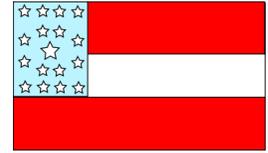




The Vidette

CALIFORNIA DIVISION

Sons of Confederate Veterans



The J. P. Gillis Flag

www.SCVCalifornia.net



November 2004 Issue 33 Published by Division Adjutant Vernon R. Padgett vp09@earthlink.net

CRUISING UP PCH

SCV Member Goes to Court for Bonnie Blue Flag on Motorcycle Tank

From Your Signals Officer

Compatriot Patrick Huggins rode up the coast and rode into some trouble. His story is our lead.

Also in this issue, Tom Hale's definitive account of the LeMat handgun, and load testing information, news of a Real Daughter in Los Angeles, and Ken Koch's report on the Mortar shoot in Ojai, where he proudly displayed the flags.

At right, Al Webb, Chuck Norred, Paul Williams's son just back from Iraq, Vern Padgett, Paul Williams, Floyd Farrar, Garland Courts. We just finished a Long Beach & Los Angeles joint meeting at Johnny Rebs in Long Beach.

At the end of this issue, see the link to the 65 volumes of History and Literature of the South—Gene Kizer has reworked this important series. -- *Editor*.

Yankee Justice?

“The imposition of rules of law by the Government for no moral purpose is evil.” These are great words to remember, especially if you ride a motorcycle in L.A. County.

I ride. I have a Harley-Davidson with a custom paint job. My baby is dark blue with a white star on either side of the tank. Yes-- It is the Bonnie Blue Flag!

Recently I went for a ride up the coast and stopped for some lunch in a city that has some issues.

While I was in this lovely little town, I was given a ticket by one of their “finest” for having “gang colors” displayed. To my surprise, this town has an ordinance that says one may not wear, nor display, the symbol of the Dallas Cowboys, as they have a gang of punks who have



adopted the symbol as their own.

Now comes the fun part. The officer was not aware, nor did they care that my little "Bonnie" was not a Cowboys fan, nor am I. She didn't even blink at my wearing of the SCV logo on my jeans vest. She just didn't want my bike in town. I tried for two days to educate the law enforcement officials of their gross lack of education, and their mistake, but it all kept coming back to the star on a blue field.

Needless to say, when I went to court, I was prepared with a 30-minute presentation on the flags of the Confederacy including a recording of the "The Bonnie Blue Flag" song, and the history of the oldest flag of rebellion in recorded history. The judge was great. With a big smile, he forced the Prosecutor and the officer to sit through the presentation and then dismissed all charges and insisted on a written apology for the lack of good citizenship by the officer.

Needless to say, in my opinion, if you are ever driving up the Jefferson Davis Highway (the under-educated call it the Pacific Coast Highway) and want lunch, press on to Santa Barbara.

By the way, the quote at the beginning is by Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., a true American, and defender of the rights granted by the Constitution.

Patrick Huggins, Camp 1208, Los Angeles

Word from Commander Norred

Men, I have been thinking about Confederate Memorial Day. Camp 1804 has been planning a big event. I am wondering how much interest I can stir up in trying to get a large number of reenactors to come to Madera for a parade and Memorial service. Camp 1804 hopes to flag over 200 Confederate Veteran grave sites in this area on the same day.

I am wondering if we could get a member from each California Camp. The event would be Saturday, April 23, 2005.

It would be nice to see a Representative from each Camp walk in this Confederate and Union parade sporting their camp flag on behalf of all the Confederate Veterans buried in California.

I know that we all usually have something but I'm just curious if we could accomplish such a large task. I have already received some positive responses from some reenactors.

What do you think?



News from Camp 2062 Ventura County Congratulations to Oren Jones Gun Crew

Mortar Crew under Gunners Mate Oren Jones, Life Member of Camp 2062 "CSS Virginia," placed First in the Ojai Valley Gun Club "Seppe Rendezvous" this weekend, 16th and 17th of October. Last year, the Gun Crew placed second. This year they were determined to place first against seven other mortars in the "Mortar and Cannon" shoot.

Mortars fired concrete-filled beer cans or 10 oz. cans of beans. The fun part is emptying cans for ammunition, which takes place away from the range under careful observation of Gunners Mate Jones.

Camp Commander Koch was there to cheer on the crew and observe their fine performance. Oren Jones received a plaque for First Place.

The Ojai Valley Gun Club Annual "Seppe Rendezvous" is held the second week of October each year. This is a black powder shooting and buckskinners contest with a "Cannon and Mortar" side



Commander Ken Koch and Compatriot Oren Jones, Camp 2062 Ventura County CSS Virginia.

match. This year there were four half-size cannons and eight mortars competing.

There were 39 'Tin Teepees' camping in the RV area plus 28 tents and vans plus another dozen hardy purists who set up wigwams and period correct tents in the designated primitive area. 'Traders Row' had seven sutlers and a blacksmith shop. A barbeque and Saturday night dance by a western band topped off the four-day shoot. Ojai Valley Gun Club met on Rose Valley Road in Ojai.

Ken Koch, Commander; Compatriot Oren Jones; CSS Virginia Camp 2062 Ventura County



Ojai Valley Gun Club: Oren Ray Jones and his son Travis, 16th October. Not pictured, but spotter for the mortar crew was Major Elizabeth Jones, USAF.

Heritage News Friends of Beauvoir

The Jefferson Davis Home & Presidential Library

This 51-acre estate is the home of the only Confederate President. The estate, fronting the Gulf of Mexico, was also once the site of the Mississippi Confederate Soldier's home.

This is the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Confederate Soldier.

The Jefferson Davis Presidential Library completes the self-guided tour with a film and exhibits that explore the life and times of the South's greatest leader.

The facility is the leading tourist attraction in the State of Mississippi.

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Beauvoir continues to content with funding issues that threaten its future. Please assist in maintaining this central part of Southern Heritage by becoming a Friend of Beauvoir

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Contributing Membership \$100 to \$500**

**Confederately Yours, —John French,
Commander, Mississippi Division Sons of
Confederate Veterans, Member, Beauvoir Board of
Trustees**

HK Edgerton Free Video

I have posted a video we took Sept 2nd, at the Gettysburg College. H.K. Edgerton gave the most moving rendition of "I Am Their Flag." You must have Quicktime <http://homepage.mac.com/jadolby/iMovieTheater3.html> to view it. You can get it as a free download from downloads.com. Search for Quicktime and install it.

Preserving our Heritage, behind enemy lines,
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Shooting a Piece of History: The LeMat Revolver

By Tom Hale, Camp 1208

Interesting problems oft times lead to interesting solutions. This may indeed be an understatement when speaking of the LeMat revolver.

The Confederate LeMat was one of the only double barrel revolver designs ever produced. The revolver consisted of a 9-shot cylinder that fired through a conventional .40-.42 caliber rifled barrel. The central cylinder pin that would normally be used in a conventional revolver was replaced by a smooth bore secondary barrel of .60-.63 caliber. This central barrel would then serve as a cylinder pin as well as the secondary barrel. Grapeshot would then be loaded into the central barrel providing a devastating charge against the union forces. A removable ramrod for use in charging the shot barrel was inserted in the rammer's lever.

I can only imagine how difficult it would be to load this weapon under fire

The revolver was constructed of blued steel with grips of polished walnut, and was 13.25 inches long. The upper, rifled, barrel was 6.75 inches long; most were octagonal, though some were round.

Originally, all LeMat revolvers came in one model --.40 caliber above a .60 barrel. Later in the war, a lighter .35-caliber pistol equipped with a 28-gauge .50 caliber shotgun barrel was produced. This later production was to bring this firearm in line with the chambering of the day as both the Confederacy and the Union used .36 or .44 caliber handguns.



Designed by Col. LeMat and Gen. Beauregard, this handgun was a favorite of General J.E.B. Stewart. The first models were produced by John Krider of Philadelphia. Later during the war they were produced in Europe by various gun manufacturers.



A 9-chambered, .44 caliber revolver with an 18 gauge shotgun barrel, all in one handgun; a soldier's dream weapon. This firearm was the brainchild of Jean Francois Alexander Le Mat, a French physician with a passion for invention and for the Confederate States of America. R. Douglas Adams, M.D., Founder, Le Mat Historical Society.

Approximately 2900 of these revolvers were produced. The first overseas manufacturing of the revolver was done by Charles Frederic Girard and Son. These were so poorly made that LeMat moved to the Birmingham Small Arms Company in England. Shipments of the guns slipped through the Union naval blockade that barricaded the Confederate coasts

In typical Yankee fashion, this amazing weapon has been relegated to the footnotes section of history.

The Smithsonian Institute records merely state: "This .42 caliber LeMat revolver has a nine-chambered cylinder and weighs about four pounds. What makes this revolver unique is the addition of a second smoothbore barrel, of approximately .63 caliber, underneath the barrel. This larger barrel was designed to fire buckshot. The top of the hammer was fitted with a pivoting striker that could be rotated to fire the .42 caliber rounds or changed to fire the lower,

larger barrel. This percussion revolver was designed by Dr. Jean Alexandre Francois LeMat, of New Orleans. LeMat was assisted in this enterprise by P. G. T. Beauregard, one of the Confederacy's well known generals. These revolvers were manufactured from 1856 to 1865, with less than 2,900 produced. They were made in Paris, France, and Birmingham, England. Many were purchased by the Confederacy and used by such famous high-ranking Confederate officers as J. E. B. Stuart."

That's it! Not much of an entry for such an intriguing device. This raised my curiosity at a young age as to the effectiveness of this unique firearm. As soon as I was able, I purchased an original LeMat from a dealer. While this satisfied my desire to inspect a LeMat, it did little to quench my curiosity as the weapon was of such great collector value as to prohibit firing it. This began a search for a LeMat that was in such poor condition as to have little collector value. Years of searching revealed an important fact! There is no such thing as an original LeMat Revolver that has no collector value! Even severely damaged examples draw a hefty premium. I was in something of a quandary!

There is no such thing as a LeMat Revolver with no collector value!

Enter Navy Arms. I discovered that Navy Arms imported a Pietta Replica of the LeMat. While not an inexpensive weapon, it was downright cheap by the collector standards of the originals. The replica is chambered in .44 caliber, which makes ammunition readily available. The smoothbore barrel is very close in diameter to a 16-gauge shotgun. This was just the



trick to allow me to determine exactly how this device worked.

I have a shooting range here on the property, and as soon as I was ready, I grabbed a pound of Pyrodex powder, a box of .44 caliber lead balls, and a can of single ought buckshot. I sat down at the bench and began to determine how to load the LeMat. The first thing that was apparent was that the LeMat is not only unique in design, it is unique in application!

The loading ram for the 9-shot cylinder is located on the side of the weapon, unlike the Colt and Remington of the day that located their loading rams in line with the center of the bore.



To actuate the loading ram, insert a small removable ramrod into the ram to allow enough leverage to seat the ball atop the charge. While this was a simple and straightforward task, the first thing I thought was, "What happens if you lose this little ramrod?"

I tried loading a chamber without the ramrod with no success. I tried several non-metallic objects as a replacement for this little ramrod. But they all broke. Lesson 1: Don't lose that little ramrod! I can only imagine how difficult it would be to load this weapon under fire. Not only do you need to watch the enemy while loading. But you need to keep track of that little ramrod with an almost religious zeal! If you lose it in the heat of battle, you have nothing left after expending your original loading than a four-pound club.

The little ramrod also has another use. It is used to load the smoothbore shotgun barrel located at the revolvers centerline. I am adept at firing black powder shotguns. So, I figured this would be of little challenge. At first this was the case. First I loaded the powder. Then I inserted a paper wad to buffer the shot. Then a conservative load of single ought buckshot. Then finally, another paper wad to hold the whole thing together. I placed the little ramrod back into its holder and capped the weapon.

The firing of the rounds from the nine shot cylinder was very much akin to firing any other black powder pistol, such as a 1851 Navy or 1860 Army Colt.

Accuracy was not tremendous, but was within nominal tolerances for a weapon of this type, with one glaring exception. Upon firing the fourth round, my eye was caught by movement on the firing bench. I looked down to observe buckshot rolling across the bench! Tipping the revolver forward confirmed my suspicions. The vibration from the firing of the cylinder had loosened the loading in the shotgun barrel and the shot was pouring out of the barrel.

I removed all of the shot but left the powder charge in place. Before firing the LeMat again I confirmed, with the little ramrod, that the powder charge in the shotgun barrel was still firmly seated.

I fired the remaining five shots in the cylinder when, on the last shot, I received a muzzle flash that was right out of a bad Hollywood movie!

Upon inspection it became apparent that the vibration of the last five shots had worked the powder charge in the shotgun barrel loose, and that the flash of the last shot had ignited it-- causing the fireworks effect.

It was quite spectacular if not a little frightening! I decided to load only the shotgun barrel and see what happened. I moved the pivoting firing pin to the proper position and squeezed the trigger. WOW! The report was tremendous! The perceived recoil was low. But the smoke from the powder was so thick that I had to wave my hand to clear it. The target, twenty-five feet away, showed a very respectable pattern for such a short-barreled shotgun. I must admit that I was enthused by the performance.



But the problem still remained with the vibration of the shotgun load while firing the cylinder. I spent the rest of the day trying different ideas to hold the

shotgun load in place. I wanted to use substances and materials to secure the shotgun load that would have been available to soldiers of the period. While this may not be of any concern to a novice shooter, those of us with any experience will immediately recognize the danger of having a loose load in the barrel. If gaps occur between the powder and the breech, or the powder and the shot, pressure in the barrel can rise to a level that can cause catastrophic failure of the weapon. In layman's terms, IT CAN KILL YOU!

Either I am missing something concerning loading, or, you would be well-advised to fire this barrel first.

I tried various substances to secure the load. Including beeswax, which melted when the cylinder was fired, bore butter, which oozed out when fired or carried, and molasses. The molasses worked the best.

Instead of just sealing the front of the load with the molasses, as I had with the beeswax and bore butter, I dipped each round of shot into the molasses.

I then rammed the shot home using a paper wad to seal it. Then I let it sit until the molasses had dried or thickened. This worked very well, that is, until I fired the shotgun barrel. The molasses held the shot in place throughout all nine rounds from the cylinder. But upon firing the shotgun barrel two things came to the forefront.



First, the cap on that barrel showed serious signs of overpressure. Second, the shot hit the target causing a single .70 caliber hole. The molasses worked so well at holding the shot together that it did not separate upon firing. This is not exactly the result I was looking for from the shotgun. The sun was setting so I gathered my gear and retired to the house for some boiled peanuts and sweet tea as I reflected upon what I had learned.

Conclusions: The LeMat revolver is certainly a marvel of 19th Century engineering; well ahead of its time. But it is also obvious that more development was needed for it to compete with the popular

handguns of the day. I believe that this weapon would be tremendous as a metallic cartridge firearm if short barreled shotguns were not so heavily regulated by Yankee law.



Specimens from Author's collection.

The loose ramrod is a problem. Due to its size it seems to me that it could be easily lost in the heat of battle. What good is a great gun if you can't load it? Also, the inability to keep the shotgun load in place while firing the cylinder is downright dangerous.

Either I am missing something concerning the proper loading of this barrel, or you would be well-advised to fire this barrel first.

My testing showed that firing the shotgun barrel had no effect of the rounds loaded in the cylinder. And the amount of smoke produced by this barrel would relegate it, at least in my opinion, to being fired while moving, such as on horseback, or while standing in a stiff breeze. In calm air you are left standing in a cloud of acrid smoke.

Switching to a substitute like 777 powder would most likely solve this issue.

The biggest issue in favor of the LeMat is that it is extremely high on the "Fun Factor"! It was a hoot to fire, and a real looker in the unique firearms category.

Real Daughter in Los Angeles

We have a real daughter in the L.A. area. Her name is Mrs. Mollie Lou Saxon Beard. She resides at 2814 Military Avenue, Los Angeles 90064-4022.

Her birthday is May 4th. In conjunction with the Los Angeles Camp, I propose we fulfill our obligation to look after the widows and orphans of Confederate Veterans. We should check up on her every now and then, send flowers, cards etc.

What a privilege it is to have her amongst us.

DEO VINDICE

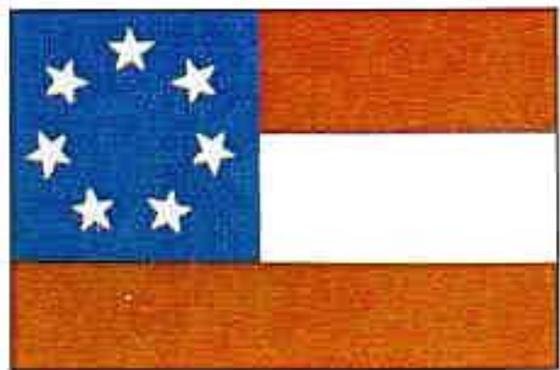
Paul Williams Commander SCV 2007

18th North Carolina Infantry: Heroes or Bums?

My Great-Great Grandfather was a true hero. Anyone who has met me will attest that I can easily back up those words. There is a slight problem though. He was the lieutenant for I Company, 18th North Carolina Infantry, the Wilmington Rifles. He was a member of the elite light forces under Jackson and A.P. Hill that even today our military can not copy completely.

He joined the army at the time of P.G.T. Beauregard's Declaration of Independence (aka Fort Sumter). He was voted lieutenant before the unit left training camp. "Old Bill" was with Branch when they marched across that field to repulse Burnside at Sharpsburg. He charged the guns with Trimble at Gettysburg. He fought for Lane with a hammer at the Bloody Angle. He led his company through every engagement; through every winter; through every rapid march until Saylor's Creek. There he was shot by a loaded weapon that fell off a stack. He was badly wounded through the foot. He was captured that day.

The problem with Grandpa Bill's service was a 45-second period that occurred in the twilight of one evening.

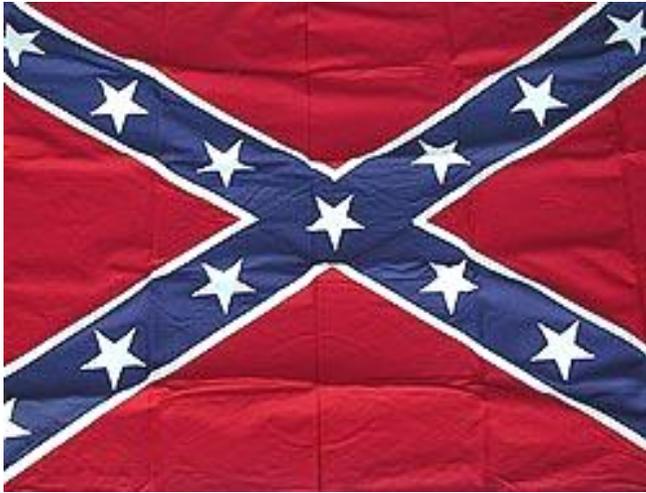


Companies E and I of the 18th were assigned line picket following the successful charge along the flank at Chancellorsville. There was a horrible accident that occurred along the front of this picket. A group of unknown horsemen were seen in the twilight, approaching from the union line. None of the horsemen were wearing the typical slouch hat of Southern officers. One was wearing the kepi that Union officers were fond of wearing. In the stress of

the evening, and with “Union” forces approaching, an order was given to fire.

It was this simple command, and an estimated 45 bullets, that has led some to believe that my great-great grandfather was not a hero.

This was the evening that General Thomas Jackson was wounded. That wound would begin the journey that would end his life. Jackson lost his left arm as a result. Lee would go on to say that he had lost his right arm. And “Old Bill” would go on to lose his home, his way of life, and his Southern identity as a result.



After all he had been through to fight for the right of the State of North Carolina to determine its own course, my great-great grandfather would end up moving to Philadelphia to live the rest of his life. He was ostracized by his neighbors, by his old friends, and by a few in our own family for that unfortunate evening.

I will not hang my head in shame. How many of you can say your ancestor was at almost every major Eastern Campaign battle in the War to stop government meddling?

Every now and then I hear someone say that if Jackson had lived he would have taken the hill. Jackson would have single handedly beaten Grant ... Sound familiar? This is a great lesson in “what ifs.” Jackson might have done one of his miracles. He might have even been able to keep JEB Stuart in the line of battle at Gettysburg. But with an ever depleting source of food, weapons, and men, could Jackson have brought about a positive end to the War?

My great-great grandfather was not responsible for ending the valiant efforts of the Southern States to win their freedom. He did his best and served with honor. Did he personally give the command? Who cares? He gave up his honor, his home, and in the end

his dignity to fight against a wrong and I will defend his name and the name of the 18th by any means necessary. I guess his Tar Heel spirit of honor didn't die with him.

Patrick Huggins, “Proud of my Confederate Ancestor!”

Letters to the Editor

In response to Tim Desmond's article in last issue:

It was interesting to read the article about Cork, Ireland ... as we just returned from Ireland on Monday.

We arrived there on the 7th, a Tuesday, and stayed in Dublin until Saturday, when all the hotels in Dublin were full. So, we took a train to Waterford and stayed there for a couple of days. There, I found out why there was such high hotel occupancy in Dublin. The All-Ireland Major Hurling championships were being played between Cork and Kilkenny, the reigning champions.

Hurling is an Irish game similar to lacrosse and it is wildly popular there. I was in a pub in Waterford Sunday afternoon (doing local cultural research, of course) when the game started. I was very curious and got involved in watching it, when I noticed a large number of very large Confederate flags flying in the stands. This immediately piqued my interest, and I set out to find out why. But even not knowing why, I felt a great sense of pride at seeing the banners being waved. As it turns out, the Cork team is named “The Rebels.”

The Confederate flag was well received there and there seemed to be no dissent over it, whatsoever.

When we returned to Dublin on Monday we saw them in town again. It kind of felt like being home. By the way Cork WON!!!!

All in all, the Irish have contributed much to our society and we have Irish influence on many aspects of American life (St. Patrick's Day, for example). It's nice to see that the Confederacy has had some influence in Ireland.

Randy Honeycutt, Camp 1208 John Bell Hood

From Sandra Ashdown-Turner, President California

Order of Confederate Rose: If you don't win the award at National for both your newsletters, we will know they only consider newsletters from Southern states.

Editor responds: No—I am sure the judging is fair and objective! – Ed.

From Michael Wright, Camp 1208: Vern, I got a lump in my throat (and not just from eating too fast this time) at the sight of that Final Encampment postcard. It is unbelievably poignant. Not so long ago Confederate veterans were alive and among us. The last encampment looks like 1951, just yesterday. And they saw the end of their lives approaching

and no doubt wanted to take hold of it for a last time in the company of the dwindling few who really understood because they were there. What fine pieces of art the postcard and stamp are! Note the setting sun behind the Confederate monument. The sun will set but the monument will still be there. Our wonderful guys in gray. How can anyone call himself a man and not love them?

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*From Joe Alarid, Past Commander, Santa Barbara SCV:*

Thanks for the kind words, and especially to Mike Wright as well. The Last Reunion image looked great in the *Vidette*. I am proud to share that with my SCV brothers! With the computer age technology available to us, these images can be shared with hundreds and thousands of SCV members. May it serve to further our efforts for preservation of Southern history, and the cause for which it stands. I hope that others in our Division will be inspired, and share these types of historical images with the rest of us. The *Vidette* gets better and better Vern. You are putting your heart into each issue. The contributors are coming up with good articles and it makes for an enjoyable read. The *Vidette* and Farrell Cooley's e-mail report are the only info I received on the SCV Convention.

Keep up the great work. I hope to get to the Moorpark event and visit with you.

~~~~~  
Poetry of Father A. J. Ryan

C.S.A.

~~~~~  
Do we weep for the heroes who died for us,  
Who living were true and tried for us,  
And Dying sleep side by side for us;  
The Martyr-band  
That hallowed our land  
With the blood they shed in a tide for us?

Ah, fearless on many a day for us  
They stood in front of the fray for us,  
And held the foeman at bay for us:  
And tears should fall  
Fore'er o'er all  
Who fell while wearing the Gray for us.

How many a glorious name for us,  
How many a story of fame for us  
They left: Would it be a blame for us

If their memories part  
From our land and heart,  
And a wrong to them, and shame to us?

No, no, no, they were brave for us,  
And bright were the lives they gave for us;  
The land they struggled to save for us  
Will not forget  
Its warriors yet  
Who sleep in so many a grave for us.

On many and many a plain for us  
Their blood poured down all in vain for us,  
Red, rich, and pure, like a rain for us;  
They bleed – we weep,  
We live – they sleep,  
“All lost,” the only refrain for us.

Bur their memories e'er shall remain for us,  
And their names, bright names, without stain  
for us;

The glory they won shall not wane for us,  
In legend and lay  
Our heroes in Gray  
Shall forever live over again for us.

Source: *Selected Poems of Father Abram J. Ryan*, Brannon Publishing Co.

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## California SCV Web Site

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Check www.scvcalifornia.net for the California SCV website. Gary Waltrip, Division Webmaster, continues to expand and add to the web site. See Gary's own site at www.RebelGray.com

History and Literature of the South

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Compatriots— Gene Kizer of South Carolina has remastered and transferred to DVD most of the parts of this powerful series on Southern history and literature. It is *65 fascinating volumes*, and features some of the most renowned scholars alive today.

For complete list with speaker biographies:  
[www.HistoryandLiteratureoftheSouth.com](http://www.HistoryandLiteratureoftheSouth.com)

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## New Book on Reenacting by Camp 1208 Compatriot Mike Chilton

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Compatriot Mike Chilton has a book on Reenacting. It would be especially helpful to new reenactors, and I recommend it. He is selling it for \$9.95. See [www.1861Reenactors.com](http://www.1861Reenactors.com)

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## SCV Life Membership

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Apply for Life Membership by completing application at [www.SCV.org](http://www.SCV.org). Ask me about the new fee structure. Mail check and form to HQ. Life Members are assigned to Camp 2 and are also listed on local Camp rosters.

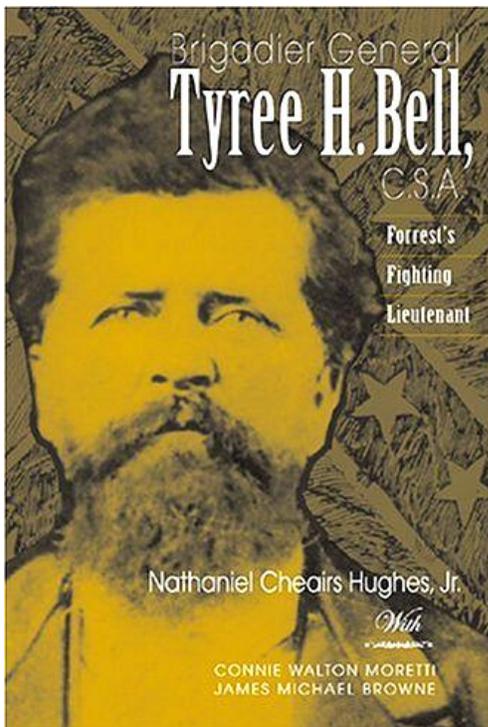
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## Brigadier General Tyree H. Bell, C.S.A: Forrest's Fighting Lieutenant

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by [Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes](#), [Connie Walton Moretti](#), [James Michael Browne](#), University of Tennessee Press, published August 2004, 346 pages, hardcover, is listed at [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com), for \$30.60, no tax, and free shipping.

--- Connie Moretti, Past President, UDC California



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## California Division Staff

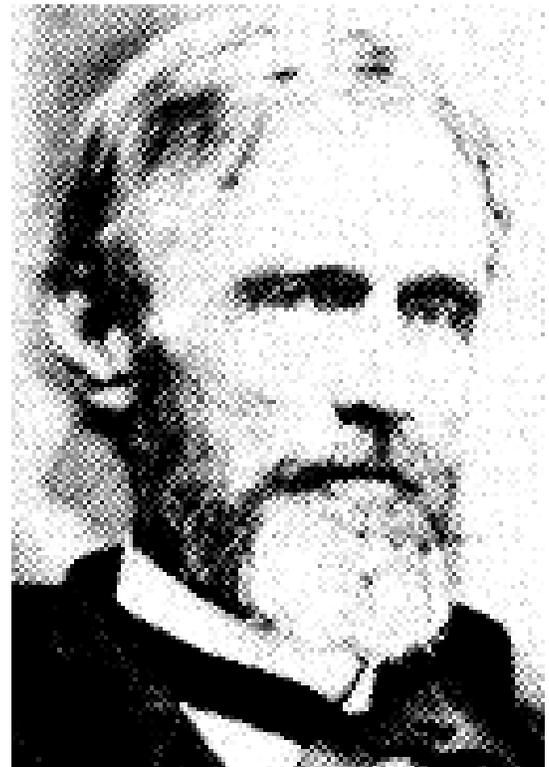
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## WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



“... We desire peace at any sacrifice save that of honor and independence. All we ask is to be let alone.” — Jefferson Davis, 29 April 1861.