



The Courier

Newsletter of the Sam Davis Camp No. 1293 SCV

Sons of Confederate Veterans March, 2018*

Deja Vu All Over Again

[Editor's Note: While trying to gather up items of interest for this month's newsletter, I came across the following little essay or editorial. From 2002 to 2004, I served as the SCV Chief of Heritage defense, and this was my final column for Confederate Veteran before handing off the job to my successor. Fourteen years later, nothing has changed and everything has changed. It's gotten worse.]

To me, and to you, and to millions of others who love it and could never really be happy outside it, the South is no mere geographical expression. It is home, sure, but it is more than that. It is the foundation of an entire way of looking at things and feeling about people. We perceive our culture as distinctive and we consider that to be a positive good. And we do not accept that the essence or value of our Southern-ness can be identified with or derived exclusively from the evils which have disfigured our history.

That is why we have, rightly, little or no sympathy for our more sanctimonious opponents. Those people too often respond to the romantic caricature of the Old South ("mint, moonlight and magnolias") -- one in which I doubt anyone reading these comments indulges in -- by opposing it with a counter-caricature ("mud, molasses and misery"). They tell us that because we can no longer believe that "Gone with the Wind" portrays the real South, we must believe that "Mandingo" does. They ask us

to admit not only that the South was wounded and crippled by sin and injustice -- a state which afflicted all great cultures and civilizations of the past as well as those of the present, and which wise Southerners would not deny -- but that it was radically and utterly depraved. They say the Southern past was a total loss, a starless night in which no spark or glimmer of honor or human love was ever seen. They ask us to agree that our symbols represent nothing less than oppression, or even genocide.

Making such demands would be outrageous even if the asserted facts were true - and, when made, probably stem more from a desire



to humiliate us than from a wish to affirm any historical or moral truth. Even more gallingly, while our spokesmen are either ignored or insulted, even the meanest and most ignorant of the South's detractors are indulged. Even praised. In some quarters, you can hear Robert E. Lee compared to Hitler and see empty heads nodding complacently. It would be amazing and appalling if no one resented this state of affairs. We do. We are, after all, responding to a blood libel, the most vicious and invidious species of insult.

Now, it would be completely understandable were our response to this unrelenting assault to be one returned in kind. Vicious. Personal. Vindictive. Even violent. Believe me, there have been times when I could not imagine anything more completely gratifying than taking up a nail-studded 2x4 and knocking the stuffing out of some smarmy, South-hating ignoramus. But, we cannot afford to respond that way, can we?

Every member of the SCV is a representative of one of the most honorable lineages of the American experience, and of a venerable, patriotic, and benevolent organization. We are also, each of us, in some small way, the living embodiment of the Confederate soldier. We are their representatives in the 21st century. As such, we cannot risk tarnishing their good name and rightful place in the annals of the American Fighting Man by stooping to the level of our transgressors.

We know what has to be done. The question remains: How?

Heritage Defense in the SCV is a constant struggle against more numerous, better funded opponents who are entrenched in the media. Our membership numbers 30-odd thousand men, many of whom, unfortunately, are members only because they appreciate history or are involved in the mushrooming hobby that is genealogy. They have no desire

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Samuel Davis

Next Camp Meeting: Thursday, March 22nd Oglesby Community Center, 7:00 p.m.

Confederate Calendar

March 22nd ~~ Sam Davis Camp meets at 7:00 p.m., Oglesby Community Center. The Center is adjacent to the Woodson Chapel Church of Christ on Edmondson Pike, 1/2 block South of the intersection of Edmondson Pike and Old Hickory Blvd. **We will elect officers for the next two years. Be there!**

April 20th & 21st ~~ 2018 Tenn. Division Reunion, Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill. See your recent edition of the *Forrest Escort* for details.

April 26th ~~ Sam Davis Camp meets at 7:00 p.m., Oglesby Community Center.

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or intent to confront those who would be most happy to deny public acknowledgement of the heritage we seek to preserve, and would make us feel shame rather than pride in our ancestry. This observation is made without any intent to denigrate those members I might describe, but only to make this point -- we are not fighting with our full strength.

I should also note that not all media is antagonistic. We all know members of the media who are sympathetic to our mission. Unfortunately, even those who seek to treat us fairly are usually forced by editorial policy or corporate fiat to acknowledge our opponent's point of view, and therefore help them perpetuate their hateful propaganda. You know the line, which goes something like this: "...the Confederate Battle Flag, which some see as a painful reminder of (insert some injustice which the opponent likely never endured here)..."

We've been reading that phrase,

or a similar one, for more years than I care to count now. And its effect is cumulative. Americans are, for the most part, a cordial people. We like to live and let live, and don't enjoy giving offense, at least when none is intended. That's exactly why, after years and years of reading and hearing that our flag may offend someone, people who wouldn't otherwise think twice when they saw a Confederate symbol or who might actually appreciate it choose not to show the colors. They even protest them. Wouldn't want to cause trouble. Can't we all get along? Blah, blah, blah. Try this analogy on for size: What if, for more years than you could remember, every time a mention was made of the Statue of Liberty that mention was qualified with a statement such as "a symbol which offends" some people. It wouldn't take long before you'd never see the statue's photograph, and "good people" wouldn't talk about her in public. Facts be damned. It's the perception, not the truth, which matters. When it comes to facts, those are on our side. It is the perception we must combat.

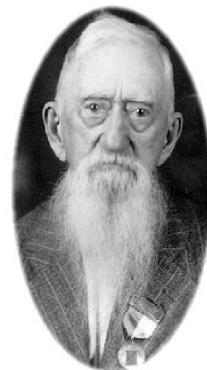
Changing the perception is where you, the individual member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, come in. All battles begin at the picket line, on the front, or at a distance from the main force. Similarly, almost all heritage battles are local. You, and your local camp, are our front line. The first to respond. As such, our Confederate sires are depending on you to be prepared. Are you armed with the facts? Can you respond with certainty to our detractors? Have you cultivated a media contact that can and will make sure you too are heard? Do you have connections to local officials who can, if they choose, make a problem go away while it's still just a small one? Do you take advantage of opportunities to present a positive image to the

public? Are you recognized locally as a good citizen? Is your camp seen as an asset to your community? If your answer to any one of those questions is no, or even "I don't know", then do what you have to do to change it. Study our history. Be prepared with the answers to difficult questions. Be active as a group in your community. Cultivate your contacts with those in a position to help when called upon.

Some heritage fights spill out of the local arena for one reason or another. But, because our size and funding is limited, we are forced to pick and choose the battles to which we commit major organizational assets. In essence, we have to shoot for effect rather than lay down blanket of fire. We are becoming more adept at doing that, but it sure would be nice to have a little more latitude in the choosing.

In my term as Chief of Heritage Defense, we've had some successes. We've also had setbacks. Every instance has come with an opportunity to learn, either how to repeat the victory or how to avoid the loss in the future.

In the years to come, the fight to preserve our heritage will require more and more of our energy and our assets just to maintain the tenuous position we now occupy. If we are sincere about fulfilling our mission, we'll have some success, but only if we step up our game.



Jessie R. Shelton, age 91. See page 4.



You Can't Make This Stuff Up

When a New York Times bestselling author noticed a blue-and-red flag flying near her home, she tipped off the local newspaper to report a "Confederate flag." But there was just one little problem – it was a Norwegian flag.

The tip-off to the *Seattle Times* came from true-crime author Rebecca Morris. "Hi. Suddenly there is a Confederate flag flying in front of a house in my Greenwood neighborhood. It is at the north-east corner of 92nd and Palatine, just a block west of 92nd and Greenwood Ave N. I would love to know what this 'means'... but of course don't want to knock on their door. Maybe others in the area are flying the flag? Maybe it's a story? Thank you."

The *Seattle Times* was on the case, driving directly to scene. But when they arrived, they didn't see the Confederate flag at all. It was a Norwegian flag, being proudly flown by a Norwegian-American, who is showing his support to the Scandinavian country during the Olympics.

"That's a Norwegian flag," homeowner Darold Normal Stangeland told the *Seattle Times*. "It's been up there since the start of the Olympics. I'm a proud Norwegian-American. My parents emigrated here in the mid-1950s. He skippered tugboats," Stangeland continued.

When Morris was informed of her mistake, she responded with a simple "Are you kidding me?" and noted that she had even looked up the Confederate flag online.

On second glance, however, Morris admitted her error. "Well, it does look like the Norwegian flag!" she said. **"Maybe that's the story... we're so stressed by all things political that we see things that aren't there."**

It's not the first time there's been a mix-up between the two flags, both of which bear the colors blue, red, and white. In 2012, a

woman in New York came under fire after flying a miniature Norwegian flag. "It was embarrassing," she said at the time. "Everyone in the county was asking me if I'm flying a rebel flag."

The Confederate flag has long been a controversial symbol in the US, due to its historic ties to slavery and segregation. Critics say that flying the flag is a way of defending slavery, while others say the flag is about honoring the history of the American South. ~ RT.com

We Win. They Lose.

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. — A Charlottesville judge has ruled that the tarps covering statues of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson must be removed.

The tarps were installed in the wake of deadly violence that erupted at the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville on August 12, leading to the deaths of Heather Heyer and two Virginia State Police troopers.

The city said it was as a sign of mourning, but did not specify a date when that mourning would end.

But the covering of the Confederate statues, which were the initial focal point of the rally due to Charlottesville's vote to move the Lee statue, drew backlash from many people.

In the months since that time, they have been removed multiple times and replaced by Parks and Recreation crews. If the tarp was damaged when removed, replacing it came at a cost to the city.

City officials say each tarp, measuring 40 feet by 60 feet, cost about \$375. In addition to that, the city paid other costs like manpower and equipment needed to shroud the statues.

But that will no longer be a concern after the latest decision in the long-running debate over whether the statues should remain in downtown Charlottesville.

The ruling was made at the conclusion of a motions hearing on

Tuesday morning concerning the lawsuit to prevent the city from removing the statues.

Attorney Charles Weber sued the city after council voted to remove the monuments last year. He said it's a protected war monument, which, under Virginia law makes it "unlawful for the authorities of the locality, or any other person or persons, to disturb or interfere with" any war monuments.

The city argued that state law applied only to war memorials built after the law was amended in 1998 (the statute was originally codified in the 1950s, after the statues were erected in the 1920s).

Late last year, a judge ruled the Jackson Statue meets criteria of being a war memorial but also chose to let the tarps stay.

However, he said the plaintiffs did not adequately prove that the Lee statue is a war monument.

Now Judge Richard E. Moore has ruled that the Robert E. Lee statue qualifies as well, but said the city was within its authority to rename Jackson Park to Justice Park.

Earlier in the trial, a funeral director from Hill and Wood Funeral Home in Charlottesville testified that public mourning generally lasts between 30 to 40 days, which meant, if the tarps were meant to symbolize mourning, it was past time for them to come down.

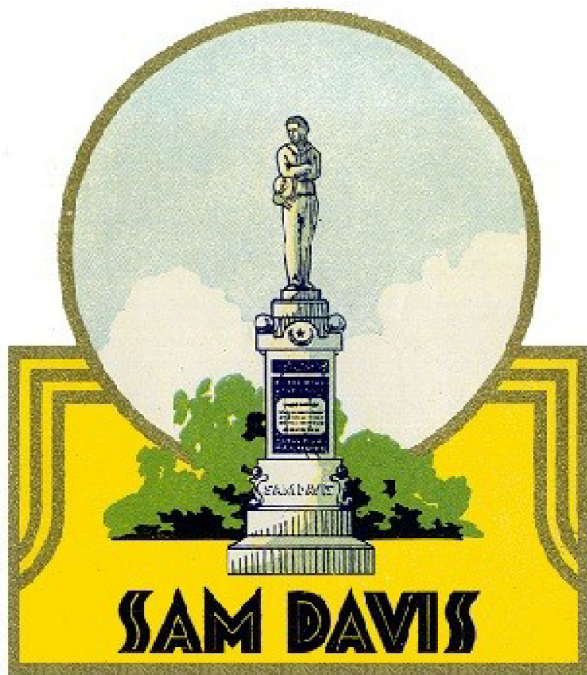
However, when the Charlottesville City Council voted to install the tarps, there was no indication made on when they would be removed.

Charlottesville City Manager Maurice Jones also testified the city spent \$3,000 on each tarp, and bought six or seven of them.

This means the city spent between \$18,000 and \$21,000 on tarps.

"We're very grateful the state legislature has seen fit to basically uphold the current law on good, sound public policy for Virginia," said Weber. ~ from WCAV





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He Rode With Forrest

From the Murfreesboro *Daily News Journal* of May 14, 1940:

Jesse R. Shelton / Rutherford Gray Veteran Succumbs.

Jesse Ransom Shelton, only Rutherford County survivor who served with Nathan Bedford Forrest, and one of the three remaining Confederate veterans of the county, died this morning at his home near Beech Grove on the Manchester Pike.

The ninety-six year old veteran, who enlisted at 18 at Hoover's Gap, was a member of Starnes' Regiment, of the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry. He participated in the pursuit and capture of Federal Colonel Streight at Rome, Ga., and during one engagement his horse was shot from under him. Falling a victim to typhoid fever he was mustered out of the army in 1864.

Shelton often said of the fearless Forrest, "He'd rather be in than out of a fight."

His parents were John and Emmeline Hamby Shelton. In 1868, he married Martha Jane Eaton. He was a member of the Beech Grove Baptist Church where services will be held Wednesday afternoon at 1 o'clock conducted by Elder R.A. Taylor.

Surviving are his daughter, Mrs. J.L. (Sallie) Hoover, two sons J.W. and S.F. Shelton, 15 grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and one great, great-grandchild."

Information confirming Jesse Ransom Shelton's service can be found in the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Roll #18 Confederate. A questionnaire completed in April 1922 for the Tennessee Historical Committee expands on those official records, and also provides an interesting personal account.

Jesse Ransom Shelton joined Co. E of the 4th (Starnes') Tennessee Cavalry (Confederate) in September 1862 at Hoover's Gap, Rutherford County, Tennessee. The regiment was sent to Columbia, Tennessee, and became part of the group of regiments known as Forrest's "Old Brigade." In December 1862, Shelton participated in Forrest's first West Tennessee campaign, fighting at Jackson, Humboldt, and Trenton. He was also part of the pursuit and capture of Col. Abel D. Streight (April-May 1863).

The Fourth Tennessee Cavalry, now under McLemore, was one of the units left behind in East Tennessee when Forrest was dispatched West in October 1863. While campaigning in East Tennessee, Shelton was disabled by typhoid fever, and was left by his command in the care of a Union-sympathizing but friendly family.

Two months of recovery time separated the young soldier from his command, so he set out on foot from about 40 miles east of Pikeville for his home in Middle Tennessee. As he later wrote, with "very little left of me but skin and bone, hardly able to travel, I started for home.... alone and afoot, across the mountains, infested with thieves [sic] and Bushwhackers [sic], a distance of 100-125 miles (the lonesomes' [sic] trip of my life)." Shelton returned to farming and stock raising, and as he later wrote "never followed any thing else."