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Paul C. Graham, Editor

A FRATERNAL ORGANIZATION OF SOUTHERN MEN

CONFEDERATE CHRISTMAS, 1862

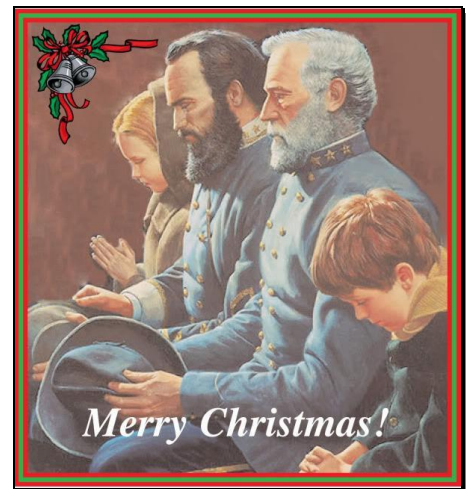
Editor's Note: The following is a letter written by Tally Simpson, a Confederate soldier bivouacked near Fredericksburg, VA, to his sister Anna Simpson on December 25, 1862. As we prepare to experience the joy of Christmas that comes from being able to spend this special time with our family, friends, and loved ones, let us not forget the sacrifices made by our Confederate ancestors during our war for independence.

My dear Sister

This is Christmas Day. The sun shines feebly through a thin cloud, the air is mild and pleasant, [and] a gentle breeze is making music through the leaves of the lofty pines that stand near our bivouac. All is quiet and still, and that very stillness recalls some sad and painful thoughts.

This day, one year ago, how many thousand families, gay and joyous, celebrating Merry Christmas, drinking health to absent members of their family, and sending upon the wings of love and affection long, deep, and sincere wishes for their safe return to the loving ones at home,

See **CHRISTMAS**, Page 3



A SOLDIER'S STORY OF CHRISTMAS PAST



Bill Yopp

By Calvin E. Johnson Jr.

Why do some merchants and media call it just a holiday? People stand in line at malls after Thanksgiving and rush through the doors to buy, buy and buy.

Is this Christmas?

Partly, but the true meaning of the Christmas Season is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas is also about helping people.

During the year of our Lord 1919, the folks of Atlanta, Georgia were preparing for Christmas. This holy day was a special time for family, friends and children. People went to church or synagogue and gave thanks to God for their many blessings.

There were, however, some who were not as fortunate!

The aging veterans of the Confederate Soldier's Home were proud men who had braved many a battle in the 1860s. One of these men was former Captain Thomas Yopp who saw battle in such places as Fredericksburg, Virginia where a cannon ball shell knocked him unconscious.

The man who stayed with him until he recovered was his servant who had also joined the 14th Georgia Regiment. Bill Yopp was more than a servant; he and Thomas Yopp were friends who hunted and fished together.

Bill Yopp, a Black Confederate veteran, was sympathetic to the men of the Atlanta's soldiers home who had been his compatriots in arms over 50 years earlier.

During the War Between the States, 1861-1865, Bill Yopp was nicknamed "Ten Cent Bill" because of the money he made shinning shoes. He did this for the soldiers at a dime a shine and ended up with more money than most of his comrades. The soldiers did not mind him doing this and took care of him when he was sick.

During the Christmas of 1919, Bill wanted to pay back the kindness that was shown him. He first caught a train to Macon, Georgia where he was offered help by a newspaper editor. He then took a train to Savannah where he raised Christmas money for the veterans.

Just weeks before the Christmas of 1919, Bill had raised the money and Georgia's Governor Hugh Dorsey helped him distribute envelopes of three dollars to each veteran. This was a great deal of money in those days.

The old Confederates were speechless.

See **YOPP**, Page 3

This month's marking of the sesquicentennial to the War Between the States comes forth with as much revelry and excitement as controversy. Most media outlets that I have read thus far, report the marking of the War between 1860 and 1865 in a less than favorable light. Many reports have given more attention to opponents of historical authenticity than to the celebration itself. Online media reports are often followed by "blogs" from readers with less than historically accurate information.

It should be of no surprise to the membership of the SCV that during a time that should be for reflection and reverence, opponents to the cause for Southern Independence receive the majority of the spotlight. Len Riedel, Executive Director of the Blue and Gray Education Society in Danville, VA wrote in June 2007:

The Civil War is on the retreat when it should be reasserting its place in America's story. Planning appears to be lacking today because politicians don't

think this is important enough to shake the hornet's nest. We have become a poorly informed and cynical people. Political leadership seems to lack morale courage. Unfortunately many states downplay humanities in secondary education and are substituting subjects more in tune with student interests.

I have recently given much thought to my ancestors during this time 150 years ago. I often imagine what their daily life was like and what catalyst encouraged them to make the sacrifice to bear arms against their country. What made farmers, merchants, and lawyers set aside their daily life and put their life on the line? Recent media reports suggest that it was to preserve a slave holding institution. Bloggers write of rich, slave beating, plantation owners hoping to preserve a "status quo". Historians state a desire for self governance and defense against a tyranny. Whatever there motivation, certainly there is no shame in standing up for what you believe to be your

rights, beliefs, and convictions.

Our families were united in a cause they believed as great, or greater, than the Revolutionary War. The Signers of Secession stated rights that were given to citizens by the founding fathers as cause for independence. It is hard to imagine our ancestors as the hateful and treasonous people that are portrayed by many in our current day and time. I often wonder what the great grand father of these people would think of their politically correct descendants. Judging by the "blogs" on news media outlets, their descendants do not wish (or care) to learn about the truth of their family's history.

As usual, there will no meeting in the month of December. Our next meeting will be our annual Lee-Jackson Banquet. It is scheduled for Friday January 21 at 6:30 pm at Seawells. Our guest speaker will be Stan Clardy performing the Music Behind the Song. Until then, I wish all a happy and safe Christmas holiday.

CHAPLAIN'S WITNESS

LARRY BATES

With the Christmas season upon us, live nativity scenes and children participating in Christmas plays abound but when I read the whole Christmas story in the scriptures, it sounds more to me like a "Battle Brief" that involves a great rescue than it does a heart warming story that makes me feel good.

To understand, you have to go back to "In the beginning", but not the one in Genesis, go back further in time, to the one in the Gospel of John, which says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." See, there was an angel named Lucifer, son of the morning, who decided he would be higher than God, that he would ascend to the heavens, raise his throne above the stars of God and make himself like the Most High. Lucifer had one-third of the angels in heaven on his side. The bible says "there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon (Lucifer); and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him." Jesus said he "saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." Defeated, but not destroyed, Satan is the greatest enemy of the human race. The Scriptures say he is an accuser, liar and a murderer. If not enough,

man is eternally lost in his sin, in great need of being rescued.

Under cover of darkness, on a "silent night", a daring rescue is launched in the small village of Bethlehem. Angels appear to shepherds in nearby fields and the shepherds are frozen with fear. The angels announce that Christ the Lord is born in the City of David. Wise men from the east search for the star, which would lead them to the birthplace of Christ in the manger, and finding it they fall down and worship him and honor him with gifts. Being warned of God, they leave the country without telling King Herod where Christ was born. It was King Herod who would do Satan's bidding. Angels appeared to Jesus' father, Joseph, warning him to take his family to Egypt "for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." And Herod did indeed try, "he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi." Joseph and family would not return to Israel until the death of Herod.

So there we have a more full version of the Christmas story, one I have not seen in any Christmas plays. Why though was Jesus sent? Jesus tells us He was sent "to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free..." The object of the rescue has been us. What

value then do you think your life has to God for Him to have done this? Of great value, for Christ "was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." In this season of gift giving, the Bible says, "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

ADJUTANT'S REPORT

Gentlemen:

As I write my last Adjutant's Desk for the December issue of the Legionary, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the camp for letting me serve as your adjutant for the last 3 years. It has been a privilege and honor to serve each and every one of you. Our new adjutant is Carl Potter and I have listed his contact information below. Be sure to thank Carl for serving and change your contact information for the adjutant to:

Adjutant Carl Potter
3217 Camp Rawls Road
Wagener, SC 29164
(803)730-1811 / Carl@cmpotter.us

—Ricky Badger

but today are clad in the deepest mourning in memory to some lost and loved member of their circle. If all the dead (those killed since the war began) could be heaped in one pile and all the wounded be gathered together in one group, the pale faces of the dead and the groans of the wounded would send such a thrill of horror through the hearts of the originators of this war that their very souls would rack with such pain that they would prefer being dead and in torment than to stand before God with such terrible crimes blackening their characters. Add to this the cries and wailings of the mourners - mothers and fathers weeping for their sons, sisters for their brothers, wives for their husbands, and daughters for their fathers - [and] how deep would be the convictions of their consciences.

Yet they do not seem to think of the affliction and distress they are scattering broadcast over the land. When will this war end? Will another Christmas roll around and find us all wintering in camp? Oh! That peace may soon be restored to our young but dearly beloved country and that we may all meet again in happiness.

But enough of these sad thoughts. We went on picket in town a few days ago. The pickets of both armies occupy the same positions now as they did before the battle. Our regt was quartered in the market place while the others occupied stores and private

houses. I have often read of sacked and pillaged towns in ancient history, but never, till I saw Fredricksburg, did I fully realize what one was. The houses, especially those on the river, are riddled with shell and ball. The stores have been broken open and deprived of every thing that was worth a shilling. Account books and notes and letters and papers both private and public were taken from their proper places and scattered over the streets and trampled under feet. Private property was ruined. Their soldiers would sleep in the mansions of the wealthy and use the articles and food in the house at their pleasure. Several houses were destroyed by fire. Such a wreck and ruin I never wish to see again.

Yet notwithstanding all this, the few citizens who are now in town seem to be cheerful and perfectly resigned. Such true patriots are seldom found. This will ever be a noted place in history.

While we were there, Brig Genl Patrick, U.S.A., with several of his aides-de-camp, came over under flag of truce. Papers were exchanged, and several of our men bought pipes, gloves, &c from the privates who rowed the boat across. They had plenty of liquor and laughed, drank, and conversed with our men as if they had been friends from boyhood.

There is nothing new going on. I

am almost dead to hear from home. I have received no letters in nearly three weeks, and you can imagine how anxious I am. The mails are very irregular. I hope to get a letter soon. Dunlap Griffin is dead, died in Richmond of wounds received in the last battle. Capt Hance is doing very well. Frank Fleming is in bad condition. (He has been elected lieutenant since he left.)

Write to me quick right off. I wish to hear from you badly. Remember me to my friends and relatives, especially the Pickens and Ligon. Hoping to hear from you soon I remain

Your bud
Tally

Pres Hix came for the remains of Nap his brother and Johnnie Garlington yesterday and will take them to Richmond today. They will be carried on home immediately. Tell Aunt Caroline Jim is getting on finely. Howdy to all the negroes. I have received the bundle of clothes sent to Columbia. The bundle contained one shirt, one scarf, and two pairs of socks. At least I suppose it is the one you sent to Col[umbia] to be sent to Barnwell at Richmond. I am a thousand times obliged. When is Harry coming? Oh! that peace may soon be restored to our young but dearly beloved country and that we may all meet again in happiness. ☞

YOPP

Tears were shed because of Bill Yopp's good heart and kind deed. Many of those men had little or nothing. Bill was invited to come into the home's chapel to say a few words.

Bill Yopp was presented a medal of appreciation for his support of the soldiers and was later voted in as a resident of the Confederate Soldier's home where he spent his remaining years.

Bill Yopp died on June 3, 1936, the birthday of the Confederacy's President Jefferson Davis. Bill was buried at the

Confederate Cemetery in Marietta, Georgia.

Christmas is about love, forgiveness, old friends, family and the child who became Savior of the world.

2011 marks the 150th Anniversary of the War Between the States and the Georgia Division Sons of Confederate Veterans is airing a video on TV commemorating this time in American History.

See more information at:
<http://www.150wbts.org>

Please read Charles Pitt's book "Ten Cent Bill" for more about Bill Yopp.

Merry Christmas! ☞

Johnson is a speaker, writer, contributor to Huntington News Network and author of the book "When America Stood for God, Family and Country." He lives in Georgia and is a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Source: HuntingtonNews.net.
Huntington, WV, December 14, 2010.

WORDS OF WISDOM

"To me, however, the campaign by certain groups to remove all the symbols and memorials to our Southern past amounts to the same thing...a desecration of graves. Every flag or monument that is removed, every plaque taken down, every school or street or bridge that is renamed, is no different from a broken tombstone. It is wanton and hateful violence directed at the dead who can no longer defend themselves."

— John Field Pankow

"Any society which suppresses the heritage of its conquered minorities, prevents their history, and denies them their symbols, has sewn the seed of its own destruction."

— Sir William Wallace 1281 A.D.

Important Dates in the *War to Prevent Southern Independence*:

Dec. 08, 1860 –	US Sec. of Treas. Howell Cobb resigns. The GA native will become a Confederate Maj. Gen. in 1863.
Dec. 17, 1860 –	At Columbia, the SC Secession Convention issues a resolution in favor of SC seceding
Dec. 20, 1860 –	By a vote of 169 to 0, SC adopts an Ordinance of Secession and the Union is dissolved.
Dec. 26, 1860 –	In Charleston Harbor, SC, State Troops seize Castle Pinckney.
Dec. 10, 1861 –	An act of the Confederate Congress in Richmond admits KY to the Confederacy, thus completing the 13 states.
Dec. 11, 1861 –	Suffering under the Union blockade, Charleston, SC is struck by a disastrous fire that sweeps through its business district.
Dec. 30, 1861 –	SC troops seize the US arsenal at Charleston, after Pres. Buchanan's failure to remove US troops from the Charleston Harbor.
Dec. 04, 1862 –	Gen. Johnston assumes overall command in the west.
Dec. 05, 1862 –	At Coffeville, MS, on the MS Central Railroad, Confederates defeat a force of Federal Calvary.
Dec. 12, 1862 –	In MS, the <i>USS Cairo</i> strikes a torpedo in the Yazoo River. She is the first US ship sunk by this method.
Dec. 13, 1862 –	Battle of Fredericksburg, VA. Over 186,000 troops are engaged in the fighting there.
Dec. 14, 1862 –	At Fredericksburg, the Federal Army withdraws after being severely beaten in the previous days' assaults from the Federal Union known as the United States of America.
Dec. 18, 1862 –	At Lexington, TN, Gen. Forrest's Cavalry defeats a Federal cavalry force.
Dec. 28, 1862 –	Vicksburg Campaign. Battle of Chickasaw Bayou.
Dec. 01, 1863 –	Confederate spy Belle Boyd is released from prison in Washington, DC.
Dec. 27, 1863 –	Confederate Congress abolishes substitution for military service.
Dec. 06, 1889 –	Death of Confederate Jefferson Davis in New Orleans, LA.

NO CAMP MEETING IN DECEMBER



**MERRY CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

FROM
THE OFFICERS & COMPATRIOTS
OF
THE WADE HAMPTON CAMP

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