



Glimpses

Items of recent and historical interest
from members of The Heritage Library

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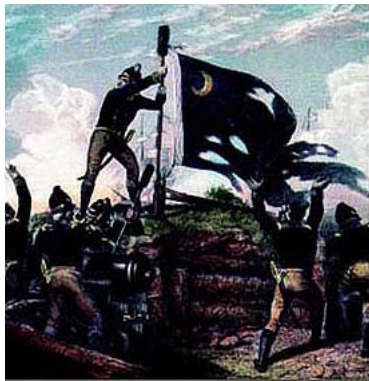
ELSEWHERE IN THE CAROLINAS DURING THE REVOLUTION

Sergeant Jasper, William Moultrie, and the Palmetto Flag

The 1776 battle of Charleston produced two men still famous today.

William Moultrie was acclaimed as the hero of the battle where he defended Charleston from Sullivan Island in a ten-hour battle with the British. The fort was incomplete at the time, had only 30 cannon and 30 rounds of ammunition. As the day and the battle wore on, more gunpowder was delivered, while the bulwarks of palmetto logs protected the fort by absorbing or deflecting the British cannon shot.

But some cannon shot got through, and one splintered the mast supporting the flag. As the flag tumbled, watchers gasped, thinking the fort was surrendering. In the midst of the noise and smoke and enemy fire, Sergeant William Jasper leapt into the fray and held the flag aloft until it could be attached to a new mast.



The SC flag at that time consisted of white crescents on a blue background. The palmetto was added later in a tribute to the role the palmetto logs played in defending the fort.

The fort on Sullivan Island was later named Fort Moultrie in honor of our William, who was later to become a prisoner of the British when Charleston fell in the second battle of Charleston in 1780.

Sgt. Jasper was mortally wounded in a failed attempt to recapture Savannah in 1779, but his name lives on in Jasper County, created from land that was once in the Beaufort District.

HILTON HEAD AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A Cycle of Vengeance and Bloodshed

by Lyman D. Wooster*



South Carolina's role in America's War for Independence tends to be overlooked by many when in actuality it profoundly influenced the outcome in the final months of the Revolution.

In the late 1770s, the commander of British forces in America opted to concentrate his military strength in the south where, he believed, a majority of the population was supportive of the Crown. Savannah had fallen to the British in 1778; by the time Charleston fell in 1780, all of Georgia and South Carolina were controlled by the British, and General Cornwallis established his Headquarters in Camden, South Carolina.

But in the autumn of 1780 and early 1781 the Patriots' cause began to improve, partly because the harsh and sometimes cruel treatment by the occupying forces turned backcountry Carolinians against the British. Military action at King's Mountain in October 1780, at Cowpens in January 1781, and at Guilford Courthouse (in North Carolina) in March 1781 advanced significantly the American cause; the struggle at those three sites combined to create what was in effect a turning point in the lengthy war. Great Britain's southern strategy had become a major blunder.

Those battles plus the American guerilla tactics of harassing British lines of communication prompted Cornwallis and his forces to retire from the Carolinas. They moved into Virginia and there the weakened British army met General Washington's army and the French fleet at

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Yorktown, and in October 1781 Cornwallis surrendered. The British defeat there effectively ended the Revolutionary War, although the peace treaty was not concluded for another two years, on September 23, 1783. In the interim the countryside continued to be marred by bitter clashes between Patriots and Loyalists.

From the outset, the War for Independence created divisions among the American people; communities, neighbors, and even families split, some becoming Patriots or Whigs, supporting the Revolution, while others, the Loyalists or Tories, remained faithful to the Crown. The plantation owners on Hilton Head were for the most part Patriots, while on neighboring Daufuskie Island the people were Loyalists. And the divided loyalties led to severe altercations, guerilla-style and localized clashes, between the Hilton Head and the Daufuskie militias.

The Slaying of James Doherty

One deadly confrontation that led to another, equally deadly, occurred in January 1781 when a Captain Richard Pendarvis, a Daufuskie Tory, went to Bear Island¹ in search of his one-time friend and neighbor, Captain James Doherty.² Pendarvis had developed a dislike, even a hostile hatred, for Doherty because of the latter's vigorous support of the Revolution, and he took along a group of militiamen to Bear Island including one Lt. William Patterson.³

When they found Doherty, who was accompanied by Hilton Head's John Leacraft and cohorts, gunfire was exchanged and Doherty was wounded. Then, while Doherty was lying on the ground, he was shot again, this time fatally. His two companions, however, managed to escape. Doherty's nephew, John Leacraft, witnessed the shooting and vowed to avenge his uncle's death.

1. Near what is now Moss Creek

2. Sometimes spelled Dougherty.

3. Billie Burn, *An Island Named Daufuskie*. The Reprint Company, Spartanburg, South Carolina. 1991 [Burn cites the family account of the Bloody Legion's invasion which is in: "Record of the Martinangele Family Connection with the Mongins of South Carolina. Copied 1899." Transcript. In the possession of Mrs. Charles (Kathrine) Ellis II.

Pendarvis and Patterson: Shot in Revenge for Doherty's Death

Soon thereafter, Pendarvis married Margaret Martingeale and they were on their honeymoon at Stephenville Plantation on the banks of South May River (Palmetto Bluff). On April 17, as they were preparing to leave for Florida, a house servant informed them that a rebel scouting party, led by the vengeful Leacraft, was coming down the road. Margaret wanted Richard to hide but Pendarvis replied, "I will immediately go out to them and deliver myself up as a prisoner of war and in a very short time I will be exchanged." However, instead of taking him prisoner Leacraft shot and killed Pendarvis.⁴

Another source reports that when Leacraft learned that Pendarvis and his fellow Tory, Lt. William Patterson (the two men who had been involved in the wounding and then the killing of Captain Doherty) were in the Palmetto Bluff area, Leacraft rode posthaste, to Palmetto Bluff from Ft. Balfour, which had just surrendered to the Patriots. There at Palmetto Bluff he found Pendarvis, shot and killed him, then drew his sword and ran Patterson through.

Destruction in Revenge for Patterson and Pendarvis

The Loyalists of Daufuskie chose to retaliate for those two Tory deaths, by sending a unit to Hilton Head to destroy the homes of Patriots on plantations along Skull Creek, including those of John Leacraft and John Talbird, an avid Patriot who was at that time a wounded prisoner-of-war.

As it happened, the young officer commanding the Tory unit assigned the task of setting fire to the houses was married to the sister of Mrs. John Talbird and before putting torch to the place he allowed the servants, with some assistance from his soldiers, to remove the furniture and other belongings.⁵ He may have had in mind as an explanation for his action—in the event he was ques-

4. Burn, 233.

5. Talbird Family Letter, May 18, 1888. Filed at the Heritage Library, Hilton Head Island, S. C.



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tioned by his superior about his decision—that “furniture” had not specifically been included in the order to set fire to the dwellings. Anyway, the furniture was carried out and stored under a great oak tree in a nearby field. That large tree, a huge sheltering umbrella, still exists well over 200 years later, now known locally as the Talbird Oak. On that particular raid of Hilton Head, the Tories burned a number of plantation homes along Skull Creek and carried off captured slaves for sale to the West Indies.⁶

That story would not be complete without noting that on October 19, 1781 -- the day Cornwallis surrendered to Washington and about the time the Talbird house was torched -- John Talbird’s wife gave birth in a hastily-constructed shelter to a son who was named for his grandfather, Henry.

The Ambush of Charles Davant

The next episode in this account of retaliation followed by retaliation has two different dates for a single event: October 1781 and December 1781. The first date is based on the fact that Charles Davant’s gravestone plaque gives the date of his death as October 22. If he died on that date, then the events to be described⁷ took place at that time and the previous day: The Hilton Head militia reportedly received intelligence when homes along Skull Creek were being burned that a party of Daufuskie Royal Militia would be crossing Calibogue Sound and landing on Hilton Head during the night of October 21-22; a lookout was thus established in order to give the uninvited guests a warm but unfriendly reception.

As the night passed and no enemy was spotted, members of the local militia concluded that their intelligence had been faulty so they began returning to their homes. Their intelligence, however, had not been faulty: a Royal Militia unit under the command of Capt. Phillip Martinangele⁸ had rowed up Broad Creek with muffled oars and deployed itself so as to be in position to ambush any Patriot who appeared at Big Gate.⁹

Charles Davant and John Andrews rode together as

6. Virginia C. Holmgren, *Hilton Head, A Sea Island Chronicle*, 56-57.

7. Peeples, *The Island Packet* (Hilton Head Island, SC), July 13, 1976.

8. Born November 20, 1747, son of an Italian prince, Filippo de Martinangelo, who came to America about 1747, and settled on Daufuskie. Burn 36-37. The name was anglicized to Martinangele.

9. Near present-day Marshlands and Mathews Road.

they returned to their homes after serving all night as members of the lookout, and as Davant leaned from his horse to open the gate he was shot; at the same moment he spotted the Martinangeles, father and son. His startled horse sped for home with Charles hanging on the saddle, home being the Two Oaks Plantation¹⁰; there he fell from his horse and lived only long enough to tell his four-year old son that the Martinangeles were the persons who had shot him. The son, also named Charles, many years later as an elderly man, told the Rev. Henry Talbird that “standing over his dead body, I, as a boy, vowed that I would kill those men if I lived to be a man.”¹¹

Revenge for the Killing of Davant

According to this version, it was two months later, at Christmastime, that the killing of Charles Davant was avenged by a group from Hilton Head. As reported on January 30, 1782, by the *Royal Gazette* of Charles Town, S.C. (note the spelling and that the *Gazette* was a royalist publication):

“We are informed from Savannah that about Christmas last a gang of banditti came to a house on Daufusky Island, where Capt. Martinangel of the Royal Militia was lying sick, and whilst two of them held his wife, another named Israel Andrews, shot him dead; they afterward plundered Mrs. Martinangel and her children of everything they had. ~ These wretches came from Hilton Head, they stile themselves the Bloody Legion, and are commanded by John Leaycraft. The following is a list of the gang: John Erving, Lewis Bona, Daniel Savage, Christian Rankin, James Devant, John Bull, James Erving, James Allan, Charles Floyd, Isaac Davids, Nathaniel Gambal, William Chiswell, Thomas Roberts, John Mongin, sen. John Mongin, jun, David Ross, Patrick M’Mullin, Isaac Bolder, Meredith Rich, John Fendon, William Scott.”¹²

Davant’s Death: Another Version

A second version has the Daufuskie raid on Hilton Head and the killing of Charles Davant occurring in

Cycle of Vengeance: Cont’d on Page 4

10. On what is now Leg of Mutton Road.

11. Peeples, *The Island Packet*, July 13, 1976.

12. “Historical Notes,” *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 5 (1904), 59. The term “Bloody Legion” appears only once in the Revolutionary War period and that in the *Royal Gazette* article; thus, it can be assumed that the label had no official standing as a name for a Patriot’s organization.

Cycle of Vengeance: Cont'd from Page 3

early December, rather than in October. In both cases, Israel Andrew was reported to be the Christmastime executioner; he had requested that role because his brother, John, had also been wounded in the Big Gate ambush. Martinangele family legend has this account:

“Lee Craft’s party landed on Daufuskie Island. There they visited the Martinangel plantation. [Phillip] de Martinangel had been very ill and they had left his little daughter [Margaret], about three weeks old, on the bed with him. The breakfast table was set waiting the assembly of the family when lo, the stillness of the scene was interrupted by the visit of Lee Craft’s party. They entered and all [the family] fled like frightened birds. The [raiding party] stole the silver from the table. Then they entered the room of the invalid and murdered him in his bed and left yelling like so many bloodhounds let loose. When quietness returned to the family, the husband and father was no more and the little baby was [nearly] strangled in her father’s blood.”¹³

During the eight years of the War for Independence, relations between American Patriots and American Loyalists throughout South Carolina were bitter, often painful and sometimes deadly. The Royal Militia’s burning of plantation homes along Skull Creek, the ambush and killing of Charles Davant and Hilton Head’s response with the so-called Bloody Legion, and the episodes involving Pendarvis, Doherty, and Leacraft serve to illustrate the bitterness and the ruthlessness that marked relations between Patriots and Loyalists in South Carolina. Not until the withdrawal of British troops was completed -- from Beaufort in November 1781, from Savannah in July 1782, and from Charleston in December 1782 -- did the enmity subside.

**Lyman Wooster was born in Kansas in 1917. His colorful career includes stints as a political science teacher at the U. of Pennsylvania, a civilian analyst of Soviet military and political affairs in Army Intelligence, then in Defense Department Intelligence, and subsequently an analyst with the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. He moved to Hilton Head in 1988. His interest in history led him to the Heritage Library, where he has contributed both research and articles.*

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Author’s Note: In addition to works cited throughout the text, the following were helpful:

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Call for Articles

Do you have a favorite period of history that has so intrigued you that it has become one of your passions? Have you unearthed some fascinating tidbits in your own family tree? Does your field, such as medicine or law, give you a special insight into some historical development? Might you write about the evolution of free speech, the fight for woman suffrage or civil rights, the role of disease in early settlements, the social mores of colonial plantation life, or the rigors of serving in the Revolutionary or Civil War armies?

If so, we hope you’ll share your knowledge and insights with your fellow members. You may send your articles to me, barbaraguild@earthlink.com, via email in a Word document. If you don’t like to use email, you can send a double-spaced typed copy to me at the Library.

I look forward to hearing from you.

BARBARA MULLER

A Methodology For Tracing African-American Family History In Beaufort County, South Carolina

by Dr. James M. Rose*



African-American genealogical research in this country is developing rapidly, as more African-Americans try to find their own roots. This is especially true in this area, since many searches lead to Beaufort County, which is one of the nucleus counties for African-American genealogical research along

the Atlantic coastline.

In August, I will be presenting to the National Federation of Genealogical Societies a methodology I created which “descends” down from a primary or secondary source instead of backwards from a present source to the past.

This methodology was originally explained in my book, *Black Roots in Southeastern, Connecticut, 1650-1900*, co-authored with Barbara Brown and published in 1980. Presented very simply, it was as if I took archaeologists’ tools and painstakingly dug out every record on “persons of color” in southeastern Connecticut from 1650-1900, and put the information into an organized database.

From that effort, many African-Americans who traced their roots back into the past, were surprised and pleased when they found their family history in the publication “Black Roots.”

Today, many African-Americans tracing their family history from themselves backwards into the past

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run into a brick wall when they reach the slave period and give up the effort. Knowing an ancestor was a slave, and knowing that most slave records do not include last names, but not knowing the name of the planter who owned the ancestor nor the name of the plantation, they conclude that any further search would be futile and abandon the quest. The descendent process would enable more researchers to go beyond that “brick wall” and unearth clues that lead to a definite identification of an ancestor.

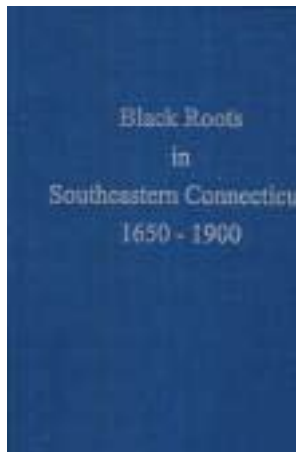
Because of that “brick wall,” the “rules” of genealogy are different for African-American family trees than for those people who never endured slavery. In the absence of primary sources, the descendent process allows the use of inferences based on logical connections.

For example, a researcher starts from a probate record of a slaveowner and finds slave names that match their family names, and connects those names to the 1870 census, a WPA slave narrative, a Freedmen’s Bank record, or a family cluster in the 1880 census.

Further research in the 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930 census then connects the data to family history and brings in information to the present.

This process is especially needed for this area, and it is something I have been working on for several months. First, I am developing with Barbara Muller, editor of the *Glimpses* online magazine published by the Heritage Library, a book entitled *Beaufort County, South Carolina: An Illustrated African-American Genealogical Source Book*. This book will illustrate the tools necessary for researchers to trace their family roots from themselves back into the past, and provide a research framework for individuals or teams to create databases to enable a descendent approach to become successful.

For example, researchers could accumulate all of the indexed records affecting Beaufort County during the antebellum period relating to African-American genealogical primary and secondary sources found online at the South Carolina archives, South Carolina Historical Society, and other local and national genealogical institutional sources, and make these indexes available at the Heritage Library of Hilton Head. Eventually the images themselves of these actual records can be obtained from the institutions to provide a more complete and authoritative record.



Lastly, it should be noted that many primary and secondary sources relating to African-American genealogical research in South Carolina can be obtained from sources outside the state; typical is this record to be found at the Southern Historical Collection, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina.

Louis M. DeSaussure was a physician and planter of Beaufort County, S.C., son of Henry W. DeSaussure, longtime state chancellor. The collection is a plantation journal of Louis M. DeSaussure relating to his Beaufort County, S.C., cotton plantation. Entries vary in length and frequency, with many entries being monthly or annual summaries of activities at the plantation. Topics include crops, slaves, diseases, and weather conditions. Entries during the period 1861-1864 include brief comments on DeSaussure's wartime activities as a surgeon with the 8th and 4th South Carolina Infantry regiments, C.S.A. Also included are poems and sayings that DeSaussure collected; recipes; remedies; lists of slaves, including one that shows family relationships among the slaves; notes on bequests of others to various activities of the Episcopal Church of which DeSaussure was a member; and cattle inventories.

It is hoped that, when this process is concluded, it will no longer be almost impossible to trace African-American history in Beaufort County. In addition, this process can act as a **model for other ethnic group researchers who have roots in Beaufort county who can then build databases, which can then be added to the growing collection at the Heritage Library.**

**Dr. James M. Rose is a member of the Board of the Heritage Library Foundation and a nationally-known expert on African-American Genealogy. The subjects of his talks scheduled for National Conference of the Federation of Genealogical Societies in August illustrate the breadth of his research: In one he will present case studies of ex-slaves who followed their owners west; in another he will discuss his methodology described in his books on African-American genealogy written with Barbara Brown and Alice P. Eichholz, considered "the definitive books in forming the core of African-American genealogy." If his suggested methodology is brought to fruition, it will be of great benefit to the Heritage Library and its patrons.*

FIRST IN AN OCCASIONAL SERIES ABOUT HISTORICAL SOUTH CAROLINA PERSONAGES

Christopher Gustavo Memminger: His roles in the Nullification Controversy and as a cabinet officer in the Confederacy



Nullification is an issue that arises from time to time as states within the Union become unhappy with actions on the part of the Federal government. Typically those advocating "nullification" – or the state refusing to go along with Federal laws or requirements – relied on the Tenth Amendment¹ for their arguments.

South Carolinians may be interested to learn that such an issue arose in their state long before the Civil War (or War Between the States) and crescendoed in the 1830s when South Carolina first came close to declaring itself not bound by Federal laws.

A prominent player at the time was Christopher Memminger. Born in Germany in 1803 and orphaned at the age of four, he was placed by his grandmother in an orphanage in Charleston, South Carolina. Later he was taken under the wing of Thomas Bennett, a prominent Charlestonian who would later (1820) become governor of South Carolina,

Memminger quickly proved himself an apt and willing student. At the tender age of twelve, the smallest and youngest of his class, he entered South Carolina College. To appreciate the caliber of this accomplishment, we need only look at the requirements for matriculating at that college: he would be required to pass an examination on the following subjects: arithmetic, including elementary algebra; English grammar; the Latin writings of Nepos,² Caesar Sallust,³ and all of Virgil's *Aeneid*; also enough Greek to read the New Testament writings of John and Luke, and the *Acts of the Apostles*.

1. "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

2. Presumably the first century BCE historian, Cornelius Nepos.

3. Another first century BCE historian, Gaius Sallustius Crispus (Sallust) was born in 86 BC.

In his freshman year he would study Cicero's *Orations* and the *Odes* of Horace in Latin; Xenophon's *Cyropoedia*⁴ and *Memorabilia* in Greek, Adam's *Roman Antiquities*, Vulgar and Decimal Fractions, the Equations and Extraction of Roots, English Grammar, and Rhetoric.

According to a flowery and fulsome biography published in 1893 by Henry D. Capers⁵, Memminger acquitted himself well in college. After graduation, he entered the law office of Joseph Bennett, the brother of the governor. He became a naturalized citizen in 1824, which made him eligible to become a member of the bar.

According to Capers, Memminger was a "brilliant" constitutional scholar, which puts into relief his opinion on one of the burning issues of the day, nullification. The 1820s and '30s were a time of recession and political turmoil, generating "hotheads" and "radicals."

The issue of nullification rose to the surface ostensibly as a protest against high tariffs enacted by a Congress controlled by Northerners. Some historians⁶, however, believe that the tariffs were not that onerous, and that one unexpressed but equal cause was southern discomfiture over the issue of what they euphemistically called "our peculiar⁷ institution" – namely, slavery. By the time a convention was called to examine the issue, opinions in South Carolina had fallen into two main prevailing camps, both citing "state's rights": the Union State Rights Party, known as the Unionists, and the Free Trade and State Rights Party, popularly called the Nullifiers.

During this time, Memminger wrote a number of pamphlets sharply critical of the people who wanted South Carolina to declare tariff laws enacted by Congress as invalid. One of these was a pungent satire on the doctrines of nullification, *The Genuine Book of Nullification*, written in biblical style.

Sample passage:

16 And John the Conjuror and Robert the Nullifier and George the Prophet and James the son of James feared in their hearts the power of Andrew for he was a just man and had the fear of the Lord before his eyes.

4. Xenophon (c. 430-354 BCE), a Greek historian, wrote *Cyropoedia* as a fictionalized biography of Cyrus the Great;

5. Henry D. Capers, *The Life and Times of C. G. Memminger*, available online at the Cornell University Library

6. For example, William W. Freehling, *Prelude to Civil War*, a book which earned the Bancroft Prize in History.

7. John C. Calhoun and others used the expression *peculiar* in the sense of "that is one's own," a 15th century usage derived from the Latin *peculiaris*, meaning "not held in common with others." [*Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*]

17 And they bowed before his throne and spake in a loud voice to the people saying We even we are the faithful servants of Andrew and will do honor to his name.⁸

Presumably in this passage, "John the Conjuror" is John C. Calhoun; "Robert the Nullifier" might be Robert Barnwell Rhett; "James the son of James" is James Hammond; "George the Prophet" is George McDuffie—all prominent Nullifiers, here presented as loudly proclaiming their fealty to Andrew, that is, president Andrew Jackson.

Prominent among the Unionists—those who believed differences should be settled by the Constitution—were Joel Poinsett⁹, Colonel William Drayton¹⁰, James L. Petigru, Judge Daniel E. Huger, John S. Richardson, Hugh S. Legare, Richard I. Manning, Henry W. DeSaussure, and Gus Memminger.

Many of the Unionists celebrated in a Jefferson Day dinner, during which the toasts must have gone long into the night, judging by the fifty-plus pages they occupied in the Memminger biography by Capers. Thomas R. Mitchell was among those who declared that the Unionists wished only to oppose *abuses* of the Constitution, while those holding the so-called Carolina position, (another name for the Nullifiers), were "against the very Constitution itself."

South Carolina actually passed a Nullification Act in 1832, but President Andrew Jackson responded vigorously, demanding and receiving from Congress a bill enabling him to use force. Congress also compromised on tariffs and the crisis was averted – temporarily.

From 1836 to 1852 Memminger represented Charleston in the state assembly and was prominent in the financial legislation of that period. In 1854 he personally toured the North to study their public school systems, and returned to South Carolina with suggestions which were put into practice for universal education in that state.

When South Carolina actually seceded, decades after the Nullification Crisis of 1832, many of those men who had sided with the Unionists felt their first duty was to their state. Among them was Gus Memminger, whom President Jefferson Davis tapped to be Secretary of the Treasury for the Confederate States of America.

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8. Capers, Appendix.

9. Whom we have met before, in the December 2009 issue of *Glimpses*.

10. Whom we have met before, in the article by Lyman Wooster in the February 2010 issue of *Glimpses*,

Cont'd from Page 7

Memminger's task turned out to be a thankless and hopeless one; though Memminger repeatedly offered financial advice, no one in authority listened. After three years of attempting to raise money where none existed and seeing "Confederate money" become increasingly worthless, he tendered his resignation in 1864.

Meanwhile his home in Charleston had been taken over by the Union army and turned into an orphanage for Negro children. After the war ended, Memminger sought and received a pardon¹¹ from the President of the United States, regained possession of his Charleston home, and once again took up his practice of law.

In his later years he moved to his summer home in Flat Rock, North Carolina. That home was later sold to Carl and Paula Sandburg, and is now a National Historic Site.

11. In May of 1865 President Andrew Johnson issued a blanket pardon of CSA citizens which, however, did not apply to those in leadership or those with assets of \$20,000 or more. Such persons had to apply personally with oaths of allegiance and recommendations for clemency.



This Confederate States bond for \$10 bore the picture of C. G. Memminger in the lower right and R. M. T. Hunter on the left. The law required that each individual note be handsigned; official signers often worked through the night signing notes.

Handwritten receipts and papers signed by C. G. Memminger are available on the Internet, as well as Confederate bonds bearing his likeness. Genuine Confederacy currency, once worthless, commands large sums today from collectors. Facsimiles are also in circulation; typically they can be distinguished from the real thing by the signature, which in facsimiles is black. In genuine CSA notes, signatures are in brownish iron-gall ink.

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