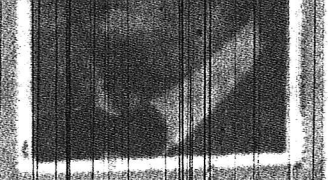


By D. B. McKay



WHEN TAMPANS LEFT FOR CIVIL WAR

Sunny South Guards Feted With Poetry, Banner on Departure

Theodore Lesley has, in his remarkable collection of historical memorabilia, a copy of a stirring speech delivered by his grandfather, Capt. John T. Lesley, in accepting a beautiful flag presented by the ladies of Tampa to his Sunny South Guards on the eve of their departure for the front.

Nearly 50 years later at a meeting of the United Daughters of the Confederacy at the home of Mrs. C. E. Webb in Tampa on January 19, 1911, Mrs. Julia Harrison Norris read Mrs. Jane Givens Wells' reminiscence of the occasion. Besides Mrs. Wells, there were two other survivors present at the meeting—Mrs. Marry J. (McCarthy) McKay and Mrs. George W. Lyons.

The following account appeared in The Tampa Daily Times in reporting the U. D. C. meeting.

Fair Ladies' Flag for the Confederacy

"The first company organized in Tampa for service in the Confederate Army was raised by Capt. John T. Lesley, then and now, an honored resident of our city. The roll of the company was completed in the summer of 1861. The names making up this roll were from the best families of the town and vicinity—husbands, fathers, sons and brothers.

"In September, 1861, when orders came for the company to march to the seat of war, the ladies of Tampa, filled with pride, in the gallant soldiers, and in their enthusiasm and love for the cause of the South, prepared for the presentation of a flag to the Sunny South Guards, as the company had been named. The material for the flag was of the best hunting with silk

While from the mountains to the sea

Her freeman round her banner rally.

* * *

"Sixth, Louisiana, by Mary J. McCarthy:

'Louisiana's glorious flag
With the pelican crest is next unfurled,
And with her Beauregard and Bragg
She bids defiance to the world.'

"Seventh, Texas, Miss Emma Miller:

'The lone star resplendent gleams
On Texas' plains, as long ago
Liberty saw its radiant beams
Light the dark hour at Alamo.'

"Eighth, Virginia, by Miss

and Black Republican Parties until today, following the election and inauguration of President Lincoln, it has entirely devoured the last vestige of personal guarantees of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness defined by the Constitution of our fathers—that bulwark protecting the life that they knew and lived in (17) '87 and which they decreed was to be perpetuated, unchanged to their descendants ad infinitum, to the infinite degree of endlessness.

* * *

"YONDER in Tampa's burial ground lies the loved and sacred dust of this speaker's mother, a Livingston before her marriage to the Lesley sire.

"It was her lot to have her cradle rocked by the vener-

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"In September, 1861, when orders came for the company to march to the seat of war, the ladies of Tampa, filled with pride in the gallant soldiers, and in their enthusiasm and love for the cause of the South, prepared for the presentation of a flag to the Sunny South Guards, as the company had been named. The material for the flag was of the best hunting with silk trimmings, and was furnished by Mrs. W. C. Brown, and her sister, then Miss Ellen Haagar, now Mrs. George W. Lyons.

"The ceremony of presentation took place in the Garrison, from the porch of the officers' quarters, a building erected by the United States government at the Old Indian War post of Fort Brooke. Miss Ellen Haagar was selected to present the flag with an appropriate address.

"Each of the Confederate states, in order of the time of its secession, was represented by a Tampa girl, and each repeated a verse appropriate to the state she represented. The presentation address and the verses recited by the representatives of the states were written for the occasion by a young lawyer then residing in Tampa, E. M. Thompson.

"THE YOUNG GIRLS were dressed in white with blue sashes going over the shoulder and tied at the side, with the name of the state represented on the sash across the front, and a red rosette, on the shoulder. One young lady represented the Confederacy, and received the representatives of the states. The order of the ceremony of presentation was as follows.

Prayer was offered by Dr. Franklin Branch. The young ladies participating in the ceremony, stood in a half circle on the porch, the Sunny South Guards were formed on the ground in front, under

Bragg
She bids defiance to the world.'

"Seventh, Texas, Miss Emma Miller:
"The lone star resplendent gleams
On Texas' plains, as long ago
Liberty saw its radiant beams
Light the dark hour at Alamo.'

"Eighth, Virginia, by Miss Jane Kennedy:
"Virginia, mother of the brave,
E're yet the vandal strife's begun,
Unfolds her broad eagle o'er the grave
Of great and glorious Washington.'

"NINTH, Arkansas, by Miss Sallie Hooker:
"Arkansas, though fallen long,
But scorning suppliant concession,
With arm and heart and courage strong,
Enters the proud ranks of secession.'

"Tenth, North Carolina, by Miss Eliza Ferris:
"Old Rip Van Winkle is next awake,
While the invading cannon rattle,
And feeling her liberty at stake,
For which she now must nobly battle.'

Eleventh, Tennessee, by Miss Mary Turman:
"Tennessee, o'er whose sad fate
Each patriot long has poured his tears,
With kindling ardor now elate
Sends to the field her volunteers.'

"AFTER ALL the representatives had responded, Miss Analene Coon, impersonating the Confederacy, with a Confederate flag draped around her, received the states with a few appropriate words.

Then Miss Ellen Haagar stepped forward to where Sergeant James Haskins, of the Sunny South Guards,

petuated, unchanged, to their descendants ad infinitum, to the infinite degree of endlessness.

"YONDER in Tampa's burial ground lies the loved and sacred dust of this speaker's mother, a Livingston before her marriage to the Lesley sire.

"It was her lot to have her cradle rocked by the venerable hand of an honored father, a soldier of the American Revolution.

"He with his fellow compatriots, your fathers and grandfathers, won that liberty from the English crown which now once more we are called out to champion and defend.

"HERE AGAIN, if fate decrees but God forbid, Anglo-Saxon brother will be warred with brother for right and country. If it so be, we of the South vow anew that we stand united in a glorious cause; and we its defenders beseech of a Divine Providence guidance for a triumphal victory under this beautiful banner the hands of Tampa's finest have bestowed on us this day.

"Accept our solemn pledge, fair ladies, naught will defile it. For if it proves to be our lot that under these Stars and Bars we be not destined to hear our Army's victory song, then may its silken threads rest lightly o'er us in quiet requiem to what may be a brave and gallant band of warring soldiers faithful even unto death."

"THE FLORIDA Peninsula - a Tampa paper edited by Simon Turman, noted on March 23, 1861 of the flag

"The flag of the Confederate States of America consists of a blue union with a wreath of seven stars in the upper flag-staff corner—and broad white and red stripes, two of red and one of white.

"This flag presents a handsome appearance, and is easily distinguished from the old U.S. flag."

"THE YOUNG GIRLS were dressed in white with blue sashes going over the shoulder and tied at the side, with the name of the state represented on the sash across the front, and a red rosette on the shoulder. One young lady represented the Confederacy, and received the representatives of the states. The order of the ceremony of presentation was as follows:

"Prayer was offered by Dr. Franklin Branch. The young ladies participating in the ceremony stood in a half circle on the porch; the Sunny South Guards were formed on the ground in front, under the grand old live oaks. After the prayer a song, Land of the South, I love Thee Still, was sung by the young ladies. Then each, in order of the secession of the state she represented, repeated a verse of poetry.

"First, South Carolina, by Miss Melissa Prevatt.

South Carolina has given the chain

With which a tyrant would have bound her.

And hoisting freedom's flag again.

Behold her Southern sisters round her."

"Second, Mississippi, by Miss Annie Porter.

Mississippi, land of cotton whose proud king

Swears no tyrant's slave she is.

Sends to the field the great Jeff. Davis."

"THIRD, FLORIDA, Miss Ellen Haager.

Florida hears the glorious call.

Rebelling through her blooming towers.

And with her sisters, periling all.

Faces the storm that darkly looms."

"Fourth, Alabama, by Miss Jane Green.

Alabama, with unswerving

Miss Mary Turman, Tennessee, o'er whose sad fate

Each patriot song has poured his tears.

With kindling ardor now elate Sends to the field her volunteers.

"AFTER ALL the representatives had responded, Miss Analese Cook, impersonating the Confederacy, with a Confederate flag draped around her, received the states with a few appropriate words.

"Then Miss Ellen Haager stepped forward to where Sergeant James Haskins, of the Sunny South Guards, stood holding the flag staff with the furled flag, and delivered her address. At the proper time she gracefully unfurled the beautiful flag, and the young color-bearer received it.

"Captain Lesley responded with an eloquent and touching speech of acceptance on behalf of himself and his company. The young ladies sang The Bonnie Blue Flag, the band played Dixie and an occasion ended that day the memory of which is still warmly cherished by some now living who participated. Of that circle of young girls five only survive today, three of whom are living in Tampa."

CAPTAIN LESLEY'S

speech of acceptance follows: "Ladies — and my fellow countrymen: It is with humble words, yet in a prideful spirit, that I accept in behalf of my fellow soldiers of the Guard, this beautiful banner of our youthful Confederate Republic, born destined to witness before God and the world defense of freeman's inalienable rights as defined by constitutional law.

"That constitution which our forefathers forged from blood and suffering for six warring years, has by the darkened hands of Abolitionists and Republicans been broken trampled — and the High Tribunal of the last appeal

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Arcadia Major Su

Col. Brad Harding, of Arcadia, who has contributed several well-researched articles on the Florida past in recent months, pays tribute to a distinguished DeSoto County physician whose service was well-known in the southern portion of the state.

Beloved Physician

"The booklet listing historic structures and sites in Florida published a year ago by the Florida Board of Parks and Historic Memorials is an inventory by counties of the hundreds of memorials existing throughout Florida. There was no attempt made to describe or give the purposes of these marked sites.

"Under the heading of DeSoto County is included one referred to simply as McSwain Park in Arcadia.

"This memorial city park is located at the intersection of East Oak Street and South Volusia Avenue in Arcadia, opposite the DeSoto County Court House. It was formally dedicated some 25 years ago as a monument to the memory of Dr. Daniel Lafayette

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Florida hears the glorious call.

Echoing through her blooming towers.

And with her sisters, pulling all.

Face the storm that darkly lowers.

"Fourth, Alabama, by Miss Jane Glavin:

Alabama, with covering arms.

bids her own land as Freedom calls.

And now to lead the grand retreat.

Echoing through her stately halls.

"Fifth, Georgia, by Miss Martha McKay:

And now the storm that Georgia's flag

Reverberates through hill and valley.

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"That constitution which our forefathers forged with blood and suffering for its warring years, has by the darkened hands of Abolitionists and Republicans been broken sunder — and the High Tribunal of the land called in its decree defining rights of personal property, its transfer and protection by legal constituted means.

"That was done a glorious nation prospering under the Divine Eye and Hand was crumbled at the feet of slavery, Dissolution, and Liberty's death.

"The manner of our death has been violent and nurtured by the Abolitionists

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This memorial city park is located at the intersection of East Oak Street and South Volusia Avenue in Arcadia, opposite the DeSoto County Court House. It was formally dedicated some 20 years ago as a monument to the memory of Dr. Daniel Lafayette McSwain, the last of the pioneer physicians and surgeons of DeSoto County.

Dr. McSWAIN, a native of Florida, was born in Walton County July 21, 1834. It was through his own efforts that he completed his education as Doctor of Medicine at Tulane University in New Orleans.

Before the end of the last century Dr. McSwain came to DeSoto County and during the first year of his practice