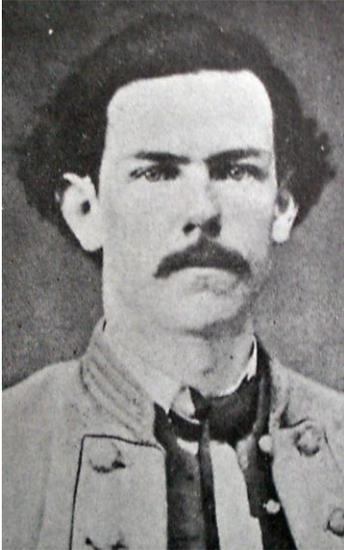
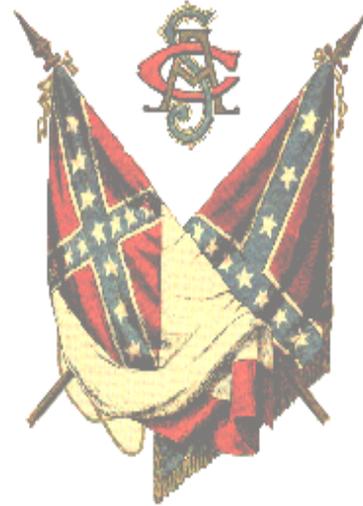


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**NEWSLETTER OF STATE OF DADE CAMP NO. 707**



**THE  
SILVER  
GRAY**



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An earlier Christmas Parade.

# **Death of Jefferson Davis Remembered The Christmas of 1889 was a sad time in the South.**

By Calvin Johnson Jr.

December 6th, is the 118th anniversary of the death of a great American Hero — Jefferson Davis.

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

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

The Sons of Confederate Veterans have declared 2008, the "Year of Jefferson Davis." Remembrance events will include the re-opening of "Beauvoir" on Jefferson Davis' 200th birthday---June 3, 2008. This was Davis' last home that was damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library and Museum will be rebuilt and re-open about two years after the house. Beauvoir is located on the beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast. See more at: [www.beauvoir.org](http://www.beauvoir.org)

The New York Times reported the death of Jefferson Davis; New Orleans, December 8, 1889 — Quote "A careful tally of the visitors shows that about 40,000 persons, mostly women and children, viewed the remains today. This crowd included, in solemn and respectful attendance, all conditions of Whites, Blacks, ex-Confederates, ex-Federals, and even Indians and Chinamen." — Unquote

Davis' Death was also the page 1 story in Dixie; December 1889, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution; — Quote "The Great Chieftain passes over the river...and rests with Jackson under the shade of the trees. The hearts of a great and loving people, crushed by the death of a great leader. The Hero of hard-fought fields in Mexico. The peerless Statesman in Federal Councils. Jefferson Davis is no more!!!" — Unquote

Who was Jefferson Davis?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Lest We Forget!!!**



# Christmas During the Civil War

Many of today's American Christmas customs are rooted in the early 19th century. Perhaps ironically, they came to maturity during the Civil War, when violence, chaos, and staggering personal losses seemed likely to drown out the choruses of "Peace on Earth." Many of the artists of the period, Winslow Homer, Thomas Nast, and Alfred Waud created visual chronicles of the spreading influence of many holiday traditions we enjoy today, including Santa Claus Christmas trees, gift-giving, caroling, holiday feasting, and Christmas cards.

Nast and Homer drew scenes of the wartime practice of sending Christmas boxes filled with homemade clothes and food items to soldiers at the front. The war made an



impact on the nation, both North and South, in the ways Christmas was observed. Christmas boxes like the ones Homer and Nast pictured gave their recipients a much-needed mental and physical boost. When in 1861, for the first Harper's Weekly Christmas cover of the war, Homer drew overjoyed soldiers reveling in the contents of Adams Express boxes from home.

The most beloved symbol of the American family Christmas – the decorated Christmas tree – came into its own during the Civil War. Christmas trees had become popular in the decade before the war, and in the early 1860s, many families were

beginning to decorate them. Illustrators working for the national weeklies helped popularize the practice by putting decorated tabletop Christmas trees in their drawings.

On the home front, the homes were mostly decorated with different kinds of pines, holly, ivy, and mistletoe. While there were many families who spent lonely Christmases during the war, they still had a Christmas tree that was the centerpiece for the home. Most trees were small and sat on a table.

The decorations were mostly home made, such as strings of dried fruit, popcorn, pinecones. Colored paper, silver foil, as well as spun glass were popular choices for making decorations. Santa brought gifts to the children. Those gifts were home made, such as carved toys, cakes or fruits.

It was only a matter of time before the Christmas tree made its way into military camps. Alfred Bellard of the 5th New Jersey remarked about the arrival of the newly popular Christmas icon to his camp along the lower Potomac River.

Christmas carols were sung both at home and in the camps. Can you imagine how homesick the soldiers would become singing these songs. Some of the most popular ones were "Silent Night", "Away in the Manger," "Oh Come All Ye Faithful", and "Deck the Halls".

By 1863, the Union blockade of the Southern coasts had made it nearly impossible for Santa Claus to visit homes in the South; scarcity of goods and the consequent high prices put both store-bought presents and raw materials for homemade gifts out of the financial reach of many Southern consumers. Quite a few mothers explained to their children that even Santa Claus would not be able run the formidable blockade.

Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas of Augusta, Georgia, told how a simple act of faith on the part of her children caused her to dig deeper for a holiday offering on Christmas Eve: "I have written so much that it is now after 9 o'clock and yet I have said nothing of Turner's and Mary Bell's party which we gave them last week in lieu of the Santa Claus presents. Mary Bell has been told that Santa Claus has not been able to run the blockade and has gone to war – Yet at this late hour when I went upstairs Thursday night of the party I found that the trusting faith of childhood they had hung their little socks and stockings in case Santa Claus did come. I had given the subject no thought whatever, but invoking Santa Claus aid I was enabled when their little eyes opened to enjoy their pleasure to find cake and money in their socks."

As the war dragged on, deprivation replaced bounteous repasts and familiar faces were missing from the family dinner table. Soldiers used to "bringing in the tree" and caroling in church were instead scavenging for firewood and singing drinking songs around the campfire. Therefore, the holiday celebration most associated with family and home was a contradiction. It was a joyful, sad, religious, boisterous, and subdued event.

**Wishing everyone**

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**A Southern Christmas**  
**And**  
**A Confederate New Year!**



## The Chaplain's Corner

Even as tiny children wait with great anticipation for the coming of Christmas morning, so the world had been waiting for many centuries for the appearance of the Savior. He did not appear until "the fullness of the time" according to the Bible story. In this fact, there is great and abiding comfort for all who wait for loved ones to accept the Savior.

The great gift of Christmas is the promise of God's love revealed at the proper time. Father, we accept the promises of Christmas, and ask thee to make them realities in our hearts and lives.

**Galatians 4:4** *But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.*

**Prayer List:** Lewis Leach still continues his great fight for recovery. He has been at Erlanger hospital and the Health Center at Standifer Place. Wedge Morrison's granddaughter, Rachel, has a very serious illness. Ronnie Watts requests prayer for his Dad who has health problems.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to Camp #707

May God bless,  
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