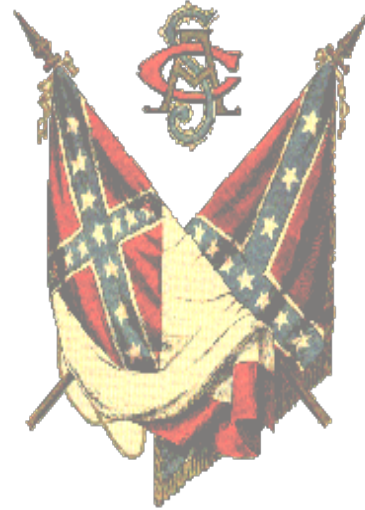




**NEWSLETTER OF STATE OF DADE CAMP NO. 707**



**THE  
SILVER  
GRAY**



---

Vol. 16

January 2011

No. 1

---



Guests arriving for the Secession Ball in Charleston, SC. Honoring the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Secession of the state from the Union.

# Virginia's Black Confederates

BY WALTER WILLIAMS (Black Syndicated Newspaper Writer)

One tragedy of war is that its victors write its history and often do so with bias and dishonesty... Kevin Sieff, staff writer for The Washington Post, penned an article "Virginia 4th-grade textbook criticized over claims on black Confederate soldiers," (Oct. 20, 2010). The textbook says that blacks fought on the side of the Confederacy. Sieff claims that "Scholars are nearly unanimous in calling these accounts of black Confederate soldiers a misrepresentation of history." Let's examine that accepted scholarship.

In April 1861, a Petersburg, Va., newspaper proposed "three cheers for the patriotic free Negroes of Lynchburg" after 70 blacks offered "to act in whatever capacity may be assigned to them" in defense of Virginia. Ex-slave Frederick Douglass observed, "There are at the present moment, many colored men in the Confederate Army doing duty not only as cooks, servants and laborers, but as real soldiers, having muskets on their shoulders and bullets in their pockets, ready to shoot down ... and do all that soldiers may do to destroy the Federal government."

Charles H. Wesley, a distinguished black historian who lived from 1891 to 1987, wrote "The Employment of Negroes as Soldiers in the Confederate Army," in the *Journal of Negro History* (1919). He says, "Seventy free blacks enlisted in the Confederate Army in Lynchburg, Virginia. Sixteen companies (1,600) of free men of color marched through Augusta, Georgia on their way to fight in Virginia..." One would have to be stupid to think that blacks were fighting in order to preserve slavery. What's untaught in most history classes is that it is relatively recent that we Americans think of ourselves as citizens of United States. For most of our history, we thought of ourselves as citizens of Virginia, citizens of New York and citizens of whatever state in which we resided. Wesley says, "To the majority of the Negroes, as to all the South, the invading armies of the Union seemed to be ruthlessly attacking independent States, invading the beloved homeland and trampling upon all that these men held dear." Blacks have fought in all of our wars both before and after slavery, in hopes of better treatment afterwards.

Denying the role, and thereby cheapening the memory, of the Confederacy's slaves and freemen who fought in a failed war of independence is part of the agenda to cover up Abraham Lincoln's unconstitutional acts to prevent Southern secession. Did states have a right to secede? At the 1787 Constitutional Convention, James Madison rejected a proposal that would allow the federal government to suppress a seceding state. He said, "A Union of the States containing such an ingredient seemed to provide for its own destruction. The use of force against a State would look more like a declaration of war than an infliction of punishment and would probably be considered by the party attacked as a dissolution of all previous compacts by which it might be bound."

Walter E. Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University

# **The Vote For Secession: South Carolina in Early December, 1860**

Bernhard Thuersam, Director  
Cape Fear Historical Institute

In the December 6 election of delegates to the secession convention voting in most places was light, a fact that has sometimes been interpreted as indicating a strong reaction from the secession enthusiasm so manifest at the time of the passage of the convention bill. Actually the light vote must be explained by the absence, in most places, of a contest.

When the secession convention met December 17, South Carolina was confident that her action would soon be followed by other States. Governor Gist, in his message to the legislature at the end of November, had stated that there was not the least doubt that Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Texas and Arkansas would immediately follow, and eventually all the South. Several days before the convention assembled, John A. Elmore and Charles E. Hooker, commissioners from Alabama and Mississippi respectively, arrived in Columbia. They interviewed practically every member of the legislature and the assembling convention, and positively guaranteed secession in their States.

Early in December a caucus of twenty-six Southern congressmen from eight States met and unanimously decided that immediate action by South Carolina was desirable. Soon thereafter the very encouraging address of the Southern congressmen to their constituents appeared:

“The argument is exhausted. All hope of relief in the Union through the agency of committees, Congressional legislation, or constitutional amendment, is extinguished, and we trust the South will not be deceived by appearances or the pretense of new guarantees. In our judgment the Republicans are resolute in the purpose to grant nothing that will or ought to satisfy the South. We are satisfied the honor, safety, and independence of the Southern People require the organization of a Southern Confederacy – a result to be obtained only by separate State secession.”

Assembling at the Baptist church in Columbia December 17, the convention called D.F. Jamison, delegate from Barnwell. If elections meant anything, he said, the State should secede as quickly as possible. The greatest honor of his life, he said, would be to sign as chairman of the convention an ordinance of secession.”

(South Carolina Goes to War, 1860-1865, Charles Edward Cauthen, UNC Press, 1950, pp. 63-68)

# Massacre at Marianna, Florida.

From Confederate military history; a library of Confederate States history (1899) Vol. XI, Chap. VI, page 114 By Clement A. Evans.

On the morning of the 25th of September, 1864, the usually quiet little town of Marianna, in west Florida, of about 2,000 inhabitants, was in a state of great anxiety over the report that the Yankees were coming. On this occasion, however, September 25th, Colonel Montgomery made a personal reconnaissance and found the report well founded. He hastily returned to headquarters and sent out couriers to his scattered companies, with orders to report in all haste at Marianna. The church bells were rung, calling out all citizens to the court house, where a meeting was held and resolutions passed to repel the invaders. A few Confederate soldiers, then at home on sick leave, formed a nucleus of an organization which was at once perfected. Grayheaded old men, boys under 16 years of age within the town and ten miles around, regardless of previous Union sentiment, arrived with shotguns and formed what they themselves called "The Cradle and Grave militia company," in all about 200, and partly mounted. They elected Captain Norwood, a prominent Unionist, as their captain, and reported for duty to Colonel Montgomery, full of ardor and brave endeavor. The Federal command consisted of a battalion of the Second Maine cavalry under Maj. Nathan Cutler, of Augusta, Me., and several companies of deserters, the so-called First regiment of Florida Union troops, and two full companies of ferocious Louisiana negroes, in all about 600, under the command of Brigadier- General Ashboth.

About two o'clock in the day the advanced pickets of the enemy made their appearance on the edge of the town, from the Campbell ton road. It was then too late to draw in Colonel Montgomery s straggling line, so fire was opened upon the pickets about 200 yards in front of our men, under which the Federal advance made a hasty retreat, inspiring the little Spartan band of defenders with hope of victory. But presently the main body made its appearance and General Ashboth detached a part of his command to flank the village, and advanced the main body directly toward the church. An indiscriminate firing began from the Confederate front and rear, the old men and beardless boys fighting like enraged lions, disputing every inch of ground. The contest was fierce and deadly for half an hour, when General Ashboth ordered the church, boarding-house and a private residence opposite burned. The militia kept their ground manfully between the two walls of flames. In the meantime the Federal flanking party gained the rear of the militia and commenced an indiscriminate slaughter, giving no quarter to any one. The negro companies in particular acted in the most fiendish manner. Old men and boys who offered to surrender were driven into the flames of the burning buildings ; young lads who laid down their arms were cut to pieces; others picked up bodily by stalwart negro soldiers and thrown into the seething, burning church. The charred remains of several of the half-grown boys were afterward found in the ruins of the church. Colonel Montgomery and his staff made a very precipitate retreat toward the Chipola river, the eastern boundary of the village, leaving the men to fight it out the best they could. The colonel was unhorsed and captured, and the staff made their way across the river in

safety. The Confederates scattered in every direction, every man for himself, pursued by the Maine cavalry who kept up a steady fire upon them. The casualties on the Federal side were Captain Adams and 10 men of the Second Maine cavalry, killed. General Ashboth and Maj. N. Cutler were seriously wounded, and about 25 enlisted men wounded. The loss on our side was about 60 killed, burned and wounded. About 50 of the Confederates succeeded in crossing the Chipola river and tore up the bridge. Captain Miller, quartermaster, and Dr. Robin son, post surgeon, made attempts to reform the scattered command, and held them together until late in the evening, when they were reinforced by the arrival of Captain Milton with 75 mounted men. The whole fight lasted about an hour. With the retreat of the Confederates across the river, the town was in full possession of the Federals. General Ashboth and Major Cutler were carried to a private house, where their wounds were dressed. A council of war was held by the Federal officers, who concluded that in consequence of the wounded condition of their general they would return to Pensacola with their prisoners, contraband and plunder. About mid night General Ashboth was carried off in a carriage. Major Cutler and the other wounded were left behind, and the town evacuated. The several companies of Confederate cavalry who had been previously sent for made their appearance on the east side of the river, anticipating and hoping for a renewal of hostilities next morning. By dawn their scouts were sent in town and learned of its evacuation by the enemy.

It was deemed advisable not to attempt a pursuit until stronger reinforcements that were looked for from Tallahassee should arrive, but to take possession of the town and await results. The prisoners carried off by the Federals were most of them old men and boys who had surrendered, also a number of non-combatants, in all about 100 men. They were sent to northern prisons, principally Elmira, N. Y. About 40 of these unfortunates survived the rigor of the climate and the painful experience of prison life and returned to their homes so enfeebled in health and broken-hearted that most of them were soon released from a life of suffering before the year expired, and but few are living to tell the tale of their sufferings.

On the arrival of Col. G. W. Scott with a battalion the day following, an attempt at pursuit was made, but the enemy had 24 hours start and the desperate Confederates failed to overtake them. The day after the fight, Marianna presented a pitiable sight. The dead and wounded lay all about, and the wails and cries of mothers, wives and sisters could be heard in every direction. Women and children searched for father, son or brother in the ashes of the burnt buildings. Here and there a charred thigh or ghastly skull was disinterred from the debris. Eventually some sort of order was evolved from the chaos. The dead were buried, the wounded citizens taken to their homes or those of friends, and the Federal wounded to the military hospital. While this skirmish was a defeat to the people of Marianna, it in reality resulted in a victory. The objective point of General Ashboth's expedition was to capture Tallahassee, the capital of the State, and as the resistance made at Marianna frustrated his object and compelled his hasty retreat to Pensacola, his success was barren.

The foregoing account of this cruel raid was given by the post surgeon, an eye-witness of the horrors of the invasion and the atrocities that were perpetrated.

## The Chaplain's Corner



The Bible is full of words for praise for heroes, as if to give a blessing to the normal wish of the heart to honor those who serve and have served.

As we go into the month of January, we need to remember two great generals of the Confederacy that were born in this month. Generals Lee and Jackson were men who went through many battles to show their devotion to their country and its citizens.

So as we honor these great generals this month by going to a Lee-Jackson Banquet or some other function, let us also remember the military person that is defending our country now.

**1 Samuel 4:9** *"Be strong and quit yourselves like men.....quit yourselves like men and fight."*

**Prayer List:** Let us All pray for a better New Year.

Happy New year to all in the SCV.

James Fletcher, Chaplain  
SCV Camp #707  
Ph. 256-657-5998  
E-mail [jdfletcher@stateofdade.com](mailto:jdfletcher@stateofdade.com)



# Message from the Commander

By Freddie Parris



I hope all of you had a great holiday season and are now ready to move forward with the New Year.

The annual Lee Jackson Dinner will be held on Saturday, January 22, 2011 at the Gordon Lee house in Chickamauga, Georgia. The cost will be \$12.00 per person. The price is very reasonable and Commander Mark A. Simpson, South Carolina Division who will be featured at this year's event, is a good speaker.

The State of Dade officers for 2011 will be elected, as usual, at the February Camp meeting. Anyone who would like to stand for an office should let Larry Wheeler know before the meeting, or we will take nominations from the floor.

At the recent Mechanized Cavalry election, Denny Forster was elected First Lieutenant of the First Troop and Freddie Parris became First Sergeant.

We will have our booth, as usual, at the annual Civil War relic show in Dalton on the first week end in February. We hope that everyone will plan to attend and take part in this event. I also hope that all camp members will start making plans now to take part in the big re-enactment at Bridgeport, Alabama in March.

Freddie Parris, Commander,  
State of Dade Camp 707  
(706) 657-5000





## UPCOMING EVENTS

January 16: Lee-Jackson Dinner: The annual Lee Jackson Dinner will be held on Saturday, January 22, 2011 at the Gordon Lee House in Chickamauga, Georgia. The cost will be \$12.00 per person. See Adjutant Larry Wheeler for details. This will count as our monthly meeting for January. Next meeting will be in February.



**STATE OF DADE CAMP No. 707**  
**Sons of Confederate Veterans**  
**Larry D. Wheeler (Adjutant)**  
**639 Canyon Park Dr.**  
**Trenton, Georgia 30752-2640**

**HONORING OUR CONFEDERATE HERITAGE**

