



The General's Aide

Gen. Tom Green Camp #1613
Sons of Confederate Veterans



September 2023

Special Dates of Interest:

Check the Camp's Website for the
Calendar - Be In The Know

Sept. 4 - Labor Day

Sept. 8-10 7th Brigade Muster and
Living History - Proctor, Texas.

Sept. 21 - Gen. Tom Green Camp
Meeting @ 7:00 pm, Ft. Concho LHSC.

Sept. 23-24 - Gun Show - San
Angelo

Sept. 23 - Seminole Canyon History
Fair, Comstock, Texas. 10:00-
2:00pm.

Sept 29-Oct 1 - School of the Piece
@ Ft. Concho LHSC.

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The Purple Heart

One of my favorite quotes is from Mark Twain. He said, "Never let school interfere with your education." Last month my education taught me that August 7th is "Purple Heart Day" in our country. And here is the rest of the story.

In the last year of the American Revolution, 1782, General George Washington was determined to recognize the service of enlisted soldiers. So, on August 7, 1782, from his headquarters in Newburgh,

N.Y., General Washington issue his order creating the Badge of Military Merit. "... *The General ever desirous to cherish virtuous ambition in his soldiers, as well as to foster and encourage every species of Military merit directs whenever any singularly meritorious action is performed, the author of it shall be permitted to wear on his facings, over his left breast, the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk edged with narrow lace or binding.*"

As enlisted men, this award granted them the distinction of being permitted to pass all guards and sentinels as could commissioned-officers. The names of the recipients were to have been kept in a "Book of Merit" (which has never been recovered). At the present time there are three verified recipients of the Badge of Military Merit: Sergeant Elijah Churchill, 2nd Continental Dragoons; Sergeant William Brown, 5th Connecticut Continental Line Infan-

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The Forgotten Counterattack That Probably Saved Lee's Army at the Battle of the Wilderness

by Jerry McAbee

During the Battle of the Wilderness, three events along or near the Plank Road on May 6, 1864, have fascinated historians for years. The "just in time arrival" of James Longstreet's First Corps stopped the Federal rout of A. P. Hill's Third Corps, preventing the

piecemeal destruction of the Army of Northern Virginia. Longstreet's subsequent flanking movement of four Confederate brigades from an unfinished railroad cut shattered the combat cohesion of five Federal divisions, forcing Winfield Hancock to flee to

previously prepared positions. And, the grievous wounding of Longstreet stalled a well-planned Confederate attack intended to push more than half the Federal army back across the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers.



A HEROINE OF VIRGINIA

Maria Isabella "Belle" Boyd of Martinsburg Virginia. Known as "La Belle Rebelle," "the Siren of the Shenandoah," the Cleopatra of Secession: "the Rebel Joan of Arc," and the "Amazon of Secessia" once shot a Yankee soldier dead at the age of 17 for insulting her mother, and was one of the Confederacy's most notorious spies.

"If it is a crime to love the South, its cause and its President, then I am a criminal. I

would rather lie down in this prison and die than leave it owing allegiance to a government such as yours." - Belle Boyd

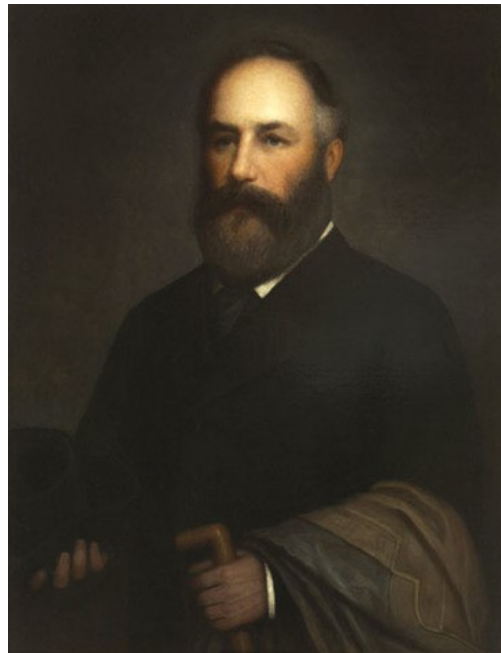


The Forgotten Counterattack... (con't)

But one pivotal action that day was never properly recorded and has been essentially lost to history.

After Longstreet fell, Lee needed to realign the jumbled Confederate brigades before continuing the attack. The delay gave Hancock time to regroup. His seven divisions occupied a strong line of breastworks along the Brock Road. At 4:15 p.m., Field's and Anderson's rebels closed to within 100 yards of the breastworks and assaulted the center and left of the Federal line.

Beyond the rebel's left was a gap between Edward Perry's Florida brigade and the nearest Confederates. Henry Heth's and Cadmus Wilcox's divisions were posted several hundred yards northwest of the Floridians to guard the open area between Ewell's Corps at the Orange Turnpike and Longstreet. At 5:30 p.m., Orlando Wilcox's Third Division, supported by Robert Potter's Second Division, both of Burnside's IX Corps, Army of the Potomac, moved into the gap and struck hard against the Confederate left, routing Edward



Edward Perry - Florida Department of State

Perry's Floridians and William Perry's Alabamians that had moved up in support. Two Federal divisions had surprised Lee! They were in perfect position to strike the flank and rear of Anderson and Field who already had their hands full at the breastworks. Another crisis was at

hand.

Fortunately, William Perry had anticipated the attack and asked Lee earlier for reinforcements. William Wofford's brigade of Georgians was the closest uncommitted unit. Lee ordered it forward. Perry wrote: "The promised reinforcements came. It was not in time to save us from a great mortification; but it was in time to retrieve the disaster. It was Wofford's brigade of Kershaw's division. It swooped down upon the enemy in the midst of their exultation and confusion, and swept them away like chaff ... the enemy disappeared like an apparition."

In their official reports, Burnside and Kershaw were more succinct. Burnside stated: "This part of their line [Confederate left] was held for some time, but we were finally forced to give it up by the overpowering force of the enemy." Kershaw wrote that Wofford "moved against the enemy in the afternoon on the left of the Plank Road, and met some success in that quarter and suffered some

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Military Records — World War II

Have you ever tried to find military records for your World War II ancestor? Well, it is not easy. Military records are archived at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. This would be the place to go if you were searching for your ancestor's military service records. However in 1973, some genius moved a bunch of military records out of the vaults into the hallways and Shazam, there was a fire which burned and smoldered for 4 1/2 days. 18 million World War II and Korean War service member's records were lost.

In my quest to find records of my Grandfather's service in WW II, hitting brick wall after brick wall,

I have had a breakthrough. Service members are 'required' to submit copies of their military records to their local county courthouse upon discharge. Knowing that my Grandfather lived in San Angelo when WW II started, I went to the Tom Green County Clerk's office, where these records are kept and submitted the information for them to search for his records. I had to be persistent but, with the help of the people there I obtained his WW II Army records. Happy Days were at hand! If you know where your ancestor lived in 1940, chances are they went back there after the war.

Remember, they used Service Numbers back then, not Social Security Numbers for identification.

So, now there is a new door open to those searching for military records, the county courthouse. But note, due to privacy laws, you might have issues obtaining recent records for genealogy use. Records over 62 years old can be released by law. So, good luck with your search.



The Forgotten Counterattack... (con't)

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loss."

Wofford's brigade had prevented a disaster that threatened Lee's army as surely as Hancock's rout of Hill's Corps had threatened it earlier that morning.



A Kurz & Allison engraving depicting the desperate fight on the Orange C.H. Plank Road, near Todd's Tavern, on May 6, 1864, during the Battle of the Wilderness | LOC



The Purple Heart (con't)

(Continued from page 1)

try and Sergeant Daniel Bissel, 2nd Connecticut Continental Line Infantry. Washington stated that the award was to be a permanent



The Badge of Military Merit, one of two originals that exists in the world. New Windsor and National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.

one, but once the Revolution ended, the Badge of Military Merit was all but forgotten until the 20th century.

General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing suggested a need for an award for merit in 1918, but it was not until 1932 that the modern Purple Heart was created in recognition of Washington's ideas and for the bicentennial of his birth. General Order #3 announced the establishment of the award: "... *By order of the President of the United States, the Purple Heart, established by General George Washington at Newburgh, August 7, 1782, during the War of the Revolution is hereby*

revived out of respect to his memory and military achievements.

By order of the Secretary of War:

Douglas MacArthur

General, Chief of Staff

On May 28, 1932, 136 World War I veterans were conferred their Purple Hearts at Temple Hill, in New Windsor, NY. Temple Hill was the site of the New Windsor Cantonment, which was the final encampment of the Continental Army in the winter of 1782-1783.

The Purple Heart has undergone many changes with respect to the criteria for being awarded. At first, the Purple Heart was exclusively awarded to Army and Army Air Corps personnel and could not be awarded posthumously to the next of kin. In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt

signed an executive order allowing the Navy to award the Purple Heart to Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel. Also in that year, the Purple Heart was made available for posthumous awarding to any member of the Armed Forces killed on or after December 6, 1941.

Originally the Purple Heart was awarded for merit. Being wounded was considered to be one type of merit. With the creation of the Legion of Merit in 1942, the award of the Purple Heart for merit became unnecessary and was therefore discontinued. Currently, the Purple Heart, per regulation is awarded in the name of the President of the United States

to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the U.S. Armed Services after April 5, 1917 has been wounded, killed, or has died after being wounded by enemy action.



To date, more than 1.8 million Purple Hearts have been awarded to American service members.

I must add that Congress prohibited General Washington from granting commissions as a reward for merit, it seems Congress was having an issue just paying the current officers that were serving.

Information in this article came from the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor

(www.thepurpleheart.com) and the American Battlefield Trust (www.battlefields.org).





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To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish."

Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee, Commander General,
United Confederate Veterans,
New Orleans, Louisiana, April 25, 1906

Back Page Story

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I was watching a video on YouTube the other day titled "Postmen vs SS" by Yarnhub. It is an animated story of the Polish postal workers with military training defending a post office against the invading Nazi SS, September 1, 1939. The postmen held out for 18 hours before some surrendered and those that refused to surrender, escaping. At the end of the video they showed the new monument to these brave men that stood against the Nazi war machine. This monument stands in front of the old post office, which is now a museum. What crossed my mind when I saw this was the thought that their new monu-

ment will not be there long because it stands for resistance to tyranny. Then it hit me, that is why these marxist anti-americans are going after everything Confederate. The Confederate States of America is the poster child for resistance to tyranny, as was the fathers of the Confederacy towards King George. Many throughout the world have used the Confederate Battle Flag while fighting tyranny. It makes one wonder, when will these attacks against the South end. Well, it occurred to me several weeks ago that these marxist anti-americans will one day demand that every State that seceded from the

union be made to change their State's name. Why you might say, simple, each name of the states that seceded is synonymous with the Confederacy just as much as Dixie, cotton, plantations, Southern Bell and Johnny Reb. "They" must stamp out everything that implies "resistance" to their control, thus the extermination of all things Confederate.

SM

