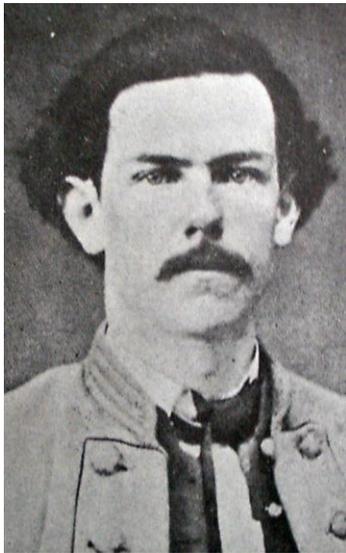
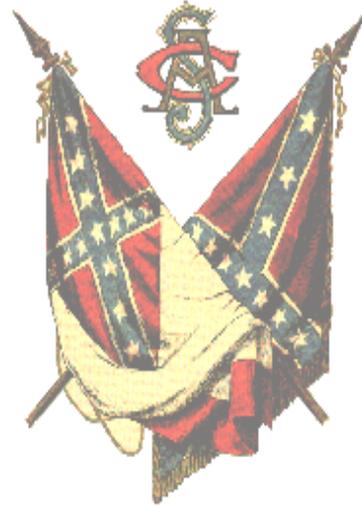




NEWSLETTER OF STATE OF DADE CAMP NO. 707



**THE
SILVER
GRAY**



Vol. 17

September 2012

No. 9



Cannon on Cameron Hill.

Poland's Contribution to the American Civil War

LeRoy H. Fischer

Polish Count Adam Gurowski's made a big contribution to the extremist, abolition-minded wing of the Republican Party that brought on the war.. No man saw the lines of demarcation more distinctly [between Radical and Moderate Republicans] than he. No man labored more tirelessly to strengthen the Radicals, dubbed by [John] "Jacobins," after a leftist faction of the French Revolution.

The attitudes and approaches of the Radicals in preventing compromise while secession snowballed are well illustrated by Gurowski's relations with the Peace Convention, which assembled at Willard's Hotel on February 4, 1861. Meeting at the call of the Virginia legislature, all States were represented except Arkansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, California, Oregon, and the seven of the lower South. Although the convention assembled too late to be a controlling factor, its activities proved all the more futile, because Radicals insisted that its Republican members maintain an uncompromising stand. The convention's seven proposed amendments to the Constitution, presented to Congress on February 27, evoked negligible support.

Gurowski was quick to acquaint himself with the Northern delegates, and within a week of the opening of the convention he was conversing freely with a large number. He did not have access to the convention itself, which met behind closed doors, but he managed with uncanny accuracy to discover what was occurring. Realizing that negotiations were taking an unsatisfactory course, he unassumingly appeared before an informal group of the Northern members one evening at Willard's, suggested a course of action, and related plots [by Southerners] to seize the Union.

He told them they would "make a mess of it," and impetuously questioned: "Are you lambs to be eaten up unresistingly by the wolves of secession?" Then he unfolded the plots. Federal property would be transferred as rapidly as possible to the South. Armed Southerners would pack Washington when the electoral votes were counted in the House of Representatives on February 13. They would start a riot, then seize the executive departments and the capitol and establish a confederacy with Jefferson Davis as president.

Radical propaganda spread by Gurowski and supported by [New York delegate James] Wadsworth and other Republicans,...was instrumental in the breakdown of the Peace Convention. When Northern delegates heard of the Count's alarms, they doubted their efforts. Fears increased, and the spirit of compromise sank deeper and deeper as hate flared in the convention debates."

(Lincoln's Gadfly, Adam Gurowski, LeRoy H. Fischer, University of Oklahoma Press, 1964, pp. 77-79)

ANNUAL DUES

Dues payable August 1 of each year and are delinquent November 1 of each year. Dues collected by Larry Wheeler will be sent in no later than 26 October 2012 to insure that they reach HQ in time. If you are delinquent, the SCV will stop all publications and remove your name from the membership rolls. After November 1, you must send in your dues plus a \$5.00 reinstatement fee.

DUES ARE AS FOLLOWS

Sons of Confederate Veterans	\$30.00 per year
Georgia Division Sons of Confederate Veterans	\$12.00 per year
State of Dade Camp #707	\$ 5.00 per year
TOTAL	\$47.00 per year

You may pay Larry at the meeting or mail your DUES to:

Larry D. Wheeler (Adjutant)
639 Canyon Park Dr.
Trenton, Georgia 30752-2640

Thank you for being a Son of the South. The South needs the support of all of her Sons. Please continue your membership and support THE CAUSE AND PROTECT OUR HERITAGE.

Thank you for your kind assistance in this matter.

Yours in Service to the South,

Larry W. Wheeler, Adjutant

Thomas Webster and the first wartime cannon made in the local area

When Thomas Webster was a boy living near Birmingham, England, his father took him to see George Stephenson and his amazing new locomotive. From that day forward, he knew that his future would be as a machinist, helping to produce the powerful new engines that would change the way people traveled and shipped freight around the world.

Thomas Webster eventually made his way to Chattanooga, where he capped off his remarkable career as a builder of engines and foundries. He had been apprenticed at age 13 in an engineering firm, then, when he was 17 he struck out for America to ply his trade. At New York City he worked in the shops of the Long Island Railroad. Then in 1843 he moved to Philadelphia. He was foreman of the Reading Railroad car shop, and he held a position with Eastman, Harrison and Company Locomotive Works, building machinery for Russia.

While with the Baldwin Locomotive Works, Webster was entrusted with delivering engines to many new railroad enterprises throughout the country. One of these deliveries of a Baldwin Locomotive was to the new Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. The engine parts went to wagons over rough mountain roads to Pittsburgh, then via steamboat along the Ohio and Cumberland rivers to Nashville. While there, Webster was persuaded to take a position as the N&C's master mechanic.

Thomas Webster moved in the winter of 1857 to Chattanooga, having decided to set up his own foundry. His Chattanooga Foundry and Machine Works was erected on King Street near South Market. His associates in the foundry operation included Pleasant Andes Mitchell, who had helped build the N&C, and John A. Lee. Webster continued to travel throughout the South on various projects. He built the English Company's shops at South Pittsburg, and he completed the first three furnaces at Birmingham, Ala.

Thomas Webster became an active member of the Presbyterian Church at Chattanooga, and he served as an alderman. He was one of the prime movers in setting up a city water company. The Webster's lived on King Street near the foundry. He had married Kate Rhodes of Philadelphia in 1844, and they had three sons and three daughters.

The families remained in Chattanooga during the opening months of the Civil War. However, at the time of the first attack on the city in June of 1862, they packed some of their belongings in an ox cart and hurried to a retreat near Green's Lake. When his Union threat had subsided, the Webster's returned to King Street. The Webster foundry during this period was kept busy night and day making ammunition and casting

cannon. One of the cannon was dubbed the “Lady Lilla” in honor of one of the Webster daughters.

Early in 1862 Robert L. Barry, John A. Armstrong, and Richard L. Watkins recruited 113 men and organized a battery of light artillery; Watkins purchased four fully equipped cannons for the unit. As was the custom of the day, the men elected their officers. Due to his better education, Barry was supported by Watkins for the position of Captain. The results of the election made Robert L. Barry, captain; Richard L. Watkins, first lieutenant; James Lauderdale, junior first lieutenant; John A. Armstrong, senior second lieutenant; and John Springfield, junior second lieutenant; A. N. Moon, orderly sergeant. The unit was mustered into Confederate service April 4, 1862, as the Lookout Battery, although it was more commonly called Barry’s Battery. Although Barry was the Captain, Watkins was still very much in charge. He constructed a redoubt and positioned the guns near his house on Cameron Hill. For weapons, he received the cannons that had been recently manufactured by Thomas Webster at Chattanooga.

This was the only local organized artillery unit. This unit fought in the first action in the local area when General James Negley brought his artillery over Signal Mountain and shelled Chattanooga from Stringer’s Ridge near the present tunnel. The Lookout Artillery occupied the earthen redoubt fort on Cameron Hill and successfully fought off the Federals.

Of his battery Captain Barry says: “It was the darling and pride of the city, being composed, as it were, of its very best blood.” An opportunity soon came to test the bravery of the men and the affection of their friends. Upon the approach of the enemy toward Chattanooga, Captain Barry ordered the battery upon the small cannon hill near the river to defend the city. The citizens followed and refused to leave the hill, even at the command of General Leadbetter.

“But,” says Captain Barry, “an order soon came from the general on the other side in the shape of a shell from one of his guns. It was amazing to see with what haste they obeyed, for the shell burst just over their heads and they retreated in quick time.” The battery itself, however, endured its baptism of fire with bravery, and curiously enough, suffered not the slightest injury in this, its first engagement.” According to a local newspaper, this battery was the first to use a cannon cast in Tennessee. It was Amos Brice, a member of the battery who fired the first shot from the gun in the encounter with Negley.

Thomas Webster also helped develop a powder mill at Augusta, Ga., that gave much aid to the Confederate forces. The Websters were among those gathered at the Presbyterian Church on Aug. 21, 1863, for a special service of fasting and prayer called by President Jefferson Davis. A scream of a shell came across the top of the church and the boom of a Federal cannon was heard. The church began to empty though Dr. B.M. Palmer never paused in his long prayer.

Thomas Webster gained use of a boxcar and the family placed some of their furnishings and necessities there. Little Lilla Webster carried her favorite doll in her arms in the ride to Acworth, Ga. Thomas Webster later took the last boxcar south from Chattanooga to Griffin, Ga. The oldest Webster son, John William, joined the Confederate forces at age 18. Serving with Ashby's brigade, he was in the thick of fighting in numerous battles, but was never wounded.

The King Street foundry was destroyed by the war, but it was rebuilt and returned to operation. Thousands of tons of shells were gathered from battlefields around Chattanooga and heaped in the foundry yard to be reshaped into new iron products. However, the Webster foundry was struck by “an incendiary fire” shortly after reopening and was again ruined. The loss included patterns that had taken years to develop.

The foundry was rebuilt at the same six-acre site and remained in operation until the winter of 1874 when Webster sold many of his patterns to one of his young workers, John Cahill. Webster then started a firm manufacturing small castings and brassware on Montgomery Avenue (Main Street), but this factory was washed away in a flood in 1875.

The Websters later lived on McCallie Avenue near Houston Street. Their daughter, Kate, married the energetic promoter Charles E. James, and they lived nearby. Little Lilla married George Washington Davenport, and they were also McCallie Avenue residents. The third daughter, Irene, married R.H. Bowron.

John William Webster, like his father, started out as a machinist. He ran the first engine on his brother-in-law's “dummy line” in 1886, then he was an engineer for the Chattanooga Southern Railroad. He was also an official of the Chattanooga Railway and Light Company.

At age 61, John William Webster took a position as a streetcar conductor. Known affectionately as “Daddy” Webster, he was “a great favorite of the streetcar boys, who gave him a Confederate uniform.” When he died in 1918, he was buried in this suit of gray. He had married Susie McCarver, who wrote a history of Chattanooga.

Thomas Webster also had twin boys, Harry and Thomas B. Harry worked for James Supply Company and was an iron and steel broker. A bachelor, he lived with his brother on McCallie Avenue. Thomas B. was in the hardware business. Like his other married brother, he had no sons — so this male line of Websters died out.

Thomas Webster lived until 1908 when he was 90 years. Two years earlier, it was said he was “as active and alert as any man of quick wit and a clear conscience should be.” He had recently been introduced at the opening of a new Masonic hall at Seventh and Cherry as the city's oldest living Mason.

A railroad freight depot was built at the site of the old Webster foundry on King Street. It was later operated as John's Railroad Salvage, then as the Freight Depot Marketplace. The site is now a parking lot.



Chaplain's Corner

II Samuel 22:4 I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from mine enemies. In this famous passage of a song by David, there is the universal hope of hearts to be saved from enemies and to give thanks to God for victory. Sometimes this praise must be given through tears, as families recall the great and terrible sacrifices of their service related fathers, sons, daughters, sisters and brothers. This loss is compounded when victory seems to be taken for granted by those who have not made sacrifices. Calling upon God for comfort and peace remains the way to personal victory over sorrow and

suffering. God, accept our deep gratitude for those who loved us with their very lives, and make us worthy of you.

Prayer list: Larry Wheeler continues to improve after his back surgery. Let us continue our thoughts and prayers for him.

I had open heart surgery on Aug. 14th and then had to have a pace maker on the 21st.. i arrived at home on Aug. 28th and have a long recovery time but hope to see many of you soon. also please keep me in your thoughts and prayers.

May God Bless,

James Fletcher, Chaplain

SCV Camp #707

Ph. 256-657-5998

E-mail jdfletcher@stateofdade.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 8-9th: Battle re-enactment: The annual re-enactment of the Battle of Tunnel Hill will be held on September 8-9th, 2012. All re-enactors are urged to attend. Call (423) 298-4544 for additional information.
- September 15th: The annual War Between the States Day event will be held on the grounds of the Gordon Lee Mansion at Chickamauga, Georgia. There will be all forms of period living history and a big barbeque Contest
- September 18th: Camp Meeting: The September 2012 meeting of the State of Dade Camp 707, Sons of Confederate Veterans will be held at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, September 18, 2012 at Randy's Restaurant in Trenton. We will meet to eat at 6:00 P.M. – there will be no retreat! Call (423) 298-4544 for directions.



STATE OF DADE CAMP No. 707
Sons of Confederate Veterans
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HONORING OUR CONFEDERATE HERITAGE

