



# TRAVELLER



The official publication of the General Robert E. Lee Camp #1640

Sons of Confederate Veterans, Germantown, Tennessee

*Duty, Honor, Integrity, Chivalry*

*Deo Vindici*

**August 2012**

**CAMP MEETING  
Monday August 13, 2012**

**Speaker: Arthur Oliver**

**Topic: "Second Manassas – Lee's  
Greatest Victory"**

**7:00 p.m. at the Pickering Center**

## **KENT--A WAR-TIME NEGRO**

BY MARION JOHNSTONE FORD

Kent was the flower of his flock as regarded his appearance, being tall and slender, with shiny black skin and unusually high features for a Negro. He seemed to justify his mother's boast that she was "no low-blooded Negro, but was of a good family in Africa."

When the Great War broke out, and all the men and youths were joining the army, our hearts were heavy, and we felt full of sad forebodings at Otranto, our country home, where parting and sorrow had never come. We were a large band of girls, with one young brother, the idol of our hearts, and the apple of our parents' eyes. Like everybody in those days, we were very patriotic, but when it dawned upon us that Harry must shoulder his rifle and go to Virginia we felt that love of country cost us dear. Harry completed his sixteenth year the April after the secession of South Carolina, and as there was no doubt that his college days were over, as he would not study, we were not surprised when the day after his birthday, he galloped up the avenue, dashed into the room where we were sitting, upsetting a chair, and exclaimed:

"How soon can you get me ready, girls? I joined the Hampton Legion this morning, and we are off to Virginia, --Hurrah!"

The day appointed for the company to which Harry belonged to join the Legion in Virginia came all too soon. He shouldered his knapsack, and tore himself from us, followed by his colored attendant, Kent, with whom we all shook hands and whom we urged to "take care of Mas' Harry."

Of course Harry left a great gap behind him, but we tried to excel each other in efforts at cheerfulness, and bright prognostications as to his future career as a soldier. We succeeded only tolerably in these laudable efforts, when Martha waddled in--she was our cook, and a decided character in her way. I believe, next to our mother, she thought herself of first importance among the feminine part of the household. She gave a keen glance at our mother, whom she idolized.

"Well, Missus," she said, dropping a little curtsy, "I come to see how you gettin' on. You all looks pretty blue, but I 'clare to gracious there's no 'casion to fret. Nuttin' gwine to hu't Mas' Harry w'en Kent gone to tak' care ov him. Missus, you dunno how smart dat boy is; an' I jus' tell him, 'Mas' Harry tinks he's a man and a soger, but you know he ain't nuttin' but a baby, an' a ma-baby at dat.' An' I jus' tell him he need not to come home if he let anyt'ing hu't Mas' Harry. So don't you fret, Missus."

"But how could Kent prevent Harry's being wounded or hurt, Martha?" I asked.

"Now, Miss Sallie, don't you go for to talk nonsense," responded the old woman. "An' your ma always says w'ere dere is a will dere is a way. Well, dat's what I tells Kent, an' I tells Affy, de gal he's courtin', it's no use for she to fret, fur 'less Kent brings Mas' Harry back safe, dere won't be no weddin' fur him."

"Oh," I said, "he is courting, is he? That is why he looked so serious when he left."

"It looks so, Missy. He tell me to look sharp at her,

an' see if she notice anybody while he is gone.

An' I will--an' let her know, too, if she do," she muttered as she left the room.

Harry saw much active service, was in many battles, and fortunately escaped with only one wound. He told us in his letters of Kent's faithful following, and attendance on long marches, and after a battle he always found him looking anxiously for him, with something to eat as nice as he could get. Indeed, he was a wonderful provider, but Harry was by no means sure that Kent could have made good his claim to many of the eatables he set before him, for his conscience was an elastic one as to the rights of property in food. So long as he got what he wanted for Harry, he stopped neither to buy, beg nor borrow, but helped himself. His kindness of heart, ready wit, and readiness to lend a helping hand to any one in need made him a general favorite in the company, where he was noted for the care he took of his young master.

In the latter part of '63 we were distressed to hear from Harry that he was ill in the hospital in Tennessee. He wrote: "I think we are falling back. Kent is ill with pneumonia, and the worst of it is that if we fall back I have no means of transportation for him; it will be hard to have to leave him."

Dire was the distress that letter brought us. We waited anxiously for further news. Harry brought it himself. He had been ill, and was sent home on furlough. He looked worn, and very unlike the bright boy who had left us.

"What of Kent?" we asked.

"I had to leave him," he said. "I could not help it. We were falling back rapidly. Many were left in the hospitals, and are now prisoners. It was only through my captain being such a friend of father's, and stirring himself to get me a place in an ambulance, that I was not left. I dragged myself to see the good fellow, although I could scarcely walk. He was very sick, and distressed to part with me. I told him the enemy would be in town that night, and he would be free. He said, 'Mas' Harry, that is nothing to me; if you don't see me home, you will know I am dead. Tell Missus, and Ma, and Affy so.'"

Martha was given the message, but our conscientious

mother added: "But, Martha, if you do not see him you need not be sure he is not living; but you must not count too much on seeing him, for if he gets well he will doubtless be tempted to stay, and try a new experience."

The old woman twirled the corners of her apron, as she said sadly: "Missus, it is five generations since my fam'ly come from Africa, and Mausser's from France; we's been togedder since dat time, an' been fait'ful togedder; for once w'en times was hard wid Mausser, he mout hab sold us, but he didn't. He kep' us all togedder, an' you tink Kent such a fool as not to know dat, an' be happy 'mong strangers? He got to work w'erebber he is, an' nobody gwine to consider him like you all. No, ma'am, if he alive I'm lookin' for him, w'atever it seems like to you, ma'am." And she bobbed her curtsy and walked off, leaving her mistress feeling quite small.

Harry remained with us for some weeks. It was pleasant to see his enjoyment of home fare, even in

its pruned condition. Everything seemed luxurious after the camp life; but he did not linger after he was well enough to return to the army. There still was no news of Kent. Harry refused to take another servant in his place, although urged to do so. "No," he said, "I could not find any one to fill Kent's place; and it is a demoralizing life. I do not know if even he could stand the restraints of civilization again."

Several months passed after Harry's departure, and we had given up any idea we might have had of hearing any more of Kent. Martha mourned him as dead, and induced her preacher to preach his funeral, she and Affy attending as chief mourners. Affy in a black cotton dress of Martha's which swallowed

her up, and Martha with her very black face muffled in a square of black alpaca, from which, as she peered out, her teeth and eyeballs looked dazzlingly white.

One freezing night in December, as we were trying to summon resolution to leave the warm chimney corner and go to bed, we were startled by a rap at the door. Everything was startling in those days. Our father opened it, and the light fell on a tall figure clad in a United States uniform, surmounted by Kent's smiling countenance.



"Why, where do you come from?" we exclaimed.

"Well, I tole Mas' Harry if de Lord spare my life I'd come home, an' here I is, sir, and Missus, an' mighty proud," he added, as my mother extended her hand to him, and said:

"You are a faithful fellow. Your mother knew you better than I did."

We were anxious to have Kent's adventures, which he was pleased to narrate.

"You see, w'en Mas' Harry an' our people lef, I felt pretty bad. That night, sure'nuf, as Mas' Harry tole me, the Yankees came booming into town, an' it wasn't long befo' all our mens, who was in the hospitable, was took prisoners; but they seemed very kind to them. W'ile they was sick they give them everything.

It was a cur'ous t'ing, w'en General Foster come through w'ere I was, he noticed me, and asked me w'at I was doin' there, an' I tole him how I had been wid my young Maussa, an' w'en I tole him w'ere I come from an' Mas' Harry's name, 'Oh,' say he, 'I know his father well. I was stationed at Fort Moultrie befo' de war, an' I have eaten many a good dinner at the old Colonel's.' I tole him, 'Yes, sir, Maussa had the bes' of everything, an' my ma was a splendid cook.'

So then he say: 'If you come from them you knows your business, an' w'en you are well, I will take you into my service. You is free now, you know.'

So they kep' me in the hospitable, an' give me nice things to make me well, an' w'en the hospitable discharged me, de General took me an' was rale kind. I had good greenback wages and plenty of everything, an' not much to do, an' rale coffee, as much as I wanted, too; but somehow I couldn't diskiver to be settled.

I had been in de Soudern army so long, w'en they talked of beatin' it, it made me oneasy, an' w'en I studied on Mas' Harry back in de army wid nobody--for I know he wouldn't take nobody in my place--an' wid not 'nuf of even corn bread an' bacon, widout me to perwide," he added, with a grin, "I jest kep' studyin', but I never said nuttin', an' every day dey tole me how lucky I was to be free.

I jes' made up my mind, an' I got the General to let me draw all de clo's I could, an' a overcoat an' shoes an' blankets on my wages, an' den I ask him for a month's wages in advance, an' he seem a little

surprised, but he was very kind, an' he give it to me; so w'en I got everything I could, one night I waited on the General fust rate, w'en he was goin' to bed, an' fixed everything very nice, an' he said I was a rale good servant an' a treasure of a boy; but I jest took my things an' watched my chance, an' jest slipped off in the dark, an' dodged about until I got out of their lines an' into our'n.

I had to walk a hundred miles befo' I got to our regiment. An', Mis', they jest gave me three cheers w'en I tole them how I come back; an' I took de liberty to bring a bottle of whiskey, an' I treated Mas' Harry's ole mess.

Dey tole me he had jine another regiment. I had to walk a good piece more to de cyars; but one of our officers give me a letter to the conductors on de cyars, so I jest come through without payin' a cent. An' mighty glad I is to git home," he added, drawing a long sigh of relief.

"But did you not feel bad at robbing the kind officer who employed you?" I asked.

"Well, Missy," he answered, "seems like Mas' Harry has the bes' right to me, an' he was robbin' Mas' Harry ob me." And, turning to our mother, he said: "Please, ma'am, I would like a week at home to marry Affy, an' den can't I find Mas' Harry?"

It is needless to add that Kent's wedding was as festive as it could be made. It was a holiday on the plantation, and dancing was kept up to the sound of the rhythmic stick beating, from morning until night. The bride was proud, happy and dusky in white muslin; the groom a marvel in his attire, and with all the airs of a traveled man.

After the surrender Kent followed his young master home, and he and Affy settled on a pretty part of the plantation, declaring that they would live "faithful togedder" for the remainder of their lives.

(Excerpted from: *Life in the Confederate Army: Being Personal Experiences of a Private Soldier in the Confederate Army ; and Some Experiences and Sketches of Southern Life*. Arthur Peronneau Ford and Marion Johnstone Ford. New York; Washington: The Neale Publishing Company, 1905.)



# Confederate Silver Dollar

*Coin in plastic sleeve \$65.00 ea.  
Coin encased in plastic \$75.00 ea.  
Add \$20.00 for shipping & handling*

*\*Price subject to change with market fluctuation.  
Call for live quotes*



*The coin itself is one troy ounce of .999 fine silver. It was minted in Washington State by the Northwest Territorial Mint (NWTM).*

*One side of the coin features the Great Seal of the Confederacy, showing Colonial George Washington astride his horse. The other side of the coin was designed in 2002. The scripture "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" is from Psalm 33:12 and celebrates the strong Christian faith and tradition of the old South. The centerpiece is an eagle from a U.S. 1830s silver half-dollar, a coin in circulation during the war. The Breastplate or shield has the "Stars and Bars" of the battle flag with CSA (Confederate States of America) above.*

*Much history rests in this coin. It can be kept as a treasured keepsake or given as a gift.*

## **YOURS FREE**

*With a new member brought in by yourself*

*Lee Camp Members Only*

*See Camp Commander for more information  
Tarry Beasley*

Visit our website @ [www.atlanticbullionandcoin.com](http://www.atlanticbullionandcoin.com)

## Commander's Corner

Gentlemen:

**LAST MONTH'S MEETING:** was really exciting in that we had an ORIGINAL Confederate Battle flag from a Tennessee brigade. It is rare, beautiful, and extremely valuable. The owner gave its history and related information about how it has remained in the family for these many years. If you were not there you sure missed an opportunity of a lifetime. This month will also be out standing and you need to mark you calendar for another interesting talk on our Heritage! See you there August 13th at 7:00 pm.

**DUES:** Dues are due this month. Please bring you annual dues for the 2012 to July 31, 2013 dues to the Camp meeting so you will be paid up for the year and not have a late dues charge. The dues are 30 for National 10 Division and 20 for Camp a total of 60 if paid on time. Life members subtract the national dues of 30. Why not have Kroger buy your membership next year?

**MURFREESBORO REUNION:** was a resounding success and I will relate more to you at the August 12th meeting. The reunion badge will also be on display.

**DOOR DRAWING:** We will have several items in the door prize drawing one of which will be a booklet on some of the d...yankee prisons Your contribution to the drawings helps pay for the meeting room that we use each month for our meetings. Come and participate.

**GERMANTOWN TOUR:** What do you think about our camp doing a tour of Germantown to educate the public on the sites there? Several of the Churches were there when we were occupied and with the "fort" on the Memphis Charleston Railroad, as well as several houses. Maybe a tour of the fort, one house, one church, and a talk on one or two of the residents of Germantown on how the town reacted to the d...yankee invaders and how they treated the locals? First person presentations would go over well just as our walking tours in Elmwood did for

years but maybe with just 4 stops. Lets talk about it at the meeting August 12th. We will need several non-speaking citizens and soldiers of the period and some logistical help.

**FORREST BIRTHDAY** party was once again a great success with a good crowd and cooler weather than usual. I sure wish Mrs. Forrest had picked a cooler month to bring her boy into the world.

**CLARK DOAN** has done it again. He brought a new member into the Camp and we are proud to have Mr. Lee Carpenter join us as a new member. We look forward to having him with us.

**AUGUST 12 MEETING:** will have a presentation on one of the early Battles of the War, you will not want to miss it and it is being presented by a speaker who has presented to us before an excellent program on the Peninsular campaign. See y'all at the meeting

Tarry Beasley, Commander

### July Camp Meeting

**Mr. David Baird presented the original battle flag of Co. C, Barrow Light Guard, CSA, for a rare viewing at the Robert E. Lee Camp, Sons of Confederate Veterans, at the meeting on Monday, July 9, 2012. In the attached photo, Mark Buchanan (on left), Lt. Commander of the Lee Camp, David Baird, and Alex Baird, all descendants of Capt. Edward East Buchanan, Captain of Co. C, proudly display the artifact. Alex is holding his ancestor's service revolver.**

## “Second Manassas – Lee’s Greatest Victory”

Arthur Oliver will be our speaker at the August Lee Camp meeting. Arthur will give a quick overview of the entire campaign from an Army officer’s point of view. The campaign consisted of five battles, not just that at Manassas. This was the campaign that created the mystique of Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. August will be the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory.

### Traveller - Now Online

Traveller, the R.E Lee Camp 1640 newsletter, has caught up with the 21<sup>st</sup> century and is now available on line. Find it monthly at:

<http://www.tennessee-scv.org/camp1640/>

### SCV LIFE MEMBERS ROSTER

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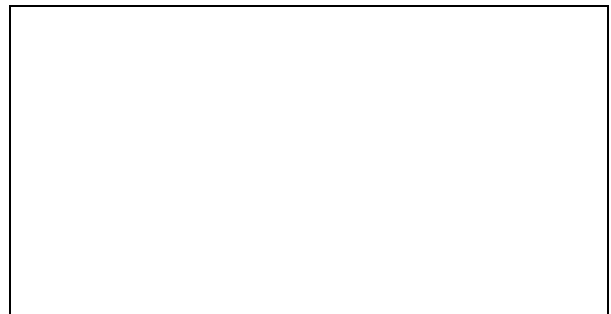


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Steve M. McIntyre, Editor



**Next Camp Meeting \*\* August 13, 2012  
Germantown Pickering Center, 7771 Old Poplar Pike, Germantown, TN**