



# THE LEGIONARY

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Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton Camp No. 273

Columbia, South Carolina ♦ [www.wadehamptoncamp.org](http://www.wadehamptoncamp.org)

A FRATERNAL ORGANIZATION OF SOUTHERN MEN

## Black Southerners in Confederate gray

Note: The writer gratefully acknowledges Zack Malpass, Murfreesboro SCV Camp 33 [TN], for so generously sharing his extensive research, and to Dr. George Smith, for providing both research and viewpoint.

February marks the beginning of Black History Month – a remembrance of important people and events of African American origin that began in 1926.

There have been many major contributions to our nation and to our society by black Americans some that have changed history – and are continuing to do so today. One area that has never received the recognition it deserved and has even been over-looked to a certain degree was that of black Southerners who fought for the Confederacy.



Confederate Soldiers of Color During the War

... Historian Erwin L. Jordan, Jr., calls it a “cover-up” which started back in 1865. He writes, “During my research on pension applications, I came across instances where black men stated they were soldiers, but you can plainly see where ‘soldier’ is crossed out and ‘body servant’ or ‘teamster’ inserted.”

See *Black Confederates*, Page 3

## Remembering Columbia's Longest Days

On February 17, 1865, Columbia was invaded, sacked, burned, and all but destroyed.

On that day, non-combatant residents in Columbia - black & white, slave & free, rich & poor - were terrorized, plundered, abused, ravished, and their homes and private property put to the torch by Federal troops.

This was not an act of war in the pejorative sense of the word. This was not collateral damage resulting from a heated battle between two opposing armies. This was a military invasion of an unarmed city and the conquest of a people — a war crime without precedence in our country's history!

The responsibility for the burning of Columbia rests squarely on the shoulders of Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, commander of the Federal forces.

Sherman's official report on the burning placed the blame on Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton III, who Sherman said had ordered the burning of cotton in the streets. Sherman later recanted this allegation and admitted lying in his *Memoirs*, Volume 11 page 287. He said, "In my official report of this conflagration I distinctly charged it to General Wade Hampton, and confess I did so pointedly to shake the faith of his people in him, for he was in my opinion a braggart and professed to be the special champion of South Carolina."

In 1867 a chance meeting of former combatants occurred in Federal Governor Orr's office in Columbia. Gen. Howard, commander of the US 15th Corps of Sherman's army during the burning, was to be introduced to Gen. Hampton in the presence of many dignitaries. Gen. Hampton said, "Before I take your hand General Howard, tell me

See *Remembering*, Page 2

I trust all that attended our Lee-Jackson banquet enjoyed Stan Clardy's "Soldier's in Gray." It was an exceptional performance that should have given you a better appreciation for both your Confederate ancestor(s) and Confederate heritage. For those of you that did not attend my only question is *Where Were You?*

We have several events of importance in the near future to include the State Convention. It will be held on March 14-15. I hope all of you will make plans to attend and express your opinion on the future of the SC Division. This is an election year for Division Commander and

other division level officers. *The Battle For Columbia* is just around the corner, May 3-4, and your help will be needed. I recall several months ago when voting on whether to continue the event, there were no dissenting votes. There will be work days leading up to the event where your services will be required in addition to needing your services during the event. Past Commander Tommy Rollings has agreed to serve as chairman of BFC.

I would ask every member to invite someone to a meeting. Most of our members joined as a result of being introduced to the SCV by a friend. I would also ask every member to make an effort to

attend meetings. When you joined the SCV you took a pledge to loyally support the activities of the camp. Meeting attendance is probably the least demanding means of supporting the camp.

An insert has been included in this issue of your newsletter to inform the membership of what was discussed at our staff meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Thursday February 21, 2008 at 6:00 pm. Our speaker for the evening will be Jack Marlar. His program will be on *Great Artillery Actions of the WBTS*. I look forward to seeing all of you with a guest on Thursday February 21, 2008 at 6:00 p.m.

## Chaplain's Pulpit

—LARRY BATES

Last month at the Lee-Jackson Banquet, I discussed a question which at times speaks to each of us: Why are we in the Sons of Confederate Veterans? It ought to be easy to answer, and to some it may be, but for many clarity is just out of reach. Honoring our ancestors is a big part to be sure, but doesn't seem to fully explain the enormous interest, much less the long hours and effort we so willingly contribute to defending the Confederate Soldiers good name. Something in your heart is awakened and stirred when you hear the great stories of the War Between the States, when you read about the great adventures and battles in which the Confederate soldier fought and especially those battles where your ancestor took part. Our hearts are stirred when we watch the

great stories of the War Between the States in film. The scene of the farewell speech Stonewall Jackson gives to the Stonewall Brigade in the movie "God's and Generals," or some of the dramatic scenes in the movie "Gettysburg" are but two examples. Well, whether I just struck a chord or not, there is something about the courage of the Confederate Soldier that stir's our hearts; that place in us where we do our deepest thinking, the real genuine you. The Bible has much to say about the heart and I would like to continue this discussion for a few more meetings. "... *He has also set eternity in the hearts of men...*" *Ecclesiastes 3:11*

Your help is needed. The Camp likes to send get-well cards to members who are in the hospital, at home recovering

from surgery or who are seriously ill. We do not want someone to feel that the Camp has forgotten them and we also want to do something to maybe help cheer them up as they recover. The problem is that since we only meet one time a month, and it's hard to get to know everybody, a member could go in the hospital and we would not know about it until they are fully recovered and tell us about it long after the fact. I've had this happen to me before with members I know fairly well. So, if you find out someone is ill or going in the hospital, please let me know or if you tell one of the Camp Officers that will be fine as they will get the message to me. Thanks, this is important. †

## Remembering

who burnt Columbia?" Gen. Howard replied, "It is useless to deny that our troops burnt Columbia, for I saw them in the act." (See Edwin J. Scott, *Random Recollections of a Long Life*, page 185; *The Burning of Columbia*, Charleston, SC, 1888, page 11.)

As to the case for the burning of Columbia, South Carolina on February 17, 1865, the responsibility lies totally and completely with General William Tecumseh Sherman.

While some historians and other Northern apologist may dispute that Sherman was *really* responsible for the atrocity, those who were in the city during the invasion knew exactly who was responsible.

As Sons of Confederate Veterans, it

is important that this horrible event is never forgotten and that we see that others remember as well.

One way to do this is by participating in the Greater Columbia Civil War Alliance's COLUMBIA'S LONGEST DAYS to be held this Friday and Saturday.

The events this year will include a Confederate Ball held in the Congaree Room of the Mills Building on Friday evening.

On Saturday there will be a Re-enactment of the Firing on the State, Congaree Creek and Sherman's Left Wing Bus Tours, and a Civil War Expo and Symposium.

Civil War artifacts will be on display from museums and personal collections. The living history portion of the expo will feature hobbies and crafts of the time period. Re-enactors will be on hand to display uniforms and weaponry. The public is also invited to bring in their Civil War era artifacts for a free, professional appraisal. This is a great family event with no admission fee.

For a schedule of events, along with costs and reservations for some of the events, please contact Liz Jenkins by phone at 803-217-0071 or by e-mail at gccwa@knappagency.com. You may also visit the event web page at [www.columbiaslongestdays.com](http://www.columbiaslongestdays.com).

## Black Confederates

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Another black historian, Roland Young says that “he is not surprised that blacks fought ... some, if not most, would support their country, and that by doing so they were demonstrating that it was possible to hate the system of slavery and love one’s country.”

...It has been estimated that more than 65,000 Southern blacks served in some form or fashion in the Confederate ranks, and more than 13,000 of these “saw the elephant,” a term used to describe meeting the enemy in combat. These black Confederates included both slaves and free men. The Confederate Congress did not approve blacks to be officially enlisted as soldiers, except as musicians, until late in the war. But in the ranks it was a different story. Many Confederate officers, ignoring the mandates of politicians, enlisted blacks with the simple criteria, “Will you fight?” According to historian, Ervin Jordan, “biracial units were frequently organized by both local and state militia commanders in response to immediate threats by Union troops.” As of February 1865, there were 1,150 black seamen who served in the Confederate Navy. One of these was among the last Confederates to surrender, aboard the CSS Shenandoah in England, six months after the war ended.

However, Dr. George Smith has done extensive research on this subject as well and based upon both Union and Confederate documents included in the Official War Records, it is his opinion that “Since it was illegal for Blacks, either free or slave, to carry and bear arms, it is extraordinarily hard to believe there were 65,000 Blacks serving in Confederate ranks, with over 13,000 seeing combat. Closer to 100,000 freemen and slaves were impressed under the numerous impressments acts. All the impressments acts clearly delineated slaves were to be used as teamsters, laborers, hospital orderlies, cooks, etc.”

As the war was nearing its final days, the Confederacy took progressive measures to build back its ranks with the creation of the Confederate Colored Troops, copied after the segregated northern colored troops, but this idea came too late for any measure of success. CSA Maj. Gen. Patrick Cleburne, at the height of his military career and recognizing the plight of the South’s dwindling supply of able-bodied men, made a bold proposal in late 1863 to “drill and arm

as many as 300,000 black slaves.” Included in this proposal was the idea to not only free the blacks who volunteered, but their wives and children as well. Cleburne was quite disappointed that his idea was not more readily embraced. However, in 1864, President Jefferson Davis, in an attempt to gain official recognition of the Confederacy by Britain and France, did approve a plan that proposed the emancipation of slaves. But what actually passed on March 13, 1865 was General Orders No. 14 which stated: “SEC. 2, that the General-in-Chief be authorized to organize the said slaves into companies, battalions, regiments, and brigades, under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of War may prescribe, and to be commanded by such officers as the President may appoint. ... that nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize a change in the relation which the said slaves shall bear toward their owners, except by consent of the owners and of the states in which they may reside, and in pursuance of the laws thereof.” This occurred just one month before the end of the war and by this point, there was no time, no munitions, no supplies, no uniforms, no nothing, for it to ever come to fruition. It is unclear whether the wages would go to the slaves or to the owners.

...Free black men served the Confederacy as soldiers, teamsters, musicians, and cooks. They earned the same pay for their service as did white Confederate privates, which, in the Union Army, was not the case. They also earned the wrath of their fellow black men of the North. Ex-slave Frederick Douglass commented: “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.” Horace Greeley, observing the differences between the two warring armies, commented: “For more than two years, Negroes have been extensively employed in belligerent operations by the Confederacy. They have been embodied and drilled as rebel soldiers and had paraded with white troops at a time when this would not have been tolerated in the armies of the Union.”

...Southern generals owned slaves but northern generals owned them as well. Gen. Ulysses Grant’s slaves had to wait for the Thirteenth Amendment for freedom. When asked why he didn’t free his slaves earlier, General Grant replied, “Good help is so hard to come by these days.” In February of 1865, Grant in fact ordered the capture of “all the Negro men ... before the enemy can put them in their ranks.” And Frederick Douglass warned President Lincoln that unless slaves were guaranteed freedom (those in Union controlled areas were still slaves) and land bounties, “They would take up arms for the rebels.”

With the South’s surrender, men stacked arms and went home. Many had no home to go to. During the early 1900s, many members of the United Confederate Veterans advocated awarding former slaves rural acreage and a home. There was hope that justice could still be served to those slaves who were once falsely promised “forty acres and a mule.” In 1913, this plan was printed and promoted by the Confederate Veteran Magazine, as “the right thing to do.” There was much gratitude toward former slaves, which stated, “thousands were loyal, to the last degree,” now living with total poverty in the big cities. Regrettably, this proposal fell on deaf ears on Capitol Hill...

So why did so many Southern black men choose to wear Confederate gray?

Blacks fought for the very same reason as whites – to defend their homes and their families. Historical data can sometimes be a matter of interpretation and the facts can sometimes contradict themselves. But, one must remember that day and time and judge it accordingly, for a man of the 19th century should not be compared to a man of today’s world and evaluated by current standards. Regardless of how black Southerners participated, whether voluntary or involuntary, one thing is certain: the thousands of slaves and free persons of color in the South are the most forgotten group of the Civil War. They, too, should be remembered for the suffering, sacrifices and contributions they made.

Source: Edited from article by Shirley Farris Jones. *The Murfreesboro Post*, 02/10/2008.  
<http://www.murfreesboropost.com>

## Important Dates in *The Second American Revolution*:

- Feb. 1, 1861: Texas secedes from the Union
- Feb. 4, 1861: The Confederate States of America is organized at the first session of the Provisional Confederate Congress.
- Feb. 6, 1863: U.S. Government refuses a French offer of mediation between North and South.
- Feb. 9, 1861: Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens are elected President and Vice President of the Confederate States of America.
- Feb. 12, 1861: Provisional Congress of the Confederacy provides a Peace Commission to the United States.
- Feb. 16, 1861: Pro-Confederate forces called the "Committee of Public Safety" seize the U.S. Military Post and the Federal Arsenal in San Antonio, TX.
- Feb. 17, 1864: Charleston, SC. The Confederate submarine *H.L. Hunley* becomes the first submarine in history to sink an enemy ship in combat.
- Feb. 17, 1865: Columbia, SC is surrendered to Federal troops under the command of Gen. W.T. Sherman. The city is subsequently sacked, looted, and burned by those under the Sherman's command.
- Feb. 18, 1861: Jefferson Davis inaugurated Provisional President of the CSA.
- Feb. 20, 1865: Confederate House of Representatives authorized the use of slaves as soldiers. Gen. R.E. Lee endorses the idea.
- Feb. 23, 1865: Gen. Joseph E. Johnson assumes command of the Army of Tennessee.
- Feb. 27, 1863: President Davis names three commissioners to Washington to attempt negotiation with the Federals. He also calls for a day of fasting and prayer.

**Come one! Come all!**  
**Next Camp Meeting**  
**Thursday, Feb. 21**  
**6:00 PM**



**Seawell's Restaurant**  
**1125 Rosewood Drive**  
**Columbia, SC**

This month's speaker will be  
**Compatriot Jack Marler**  
 Topic:  
**" Great Artillery Actions of the  
 WBTS "**

www.wadehamptoncamp.org



pgj2105@yahoo.com

Paul C. Graham, Editor  
 Post Office Box 8714  
 Columbia, SC 29202

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