



**PATRIOT'S PERIODICAL**  
**UPSHUR CO. PATRIOTS CAMP #2109**  
**SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS**  
**GILMER, TEXAS**

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DECEMBER 2020



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

[www.upshurpatriots.org](http://www.upshurpatriots.org)

**CHRISTMAS DURING THE CIVIL WAR**

*battlefields.org*



It can be difficult to relate to the men and women of the Civil War era. Despite the extraordinarily different

circumstances in which they found themselves, however, we can connect with our forebears in traditions such as the celebration of Christmas. By the mid-19th century, most of today's familiar Christmas trappings—Christmas carols, gift giving and tree decoration—were already in place.

For many, the holiday was a reminder of the profound melancholy that had settled over the entire nation. Southern parents warned their children that Santa might not make it through the blockade and soldiers in bleak winter quarters were reminded, more acutely than ever, of the domestic bliss they had left behind. Sallie Brock Putnam of Richmond echoed wrote: "Never before had such a sad Christmas dawned

upon us. We had neither the heart nor inclination to make the week merry with Joyousness when such a sad calamity hovered over us."

Christmas during the Civil War served both as an escape from and a reminder of the awful conflict rending the country in two. Soldiers looked forward to a day of rest and relative relaxation, but had their moods tempered by the thought of separation from their loved ones. At home, families did their best to celebrate the holiday, but wondered when the vacant chair would again be filled.

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\*After months of separation from friends and family due to COVID-19, many people hope to reconnect over such holidays as Christmas. But health experts continue to encourage people to practice safe behaviors and avoid situations that could expose them or their loved ones to the virus.



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**THE GUARDIAN**

Although going to a graveyard might seem an unlikely activity for the festive season, there are exceptions worth noting.

For many years, florists and cemeteries themselves offered “grave blankets” or wreaths. They are commonly made of a variety of evergreen boughs. The grave blanket covers the ground at the base of the grave and symbolizes the caring and warmth that friends and family feel toward the deceased person and gives some level of comfort during the holidays. You may find other holiday decorations on graves ranging from small Christmas trees, or even toys.



Every December since 1992, volunteers have laid wreaths at the headstones of thousands of America’s honored dead at Arlington National Cemetery.

*Consider being involved in honoring our Ancestors and become a “Guardian.”*

*Contact Program Chairman Phil Davis for information. [pdavis37@etex.net](mailto:pdavis37@etex.net)*



## UPSHUR CO. PATRIOTS GUARDIANS

| <u>Name</u>           | <u>Guardian</u><br><u>Status</u> | <u>Number of</u><br><u>Graves</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Phil Davis            | Full                             | 29                                |
| Kim Duffey            | Full                             | 3                                 |
| Jamie Eitson          | Full/GPT                         | 8                                 |
| Chris Loyd            | Full                             | 5                                 |
| George Linton         | Full/W/GPT                       | 46                                |
| T. Mitchell/G. Linton | Full                             | 5                                 |
| Eddie Pricer          | Full/GPT                         | 40                                |
| Milt Ojeman           | Full/GPT                         | 4                                 |
| David Palmer          | Full                             | 1                                 |
| Bill Palmer           | Full                             | 10                                |
| Tommy Ray             | Full/GPT                         | 19                                |
| Bill Starnes          | Full/W/GPT                       | 7                                 |
| Frank Smith           | Full                             | 2                                 |
| Mitch Tyson           | Full                             | 3                                 |
| Gregg Gipe            | GPT                              | 3                                 |

W=Wilderness GPT=Guardian Pro Tem



*Christmas became a federal holiday in 1870*



## OUR PLEDGES



### PLEDGE TO THE U.S. FLAG:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag Of the United States of America, And to the republic for which it stands, One nation, under God, indivisible, With liberty and justice for all.



### PLEDGE TO THE TEXAS FLAG:

Honor the Texas Flag; I pledge allegiance to thee Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible.

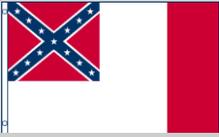


### SALUTE TO THE CONFEDERATE FLAG:

I salute the Confederate Flag With affection, reverence, and Undying devotion to the cause For which it stands.



The Sons of Confederate Veterans is a non-profit, heritage organization whose mission is to preserve the history and legacy of Confederate veterans. It is not associated with any anti-government or hate groups. Membership is open to any male descendent of a Confederate veteran who served honorably in the Confederate armed forces.



## CHARGE TO THE SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS

“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.”



**“Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations.”**



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

*“The SCV’s Best Hope for Success is  
Knowledge of the Truth”*



## TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

*crosswalk.com*

Christmas truly is one of the most wonderful times of the year. For many, there are warm parties, cozy homes, fond traditions to celebrate, and gifts to be shared. It’s a joyous time of celebration. However, sometimes we get lost in the season and forget the reason we celebrate it, to begin with.

Take time this holiday season to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas by glorifying the One who gave it all. A child was born in humble circumstances and his sacrificial death reflected the same, however, both were significant for humanity. Without the death of Christ, salvation isn’t possible. So without His birth, neither is it possible. Jesus coming to Earth that night changed everything and it’s a moment we should celebrate with all our hearts.

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ~ John 3:16*

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ~ John 1:14*

## COVID-19 IN EAST TEXAS

kltv.com

### Upshur County

As of Friday, November 27, at 8 p.m

(606 cases, 17 deaths, 515 recoveries)

The state reported 13 new cases on Wednesday, Nov. 25.



## HISTORICAL DATES IN DECEMBER

December 2, 1859 -

Abolitionist leader  
John Brown was  
executed for



treason at Charles Town, West Virginia,  
following his raid on the U.S. Arsenal at  
Harper's Ferry.

December 13, 1862 - The Battle of  
Fredericksburg, Virginia. The Army of the  
Potomac, under General Ambrose Burnside,  
is soundly defeated by Lee's forces after a  
risky river crossing and sacking of the city.

December 31-January 3, 1863 - Battle of  
Stones River, Tennessee. Fought between  
the Union Army of the Cumberland under  
General William Rosecrans and the  
Confederate Army of Tennessee under  
General Braxton Bragg.

December 8, 1863 - Lincoln Issues his  
Proclamation of Amnesty and  
Reconstruction, which would pardon those  
who participated in the "existing rebellion"  
if they take an oath to the Union.

December 10, 1864 - Harassed only by  
scattered Georgia militia, Sherman's Army  
of Georgia arrives at Savannah, Georgia,  
completing the famous "March to the Sea".

December 15-16, 1864 - The Battle of  
Nashville, Tennessee.

December 5, 1876 - President Ulysses S.  
Grant delivered a speech of apology to  
Congress claiming mistakes he made as  
president were "errors of judgment, not  
intent."

December 15, 1939 - *Gone with the Wind*  
had its world premiere in Atlanta,  
introduced by producer David O. Selznick  
and featuring appearances by Vivien Leigh  
and Clark Gable.

December 7, 1941 - The U.S. Naval base at  
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, was attacked by  
nearly 200 Japanese aircraft in a raid that  
lasted just over one hour and left nearly  
3,000 Americans dead.



BATTLE OF STONES RIVER  
[tennessee.edu](http://tennessee.edu)

Early on the morning of December 31, 1862  
a cold, wet, and miserable dawn, the  
Confederate Corps of Lieutenant General  
William J. Hardee struck first. Streaming out  
of the clumps of black cedars in the dim  
morning light, they stunned Major General  
Alexander M. McCook's troops, who were  
still at breakfast. The full force of the  
assault on the Federal right wing fell on the  
brigades of Brigadier General Edward N.  
Kirk and Brigadier General August Willich.  
At the moment of the Confederate charge,  
Kirk's men were up and under arms, but  
some of the artillery horses had been  
unhitched and taken to water. The resulting

confusion was compounded when Kirk suffered a mortal wound. Willich's men were cooking and eating breakfast, their arms stacked.

Hardee's corps, supported by Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk's corps, spearheaded the Southern effort and forced the Federals to retreat some two and one-half miles to the Nashville Turnpike and railroad. Once he realized the magnitude of the Confederate assault, Rosecrans called off his planned offensive and worked to build a defensive line along the turnpike to protect his line of supply and reinforcement from Nashville.

Both armies spent New Year's Day reorganizing and preparing to renew the battle. The Federals sent troops across Stones River and occupied a ridge from which enfilading fire could threaten the Southern position. On January 2, Bragg ordered Breckinridge to recross the river and drive the Union forces from the high ground. Late in the afternoon, Breckinridge attacked and drove the Federals from the hill. As the Confederates pursued the enemy toward the river, however, they were met by massed Union artillery fire from a commanding position on the opposite side of the stream. The Southerners suffered heavy casualties and fell back. The Confederate retreat left the Union forces in possession of the battlefield.



## A DAY OF INFAMY

*britannica.com*



"December 7th, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan."...F. D. Roosevelt

December 7, 1941 a surprise aerial attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor on Oahu Island, Hawaii, by the Japanese precipitated the entry of the United States into World War II.

The first Japanese dive-bomber appeared over Pearl Harbor at 7:55 am (local time). It was part of a first wave of nearly 200 aircraft, including torpedo planes, bombers, and fighters. Within a quarter of an hour the various airfields at the base were subjected to savage attack.

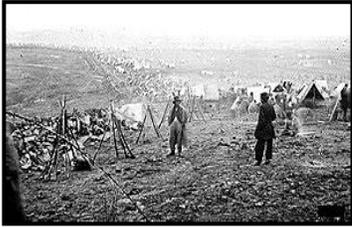
The Attack managed to destroy or damage nearly 20 American naval vessels, including eight battleships, and over 300 airplanes. More than 2,400 Americans died in the attack, including civilians, and another 1,000 people were wounded.

The day after the assault, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress to declare war on Japan.



## BATTLE OF NASHVILLE

*tennessee.edu*



The battle of Nashville, fought December 15-16, 1864, continued the destruction of the Confederate Army

of Tennessee that had begun when it suffered devastating casualties at Franklin. After that engagement, army commander John Bell Hood faced limited options. A withdrawal would further dishearten the army, and Hood rejected his former notion to bypass Nashville and head northward. The high toll at Franklin prevented him from seriously contemplating an assault at Nashville. Hood opted to bring his army to the city's outskirts and await an attack from the Federals, hoping to counterattack if the enemy left an opening.

Only a skillful defense by Stephen D. Lee prevented Hood's adversary, General George Thomas from achieving his goal of encircling the Confederates and annihilating them. Lee pulled his corps back to the Overton Hills and managed to stave off the Federals.



The result of Hood's Tennessee campaign, which began with such heady optimism in the fall, was the near-total disintegration of his army. Hood lost some six thousand men at Nashville, many of them captured when they failed to make good their escape from the battlefield. Union casualties were just over three thousand.



## THE SECOND AMENDMENT MATTERS

By  
*Nathan Wanlass*

The U.S. Constitution's guarantee of the right to bear arms has been a primary conversation topic among Americans in 2020. As uncertainty and fear have plagued the world over the last eight months, there has been a surge in gun sales nationwide, many of them to first-time owners.

While some Americans have sought to restrict gun ownership, for many others it is a cherished right they work to protect. People should be able to protect themselves individually and collectively, we should be able to preserve our freedoms. This lets us have agency and a land of liberty. The Second Amendment was included in the Constitution so the government could not take over. It's to serve against government encroachments. The first 10 amendments were developed because of what the Founding Fathers saw in other parts of the world.

The threat of potential regulation has made some Americans nervous, and conservative

politicians say the Second Amendment is under attack, or will be eliminated because of their political opponents.

It's ignorant and foolish not to have a plan for preparation and protection. You can think all day long that something won't happen 'here' or 'to you' but if it does, you're not going to be prepared.



### WITCH BOTTLE

*By Sean Martin  
May 9, 2020*

A glass bottle stocked with old, rusted nails dating back to the Civil War has been discovered in Virginia. Unlike other glass bottles, this one may have been used to "ward off spirits," according to experts.

Known as a "witch bottle," the glass bottle was found between the exits 238 and 242 on Interstate 64, according to a release from the William & Mary Center for Archaeological Research (WMCAR). During the Civil War, the area was known as Redoubt 9, a mini-fort constructed by Confederate troops. It was eventually taken over by Union troops in 1862.

The glass bottle filled with rusty nails discovered in Virginia could be a rare 'witch'

bottle used by soldiers in the US civil war to fend off evil spirits. The bottle stands at a height of five inches tall and three inches wide and was discovered near a civil war fort known as Redoubt 9.

Archaeologists from (WMCAR) discovered the bottle, made in Pennsylvania, near a hearth, and believe a Union soldier must have placed it there. Initially, the researchers thought Union soldiers who were occupying the Confederate base used the glass bottle to store rusty nails.

But as the bottle was located near a hearth and containing rusty nails, the evidence hinted that it served a ritualistic purpose. (WMCAR) director Joe Jones said in a statement: "There were a lot of casualties and fear during this period. "The Union troops were an occupying force in enemy territory throughout most of the war, so there were plenty of bad spirits and energy to ward off."



### JANE LONG'S CHRISTMAS

*By Andrew Piziali*

Any good Texan knows that Stephen F. Austin is considered the "Father of Texas." Yet, the woman who would come to be known as "Mother of Texas" was facing trials of her own during the Christmas of 1821.

## CHRISTMAS ON THE RANGE

By Anne Dingus



Christmas Eve fell as balmy as April,” wrote O. Henry in 1903, thereby summing up the distinguishing mark of a Texas Christmas: it’s hot. O. Henry didn’t know the blizzardy side of the state, living as he did in the south of it, but he knew that few native Texans witness many white Christmases. Most of us resign ourselves to green ones. Unless we live in East Texas, where pines are native, we have to buy our Christmas trees from the Optimist club. Without fireplaces, we lack the proper place to hang stockings, roast chestnuts (well, pecans<sup>^</sup> then), and look for bootprints in the morning ashes.

Over the years we have created traditions of our own. In the case of the Christmas tree, our forebears used cedar, a pestilent plant that had never before done anyone much good. A. C. Greene recalls childhood trips to fetch “the least lopsided and wind-whipped” tree. If cedar was unavailable, a sapling, tumbleweed, or cactus might serve. Decorations varied—popcorn garlands, candles, strings of red chiles and garlic. On top, of course, was a lone star.

Texas does have mistletoe, which, like cedar, is a nuisance that redeems itself only in December. All over the state you can spot mistletoe snippers gingerly scaling barbed wire to cut bunches from beleaguered mesquites by the side of the road.

Jane Wilkinson Long was born in Maryland in 1798. Raised by a distant relative, General James Wilkinson, after her parents died when she was quite young, she grew up on Wilkinson’s plantation. While pursuing her education she met James Long, a surgeon who had fought in the Battle of New Orleans. Long accepted a commission as general to lead an expedition to Texas. In 1821 Jane accompanied him with their two daughters and they settled in Bolivar Point.

When Long was away, winter arrived with a vengeance, freezing Galveston Bay! Jane, her daughters, and their 12-year old servant girl Kian were ultimately abandoned by the soldiers who initially remained at the fort. She managed to keep her family fed and fended off hostile Karankawa natives through the winter, only to learn her husband had been shot in a Mexico City prison. Jane later opened a boarding house in Brazoria and, tradition has it, turned down marriage proposals from Sam Houston, Ben Milam and Mirabeau B. Lamar.



*May your Christmas sparkle with moments of affection, laughter, and goodwill, and should the year ahead be packed*

*with happiness and joy.*

***Have a Merry Christmas***



Our most influential culture, though, was that of the cowboy. The range life was a solitary one, and holidays meant a rare chance to socialize. Most towns held a dance, and cowboys would ride all day to attend. Caroling was a mite civilized for early Texas tastes, so cowboys initiated the Christmas serenade, a shivaree like procession whose sole purpose was to make a huge commotion. On Christmas morning they settled down long enough for a church service or a few impromptu prayers; for all their horseplay, cowboys were believers. Later in the day, married couples invited them in for revelry and chow; they reciprocated by smuggling in trinkets for the children, who surely redoubled their faith in Santa when goodies miraculously appeared in their stockings, with not a store for miles.

Excess has become a Texas tradition too. We always try to be the biggest, the noisiest, and the best. We string colored lights on everything from fences to pump jacks and ring cowbells instead of sleigh bells. Who needs snow-covered pine trees anyway? They just block out the stars in our big December sky.

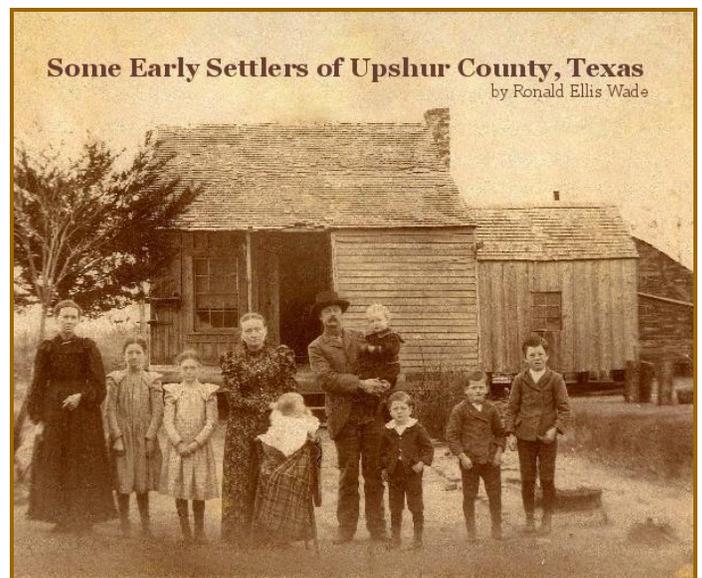
*“There is a perennial societal tension now associated with Christmas. If not for its dire implications for the future of Liberty, the seasonal contortions over “non-offensive greetings” would be humorous. The Left insists the word “Christmas” violates the phony “Wall of Separation” doctrine if a government employee deigns to utter it within earshot, and that it is too ethnocentric for corporate use.”*



Marshall & East Texas Railroad 1899 near Ashland



Downtown Gilmer





Upcoming Events may be found on the Calendar at:

[www.upshurpatriots.org](http://www.upshurpatriots.org)



In honor and in loving memory of our Confederate Ancestors who sacrificed and gave their all to protect home, our beloved Southland, and a way of life. May the heroic deeds of these men be studied and understood, never to be lost or forgotten. Protecting and defending their memory to future generations. We are proud descendants of these brave and valiant soldiers for those who chose Upshur County, Texas as their home and final resting place - we will forever remember.

The Patriot's Periodical is a multi-award winning Publication by a Camp in the Texas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans. Comments or suggestions should be made to: David Palmer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander/Editor [david.palmer@upshurpatriots.org](mailto:david.palmer@upshurpatriots.org)



We thank Bill Starnes  
And the Starnes Family for  
providing a meeting  
Place for the Upshur Co. Patriots



We are proud to be associated with the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

