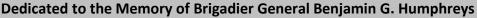


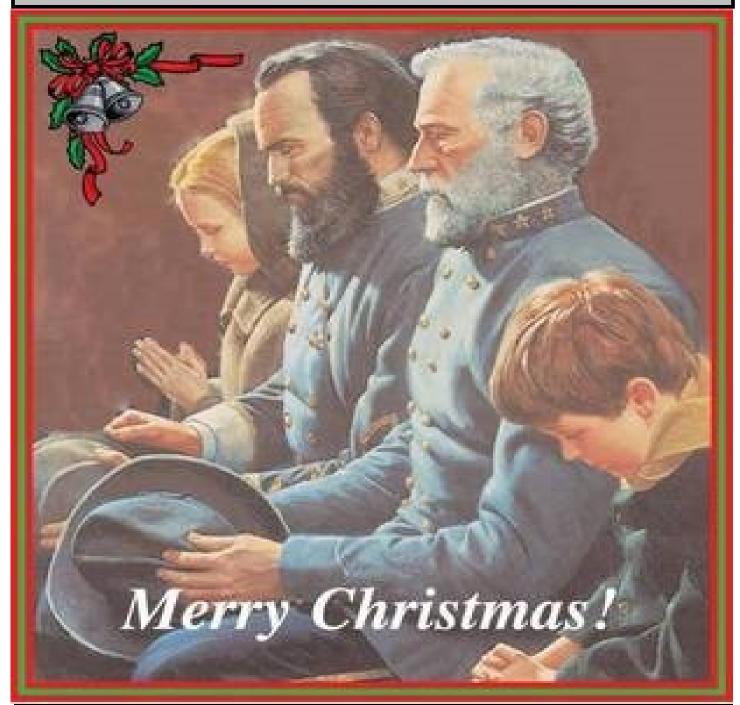
The Delta General

Camp Website: www.humphreys1625.com

December, Volume 24, Issue 11







In this Issue:

- Christmas During the War
- Harvey's Scouts Monument

Commander's Comments—Larry McCluney

Compatriots,

As you know the Holiday Season is upon us and this month is our election month for Camp officers. Unfortunately, I will not be with you on December 4 because I will be in North Alabama carrying out CiC duties for the SCV

Currently the following have announced their candidacy or are nominated for the positions:

Camp Commander—Larry McCluney

Lt. Commander-Michael An-

thony

Adjutant—Dan McCaskill

Color-Sgt-Earl Allen

If there are others interested in running for these positions, please show up at the meeting and announce we also need our members to show up and cast a vote for the future leaders of this camp. We also need to tie up all loose ends for our Lee and Jackson Banquet which is January 22, 2022. Richard Garcia has been secured to be our guest speaker for the Banquet and we really need to promote him throughout our Camp as well as the Division. For those who do not know, Richard will be speaking on Confederate Hispanics that served during the war. Richard was also featured in one of the films I commissioned when I was Lt. Commander-in-Chief for recruiting purposes.

Also, the OCR will take donations for raffle prizes for the Lee/Jackson Banquet. Please consider this for they provide meals for our meetings.

Please bring a friend or potential recruit at our to our November 6 meeting. As we gather to carryout our Camp's business. We hope to see you there. Since I will not be attending, Merry Christmas to everyone.

Adjutant's Report—November 6, 2021—Dan McCaskill

I was unable to attend this meeting due to the birthday celebration of our Granddaughter Lucy and son Andrew. The following minutes are from information provided by Commander McCluney.

6:00 pm: The Meeting was called to order by Commander Larry McCluney.

Officer Reports: Adjutant Dan McCaskill although absent what I would have reported. As directed by the Camp Membership, all accounts at Regions Bank have been closed and the funds move to a new account at Planters Bank and Trust in Leland. The moving the accounts was due to Regions Bank closing its branch in Leland. Due to the low interest rates, a savings account was not opened. Current balance is \$2,432.01 after purchasing new checks. Of this money, \$558.40 remains in our Operating Budget.

There were no other officers reports.

Upcoming Event: On December 4th the MS Division Executive Council will be holding their meeting at the War Memorial Building at 10:00 am in Jackson, MS. Any SCV member in good standing with the MS Division is welcome to attend. Our Lee-Jackson Banquet at the 1st Presbyterian Church on Saturday, January 22, 2022 starting at 6:00 pm. Our Confederate Memorial Service is set for May 7, 2022

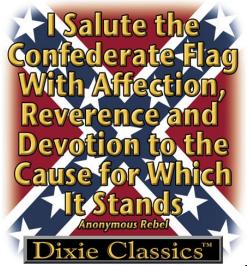
Camp Business: New Officers will be elected at our December Meeting and that anyone interested is welcome to announce their candidacy. At present we have the following candidates: Commander, Larry McCluney; 1st Lt. Commander, Michael Anthony; Adjutant, Dan McCaskill and Color Sergeant, Earl Allen. Some arrangements for our upcoming Lee-Jackson have been finalized. Our guest speaker will be Richard Garcia with his program to be announced later. The Camp approved to reserve a

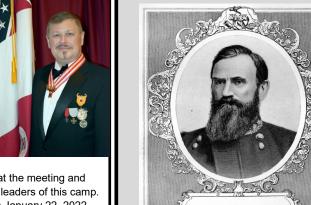
room for Mr. Garcia at the Hampton Inn. The entrée for the meal will be Southern Fried Chicken provided by the Camp and sides provided by Camp members. There will be a \$5 charge per person age 12 and up to help cover expenses for the banquet. Lastly, the Camp is having a fund raising to purchase a Confederate Headstone for a Veteran who died in Greenville shortly after the fall of Vicksburg. Since Confederate Veterans do not qualify for "Memorial Headstones" according to the VA's lawyers, we have to purchase a headstone. The purchase price will be around \$450 which equates to a \$10 donation per member to reach our goal. Any member wishing to donate \$10 or more dollars can mail their donation to me at 205 Cypress Street; Leland, MS 38756. To date \$120 has been raised.

Program: No Program

With no other business coming before the Camp, the meeting was adjourned.

Attendance: 8





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- Harvey's Scouts Monument
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Camp Commander / Editor: Larry McCluney Confederate @suddenlink.net

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Guardians needed

Everyone knows the atmosphere in this country where it comes to anything Confederate. Last summer we saw how vulnerable our Memorials were to the rioters. Sadly, it has spread to the cemeteries the place where the left wants all the Memorials moved. In the past few weeks, the Sleeping Lion Memorial to the Confederate dead in Oakwood Cemetery in Atlanta, GA has been removed. Our Confederate Dead and our Memorials are at risk to removal and vandalism. This why we need Guardians to watch over our Memorials and burial sites of our Confederate Dead. Most of our members live in Counties with Confederate Memorial Monuments and all live near a cemetery where Confederate Dead are buried. The Mississippi Division has the MS Division Guardian Program for burial sites where a person adopts a burial site or several sites and watches over the site ensuring it is properly cared for. The Division now has the MS Division Monument Guardian Program. With this program, a person signs up to keep watch on a Memorial. There is a contact person to report any vandalism and/or threats of removal. If anyone is interested in either or both of these programs, please contact me by either email: danmccas@tecinfo.net or cell phone: 662-822-1096. One or two people cannot be everywhere. It takes a group effort. This is one way you can live The Charge given to the Sons by Gen. Stephen D. Lee.

Chaplain's Corner—Earl McCowen

From the Chaplain's pen (December. 2021)

Away from home, Cold and lonely.

As we approach the Christmas season, I think of the members of the U. S. Military. As they are deployed throughout the world, I remember how it

was to be away from home during the holidays. Things are much better now than when I was serving. Communications for service members has improved a thousand fold. Cell phone, social media, video calls; no need not to talk to the folks at home. Packages (gifts) can be delivered to just about any the point on globe. Thanksgiving or Christmas meals, ham, turkey, dressing, pies, cakes and all the trimmings served hot and there is plenty of it. If you happen to be fortunate enough not to have the Christmas duty, a quick hop on a military aircraft, and you're home in a matter of hours. I am, in no



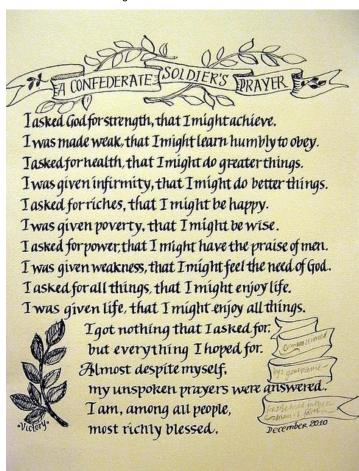
way, saying that military life is a snap, and that it is always fun and games, I'm just getting to my point:

Please look back in time. Remember our ancestors. Away from home, hundreds of miles away, no cell phones, no social media, no video calls. Letters take weeks or even months to get there. No way to communicate with the folks back home. Too far away from home to even think of going home for the holidays. It wouldn't have been possible anyway. Needs of the War, remember? Hot meals, only in their dreams. They settle for hard tack, weak coffee (made from ground acorns) if they were lucky. They might even butcher an old cow (to be shared by a couple of hundred men). They were ill clothed, mostly barefoot. And there seemed to never be enough blankets to go around. The folks at home were no better off. They too were alone, cold and lonely.

Again, I am not putting down our modern military. I know the kind of life they have, and I thank them and applaud them for their service. I just wanted to recognize the difference of modern warfare and the War for

Southern Independence.

I end this with a sincere prayer for our military, whether deployed or not. Let's include our veterans as well. "Lord, we thank you for these brave men and women of the military, and the veterans who stand in the gap for us. They give us the freedom to worship You and the right to live in a free nation. Father, we do ask Your blessings for these brave people, as well as the families they left at home. God please grant them safety, and Your richest blessings. Amen"



WORDS FOR MEMBERS TO LIVE BY

I am a MAN before anything!... I am a LEADER!... I will build I will not tear down other MEN! ... I will take the initiative in building and protecting my COMMUNITY...It is left up to me to do my part in being a POSITIVE ROLE MODEL and to make a POSITIVE IMPACT on our Future Stars (our youth) ... I have felt the pain of being torn down and I have decided I will be deliberate about building others up! All too often, we men find it easier

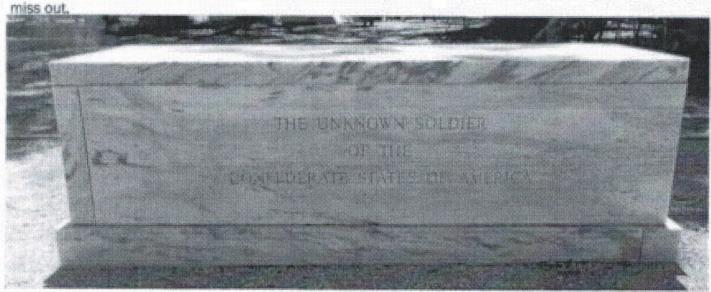
to criticize each other, instead of building each other up. With all the negativity going around let's do something positive!! Let's build ourselves / up, instead of tearing ourselves down.

CHANGE OF THE ANS SERVICE OF THE

Kevin Nelms, Captain MS Division Mech Cav, 1G

Bricks for Beauvoir and the Tomb of the Unknown Solider

Honor your confederate Ancestors by purchasing an Ancestral Memorial Brick for \$50.00 each in the Memorial sidewalk of the Confederate Cemetery at Beauvoir. The plans for the sidewalk are nearing completion, so if you want a brick put down for your ancestor you need to get your order in soon, so as not to



Each brick that you purchase will be engraved with your ancestors rank, name, unit and company. Memorial bricks will be laid, memorializing your ancestor, in a sidewalk from the UDC Arch to the Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Solider at Beauvoir.

Detach and send in the form below to the address listed to order your bricks.

Ancestral Brick Order Form

Instructions: Use the lines as laid out no more than 15 spaces per line...You may use abbreviations when necessary. Please include your name and address, for confirmation letter. (See Sample Below)

Line	1:
	(First and Last Name)
Une	2:
	(Rank
Line	8:
	(198)

ORDER YOUR ANCESTOR'S BRICKTODAY!

Make Charles out for \$10,000 per been for

eralisasse valada este eraken eteka et Siiri iras esta alama eteka etek

Visit our gift shop where you can pay by cash or credit! Europie:

PVt. JAMES W.

McCluney

6th MS CAV, CO. F.

The Howcott Monument (Harvey's Scouts Monument in Canton, MS)

Monument in Memory of Colored Servants of Harvey Scouts. Canton Miss. Erected by W. H. Howcott Monument erected by William H. Howcott, a veteran of Harvey's Scouts, a Confederate cavalry unit. The base reads "To the memory of the good and loyal servants who followed the fortunes of Harvey's Scouts during the civil War." Image Source: Howcott Memorial, from the blog Finding Josephine; photo courtesy Joel Brink.

The blog Confederate
Digest – which claims to
provide "historically accurate" commentary about
the Confederate States –
has a blog entry about a rare
type of monument in Canton, Mississippi: it was
erected in honor of a Confederate slave.

The monument honors Willis Howcott, who was the slave of William Howcott. William Howcott was a

member of Harvey's Scouts, a Confederate cavalry unit from Mississippi made up of around 128 soldiers. While the names of the Scout's soldiers are listed, neither the names of the slaves who were with the soldiers, nor a count of those slaves, are are indicated in Claiborne's history.

The Confederate Digest blog entry says that "William was 15 years old when he joined Harvey's Scouts in 1864. Willis, his childhood playmate was only 13 but would not be dissuaded from going off to war with his friend. Willis was, tragically, killed in combat sometime in 1865 at the age of 14." This is based on family memoirs and memories.

This same blog entry makes the claim, which is largely discredited, that an "estimated 65,000 or more African American men, both free and slave, were Confederate soldiers." Was Willis Howcott one of these black Confederate soldiers?

First, some quick background. During the Civil War, many masters took their slaves with them as they went off to war. These slaves performed a number of tasks: they cooked, foraged for food, washed laundry, cut hair, cared for animals, etc. These slaves were not enlisted in the army; slave enlistment was prohibited by the Confederate government until March 1865. (One month later, Confederate general-in-chief Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox, Virginia.)

I read through Claiborne's history of the Scouts, and found no mention of Willis Howcott. Claiborne's list of the unit's dead (12 men in all) does not include Willis Howcott's name. If Willis Howcott did die in battle, it is not recorded in this history, which was developed "out of a considerable amount of material furnished by different persons, and placed at his (Claiborne's) disposal."

In fact, Claiborne's history of Harvey's Scouts makes no mention of the unit's slaves at all. Interestingly, Claiborne does document an encounter the Scouts had with a group of US Colored Troops, black men who enlisted in the Union army. Claiborne writes that the "Scouts fell in with a long wagon train from Natchez, guarded by a colored regiment. A desperate fight ensued. The negroes had been taught that we would show them no quarter, and fought like devils." But there is no mention of the negroes who were with the Scouts. In Claiborne's history, the slaves are not soldiers, but rather, invisible men.

Regardless of Willis Howcott's role in his master's army unit, there is no doubt that his death was heartfelt by William Howcott: in the 1890s, William paid for a 20-foot high granite obelisk monument to the memory of Willis in Canton, MS. While there are hundreds of monuments to Confederate soldiers, monuments recognizing slaves who accompanied Confederate military units are quite rare. The inscription on the monument William Howcott dedicated to Willis Howcott poignantly reads, "A tribute to my faithful servant and friend, Willis Howcott, a colored boy of rare

loyalty and faithfulness, whose memory I cherish with deep gratitude." Of note is that Willis Howcott is identified as a servant who was loyal to his master, not as a soldier who was loyal to his country. And there is no mention of how Willis died. In

any event, William Howcott was clearly hurt by the loss.

Did William Howcott ultimately blame himself for the loss of his slave and friend? Should he have?

The monument raises the guestion: how should we, today, look at the death of Willis Howcott? When soldiers fight and die for a great cause – such as the independence of their country, or liberation from bondage – we thank the soldier and honor his sacrifice. But Willis Howcott died a slave. He died because his master chose to bring him into a war zone, for the master's convenience. In death, Willis Howcott paid the highest price that could be paid by a slave in his service to his master. Is it honorable or right that a slave master should put his slave in that position? Beyond his master's respect and gratitude, what did the slave stand to gain by being placed in such hazardous conditions... is what the slave stood to gain "worth" the loss of his life? Is the death of this exploited laborer much more tragic than it was possibly heroic (assuming that the 14 year



old Willis did die in battle)?

(The Confederate Digest post says "Willis, his childhood playmate was only 13 but would not be dissuaded from going off to war with his friend." Really?... a 13 year old slave boy had the authority to dictate that he would join his young master in a military unit? Willis Howcott's presence in the unit was surely not his decision to make, and probably not solely William Howcott's decision; William's parents or guardians at least would have approved it. The parents/guardians of William no doubt felt better about William's military service with servant Willis at his side to help out with the rigors of camp life. And it's not unlikely that young Willis wanted to accompany his master. The idea of going off to war might have been a thrill for both these young teenagers. It is unknown if Willis's parents approved, or had veto power over, the taking of their son.)

African Americans, in Mississippi and elsewhere, typically lacked the resources to erect their own such monuments. So the family's feelings about Willis's death were not etched in stone, for us to see. This possible relative might well have been thankful that Willis received due recognition for his sacrifice, no matter what the circumstances of his death. This, as opposed to so many unnamed and unnoticed black men and women, who did the very best they could do under trying times, and yet have nothing in the commemorative landscape to show for the lives they lived. Willis Howcott's death is worth remembering. As to how that death should be remembered... that is another question.

EDIT: As noted in a response from Francis Howcutt, the Willis Howcott monument was moved a few years ago from the site shown in the picture to a burial ground near the Old Jail at Canton, Mississippi.





Walkways of Remembrance

Bricks and Pavers For the Walkways for the General Headquarters for the Sons of Confederate Veterans at Elm Springs and the

Confederate Museum at Elm Springs

Remember and honor your Confederate Ancestor, a family member or any cherished memory with the purchase of a Memorial Brick to be laid for a walkways at the General Headquarters for the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the Confederate Museum at Elm Springs.

Brick sizes:

The 4" x 8" brick will allow 3 lines with 21 characters (including spaces) per line and will cost \$50.

The 8" by 8" brick will allow 6 lines with 21 characters (including spaces) per line and will cost \$100.
Layout for 4" x 8" brick with 3 lines max and 21 characters per line max (including spaces) \$50
Layout for 8" x 8" brick with 6 lines max and 21 characters per line max (including spaces) \$100
Make checks payable to SCV and write "Bricks" in the memo line. Please fill out this form and mail to:
SCV, P.O. Box 59, Columbia, TN 38402
Credit card payments are available by calling 1-800-MYSOUTH and contacting Merchandising.
Please include all your contact information so we can contact you.
Name:
Address/City/State/Zip:
Phone number:
Email address:



Friends of

The Confederate Museum at Elm Springs Annual Membership Application

All memberships are tax-deductible and include the E-Newsletter.

Name:						
Phone:						
Email address:						
	Membership Levels & Benef	fits				
 Longstreet Level: \$25 Membership for one Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs 	Judah P. Benjamin Level: \$50 • Family Membership • Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs	Patrick Cleburne Level: \$100 Family Membership Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs 10% Gift Shop Discount				
 N. B. Forrest Level: \$250 Family Membership Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum 10% Gift Shop Discount Free Elm Springs Hat or T-Shirt 	 Robert E. Lee Level: \$500 Family Membership Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum 15% Gift Shop Discount Free Elm Springs Hat and T-Shirt 	 Jefferson Davis Level: \$1000 Family Membership Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum 20% Gift Shop Discount Free Elm Springs Hat, T-Shirt and Polo 				
N. B. Forrest Level Please make checks payable to So	Dership level: Judah P. Benjamin Level Robert E. Lee Level ons of Confederate Veterans and mail to O. Box 59, Columbia, TN 38402	Jefferson Davis Level				



Friends of Elm Springs Annual Membership Application

All Proceeds 50 to the restoration and maintenance of the Home Elm Sprin5s built in 1837

All Memberships are tax-deductible and include the E-Newsletter

Is this a Corporate Mer	e Friends of Elm Springs				
Name:					
City/State/Zip:					
	Membership Levels & Bene	fits			
Elm Tree Level: \$25	Cool Spring Level: \$50	Todd Family Level: \$100			
Membership for one	Family Membership	Family Membership			
Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs	Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs	Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs			
		10% Gift Shop Discount			
Susan Looney Level: \$250	Abram Looney Level: \$500	Frank Armstrong Level: \$1000			
Family Membership	Family Membership	Family Membership			
Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs	Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs	Unlimited Tours of Elm Springs			
 Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum 	Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum	Unlimited Tours of The Confederate Museum			
• 10% Gift Shop Discount	15% Gift Shop Discount	20% Gift Shop Discount			
Free Elm Springs Hat or T-Shirt	Free Elm Springs Hat and T-Shirt	Free Elm Springs Hat, T-Shirt and Polo			
Please check the following memb	pership level:				
Elm Tree Level	Cool Spring Level	Todd Family Level			
Susan Looney Level	Abram Looney Level	Frank Armstrong Level			
Sons of Confederate Veterans, P.	ons of Confederate Veterans and mail to				
If paying by credit card, please of	all (931) 380-1844 or email at exedir@s	sev.org			

National SCV News:

Join the Confederate Legion

Membership fees & donations support the Southern Victory Campaign

- Individuals and organizations can join. Membership in the Sons of Confederate Veterans is not required.
- Businesses, associations and S.C.V. camps can join.
- An individual member can organize an independent Confederate Legion group and name it whatever he/she likes.
- Members are expected to follow moral standards, obey the law, and participate in the Southern Victory Campaign.
- Credit cards and checks are accepted. Credit card payments can be recurring.
- Payments are tax deductible because the S.C.V. is a 501 (c) (3) entity.
- Members receive an ID card, certificate, access to support and communications. Most of all, you get the satisfaction of knowing you're part of the offensive!

Dues and donations are used to mount a two-prong offensive that we call the Southern Victory Campaign. It's led by the Heritage operations Committee of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Phase One of the campaign offensive involves direct action by the Heritage Operations Committee of the S.C.V. Prong Two involves direct action by individual and group members of the Confederate Legion.

Objectives include:

Reestablishing public support for the principles of liberty held by the founders
of the United States and the Confederate States of America.

Rebuilding respect for the Confederate States of America that preferred to leave the Union rather than abandon the principles of liberty like the Northern states were doing under Leftist influences of that day and age.

For those interested in more information on how you can help "Make Dixie Great Again" go to https://www.makedixiegreatagain.com/



Every Monday Night on Facebook at 7:00 PM Central time and on Thursday Nights at 7:00 PM for Look

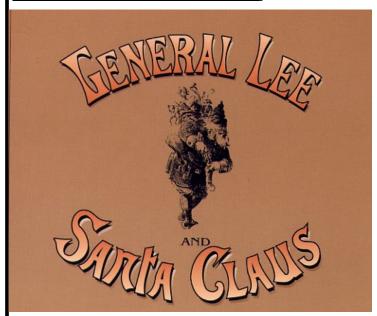
Around the Confederation





General Lee and Santa Claus

I recently came across an interesting Christmas-y story about General Robert E Lee. I am not sure the story is true, but I found it interesting, so I thought I would share it with you. The story was written about by Louise Clack in her 1867 book titled <u>General Lee and Santa Claus: Mrs. Louise Clack's Christmas Gift to Her Little Southern Friends.</u>



As the story goes, sometime after the end of the Civil War, three young southern girls were confused as to why no Southern children received toys at Christmas during the war years. Their aunt suggested that the reason was because General Lee would not allow Santa to cross the lines into territory held by the South. The inquisitive girls took it upon themselves to write General Lee and find out if, in fact, this was the case. They greased the wheels by complimenting Lee, saying he was the "goodest man that ever lived" and that he "always spoke the truth." Their letter continued as follows:

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

They signed the letter with "Your little friends, Lutie, Birdie, and Minnie."
According to Mrs. Clack, General Lee wrote the little girls back, thanking them for their prayers, and explaining to them what happened to their toys. His letter stated the following:

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

"Halt! Halt!, I said; but at this the funny fellow laughed, and did not seem inclined to obey, so again I cried Halt!. And he drove down to my side with a sleigh full of toys. I was very sorry for him when I saw the disappointed expression of his face when I told him he could go no further South; and when he exclaimed, Oh, what will my little Southern children do! I felt more sorry, for I love little children to be happy, and especially at Christmas. But of one thing I was certain—I knew my little friends would prefer me to do my duty, rather than have all the toys in the world; so I said: Santa Claus, take every one of the toys you have back as far as Baltimore, sell them, and with the money you get buy medicines, bandages, ointments, and delicacies for our sick and wounded men; do it and do it quickly—it will be all right with the children."

Lee continued his letter, stating that Santa saluted, drove away, and returned before dawn with not only the requested supplies, but much more for the sick and wounded men, and that Santa did this every Christmas Eve during the war. Lee closed his letter by inviting the three girls to write him again and signed off with, "Your true friend, General Robert E. Lee."

I have no proof that these letters were ever truly written or exchanged. Whether they were real or simply a work of Mrs. Clack's imagination, I thought they gave an interesting perspective on that period in our nation's

history. I hope you enjoyed the story as much as I did.

And I pray you all will remember the true meaning of Christmas, as detailed in the Bible in Luke Chapter 2. It is my family's long-standing tradition to read the story of Christ's birth on Christmas morning and consider the greatest gift we've ever been given—a baby in a manger, who would grow into the Savior, crucified to pay the price for our sin, in order that we can have relationship with God.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luke 2:14 NKJV)

A Confederate Christmas Tale

It was Thursday, Christmas day of 1862, and the guns at Fredericksburg had fallen silent just ten days before with over ten thousand Union soldiers of the Army of the Potomac and half that number of Confederates from the Army of Northern Virginia lying dead or wounded beyond the city. That night, a twenty-one year old cannoneer from Richmond, Lieutenant William Gordon McCabe, sat in his bivouac penning some lines of verse . . . a poem in which he took a bit of literary license, as the weather that December in Virginia was unseasonably warm and would become even warmer the following month when the retreating Union Army virtually sank in a sea of melting mire during its humiliating "mud march" northward. The following poem was soon published in a number of Southern newspapers, such as Richmond's "Southern Literary Messenger."

the snow is falling overhead;
I hear the lonely sentry's tread,
and distant watch-fires light the sky.
Dim forms go flitting through the gloom;
The soldiers cluster round the blaze
To talk of other Christmas days,
And softly speak of home and home
My saber swinging overhead,
gleams in the watch-fire's fitful glow,
while fiercely drives the blinding snow,
and memory leads me to the dead.

My thoughts go wandering to and fro, vibrating 'twixt the Now and Then; I see the low-browed home again, the old hall wreathed in mistletoe. And sweetly from the far off years comes borne the laughter faint and low, the voices of the Long Ago! My eyes are wet with tender tears. I feel again the mother kiss, I see again the glad surprise That lighted up the tranquil eyes And brimmed them o'er with tears of bliss As, rushing from the old hall-door, She fondly clasped her wayward boy -Her face all radiant with they joy She felt to see him home once more. My saber swinging on the bough Gleams in the watch-fire's fitful glow, while fiercely drives the blinding snow aslant upon my saddened brow Those cherished faces are all gone!

Asleep within the quiet graves where lies the snow in drifting waves, — And I am sitting here alone. There's not a comrade here tonight but knows that loved ones far away on bended knees this night will pray: "God bring our darling from the fight." But there are none to wish me back, for me no yearning prayers arise the lips are mute and closed the eyes — My home is in the bivouac."

Even though the overwhelming Confederate victory at Fredericksburg was a welcome present for the beleaguered South on this second Christmas of the War, it did little to restore the festive season that had reigned in the antebellum days. Unlike New England where the celebration of Christmas had been illegal or and least severely frowned upon until the mid-Eighteenth Century and did not even become an official holiday in the United States until 1870, the season had always been a joyful time throughout the South. Homes had been decorated, Christmas trees lit with candles, holiday parties given and presents exchanged, with Saint Nicholas paying a visit to all the Southern children each Christmas Eve. As the War dragged on, however, such happy times began to grow ever more dim as it became difficult to obtain the usual necessities for the season and letters from those on the

fighting fronts became the dearest presents. In the wartime Southern homes, virtually all imported goods were impossible to to obtain, honey and sorghum had to be substituted for sugar in making Christmas cakes and candies and gifts were mainly hand made or created from recycled items, particularly the gifts for the children. In this respect, fanciful tales were created to explains Santa's failure to fill their Christmas stockings, such as how the blockade prevented his visits to the South. Some parents told their children that Santa Claus was actually a Yankee and had been stopped at the border, while others went even further by saying that Father Christmas had been shot by the Yankees. Even at the Confederate White House, President Davis and his family had little in the way of Christmas celebrations, as revealed in letters written by First Lady Varina Davis. In one such letter Mrs. Davis wrote that General Lee had visited the residence a few days before Christmas while she was working in Richmond helping to repair old toys as gifts for orphan children. She said that the general had stopped by to apologize for mistakenly receiving a barrel of sweet potatoes that was supposed to be delivered to the White House for the holidays. Lee said he had distributed the potatoes to the troops, and Mrs. Davis told him she was most pleased that the food had gone to the soldiers instead.



Lt. William Gordon McCabe

At the battle of Fredericksburg, Lieutenant McCabe had served as the adjutant to another twenty-one year old officer from Richmond and a fellow student at the University of Virginia, Captain William Ransom Johnson Pegram, who had most effectively commanded a battery of horse artillery in Major General A. P. Hill's division on the Confederate right flank. Young Pegram would later rise to the rank of colonel and die in action at the Battle of Five Forks a few days prior to General Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, while McCabe would become a captain and survive the War to become a well-known author and translator, as well as an educator who founded his own university preparatory school, first in Petersburg and later in Richmond, and served as its principal for forty years. After Colonel Pegram's death, Captain McCabe stated at his funeral that Pegram had never lost a gun during his four years of service until the one at which he died was captured. Two decades later McCabe, who had obtained the bullet-ridden battle flag of Pegram's battalion from the dead colonel's mother, would present it at a reunion of the battalion's veterans.

William McCabe came from a highly respected Richmond family in which his father, Reverend John Collins McCabe, was a noted authority on Virginia's colonial church history, his great grandfather, James McCabe, had been an officer under General Benedict Arnold in the invasion of Canada during the Revolutionary War, and his great, great grandfather, George Taylor, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Reverend McCabe was also a close friend of Edgar Allen Poe when Poe was serving as editor of Richmond's "Southern Literary Messenger." Prior to the War Between the States, the elder McCabe had been the rector of the Church of the Ascension in Baltimore and later the rector of Saint Anne's Parish in Maryland's Anne Arundel County. When Virginia seceded in 1861, Reverend McCabe bravely sailed back to Richmond through the Union blockade and became the chaplain of the Thirty-Second Virginia Infantry Regiment. The following year, he was appointed as the chaplain general of Richmond's prisoner-of-war facilities, including Libby Prison, a post he held until

the end of the War. His son William entered the University of Virginia in 1860 but when war broke out a year later, he , like William Pegram and many other of the University's students, left their classes to offer their services to the Confederacy, with young McCabe marching to Harper's Ferry as a member of the Student Guard and then volunteering as a private in the Richmond Howitzers. After serving with that artillery unit throughout the Peninsula Campaign in 1862, McCabe was commissioned a first lieutenant and appointed as adjutant of Atkinson's Heavy Artillery Battalion. Following his service at Fredericksburg with Captain Pegram's Battery, Lieutenant McCabe was transferred to Lightfoot's Light Artillery Battalion in 1863 where he saw action during the battle at Chancellorsville.

Later that year, McCabe became the assistant adjutant-general in Charleston where he was involved in the successful defense of Fort Sumter, as well as that of Battery Wagner on Morris Island. The latter fortification was the scene of both naval bombardments and two land assaults, the first by a single brigade in June of 1863 and the second a month later by a much larger force of ten regiments headed by the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment of United States Colored Troops . . . the attack depicted in the the 1989 film "Glory." For his service in South Carolina, General Beauregard recommended McCabe's promotion to captain and placed him on the staff of Brigadier General Walter Stevens, the chief engineer in the Army of Northern Virginia. Then, in 1864, McCabe rejoined Colonel William Pegram and became adjutant of Pegram's Light Artillery Battalion, participating in all its battles from the Wilderness to Five Forks, the scene of Pegram's death. Rather than surrendering with General Lee at Appomattox on April 9, Captain McCabe and several other artillery officers made their way to Greensboro in North Carolina to join Generals Johnston and Beauregard. Johnston, however, realized that all was lost and after several days of negotiations with Union General William Sherman, surrendered the remaining troops in the Army of Tennessee on April 26.

Following Johnston's surrender, McCabe returned to Richmond to receive his parole the following month and by October of that year he had already established his school in Petersburg. His rapid efforts to help restore the South's educational system were soon widely recognized, even in the North. A month after the school opened its doors, the "Nation" magazine in New York wrote that "such a school as McCabe's would be an honor to any state," and the following month the "Atlantic Monthly" in Boston wrote that there would be "nothing better the South can do in her schools than to take this (McCabe's) school as a model." During the forty years of the school's existence, its graduates went on to win high honors at not only the University of Virginia but many other leading universities throughout the South and even at such great Northern institutions as Harvard, Princeton, Yale and Columbia, as well as the military academies at West Point and Annapolis. A year after the school closed in 1901, McCabe was offered the newly created post as president of the University of Virginia and while he declined the position, the University named him to its Board of Visitors where he served as vice-rector for several years, as well as hanging a portrait of McCabe by the noted English artist, Walter Chamberlain Urwick, in one of the University's halls.

Aside from his academic duties, William McCabe also served for many years as the president of several Southern institutions, including the Virginia Historical Society, the Westmoreland Club of Richmond and the Virginia chapters of both the Sons of the Revolution and the Society of the Cincinnati. The former Confederate officer was also a member of the Virginia Gettysburg Monument Commission, as well as the State commissioner and director of the 1905 Jamestown Exposition. McCabe was also well known as an author and translator, including his noted 1879 anthology of heroic poems by many renowned writers from both America and abroad, "Ballads of Battle and Bravery," his various historical works, biographies, Latin text books and a translation of "Caesar's Gallic Wars," which won him fame as

one of the nation's leading Latin scholars, as well numerous article for various publications in both America and Great Britain. While McCabe had penned another widely-published and highly nostalgic wartime poem, "Dreaming in the Trenches" which he composed in 1864 during the siege of Petersburg, perhaps the lines he wrote in December of 1862 at Fredericksburg best invoked the feeling of sadness and despair that was then being felt throughout the South at Christmastime.



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