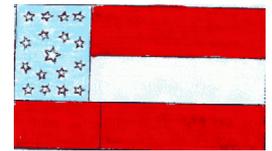




The Vidette

CALIFORNIA DIVISION

Sons of Confederate Veterans



The J. P. Gillis Flag



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SCV, UDC Collaborate at Hope Ranch Picnic --Rare Medal Presented to UDC President

--- By Joseph V. Alarid, Santa Barbara Camp 1631

On Saturday 7 September I went to the UDC picnic in Hope Ranch, with Barron Smith, his wife Kyle, Camp member Dalton Pittman, and our Real Son Woody Plaughter.



UDC Division President Rhobie Reed-Curtis and SCV Commander Joseph V. Alarid

This annual picnic is hosted by the Phoebe Yates Pember UDC Chapter 2532. The UDC Division president, Ms. Rhobie Reed-Curtis, was there.

In my travels to flea markets, swap meets, antique shows, etc., I found two UDC pins. One was a regular enameled pin with the Stars & Bars, wreath and bow

pattern. The other was a UDC 50-year member pin. It is a very humble, unassuming pin with a five-point



A Surprised Rhobie Reed-Curtis thanks Joseph Alarid

star, and CSA in the middle of the star, with the UDC wreath & bow ribbon pattern surrounding the star.

I had the Southern Cross of Honor that I wanted to surprise them with. I had told Billye Viole of UDC chapter 2532 prior to the picnic about the UDC pins, and word got to the division President. The Cross had been in my custody for years; I just couldn't identify the soldier's regiment. It seemed right to give it back to the UDC. He was named "Davis," after all.

At the ceremony, I said that it must have meant so much to the woman who proudly wore it. I felt that these pins belonged to the UDC, and I presented them to the California Division president.

She and the Daughters were very excited to get these pins. In addition, I gave her an original Southern

Cross of Honor. It was engraved with the name J. M. Davis. Many years ago, I attempted to identify his regiment and company. But there are three rolls of Davis's on microfilm at the Los Angeles Mormon Family center, and many soldiers with the initials "J. M." in the Davis rolls.



Compatriot Dalton Pittman; Real Son Woody Plaughter; Joseph Alarid; SCV Division Commander Barron Smith

Since his last name was the same as our beloved president, I thought it a great coincidence. They were very excited about this. The president said that it might wind up on display in a museum.

In my short speech, I explained that the Southern Cross of Honor was issued to living Confederate Veterans in the UCV after 1900.

The protocol is that only the veteran may wear this medal-- Not his wife or children. Upon his death, the medal may be buried with him, or returned to the UDC. It seemed like the right thing to do. I made sure that the ladies passed it around, for many had never seen one before.

And it occurred to me that the various badges, medals, and insignia of both organizations mean so much to us. We should all make provisions in our wills that, upon our death, these things should be turned in to the local chapter or camp, lest they fall into the wrong hands.

One UDC member told me she was taking hers with her: They would be buried with her!

I have one more identified Southern Cross of Honor, for John W. Stone, part of the Color Detail of the 2nd Tennessee Infantry, Company K. We should find his family too. I have one each of the Southern Cross of Military Service for WW1, WWII, and Korea. They do not have engraved names.

I have told the story of the other identified cross in my custody. It belonged to William J. Hilburn,

Company K, 7th Georgia Infantry. He is buried in Hollywood Cemetery on Santa Monica Blvd. I ran an ad in *Confederate Veteran Magazine* in 1997 and was contacted by the soldier's g-g-nephew, Barney Hilburn, Color Sergeant of John Gregg SCV Camp 958 in Hallsville, Texas.

I sent him the cross, military record, and obituary from the 1927 *Los Angeles Times*. I also sent him photos of the grave. Barney sent me a great letter and a check for the original cost of the medal, about \$135 or so. They go for \$400 now; sometimes more for an identified Cross.

Anyway, it's one of those things that whispers in your ear. You only have custody of the Cross. It belongs to the soldier, and to his family

It was a beautiful day, with good food, good friends, and the reminder that the SCV and UDC can work together in remembrance of our Southern heritage.

[Photos by Barron Smith; editing by Floyd Farrar]

Rebel re-enactor with a cause

By LAURA MOYER *The Free Lance-Star*

ROCKVILLE--In the Hanover County woods where men in blue and men in gray are shooting at each other, it's all noise and smoke and stink.



Photo by Robert A. Martin / The Free Lance-Star
Willie Levi Casey Jr. of Spotsylvania re-enacts as a Confederate private with the 6th North Carolina State Troop. Casey's unit participated yesterday in a re-enactment of the 1862 Battle of Beaver Dam Creek.



Photo by Robert A. Martin / The Free Lance-Star
 Willie Casey (second from right) says people don't understand why he joined the Sons of Confederate Veterans. 'People say to me, "Do you support slavery?" I say, "No. I support preserving Southern history and telling it the way it is."

Across a field there's cannon fire so loud it resets your heartbeat for you. Horses whicker, and men shout. Fog-thick gunpowder smoke gives off a rotten-egg reek.

For Confederate Pvt. Casey of the 6th North Carolina State Troop, a Civil War re-enactment unit, the conflict is all external.

In real life, the Rebel private is Maj. Willie Levi Casey Jr. of the U.S. Army--a tasty bit of irony if you're looking for it.

But Casey sees no irony at all in re-enacting as a 19th-century soldier in gray and being a 21st-century African-American.

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 Spotsylvania resident Willie Levi Casey Jr. is an African-American member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and proud to be Southern.  
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Casey, a 40-year-old resident of Spotsylvania County's Chancellor area, is a Southerner by birth and proud of it by choice.

He's been re-enacting since 1997 and was welcomed as a full member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans Matthew Fontaine Maury Camp 1722 two years ago.

It all makes sense, he said, if you view the Civil War not as a textbook struggle between good and evil, but as the nuanced conflict it truly was.

"Look at the mentality of a black person in the South" at the time of the Civil War, Casey said. That person's ancestors might have been living in the South for 150 years before the war.

In such a case, he said, "You may be a Southerner by force, but you are a Southerner."

Historians have long held that black Southerners, free or slave, did not serve the Confederacy as soldiers, but worked instead as teamsters, laborers, cooks and personal servants.

If those black men took up weapons in battle, this official version of history goes, it was because of circumstances and self-defense, not because they believed in the Southern cause.

But recent scholarly works--many by African-American academics--have alleged a historical understatement and even a cover-up of blacks' real participation.

Casey, who earned a degree in history from Presbyterian College in South Carolina, said his reading over the past few years leads him to believe that tens of thousands of blacks, slave and free, fought for the Confederacy.

Their motivation, he believes, was not to support slavery but to support what they saw as their country--the South--and to improve their own lot in life.

"You would fight to gain status. Because you know that even if you lose, you're still one of the brothers in arms," Casey said. "You're fighting to make your life better."

Casey's persona as a re-enactor is a free black cabinetmaker from eastern Tennessee, able to read and write, with a wife and a child at home.

But he has a real-life link to the Confederacy as well--one he always vaguely knew about but pinned down only in recent years.

Casey grew up in Cross Anchor, S.C., in the 1960s and '70s. It was an area full of Caseys, black and white.

He and his siblings knew they had a white great-grandfather, a man who had never married their American Indian/African-American great-grandmother even though they had six children together.

A family photo of the couple's son Barney Casey shows a bulky man in overalls with lank gray hair and white skin. He's Willie Casey's grandfather.

Willie Casey was well into adulthood when he decided to research the white side of his family.

In the course of his genealogical effort he came across the Civil War record of one Pvt. Martin Luther Casey, a South Carolina soldier killed in 1862. That man was the older brother of Casey's great-grandfather.

Being a collateral relative of a Civil War soldier qualified Casey for membership in the SCV. He's

twice been elected aide-de-camp of the local group.

His acceptance into the organization doesn't surprise him. "Most people will welcome you according to how you treat them," he said.

The SCV denounces racism and has vehemently fought the usurpation of the Confederate battle flag by the Ku Klux Klan and other hate groups.

"These are guys who are trying to remember their ancestors in a positive manner," he said. And that's what he wants to do, too.

Still, Casey is often asked to explain himself--not to his fellow re-enactors or SCV members, but to people who just can't understand where he's coming from.

"People say to me, 'Do you support slavery?'" he said.

"I say, 'No. I support preserving Southern history and telling it the way it is.'"

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California SCV Web Site

Check www.scvcalifornia.net for the revised California SCV website.

Gary Waltrip, Commander Camp 1440, The Stainless Banner, San Jose, continues to expand and add to the web site. See Gary's own site at www.RebelGray.com.



SCV Life Membership

Many members choose Life Membership. Apply for Life Membership by completing the application, available on the SCV.org national website. Fee is \$300 if you are 59 or younger; \$200 for those aged 60 to 69, and \$100 for those aged 70 and older. Mail the check and form to HQ.

Life Members are assigned to Camp 2, and are also listed on local Camp rosters with "LM" instead of an expiration date.

PBS SERIES KCET--

Ken Burns's *The Civil War* broadcasts all week

Tune in and enjoy Ken Burns's 11 hour, 9 episode series: *The Civil War*. Yes, it has mistakes— shoes had little to do with the Gettysburg Campaign, and the Morrill Tariff of 1860 is not mentioned even once. But where else on television can you see frame after frame, hours and hours chronicling of the brilliant leadership of Southern generals, not to mention lengthy coverage of President Jefferson Davis?

5-disk DVD set: At Best Buy \$99.99; Target \$79.99; Barnes and noble \$103; Amazon.com Price: \$97.49. -- Ken Koch, Commander, SCV Ventura County, CSS Virginia Camp 2062



Still from *Gods and Generals*

HISTORY CHANNEL

Silver Mines

IT WAS CALLED THE MOTHER LODE," A DEPOSIT OF SILVER SO MASSIVE -

That it would produce \$300-million in its first 25 years of operation, establish Nevada as a state, and bankroll the Union Army in the Civil War. Named after an early investor, we'll see how the Comstock Lode, discovered near Virginia City, proved to be a scientific laboratory from which vast improvements in mining technology and safety were pioneered,

including innovations in drilling, ventilation, drainage, and ore processing.



Still from *Gods and Generals*

To Congressman Gary Miller, Diamond Bar

From Farrell Cooley, Anaheim, California, 1st Lt. & Heritage Officer, Gen. John Bell Hood 1208, Los Angeles, Sons of Confederate Veterans

TO THE HONORABLE GARY MILLER:

Let me congratulate you on the fine article printed in the *Orange County Register*, "Lawmaker brings hobby to the floor" 13 September 2002.

It made my heart warm to see that you initiated a bill to preserve battlefields by using government money to help nonprofit organizations or state government purchase battlefield property in order to preserve these areas.

Recently, the OCCWRT and I donated \$600 to the Nathan Bedford Forrest Home preservation project offered through the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

The Round Table has donated a lot of money on behalf of many different battlefields, and in each situation they use the members who decided where the money should be sent.

I feel it is important to help get your name out there to various members who have these kinds of heartfelt sympathies toward our precious HISTORY. Maybe they in turn can contact their representatives and make a difference.

The article didn't say if you're a descendant of a Confederate veteran, but if that is the case, then I welcome you to join the General John Bell Hood Camp of Los Angeles. It would be an honor to have you among our members. We have several politicians

who are members, primarily in the South, such as Trent Lott of Mississippi.

That must be pretty cool to be with Robert Duvall and Jeff Daniels in "Gods and Generals"! Good cause for another congratulations. I can't wait to see the movie.

Thanks for everything you're trying to do towards battlefield preservation. We need more bills like this.

Best Regards, Farrell Cooley

Life Member, Sons of Confederate Veterans



Still from *Gods and Generals*

Black Confederate Prepares for 1300 Mile March In Defense of the Confederate Flag & Southern Heritage

By Ron Holland

Published 09. 16. 02 Sierra Time

Asheville, NC - HK Edgerton, the former head of the Asheville, NC NAACP and for the last 5 years, a defender of Confederate causes is a man on a mission.

On Monday, October 14th, 2002, Mr. Edgerton in Confederate uniform and carrying his Third National Flag of the Confederacy will begin a 1,300 mile march from Asheville to Austin, Texas.

The real purpose of HK Edgerton's March Across Dixie is threefold. First, he wants to expand the awareness of the need to defend Southern heritage, history and the rightfulness of the Confederate cause here in the South and across the entire United States.

Second this is an educational effort to show that our Southern symbols are part of a proud heritage that should be defended not scorned, as many liberal politicians, media and special interests would have you believe.

Third, he plans to raise money and support to build a permanent heritage defense fund to be split between the Southern Legal Resource Center and the

Sons of Confederate Veterans to guarantee our heritage and history survives and prospers despite the current attacks.

This is a tall order for a 55 year-old Black man, to walk the breadth of the old Confederacy carrying a flag many respect and revere but some hate and despise. HK knows this is an uphill educational battle to educate millions of Southerners who have been taught in the public schools, by liberal politicians and the establishment media that everything Southern is evil, bad or racist.



Still, the sometimes past slander and distortions by the liberal media, personal attacks by leftwing special interest groups and violent physical assault has not damped Mr. Edgerton's love for all the people of Dixie, our symbols and our Confederate heritage.

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What the South was fighting For

"They (the South) know that it is their import trade that draws from the people's pockets sixty or seventy millions of dollars per annum, in the shape of duties, to be expended mainly in the North, and in the protection and encouragement of Northern interest

These are the reasons why these people do not wish the South to secede from the Union. They (the North) are enraged at the prospect of being despoiled of the rich feast upon which they have so long fed and fattened, and which they were just getting ready to enjoy with still greater gout and gusto.

They are as mad as hornets because the prize slips them just as they are ready to grasp it."

~ *New Orleans Daily Crescent*, January 21, 1861

Jefferson Davis, American

Amazon.com

The title might seem odd, given that Jefferson Davis (1808-89) served as president of the Confederacy, and never once, in the 34 years between the end of the war and his death, expressed any remorse for his part in the conflict that tore America apart. Yet, as historian William J. Cooper Jr. reminds us in his sober, comprehensive biography, Davis "saw himself as a faithful American ... a true son of the American Revolution and the Founding Fathers." Indeed, Davis's own father had fought in the Revolution, and Davis himself was a West Point graduate and Mexican War veteran. He declared January 21, 1861, "the saddest day of my life," as he resigned his U.S. Senate seat to follow his native state of Mississippi out of the Union; yet he also unflinchingly defended secession as a constitutionally guaranteed right. Cooper's measured portrait neither glosses over Davis's lifelong belief that blacks were inferior nor vilifies him for it: "My goal," he writes, "is to understand Jefferson Davis as a man of his time, not condemn him for not being a man of my time." The chapters on the War show Davis intimately involved in military decisions, as well as in diplomatic attempts to gain foreign support for the Confederacy. Cooper acknowledges the irony of his subject-- who interpreted the Constitution as strictly limiting federal authority-- being forced by the war's exigencies to create a powerful, centralized Confederate government. Yet, this depiction of a forceful, self-confident Davis makes it clear that he never could have been anything but "a vigorous and potent chief executive." The author also paints an attractive picture of a warm family man who was devoted to his strong-minded wife and their children. This evenhanded work sees Jefferson Davis whole. --

Wendy Smith --This text refers to the [Hardcover edition](#)

