

# ESSENTIAL CIVIL WAR CURRICULUM

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## Surrenders After Appomattox

By **Chuck Hamilton**

**C**ontrary to common assumption, the American Civil War did not come to a screeching halt after General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse. The Army and Navy of the Confederate States of America did not surrender all at one time, but rather in a piecemeal fashion over a widely dispersed geographic distribution, including one unit overseas. Some units, in fact, never surrendered at all.

The Confederate Navy was composed of ironclads, submarines, gunboats, torpedo boats, various support ships, and a number of blockade-runners and commissioned privateers.

For most of the war, the Confederate Army was composed of three major field commands (Army of Northern Virginia, Army of Tennessee, and Army of the Trans-Mississippi), with a number of smaller independent field units such as Forrest's Cavalry Corps (in the latter stages of the war), the Thomas Legion of Cherokee Indians and Highlanders, and Mosby's Partisan Rangers, and of geographic units (Division, Department, District, in decreasing order of size).

The three field commands mentioned above were the most enduring, but several other short-lived commands designated as armies were formed at times, particularly early in the war.

For instance, the earliest field army in the western theater was General Albert Sidney Johnston's Army of Mississippi, which later combined with the Central Army of Kentucky (originally under Major General Simon Bolivar Buckner) to become the Army of Tennessee. Two other commands were also named Army of Mississippi, one formed around what had been Major General Earl Van Dorn's Army of West Tennessee, the other, under Major General John Clifford Pemberton, later merged into the Army of Tennessee, or at least its remnants did so.

There was also an Army of Middle Tennessee under Major General John Cable Breckenridge which became a division of Hardee's Corps in the Army of Tennessee. The Army of East Tennessee formed under Major General Edmund Kirby Smith

became the Army of Kentucky before merging into the Army of Tennessee after Smith's promotion and transfer to head the Army and Department of the Trans-Mississippi.

None of these Confederate armies of Tennessee should be confused with Union Major General William Tecumseh Sherman's Army of the Tennessee. It was the practice of the Confederates to name armies after states and the Union to name them after rivers.

### **The surrenders of Confederate forces**

The first attempt by a large field army or geographic section to try to surrender took place in the southwest. On March 11, 1865, Brigadier General James Edwin Slaughter and Colonel John Salmon "Rip" Ford met with Union Major General Lewis "Lew" Wallace and agreed to terms of surrender for all forces in the District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona that included an amnesty for former Confederates and the gradual emancipation of slaves. Slaughter's and Ford's superior, Major General John George Walker, temporarily commanding the District in the absence of Major General John Bankhead Magruder, refused the terms, however.

On April 9, 1865, General-in-chief Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army and Department of Northern Virginia to General-of-the-Army Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox, Virginia.

On April 12, 1865, Brigadier General John Echols disbanded the Department of East Tennessee and Southwestern Virginia at Christiansburg, Virginia, upon learning of Lee's surrender through a telegram waiting for him when he mustered his forces in Christiansburg. The command's sixteen artillery piece carriages were cut apart, the gun barrels were spiked, and the ammunition was destroyed. All who wished were allowed to return home.

After Echols dissolved the Department, Brigadier General George Blake Cosby took the remainder of his brigade west into Kentucky to surrender to federal authorities. Echols led the remaining troops of Brigadier General John Crawford Vaughn's Brigade and Brigadier General Basil Wilson Duke's Brigade, toward North Carolina hoping to link up with General Joseph Eggleston Johnston and the Army of Tennessee. The former Department's District of Western North Carolina remained unaffected and intact.

On April 16, 1865, the remnant force from East Tennessee-Southwest Virginia split, with some few following Brigadier General Echols toward the Army of Tennessee and the remaining majority, under the overall command of Brigadier General Vaughn, hoping to meet up with Lieutenant General Joe Wheeler's cavalry.

The two brigades under Echols joined the bodyguard of President Jefferson Davis on April 19, 1865, under command of General John C. Breckenridge made up of Brigadier General George Gibbs Dibrell's Brigade, Brigadier General Samuel Wragg Ferguson's Brigade and Colonel William C. P. Breckenridge's Brigade.

On April 20, 1865, Major General Thomas Howell Cobb surrendered the District of Georgia and Florida to Major General Edward Richard Sprigg Canby at Macon, Georgia.

On April 21, 1865, Colonel John Singleton Mosby disbanded Mosby's Partisan Rangers, (also known as 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, Virginia Cavalry) at Salem, Virginia.

On April 26, 1865, General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered the Division of the West under himself, the Army of Tennessee under General Braxton Bragg, the Department of North Carolina under General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, and the Department of Tennessee and Georgia under Lieutenant General William Joseph Hardee to Major General William T. Sherman at Durham Station, North Carolina. Brigadier General Echols, formerly of the Department of East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia, was by this time with Johnston, having left the column of Vaughn's and Duke's brigades on April 16.

On April 27, 1865, Confederate Secret Service operative Robert Loudon used a coal torpedo (a bomb made to look like a lump of coal) to sink the SS *Sultana* on the Mississippi River near Memphis, Tennessee, killing 1,600-1,800 of its 2,400 passengers, most of them former prisoners from the Union Army. It remains the biggest maritime disaster in U.S. history and arguably the largest terrorist attack on U.S. soil prior to September 11, 2001.

On May 4, 1865, Lieutenant General Richard Taylor surrendered the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana to Major General Edward Canby at Citronelle, Alabama.

On May 5, 1865, Major General Dabney Herndon Maury surrendered the District of the Gulf to Major General Edward Canby at Citronelle, Alabama.

Also on May 5, 1865, President Jefferson Davis met with his Cabinet for the last time in Washington, Georgia (Wilkes County), to dissolve the government of the Confederate States of America. The next day President Davis continued on with a small bodyguard under Captain Given Campbell.

On May 6, 1865, Brigadier General Joseph Horace Lewis surrendered the Kentucky Orphan Brigade along with the remnants of Ferguson's and Breckinridge's brigades to Captain Lot Abraham of the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry in Major General James Harrison Wilson's cavalry corps at Washington, Georgia.

On May 8, 1865, Captain Jesse Cunningham McNeill surrendered McNeill's Partisan Rangers to Major General (and future U.S. President) Rutherford Birchard Hayes at Sycamore Dale, West Virginia.

On May 9, 1865, Lieutenant General Nathan Bedford Forrest surrendered Forrest's Cavalry Corps to Major General James H. Wilson at Gainesville, Alabama.

Also on May 9, 1865, Brigadier General James Green Martin surrendered the District of Western North Carolina and Colonel William Holland Thomas the Thomas Legion of Cherokee Indians and Highlanders to Colonel William C. Bartlett at Waynesville, North Carolina, after the Thomas Legion surrounded and captured Bartlett's entire command the previous day. The units of the Legion present included the Cherokee Battalion, Love's Regiment, and Barr's Battery.

Again on May 9, 1865, Major S. G. Spann surrendered his mostly Choctaw Battalion of Independent Scouts at Meridian, Mississippi.

Yet again on May 9, 1865, Brigadier General John C. Vaughn surrendered his remnant brigade to Captain Lot Abraham of the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry at Washington, Georgia.

On May 10, 1865, Major General Samuel Jones surrendered the Department of South Carolina, Florida, and South Georgia to Brigadier General Edward Moody McCook at Tallahassee, Florida.

Also on May 10, 1865, Commodore Ebenezer Farrand surrendered the CSS *Nashville*, CSS *Baltic*, CSS *Morgan*, and several other vessels, nearly all the remaining warships in the Confederate Navy, to Rear Admiral Henry Knox Thatcher at Nanna Hubba, Alabama.

Again on May 10, 1865, Brigadier General Basil Duke surrendered the remnant of his brigade Captain Lot Abraham of the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry at Washington, Georgia.

Finally, on May 10, 1865, former President Davis and his party were captured in Irwinsville, Georgia, by the troops of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Haruden from General James Wilson's command.

On May 11, 1865, Brigadier General George Dibrell surrendered the remnant of his brigade to Captain Lot Abraham of the 4<sup>th</sup> Iowa Cavalry at Washington, Georgia.

On May 12, 1865, Brigadier General William Tatum Wofford surrendered the Department of North Georgia to Brigadier General Henry Moses Judah at Kingston, Georgia (Bartow County).

Also on May 12, 1865, Captain Stephen Whitaker surrendered Walker's Battalion of the former Thomas Legion, detached from the rest of the command, to Colonel George Washington Kirk at Franklin, North Carolina, upon hearing of the surrenders of Thomas and Martin. This was the last surrender of Confederate troops east of the Mississippi River.

On May 13, 1865, the last land battle of the war was fought at Palmito Ranch in Texas, near Brownsville, with Confederate forces under Colonel Rip Ford (including his own 2<sup>nd</sup> Texas Cavalry) defeating decisively the Union forces under Colonel Theodore Harvey Barrett.

On May 26 1865, Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner surrendered the Army of the Trans-Mississippi to Major General Edward Canby at New Orleans, Louisiana. Buckner was in direct field command of the army at the time it was surrounded by Union forces.

On May 30, 1865, Brigadier General Slaughter and Colonel Ford disbanded the remaining field forces of the District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona at Brownsville, Texas.

On June 2, 1865, General Edmund Kirby Smith surrendered the Department of the Trans-Mississippi to Major General Edward Canby at Galveston, Texas.

On June 3, 1865, Captain Jonathan H. Carter surrendered the CSS *Missouri* to Lieutenant-Commander William E. Fitzhugh at Alexandria, Louisiana.

On June 23, 1865, Brigadier General Stand Watie, Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation, surrendered the First Indian Brigade of the Army of the Trans-Mississippi to Lieutenant. Colonel Asa C. Matthews at Doaksville, Choctaw Nation (Indian Territory).

On November 6, 1865, Commander James Iredell Waddell surrendered the privateer vessel CSS *Shenandoah* and its crew to Captain R. N. Paynter of the HMS *Donegal* at Liverpool, England. It was the only Confederate Navy ship to circumvent the globe. The crew remained in Europe for several years afterward, for the most part, and eventually returned home. The *Shenandoah* was sold to the Sultan of Zanzibar.

On August 20, 1866, President Andrew Johnson declared the insurrection officially over and peace restored.

### **The Unsundered, exiles and expatriates**

On July 4, 1865, Major General Joseph Orville Shelby led his Iron Brigade and other troops in his Missouri Division across the Rio Grande at Eagle Pass, Texas, into Piedad Negras, Empire of Mexico, to avoid surrender.

Accompanying Shelby's column were former Confederate governors Pendelton Murrah (Texas), Henry Allen (Louisiana), Thomas Reynolds (Missouri), and Isham Harris (Tennessee), as well as ex-generals Edmund Kirby Smith, Sterling Price, John

Bankhead Magruder, Alexander Watkins Terrell, and other officers of the former Trans-Mississippi Department and their families.

Under the direction of former Commodore Matthew Fontaine Maury of the Confederate Navy, the ex-officers and troops who had crossed into the Empire of Mexico established the New Virginia Colony in the state of Veracruz at the invitation of Emperor Maximilian. Its central city was Carlota, named for Maximilian's empress. Slaves were not allowed, slavery being against Mexican law. When the republican Juaristas (supporters of President Benito Juarez, whom the French ousted in 1864) overthrew Maximilian's government, these former Confederates returned north, many becoming prominent citizens.

Interestingly, in 1851 Maury had once formulated a plan to both eradicate slavery from within the borders of the U.S. and slow or end Brazil's slave trade with Africa.

Between ten and twenty thousand former Confederates emigrated to the Empire of Brazil at the invitation of Dom Pedro II, who wanted to encourage the growth of cotton. Establishing themselves in several communities, these people became the foundation of an ethnic group unique to Brazil known today as Los Confederados, now centered in the Sao Paulo town of Americana. The now multi-racial Los Confederados are extremely proud of their history and send young people to the American South every year to see the former homeland. The original settlers included an ancestor of former First Lady Rosalyn Carter.

Other former Confederates settled in what was then British Honduras (now Belize), establishing the settlements at New Richmond near San Pedro, on the New River south of Orange Walk Town, and around the town of Punta Gorda. Within a few decades, these groups had assimilated and lost their distinctiveness.

Ex-Rear Admiral John Randolph Tucker led a group of former Confederate expatriates into Peru to establish New Manassas and wound up being assigned to chart the Amazon River. A Dr. Henry Price took another group into Venezuela to occupy large areas of the state of Guyana called the Price Grant.

Of all these, Los Confederados de Brasil is the only former colony whose descendants still survive as a distinctive ethnic group. The best account I have seen of these expatriate groups is the 2007 master's thesis of Justin Horton at the East Tennessee State University: "The Second Lost Cause: Post-National Confederate Imperialism in the Americas"; it is online.<sup>1</sup>

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Brazil abolished slavery in 1888. Former slave owners, backed by the military, overthrew the imperial government in 1889. A military dictatorship ruled the country until civilian republicans came to power in 1894.

The Reconstruction of the former Confederate states lasted from the end of the war until the Great Compromise of 1877, which is also called the Corrupt Bargain. The so-called Redemption Era of the South (which brought us Jim Crow, the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and drastic historical revisionism) lasted from that time until the civil rights legislation of the mid-1960's.

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