cheers, well wishers, food, and probably a swig or two. It was never really a parade, more of an amusing mob as the Raccoon Roughs were unschooled in the manner of marching on parade. They didn't mind soaking in all the attention.

On May 1, 1861 the Raccoon Roughs became company I of the 6th Alabama Infantry and Captain Gordon was elected a major of the regiment on May 14th, 1861. The Regiment's first assignment in the field was Corinth, Mississippi but they were quickly ordered to the Eastern Theater.

The First Battle of Bull Run occurred on July 21, 1861 and the 6th Alabama arrived too late to participate.

Commanders are evaluated every day by their superiors, their subordinates, and themselves and Colonel John B. Gordon became recognized as a splendid example of a commander. He was slender,

erect, encouraging, steadfast and always trooping the line; possibly the most enduring of all, oblivious to the noise and risk of battle.

At Seven Pines on May 31, 1862, Colonel Gordon, Commander of the 6th Alabama Infantry Regiment, was elevated to command Brigadier General Robert E. Rodes's Brigade. The Brigadier was wounded in the fight after being directed to conduct a premature attack. Major General D.H. Hill, the Division Commander, became anxious and impatient. After a five hour delay, he directed the assault against the green troops of Union General Casey's Division. An acoustic shadow (a [topographical](#) phenomenon created by wind currents and physical obstructions) concealed the sound of the battle from commanders only two and a half miles away. Reinforcements from General Longstreet arrived, yet General Rodes's Brigade, by this time wounded and replaced by Colonel Gordon, had pressed the Union forces well beyond Seven Pines. Not for the first time, Colonel Gordon was recognized for his astute leadership and decision making skill under fire.

The Seven Days Battle Campaign ended at Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862. Preceding the battle, Colonel Gordon met with Stonewall Jackson and recorded his thoughts from that interview in his biography. Colonel Gordon walked away from the discussion with a single principle – keep faith in your own judgment and let the results validate your decision.

Colonel Gordon participated in the ill-advised assault on Malvern Hill. The troops were within 200 yards of the Union artillery positions, taking devastating casualties, when Colonel Gordon's blouse was badly torn by shrapnel. The handle of his revolver was shattered; his canteen was struck, draining water onto his trousers. An artillery shell stunned him, blinded him as it blasted dirt in his eyes, and left him disoriented. The remnants of the command were saved only by the dark of night that concealed the withdrawal.

General Robert E. Lee's Confederates began taking positions between Antietam Creek and the Potomac River on September 15, 1862. Union forces under Major General George B. McClellan began to arrive on the afternoon of the 15th and probed the right flank of the

Confederate line on the evening of the 16th. At 6 a.m. on September 17, Colonel Gordon and the 6th Alabama Infantry held the line at a terrain feature local residents referred to as the Sunken Road. They could hear the battle erupting to the west, their left. The 6th Alabama, along with other regiments of Major General D. H. Hill's Division, had strengthened their position by piling fence rails along the embankment. They stood ready.

At 9:30 a.m., the Sunken Road became the center of furious fighting as the 6th Alabama solidly held the center left of the line for the next four hours. The Union's Irish Brigade led the fourth assault to the right of Colonel Gordon's command. New York brigades turned the right flank of the A.P. Hill's Division and occupied slightly higher ground. The Sunken Road became the Bloody Lane. Colonel John B. Gordon went down with his face buried in his cap and into blood soaked soil but only after being wounded twice in the right leg, twice in the left arm and once in the face, five times in all. The blood from his face wound filled his cap and drained slowly through a bullet hole in the



cap. He may have drowned in his own blood if not for a Union soldier that turned him on his back. Colonel Gordon was removed from the field before the fighting ceased.

General D.H. Hill characterized Colonel Gordon as a "Christian hero," clearly amplifying the excellence of his former deeds at Seven Pines and Malvern

Antietam's Bloody Lane

Hill. General Hill further

remarked that, “Our language is not capable of expressing a higher complement.”

Colonel Gordon’s wife was never far from the battlefield and General Early once remarked that he wished she would stay away. This time her presence was useful. The colonel was filthy with the stench of death and dying, but he wanted to ensure his wife could fine him. As she entered the area, he struggled to rise with a greeting. “Here’s your handsome husband. [I’ve] been to an Irish wedding,” he said. His young wife nursed him back to health and Colonel Gordon was promoted to brigadier general on November 1, 1862.

He was appointed to command the Georgia Brigade in General Jubal Earl’s Division in the Army of Northern Virginia from April 11, 1863 to May 8, 1864. On July 1, 1863, just north of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, he directed a frontal attack against Barlow’s Knoll, pinning down the defenders while other brigades enveloped the defenders’ exposed flank. Another Georgian command in synch with General Gordon continued the assault. Coincidentally, they were the same Union brigades that had been the initial target of “Stonewall” Jackson’s flanking attack at Chancellorsville. They were overwhelmed and conducted a very disorderly retreat.

During the Wilderness Campaign on May 6, 1864, Brigadier General Gordon reconnoitered the Union lines west of the plank road and recommended to General Early that he conduct a flank attack. Initially, General Early disapproved but General Lee, upon visiting General Early, approved the plan although all do not agree that General Lee intervened. General Gordon attacked the flank, driving back a green New York regiment until darkness and terrain halted the movement. Union forces had time to reinforce the flank and halt the initiative. The attack caused concern in the Federal camp and influenced a maneuver some distance away.

At Spotsylvania, General Gordon was to command Major General Early’s Division, but not before acting as the reserve brigade behind Ewell’s Division and plugging a gap in the Confederate line breached by Union General Hancock’s Corps. General Gordon sent more brigades into the breach. In a move similar to the events at the Widow

Tapp's farm at the Battle of the Wilderness, General Lee was directed by General Gordon and his men to move to the rear. As a result, they closed the breach on the eastern leg of the Mule Shoe in about 30 minutes fighting.

Major General John B. Gordon employed his division at Monocacy on July 9, 1864. When it was obvious that Confederate cavalry could not break the Union flank, General Early directed General Gordon's Division to attack. He launched a three pronged attack at the center and both flanks of the regiments on his front and the Union right fell back, allowing the Confederate division to enfilade the remaining Union line. They retreated toward Baltimore.

Petersburg, Virginia was under siege and General Lee's Army was hungry, ill, and lacking in all things necessary to continue the fight. At a war council, Major General Gordon was asked his opinion. He offered three recommendations: offer peace terms to the enemy, retreat from Richmond and Petersburg to link with General Joseph E. Johnson in North Carolina, or fight without delay. The discussion was heated. On March 6, he was instructed to join General Lee at his headquarters. General Gordon was told "there seemed to be but one thing that we could do – fight. To stand still was death. It could only be death if we fought and failed."

At 4:30 a.m. on March 25, 1865, General Gordon launched his attack against Fort Stedman with sharpshooters and engineers masquerading as deserters. Relying on surprise and speed, the masqueraders disarmed the pickets, and three groups of 100 men each quickly followed. The ploy was a complete surprise and the Union troops at Fort Stedman were overwhelmed. The breach of the Union line was nearly 1000 feet long, but Union leaders reacted quickly and retook at least two captured batteries. While General Gordon launched a division against Fort Haskell, he watched the division repulsed with overwhelming artillery. The breach was countered, and in the absence of additional support, the rallying Union forces of over 4000 quickly closed the breach. By 7:30 a.m., with Generals Lee and Gordon watching, the stragglers signified the attack had failed.

The last page in Major General Gordon's war record can be regarded as the end of the Confederacy. General Lee, on April 12, 1865, met General Grant at Appomattox Court House. Their war was over. Major General Gordon, commanding the remnants of his II Corps, marched the unit in front of the courthouse. Union General Joshua Chamberlain and the assembled Union Army were there as well. Each rendered a ceremonial salute to the other, one as the victor, the other the valiant foe.

Mr. Gordon and his wife returned to their family. At 33 years of age, he was a hero throughout the state. He resumed a law practice for a time and quickly launched another career. He vigorously opposed Federal Reconstruction policies and was unsuccessful in his bid for governor in 1868, but was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1872. He served two stints in the Senate before he resigned in 1880 to take a position with a railroad company. Yet, once again, he returned to politics and in 1886 was elected for a term as the Governor of Georgia. Afterwards, he returned to the Senate where he served until 1897. There were rumors that he served as the Grand Dragon of the Ku Klux Klan at one time. In 1890, he became the first Commander-in-Chief of the United Confederate Veterans. In 1903, he published his memoirs, "Reminiscences of the Civil War."



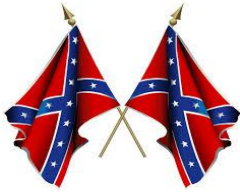
General John Brown Gordon

General John B. Gordon died on January 9, 1904 at Miami, Florida at the age of 71. Tributes after his passing were reported from many sources. John W. Worsham, a former soldier with the 21st Virginia Infantry Regiment who also served with General Stonewall Jackson wrote, "Gordon always had something pleasant to say to his men, and I will bear my testimony that he was the most gallant man I ever saw on a battlefield, he had a way of putting things to the men that was irresistible,

and he showed the men, at all times, that he shrank from nothing in battle on account of himself.”

President Theodore Roosevelt summarized the thoughts of many who knew him by saying, “A more gallant, generous, and fearless gentleman and soldier has not been seen by our country.”

His memory lives at the U.S. Army’s Fort Gordon, Georgia, home of the U.S. Army Signal Center. General John B. Gordon is buried at Oakland Cemetery in Atlanta and a statue stands on the Georgia State Capitol Grounds



Brigadier General John Gregg

By Robert P. Reeves



**Brigadier General John
Gregg (September 1828 -
October 1864)**

Confederate Brigadier General John Gregg was described as a rugged, unrelenting fighter without personal fear. He was even called pugnacious. Gregg believed his position in battle was at the front, leading his men, not directing them from the rear. This belief continuously put him in harm's way and would eventually lead to his death.

John Gregg was born September 28, 1828 in Lawrence County, Alabama, to Nathan Gregg and Sarah Pearsall Camp. He graduated from LaGrange College, the first chartered college in the state of Alabama (now the University of North

Alabama), in 1847, where he was subsequently employed as a professor of mathematics. He later studied law in Tuscumbia, Alabama. John Gregg relocated to Freestone County, Texas in 1852, and settled in the town of Fairfield. He was elected as a district judge and served in that position from 1855 until 1860.

In 1855, John Gregg's wife, Mollie, died. In 1858, Gregg returned to Alabama, traveling to Morgan County where he took as his second wife, Mary Francis Garth. Both were thirty years old when they spoke their vows, "In sickness and in health - Till death do us part." Unfortunately, that would come all too soon.

Mary Francis Garth was raised in the lap of luxury in Decatur, Alabama. Friends described Mary as, "An unusual woman - a direct

descendant of Patrick Henry. She was a tall slender woman of military carriage and as firm in mind and character as her husband or any General for that matter.....she was a tender Christian woman.” Mary’s father, General Jessie Garth, was a state senator as well as one of the wealthiest plantation owners in the state. His worth would be equivalent to nearly four million dollars today. He was also a Unionist and stated he would gladly give up his hundreds of slaves and all his wealth to save the Union. Jessie Garth’s political stand put him at odds with his new son-in law. John Gregg was a staunch secessionist and he quickly returned to Texas with his new bride and continued his law practice.

Gregg was one of the founders of the *Freestone County Pioneer*, the first newspaper in Freestone County. His partner in this venture was Morris Reagan, brother of his good friend John H. Reagan. He used his paper and political clout to call for a secession convention following the election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860.

John Gregg served as a delegate to the Texas Secession Convention in Austin, in January 1861. The delegation issued the Ordinance of Secession on February 1, 1861. Gregg was one of six members of the convention that were elected to represent Texas in the Provisional Confederate Congress in Montgomery, Alabama, and later in Richmond, Virginia.

Gregg began his service in the Provisional Confederate Congress on February 15, 1861, but immediately after the first Battle of Manassas/Bull Run in July 1861, he resigned to enter the Confederate Army. He returned to Texas and formed the 7th Texas Infantry, becoming its colonel in September. John Gregg was ready for action and more than ready to defend what he believed to be Southern rights and liberties afforded by the Constitution.

John and Mary were in their third year of marriage when he went to war. He led the regiment in several small battles before he and the 7th saw their first significant action at the Battle of Fort Donelson, Tennessee from February 12 to February 16, 1862. He and his men were captured along with most of the garrison. He was sent to Fort Warren in Boston, Massachusetts for confinement. On August 15,

1862, Colonel Gregg was released in a prisoner swap and sent home to Texas, but he didn't stay for long. Soon after his release, Gregg got word that President Jefferson Davis promoted him to brigadier general.

In September of 1862, the new general left for Mississippi to join William H.T. Walker's Division. Gregg commanded a brigade consisting of his 7th Infantry, 3rd, 10th, 30th, 41st, and 50th Tennessee Infantry regiments and the 1st Tennessee Battalion. He and his brigade helped repel the assault made by U.S. General William T. Sherman at Chickasaw Bayou. Sherman lost over 1,100 men compared to less than 200 Confederate casualties. General Gregg and his men played significant roles in the battles of Fort Raymond and Jackson, as well.

On May 12, 1863, Gregg's Brigade met McPherson's 17th Corps in Raymond, where he and his men fought with absolute abandon. It was good they did, because he had led his brigade of 3,000 men into battle against a Union force numbering upwards of 12,000. For six hours, the battle raged before the Confederates were forced to retreat. Gregg was then pulled back to Jackson, Mississippi by General Joseph E. Johnston, where he and his men fought bravely before Johnston was forced to retreat from the town.

After the fall of Vicksburg, Gregg's 10th Brigade, known widely as Gregg's Brigade, was sent to Braxton Bragg's army in Georgia. At the Battle of Chickamauga, the brigade was assigned to Longstreet's Corps. His men were part of the force that broke the Federal Army. During the fighting there, Gregg was shot in the neck and severely wounded on September 20, 1863. He was left for dead and Union soldiers even robbed him of all of his valuables. John Gregg was found alive and sent to Marietta, Georgia, to recuperate. During the months spent in recovery, his beloved wife, Mary, joined him and helped to nurse him back to health. The Greggs remained together until January 1864, when John was transferred to Virginia.

On January 11, 1864, at a train station in Dalton, Georgia, Mary said goodbye to her husband as they boarded separate trains. Mary's train would take her south to her father's home in Decatur, while John's train headed north to Richmond. The parting was emotional and one has to wonder if the thought crossed her mind, was this her last time to see

him alive? Little did she know, the answer would come just nine months later. General John Gregg was killed during the Siege of Petersburg.

Gregg recovered, despite the severity of his neck wound, and was rewarded by General Longstreet for his valor in the battle. Longstreet placed Gregg in command of John Bell Hood's old Texas brigade in Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. He was a perfect fit for this brigade. The man even favored Hood in appearance. Gregg was a very capable brigade commander and probably would have made a bold division commander if given the chance. He and his men participated in many of Lee's campaigns in the spring of 1864, including the Battle of the Wilderness, the Battle of Cold Harbor, the Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse and the Siege of Petersburg. He was repeatedly commended for his bravery under fire and on the second day of the Battle of the Wilderness, when Longstreet's Corps checked the victorious onset of the Federals, General Gregg and his Texans won immortal fame. General Robert E. Lee was well aware of Gregg's valor and during the Siege of Petersburg, Lee sent Gregg and his men north of the James River to drive the Federals from in front of Richmond.

The Richmond-Petersburg Campaign (June 15, 1864 – March 25, 1865) was a Union effort to capture the city of Petersburg, Virginia. During the Battle of Chaffin's Farm, Union forces captured Fort Harrison from the Confederates on September 30. Robert E. Lee realized the severity of the loss of Fort Harrison and personally brought 10,000 reinforcements under Major General Charles Field north from Petersburg. On September 30, 1864, Lee ordered a counter-attack to retake Fort Harrison, now commanded by Union Major General Godfrey Weitzel, who had replaced the wounded Union Major General Edward Ord. The Confederate attacks were uncoordinated and were easily handled.

This prompted Lee, on October 7, to order an offensive on the right flank of the Union forces, which were under the command of Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant.

The Union defensive lines, commanded by Brigadier General August V. Kautz and Major General David B. Birney, were positioned along

the length of New Market Road, with further Union Cavalry defending Darbytown Road. The initial Confederate attack, commanded by Major Generals Robert Hoke and Charles W. Field, was successful in dislodging the Union Cavalry from Darbytown Road. The Union Cavalry forces were routed from the field, and the Confederates attacked the Union defensive lines on the New Market Road.

During this attack, Brigadier General John Gregg and his Texas Brigade came against a Federal position fortified with abatis,(a defensive obstacle made by laying felled trees on top of each other with branches, sometimes sharpened, facing the enemy).To make matters worse, the Union soldiers were armed with Spencer repeating rifles. Undaunted, Gregg led his men forward and actually penetrated the Federal lines, but Gregg was shot in the neck for the second time, this time fatally, during a counter attack along Charles City Road. His second in command was shot in the shoulder and wounded. The attack quickly fell apart.

The following article appeared in a Richmond newspaper, *The Richmond Whig* on October 8, 1864:

The gallant General Gregg, commanding a Texas Brigade fell in the advance. Among other casualties we have to report: General Bratton, of South Carolina, badly wounded; Colonel Haskell, Seventh South Carolina Infantry [Cavalry], severely wounded in face and Major Haskell, of the South Carolina Artillery, also wounded. Rumor stated that General Gary had been killed.

In an October 10 communique from City Point, Virginia, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant sent word of the results of the battle that took place at Darbytown and New Market Road to Secretary of War Stanton. He wrote, "Our entire loss in the enemy's attack on our lines on Friday, the 7th instant, does not exceed 300 in killed, wounded and missing. The enemy's loss is estimated by General Butler at 1,000."

Just as Grant had anticipated, the fighting around Chaffin's Farm forced Lee to shift his resources, and that helped the Union Army south of Petersburg win the Battle of Peebles's Farm. After October, the two armies settled into trench warfare that continued until the end of the war. The fighting around Chaffin's Farm cost the nation nearly 5,000 casualties.

After his death, the body of 36-year-old John Gregg lay in state in the Confederate Capital of Richmond. His men loved him so much that Lee granted their request to escort his body to Hollywood Cemetery for burial.

It was reported that "days elapsed from the time General Gregg was killed until the poor wife knew of her bereavement." Mary Gregg had been staying at the home of her father in Decatur when the War Department of the Confederacy brought the heartbreaking news. Confederate Postmaster-General John Regan wrote to Mary:

My Dear Madam,

I am called to perform the most melancholy duty. Your noble husband and my best friend has fallen in battle. I will not mock the grief which awaits you by more words. Keen and bitter as is my own sorrow for the loss of so dear a friend, and of an officer so valuable to the country and so esteemed by all. I wish it were in my power to bear a portion of the deeper and holier grief which must fall on you, the partner of his joys and sorrows, and the cherished idol of his heart.

Friends later recalled her reaction. "Her soul was plunged in grief beyond all other grief. For weeks, her sorrow knew no bounds. No comfort came to the aching heart. No desire in life seemed hers save that the body of her dead husband should find a last resting place safe from the hands of the enemy."

Mary grieved for weeks, but managed to fight her depression enough to decide she could not, nor would not rest until she traveled to Virginia

to claim her husband's body. Before doing so, she traveled to Aberdeen, Mississippi, where her father owned property. She hoped to find Aberdeen a suitable place to live as well as bury her husband. She then had to make her way to Virginia to retrieve John Gregg's body, but this would not be easy, as the Confederacy had unraveled and a trip through enemy lines was extremely hazardous. Mary Gregg used all of her and her father's influence and called in many favors before she finally secured an escort, Sgt. E.L. Sykes, a Confederate soldier and family friend, to accompany her.

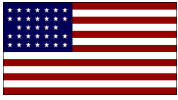
On January 18, 1865, the pair began their perilous journey - traveling by way of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad and Alabama River. Approximately one month later, they arrived in Virginia where Mary Gregg anxiously claimed her husband's body. Unfortunately, it was all too much for her as she succumbed to a nervous breakdown and had to wait weeks before recovering the strength to return to Mississippi with John's body. The trip back to Aberdeen took another full month and was filled with horrendous adventures. Mary and Sgt. Sykes could have shouted for joy as their carriage finally crossed the border into Mississippi. In April of 1865, her resolve paid off as Mary Gregg gained a level of peace and contentment by burying her husband at the Odd Fellows Cemetery on the outskirts of Aberdeen.

A monument to General John Gregg reads "To the memory of General John Gregg of Texas - A Christian soldier and patriot. Born in Lawrence Co. Alabama Sept. 2, 1828: And fell before Richmond in behalf of Southern rights and constitutional Liberty October 7, 1864."

Gregg County, Texas, established in 1873, was named for General Gregg. It is one of eighteen Texas counties named for soldiers and statesmen of the Southern Confederacy.

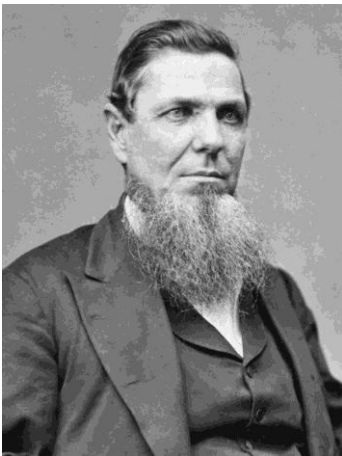
As Mary Gregg settled into her new life in Aberdeen, she became a successful planter and was one of the city's most prominent citizens. She was among the women whose efforts began a Memorial Day observance. Later, she became famous for her work with orphans as well as the afflicted. For the remaining thirty years of her life, she never left the town in which her husband's remains were interred. Mary Garth Gregg died in 1897 and, following a solemn and impressive ceremony,

was laid to rest next to her husband. Her tombstone simply reads, “Mrs. General John Gregg.”



Brigadier General Andrew Jackson Hamilton

By Brian Hogan



**Brigadier General Andrew
Jackson Hamilton
(January 1815 - April 1875)**

It is not known when the Hamilton family arrived in Madison County as there are no records available prior to 1809. An 1809 census of Madison County, Mississippi Territory, conducted by the surveyor Thomas Freeman, named James C. Hamilton as head of the household, however it listed only the number of others in the household, i.e., three white people and four free slaves. James C. Hamilton was a lawyer, and was admitted to the Twickenham Bar in 1810.

James C. Hamilton, born in 1785, was married to Jane Bayless. Their son, Morgan Calvin Hamilton, was born in 1809, and perhaps he was the third white member of the family when the census was taken. Andrew Jackson Hamilton, the subject of this story, was born in Madison County on January 28, 1815.

On October 7, 1813 the citizens of Madison County were alarmed by a report that a large body of Creek Indians was within a day's march of Huntsville. Just five weeks earlier, several hundred soldiers and members of their families were killed by Creek Indians in the Ft. Mims Massacre about 35 miles north of Mobile. With the horrible details still fresh in their minds, a panic spread throughout the area.

The report proved to be a false alarm, but it prompted many able-bodied men to organize a militia force. Among them was James C.

Hamilton, who recruited a company of mounted guards in November, 1813 and became their captain. His company was ordered into service by Colonel Peter Perkins, Madison County, Mississippi Territory and assigned to Andrew Jackson's army. The company appears to have mustered out on July 13, 1814.

A Huntsville Historical Marker notes that General Andrew Jackson came through Huntsville on October 11, 1813, en-route to the Creek Indian Wars. The culmination was the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, where Jackson's army soundly defeated the "Red Stick" Creek warriors in March, 1814. This battle basically ended any further Indian uprisings. General Andrew Jackson went on to defeat the British in the Battle of New Orleans in January, 1815.

It would seem obvious then that when James Hamilton's second son was born in 1815, he was named Andrew Jackson Hamilton, after the Hero of the South.

Andrew Jackson Hamilton, after attending the common schools, studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1841. He practiced law in Talladega until late in 1846 when he joined his brother in Texas. He practiced law in LaGrange, Fayette County for three years before he moved to Austin. His brother, Morgan Calvin Hamilton, moved to Texas in 1837 – the same year that their father died.

In 1849, the Governor appointed him Acting Attorney General – the beginning of his political career. Hamilton represented Travis County in the State House of Representatives from 1851-1853, where he aligned himself with a faction of the Democratic party that opposed secession, reopening the slave trade and other Southern extremist demands. In 1859, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. He was the last Texas representative to leave Congress, preferring to remain in his seat even after Texas officially left the Union.

After his return to Texas in 1861, he won a special election to the State Senate, but his anti-slavery and anti-Confederacy stance led to plots against his life. In July, 1862, he fled to Mexico. Hamilton left Mexico with other Texas refugees aboard the American brigantine *N. Berry* and landed in New Orleans in early September, 1862.

As he made his way north, Hamilton spoke in many Northern cities about dis-unionists and the “slave power” that he believed was trying to subvert democracy and the rights of non-slave owners.

On November 14, 1862, Hamilton was commissioned a brigadier general by Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, and appointed Military Governor of Texas, headquartered in New Orleans. He was to “re-establish and maintain, under military form, the functions of civil government, until the loyal inhabitants of Texas shall be able to assert their constitutional rights and privileges.”

Hamilton had no military command, but Stanton instructed Major General N. P. Banks, commander the Department of the South, to support him by assigning a governor’s guard, commanded by a competent officer.

The only military action he was involved in was the attempt to capture Galveston Texas, the main port on the Gulf from where blockade runners would transport cotton. He pushed the Army and Navy to mount an attack, which they did on January 1, 1863. The attack was unsuccessful and two of eight ships were lost. One was captured and the other was blown up, after it was grounded, to prevent capture. Three companies of 260 men of the 42nd Massachusetts Infantry, that had landed on December 24, 1862, were also captured by a Confederate force said to number 3000.

It has been claimed that some of Hamilton’s “entourage” were cotton traders and that he had arranged that they could accompany the expedition. There is no direct evidence of this but it could be true. General Banks’s after-action report to Major General Halleck on January 7, 1863 includes the following:

...General Hamilton is not a bad man, but he does not manifest great force of character, and is surrounded by men who came here...for base, speculative purposes and nothing else....He explains their presence by saying that in the North he became indebted to them for pecuniary assistance. I sent him notice that they would be required

to leave the department if their course was approved by him....

Hamilton spent the remainder of the war in New Orleans, serving no real purpose.

With the beginning of Reconstruction, President Andrew Johnson appointed Andrew Jackson Hamilton as the Provisional Governor of Texas in July, 1865.

In the *Handbook of Texas Online*, James A. Marten wrote:

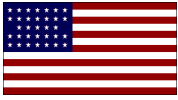
...[Hamilton's] career during Reconstruction was stormy and frustrating...he pursued a program of trying to limit officeholders to former Unionists, ratifying the Thirteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution, and granting economic and legal rights (although not the vote) to freedmen. When the Texas Constitutional Convention of 1866 refused to enact most of his suggestions, he rejected presidential Reconstruction and promoted the harsher program of the Radical Republicans, (and) endorsed black suffrage and helped organize the Southern Loyalists' Convention in Philadelphia in September, 1866....

Hamilton was defeated in the 1866 election for governor by former Confederate Brigadier General James W. Throckmorton. Surely his defeat was a result of his policies. Ironically, Throckmorton was to last only one year. He was removed from office by order of Union General Philip Sheridan as "an impediment to reconstruction."

Hamilton's political views changed and he became one of the leading Moderate Republicans in Texas, opposing his own brother Morgan Hamilton, who was a leading Radical Republican spokesman in the U. S. Senate. Morgan Hamilton was elected in 1870 and served until 1877.

Andrew Jackson Hamilton again ran for governor in 1869 and lost to a Radical Republican. Hamilton would not seek public office again, but resumed his practice of law. He died from tuberculosis on his farm near

Austin on April 11, 1875. He is buried in Oakwood Cemetery there. He was preceded in death by his father, James C., who died in 1837 and his brother Morgan Calvin Hamilton, who died in San Diego in 1893.



Brigadier General Daniel McCook Jr.

“Colonel Dan of the Tribe of Dan”

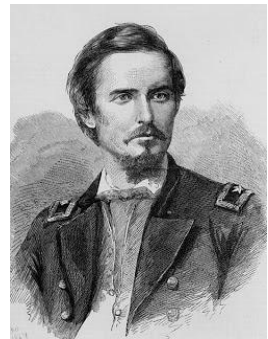
By Arley McCormick

The day before his death, members of the McCook family gathered to hear an official of the Federal Army inform Colonel Daniel McCook, Jr. that he had been promoted to the rank of brigadier general. Only 29-years-old, General McCook, uncomfortable and struggling to breathe, politely rejected the appointment saying, “It is too late now.” He died on July 17, 1864 from the wound sustained at the Dead Angle on Kennesaw Mountain, Georgia.

Daniel Jr. was the sixth son and the eighth of twelve siblings born to Daniel, a Presbyterian elder and Sunday-school superintendent, and Martha McCook at Carrollton, Ohio on July 22, 1834. All ten of their sons fought for the Union although not all during the Civil War.

Daniel, Sr. had two brothers, John and George, and between them, either fifteen or seventeen (the historical record is not clear) served. Hence the moniker “The Fighting McCooks” became a familiar term in the North during the war. Occasionally, people would speak of the “Tribe of Dan” or the “Tribe of John,” a reference to these warrior families. The McCooks had a reputation as leaders in the community with a manner about them that was regal, compassionate, and tempered with good judgment. Daniel, Jr. enjoyed reading, quoting poetry, and seemed to enjoy the fair ladies in any community where he lived.

When it was time for a formal education, Daniel, Jr. went south to LaGrange College in North Alabama. The college was respected and



**General Daniel
McCook Jr.**
July 1834 – July 1864

revered for a disciplined curriculum that included geography, mineralogy, grammar, arithmetic and the study of classics, both Greek and Latin. Upon graduating from LaGrange in 1858, he returned home to Steubenville, Ohio to study law.

The entire country was consumed in a hostile political climate. It was no surprise that Dan McCook, Jr. followed the action and on January 1, 1859 he added his name to the partnership of a Leavenworth, Kansas law firm that became Sherman, Ewing, & McCook. Leavenworth was a bustling little city competing with the Missouri cities of St. Joseph and Kansas City for people and industry and near the center of the most savage repercussions to the Kansas-Nebraska Act. It was an ideal location for an ambitious lawyer.

William Tecumseh Sherman took him under his wing and became well acquainted with Dan McCook's skills. Daniel's quick thinking was very useful. Late in the spring of 1859, an Irishman came into the Leavenworth law office with a legal problem regarding the boundary of his rented property. Sherman, jotting down the necessary information, quickly passed the case to McCook. Over a month passed and the excited Irishman returned to the office looking for McCook. In Daniel's absence, he spoke to Sherman again, explaining he must go to court immediately and Sherman sent him to the court to find McCook. The Irishman quickly returned and Sherman found himself poorly prepared and in front of the judge requesting a continuance. The offended party and his witnesses were present and standing before the judge. The judge denied the continuance and Sherman lost the case. Upon returning to the law office, Daniel was informed of the judge's decision. He thought for a minute and then advised his client that the judge's decision would take 10 days to enforce and he should immediately return to his shanty, pick it up, and move it to unclaimed property there-by he would not have anything on the disputed property that could be confiscated or subject to the award decree. The Irishman followed the recommendation and thus avoided further financial loss.

1859 passed and the political climate became more aggressive and violent. John Brown raided Harper's Ferry in October and was hanged in December. As the divisiveness between North and South deepened,

young Daniel made every effort to lead a normal life. In 1860, Daniel McCook's reputation as a lawyer was well established. Julia Elizabeth Tibbs of Platt County, Missouri captured his heart and they were married that year.

While Daniel, Jr. was fighting legal battles in Kansas, 63-year-old Daniel, Sr. was making ready to fight a battle of a different sort in Washington D.C. On Friday, April 12, 1861, at 4:30 a.m., Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumter. The following day, the fort was surrendered and evacuated. Six days later, Daniel McCook, Sr. and 60 other western supporters conducted dismounted drill on the velvet carpet of the East Room of the White House. The men were recruited earlier in the lobby of the Willard Hotel and marched up Pennsylvania Avenue and announced to the president they had come to save him from the hands of 15,000 Southerners rumored to be marching toward the capital to hang him.

On May 1, 1861, Daniel McCook, Jr. became the captain of the Shield Grays, an infantry company formed at Leavenworth and on June 3rd, they were ushered into the 1st Kansas Infantry. Nearly a month later on July 1, 1861, his brother, Private Charles Morris McCook, was killed at the Battle of Bull Run. Their father watched the Confederates overwhelm his brother's unit and shouted for him to surrender, but he reportedly responded, "Father, I will never surrender to a rebel!" Private McCook was dead at the age of 19.

The 1st Kansas Infantry marched off to the August 10 Battle of Wilson's Creek, but Daniel fell ill with pneumonia and missed it. The 1st Kansas Infantry took massive casualties and after the battle, Daniel McCook's brother, Brigadier General Alexander McCook, secured an appointment for him as assistant adjutant general on his staff with the 2nd Division Volunteers of the Army of the Ohio. Captain McCook joined the division on November 9, 1861. With his brother's division, he crossed the Tennessee River onto Pittsburg Landing on April 7, 1862, where he was involved in General Grant's counterattack on the left flank of the Union line. He accompanied the division to the siege of Corinth that began in April 1862.

In May 1862, the Ohio Governor, David Tod, requested that young Dan McCook come to Columbus and recruit soldiers for the newly formed 52nd Ohio Infantry. His recruits were from various counties and population centers in Ohio. On July 15, 1862, McCook was appointed the colonel of the new regiment and promptly and affectionately referred to as “Colonel Dan” by his men.

August 6, 1862 was another devastating day for the McCook family. Brigadier General Robert McCook, a respected and revered commander who had returned to his unit prematurely, ill and not totally recovered from a wound, was shot and killed by Rebel partisan cavalry near Huntsville, Alabama. The uproar and misinformation surrounding his death spread quickly throughout the north and all the way to the White House. Colonel Dan was training, equipping, and preparing his regiment for the front line when he received the news. He had little time to mourn, as his regiment loaded on trains on the August 25, destined for Louisville, Kentucky. In Cincinnati, the train halted for the representatives of the city to present a silk national flag inscribed “McCook’s Avengers” in reference to the killing of his brother who was 34 years of age. The regiment arrived in Lexington the following day, and the first mission was to provide the rear guard for units badly defeated at the Battle of Richmond, Kentucky. The 52nd Ohio arrived in Louisville on September 6 and became part of the 36th Brigade, 11th Division, Army of the Ohio.

Colonel Daniel McCook moved up to command the 36th Brigade in the 11th Division, III Corps at the Battle of Perryville, which took place on October 8, 1862. He provided valuable service and was held in reserve. His cousin, Major General Edward Moody McCook, commanded the II Corps. The Union Army reorganized several times in the months following Perryville and Stones River. Daniel was in command of the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, Reserve Corps, Army of the Cumberland when more bad news was delivered. Daniel McCook Sr., his father, and the patriarch of the “Tribe of Dan,” was killed at the Battle of Buffington Island on July 19, 1863. Daniel McCook Jr. would soldier on, participating in several minor engagements between

Perryville and Chickamauga. The real trial began, however, when Sherman initiated the Atlanta Campaign.

After Chickamauga, Dan's brother Alexander was dragged through court-martial proceedings for his conduct while in command. He was relieved from command and no longer served in the Western Theater. Daniel, a colonel commanding a brigade – normally a brigadier general's position – was no longer held in reserve. His brigade would participate aggressively in the Atlanta Campaign and was nearly always engaged in the fighting.

Kennesaw Mountain loomed near the prize – Atlanta, Georgia. Colonel Daniel McCook Jr., Commander of the 3rd Brigade in the 2nd Division of the XIV Corps; Army of the Cumberland, met his Waterloo on June 27, 1864. The entire leadership from General Henry Thomas down had surveyed the Confederate defense along the ridge line, and determined that Cheatham Hill offered the best opportunity for successfully routing them. It was the shortest distance between the Union line and the flanks of the two seasoned Confederate divisions of Major Generals Patrick R. Cleburne and Benjamin F. Cheatham, facing them along a fish hook.

Even with the shorter distance, it would have been difficult. The units had to cross a small valley with a creek, up a gentle slope toward a wooded ridge and hilltop where the opposing troops had dug in with solid earthwork, entanglements out in front, and the flanks of the Union regiments would be exposed to artillery as well as infantry weaponry. As the brigade officers mused that this was the best opportunity for success, they knew speed would be essential. Once on the move, they must keep moving and quickly.

At sunrise, the units marched from their assembly area to within 600 yards of the Rebels. The brigades formed in closely packed columns with ten paces between each line. On the order, "check cartridge boxes" then "fix bayonets," troops knew battle was imminent. Colonel Daniel McCook Jr. had dismounted his horse and strolled to the front of his command. Along the way, he could hear occasional recommendations from his officers and men to remain at the rear of the column. He

turned, faced his command, offering encouragement and a quote from Horatius:

Then out spake brave Horatius,
The Captain of the Gate:
To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late.
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods.

If the Confederate line had not observed the Union preparation, they soon heard and felt 15 minutes of artillery fire raining down. Then there was silence. The Union line was not ready. At this hour, the direction was to wait while the leading regiments aligned properly. Two cannons would fire to signal the advance. There was no doubt the Confederate line was waiting – ready to unleash hell.

It was mid-morning before the signal came and the trumpets blared, the unfurled flags waved in a slight breeze that marked the center of each regiment. McCook's skirmishers moved out from beneath the cover of brush and trees followed by the waves of regiments.

The time had come. "Quick March!" came the order, followed by the instruction, "Maintain your Interval!" A final warning from the commanders, "Steady boys!" was followed by the release, "Double quick!" Over 1800 yelling blue clad demons of the brigade charged up the slope toward the Rebel line.

Patrick Cleburne's division and artillery crews watched as the Federals headed their way. The first Federal Regiment was 40 yards away from the breastwork when the Confederate line erupted. It smashed the heads of the Union columns and orderly redeployment became impossible. The surge of blue continued to move as men at the rear pushed and crowded, tripping and falling, making it impossible to maintain order or lines. Each soldier struggled alone in a crowd, running pell-mell into the slaughter. Four color bearers fell in turn and

there were no tactics, just fighting with both sides firing their weapons into one another's faces, stabbing with their bayonets, swinging their rifle butts like bats, and throwing stones or chunks of wood. Dead bodies collapsed on top of the wounded. Rifles became foul with burnt powder.

Reinforcement for the Rebels came as Col. Daniel McCook, Jr. reached and leapt to the top of the parapet, slashing with his sword at Rebels who tried to stop him with their bayonets. He bellowed above the melee, "Forward the flag!"

A private screamed at the commander, "Colonel Dan, for God's sake get down, they will shoot you!"

"God damn you!" the Colonel yelled back, "Attend to your own business!" The private's observation was realized as a Rebel bullet pierced his chest and McCook fell down from the earthwork onto the bodies of his fallen troops.

"Stick it to them, boys!" he gasped as he was quickly carried to the rear. The "Dead Angle" was indeed the end of the battle, the war, and the life of Colonel Daniel McCook Jr.

The colonel was removed from the battlefield and treated at an aid station but it was certain that the bullet piercing the right side of his chest, four inches below the collar bone, struck the lung. The only possible result was a slow, lingering death. Arrangements were made quickly to remove him to his home in Steubenville, Ohio.

On July 17, 1864, he died. The final remarks he made to his command must certainly have been learned at LaGrange College in Alabama. He served in a Brigadier General position from September 1862 until his death. Another "Fighting McCook" was heralded in the papers and gazettes around the north as the fourth McCook to sacrifice his life for the cause. His death left his wife, Julia, and newborn baby girl without a husband and father. His remains were buried in the Spring Grove Cemetery, Spring Grove, Ohio.



Thunderbolt of the Confederacy

By Jacquelyn Procter Reeves



John Hunt Morgan
(June 1825 - September 1864)

Using dull knives smuggled out of the mess hall, six prisoners housed in the Ohio state penitentiary began to dig under their bunks. Among those men were John Hunt Morgan, known by the Yankees as the “Thunderbolt of the Confederacy,” Thomas Hines, and Dick Morgan. It was difficult to dig through the concrete floor, but they were persistent. On a cold November night in 1863, the prisoners-of-war were finally ready to make their escape. But while the story could have ended there, General John Morgan would not leave well enough alone.

John Hunt Morgan was born in Huntsville, Alabama on June 1, 1825. Several days after his birth, the Morgan family moved into their home at 558 Franklin Street, located in the heart of present-day Twickenham Historic District. He was the oldest of ten children born to Calvin Morgan and Henrietta Hunt Morgan. But their time in Huntsville would not last long. The family lost their home in 1831 when Calvin Morgan’s business fell on hard times.

At that time, the Morgans left the Tennessee Valley and moved to Lexington, Kentucky, home to Henrietta Hunt Morgan’s family. Young John Morgan’s propensity for fighting made itself known early, for in 1844 he was suspended from Transylvania College for dueling with another student.

Like many of the men who would later serve in the Civil War, Morgan enlisted in the army to fight in the Mexican-American War. He participated in the Battle of Buena Vista, also known as the Battle of Angostura. In that February 23, 1847 battle, 5,000 Americans serving under Major General Zachary Taylor fought – and sent running – 12,000 Mexican soldiers under the command of the self-proclaimed president of Mexico, Santa Anna. Taylor’s men were supported by the Mississippi Rifles, led by Colonel Jefferson Davis, a man who would play a major part in an upcoming war that would change the course of America’s history. Major Braxton Bragg, another name that would become synonymous with the future American Civil War, was ordered by General Taylor to “double shot your guns and give them hell!” The famous quote would be re-written slightly and serve as Taylor’s campaign slogan that would propel him to the White House as President of the United States in 1848.

Although the Americans stubbornly held their position and gave the Mexicans the hell Taylor had prescribed, Santa Anna boasted that the battle was a Mexican victory and took his army with him in retreat to Agua Nueva.

At the conclusion of the war, John Hunt Morgan returned to Kentucky and in 1848 married Rebecca Bruce. Tragedy struck five years after their marriage, as 23-year-old Rebecca Morgan gave birth to a stillborn son and an infection in her leg necessitated its amputation. Becky lingered in bad health for years. She died on July 21, 1861.

Apparently there was no love lost between Morgan and his wife’s family. Becky’s health problems put a strain on their relationship and perhaps his in-laws also disapproved of Morgan’s continued interest in military matters. He raised a company of infantry, the Lexington Rifles, and spent much of his time in drill. In 1861, the Civil War cast its ugly shadow on the nation, and with Becky’s death, Morgan was free to leave. As colonel of the newly established 2nd Kentucky Cavalry Regiment, Morgan began to implement the guerilla tactics he knew best.

Brigadier General J. T. Boyle wrote in his July 18, 1862 report that Cynthia, Kentucky was surrounded by Morgan’s men. “His force is

reported to me as about 2,500; it is estimated by some as over 3,000. I do not believe these reports, though his army increases daily. They spread every possible lie....”

On that same day, Cincinnati Mayor George Hatch sent a report to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton that Morgan was making his way through Kentucky. “My informant shook hands with him and was disarmed by him. Cynthiana surrendered at 5:30 p.m. Boyd’s Station...expects to be attacked every moment.” Every male resident was ordered to arm themselves and go to their voting stations, prepared to defend the city.

The following day, the number of Morgan’s Raiders was reported to be 30,000, a considerable increase from the estimated 2,500! Brigadier General Boyle sent a note to Major General Don Carlos Buell. His anger was transparent:

...I shall levy heavy contribution on his uncles and other secessionists; it is the only way to prevent a repetition of his raids. I shall publish orders forbidding any secessionists standing for office, and see that those who desire the overthrow of the Government do not acquire influence from official positions...The domestic rebels will subside for a season, though there are bands over the State.

Two days later, he wrote, “As soon as I am rid of Morgan, I will clear out that region.” The following day, he wrote, “Morgan at Crab Orchard, going toward Somerset; my force pursuing him. He is too far ahead to overtake....” Later that same day he wrote, “...He has the best mounted men in the world.”

Morgan accumulated enemies quickly. It wasn’t enough for him to defeat the enemy in battle – he taunted them as well. On July 22, 1862, he sent a letter to George Dunlap, a U.S. Representative from Kentucky:

Just completed my tour through Kentucky. Captured sixteen cities, destroyed millions of dollars' worth of United States property. Passed through your county, but regret not seeing you. We paroled 1,500 Federal prisoners.

Your old friend, John H. Morgan, Commanding
Brigade

On December 7, 1862, Morgan led his men at the Battle of Hartsville, Tennessee. Snow covered the ground as his force of 1,400 men marched toward the camp of Union Colonel Absolom B. Moore, 104th Regiment Illinois Infantry, located near the Cumberland River. Greatly outnumbered and miserably cold, Morgan's shivering men and their horses crossed the icy Cumberland River at 3 a.m. along with the men under the leadership of Basil Duke. Some Confederates did not cross, waiting to capture any Union soldiers who might try to escape to Lebanon, while others waited near Hartsville on the Gallatin Road for the same reason.

The battle began at about 6:45 a.m. "The Rebels are coming!" a servant shouted to the Union soldiers eating breakfast. An order was issued to sound the long drumroll – the prelude to battle. Four hundred yards from the camp, the Confederate cavalry was forming a line as the bugle sounded double-quick and then full speed. The Union soldiers waited as the Confederates advanced another 300 yards. With the ear-splitting screech of the dreaded Rebel Yell, the Confederate attack began.

The Battle of Hartsville lasted one hour, fifteen minutes. At the conclusion, a Confederate soldier said, "Never in my life have I looked upon anything so beautiful, so charming and so soul-satisfying as that white rag given to the breeze by the hand of a surrendered Yankee."

Morgan and his men captured 1,800 men along with their arms and ammunition. Morgan's men had suffered because of their inadequate clothing, now frozen after the river crossing. His order to the Union prisoners of war was succinct. "Come out of those overcoats!"

Among the captives was Union Colonel Absolom Moore who was sent to a prison where he remained until his exchange early the following year. Moore made his belated report on February 25, 1863, and explained his defeat by writing that he was badly outnumbered. He reported that he was attacked by a Confederate army of 5,000 to 6,000 strong, a far cry from the actual 1,400. President Lincoln allowed him the opportunity to resign.

The Rebel victory was a much-needed boost to the sagging morale of the Southland. For this, Confederate President Jefferson Davis would personally reward John Hunt Morgan with the rank of brigadier general.

In the same month, Morgan married Tennessean Martha "Mattie" Ready, the daughter of U.S. Representative Charles Ready. The wedding ceremony was a true celebration. Confederate General Leonidas Polk, known as the "Fighting Bishop," performed the ceremony. In attendance were President Jefferson Davis, General Braxton Bragg, General John Breckinridge, General William Hardee, and General Benjamin "Frank" Cheatham.

Morgan and his men had already made a name for themselves. They were hand-picked and carefully trained by their leader. George "Lightning" Ellsworth, a member of Morgan's Raiders, was an accomplished telegrapher who intercepted important information and in turn, sent out misinformation to the Union Army. The raiders blew up the Big South Tunnel near Gallatin, Tennessee and otherwise wreaked havoc upon the Union-held railroad lines. According to some sources, like the legendary Robin Hood before them, Morgan and his men even stole supplies from the Union Army and distributed them to the struggling civilians in the towns they passed through.

Most of Morgan's notoriety was gained by his actions in the summer of 1863, known as the Great Raid of 1863. Morgan and his raiders crossed the Ohio River, rode through southern Indiana and Ohio, making him the first and only Confederate to penetrate so far into the Union territory. In that three weeks, the raiders took approximately 1,200 prisoners of war and raided 17 towns. About 700 of his men were captured on July 19, but Morgan held out until July 26 when he and

several others of his men surrendered near Salineville, Ohio. It was at this time that they became guests of the State of Ohio.

On November 27th, Morgan and his men were ready to make their escape from their cells in the Ohio State Penitentiary in Columbus. After several days of digging with spoons through concrete, lime mortar and brick, they reached the foundation of the building. This had to be dug through before they could begin their horizontal tunnel and final upward tunnel to the surface. After several weeks, the tunnel was finished. John Morgan, who was housed on the second floor, switched places with his brother Dick when it was time to be confined to their cells for the night. Dick would not be part of the escape party. Some time after midnight, John Morgan arranged his bunk to appear that he was sleeping soundly. He slipped into the tunnel under Dick's bunk and made his way down until he met the other five men in the tunnel. From the surface, they still had to cross a high wall, but on the other side an unexpected surprise waited for them. Union guards warmed themselves next to a bonfire.

Their very lives depended on their sure-footed silence. They scattered, making their way as far as they could from their prison home. Thomas Hines and John Morgan, on the other hand, bought train tickets to Cincinnati and sat down beside a Union soldier. As they passed the Ohio State Penitentiary, the officer, who had no idea who his new friend was, glibly pointed out that the Confederate raider, John Hunt Morgan, was a prisoner there. Morgan's quick-witted reply was something like, "May they guard him always as they do right now."

Morgan and his wife, Mattie, were soon reunited. They were in Richmond in early 1864. They went to Abingdon, Virginia in late March where he took command of the Southwestern Virginia Department. There was trouble however, within the Confederate Army. Morgan and his men were reckless. Like most guerilla raiders, he operated on the fringes and oftentimes crossed over the boundaries of good sense and took liberties with his orders. While he wasn't technically insubordinate, he was painfully close. In addition, his best soldiers were in prison camps and many in his command were

considered untrustworthy. By this time, the physical toll on him was apparent.

On September 4, 1864, his luck ran out. Morgan and his men were in Greeneville, Tennessee for a brief rest. Morgan was staying at the large home of a family friend, Mrs. Catherine Williams. Sometime in the night, Union forces surrounded the house. It was rumored that they had been tipped off by a Union sympathizer. According to some sources, he



John Hunt Morgan
by Brenda Milam Morgan

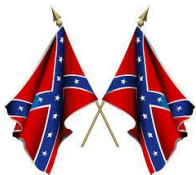
was executed while in the act of surrendering, by Union Private Andrew Campbell, a member of Company G, 13th Tennessee Cavalry. Although the official Union report stated John Morgan was killed while trying to escape, the fact that he was the only one of his men shot, even as others were fleeing, tends to support the first theory.

It is widely believed that the informant was Lucy Williams, the daughter-in-law of Mrs. Catherine Williams.

Morgan's body was thrown onto the back of a horse and paraded up and down the streets as the Union detachment celebrated their kill. He was stripped and thrown into a ditch. Confederate Major Withers, one of the only staff officers taken prisoner, asked that he be allowed to return his commander's body to Morgan's widow in Abingdon, Virginia, who was two months pregnant.

A memorial service was held in Abingdon for the slain general before he was transported to Richmond for a military funeral. Finally, in 1868, Morgan's brother brought him back to Lexington, Kentucky for his final interment. Morgan was admired by the South, considered reckless by his superiors, and dreaded by his enemies. But everyone knew who he was. At his third and final funeral, four years after he was killed, over 2,000 people turned out to say good-bye to Huntsville's own Thunderbolt of the Confederacy.

Johnnie Hunt Morgan was born in early April, 1865. She died at age 23 of typhoid fever, and today there are no direct heirs of John Hunt Morgan.



Edward A. O’Neal of the “Fighting O’Neals”

By Arley McCormick



Edward A. O’Neal was born in Madison County on September 20, 1818. He graduated from the Green Academy in Huntsville, and then in 1836 from La Grange College near Florence, Alabama. He tutored in law under James W. McClung of Huntsville, and he became a member of the bar in 1840. Through hard work and diligence, he became a Commanding General in the Confederate Army. After the war, he went on to become the 26th Governor of Alabama. But the path was not always accompanied with cheers and bravado - there was pain,

humiliation, and grieving along the way.

Edward O’Neal was a first generation American whose father emigrated from Ireland. His mother, who was from South Carolina, was a descendant of French Huguenots. He grew up in Huntsville, and after graduating at the top of his class from La Grange College, he married, in 1838, Mary Olivia Moore, the daughter of Dr. Alfred Moore of Huntsville. Together, they had nine children. Their two sons went on to fight in the Civil War as well. Alfred Moore O’Neal became a major in 11th Alabama Infantry and Edward Asbury O’Neal Jr. was aid-de-camp for Major General Robert Emmett Rodes in the Army of Northern Virginia. Thus they were known, in the Florence community, as the “Fighting O’Neals.”

In 1841, O'Neal was elected to Alabama's fourth judicial circuit court to fill an unexpired term. In this capacity, he served four years. He eventually moved to the growing community of Florence to establish a law firm. He was quickly accepted and became an influential leading citizen. Often neighbors and acquaintances would stop by his modest home, take a sip of water and pass the time discussing politics, family, and events occurring in the community. Edward O'Neal was a popular resident with many friends and associates.

The 1850s were turbulent years in the country. The rhetoric was vicious and constant between abolitionists and states' rights advocates, who attempted to influence politicians in support of their position. Edward O'Neal grew into an avid Secessionist. When Alabama passed its Ordinance of Secession on January 11, 1861, and Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as the 16th President of the United States on March 4, he knew what he had to do. In June, at the age of 43, Captain O'Neal and his two sons marched off to war, three of many residents of North Alabama to cast their lot with the Confederate Army.

Upon arriving in Virginia, Edward O'Neal was immediately promoted to Major, 9th Alabama Infantry Regiment. In March 1862, he was commissioned as a Lieutenant Colonel and in time promoted to Colonel and placed in command of the 26th Alabama Infantry Regiment. In less than a month, he led his regiment at Yorktown. General Joe Johnston's Confederate forces blocked the advance of the Union forces under General George McClellan as they drove up the peninsula to threaten Richmond. Although not engaged, O'Neal and his regiment were ready. General McClellan's timidity resulted in a month-long standoff.

General Johnston worried that the Union Navy might attack his flanks. He withdrew up the peninsula toward Richmond. At Williamsburg on May 5, along with General D. H. Hill's division, a portion of the rear guard engaged Union troops. In the ensuing standoff, the Confederate Army withdrew. O'Neal's brigade participated in the skirmish without significant impact.

On May 31, Colonel O'Neal's first major contribution in battle won him a vote of confidence from General Rains. Assigned to Major

General D. H. Hill's division, a regiment in Brigadier General Gabriel J. Rains's Brigade, the 26th Alabama Infantry executed a key maneuver toward the Union Army's left flank that helped delay the Union forces and eventually withdraw from the peninsula. Unfortunately, his horse was killed beneath him. O'Neal was severely wounded by shell fragments and spent several weeks recuperating before he rejoined his regiment.

Bloody battles erupted in a series of gaps on September 14, 1862: Crampton, Turner, and Fox, in the South Mountain area of Maryland. The Army of Northern Virginia was returning from Maryland. A small Confederate force under Major General D. H. Hill protected Turner and Fox Gaps – two vital passes through the South Mountain range. Early on September 14, 1862, General McClellan's Union Army pressed their advantage in numbers. Colonel O'Neal, under the command of Brigadier General Robert Rodes's Brigade, fought to hold the field as casualties mounted. They were outnumbered nearly 12 to 1. After seven hours of fighting, the Union divisions made a relentless charge on the northern end of Turner's Gap. General Longstreet prevented a rout by reinforcing the line along a cornfield fence.

As darkness fell, the Union forces broke through the Rebel line but ended the assault as darkness fell. As the sun set over South Mountain, the exhausted Confederates still maintained control of Turner's Gap.

The Confederate generals abandoned South Mountain before daylight on September 15. In the end, that bloody day bought the Confederate Army valuable time to consolidate its position for the battle along Antietam Creek. Colonel O'Neal was temporarily out of action again because of wounds he received in the fight.

O'Neal received praise for his action at Chancellorsville between April 30 and May 3, 1863. On May 2, while serving under Major General A.P. Hill's division on the left of the Army of Northern Virginia, Colonel O'Neal's regiment held a position to the right and adjacent to Iverson's regiment, straddled the Orange Turnpike, and pressed the Union force's hard. By 7 p.m., Colonels O'Neal and Iverson had secured terrain all the way to the Wilderness Church. They

continued to press the Federal forces till 9 p.m. Again, Colonel O'Neal was slightly wounded and was taken from the field on May 3.

Two months later, Colonel O'Neal was commanding Major General Rodes's old brigade, a brigadier general's position, which encompassed the 3rd Alabama, 5th Alabama, the 12th Alabama and his former regiment, the 26th Alabama. Major General Rodes was commanding the Division in A.P. Hill's Corps as the horrendous Battle of Gettysburg, fought on July 1, 2, and 3, was about to begin.

There is always confusion in battle and battle is always accompanied by the unexpected. General Lee directed his commanders not to jump into the fray before he could consolidate the Army of Northern Virginia. General Hill, from his vantage point on Oak Ridge, could observe the arrival of two Union regiments, judge their number, and may have intended a limited engagement. The engagement indeed began as a duel between artillery batteries. Colonel O'Neal was given orders to advance his brigade south along the eastern slope of the ridge in tandem with Colonel Iverson's Brigade and clear the Union skirmishers fronting Culp's Hill.

Unfortunately, the two-regiment assault was not executed well. He could have been too anxious to execute, perhaps it was inexperience, or simply an oversight, but Colonel O'Neal launched his brigade without consultation or coordination with Colonel Iverson, and rather than lead the assault, he remained behind with the 26th Alabama. The assaulting regiments almost immediately came under fire from long and short range musketry, and as they approached to within about 80 to 100 yards of a stone fence, the Union forces stood up and placed direct fire on their entire line, causing massive casualties and a huge number of men to be captured. The initial engagement lasted no longer than 30 seconds and nearly destroyed two regiments. Colonel O'Neal consolidated the regiments and continued to press the attack, but they were repulsed again and again.

Colonel O'Neal may not have been in a position to observe the entire field or the consequences of his order. He failed to call for reinforcement, and he did not recall the attack. The result was that his two regiments were mauled. Nothing he could do after that fatal assault

could retrieve the loss in manpower or his superior's faith in his ability to command. In the aftermath of Gettysburg, his reputation was irreparably damaged. The recommendation for his promotion to brigadier general that had preceded the Gettysburg Campaign was suspended for a time and eventually submitted by General Lee to President Davis, with a recommendation to withdraw his name from consideration. President Davis obliged.

Colonel O'Neal continued to serve, knowing his career was in jeopardy, and knowing that General Lee held his future on the letter he would eventually submit to the President. In the aftermath of Gettysburg, of the 171 infantry regiments engaged, 46% of their command and staff had become casualties. The old warriors in the Army of Northern Virginia expected their commanders to lead from the front, yet after so many had been killed, that expectation did not change.

At the Battle of New Hope Church, which occurred from November 27 to December 2, 1863, O'Neal's regiment again saw action, but the final engagement of the year was inconsequential. The Confederate and Union armies went into winter quarters. Upon the reconsolidation of the Army of Northern Virginia in early 1864, O'Neal and his regiment returned to Alabama to replenish its ranks. Within a few months, a rejuvenated command was ordered to Dalton, Georgia.

Colonel O'Neal, with his 26th Alabama Regiment, was in Mobile, Alabama, where Colonel James Cantey, who served with Stonewall Jackson in the Army of Northern Virginia, had been detached to organize a brigade. By April 1864, he had organized a brigade of three regiments, the 17th and the 26th and the 29th Alabama Regiments and one, the 37th Mississippi Regiment. Colonel Cantey had a solid reputation as a regiment commander. He had been promoted to brigadier general on January 8, 1864 but he was frequently absent from his command due to illness. Consequently, Colonel O'Neal would get another opportunity to command a brigade during the Atlanta Campaign

The Army of the Tennessee was his new command. When Colonel O'Neal arrived, General John B. Hood, with whom he was well

acquainted from their service in the Army of Northern Virginia, was the second corps commander. The 26th Alabama was assigned to General Polk's Third Corps, formerly the Army of the Mississippi. Major General Edward C. Walthall was his division commander.

On the eve of Battle at Peachtree Creek, General Joseph Johnston was relieved by Jefferson Davis and General Hood assumed command of the Army of the Tennessee. On July 20, 1864, Colonel O'Neal found himself commanding Cantey's Brigade and on line facing a federal division positioned north of Collier Road. Colonel O'Neal's Alabama and Mississippi regiments attacked aggressively – as ordered – with initial success, enfilading the unit in their front and striking the flank of the XIV Corps along Howell Mill Road. In time, Union artillery caught them in a cross fire and decimated their ranks. They continued to fight until flanked, and then fell back in disorder.

The Army of Tennessee's bold strike failed, but Colonel O'Neal's Brigade, with significant losses, acquitted themselves very well. Considering the horrendous destruction caused by the Union artillery, they fell back and regrouped at their previous breast work to await further orders.

Eight days later, Major General Walthall's Division, while marching toward and ultimately into the Battle of Ezra Church fought on July 28, 1864, was consulted by Major General S. D. Lee and Major General Alexander Stewart regarding the stubborn resistance by the Union line. Not wanting to miss an opportunity to smash the Union Army, Walthall deployed Colonels O'Neal and Reynolds Brigades to attack the Union right. They did so with vigor, repeatedly, and with great losses. General Walthall's growing concern that the support on his right had not materialized, challenged General Stewart to bring another brigade to his left. Precious time passed, and there was still no support on General Walthall's right. Consequently, he directed the reserve to deploy to his rear and ordered Colonels O'Neal and Reynolds to execute a passage of lines to the rear, withdrawing through the lines of the reserve division. Once again, Colonel O'Neal and his command met the task with severe losses.

Shortly after the Battle of Ezra Church, the Confederate Military Command conceded that Atlanta was lost and reorganized in an attempt to distract General Sherman from advancing further into Georgia. General Hood moved the Army of the Tennessee north and west toward Alabama in an attempt to recover Tennessee. He retained the 26th Alabama Infantry Regiment in his formation, but relieved Colonel Edward O'Neal from command of Cantey's Brigade and the 26th Alabama Infantry Regiment. Hood placed him on detached service, rounding up deserters in the region of North Alabama.

The fight for the Confederacy was lost forever in another hard year, and Edward O'Neal and his sons returned to Florence to rebuild their lives. Edward O'Neal resumed his law practice and after being elected to the Alabama Constitutional Convention, chairing the Committee on Education, and campaigning vigorously for Winfield Scott Hancock for president, he was elected to the governor's chair serving from 1882-1886. His son, Emmet O'Neal, continued the political legacy and served two terms as governor between 1911 and 1915.

While Edward O'Neal's military superiors may have found fault in his command capability and denied him the rank of brigadier general, his family, friends, and political allies would always refer to their local hero as "general." Military service during the Civil War was a dangerous proposition under any circumstances. The constant threat and exposure to disease and petulance that modern sanitary and medical understanding significantly mitigate; the constant stress of the responsibility for the lives of those that serve with you and around you, all take a toll that is aggravated further by the fog of war and the collective errors induced by weather, terrain, tactical intelligence, action, judgment, and of course – the enemy. Edward O'Neal may not have lived up to the standard of some of his senior officers, but he was wounded several times, served honorably, and died in bed surrounded by his family and friends in Florence, Alabama on November 7, 1890. Edward A. O'Neal dedicated the majority of his life to the South and the people of the State of Alabama.



Brigadier General Edmund Winston Pettus

By Mike Morrow



Edmond Winston Pettus
(July 1861 - July 1907)

Edmund Winston Pettus was born in Limestone County, Alabama on July 6, 1821. He was the youngest son in a family of nine children. His father, John Pettus, was a planter and former soldier in the Creek Indian Wars. He died when Edmund was still a child. His mother was a daughter of Captain Anthony Winston of Virginia, a veteran of the American Revolution.

Edmund Pettus was educated in the public schools and at Clinton College in

New Middleton, Tennessee. He was admitted to the bar in 1842, and began his practice of law at Gainesville, Alabama. In 1844, he was elected solicitor of the 7th circuit. In June 1844, he married Mary, daughter of Judge Samuel Chapman. She was his faithful and devoted wife for more than 60 years. Three of their six children, two daughters and a son, survived to adulthood. Their son, Francis L. Pettus, served as Speaker of the House and later as President of the Senate in the Alabama Legislature.

Edmund Pettus served as a lieutenant in the Mexican War with Alabama volunteers from 1847 to 1849. In 1849, he traveled to California, one of the many famous "Forty-niners." In 1853, Pettus returned to Alabama and was elected as a judge of the 7th circuit in 1855. He resigned the office in 1858 to return to private practice in

Dallas County, Alabama. Excepting his Civil War service, he continued his practice until elected to the U.S. Senate at age 76.

After Alabama's secession in 1861, Pettus was sent as a commissioner to the secession convention of Mississippi, where his older brother John J. Pettus was governor. He joined the Confederacy as a founding member of the 20th Alabama Infantry Regiment. He was elected major in September 1861, and became the regiment's lieutenant colonel in October. In May 1862, he was promoted to colonel and given command of the regiment. He was with his regiment under Kirby Smith in east Tennessee in the summer, fall, and winter of 1862.

On December 29, 1862, during the Battle of Murfreesboro, Pettus was captured, but was exchanged a short time later. The regiment reported to Mississippi with Edward Dorr Tracy's Brigade, and was in the fight made against Union Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Port Gibson. He was captured again on May 1, 1863, as part of the surrendered garrison that had defended Port Gibson. He escaped and had returned to his own lines by May 6.

During the Siege of Vicksburg in 1863, Pettus and his regiment were part of the force that defended Confederate control of the Mississippi. An incident during this campaign illustrates well the gallantry of Colonel Pettus in the line of fire. His division commander, Maj. Gen. Carter L. Stevenson, reported an action that occurred at Vicksburg on May 22, 1863:

An angle of one of our redoubts had been breached by their artillery before the assault and rendered untenable; and toward this point, at the time of the repulse of the main body, a party of about sixty of the enemy, under the command of a lieutenant colonel, made a rush and succeeded in effecting a lodgment in the ditch at the foot of the redoubt, and planting two flags on the edge of the parapet; the work was so constructed that this ditch was commanded by no part of our line, and the only means by which they could be dislodged was to take the angle by a desperate charge and either kill or compel the

surrender of the whole party by the use of hand grenades. A call for this purpose was made and promptly responded to by Lieutenant-Colonel Pettus and about forty men of Waul's Texas Legion. A more gallant feat than this charge has not illustrated our arms during the war. The preparations were quickly made, but the enemy seemed at once to divine our intentions and opened upon the angle a terrible fire of shot, shell, and musketry. Undaunted, this little band, its chivalrous commander at its head rushed upon the works, and in less time than it requires to describe it, the flags were in our possession.

Brig. Gen. Stephen D. Lee, whose brigade included the 20th Alabama, commented:

When a call for volunteers was made to, again make the assault two companies of Waul's Texas Legion responded to a man; about 20 men were cut off from the right, and either Major Steele or Captain Bradley asked Colonel Pettus if he was going to tell them how to take the fort. Pettus replied: "I will not tell you how to take the fort, but will show you," and he took a musket and took his place at the head of the assaulting party. Pettus arranged with General Lee how he should approach the fort, and to concentrate the Confederate fire upon it until he should signal to cease firing. This was done, and immediately after the signal was given Pettus and his men rushed into the fort and for the flag on the parapet. It was seized at the same instant by Pettus and Bradley, and neither would for a moment relinquish it; then Pettus said; "The flag honorably belongs to the Texans, and they shall have it." The surrender of the union soldiers in the ditch outside of the fort was compelled by Pettus cutting the fuses of 12-pound shells so they

would explode in a few seconds and throwing them over into the Federal ranks, which resulted in the surrender of a lieutenant-colonel and about 50 men.

Brigade Commander Lee concluded with the following note to Division Commander Stevenson:

General, I send you the flag taken by the Texans under the lead of our gallant Lieut. Col. E.W. Pettis, Twentieth Alabama Regiment. It was as gallant an act as I have ever seen during the war. I have pledged myself to give it to the captors. I beg that you and General Pemberton will bear me out.

It is also recorded that on the night of the assault, the Texans unanimously elected Pettus to be a Texan, and that Pettus always considered this one of the greatest compliments ever paid him.

That he was fearless in the line of duty is shown by his leadership in the desperate charge at Vicksburg at the head of the assaulting column, and then at the peril of handling shells liable to explode in his hands. His were actions that in a later era would merit the highest of military valor awards – actions performed not by some impetuous young officer, but by a father of six in his early forties!

When the Vicksburg garrison surrendered on July 4, Pettus was again captured and would be a prisoner until his exchange on September 12. Days later, he was promoted to brigadier general for gallant and meritorious service, then awarded command of his brigade in November. This brigade was known as the Pettus Brigade to the war's conclusion.

In October and November 1863, the brigade participated in the Chattanooga and Missionary Ridge campaigns of the Army of Tennessee, including the unsuccessful Lookout Mountain defense of November 24. In 1864, it was part of the Georgia campaign, with action at Rocky Face on May 8, Kennesaw Mountain on June 27, Atlanta on July 22, and Jonesborough from August 31 to September 1.

The Pettus Brigade was part of Hood's Tennessee campaign, but was several miles south of Franklin on November 30, 1864, and did not participate in that battle. Beginning on December 17, Pettus temporarily led Stevenson's Division in the Army of Tennessee. The gallantry of the Pettus Brigade at Nashville, and later at the Harpeth River while covering the Army of Tennessee's retreat from Nashville, was commended by Corps Commander S. D. Lee.

The Pettus Brigade participated in the Battle of Bentonville from March 19 to 21, 1865. Pettus received a severe wound to his right leg during the battle's first day, but he remained with his brigade until the action was complete. His aide-de-camp, a nephew also named E. W. Pettus, was killed at Bentonville.

On May 2, 1865, Pettus was paroled at Salisbury, North Carolina, and was pardoned by the U.S. Government on October 20, 1865. During his many western theater actions, he had been wounded four times and captured three times.

After the war, he resumed his practice of the law and never sought or held any political office until 1896, when he was elected to the United States Senate for the term beginning March 1897. He served there until his death on July 27, 1907, following a stroke. He was the last Confederate military leader to serve in the U.S. Congress.

Military historian Ezra J. Warner stated that General Edmund Pettus was "...a fearless and dogged fighter and distinguished himself on many fields in the western theater of war...he followed with conspicuous bravery every forlorn hope which the Confederacy offered."

North Carolina's Senator Lee Overman delivered a memorial address for Senator Pettus to the U.S. Senate. It contained the following commendation:

Senator Pettus was not a politician. He despised hypocrisy and subterfuge. He never espoused a popular cause to curry favor with the masses, nor was it ever necessary for him to do so. Simple, straightforward, unaffected, of rugged honesty and sincerity of purpose,

he followed the dictates of his own conscience without regard to popular approval or favor. And though he loved the people, yet he could not be swayed from the path of duty by false clamor or unhealthy public opinion. Born under the regime of the “Old South,” imbued with the doctrine of State rights, loving the South, her people, and her traditions, with a fervor amounting to passion, he viewed with disfavor and suspicion every measure which seemed to him to point to a centralization of power in the hands of the Federal Government.

Today, sadly, the name of Edmund Pettus is most commonly recalled by the general public as the name of the 1940 memorial bridge across the Alabama River at Selma, associated in particular with the “Bloody Sunday” Civil Rights conflict of March 7, 1965.



Phillip Dale Roddey “The Defender of North Alabama”

By Arley H. McCormick

Boys entering high school may check off names of Civil War cavalry leaders they recall: Custer, Forrest, perhaps Wheeler and then the recollection fades. Contemporary accounts mention Phillip Dale



Phillip Dale Roddey
(April 1820 – July 1897)

Roddey (sometimes spelled Roddy) in passing and only in relation to more widely acclaimed personalities, yet, the farmer, steamboat owner and operator, businessman, superb cavalryman, and a favorite son of Moulton, Alabama to North Alabama residents and his superiors, was a clever and daring scout, aggressive raider, and an illusion to the Federal Army.

On April 2, 1820 Sara Roddey delivered a son to her husband, Daniel, at their farm near Moulton on Big Nance Creek. Phillip’s parents were successful but poor farmers; certainly incapable of providing a formal education to their children and complicating his young life, his father was killed resulting in the first capital murder trial in Lawrence County. Dan Roddey’s bull crashed through their fence and wandered into a corn field belonging to a neighbor, Jimmy Seward. Phillip’s father was unable to prove the bull was the victim of Mr. Seward’s rage but he composed a poem and recited it repeatedly on occasions when neighbors met for log rolling contests or corn shucking gatherings.

Jimmy Seward killed a bull
Daniel Roddey found him

Away down on Big Nance
Ten thousand buzzards around him

Mr. Brazel, a close acquaintance of Mr. Seward and the brother-in-law of the Lawrence County sheriff, annoyed with the frequent slight to his friend, shot Daniel Roddey dead. Mr. Brazel was tried, found guilty, and hanged at Moulton but only after the sheriff deputized another man to drop the trap door. It was not the last time Phillip Roddey would rely on the legal system. Phillip's mother never remarried and she struggled to raise three children. His youth, no doubt, instilled the virtue of hard work and he grew into the role of the man of the house helping to support his mother and two sisters, Maggie Dale and Caroline. A clever young man with ambition and an inviting personality, his first business enterprise was learning the tailor trade. At age 26, he became the youngest elected sheriff of Lawrence County. After three years as a lawman, he turned to the steamboat business – first as a clerk, then a manager and finally in 1854 a partner with John Thomas Humphrey in the purchase of a steamer. The *Julia H. Smith* operated between New Orleans and Waterloo.

The war began at the time he managed the steamboat and lived in Chickasaw, Alabama. As a businessman, like others in North Alabama, he did not support secession, but after the vote he rallied to the Confederacy to keep a Federal army from destroying his home and state. When Tennessee's Fort Henry fell, Union gunboats were spotted in Alabama as far south as Florence. Rather than allow his steamboat to be seized, he burned it.

His notoriety, popularity, and genteel southern manner secured his favor in the region and folks frequently referred to him as "Buttermilk Phillip" and his unit the "Buttermilk Brigade" because his organization lived off the land and it was a moniker that faded with his success in the cavalry. Buttermilk Phillip's cavalry life began in October 1862 at Tuscumbia, Alabama, upon raising a company of mounted soldiers referred to as the "Tishomingo Rangers" and becoming their Captain.

Captain Roddey learned what it took to be a cavalry commander. The cavalry arm of an army is its eyes and ears moving on the flanks,

sometimes the rear guard, or well in advance of the main body – the infantry and artillery. The cavalry could always expect to draw fire and fix the location and strength of the enemy. Roddey’s rangers, casually referred to as “bull pups,” were first to report, on January 17, 1862, the buildup of Union troops at Pittsburg Landing. His Tishomingo Rangers escorted General Bragg at Shiloh where they were baptized by fire and Captain Roddey was cited for gallantry.

Captain Roddey met the elephant at Shiloh but it took longer to master the techniques requisite for a great cavalry commander. He grasped the feel of operating well behind federal lines after the Army of Tennessee withdrew to Corinth; learned that seeing without being seen, moving without being detected, hitting quickly and disappearing into the country side was the formula for a raider’s success. Thus, after a couple of near disasters, he became recognized by Federal officers and his senior commanders as a daring, innovative, and feared commander of cavalry. While Bragg was organizing for his Kentucky campaign, he advised General Sterling Price that:

Captain Roddey is detached with a squadron of cavalry on special service in northwest Alabama, where he has shown himself to be an officer of rare energy, enterprise and skill in harassing the enemy and procuring information of his movements. Captain Roddey has the entire confidence of the commanding general, who wishes to commend him to you as one eminently worthy of trust.

Federal forces were occupying the vicinity of Corinth when General Bragg decided to move east and his confidence in Roddey’s leadership resulted in Roddey covering Bragg’s left flank. On August 21, 1862, General Bragg wrote in general orders:

A portion of our cavalry, consisting of the companies of Earle, Lewis and Roddey, led by Captain Roddey, has made another brilliant dash upon a superior force of the

enemy, resulting in their utter discomfiture and the capture of 123 prisoners. The judgment and prudence of the previous dispositions exhibit high military skill.”

General Bragg frequently reported Roddey’s success and that earned him favor, more responsibility, and an admiring reputation in North Alabama, as well as the authority to increase his command to a regiment. It was designated the Fourth Alabama Cavalry and in October 1862, he became its colonel commanding 1,400 men at Tusculumbia.

In December 1862, his first major engagement as a colonel took place near Little Bear Creek, Alabama where he forced Union General Thomas W. Sweeney to withdraw. Near the close of 1862, he was ordered to join General Van Dorn’s cavalry corps in Mississippi.

Captain Roddey was baptized by fire at Shiloh, honed his cavalry skills in and around North Alabama in 1862, and as the colonel of his regiment, made the Federal forces suffer in 1863 and 1864. He began 1863 by rising and floating the *Dunbar*, a steamboat sunk by the Federals the previous winter, and repaired flat boats and barges to conceal for his use on the Tennessee River.

In February, he fought at Tusculumbia and then at Columbus, Tennessee in March. By April, Union General Grenville M. Dodge was confused. He miscalculated and exaggerated the Rebels’ strength at various locations and requested reinforcements to support what would later be described as Streight’s Raid.

Neither Roddey nor General Nathan Bedford Forrest could define the objective of Streight’s maneuver, but the Federal intent was for Dodge to distract and delay Roddey and Forrest while Streight slipped off to destroy the Confederate logistics infrastructure at Rome, Georgia. Forrest directed Roddey to engage Dodge while Forrest insured Straight did not loop back to their flank. Roddey’s first engagement was at Buzzard Roost and Newsome Farm near Cherokee against Colonel George E. Spenser’s 1st Alabama Cavalry (US). It would not be the last time they met. On April 20th, Roddey spooked Streight’s animals in the night and caused a stampede. On April 23rd at the Rock

Cut west of Tuscumbia, Roddey met Colonel Spenser again, causing Streight to evacuate the area and leave it to Roddey. Dodge believed he had gained the time Streight needed to complete the raid. He retired to Corinth which allowed Forrest and Roddey to follow Streight even though he had a five day head start. Roddey caught Streight and was bloodied at Days Gap, but the chase continued until Streight was caught and surrendered at Cedar Bluff, Alabama in early May.

After Streight's surrender, Roddey was directed to Decatur and when General Bragg learned he would not join him, he made his frustration clear to the Confederate high command but political pressure from North Alabama residents, who claimed each time Colonel Roddey left the area the Federals had their way with them, may have influenced his new assignment. On May 19th through July 4th 1863, Roddey commanded the district of North Alabama.

Returning to northwest Alabama, Roddey pursued the Federals to Florence. The Federals fought a delaying action and on May 28th, evacuated Florence. They burned seven wagon factories, the largest tanning facility in the Confederacy, and many buildings that held live ordnance.

In June, Roddey's headquarters was moved to Burnsville to disrupt the Memphis & Charleston Railroad that supported the Federal stockpile stored at Corinth and he continued to move his units around to confuse the Federal patrols and informers. In August, Roddey was nominated to become a brigadier general and was confirmed in April 1864.

Buckhorn Tavern was the site of another skirmish on October 12th, 1863. Roddey's Brigade was moving south from New Market when he unexpectedly intercepted Union General Robert Mitchell's Cavalry Brigade advancing northeast from Huntsville. It was a short testy encounter that bloodied both commands. Both commanders, not electing to become decisively engaged, were quite happy to extricate themselves from the melee after dark.

At one time or another, almost every general in the Western theater wanted either Roddey's support or his capture. Perplexing Roddey's position was an oft confusing chain of command. Major General Steven

D. Lee wanted him in Mississippi to defend Vicksburg. General Bragg, then commanding the Army of Tennessee, wanted him in Tennessee. On paper, the chain of command was clear, but in practice it was not so evident. Frequently, Roddey, responding to Lee's desires, would cross the Tennessee River with his regiment only to be recalled to his former position by Bragg. In some measure, possibly to appease General Bragg, on one occasion Major General Wheeler received orders from General Bragg to bring Roddey with him to the right of the Army of Tennessee in Northwest Georgia. General Johnston, commanding the Department of the West, advised Major General Lee he supported recalling Roddey to support Lee, yet General Bragg, without coordination with Johnston, directed Roddey to join Wheeler. Consequently, Roddey supported a raid into Tennessee and was commended for his destruction of the railroad between Nashville and Union General Rosecrans's forces. General Johnston remained silent.

The Federals seemed to find Roddey everywhere and couldn't catch him anywhere. On November 13th, Roddey was contesting the Federals crossing the river at Savannah, Tennessee. On the 14th, he was reported at Leighton; on the 17th he was at Decatur and Courtland; on the 23rd he was at all points between Decatur and Florence; and on the 27th he was near Lawrenceburg, Tennessee and Florence, Alabama. The Federals were tiring of chasing Roddey. From Tullahoma, Tennessee, Brigadier General A.S. Williams declared that he must be caught. Roddey had other plans, and he continued to baffle and frustrate the Federals.

On December 11, Union scouts reported Roddey at Yellow Creek above Hamburg with 800 men, and they believed he was the vanguard of a larger force. Union reports also placed him at Guntown, Mississippi with 1500 men and artillery, then at Bartons Station, Alabama east of Cherokee. Later he was placed at Glendale, Mississippi where the Federals lost men, horses, weapons and a covered bridge was torched. His raids were such an irritant that General U.S. Grant chastised his command to deal with General Roddey on Christmas Day.

Skirmishes continued in North Alabama, and in January 1864, the Federals reported Roddey near Florence. On the 21st at Shoal Creek, Roddey joined Forrest with 1,500 cavalry. On the 25th, Roddey's troops camped at Bainbridge and skirmished with the Federals and crossed the river with the main part of the Brigade to Athens. In April 1864, Roddey's brigade was transferred to the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, but he remained in Alabama during General John Bell Hood's 1864 Nashville campaign. On September 15th, Roddey was reported in Gunter'sville moving toward Lebanon. Every Federal command in Tennessee, north Mississippi, and north Alabama wanted to know where and what Roddey was doing.

General Hood's campaign to save the Confederacy failed on December 16th, 1864 at Nashville and he retired the Army of Tennessee to Tupelo, Mississippi. After Hood's defeat, the Union forces followed the withdrawal and halted on the north bank of the Tennessee River in January 1865. The previous fall, Roddey made a desperate attempt to retake Decatur but failed. Some historians refer to it as a feint to cover General Hood's approach to Nashville. Now the Federals occupied Decatur and most of the north bank of the Tennessee River. General Roddey often commented that his service cost the Confederacy nothing, possibly because of the war materials he "re-appropriated" from the Federal Army. However, North Alabama was isolated and occupied by the Union Army and as the possibility of a Southern victory was waning, military discipline eroded and the reprisals against unionists and secessionists was bitter. Civilians suffered as well. In January, using his authority under Martial Law, Roddey executed four bushwhackers near Moulton, yet the Secretary of War at Richmond, Virginia was asked to replace General Roddey's command in North Alabama with troops that had no local interest in the region. A decision was not necessary.

In March, Union General James F. Wilson organized the largest Federal Cavalry force ever seen on the north side of the Tennessee River and crossed toward the heart of Alabama. Roddey and Forrest fought an aggressive delaying action and finally, they stood together for the last fight at Selma. They were out-manned and out-gunned and

most of Roddey's command was captured, but Roddey and Forrest narrowly escaped by swimming the Alabama River in the dark. The remainder of Roddey's command surrendered at Pond Springs, Alabama, in May 1865.

Confederate Brigadier General Phillip D. Roddey's war was over but building a new life during reconstruction was as challenging as a cavalry officer's life was exhausting. Even before the war's end, Roddey's reputation was under fire. He was accused of catering to the peace advocates, whose platform included making a separate peace with the Federal authorities and letting the Confederacy make its own peace. It didn't help that a close friend was David P. Lewis, (later governor of Alabama) and a Peace Party member who eventually went behind Union lines. Roddey even named a son Dale P. Lewis Roddey. He was also accused of becoming a Republican, both allegations his supporters in Moulton rallied to refute.

His civilian experience and war time popularity no doubt influenced an offer for a partnership in a steamboat soon after the war but the conditions of his parole, acquired on May 17th 1865, at Courtland, Alabama, prevented him from taking advantage of the opportunity. The two documents he had to acquire before returning to a normal life was a parole and a pardon. A pardon was more difficult. He applied to the War Department for a pardon with endorsements from U.S. Grant and the Commander of the 1st Alabama Cavalry Regiment (US), Colonel George E. Spenser. He and General Grant communicated occasionally after the war. With a pardon, Roddey entered the business world.

He moved his family to Tuscaloosa, Alabama and became a commission merchant. His negotiations were successful, but collecting his fee became a challenge. His associates, the Parker and Brooks Company, filed for bankruptcy and Roddey went to court to claim a debt against them for \$33,297.28. His claim was based upon a certificate allegedly signed by U.S. Grant guaranteeing Parker and Brooks's funds. A federal court in Memphis declared the certificate was invalid and he lost his claim. While the war years provided him extensive knowledge of the Confederacy's terrain, the terrain of New York City was a challenge of a different sort. He became acquainted

with Miss Carlotta Shotwell, not a particularly reputable lady and known by several aliases, one of which was Mrs. Caroletta Roddey. Phillip Roddey charged that she stole his opera glasses. She claimed they were married before Roddey had divorced his wife in Alabama. The court found Miss Shotwell not guilty of the theft but guilty of libel for claiming she was his wife.

He was reportedly bankrupt twice. One rumor said he was dying in Florida. With each false claim, his faithful friends in Moulton would ferret out the truth. The former general's end came when his business took him to London, England where he and acquaintances had acquired a patent for a pump. He was negotiating a sale when he was admitted to Westminster Hospital and treated for uremia. He died in the hospital on July 20, 1897 and his body was returned for burial in Greenwood Cemetery, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Many aspects of the notable life of General Phillip D. Roddey, farmer, tailor, business man, and patriot for the Southern Cause remain undiscovered – such as his home behind the post office in Moulton which is now lost to history and time. There are few records of his early life, no contemporary biography, and yet both the Southern and Northern war reports illustrate “The Defender of North Alabama” had an exceptional capacity to lead men in war.



Lawrence Sullivan “Sul” Ross

By A. E. Elmore



Lawrence Sullivan Ross
(September 1838 - January
1898)

A wise man once said that if you want to be remembered by history, don't do lots of things very well – do one thing *supremely* well. Perhaps this is the reason Paul Revere is far better remembered today than most of Washington's generals from the Revolutionary War.

This is why Confederate General Lawrence Sullivan “Sul” Ross has been largely forgotten, even though he was a versatile and highly successful man who did lots of things very well. He is perhaps the clearest example of so many great generals, North and South, who had greatness and intermittent fame but not lasting glory. These generals were like comets who flashed across the

face of history without ever doing that one supreme deed that might have transformed any one of them into a fixed and immortal star from our most-remembered war in all of American history.

As a student at Baylor University in his home state of Texas, he completed what was then a two-year program in a single year. After graduating in 1857, he became an equally successful student at Wesleyan University in Florence, Alabama, where the plan was for students not just to learn the basic academic subjects, but to live with prominent local families who would give them “daily exposure to good manners and refinement.”

By then, Ross had lived under several flags. He was born in the Iowa Territory on September 27, 1838. While an infant, his family moved to the Republic of Texas, which in his boyhood became a state of the United States. Still later it would become one of the eleven states of the Confederacy, and finally after Reconstruction, a U. S. state for the second time.

While home from Wesleyan in the summer of 1858, Ross participated in the first of some 140 military engagements during his adventurous life. His father, Shapley Ross, was an Indian Agent at the Brazos Indian Reserve. The U. S. Army conscripted Indians from the reserve to help the Wichita Expedition of the 2nd Cavalry in the search for Comanche Chief Buffalo Hump, who had led a number of deadly raids on Texas settlements. When his dad became ill, "Sul," as everyone knew him, was elected by the Indians as their new war chief. Young Ross, then only 19-years-old, led his 135 warriors to accompany 225 troops commanded by Brevet Major Earl Van Dorn. Young Sul was given the courtesy title of "captain" during his command.

Native scouts found about 500 Comanche, including Chief Buffalo Hump, camped outside of a Wichita village in Indian Territory, near the site of present-day Rush Springs, Oklahoma. Captain Ross and his warriors successfully stampeded the enemy's horses, leaving the trapped Comanche warriors at a disadvantage as they faced mounted troops.

Together with Lt. Cornelius Van Camp of the 2nd Cavalry, and accompanied also by one of his own scouts and one of his own troopers, Ross rode out against the fleeing Comanche. A party of noncombatants also tried to escape, and appeared to have a white child with them. On Ross's orders, his men grabbed the child. As the four soldiers turned to rejoin the battle, they were confronted by 25 Comanche warriors. Van Camp and Ross's trooper were immediately killed by arrows. Ross took an arrow through his shoulder. Then he took a .58 caliber bullet through his chest, fired by a Comanche who had picked up the dead trooper's carbine.

Ross recognized his attacker. It was Mohee, a brave whom Ross had known since childhood. As Mohee approached the temporarily

paralyzed Ross with a scalping knife, Lt. James Majors of the Second Cavalry took down the Comanche with a load of buckshot.

After five hours of fighting, 70 Comanche had been killed or mortally wounded, including just two noncombatants. Although Buffalo Hump had escaped, the battle had been won. This first encounter was emblematic of Sul Ross's military career – successful far more often than not, but more than once he was left wounded or ill afterwards.

Ross's injuries were so severe that for five days he could not be moved from the tree under which he lay. His wounds becoming infected; Ross begged others to kill him and take him out of his pain. At long last able to travel, he was first carried on a litter suspended between two mules and then on the shoulders of his men.

Ross made a miraculous full recovery even though he continued to feel pain for the rest of the year. The *Dallas Herald* made him a statewide hero when it published Lt. Van Horn's written report recounting the young captain's exploits in the Wichita village fight. Based on the young man's proven performance in battle, General Winfield Scott offered Ross a direct commission in the U. S. Army.

Ross turned him down and chose instead to go back to Wesleyan in Alabama, where he earned his degree the following year, in 1859.

Ross then returned to Waco, Texas, where his younger sister Kate had been the first white child ever born in that rugged frontier town. Finding that no one had been able to trace the family of the young Caucasian girl rescued in the fight where he had been the hero, Ross himself adopted the baby and named her Lizzie Ross in honor of his fiancée, Lizzie Tinsley.

In early 1860, the year after his graduation from college, Ross enlisted in the Texas Rangers to continue his Indian-fighting career as a member of Captain J. M. Smith's Waco Company. Smith appointed Ross his second lieutenant. When Captain Smith was promoted, the other men unanimously voted to make Ross their new captain.

The highlight of his Indian-fighting career as a ranger was the Battle of Pease River in late 1860. Ross and 39 rangers tracked some 500 raiding Comanche who had murdered a pregnant white woman. As the rangers neared the Comanche winter village along the Pease River,

Ross personally scouted ahead. Hidden by a dust storm, he was able to get close enough to see that the tribe was preparing to move. He realized that his own horses were too tired for a long pursuit, so he resolved to attack immediately even though he was separated from a much larger force that had been unable to keep up.

After fierce fighting, the Comanche Indians fled. Ross and several of his men pursued both Chief Peta Nocono and a second, unknown rider. The second rider slowed and held a child over her head. The men surrounded her while Ross rode after the chief, eventually shooting him three times. Nocona was the only Comanche male to die in the fighting. Thirteen Comanche women were killed. Ross suffered no casualties among his men.

When Ross saw that the captured woman had blue eyes, he questioned her. She neither spoke English nor remembered her birth name or details of her life before joining the Comanche. The few details of her capture that she could remember matched what Ross knew of the 1836 Fort Parker Massacre. Ross summoned Colonel Isaac Parker, who said that his niece, kidnapped at the time of the massacre, had been named Cynthia Ann Parker. The blue-eyed Comanche captive heard the statement, slapped her chest and said, "Me Cincee Ann!" Although "Cincee" Parker never returned to the Comanche people, she insisted thereafter that she was not happy to have been rescued.

Ross also rescued a nine-year-old Indian boy hiding alone in tall grass, whom he named Pease. When he was later given the chance to return to his people, Pease refused and was raised by Ross.

The Battle of Pease River was Ross's second big success. Biographer Judith Benson wrote, "Ross's aggressive tactics of carrying the war to Comanche fireside, (as it had long been carried to that of the white) ended charges of softness in dealing with the Indians."

Ross's third success was the Civil War. One week after his wedding to Lizzie Tinsley on May 28, 1861, Ross was asked by Texas Governor Edward Clark to negotiate treaties with the Five Civilized Tribes so that they would not help the Union Army. The task was accomplished before Ross could get there, but once again his talents had caught the eye of a superior.

Ross enlisted in Stone's Regiment, later known as the 6th Texas Cavalry, which elected Ross to the position of major. Twice in November, 1861, Ross was chosen by General McCulloch, with whom he had served in the Texas Rangers, to lead scouting expeditions in Missouri. Both times Ross successfully slipped behind Union lines, gathered the requested information, and retreated before being caught.

In early 1862, after a short leave to visit his wife in Texas, Ross was again assigned to raid enemy lines. With 500 men, he gathered intelligence, destroyed supplies, captured 60 horses and mules, and took 11 prisoners.

This was followed by the low point of Ross's military career. Serving under Major General Earl Van Dorn, with whom Ross had also served during the Wichita battle, Ross was blamed by his commanding officer for the defeat at the Battle of Pea Ridge. Van Dorn blamed the defeat solely on Ross, for over-marching and underfeeding his troops and for failing to properly coordinate the plan of attack.

Ross's cavalry troop was ordered to Arkansas. Because of a scarcity of forage, the men were ordered to dismount and send their horses back to Texas. The unit traveled on foot to Memphis, only to arrive two weeks after the Battle of Shiloh. In the meantime, Ross lay close to death for eight weeks due to a lingering fever.

Against his own wishes, in 1862, the men of the 6th Regiment elected him colonel. He served well, and during absences of commanding General Charles W. Phifer, he assumed Phifer's command. During the summer of 1862, he was nominated for a promotion to brigadier general. Thanks in part to his success, his unit was the only one of some eight or ten dismounted cavalry units to be promised the return of their horses.

Ross became a hero once again at the Battle of Corinth in north Mississippi. By now he had acquired a horse, which bucked him off during the battle and left his men with the fear that he had been killed. Fortunately, he was unharmed, and he led 700 riflemen to engage the Union troops at Hatchie's Bridge, where the Confederate Army had retreated from Corinth. For three hours, his 700 men held off 7,000 Union troops and repulsed three major enemy assaults. The fierce

resistance from Ross's small unit covered and made possible a successful Rebel retreat. It was this high-water moment that more than any other led to his being appointed a general.

Soon after this battle, the 6th Cavalry regained its horses. In 1863, the regiment was transferred to the cavalry brigade of Colonel William H. "Red" Jackson. In early March, Ross's unit under Jackson helped to win the Battle of Thompson's Station, with additional help from Nathan Bedford Forrest.

In July, Major General Stephen D. Lee joined the 6th Texas Cavalry with Colonel R. A. Pinson's 1st Mississippi Cavalry, creating a new brigade commanded by Ross. The rise in his military fortunes was offset by news from home that his first child had died.

Ross himself fell ill again for six full months with fever and chills symptomatic of tertian malaria. Despite his suffering, it was typical of his character that he never missed a day of duty.

In early 1864, he was promoted to brigadier general. At 25-years-old, he became one of the youngest general officers of the Confederate Army. Following his promotion, every one of his men reenlisted.

In March 1864, Ross's brigade fought against African American soldiers for the first time at Yazoo City, Mississippi. The fighting was bitter. During the surrender negotiations following Ross's victory, the Union commander accused the Texans of murdering several captured African American soldiers. Ross claimed that two of his men had been killed after surrendering.

Beginning in May, the brigade encountered 112 consecutive days of skirmishes, involving 86 separate clashes with the enemy. The regiment lost 25% of its manpower. At the bloody Battle of Brown's Mill in Newnan, Georgia in July, Ross was captured but then quickly rescued by a Confederate counterattack.

Between November 1 and December 27, 1864, Ross and his men led the Confederate advance into Tennessee during the Franklin-Nashville Campaign. They captured 550 prisoners, several hundred horses, and enough overcoats and blankets to survive the winter. Only 12 of his men were killed.

By the time Ross went on 90-day furlough on March 13, 1865, the 26-year-old had participated in 135 engagements with the enemy and had five horses shot out from under him. The end of the fighting was less than one month away. President Andrew Johnson personally approved Ross's application for parole on October 22, 1866.

In 1873, Ross was elected sheriff of McLennan County, Texas. According to the *Dictionary of American Biography*, "In his two years in office he ended a reign of terror and helped form the Sheriffs' Association of Texas. He urged needed reforms and helped write the document that governs Texas today, the Constitution of 1876."

Two decades later, he was elected Governor of Texas. He left the statehouse to step into the presidency of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas – now known as Texas A & M University. Under his capable leadership, the State of Texas and A & M University were left on a solid financial basis, with high public trust in both institutions. Current Aggie students still honor his memory by placing good-luck pennies on the boots of his bronze statue just before entering the main academic complex for any test, including their final exams. Another Texas institution of higher learning, Sul Ross State University in Abilene, is named in his honor.

"It has been the lot of few men," declared an editorial after his death in 1898, "to be of such great service to Texas as Sul Ross."

But for a few exceptions, Sul Ross's career was pretty much one unbroken success after another. All his career lacked in the end was just one of those supreme defining moments that made Generals Jackson and Forrest the subject of study by students of war and military history to this day.

Every scholar who has written about him agrees that Ross was a courageous and effective military commander who was loved and admired by his men. He was a loyal and loving husband and father to nine natural children (six survived him), to an adopted daughter, and to an adopted Indian son. He was highly effective as a political leader, having served as sheriff and state senator before becoming governor. More than any other individual, he was responsible for the survival of Texas A & M University. Sul Ross died on January 3, 1898.



The Gallant General - Edward Dorr Tracy

By Jacquelyn Procter Reeves



**General Edward Dorr Tracy
(November 1833 - May 1863)**

Although Edward Tracy, Jr. was born in Macon, Georgia, Huntsville, Alabama was his home for some time before his death. The influence he left in the world is perhaps most felt in Huntsville where he established his career, his family, and his close friendships. It is no surprise that 150 years after his death, historians are still interested in what can be learned about his life.

Edward Dorr Tracy, Sr. hailed from

Connecticut and moved to Georgia where he married Susan Campbell, whose brother, John Campbell, was a judge in Mobile, Alabama. Three children were born to the couple, however Susan died on November 5, 1833, less than one year after the birth of Edward Tracy, Jr. Tracy married again rather soon and had more children, but he did not live long enough to see his namesake or younger children reach adulthood. The 1850 census indicates Caroline Tracy was the head of the household that included six children from Tracy's two marriages. Her husband died the previous year.

Edward Tracy, Jr. continued his education, and at the age of 17, he graduated from college at the University of Georgia in Athens with an A.B. degree. He earned a Master's Degree two years later. He began practice as an attorney in Macon at age 20.

Tracy wasn't yet 21-years-old when he became a partner in a Huntsville law firm with Judge D. C. Humphreys. The handsome and

successful young man would have been considered quite a catch for the eligible young ladies of Huntsville, but it was the daughter of a prominent local architect, George Steele, who caught his eye. On February 19, 1855, Dr. Frederick Ross of the First Presbyterian Church in Huntsville performed the ceremony that wed Edward Tracy to Ellen Elizabeth Steele. They were married at Oak Place, the plantation home designed and built by Ellen's father, who died in October of that same year.

Edward and Ellen settled into the social life of other prominent Huntsville families. They were friends with Clement and Virginia Clay and the Leroy Pope Walker family, whose own forefathers had been politically connected. Edward promoted his friends politically and earned quite a reputation for his eloquent speaking. He was an 1860 delegate to the Democratic National Convention and served as an alternate elector for Alabama.

As many had warned, the country was hurtling toward a civil war. While there were strong unionist feelings in North Alabama, the secessionists were more vocal. Huntsville resident Clement Clay announced Alabama's secession from the Union.

In March, 1861, Tracy wrote in a letter to his friend, Clement Clay: "I am hesitating whether to apply to President Jefferson Davis for a position on his personal staff or to take my chances with the volunteers."

On April 10, 1861, Leroy Pope Walker ordered the first shot fired at Ft. Sumter. On April 28, Edward Tracy put away his law books and became a member of a regiment called the North Alabamians. He was elected as their captain and the unit later became part of Company I of the 4th Alabama Infantry Regiment. As they boarded trains at the Memphis & Charleston Eastern Division Headquarters in Huntsville, the men in gray were cheered by locals who sent them off to war with good will and good wishes and the promise of a safe and hasty return. After a stop in Chattanooga, they went on to Dalton, Georgia where they were officially mustered into service on May 7 under the command of another Huntsville resident, Colonel Egbert J. Jones, and

Major Charles Lewis Scott. Their initial service was for a period of 12 months. The new recruits continued on to Harper's Ferry for training.

Tracy's letters home made preparation for war sound like an adventure. Newsy descriptions of camp food, drilling, and camaraderie with friends old and new were intertwined with the expectation that the South would be victorious. He wrote, "We must be prepared in this day of our Country's great peril and distress to submit to individual sacrifices of pleasure, comfort, property and everything except honor."

In early July, the 4th Alabama was attached to the Third Brigade under the command of General Barnard Bee. On July 18, the newly promoted Major Tracy and his men were ordered to Manassas, Virginia for what would become the first major engagement of the Civil War. Tracy was weakened by fever and overwhelming thirst. On July 21, his company was sent in to battle. He wrote, "We were ordered to load as we went, and that the enemy were right before us. We marched up a hill, in an open field, and, just at the brow, were ordered to lie down, fire and load, fire and load...."

For nearly two hours, Tracy and his men were in the worst of the battle. They began to retreat but their heavy casualties continued. The blood, gore, shrieking of wounded and dying men, and the thunder of cannons and gunfire was all around them. Captain Tracy was the first to find Colonel Egbert J. Jones, another attorney from Huntsville, with a bullet wound in each thigh. Tracy was too weak from fever to carry him from the field by himself. He found volunteers to help him carry the colonel from the field as flying bullets whistled past their heads. Major Charles Lewis Scott, also of the 4th Alabama, was carried from the field by Tracy and his men after he was shot in the leg.

Brigadier General Barnard Bee, having lost a huge portion of his own men, took over command of the 4th Alabama in the absence of Colonel Egbert J. Jones. Before the battle was over, General Bee gave Brigadier General Thomas J. Jackson the nickname that would stay with him for eternity when he said, "There stands Jackson like a stone wall!" Bee was mortally wounded soon after and died the following day.

Colonel Egbert J. Jones lingered on the edge of death for 11 days. He died from his wounds on September 1. He was buried in Huntsville's

peaceful Maple Hill Cemetery. Tracy's company lost six men to death and sixteen were wounded. The adventure that men on both sides anticipated was replaced with the grim reality that not everyone would come home alive.

On July 22, 1862, Major General Kirby Smith wrote a letter to General Samuel Cooper from Knoxville, Tennessee. The size of his department justified more brigadier-generals to "increase the efficiency of the command."

He continued, "Should any new appointments be made for this command, I would most respectfully recommend to the Executive Lieut. Col. Edward D. Tracy, of the Nineteenth Regiment Alabama Volunteers....Upright, intelligent, and accomplished, Colonel Tracy, by his services at Manassas and Shiloh, has attested his soldierly qualities." After the reorganization in October, 1862, Brigadier General Tracy commanded the 1st Brigade of Kirby's 2nd Division. Under his command were the 20th Alabama, 23rd Alabama, 46th Alabama, 43rd Georgia, and Waddell's Artillery.

In the spring of 1863, U.S. General Ulysses S. Grant marched his army deep into Mississippi. The capture of Jackson and Vicksburg would cripple the Southern army. The Confederate Army could not let that happen. While Confederates feared the loss of Jackson, they feared the loss of Vicksburg even more.

Port Gibson was located in the southwestern county of Claiborne and boasted a population of over 15,000. Because of its location on the Mississippi River, it grew to accommodate the river transport of cotton. The larger nearby town of Grand Gulf offered stiff competition until yellow fever, a steamboat explosion, tornadoes, and other disasters, caused irreparable damage to the town. A large Jewish community settled in Port Gibson early on and established themselves as merchants. Although only three families were slave-holders, many of the young Jewish men enlisted to fight in the Confederate Army to support their community. While they left to fight far away from home, the war had come to their own back yards.

On April 28th, Confederate scouts watched the arrival of Union troops from the cupola of a plantation home known as Windsor, located on

Rodney Road on the east side of the Mississippi River. Signals were sent back to their commanding officers. Confederate Brigadier General John Bowen sent a telegraph to Lieutenant General John Pemberton and informed him that transports and barges loaded down with Union troops had landed on the west bank of the Mississippi at Hard Times, Louisiana. The assumption was that Union soldiers were preparing to attack Grand Gulf and plow on to Vicksburg.

On the following day, April 29th, Confederate Brigadier General John Bowen ordered his commander of the 2nd Brigade of his division, Brigadier General Martin E. Green, to send 500 men beyond Port Gibson to picket the roads leading south. In addition, he sent Colonel J. E. Cravens's sharpshooters of the 21st Arkansas and 12th Battalion Arkansas Infantry.

At about 1 a.m. on April 30th, General Green was ordered in to Port Gibson to oversee the impending battle. The 6th Mississippi Infantry and Hudson's Battery of light artillery reported to him as well. He reached Port Gibson at about 3 a.m. and went to choose a location for the battle to be fought. General Green decided on an area near Union Church.

In the meantime, about 3,000 Union soldiers made their way to Bethel Church, 10 miles from Port Gibson. More had landed at Bruinsburg and they began their approach to the gathering Confederate forces.

Confederate Brigadier General John Bowen went to General Green and informed him that Brigadier General Edward Tracy, commanding the 2nd brigade of Stevenson's Division, would soon arrive at Grand Gulf with his brigade of 1,516 men. They were joined by the 20th Mississippi. Brigadier General Baldwin, with 1,614 men, crossed the Big Black River to meet them.

Late that evening, General John Bowen sent a dispatch to Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton, headquartered in Vicksburg:

Six gunboats, with two transports lashed to them, passed by batteries tonight between 9 and 10 o'clock. Enemy on Louisiana shore, below. Hurry up re-

enforcements. My lines are very much extended. General [E.D.] Tracy has arrived. His men are much broken down. I will fight them the other side of Port Gibson.

Still later, he wrote:

There are four gunboats in Bayou Pierre. I have no guns that can check them. They can remove obstructions, and may destroy the bridge, cutting my force in two. Shall I remove all to this side, severing all communication by telegraph, or make the best of it?

General John Bowen ordered three companies of Confederates to the Bruinsburg Road and the main force to the Rodney Road, but a scout soon reported that the enemy was approaching on both roads. General Tracy's entire brigade was sent to Bruinsburg Road and General Green's men went to the Rodney Road near the Union Church. The men were ordered to sleep on their arms to be ready to fight with a moment's notice. It had already been a long day and the dreaded hours of fighting had not yet begun.

At 12:30 a.m. on May 1, Confederate pickets rushed into camp with Union soldiers on their heels. Within minutes, a six-gun battery opened fire on the Confederates, and Union soldiers began their advance. The startled Confederates fired in response and fought hard for the next three hours. Union forces retreated a short distance away and the fighting stopped – but only temporarily.

Early on the morning of May 1, General John Bowen wrote to General John Pemberton:

I have prepared for defense of both sides Bayou Pierre. The country and the jaded condition of [E.D.] Tracy's and [W.E.] Baldwin's men forbid an advance. If it can be done today, I will do it. There is no raft in Bayou Pierre. I need field artillery ammunition badly....

With the first light of morning, Union soldiers reconnoitered in every direction and began to move forward shortly after 6 a.m. With his ammunition running low, General Martin Green sent for General Edward Tracy's men for back-up. Tracy sent the 23rd Alabama Infantry and 12-pounders from Anderson's battery. They arrived at about 8:30 am. Soon the fighting grew fierce, but the Confederates, out-numbered 8 to 1, held their ground.

Colonel Isham W. Garrott and his men fought furiously to the right of General Tracy's men when General Tracy was shot. "He fell near the front line, pierced through the breast, and instantly died without uttering a word." Col. Isham was now in command of Tracy's Brigade.

At 9 a.m. on May 1, General John Bowen was three miles south of Port Gibson, hoping to be joined soon by Brigadier General William Baldwin and his men. General Bowen reported to General Pemberton that prisoners who had been taken informed him that three Union divisions had landed with John A. McClernand in command. The prisoners estimated there were about 20,000 men. General Bowen wrote, "I am vastly outnumbered, but hope to hold my position...until General Baldwin gets up. He is entering Port Gibson."

At 10 a.m., Colonel Eugene Erwin of the 6th Missouri was with his men in nearby Grand Gulf. They were relieved by the 2nd Missouri Infantry and he was ordered by Colonel F. M. Cockrell to get his 400 or so men eight miles distant to the fighting, as quickly as possible. They made it in two and a half hours.

In double-quick time, Erwin's men ran through an open cornfield under heavy fire. They were 100 yards away from the enemy. He and his men took their position on the left of General Tracy's brigade. With superior numbers fighting against them, the Confederates tried desperately to hold their position, throughout intense fighting, until help could arrive. Erwin then took his men, without orders, to charge Union soldiers attacking the right flank of Tracy's brigade. They recaptured a section of Confederate artillery from Union forces. The Union army was driven back about a quarter of a mile, but to Erwin's dismay, he discovered his men were alone with no support from

Tracy's brigade. Realizing they were now cut off, he ordered his men to halt while he decided what he would do next.

They remained for about 90 minutes, all the while sending messengers to Tracy's brigade for support. Without his knowledge, Tracy's men had been ordered to retreat, leaving Erwin and his men to fight by themselves. Still, they were able to hold their position until the ammunition was nearly gone. Now he was in trouble. The enemy's line was 20 yards away and coming closer. In addition, he was flanked on the right with fresh Union soldiers coming at them.

Colonel Erwin ordered his captains to have their men fix their bayonets loudly enough that the enemy would be expecting a charge. It was a ruse, and instead they were ordered to withdraw by the left flank, firing a volley at a given point. The maneuver worked at first, and then a second time, but now the enemy knew how small his force was and they were in the process of completely surrounding the men when Erwin ordered his men to retreat across an open cornfield under heavy enemy fire.

At 1:20 p.m., General John Bowen sent a dispatch to Gen. John Pemberton:

We have been engaged in a furious battle ever since daylight; losses were heavy. General Tracy is killed. The Virginia battery was captured by the enemy, but is retaken. We are out of ammunition for cannon and small-arms, the ordnance trains of the re-enforcements not being here. They outnumber us terribly. There are three divisions against us. My whole force is engaged, except three regiments on Big Black, Bayou Pierre, and Grand Gulf. The men act nobly, but the odds are overpowering.

At 3 p.m., General Bowen's message was desperate:

I still hold my position. We have fought 20,000 men since dawn, besides skirmishing last night. They are

pressing me hard on the right. My center is firm; the left is weak. When can Loring get here?

At 5:30 pm, General Bowen reported that he and his men were falling back across the Bayou Pierre and hoped they could hold their position until others arrived.

...Want of ammunition is one of the main causes of our retreat. The men did nobly, holding out the whole day against overwhelming odds. The town will be in possession of the enemy in a few hours, and communication cut off.

General John Pemberton answered: “General [William] Loring with nearly two brigades, has started from Jackson to you. You had better whip them before he reaches you.”

But the arrival of more men came too late. Just before sunset, the Union assault grew more powerful and the Confederate Army – exhausted, outnumbered, and with little ammunition – could not go on. Confederate General Erwin’s men retreated to the bridge over Bayou Pierre and on to Grand Gulf just after dark. They were the last to leave the field.

The Battle of Port Gibson was over and for the Union Army, the road to Vicksburg was now clear. On the morning of May 2, Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton instructed General Bowen, in code, to destroy his heavy guns to keep them from the hands of the enemy. Too many horses had been killed in the previous day’s battle and without horses, they could not take the cannons with them.

In the aftermath of the battle, the official reports were written from officers in every area of the fighting. General John Bowen wrote his detailed report on May 2 for General Pemberton. He said that General Tracy’s force did not number more than 1,500 and they had been worn down due to continuous marching. They had less ammunition than anyone else since their ordnance train had not arrived. The enemy struck hard and the Confederates held their own from 9 to 10 a.m.

General Martin Green's men fell back and General Baldwin's men were too exhausted to put up much of a fight. General Bowen reported that General Edward Tracy died early in the battle.

Colonel Isham Cockrell arrived with three Missouri regiments, but the lack of ammunition, as well as overwhelming odds against them (four Union soldiers to every Confederate soldier), spelled disaster. General Bowen wrote his final report to General Pemberton:

Nearly all the missing of the whole command can be considered among the killed and wounded, as very few prisoners were taken. The enemy have refused to allow me bury the dead, or visit the wounded beyond the mere sending of surgeons, who are to remain.

In his own report, General Martin Green stated that the 6th Missouri Infantry had been with him in every engagement since they had crossed the Mississippi River and had been impressed with their "gallant conduct...I expected much of them, they more than came up to my expectations."

General Erwin reported that had Tracy's brigade joined him, they could have routed the Union's left wing. "My officers and men, without exception, did their duty nobly, and where all are heroes it would be unjust to make distinction."

In his official report, Gen. Pemberton wrote: "Among the slain whom the country deploras I regret to mention Brig. Gen. E.D. Tracy, a brave and skillful officer, who fell where it is the soldier's pride to fall – at the post of duty and of danger."

General Pemberton wrote of the battle of Port Gibson:

Though disastrous in its results, the bloody encounter in front of Port Gibson nobly illustrated the valor and constancy of our troops, and shed additional luster upon the Confederate arms. Confronted by overwhelming numbers, the heroic Bowen and his gallant officers and men maintained the unequal contest for many hours with

a courage and obstinacy rarely equaled, and though they failed to secure a victory, the world will do them the justice to say they deserved it....

General Edward Dorr Tracy's death was also mentioned by General Ulysses S. Grant in his official report, written several weeks later:

The defeat of the enemy in five battles outside of Vicksburg, the occupation of Jackson...and the capture of Vicksburg and its garrison and munitions of war, a loss to the enemy of 37,000 prisoners, among whom were 15 general officers, at least 10,000 killed and wounded, and among the killed Generals Tracy, Tilghman, and Green...and perhaps thousands of stragglers who can never be collected and reorganized. Arms and munitions of war for an army of 60,000 men have fallen into our hands, besides a large amount of other public property, consisting of railroads, locomotive, cars, steamboats, cotton, & c., and much was destroyed to prevent our capturing it....

General Lloyd Tilghman was killed when a parrott shell nearly cut him in half on May 16, 1863 in Hinds County, Mississippi during the Battle of Champion Hill. General Martin Green was wounded slightly on June 25, but a bullet fired from a Union sharpshooter hit him in the head and killed him on June 27, 1863 at Vicksburg.

A telegram, dated May 3, 1863, was addressed to Mrs. E. D. Tracy in Huntsville, Alabama. It read, "Your gallant husband is dead. Fell mortally wounded in the 1st inst. I have escaped unhurt will try to come home. C. Tracy." This may have been sent by his brother, Campbell Tracy.

Another telegram was sent on May 12, 1863 to Mrs. E. D. Tracy: "The remains of General E. D. Tracy were buried at Port Gibson. It was infeasible at that time to have them sent to Macon." It was sent by Major General Carter L. Stevenson.

The body of General Edward Dorr Tracy, Jr. was taken to his hometown of Macon, Georgia for burial. He was the highest ranking native of Macon to serve in the Confederate Army. He survived the Battle of Manassas in 1861, the Battle of Shiloh in 1862, Chickasaw Bayou in 1862, before he lost his life at Port Gibson on May 1, 1863.

A historic marker stands near his Rose Hill Cemetery grave. In his honor, the Sons of Confederate Veterans Camp 18 in Macon bears his name. His dress uniform and his battle sword are on display at the Cannonball House in Macon.

E. D. Tracy's brother, Major Philemon Tracy, was killed in battle at Sharpsburg, Maryland in September 1862. Ellen Steele Tracy died in April 1868 and is buried with her gallant husband.



General Leroy Pope Walker

By Kent Wright



Leroy Pope Walker
(February 1817 – August 1884)

North Alabama produced several men of good standing who served as general officers – both Union and Confederate – in the American Civil War. Perhaps one of the most well known was Leroy Pope Walker, a Huntsville native, who was born into a wealthy and politically powerful family on February 7, 1817. He was the son of John Williams Walker, an early politician who was destined for great things until his death at age 40 of tuberculosis. Leroy's mother was Matilda Pope Walker, daughter of one of Huntsville's

founders, LeRoy Pope. Little is recorded of Walker's childhood in Huntsville except that he was very young when his father died and the family was left in heavy debt. An early visitor to the family home near New Market was President James Monroe, who stopped there in June, 1819 before going into the town of Huntsville.

As a young adult, Walker studied law at the Universities of Alabama and Virginia, and was admitted to the bar in 1837. He established his law practice in North Alabama where he became active in Democratic Party politics starting the 1840s. Walker was North Alabama's most outstanding lawyer and leading Democrat next to Huntsville's Clement Clay. Walker married, presumably in his twenties, to a Miss Hopkins, with whom he had two sons, Clifton and John Percy Walker. After the death of his first wife, he married Eliza Dickson Pickett, the daughter

of a Montgomery judge. To this union were born three children: Matilda Pope Walker, Eliza Picket Walker, and Leroy Pope Walker, Jr.

Leroy Walker was elected into the Alabama State House of Representatives in 1840. While serving, he became increasingly pro-slavery and pro-secession. His oratory skill and passion ranked with the fiery U.S. Senator William Loundes Yancey of South Alabama. Together, they authored the “Alabama Platform” of the Democratic Party, a strong stand in favor of westward expansion of slavery. Walker walked out of the Democratic Convention of 1860 when the Alabama Platform was not adopted into the national platform. By that act, he essentially split the Democratic Party and helped to ensure the election of Abraham Lincoln by a constitutional majority, not a popular vote. Walker grew to greater prominence in the pro-secession faction – yet he remained a relative unknown nationally.

With increasing tension and division between North and South, the Confederate government was formed on February 4, 1861. Less than three weeks later, on February 21, the Confederate States War Department was organized at the cabinet level to serve under President Jefferson Davis. Walker was chosen to head the department as the Secretary of War. Davis wanted a civilian cabinet to run his government in the same tradition as the United States and he carefully picked his cabinet members with a view that they should represent all parts of the Confederacy. Davis first offered the job to nationally known Senator Yancey, but Yancey declined and recommended Walker. Walker was readily accepted because his attributes were favorable for a Davis cabinet – he was an Alabama native with a good reputation as a jurist and legislator and a strong stand on states’ rights similar to Yancey’s.

Publically, Walker was described as an outstanding legislator, a brilliant lawyer, and a staunch advocate of states’ rights. Although it was said that he lacked a sense of humor, he was a man of great firmness and was described as tall and handsome with an elegance of style. In private, he was regarded as cold and aloof.

The London Times foreign correspondent, William Howard Russell, wrote this about him:

He is the kind of man generally represented in our types of a Yankee – tall, lean, straight-haired, angular with fiery impulsive eyes and manner – ruminator of tobacco and profuse spitter – a lawyer, I believe, certainly not a soldier; ardent and devoted to the cause, confident....

The Charleston Mercury endorsed Walker's appointment, but later commented that Walker "was selected with the understanding that Davis would control the business, which he did." Davis, through the War Department, was authorized to raise an army of 100,000 under 12-month enlistments.

One of Walker's earliest official acts as Secretary of War was of greatest impact upon Americans. On April 11, 1861, he precipitated war on the following day with his telegraphed order from Montgomery to CSA Brigadier General Beauregard to fire upon Fort Sumter. Literally, within hours after the first shots were fired, Walker's fiery rhetoric riveted the attention of the American public. That night, in an impromptu speech at the Exchange Hotel in Montgomery, he boldly asserted that "...[the Confederate Flag] will before the first of May, float over the dome of the old Capital in Washington. [and]...will eventually float over [Boston's] Faneuil Hall."

Newspapers North and South instantly picked up on the speech, ostensibly the announcement of Confederate war policy, and it spread like wildfire. Walker later claimed he was misquoted, but that hardly mattered. The effect of those words from the Secretary of War, a man ranked only by Jefferson Davis himself, was as if pouring gasoline onto a fire – one that was already sparked by the day's action against Fort Sumter.

There were many factors that influenced Northern support for the war, but Walker's impromptu speech instantly unified strongly divided factions in the North. His words ignited Northern passions for war and spread the fear of an actual *Southern* invasion of the North, which influenced Lincoln's call for 75,000 ninety-day volunteers. Stephen A.

Douglas, the lead Western Democrat, advised Lincoln to arm for war even as several Southern newspapers fanned the flames with the endorsement of an invasion of the North.

Davis became angered over Walker's gaff, but criticized little, if any. Walker stayed in the Davis cabinet until September 16, 1861. In his short term of office in the critical early months of the war, even though he was credited for raising 200,000 troops for the provisional and volunteer armies, he had considerable difficulty in getting men into national service in the regular Confederate army. Despite raising an impressive number of men, he was conspicuously ineffective in getting them armed, whether by Southern manufactory or foreign importation. No serious effort to import arms was pushed by Walker until just after the 1st Battle of Manassas/1st Battle of Bull Run when he wrote to his purchasing agents in London, "this war is now assuming truly gigantic proportions...spare no expense...to secure the largest quantity of arms, of the best quality, at the earliest possible moment, sufficient to arm, if need be, not less than 500 regiments."

Several factors beyond his control hindered his efforts, but lack of cooperation of the states was a leading factor. In particular, the governors of Georgia, Louisiana, and North Carolina, who had adopted strong states' rights positions, firmly resisted cooperation with a central government, especially in providing arms.

Walker submitted his resignation after receiving much abuse and criticism from nearly every quarter. Davis expressed no criticism himself, but neither did he defend Walker, whose troubles were only in part that he was in over his head. His problems were exacerbated by declining health.

Upon his resignation, Walker accepted an Army commission as a brigadier general at Mobile under one of his main critics, Brigadier General Braxton Bragg. There he was to have been assigned to command a garrison of presumably brigade strength, but Bragg effectively banished him from his army to an unimportant military post in Montgomery. Complaining of the humiliation in a letter to Davis, he wrote: "The only service I can possibly render at Montgomery will be

to play wet nurse to Major Vogdes, General Bragg's solitary prisoner of war."

Bragg relented and ordered Walker to command troops in the district of North Alabama consisting of "one regiment of infantry and one regiment of cavalry," with headquarters at Tuscumbia. Walker's command in North Alabama was almost immediately overshadowed by the loss of Fort Donelson and 14,000 men under General Albert Sydney Johnston. Taking his job seriously and foreseeing the threat to the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, Walker bade in a February 16, 1862 letter to General Johnston to allow him to expand his territory to Corinth, Mississippi. On the following day, he wrote to the new Secretary of War, Judah Benjamin, asserting that the "Kentucky line of defense has been lost, with a large part of our army. The line from Memphis to Virginia must be defended at all hazards. The Memphis and Charleston Road is the vertebrae of the Confederacy."

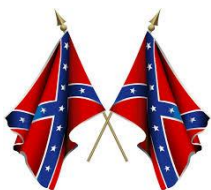
Perhaps as a result of his correspondence, Walker was soon assigned to command a brigade of Confederate States troops under Brigadier General Daniel Ruggles, 1st Corps, 2nd Division. His units were to have been: the 5th Alabama Infantry Battalion (artillery), the 38th Tennessee Infantry Regiment, the 51st Tennessee Infantry Regiment, the 52nd Tennessee Infantry Regiment, the 1st Alabama Cavalry Battalion, and Captain Walter O. Crain's Tennessee Light Artillery Battery. If it ever existed in body, his command was short-lived for almost immediately all troops assigned under him were ordered to Corinth, Mississippi and dispersed within Ruggles's Division.

At Corinth, troops were amassing under C.S. General A. S. Johnston to oppose U.S. Major General Grant's army at Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River in southern Middle Tennessee. The battle that ensued there, which claimed 23,000 casualties, took the appellation of a small church named Shiloh, an ancient Hebrew word for "a place of peace." Stripped of virtually all men in armed service, Walker protested that the only troops that remained in his district were, in his words, "...a battalion of Arkansas troops, badly armed. With this force of course I cannot render any service of consequence."

As pressure mounted in Northern Mississippi, Northwestern Alabama and southern Middle Tennessee, Walker continued to plead to Richmond for more troops and arms to defend the Tennessee River and the Memphis-Charleston Railroad. At one point, he even wrote to General Beauregard at Columbus, Kentucky to beg for more support.

Upon being deposed of any semblance of a real command, on March 31, 1862, he resigned in disgust and returned to Huntsville to resume his law practice, something at which he excelled. For the remainder of the war, except during the occasional Union occupations of Huntsville when he fled the city to avoid capture, he served as the judge of the Confederate Military Court in North Alabama with the pay of a colonel in the cavalry. As the presiding military judge, he served to adjudicate matters of the army in the field. In this capacity, he also defended Unionist North Alabamians against charges of treason.

After the war, he continued in his private practice and successfully defended Frank James of the infamous James Gang against charges of robbing the Federal payroll near Muscle Shoals, Alabama. Well beyond his death on August 23, 1884, Huntsvillians fondly remembered Walker as “Judge” or “General Walker.” He was laid to rest at Maple Hill Cemetery in the city of his birth, Huntsville, Alabama.



General Joseph “Fightin’ Joe” Wheeler

By Wil Elrick



General Joseph Wheeler
(September 1836 - January 1906)

September 10, 1836 was an ordinary day that saw the birth of an ordinary child in Augusta, Georgia. The boy was the youngest of four children born to Joseph and Julia Hull Wheeler. The name bestowed upon the ordinary child would go on to be known throughout the United States as that of an excellent soldier and statesman – that name was Joseph Wheeler.

In addition to an unremarkable birth, Joseph went through his early life in a similar ordinary state. Joseph, Sr. was a merchant banker and landowner who had built for himself a small fortune only to see it all taken away in the bank failures and financial panic of 1837. Soon after the family’s fortune was lost, Julia unexpectedly passed away. Unable to raise the young boy on his own, Joseph, Sr. sent Joseph to Connecticut to live with his two aunts and attend the Cheshire Academy boarding school in 1842.

There is little information recorded about his time at Cheshire, but he did seem to be an average youth who enjoyed reading about wars and learning about history. He graduated from Cheshire in 1854 and then moved to New York City where he lived with his oldest sister who had moved from Georgia after her marriage. It was while he was living in

New York City that he received his appointment to West Point at the age of seventeen.

On July 1, 1854, Joseph Wheeler entered West Point Military Academy, which at the time was under Superintendent Robert E. Lee. While at West Point, Joseph Wheeler was once again considered unremarkable. He had very high scores in the subject of Department, but otherwise, he was in the bottom of his class during his five years at the military academy. During this time, he did earn a reputation for being both studious and persistent, and this was noticed by his instructors before he graduated in 1859 and given his first commission at Carlisle Parks, Pennsylvania.

Wheeler did not spend a lot of time in Pennsylvania. Soon he was transferred to Fort Craig, New Mexico under the command of Colonel W. W. Loring, who specialized in the relatively obscure mounted infantry concept. It was during his time in New Mexico that Wheeler earned his lifetime nickname. In June of 1860, he was ordered to escort duty for a wagon train traveling from Missouri to New Mexico. While the wagon train continued on, Wheeler found himself at the rear guarding an ambulance wagon containing a newborn baby, the mother, their surgeon, and the wagon driver. Because they were far behind the rest of the wagon train, the ambulance was attacked by a band of marauding Indians. During the attack, Wheeler shot one of the attacking Indians with his musket and then charged the group while firing away with his Colt pistol. His act of bravery turned away the Indians, and forever left him with the nickname of "Fightin' Joe."

January 9, 1861 was the day that Georgia seceded from the Union. By this time, Wheeler had already planned to follow the rest of the Southern states and pledge his service to Georgia. He had been in contact with his brother William to notify Governor Joseph Brown that when Georgia's secession occurred, he would resign his commission in the U.S. Army and join Georgia's forming army. Wheeler was granted a commission as a lieutenant in the provisional army, Confederate States of America, before he was able to leave his post at Fort Craig.

Wheeler's first post in the Confederate Army was at Pensacola, Florida, under the command of General Braxton Bragg. Bragg, along

with General William Hardee, wanted to form an army in the Mobile and Pensacola areas, so Wheeler's experience was noticed and appreciated. It was this attention from Bragg and a friendship with Confederate politician Leroy Pope Walker that resulted in Wheeler being promoted to colonel in September of 1861. This promotion angered many of Wheeler's peers because a jump of four command levels was unheard of.

True to his meticulous nature, the new colonel in command of the 19th Alabama Regiment spent the winter months of 1861 training his new recruits and testing them with endless drilling and exercises. This paid off when his regiment was transferred with the rest of the army to Corinth, Mississippi under General Albert Sydney Johnston, who was prepping his forces for a battle against Union forces camped at Pittsburg Landing. The ensuing battle between Confederate forces under the command of Generals Johnston and Beauregard and Union forces under the command of Generals Ulysses S. Grant and Don Buell would famously become known as Shiloh.

An unknown colonel such as Joe Wheeler would not be expected to gain much attention in a battle the scale of Shiloh, and records indicate that while he was praised by his superiors, he did nothing to stand out amongst the other young officers leading their troops into battle. Once again, Joe Wheeler was seen as just ordinary. That is, until the retreat from the battle was ordered and Wheeler was given orders to take a brigade of cavalry and cover the rear of the retreating army heading back to Corinth.

The task of guarding the retreat would have been challenging except that the Federal Army did not pursue the retreating Confederates. Therefore, Wheeler's duties consisted mostly of rounding up stragglers from the Southern army that had been lost during the fighting and salvaging any materials that could be found. More importantly though, this command was the start of Wheeler's cavalry career with the Confederate Army and the position to which he went from ordinary to extraordinary. Wheeler mapped routes, and covered retreats for the Army of Tennessee for every campaign from Shiloh to the army's surrender to General Sherman in 1865.

After Shiloh, General Braxton Bragg's plan was to move into Kentucky and attract supporters to join the Confederate cause. In advance of this campaign, Wheeler and his brigade of cavalry was sent into Western Kentucky to give the impression that the entire Army of Tennessee was moving in that direction. During his advance, Wheeler found that the Federal Army had abandoned the area, so he destroyed supply lines, train tracks, and telegraph lines that the Union Army might use. After several days of advance work, he returned to Tupelo, Mississippi only to find that Bragg had moved his army east and set up a new headquarters in Chattanooga, Tennessee. It was from here that Bragg had really planned to advance into Kentucky.

Advancing from Chattanooga across the Tennessee River on August 28, 1862, General Bragg advanced 40,000 men in two parts, the left wing commanded by General Hardee and the right wing commanded by General Polk. During the movement, Wheeler commanded three regiments of cavalry and took the left wing. Wheeler moved his cavalry in front of the army attacking enemy outposts, and occasionally falling back to protect the army's flank. While the infantry had relatively easy travels with little Union resistance, this was not the case for the cavalry who was in daily and sometimes hourly contact with the enemy while advancing through Tennessee.

In Sparta, Tennessee, General Nathan Bedford Forrest and his cavalry regiments joined up with Bragg's army, and everyone expected him to be placed in charge of all the cavalry units. In a surprise move, General Bragg split up the cavalry forces and gave a division to Forrest and a division to Wheeler. This move served as a dividing line between Wheeler and Forrest that would continue throughout the war. Both of the men were now linked to the Army of Tennessee even though they would operate in very separate theaters.

History has shown us that Bragg understood the depths of his cavalry assignments because both Wheeler and Forrest were perfectly fitted for their new duties. Wheeler was efficient, faithful, unassuming, and followed orders to the letter while Forrest was known to do his best work independent of direct command. Not long after the reunion at Sparta, Forrest was sent back to middle Tennessee to continue direct

operations against Union bases. It was this move that soon paved the way for Wheeler to receive yet another promotion.

Bragg's advance toward Louisville met with failure when U.S. General Buell arrived first to find fresh recruits and supplies waiting for him. With a reinvigorated army, Buell went on the hunt for Bragg's Army of Tennessee on September 30, 1862. It so happened that Wheeler and his division were in front of the army and observed Buell's movements and decided that the Union Army would need to be delayed while Bragg gathered and restructured his forces. This is where Wheeler advanced upon Buell's army with a then mostly unknown strategy. Wheeler would have his men dismount, ambush the enemy as infantry and fight until they would need to retreat at which time they would mount their horses and retreat. Performing this tactic over and over was quite successful in delaying the Union troops and allowing Bragg's forces to regroup. Historians and military critics have since called Wheeler's use of mounted infantry as a new contribution to the science of cavalry warfare.

Even with the Union Army delayed, it was inevitable that the Union forces would find the Confederate Army, and that day came on October 8 when the two armies met at Chaplin Creek in what would later be known as the Battle of Perryville. Even though results of the battle were inconclusive, the Confederates opted to retreat, and this is where Wheeler once again found himself with an opportunity to shine. On October 13th, Wheeler was designated as "Chief of the Cavalry" which authorized him to give commands in the name of the commanding general. Along with this responsibility, Wheeler was again tasked with covering the army's retreat.

The Southern army's retreat was slow and hindered by many obstacles, but the line of retreat ran southeast from Kentucky to Cumberland Gap, Tennessee and then south through Knoxville on to Chattanooga. During the retreat, Wheeler varied his tactics against the following army allowing the Confederates to escape without losing any of their supplies. His troops fought during the day and obstructed the roads during the night until the Army of Tennessee was out of reach of

their pursuers. For his actions, Wheeler was promoted to the rank of brigadier general.

After the retreat from Kentucky, Bragg moved his forces to middle Tennessee where they set up camp in Murfreesboro. Meanwhile, in Nashville, General Buell had been replaced by General Rosecrans who spent his army's time and energy fortifying the city while he was making plans to advance on the Confederate stronghold of Atlanta. During the next couple of months, Wheeler and his men were stationed 20 miles closer to Union forces, so they spent time both training and keeping a watchful eye westward toward Nashville for Union troop movements.

That movement came on December 26th when Wheeler notified Bragg that Union forces had begun to advance toward their position. Around lunchtime on December 30th the opposing forces were within sight of each other and the artillery battle began near the banks of Stones River. The barrage ended at dark after both sides sustained heavy damage. The battle picked up the next morning and continued throughout the day ending with an almost Confederate victory that allowed Bragg to notify Richmond that "God had granted us a Happy New Year."

During the fighting, Wheeler was ordered behind enemy lines to disrupt their supply chain. His troops made their way to Jefferson where they destroyed a Union wagon train before striking the village of Lavergne, Tennessee where the Union forces had large stockpiles of supplies. Here, he took control of the supplies, captured more than 700 Union troops, and destroyed another Federal supply train. During his excursions, his troops had made an entire circuit of the enemy's rear where he destroyed many Union stockpiles and captured more than 800 Federal troops.

January of 1863 proved both successful and fruitful for Wheeler and General Bragg's Army of Tennessee. Wheeler was ordered to Ashland, Tennessee to destroy Union stockpiles that had been collected in the aftermath of the recent battle. In the late afternoon of January 12th, Wheeler's troops opened fire on the steamer *Charter*, forcing her to swing into shore and surrender. Continuing on his river raids, Wheeler

and his troops captured several more ships including transports *Trio*, *Parthenia*, and *Hastings*. To complete his devastation, Wheeler captured and destroyed the gunboat *Slidell*.

Wheeler's raids and destruction gave the Union Army pause and was the major factor in General Rosecrans's decision to increase his cavalry presence in order to deal with Wheeler's troops. On the other hand, General Braxton Bragg was proud of Wheeler and his accomplishments, and asked the Confederate Congress to promote him to major general as a reward. The Confederate Congress went a little further than that by passing a resolution honoring his achievements. That resolution read: "That the thanks of Congress are due and are hereby tendered to Brigadier General Wheeler and the officers and men of his command for his daring and successful attacks upon the enemy's gunboats and transports in the Cumberland River."

After Bragg's withdrawal to Tullahoma, the Confederate and Union Armies faced a period of down time to replenish their ranks and supplies. Wheeler knew that without constant work, his men would grow bored and cantankerous and possibly even desert the army, so he devised a plan to keep his men busy. He asked Bragg and received permission to attack nearby Fort Donelson at the mouth of the Cumberland River, which had only a small garrison of Union defenders.

The plan to attack Fort Donelson was simple, but it required Wheeler to join forces with his cavalry counterpart General Forrest. Forrest did not like the idea of attacking the fort, complaining that his men were tired, they did not have enough ammunition for the battle, and that if the fort was taken, the Confederates would not be able to hold it for any length of time. Even with Forrest's disagreement and complaint, Wheeler continued planning the raid to be carried out in the beginning of February.

On February 3rd Wheeler was at the command of all cavalry forces as they approached Fort Donelson. He sent a letter of surrender to the garrison commander who refused and forced Wheeler to send his men in to battle positions. The right flank of the cavalry was under the command of General Wharton and the left flank was under the

command of General Forrest. Both units were ordered to dismount and attack on foot. General Wharton's men were able to take the right side of the fort, but Forrest refused the order to dismount his men and they were turned away during his attack on the left flank. With the excessive battle, Forrest – as he feared – began to run low on ammo and ordered his men to retreat, even though the right flank of the fort had been captured. This of course caused Wheeler to call off the attack and slink back to Tullahoma.

Wheeler had incorrectly gauged the amount of supplies needed to win the day, and yes, Forrest had discounted orders causing the retreat, but like every other battle, it is the commanding officer who must accept the responsibility for the defeat, and this he did. In his after action report, Wheeler took full responsibility for the fiasco during the attack on Fort Donelson. But, this did little to appease the growing separation between him and Forrest. After the battle, Forrest refused to ever serve under Wheeler again. Ironically, Bragg kept Wheeler as chief of cavalry, but Forrest did not have to report to him. Therefore, the Army of Tennessee faced 1863 with a major divide in its cavalry forces, and a feud between two of its best generals.

After the division of the cavalry, Forrest was sent to Alabama to contain the forces of Union General Abel Streight while Wheeler set about reordering his command and writing a book on cavalry tactics. The book became *A Revised System of Cavalry Tactics for the Use of Cavalry and Mounted Infantry, C.S.A.* This book became the guideline of drill, discipline, and tactics for the Army of Tennessee. In the book, Wheeler advocated the use of mounted infantry over heavy cavalry. The current use of heavy cavalry was based upon the European system of cavalry, but it did not work well with the rough and wooded terrain where the Army of Tennessee mostly fought. Wheeler noted that a trooper that could ride in a charge or fight as an infantry soldier was much more useful in covering retreats, raids, and scouting parties, and therefore more desirable.

In late June of 1863, the Union Army moved into Nashville. General Bragg was not yet ready for a fight and opted to move his forces to Chattanooga. This move left most of Tennessee under the crippling

control of the Union. While moving his troops, Bragg ordered Wheeler to stay behind and slow the advance of the Union Army, which was a task that Wheeler and his men were quite adept at. This allowed the Confederate forces to move and settle into Chattanooga without enemy harassment – but the stay would not last long.

On June 28th the Union Army was on the move from Nashville, headed toward Chattanooga. Wheeler's cavalry was on picket duty and spotted Federal troops. According to Wheeler's report, they were in every mountain cove southwest of Chattanooga. Bragg, still unsure of what actions to take, packed up his army and headed southeast into Chickamauga, Georgia. But, as history came to show, the move was a mistake.

Wheeler and his troopers fought in the Battle of Chickamauga, but nothing of their actions stood out any more than the other units involved. It was after the battle had ended that Wheeler became most valuable. On September 22nd Wheeler received orders to cross the Tennessee River, intercept, and destroy the Union's lines of communications. The Union Army at this time had pulled back into Chattanooga and had only two supply routes – the first being the Tennessee River, and the second being overland supply through the Sequatchie Valley. The Confederates knew that if they could sever these two lines, they could starve the Union soldiers out of Chattanooga.

Generals Pope and Longstreet took positions on Lookout Mountain guarding the Tennessee River. Wheeler, who took control of the majority of the Army of Tennessee's cavalry troops, was to intercept and destroy the wagon trains on the overland supply route. It was here that he showcased what the mounted infantry was capable of. Even fighting against re-enforced Federal units, the amount of damage Wheeler's troopers inflicted was staggering. While it has been difficult to prove the extent of the Union losses, the most conservative of the estimates indicates 500 wagons, 1800 mules, 500 tons of food and almost 600 tons of ammunition were destroyed. Along with the physical destruction, Wheeler also tarnished the reputations of half a dozen Union Officers by besting them with a much smaller force.

These raids had the expected desired results on the Union forces holed up in Chattanooga. After more than a week without re-supply, the Union soldiers were set back to half rations which demoralized the imbedded force. After a few more days, the rations were reduced to a fourth, further demoralizing the troops. Finally, a special boat from Bridgeport, Alabama was able to penetrate the line in an attempt to re-supply the starving Union forces, but while they did manage to break the line, they were not successful in bringing a large amount of supplies through. Therefore, the Union soldiers under siege in Chattanooga were forced to endure until Longstreet's and Pope's forces were driven off the crest of Lookout Mountain.

Even when the Confederate forces were routed from the mountain, Wheeler and his cavalry continued to raid through Tennessee, first capturing McMinville and then on to Shelbyville to find that it had been already been abandoned. It was in Shelbyville that Wheeler discovered his troops were being tailed by Union forces, so he decided to once again cross the Tennessee River and take his soldiers down into Muscle Shoals, Alabama and the relative safety that it offered.

The rest in Muscle Shoals would be quite short-lived for Wheeler and his cavalry troopers. Confederate President Jefferson Davis himself ordered Wheeler's troopers to leave North Alabama to reinforce General Bragg near Chattanooga. Rosecrans had been relieved of duty and replaced by General Ulysses Grant who had managed to open a supply line between Chattanooga and Bridgeport, Alabama, causing Bragg to fall back to Missionary Ridge and on the defensive.

Once Wheeler hooked up with Bragg's forces near Missionary Ridge, his forces, along with Longstreet's, were ordered to attack Union forces that had seized Knoxville, while Bragg kept his forces in opposition of Grant's army in Chattanooga. Once again, Wheeler and his mounted infantry were the point of the spear driving the Union Army into the city of Knoxville. Once this occurred, Wheeler's mounted infantry joined Longstreet's infantry in the trenches surrounding the soldiers in Knoxville. Sadly, Knoxville proved too strong to be taken, and Wheeler's troopers were ordered back to Missionary Ridge to cover General Bragg's retreat from Grant's army. Wheeler arrived to find the

Army of Tennessee in chaos with no one covering their retreat, and for the third time in a major campaign, placed himself and his men between his army and advancing Federal forces. It was the doggedness of Wheeler's forces that caused General Grant to halt his pursuit of the retreating Confederates into Ringgold, Georgia.

December 1, 1863 saw General Bragg resigning his commission as Commander of the Army of Tennessee which resulted in General Joseph Johnston assuming command on December 16, 1863 with an approximate strength of 36,000. Of this number, 6,000 were cavalry and most were under Wheeler's command. Of this 6,000, only about 2,400 were fit for duty. In addition to the inadequate number of soldiers, Johnston found that Dalton, Georgia offered little in the way of a defensible position. Johnston decided to move his men, and ordered Wheeler to guard duty while the army moved. It so happened that Wheeler's soldiers met a detachment of Union forces who were attempting a two-pronged attack on Atlanta. Wheeler succeeded in delaying the Federals long enough so that General Grant called off a two-pronged attack on Atlanta. Grant then moved his troops north to Virginia while Union General Sherman occupied Chattanooga. This allowed Grant's forces to cross the Rappahannock River in Virginia to place his army between Confederate General Robert E. Lee's forces and Fredericksburg, while Sherman placed his forces at Tunnel Hill, Georgia.

It was Wheeler's forces near Tunnel Hill that received the brunt of Sherman's attacks, but with his mounted cavalry tactics, his men were able to fend off the considerably larger Union forces and dwindle their cavalry forces, thus forcing Sherman to ask for cavalry reinforcements from Grant.

On May 14, 1864, Sherman caught up with Johnston's army in Resaca, Georgia where a three day battle began. During the battle, Wheeler dismounted his cavalry and placed them in the trenches fighting alongside the infantry soldiers. Inevitably, Johnston was unable to hold his position and began a retreat deeper into Georgia. The retreat gave reason for Wheeler to remount his troopers and do what they did best, delay the enemy. Sherman later reported that the

Confederate cavalry was everywhere. His soldiers found roads barricaded and strategic positions defended by cavalry troopers. As soon as they would overtake their positions, they would pop up somewhere else a short distance down the road. This was another demonstration of Wheeler's ability to have his mounted infantry fully cover the retreat of the Army of Tennessee.

The Confederates continued their retreat by turning south towards Atlanta. Johnston ordered his men to fortify the slopes of Kennesaw Mountain near Adairsville, Georgia. On May 26, 1864, the Union launched yet another assault on the tired Southern troops. On the first day of the attack, the Confederates were able to repulse their attackers, but lost some of their ground on the second day of fighting. With the Union Army outmanning the Southern forces, General Johnston could not afford to keep going toe to toe with the Union Army, so he devised a plan that he hoped would distract the Federals from their dogged attack. Wheeler would of course be called upon to once again go behind the enemy lines and cause chaos in the Federal line by tearing up railroad tracks and cutting Sherman's lines of communication. This plan helped to slow the Northern advance, but in reality did little for the cause.

Sherman was able to continue his raid into the South and in July, Johnston was replaced by John Bell Hood, who was tasked by the Confederate Government to press the attack on the Union Army. After the fall of Atlanta, Hood turned his army to Nashville. Wheeler's cavalry did not continue with the rest of the army, but remained behind – effectively the only force left to oppose Sherman in his “March to the Sea.” It was during this time that complaints against Wheeler and his cavalry began to rise. As a result, Wheeler lost his command to Wade Hampton, which did little to cull the complaints.

Wheeler continued hit and run engagements with Sherman's army into 1865. His forces won several victories, including a large victory at Aiken, South Carolina, but the days were numbered for the Confederacy as the Army of Tennessee was crushed at Nashville. In the meantime, Grant's army was slowly strangling the capitol at Richmond.

These setbacks did not deter Wheeler from continuing the fight, as long as he possibly could.

Once Richmond and the Confederate Government fell, Wheeler took a band of his most trusted soldiers and tried to link up with President Davis to provide protection. He and his men were captured on May 11, 1865 near the town of Washington, Georgia. It was then that he met President Davis – on the prison boat that took Wheeler to Fort Delaware and Davis to Fort Monroe. Davis and his entourage had been captured the day before Wheeler. Wheeler was incarcerated at Fort Delaware before his parole in June, 1865.

The end of the Civil War brought about change for Wheeler, but it would also be a time that he would surpass all of his peers in the Confederate Army.

Once he was released from Fort Delaware on June 8, 1865, Wheeler returned to his home in Augusta, Georgia but he did not remain there long. He moved from Augusta to New Orleans, Louisiana where after only a short time, he soon became a partner in a carriage company. During this time he proposed to his beloved Daniella whom he had met during the war.

Wheeler and Daniella Jones Sherrod were wed in February of 1886 and the couple lived in New Orleans while he continued to prosper in the carriage business. During this time, Daniella became homesick and the two moved to her inherited home known as “Pond Spring” in Lawrence County, Alabama. Wheeler became a successful planter, before becoming a local attorney and entering into politics.

During their life together, Joseph and his wife produced a total of seven children. Five of their children were girls: Lucy, Annie, Ella, Julia, and Carrie, while the other two were boys: Joseph Jr. and Thomas.

His popularity in Lawrence County, along with his experience in the war, in farming, in business, and in the legal system, compelled Wheeler to run for government office. In November, 1880, Wheeler was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in what is still known as one of the most controversial elections in Alabama history.

Wheeler's opponent in the election of 1880 was William M. Lowe the incumbent for the seat. Wheeler was declared the winner of the campaign but Lowe challenged the win and the contested race went to court while Wheeler assumed his position in Congress. After more than a year of contention, the 1880 vote was overturned and Lowe re-took the Congressional seat in early June of 1882, however he would only hold the position for four months before passing away from tuberculosis. This set the stage for an emergency election which Wheeler won, and he resumed his political role for the final few weeks of the two-year term.

Being weary from the legal battle for his Congressional post, Wheeler opted not to run again for the seat in the 1882 election. Instead, he chose to back candidate Luke Pryor. By the time the 1884 election came around, Wheeler was again ready for the tribulations and won the seat. It was the start of a 16-year, eight election run before he resigned his post in 1900.

While in Congress, Wheeler was a popular statesman. He went above and beyond to help establish policies that would help rebuild the Southern states whose citizens still suffered many years after the war. During his tenure, he served on many committees, but two of the more important were Committee on Expenditures in the Department of the Treasury (of which he rose to chairman) and the Committee on Territories.

Wheeler was serving in Congress in April of 1898 when the government declared that a "state of war" existed between the United States and Spain over political movements on the island of Cuba. Wheeler thought he could do more good during the war as a soldier instead of a politician and petitioned for active service in the U.S. Army. President McKinley appointed him Major General of U.S. Volunteers.

This appointment made him second in command of the V Corps with his commander being General William Shafter. In June, 1898, Wheeler and his men (notably among them future president Theodore Roosevelt) sailed for Cuba with orders to scout in advance for a U.S. landing, but not to engage the enemy until U.S. forces had landed.

The plan to wait for the forces to land fell apart. On June 24th, Wheeler received reports from American troops that the Spanish Army was digging in with a large field gun to bombard the invading army. At the same time, reports from Cuban allies told Wheeler that the Spaniards were actually preparing to abandon their position. Wheeler opted to attack the position and take the gun even though the Cuban units he asked for support denied his request. This battle, which was the first major engagement of the war, became known as the Battle of Las Guasimas.

The Battle of Las Guasimas was, at the most, a defeat for the U.S. and at the least, a standoff. The Americans were unable to overtake the Spaniards' positions, and were repelled on several different attacks. The end result was that the Spaniards followed their initial plan and fell back into the city of Santiago. A well-known legend says that, in the heat of combat, Wheeler supposedly yelled out to his men "Let's go boys, we've got the damn Yankees on the run again!"

Not long after Las Guasimas, Wheeler took ill and remained so during the majority of the military campaign in Cuba. He relinquished his command to General Samuel Sumner until July. At the onset of the famous Battle of San Juan Hill, Wheeler heard the artillery and had to join the battle, and that proved to be just what the army needed. Wheeler gave orders that ultimately captured the high ground, and his troops were able to hold the hill against the Spaniards. Wheeler's men actually held the city during the fourteen day "Siege of Santiago" which was a major United States victory in the very short war that for the most part, ended the fighting in Cuba.

Once the fighting ended, Wheeler played an instrumental part in peace negotiations with the Spaniards, and returned to the United States as both a hero and symbol of a nation healing from the wounds of the Civil War.

Immediately following the Spanish American War, the United States found itself involved in another conflict, this time in the Philippines against Filipino revolutionaries seeking freedom from the United States. Of course, if there was conflict, Wheeler wanted to be there.

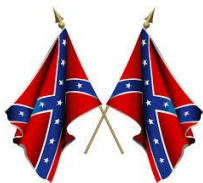
Wheeler arrived in the theater in August, 1899, and was in command of the First Brigade of the Second Division under the command of General Arthur McArthur. He maintained this command until January, 1900. It was during this time that Wheeler was transferred from the Volunteer (or the V Corps) to the regular army where he was commissioned as a Brigadier General. He became the only individual in history to hold the position of brigadier general in both the Confederate and Union Armies.

Just like his out-of-context order to fight the “damn Yankees,” another legend surrounding Wheeler popped up during the Philippine-American War. It was reported that Wheeler came upon a marching soldier complaining about the heat and exhaustion. Upon hearing the soldier’s complaints, Wheeler dismounted his horse, took the man’s pack and rifle, and ordered the man to get on the horse while the General marched the rest of the way with the infantry (at the age of 63).

Wheeler left the fighting of the Philippine-American War in June, 1900 with his appointment to brigadier general to assume command of the second iteration of the Department of the Lakes. He was over an administrative division which was subordinate to the Military Division of the Atlantic. He only held this position for about three months before he retired from the service and Congress in September, 1900. The Department of the Lakes was kept as a U.S. Military Command until 1910, at which time it was abolished.

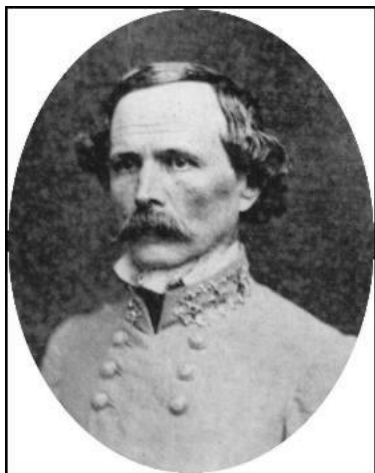
Upon his retirement, Wheeler spent the next several years traveling around the country and keeping a hectic social schedule. In the winter of 1905, he went to stay with his sister in Brooklyn, New York where he spent almost every night attending dinners and social functions. The schedule routinely left him exhausted, but his family did not worry because Wheeler had spent his entire life pressing his endurance. In January, 1906, he was diagnosed with pleuro-pneumonia in both lungs. He passed away at the home of his sister, with his family surrounding him on the evening of January 25, 1906. A sub-header in a *New York Times* article about Wheeler’s death read “his illness was brought on by the strain of exacting social duties.” Wheeler’s funeral was held at St. Thomas’s Episcopal Church in New York and he was interred at

Arlington National Cemetery. He is only one of two Confederate Generals to be interred at the National Cemetery. All in all it was a quiet, fitting, and eloquent end for a man that played a large part in our American history.



Jones Mitchell Withers

By John H. Allen



Major General Jones M. Withers
(January 1814 - March 1890)

The name “Withers” is an Old Norse term for “warrior.” Appropriate perhaps, for Huntsville native Jones Mitchell Withers, who participated in three wars, and was rewarded with high rank for his performance.

Jones Withers’s grandfather, William Withers, was born in Lancashire, England, in 1732. He came to America when he was 16, and clerked in a Norfolk, Virginia, store. Later, he was a private secretary to Virginia’s colonial governor, Robert Dinwiddie. During this time, he contested, successfully, with George Washington’s family for property rights south of Mt. Vernon.

When William was 27, he purchased property in Williamsburg. He lived on one side of a building, and rented out the other side to Mrs. Christiana Campbell for operation of a tavern. George Washington dined at the tavern 98 times, according to his diary, which he kept during the time he was a member of the House of Burgesses. In 1761, at the age of 29, William Withers sold the Williamsburg property, married Pricilla Wright, and purchased property in Dinwiddie County, southwest of Petersburg.

William and Priscilla Withers had a son named John, born in 1763. He married Mary Herbert Jones in 1795 in Dinwiddie County and together, they had nine children. In 1809, John Withers moved his growing family to a triangular-shaped piece of land he had purchased

west of the town that would become known as Huntsville, Alabama, near today's northwest quadrant of I-565 and Rideout Road (Research Park Blvd.). A separate, rectangular parcel of property was purchased a quarter mile to the west in 1818. One of the sons, David Wright Withers, is referred to in his father's will as "my unfortunate son," and suggests he would need "decent and comfortable maintenance" for the duration of his life. One of his daughters, Susanna Claiborne Withers, married Clement Comer Clay (second cousin to Henry Clay), who later became the eighth governor of Alabama from 1835 to 1837. Clay's term as governor ended early when he was appointed to the U.S. Senate. Jones Withers's uncle, R.W. Withers, became a physician, and practiced medicine from his home in Mooresville. Jones Mitchell Withers was the eighth child, and was born at the Withers plantation on January 12, 1814, five years before Alabama became a state.

At the time of Jones Withers's birth, the War of 1812 was still raging and would not conclude for another year. Seven months after his birth, the British burned the White House, and President James Madison was obliged to find temporary housing.

The Withers property is identified as a half-section of land on the Hurricane fork of Indian Creek (a section is one-square mile; a half-section is 320 acres). During the Union occupation in the Civil War, the Hurricane Creek name was changed on Union maps to Indian Creek, and what had previously been known as Indian Creek, was changed to Big Spring Branch.

Hunt's Spring, as it was known before it was officially named Twickenham, and then Huntsville, had grown to become important to the early cotton economy of Alabama. By 1815, there were five cotton gins operating in the town. In turn, this led to the establishment of a broad variety of commercial establishments. The *Madison County Gazette*, the first newspaper in the territory, began publication in 1812 and in 1816 became the *Huntsville Republican*. By the time the court house was completed in 1816, it was flanked on all sides by brick storehouses, hotels, and homes. John Hunt, the namesake of the Huntsville, was a charter member of the Masonic Lodge we now know as Helion Lodge #1. Andrew Jackson was a frequent visitor to the

lodge as well as Huntsville's Green Bottom Inn and race track. President James Monroe visited the Alabama Territory in June 1819; he and his entourage stayed at the Huntsville Inn. Perhaps a young Jones Withers had crossed paths with these notable men.

Jones Withers, and his older brother Augustine Withers (1806-1869), sold the family plantation, as recorded in 1837, after their father had died, even though his Last Will and Testament did not specifically name them as heirs to the land (Jones Withers was a participant in the Creek Indian Wars at this time). It is unclear whether both parcels of land were sold, or only one, for Jones later returned to Huntsville with his new wife, and presumably lived on one of the parcels. The parcel that was sold included the cemetery where John Sr. was buried, along with his wife Mary. The cemetery portion was reserved to the family, excluded from the sale per the deed specifications. Augustine Withers and his wife, Mary Ann Woodson Withers, are buried in Huntsville's Maple Hill Cemetery.

Jones Withers received his early education at Huntsville's Greene Academy, a boys' prep school chartered by the Territorial Legislature in 1812. It was the first educational institution established in Alabama. It was built on the north side of Clinton Avenue between Calhoun Street and White Street, but was burned by Union soldiers during the Civil War. The academic success of the institution can be seen in the many graduates who went on to distinction in Alabama. For example, other than Withers, the student roster in 1828 included such well known ante-bellum family names in Huntsville as Birney, Chambers, Clay, Mastin and Veitch. Clement Claiborne Clay, the son of Alabama's eighth governor, was a student at the academy in the late 1820s, and would later serve his state as a senator, in both the Federal and Confederate senates.

At the age of seventeen, Withers was appointed by President Andrew Jackson to become a cadet at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York. Graduating in 1835, he was assigned to the 1st Dragoons at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, with the brevet rank of 2nd Lieutenant. The 1st Dragoons was a mounted infantry troop. But in September of the same year, Withers resigned, perhaps because of the offer of a job from

the Governor of Alabama. He initially returned to his home in Huntsville, before going to Tuscaloosa, the State Capital at that time.

Jones Withers was a Democrat, a Mason, and a Presbyterian. He had a light frame, brown eyes, and was described as having a nervous temperament.

Withers began work in Tuscaloosa as the secretary for Governor Cement Clay (whose wife was Jones Withers's sister), and proceeded to study law. A year later, he was admitted to the bar.

Withers got married on his birthday, January 12, 1836, to 19-year-old Rebecca Eloise Forney. Rebecca was the daughter of Hon. D.M. Forney of Lowndes, formerly a U.S. representative from Lincoln County, North Carolina, and an officer in the War of 1812. Rebecca was the second of nine children. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the bride and groom did not return to the Withers home in Huntsville where extended family members still lived, but instead made their home in Tuscaloosa. Rebecca and Jones Withers would eventually produce ten children.

NOTE: This writer can find no such town named Lowndes in Alabama. There was and is a Lowndes County, southwest of Montgomery. "Lowndes" may have been a community in Mobile, because Capt. Martin formed-up his regiment for the Mexican war in Lowndes.

The Creek Indian War of 1836

During the Creek Indian troubles of 1836, Withers served on the staff of Major General Benjamin S. Patteson, Alabama Volunteers, and proceeded to Tuskegee to drill volunteers. Upon the arrival of General Jessup, Withers was transferred to Jessup's staff. Meanwhile, Governor Clay ordered Major General Benjamin Patteson into action against the Creek Indians.

The Creek War of 1836 was a conflict fought between the Muscogee Creek people and non-Native land speculators and squatters in Alabama. Although the Creek people had been forced from Georgia, along with many Lower Creeks, moved to the Indian Territory west of

the Mississippi River, there were still about 20,000 Upper Creeks living in Alabama. However, the state moved to abolish tribal governments and extend state laws over the Creeks. Opothle Yohola appealed to the administration of President Jackson for protection from Alabama; when none was forthcoming, the Treaty of Cusseta was signed on March 24, 1832, which divided up Creek lands into individual allotments. Creeks were given the option of either selling their allotments and receiving funds to remove to the west, or staying in Alabama and submitting to state laws. Land speculators and squatters began to defraud Creeks out of their allotments, and violence broke out, leading to the so-called "Creek War of 1836." Secretary of War Lewis Cass dispatched General Winfield Scott to end the violence by forcibly removing the Creeks to the Indian Territory.

Tuscaloosa Years

At the close of the Indian troubles, Withers returned to civilian life in Tuscaloosa, and resumed his duties as private secretary to the governor. In 1838, he was elected Secretary of the State Senate. However, he was not re-elected in 1839. Meanwhile, he practiced law, was a captain in the State Militia, and was also elected a director of the State Bank. He ran in the election for State Attorney General, but was defeated.

The Move to Mobile

In 1841, Withers moved to Mobile, and initially resided across Mobile Bay at Point Clear. He was the Attorney of Alabama for the State Branch Bank at Mobile. He also entered the cotton factor business. In the antebellum South, most cotton planters relied on cotton factors (sometimes also called commission merchants) to sell their crops for them. It was big business for the states of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi, who produced more than half of the world's cotton. The port of New Orleans exported the most cotton, followed by Mobile.

Cotton factors also frequently purchased goods for their clients, and even handled shipment of these goods to their clients, among other services. As one source notes, the factor was a versatile man of business in an agrarian society who performed many different services for the planter in addition to selling his crops. He purchased or sold slaves for his client, arranged for the hiring of slaves or the placing of the planter's children in distant schools, gave advice concerning the condition of the market, or the advisability of selling or withholding his crop, and bought for his client a large portion of the plantation supplies.

In 1846, Jones Withers was appointed to a committee to close out the State Bank of Alabama. At this time, he was reported to be "residing in Lowndes."

Mexican War

In 1846, Mexico refused to recognize the independence of Texas. Mexico threatened war with the U.S. if it annexed Texas. Meanwhile, President James K. Polk's spirit of Manifest Destiny was focusing U.S. interests on westward expansion.

American forces quickly occupied New Mexico and California, then invaded parts of northeastern and northwest Mexico; meanwhile, the U.S. Pacific Squadron conducted a blockade and took control of several garrisons on the Pacific coast further south in Baja California.

Comanche, Apache, and Navajo Indians, especially the Comanche, took advantage of Mexico's weakness to undertake large-scale raids hundreds of miles deep into the country to steal livestock for their own use and to supply an expanding market in Texas and the United States. The Indian raids had left thousands of people dead, and northern Mexico was devastated. When American troops entered northern Mexico in 1846 they found a demoralized people. There was little resistance to the Americans from the civilian population.

Jones Withers volunteered as a private in Capt. W.E. Martin's company for service in the Mexican War.

General Winfield Scott and about 12,000 U.S. troops had captured Vera Cruz, Mexico. In a letter from Vera Cruz, dated Oct. 1, 1847,

Withers wrote to his uncle, Dr. R.W. Withers, that he had just arrived via small steamer, and that Gen. Scott is "...in possession of the city of Mexico." He further noted a number of killed and wounded, including 750 men and 59 officers in General North's Division. Withers also expressed the belief that he might be transferred to some other regiment and promoted to full colonel due to the deaths of Lieutenant Colonel Graham and Colonel Ransom.

However, the U.S. government declined to receive the Withers's regiment; only a portion of it got as far as New Orleans. By then, Withers had been appointed lieutenant colonel, and by April 9th, was promoted to full colonel of the Ninth Infantry.

According to a descendent of Jones Withers in Mobile, a Mexican town presented Colonel Withers with an ornate silver-decorated saddle that is now housed in the Mobile History Museum. It was reportedly a gift for his "fair and just conduct" in the occupation after the Mexican War.

Return to Mobile

At the close of the Mexican War, Withers resigned his commission and returned to Mobile and became engrossed in mercantile affairs before trying his hand again at politics.

In 1855, Withers was elected a representative on the American ticket for Mobile County in the State Legislature. However, he resigned the following year when elected mayor of Mobile. He was reelected annually, and served until the outbreak of the War Between the States in 1861.

In 1860, the *Clotilde*, the last known ship to arrive in the Americas with a cargo of slaves, was abandoned by its captain near Mobile. A number of these slaves later formed their own community on the banks of the Mobile River after the Civil War, which became known as Africatown. The inhabitants of this community retained their African customs and language well into the 20th century.

The War Between the States

Mobile grew substantially in the period leading up to the War Between the States as it was called there when the Confederates heavily fortified it. Union naval forces established a blockade under the command of Admiral David Farragut. The Confederates countered by constructing blockade-runners: fast, shallow-draft, low-slung ships that could either outrun or evade the blockaders who maintained a trickle of trade in and out of Mobile. In addition, the Hunley, the first submarine to sink an enemy vessel in combat, was built and tested in Mobile.

At the outbreak of the war, Withers presented himself for duty in Montgomery and was commissioned a colonel of the 3rd Alabama infantry regiment, companies F & S.

On April 13, 1861, the Confederate Secretary of War, R.H. Smith, sent a telegram to President Jefferson Davis recommending that Colonel Withers be accepted in the Confederacy with the rank of Brigadier General. In the letter, Smith said, "You know he is a graduate of West Point. In my opinion, he is a man of high military and civil ability. I have known him well from boyhood. He has been mayor of this city for more than five years and by common consent is acknowledged to be the best and ablest mayor Mobile has had."

NOTE: R.H. Smith is not listed as a Confederate Secretary of War. He may have been an interim Secretary until the government was organized.

President Davis received another letter in support of Withers, apparently from Davis's friend, C.J.M. Roe. The letter said, in part, "...I therefore again take the liberty of presenting Col. Withers's name to you, which I would not do if I were not sure that his talents can surely be of service to the country. He is a man of rare ability of military education and war experience as a soldier having commanded a regiment in Mexico and is the Uncle of Priv. John Clay."

On April 26, 1861, Withers proceeded to Norfolk, Virginia, where he was placed in charge of a brigade. In May, he commanded the Eastern Division of the Norfolk Department under General Benjamin Huger, of Virginia and North Carolina.

On July 10, Withers was commissioned a brigadier general and ordered back to Alabama where he was to command the defenses of Mobile. The orders were signed by Secretary of War, Leroy Pope Walker, of Huntsville.

In a telegram to Withers in Mobile from the Confederate States "Engineer Bureau," dated September 19, 1861, Maj. D. Leadbetter, acting chief of the Bureau, discussed the removal of a large rifled cannon from Mobile to Memphis. There is mention of assistance from Lieutenant Withers, perhaps the nephew of General Withers, since his own son was only 12.

By December 1861, Mobile was under martial law. The first line of earthenworks and gun emplacements were completed three miles west of the city, built mostly by volunteers.

Withers Commanded the Department of Alabama and Mississippi, east of the Pascagoula River and that portion of Mississippi east of the Pearl River. In January, 1862, he commanded the District of Alabama in the Department of Alabama and West Florida.

In March, 1862, Mobile was turned over to raw recruits. There is anecdotal evidence from descendants living in Mobile that Withers sold his home in Mobile during the Civil War for Confederate bonds, which became worthless. It isn't known when the sale occurred, or where his family lived after the house was sold.

Rather early in the war, the Confederate government decided not to defend its entire coast, but to concentrate its efforts on a few of its most important ports and harbors. Following the loss of New Orleans in April 1862, Mobile was the only major port on the eastern Gulf that would be defended. The city subsequently became the center for blockade-running on the Gulf.

Battle of Shiloh

Withers was summoned to Corinth, Mississippi, and in early April was placed in command of a Division in Polk's Corps, Army of Tennessee, and then the 2nd Division of the 2nd Corps (and later, 2nd

Division of the 1st Corp.) This was all in preparation for the Battle of Shiloh, 23 miles to the east northeast.

The Battle of Shiloh, also known as the Battle of Pittsburg Landing, was a major conflict in the Western Theater of the Civil War. It was fought April 6 and 7, 1862, in southwestern Tennessee. The Union Army, under Major General Ulysses S. Grant had moved via the Tennessee River deep into Tennessee and was encamped principally at Pittsburg Landing on the west bank of the river. Confederate forces under Generals Albert Sidney Johnston and P. G. T. Beauregard launched a surprise attack on Grant there. The Confederates achieved considerable success on the first day, but were ultimately defeated on the second day when Union reinforcements arrived.

As a result of his performance here, Withers was promoted to major general. On April 11, he was granted a leave of 10 days, and on May 11, he was granted an additional leave of 21 days.

At the reorganization of the army at Tupelo in June, Withers was assigned to a reserve division, right wing, Army of the Mississippi, under Maj. Gen. Leonidas Polk. His new command consisted of Gardner's (Ala.) brigade, Chalmer's (Miss.) brigade, Jackson's (Ala.) brigade, Trapier's (SC & Ala.) brigade, and the batteries of Waters, Bortwell, Robertson, and Ketchum.

Battle of Perryville

In a desperate bid to bring divided Kentucky fully into the Confederate fold, Major General Braxton Bragg launched his invasion of that state in late August 1862. In preparation for Bragg's campaign into Kentucky, Jones Withers was in Headquarters, Reserve Division, A.M. Camp, two miles from Harrison Ferry, Tennessee, on August 27.

By October, Union Major General Don Carlos Buell had brought 60,000 troops together at Louisville and was sure he was ready to meet and defeat Bragg. Many units from both forces – about 37,000 Federals and 16,000 Rebels – came together near Perryville on October 8, 1862.

This strange battle was punctuated by misperceived friendly fire. Before the action began, Bragg sent a division under Gen. Withers to near Salvisa, Kentucky, to intercept a corps commanded by Union General Thomas L. Crittenden. By chance, men under Withers encountered the advance guard of Rebel General Kirby Smith. Smith's men were wearing brand-new recently captured Federal uniforms. As a result, both bodies of the Confederates took the other for enemies. According to Major E.T. Sykes, their mutual mistake led these bands of Rebels to skirmish and fire upon one another with unknown consequences.

The Battle of Perryville, took place in the Chaplin Hills west of Perryville, as the culmination of the Confederate Heartland Offensive (Kentucky Campaign). Braxton Bragg's Army of Mississippi won a *tactical* victory against primarily a single corps of Buell's Union Army of the Ohio. However, the battle is considered a *strategic* Union victory, sometimes called the Battle for Kentucky, since Bragg withdrew to Tennessee soon thereafter. The Union retained control of the critical border state of Kentucky for the remainder of the war.

After Perryville, Bragg's popularity dwindled. Two generals, Kirby Smith and Henry Heth, thought Bragg had lost his mind. "Historians have generally accepted the charge that the Kentucky campaign caused nearly every Confederate except President Jefferson Davis to lose confidence in Bragg."

On October 25, Bragg's beleaguered forces left Kentucky marching night and day, to Tennessee. The hungry Confederates subsisted on parched corn, pumpkin, and drank standing water found in holes in the ground.

The Battle of Stones River

In early December, Bragg's forces arrived in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, although part of his troops were diverted to Vicksburg, Mississippi, by order of Jefferson Davis. The Battle of Stones River, known in the South as the Battle of Murfreesboro, was fought from

December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863, in Middle Tennessee in freezing weather.

Withers's division was posted west of the river, and was the front center division of the army, its right being the pivot on which the successful wheel of the army was made on December 29. Bragg's 38,000 Confederate troops defeated Rosecrans's 50,000 Union troops. Casualties were enormous. Withers's skill and gallantry in the battle were highly commended by Generals Polk and Bragg. His division had the most dangerous, difficult work of the day to perform, and they fought nobly, but victory came with a terrible cost. Casualties were estimated at 30%, or 2,500 out of 7,700 engaged. It was the culmination of the Stones River Campaign in the Western Theater.

Of the major battles of the Civil War, Stones River had the highest percentage of casualties on both sides. Although the battle itself was inconclusive, the Union Army's repulse of two Confederate attacks and the subsequent Confederate withdrawal were a much-needed boost to Union morale following their defeat at the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia, and it dashed Confederate aspirations for control of Middle Tennessee.

Bragg retreated from Murfreesboro to Tullahoma. Once there, he had to retreat again. Bragg then lost Middle Tennessee and North Alabama. In response to the loss, Bragg was quoted, "Last night I took up a more defensible position, losing nothing of importance." Historians have noted that the implication that these two areas were unimportant to the Confederacy was ludicrous. Middle Tennessee and Alabama were the largest concentrated areas for the production of much needed war materials. Bragg blamed Union General William Rosecrans for the loss, stating "Rosecrans did not fight fair."

For the first several months of 1863, Withers's Division was attached to Polk's Corp, Army of Tennessee in Shelbyville, under the authority of Bragg. But he continued in command of his division during the Tullahoma Campaign.

On March 3, 1863, Maj. Gen. Withers returned to Mobile where a Grand Review of Rebel forces took place. Also present were Generals Buckner, Slaughter, and Cummins. Four pieces of artillery that had

been captured at Murfreesboro were presented to the Army of Mobile. Each piece was inscribed with the names of Alabamians who fell in the battle.

From April until the end of June, 1863, Withers was back in Shelbyville, Tennessee. In May, he apparently penned a letter of resignation, but there is no further explanation. It does say, however, that from January until May, the Duck River Camps of Middle Tennessee, were rocked with charges and countercharges between Generals Bragg, Polk, Hardee, Breckenridge, Cheatham, McCown, and others. During this time, Withers wrote a letter to the *Mobile Advertiser and Register* in which he appeared to support Bragg.

During the war, perhaps no town symbolized the internal divisions within the South more than Shelbyville, Tennessee. On the one hand, it was the lynchpin in Bragg's defensive network below the Highland Rim. Leonidas Polk's whole corps manned the entrenchments above the town as the Confederate commander sought to protect the main road south of his army. Yet, the community itself was fervently unionist and was called "Little Boston."

The Tullahoma Campaign

The Tullahoma Campaign, or Middle Tennessee Campaign, was fought between June 24 and July 3, 1863. During this time, General Jones Withers continued in the command of his division. The Union Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Major General William Rosecrans, outmaneuvered the Confederate Army of Tennessee, commanded by General Braxton Bragg, from a strong defensive position, driving the Confederates from Middle Tennessee and threatening Chattanooga. Generals Withers and Patrick Cleburne were commended by Bragg for valor, skill, and ability displayed at Murfreesboro. Afterwards, Withers requested, and was granted, a leave of 30 days.

The Tullahoma Campaign was arguably Rosecrans's most significant achievement of the war, described by historians as a "brilliant" campaign that achieved significant goals with very few casualties on

either side. However, it was overshadowed by contemporaneous Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg and it left his opponent's army essentially intact, which led to Rosecrans's disastrous defeat at the Battle of Chickamauga in September.

Bragg's poor health continued to plague him and he was hospitalized in Chattanooga. His health improved sufficiently, although the relationship with his troops continued to decline. The army was disorganized, disobedient and poorly trained. Confusion reigned. The Union Army began bombarding Chattanooga, so Bragg retreated.

On September 19, 1863, the Battle of Chickamauga was fought. Bragg actually won the battle but did not realize it. Instead of focusing his attention on the enemy, he made war on his own superior officers and let the Federals escape back to Chattanooga. No strategic position was won; the Federals were still in control of Chattanooga.

Not only was Bragg fighting his superiors, he was also arguing with his subordinates. One said, "Bragg is so much afraid of doing something which would look like taking advantage of an enemy that he does nothing. He would not strike Rosecrans another blow until he has recovered his strength and announces himself ready. Our great victory has turned to ashes."

Mary Boykin Chestnut, wife of Brigadier General James Chestnut, wrote in her diary, "Bragg, thanks to Longstreet and Hood, had won Chickamauga; so we looked for results that would pay for our losses in battle. Surely they would capture Rosecrans. But no! There sat Bragg like a good dog, howling on his hind legs before Chattanooga and some Yankee holdfast grinning at him from his impregnable heights. Bragg always stops to argue with his generals....I think there is something wrong about the man."

Bragg was focusing more on trying to get rid of his detractors and was unaware of the Union Army building up its forces. He laid siege on Chattanooga, trying to cut the supply line to the Union Army. But the Confederate Army was outgunned and outmanned, so Bragg added another disaster to his inept military career.

Between July and August of 1863, Major General Withers was encamped near Chattanooga at Confederate headquarters. This is all we know about his participation in this campaign.

In December, Jefferson Davis finally realized he had to do something about Bragg, and so he was replaced by Major General Joseph E. Johnston.

Back to Alabama

On February 6, 1864, Withers was reassigned to the northern district of Alabama. In April, he was detached by the War Department and placed in command of the Alabama reserves with headquarters at Montgomery. He remained in this position for the duration of the war.

Battle of Mobile Bay

In August 1864, Rear Admiral David Farragut, assisted by a contingent of soldiers, attacked a small force of wooden Confederate gunboats, led by Admiral Franklin Buchanan, and successfully fought their way past Fort Gaines guarding the mouth of Mobile Bay. It was here that Farragut is alleged to have uttered his famous “Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead” quote after the USS *Tecumseh* hit a stationary Confederate mine and sank. The *Tecumseh* rests on the bottom of Mobile Bay to this day.

In March, 1865, federal forces entered the city of Mobile. Jones Withers was living in Mobile when the city surrendered – to avoid destruction – to the Union Army. Ironically, on May 25, 1865, just weeks after Jefferson Davis had dissolved the Confederacy, an ammunition depot explosion, termed “The Great Mobile Magazine Explosion,” killed some 300 people and destroyed a significant portion of the city.

Mobile had been the last important port on the Gulf of Mexico east of the Mississippi River remaining in Confederate possession, so its closure was the final step in completing the blockade in that region.

This Union victory at Mobile, together with the capture of Atlanta, was extensively covered by Union newspapers and was a significant boost for Abraham Lincoln's bid for re-election three months after the battle.

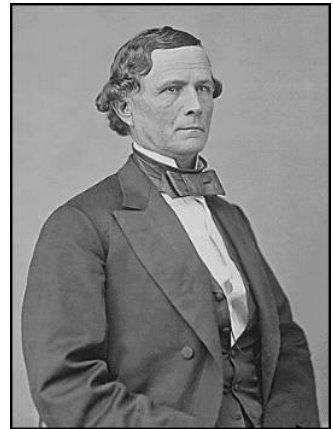
The "War of Secession" Ends

On April 9, General Robert E. Lee surrendered his Confederate Army of Northern Virginia to General Ulysses Grant at Appomattox Court House, however, some 175,000 Confederates still remained in the field. Many of these were scattered throughout the South in garrisons while the rest were concentrated in three major Confederate commands. As news spread of Lee's surrender, other Confederate commanders realized that the strength of the Confederacy was fading, and decided to lay down their arms. General Richard Taylor surrendered his army at Citronelle, Alabama, just north of Mobile in early May. Upon hearing about General Lee's surrender, General Nathan Bedford Forrest, "The Wizard of the Saddle," also chose to throw in the towel, reading his farewell address on May 9, 1865 at Gainesville, Alabama.

Return to Civilian Life

At the return of peace in the spring of 1865, Withers was paroled at Meridian, Mississippi, and on April 6, he resumed business in Mobile as a cotton broker and then editor of the *Mobile Tribune*. He was described as a "cynical publicist," but "a cultivated and incisive writer." He resided at the corner of Joachim and St. Francis Street. On December 28, he was pardoned by the U.S. Government.

By 1867, Withers was mayor of Mobile again, and was a partner in Withers, Adams & Company, located at 36 St. Michael Street. The business was soon



**Jones M. Withers,
Mayor of Mobile**

*Brady National Photographic Art
Gallery (Washington, D.C.)*

relocated to the upstairs floor of 15 S. Commerce. He also changed his residence to N.S. Government Street at Ann Street. Most of these addresses are now paved over with parking lots.

On May 22 1867, the Reconstruction Government removed Mobile officials from office, including the sheriff and Mayor Withers. Here is the text of the official letter in which Withers yielded the office:

May 24th 1867

To the Honorable Boards

Aldermen & Common Council of the City of Mobile,

On the 22d. inst. an Order from “Major General John Pope, Commanding the 3^d Military District, on the recommendation of General Swayne” deposed me from the office of Mayor of the City of Mobile.

I yielded prompt obedience to the Mandate of a Controlling power, but in that act of obedience I simply yielded to a necessity, without impairing or forfeiting, or intending to impair or forfeit any claim or interest, personal or official, vested in me by the laws of the land & guaranteed to me by the plighted faith of the Government of the United States.

J.M. Withers.

Endorsements:

Received & ordered, filed & spread on the Minutes

By Common Council, May 28, 1867

In 1869, elections were held under the watchful eye of Federal troops. Riots ensued. Then, on April 22, Withers’s wife, Rebecca, died in Mobile. She was only 51-years-old, had been married for 32 years, and had borne 10 children, possibly three of whom predeceased her.

In 1870, Withers was listed as a merchant, with his residence at the southeast corner of Joachim and State Streets, Mobile. In 1871, his

business was listed as “Withers, Eggleston & Co.” He was also editor of the *Daily Tribune*. His residence that year was 15 North Jackson.

In August 1871, former General Braxton Bragg accepted a position as Chief Engineer for the State of Alabama. He moved to Mobile where his duties included improving the river, harbor and bay. However, after quarreling with a “combination of capitalists,” he left for a job in Texas. We can only presume that Withers and Bragg met while Bragg was in Mobile, particularly since Withers was editor of the newspaper.

The aftermath of the war left Mobile with a spirit of governmental and economic caution that would limit it for a large part of the next century. The last quarter of the 19th century was a time of turmoil for Mobile. The government was controlled by Republicans after Reconstruction and instituted by Congress in May 1867. Many of those politicians instituted policies that caused the disenfranchised Democrats to become embittered. In 1874, Democrats around the state used violence and extreme measures to keep African Americans and non-Democratic voters from participating in the November election. Election day in Mobile saw armed gangs roaming the streets and mobs of people surrounding the polling places to scare any non-Democrats away.

On April 3, 1873, General Withers was appointed to act as an attorney for the city in the sale of municipal bonds. From 1878-79, Withers served as the Mobile City Treasurer.

The decline of the city continued under the Democrats. By 1875, the city was more than \$5 million in debt and could not even pay the interest on the loans. This debt had been accruing since the 1830s. A game of political maneuvering continued to be played between rival factions as the city bordered on bankruptcy. In 1879, the city charter was repealed by the state legislature, abolishing the “City of Mobile” and replacing it with three city commissioners appointed by the Alabama governor. The



Newspaper Row on Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D.C., 1874

commissioners were charged with governing the new “Port of Mobile” and reducing the city’s debt. The debt problem would not be settled until the last note was paid in 1906.

Washington, D.C. Years

In 1880, perhaps due to the political and economic turmoil in Mobile, Withers moved to Washington, D.C., where he became a claims agent and journalist. He apparently did not return to Mobile again until nine years later (no information is available about these years). In 1889, his address is listed as S.S. St. Francis, 3 E. Claiborne, Mobile. The population of Mobile in 1890 was 31,076.

Epilogue

It may be that Withers came home to die. Less than a year after returning from Washington, D.C., he died in Mobile on March 13, 1890 at the age of 76. His home address, at the time of his death, was listed as the southwest corner of Jackson and St. Francis streets. He was buried in Magnolia Cemetery. Ironically, Withers’s old Confederate superior, Gen. Braxton Bragg, is also buried in Magnolia Cemetery.

Jones Withers’s wife and five of their ten children predeceased him, as well as three of his sons-in-law. Their children were, at the time of his death, as follows:

- 1) Harriet (Hattie) Brevard (1838-1908), m. Major Daniel E. Huger, who served on the staff of his father-in-law, Major-General Withers, and was with him on July 14, 1864, when Withers was recommended for appointment as brigade commander; one daughter



**Mary Jones Withers
Thomas,
The only known
photograph of Jones &
Eloise Withers offspring.**

- 2) Herbert (1839-1882), *deceased* – m. F. Cornelia (1839-1928)
- 3) Daniel Forney (1841-1890), *deceased* – m. Clara Montgomery (1841-)
- 4) Mary Jones (1843-1918), m. Gen. Bryan M. Thomas (1843-1905) – one daughter
- 5) Priscilla (Cilla) McDowell (1845-1871), m. H.E. Witherspoon, *deceased* (1845-)
- 6) Jones Mitchell (1849-1885), *deceased* – m. Emma Norvell (1854-1899)
- 7) Charles Hopkins (1851-1870)
- 8) Eloise Forney (1855-1860), *deceased*
- 9) Virginia Clay (1858-), m. G.B. Cleveland, *deceased*
- 10) Daisy L. (1860-), m. Collier Humphreys, *deceased*.



Sterling Alexander Martin Wood

By Arley H. McCormick

Sterling Alexander Martin Wood – S.A.M. Wood – as military reports referred to him, began his Confederate career with no previous military experience. He had never been a soldier, a sergeant, or lieutenant, yet upon forming the Florence Guard that became Company K, 7th Alabama Infantry on April 1st, 1861, he was elected their captain. The fetes, speeches, tears and kisses of family, friends and loved ones ended when Captain Wood watched his company sergeant direct the other 107 members of the Florence Guard onto the train. Ensign Thomas Allen Jones may have tucked their newly presented flag neatly in his pack as the troops crowded into each window to catch a final glimpse and listen to the cheers as their civilian past disappeared from view. They were soldiers now, and on their way to Pensacola, Florida. In Pensacola, they organized and trained to defend their home. Unfortunately, many would never see home again.

S. A. M. Wood was born in Florence, Alabama to Mary and Alexander Wood, a well-known local lawyer, on March 17, 1823. He completed a Jesuit Catholic education at St. Joseph's College in Bardstown, Kentucky, and at age 18 began studying law. He moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to practice law, and in 1851, joined his brother's law practice in Florence. He ventured into politics when he was appointed solicitor for the 4th circuit court of Alabama, then elected to the state legislature in 1857 and became editor of the *Florence Gazette* in 1860.

The 1860 presidential election was a tumultuous event, and Wood supported John C. Breckenridge. The national controversy divided the Democratic Party and when the Southern Democrats walked out of the national convention to hold their own convention to nominate Breckenridge for President, it sealed the fate of the Democratic ambitions for the White House. The division resulted in a Republican,

Abraham Lincoln, winning the presidential election. That event ushered in the military phase of S.A.M. Wood's life.



S.A.M. Wood seated on front right

Once in Pensacola, Captain Wood's military education began, most likely with the study of "Hardee's Infantry Tactics." General Braxton Bragg used him as an aide and as such, he became a bystander in the negotiations regarding the Federal forces occupying Fort Pickens near Pensacola.

On May 9, 1861, he was elected, with a 310 vote majority, as the colonel of the 7th Alabama Infantry Regiment. Perhaps his acquaintance with General Bragg had something to do with that! On May 18, 1861, he took command. Less than two months earlier, Colonel S.A.M. Wood had been the editor of a local newspaper. His regiment included volunteer units from North Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky and they were divided into eight infantry and two mounted units: Lafayette Guards, Cherokee Guards, Calhoun Greys, Jackson Guards, Madison Rifles, Louisville Blues, Dale Guards, Mounted Rifles, and Prattville Rifles.

By August 8, 1861, he found himself temporarily in command of the Second Brigade, his parent unit. The commander had departed for Richmond for another assignment and the acting commander was ill. Consequently, Wood was acting as commander and wrote to the Confederate Secretary of War, Leroy Pope Walker (a native of Huntsville, Alabama). Colonel Wood was confident and thought very highly of his ability to train and command. He wrote of his desire to fight, train his own brigade, and no doubt encouraged by the meteoric rise in rank and the few months of experience drilling the 7th Alabama Infantry Regiment, he boasted of his ability to have a brigade in fighting trim in two months.

Early that winter, the 7th Alabama Regiment of Volunteers was detached and ordered to Chattanooga. They arrived on Monday,

November 11, 1861. The hard part of leading a regiment was about to begin. Partisans sympathetic to the Federals were organized and interdicting the rail lines of communication with General F.K. Zollincoffer, charged with blocking the Cumberland Gap. The mission of the 7th Alabama was to block the partisan effort and protect the lines of communication.

Colonel Wood's first tactical experience was successful and not particularly dramatic, but a good start and he was proud of the regiment as it moved in closed ranks, quietly, sporting a desire to fight. He maneuvered mounted troops across the Tennessee River south of Chattanooga and landed the infantry within a few miles of a large partisan camp. Upon arriving at the camp, he found it abandoned with the exception of a few preparing to leave. Five shots were fired and a couple of partisans wounded.

He was proud of his accomplishment when he reported to the Confederate Secretary of War, now J.P. Benjamin, on November 17 as well as General Bragg, his commander in Pensacola, Florida. The Secretary of War mildly chastised Colonel Wood for not reporting through the chain of command, and directed him to do so in the future. In his report, having been in the area for six full days, Colonel Wood outlined the tactical elements of his success and recommended that 500 infantry and a company of mounted riflemen be sent to protect the bridge at Tyner's and the provisions there. Colonel Wood described his fondness of the local home guard which was poorly trained and equipped, and led by a former postmaster known to be a drunkard. He expressed his desire to return to General Bragg, or with appropriate rank and directions, remain where he enjoyed the confidence, not only of the local population, but the mounted commanders supporting his short expedition. His military ambition was clear.

A month later, the regiment was ordered to Bowling Green, Kentucky. On January 7, 1862, S.A.M. Wood was promoted to brigadier general and command of the 3rd Brigade in Major General W. J. Hardee's 3rd Corps, by President Jefferson Davis. General Bragg was not happy. He commented to the War Department that at least two other colonels were senior in rank and better qualified soldiers than

S.A.M. Wood, but in the same correspondence, he tempered his remarks by indicating that Wood was a capable officer.

Brigadier General S.A.M. Wood's leadership was never tested at Bowling Green because Forts Henry and Donelson fell in February, 1862. His regiment, with the rest of the Army, withdrew to Corinth, Mississippi where he faced a couple of leadership challenges. The time of service of most of the companies expired the first week in April, 1862, and his regiment was almost disbanded. There were remnants that remained, but the mass of the men were farmed to other organizations. New recruits and units would round out the regiment that would fight at Shiloh. He didn't get two months to train a brigade.

The engagement at Shiloh in early April was his first real test. Gen. Hardee's Corps was small, comprising three brigades. After a sloppy, weather-delayed march from Corinth to the Shiloh area, and just hours before the battle, he met with his brigade commanders to lay out a provisional, two brigade division commanded by Colonel Thomas C. Hindman. Hindman's own brigade and S.A.M. Wood's brigade made up one division.

In the early dawn light and dense morning mist, Wood's brigade advanced. Attempting to maintain alignment over the broken ground, it faltered and shifting and realignment took precious time. Wood's brigade straddled the Seay Field Road and on a slight ridge north of Shiloh Creek, his brigade opened the battle with the first salvo.

General Wood's official report documented his regiment's capture of artillery, a description of fratricide against his troops, and being thrown from his horse and dragged through a former Union camp that left him disabled for three hours.

General Hindman was not pleased with Wood's conduct in the fight, and upon reaching Corinth, caused a formal inquiry. There was nothing revealed that discredited Wood's actions and the complaint was withdrawn. Brigadier General Wood's first aggressive test in command had resulted in embarrassment and a tainted reputation that would follow him.

General Bragg evacuated Corinth to reorganize the army at Tupelo, Mississippi and plan the Kentucky campaign. Brigadier General Wood

was designated to command the 4th Brigade of Major General Simon B. Buckner's 3rd Division on the left wing of Hardee's Corps. His fellow brigade commanders were Brigadier General John R. Liddell, Brigadier General Patrick R. Cleburne, and Brigadier General Bushrod R. Johnson.

At Perryville, on October 8, 1862, Brigadier General S.A.M. Wood was wounded. Sensing an opportunity to carry a ridgeline that Union forces held, Major General Buckner decided to commit Wood's regiment. Wood's regiment was well placed to execute the movement because earlier he occupied the heights overlooking Doctor's Creek. He passed through Brigadier General Cleburne's line where Union infantry and artillery hailed direct fire on Wood's men and forced them to fall back. Wood reformed his brigade and renewed the assault. The Federal guns ran low on ammunition and withdrew, falling back towards the crossroads. The regiment had forced the Federals back and as the regiment paused, intermittent artillery continued. Wood sustained a head injury. He was out of action until November, 1862 when the Army of Mississippi was renamed the Army of Tennessee.

On November 20, 1862, the Confederate Army of Tennessee was constituted under General Bragg and consisted of three corps. Brigadier General Wood was a brigade commander reporting to a new division commander, Patrick R. Cleburne, in General Hardee's Corps.

Union General Rosecrans became the commander of Union forces after the Battle of Perryville, and took months to prepare at Nashville before advancing on Murfreesboro. The Army of Tennessee's center was at Murfreesboro and the left wing at Eagleville under General Hardee, along with Major General Cleburne and his brigade commanders.

The Confederate Cavalry engaged General Rosecrans en route, and at dawn on December 31, 1862, the battle opened by the Confederates. Major General Cleburne was a supporting division in the attack, but after reaching a point near the Wilkinson Road, he found the Federal Army in a strong position and drove them two miles before reforming. Bushrod Johnson, John Liddell and S.A.M. Wood's brigades skirmished over broken ground and in the midst of limestone boulders

and cedar brush. Three assaults were made, and on the third, Wood and Johnson succeeded, but with great losses. Brigadier General Johnson's brigade saw the supporting troops on the fight falling back without apparent cause, and they retired without orders and in confusion. Wood, however, did not falter.

After a few yards, the formation received artillery fire from the railroad near the Nashville turnpike, but the Federal line broke and the Confederate units pursued. After all the fighting, the exhausted Confederate troops, without reinforcements, could not exploit their gains. Throughout the day, Wood had demonstrated his ability to command and control his formation. The Federals didn't fire a shot for nearly three days after the battle and General Bragg withdrew. Brigadier General Wood performed well.

The Army of Tennessee was withdrawing to Tullahoma when on June 24th, a Federal Brigade advanced and captured the crossroads at Liberty Gap. The gap was held by Brigadier General Liddell's Brigade. The Federals attempted to flank the Confederate units with infantry and mounted infantry units. There were repeated attack and counter attacks until Brigadier General Liddell recognized the futility of holding the gap and withdrew his forces.

On the 25th, Brigadier General Liddell planned to stall the Federal advance. With a desperate tactical situation and intermittent drenching rain, Brigadier General S.A.M. Wood and his brigade conducted a passage of lines to cover the withdrawal of the 6th and 7th Brigades as they retired late in the afternoon. They did so amidst rapid and accurate artillery fire. In the darkness and sporadic rain, Brigadier General Wood's Brigade stabilized the line. Sporadic firing continued all the next day and near 10 o'clock in the evening, the units withdrew to continue their march for Tullahoma. It had been another acceptable demonstration of command and leadership.

Brig. Gen. Wood's next battle would be his last. At Chickamauga, the other brigade commanders included James Deshler and Lucius E. Polk. Wood's Brigade totaled 1,982 troops. A whopping 776 were killed or wounded during the fight.

Major General Cleburne's Division was the reserve during the initial deployment, but that changed at 7 p.m. on September 19, 1863. Major General Lidell, formerly a brigade commander in Cleburne's Division, was promoted to division commander and he was having no success with the barricaded Union troops to his front. He pressed General Cleburne to attack but Cleburne didn't want to attack at night. Lieutenant General Daniel H. Hill, General Lidell's Corps Commander, arrived on the scene and was convinced to direct General Cleburne to attack in spite of the approaching darkness.

Brigadier General Wood deployed his brigade in the center with Brigadier General Polk on the left. At 7:30 p.m., the mile long parade of infantry stepped off toward the Union front. General Wood attacked over the cleared ground of Winfrey Field and lost control shortly after the first step. The Union line opened with an intense rate of fire, but it was not particularly accurate. The Mississippians to the right of General Wood's line advanced quickly and became confused in the darkness. They believed their left flank was being turned by Federal troops and in the confusion, fired on Confederates of their own brigade. Not only did General Wood lose control of the advance, but also failed to lead. He could not be found in the darkness. The uncertainty of his troops was magnified with his apparent absence and many believed him to be a coward. The rest of the division advanced in good order and by 9 p.m., Federal troops were routed from around Winfrey Field. By mid-morning on September 20, Wood's Brigade was in the center again, but lost contact with General Deshler's advancing infantry on his left. Portions of the brigade managed to maintain contact with Polk, which caused a larger split between the remainder of Woods' Brigade. Wood halted in a small valley several hundred yards from the Federal line as artillery and rifle fire rained on his troops. He waited for instructions. Major General Cleburne arrived and wanted to know why he was not advancing. Wood responded that he had lost contact with the right and was blocked by Deshler's men on the left. Cleburne pressed him to move forward and he drifted further, leaving even more distance between himself and Polk.

General Wood finally hit the Federal line in an awkward place and having lost contact with a portion of the brigade protecting the right flank, the rest of Wood's men were in open ground and Deshler lagged well behind. Wood stopped for a considerable amount of time while confusion on the front was sorted out. Again, he pushed forward. They advanced behind Federal General Turchin's right and Wood found himself in front of General King's Federal position where his men experienced a smothering fire. It was reported that Wood's men broke in confusion, leaving the right line unsupported while Wood was covered by sharpshooters and an artillery battery. Polk's and Wood's Brigades were both repulsed. Major General Cleburne's Division had a bloody fight. Improper alignment before the battle affected two brigades as they encountered the enemy. Wood's Brigade on the left had almost reached Poe's house, on the Chattanooga Road, when he was subjected to a heavy enfilading and direct fire, and driven back. Union General Thomas carried the day and General Wood was forced to weigh his aspirations for continued military service.

Brigadier General Wood's career was not typical, but not unusual either. Many generals began as volunteers or organized units that contributed mightily to the success of the army. Wood, without military experience or a resume for leading men in any sort of formation, become a brigade commander. His leadership was challenged at Shiloh, a slight that followed him. He was wounded at Perryville, performed adequately at Murfreesboro and during the Tullahoma campaign. At Chickamauga, however, he was tainted as a coward and lost control of his brigade in both a night and day attack. Most likely, believing his aspirations for more senior command were shattered (along with his personal esteem), Brigadier General Wood's resignation was accepted. On October 17, 1863, he became a civilian again.

S.A.M. Wood established a law practice in Tuscaloosa after the war. He became an attorney for the Alabama Great Southern Railway, was elected to the state legislature in 1882, and taught law at the University of Alabama. Wood died in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, on January 26, 1891.

S.A.M Wood had an accomplished life as a lawyer, politician, newspaper editor, soldier, and law professor. Perhaps he quit the army

too soon to disprove his critics regarding his ability to lead an infantry unit.

Contributing Authors and Artist and Photographer

John H. Allen

John Allen is a long-time member of the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table and was its president for five years. He is a retired corporate training manager and a former multiple-award-winning television news reporter. He also chaired a committee that transformed Huntsville's landscape. Approximately a dozen of his ancestors served in the Confederate Army.

Al Elmore

A. E. Elmore is a retired lawyer and college professor who served as a deputy public defender in Las Vegas and taught law and literature at Athens State University, Hampden-Sydney College, LSU, and the University of Alabama Law School. He is the author of *Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: Echoes of the Bible and Book of Common Prayer*.

Wil Elrick

Wil Elrick hails from Guntersville, Alabama, where at an early age he developed a love for both trivia and history. He has spent the last twenty-odd years, fine-tuning the art of communication while working in law enforcement, television media, historical research and public speaking. He is a regular writer for *Old Tennessee Valley Magazine* and is often called upon to portray Huntsville's leaders in re-enactments. He lives in north Alabama with his two boys, and a neurotic German Shepherd. Wil one day hopes that Bigfoot is proven real. If you would like to contact Wil, please e-mail him at notquitedead@outlook.com.

Brian Hogan

Brian's interest in the Civil War began in 1974 when his mother found a shoe-box containing tin-types of their Civil War ancestors – Privates Amos Bissett and his brother John, both of whom had enlisted in Co. B, 7th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry.

After being transferred to Huntsville in 1977, Brian began to research these men with the help of the late Ranee' Pruitt, Archivist, Huntsville-Madison County Public Library. In the course of his research, Brian discovered that John Bissett, Pvt, Co.B., 7th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, was seriously wounded on Laurel Hill during the battles at Spotsylvania. He died in a field hospital but no more details could be found. His burial location is unknown but it is likely his remains are in the mass burial site in Fredericksburg.

Brian has written several articles for the *Huntsville Historical Review* and *Old Tennessee Valley Magazine*. In addition, he researched and wrote the Civil War chapter for "Eden of the South, A Chronology of Huntsville, Alabama, 1805-2005" by Ranee' Pruitt.

Brian served as president of the Tennessee Valley Round Table for many years. He is widely respected for his knowledge of local Civil War history and his flawless research.

David Lady

David Lady is a native of Washington, D. C., and grew-up in northern Virginia during the Civil War Centennial. His branch of the Lady family lived in eastern Tennessee and southwestern Virginia during the Civil War, and his ancestors fought on both sides during the war. David graduated from Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio with a degree in History. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1974, and during his 33 year military career, he served as an Armor and Cavalry soldier and later as the Command Sergeant Major (CSM) U. S. Army Armor Center and the U. S. Army Europe. He and his wife Ellen reside in Huntsville. He is employed on Redstone Arsenal with the U. S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command. David has published articles in

Army Professional Journals and has led groups of soldiers and civilians on battlefield tours and military “staff rides” of both eastern and western battlefields.

Arley H. McCormick

Originally from Chillicothe, Missouri, Arley graduated from the University of Nebraska, Omaha with a General Studies Degree concentrating in Business Administration. He also holds a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from George Washington University. A former soldier and business consultant, Arley authored numerous documents regarding Operations and Training of the United States Army, Europe, its subordinated organizations, and our NATO allies. He has contributed articles to the Military Review, published by the United States Army, Command and General Staff College, Leavenworth, Kansas. He lived in Europe for 15 years and studied Napoleonic history before turning his attention to the American Civil War. Now, in his spare time he serves on the Board of Directors of the round table and he is the editor of the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table newsletter.

Clarke Moore

Born in the historic river town of Cairo, Illinois, Clark grew up in the Jackson Purchase region of Kentucky. Annual trips to the Columbus-Belmont State Park sparked a keen interest in the Civil War that led to his participation in the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table. Through his association with the organization, he learned of his Union and Confederate ancestry – appropriate for someone raised in one of the border states. Clark has resided in the Tennessee Valley since 1998. Married to an Auburn girl and father to a rambunctious young son, Clark is a practicing electrical engineer employed in the defense industry supporting Redstone Arsenal. Clarke is a graduate of Southern Illinois University and the Georgia Institute of Technology. He spends

each Saturday in the fall cheering for the Salukis and each Sunday cheering for the Green Bay Packers. Clark is a craft beer enthusiast and is currently restoring a home in the historic Merrimack Mill Village of Huntsville.

Mike Morrow

Mike Morrow graduated from Georgia Tech with a degree in electrical engineering. He served in the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam era on the aircraft carrier *USS Intrepid* and ballistic missile submarine *USS Daniel Boone*. In civilian life, Mike was a senior engineer with General Electric Company, unit supervisor with Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant unit, and engineer with the Tennessee Valley Authority. He has held a strong interest in the western Civil War since the centenary commemorations of the early 1960s.

Emil Posey

Emil Posey is a dedicated bibliophile, and is a (very) armchair political strategist and military enthusiast. He acquired his interest in Civil War history while serving five years of active duty service in the US Army – most of it as a commissioned officer. But, he chose a career in the Federal Civil Service, almost entirely in the field of procurement, and mostly in supervisory and management positions, along with 19 years in the Army National Guard and US Army Reserve.

Since December 1986, Emil is a Contract Specialist at NASA's George C. Marshall Space Flight Center, supporting the Space Shuttle Program, Chandra X-Ray Observatory, International Space Station, Ares and Space Launch System stand-up. He currently supports the Shuttle-Ares Transition Office and the center's Contracting Officer Technical Representative training program.

Emil has a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Hood College, Frederick, Maryland and currently lives in New Market, Alabama with his wife, Rhodora. He has two sons on active duty with the US Air

Force, and one daughter, whose active duty is raising her five-year old son.

Emil is a past president of the Huntsville chapter of the National Contract Management Association; a member of the Special Forces Association; the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table, and Elks Lodge 1648, Huntsville, Alabama.

Jacquelyn Procter Reeves

Jacque Reeves is a native of Las Vegas, New Mexico and graduate of New Mexico Highlands University. She is the president of the Huntsville-Madison County Historical Society, past president of the Maple Hill Cemetery Stroll, curator of the historic Donnell House, and former editor of the *Huntsville Historical Review* and the Tennessee Valley Genealogical Society's *Valley Leaves*. Jacque has written numerous books and articles on history and true crime.

Jacque is Associate Editor of *Old Tennessee Valley Magazine* and has written award-winning television commercials commemorating Huntsville's history. She is the founder of Avalon Tours, co-founder of Huntsville Ghost Walk, Madison Ghost Walk, Decatur Ghost Walk, and Mischief and Mayhem Tours. Jacque's maternal and paternal ancestors were among the first settlers of North Alabama and Tennessee.

Jacque's ancestors fought and died on both sides of the Civil War. She is involved in many local historical events and recently portrayed her great great grandmother in a Civil War re-enactment at the Donnell House in nearby Athens. Jacque's intense interest in Civil War history began with a visit to the Shiloh battlefield when she was young.

Robert P. Reeves

Robert has been a long time news anchor for WHNT Channel 19 in Huntsville. He began by co-hosting the Mornin' Folks segment with his father, Grady Reeves, who was hired as WHNT's second employee, more than 50 years ago. Robert has covered many high profile stories

in his years of reporting and is well-respected in North Alabama for his fairness, creativity, and approachability. Robert has been interested in history all of his life and lends his ability to write news stories in an interesting manner to the articles he writes for local publications. He was voted Favorite News Anchor and Best Morning News Anchor three years in a row by readers of *The Huntsville Times* and *The Times Daily* in Florence. Robert is a co-founder of the Huntsville Ghost Walk, the Madison Ghost Walk, and the Decatur Ghost Walk.

Kent Wright

Kent is a native of Nebraska and a veteran of the nuclear navy. He graduated from Iowa State University, but has lived in Huntsville since 1986. Kent worked as an engineer for General Electric and Tennessee Valley Authority before his retirement.

Before he and his wife moved to Huntsville, they lived in Vicksburg where his interest in Civil War history and his Navy experience in steam power and technology sparked his need to research 19th Century warfare. He has written and presented several programs on naval topics to the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table, as well as other round tables in the region.

In the past 30 years, Kent's research has branched beyond naval history and into Army and international affairs as well. He has recently written essays on joint operations and international topics pertaining to the American Civil War which are pending publication.

Artist Bren Milam Morgan

Bren is an artist whose passion for painting and ties to the Tennessee Valley made the opportunity to create the portraits for the “North Alabama Generals in the Civil War” and the book, a welcomed and exciting project.

A native of Decatur, Alabama, Bren studied art at Calhoun College and the University of Alabama in Huntsville. She paints in four

different mediums: watercolor, acrylic, ink, and oil and she has won numerous awards for her outstanding original creations.

Bren shares her professional experience and natural ability with others through adult and children's painting classes. Her classes include teaching through the Texas school system's programs for underprivileged children.

When not teaching, you can find Ms. Morgan painting *En plein air* on the beaches in Galveston, or working at her home studio in Sugar Land, Texas. She believes in keeping life simple: paint, passion, perseverance, and chocolate croissants (optional).

R.B. (Buzz) Estes Front Cover photograph and member of the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table

Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table History

In 1993 three interesting guys bumping into one another in a cafeteria repeatedly and discussed various battles and topics regarding the American Civil War. They made a decision to share their passion and establish a Round Table. Jerry Peddycoat, Doug Cubbison, and Mark Hubbs conceived the idea. Civil War Round Tables are not unusual; they have existed since the beginning of the 20th Century, gradually expanding to over two hundred in the United States and several foreign countries. Folklore says 1993 was not the beginning in North Alabama but the previous organization is lost to memory and membership. So, today we acknowledge 1993 as the beginning.

There are only three former presidents. The effort of the founding trio stimulated growth and interest by defining the Tennessee Valley as the domain of the Round Table. One of the individuals attracted to the new Round Table was Brian Hogan. Brian may be the single most recognized and established historian of the Civil War in the Valley. If anyone begins research in Huntsville/Madison County Library the archivists will refer any and everyone to Brian for detailed answers and locations where tidbits of Civil War history are found. Brian became the treasurer, programs coordinator, and eventually, when the position of president was defined, assumed the role for the Round Table. He held that position for several years until a former newspaper man, teacher, and writer, John Allen, reluctantly assumed the role pending finding a better qualified individual. Seven delightfully progressive years later he turned over the duty to a more reluctant, frequently quoting himself as “a draftee”, General John Scales. With a voice vote of the members and not an utter of opposition General Scales is being replaced by an enthusiastic female president, Carol Codori. She is a descendent of a family that owned the Codori farm on the Gettysburg battlefield.

In the early days and alongside Bryan and John Scales, Kent and Elizabeth Wright (the current Director of Programs), Morris Penny, and George Mahoney joined the team of organizers and they selected sites

for holding meetings based on price (free), availability, and just as important, accommodation for the growing membership. In the beginning the basement of the Madison City Hall served the purpose, and then the Round Table moved to the Conference Room. The growing Round Table moved to Quincy's in Madison, now closed, and then in 1999 to Fox Army Hospital on Redstone Arsenal, and finally Shaver's Book Store in 2000. Mr. Shaver continues to support the success of the Round Table but retirement and growth compelled another move. In 2005, George Mahoney facilitated the move to the Elk's Lodge.

After 20 years our membership is steady at approximately 200. A Round Table of our size survives and grows based upon the parade of speakers that share and entertain with their knowledge of the Civil War and our ability to market the Round Table programs. Initially, speakers were local and included well known characters from reenacting circles and Civil War Battlefield parks. Today we attract not only Civil War experts of local origin but well established and published scholars, authors, and historians. Our membership includes at least six published authors and the list of speakers interested in being introduced on our dais is growing.

The unwritten goal of the Round Table is to increase the membership. Membership dues and other small fund raising activities provide the financial resources to support the superb cast of speakers our Round Table enjoys and our preservation effort. The Round Table is fortunate to have two officers on the Board of Directors, who above all others create the opportunity to serve the Tennessee Valley; Kent Wright Programs Officer and Emil Posey Communications Officer.

A major milestone was achieved in 2012 when the Round Table not only crossed the threshold of donating over \$10,000 to the preservation of Battlefields around the country (see preservation on the menu) but also, principally because of the efforts of John Allen and Cheryl McAuley (a former Vice President) acquired the not-for-profit tax status of 501(c)(3). The status provides more flexibility in acquiring funds to expand our education programs to a younger generation.

It is a short time before the Sesquicentennial draws to a close and the National and State governments are attracted to other historical events that affected the growth of our nation. What is our future and where will it lead? We are writing that chapter now. Join us and be a part of history.

<http://www.tvcwrt.org/>

Find us on Facebook; Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table

Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table
7449 D Highway 72 West
Box # 300
Madison, Alabama 35758



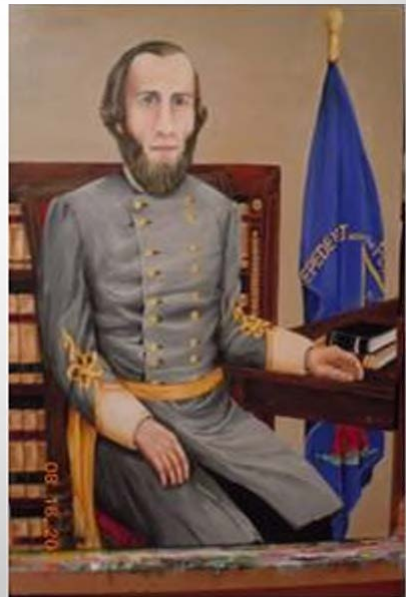
John Hunt Morgan

Popular interest in the Civil War eclipses interest in any other aspect of American History. Some 700,000 Union and Confederate soldiers lost their lives in the four-year struggle, equaling the number who lost their lives in all other American wars combined.

Some 150 years after the guns fell silent and the war came to an end in the village of Appomattox Courthouse, more than 50, 000 books have been

published on the topic, and 800 new titles are published every year.

The Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table is one of nearly 300 such organizations throughout the United States and foreign countries. Founded in 1993, its mission is to provide a forum for the non-partisan study of the American Civil War and to contribute to historical preservations.



Leroy Pope Walker