

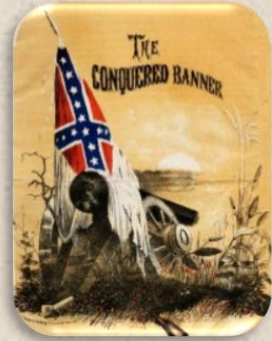


# *The Conquered Banner*

*Newsletter of the*

*Father A. J. Ryan San Diego Camp 302*

*Sons of Confederate Veterans*



**VOLUME 29 NUMBER 1**

**January/February 2021**

## *The Dogfight*

The USS Oriskany (CV 34) – The carrier was named after a major battle at Oriskany Creek, NY during the Revolutionary War, was operating in the Sea of Japan just southeast of the North Korean city of Chongjin, not far from its northern border with China and close enough to Vladivostok, Siberia to put the carrier within reach of Soviet aircraft based there. This was in November 1952, The USS Oriskany was part of a three-carrier group operating under Task Force 77 assigned the mission of striking North Korean industrial sites. Because of operations so close to China and the Soviet Union, fighter aircraft from the carriers routinely flew Combat Air Patrols (CAP) in the event enemy aircraft ventured close enough to pose a threat.

Our readers will recall reading in *The Conquered Banner's* September/October issue the article, "Searching for David" that highlighted Camp 302's past member, David Rowlands who, as a young naval aviator in 1952, was assigned to VF-781, at that time, attached to CAG 102 (Carrier Air Group) aboard the USS Oriskany.

This is Part Two of David's story.

In the early 1950's, America fought with other United Nations allies in what has been considered a *police action* in that far-off conflict on the Asian peninsula of Korea that could be cold and forbidding. The purpose, to keep the North Koreans from overrunning their neighbors in the South.

On November 18<sup>th</sup>, the task force was experiencing foul weather. There was a 500' overcast with poor visibility and blowing snow. On board the Oriskany, among the fighter squadrons, VF-781 was equipped with the latest and final version of Grumman's Panther jet, the F9F-5. Up to this time, they were used primarily in the air-to-ground mode for interdiction and close air support. The straight-winged Panther had seen little aerial encounters with Russia's impressive swept-winged fighter, the Mikoyan-Gurevich MIG-15. (Two years earlier, the first MIG-15 to be shot down during the Korean War occurred in November of 1950 when an F9F-2B brought down the MIG flown by a Russian pilot. It would be sometime before the Soviet Union acknowledged that its aviators were flying in that conflict.)

*(Continued on Page Four)*

**International Headquarters**  
Sons of Confederate Veterans  
P.O. Box 59  
Columbia, Tennessee 38402-0059  
**1-800-MY-DIXIE**

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**Salute to the Confederate Flag**

I salute the Confederate Flag with affection, reverence and undying devotion to the cause for which it stands.

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**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 the ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish."*

Lt. General Stephen D. Lee

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**Newsletter**

*The Conquered Banner* is the official newsletter of Camp 302 and is published each odd-numbered month. Permission to reprint material contained in the newsletter is freely given to SCV, MOSB and UDC organizations. Commentary and articles are solicited and should be mailed or E-mailed to the Newsletter Editor. Deadline for submissions is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. Consideration of space may require editing.

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**Meetings**

The camp meets the 2nd Saturday of each odd-numbered month at various locations which are announced in the newsletter.

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**Correspondence**

Membership applications, dues renewals, changes of address and other business should be directed to the adjutant.

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**Dues**

Annual dues are billed each August and are \$50.00 for members. Dues include the *Confederate Veteran* magazine and a newsletter.

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**Camp officers**

<u>Commander</u>	<u>Jim Millsap</u>
<u>Lieutenant Commander</u>	<u>George Faircloth</u>
<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Commander</u>	<u>Jim Coulsby</u>
<u>Adjutant</u>	<u>Jim Stephens</u>
<u>Treasurer</u>	<u>Roy Adair</u>
<u>Webmaster</u>	<u>Roy Adair</u>
<u>Chaplain</u>	<u>Jim Coulsby</u>
<u>Sergeant-at-Arms</u>	<u>Steve Smith</u>
<u>Historian</u>	<u>Vacant</u>
<u>Newsletter Editor/Publisher</u>	<u>Jim Stephens</u>

### ***Camp 302 Meeting Minutes***

The scheduled meeting for November 14<sup>th</sup> was cancelled due to increased COVID restrictions resulting in the closure of indoor dining facilities that included Marie Callender's, and as no homes of members or additional facilities were available. The next scheduled meeting is planned for January 9<sup>th</sup> 2021 now, tentatively slated for Steve Smith's home. Details to follow.



*(Dogfight Continued from Page One)*

Early on the 18<sup>th</sup>, the Pacemakers of VF-781 participated in a three-carrier strike at North Korean industrial targets. Later that day, the squadron was tasked to fly a four-plane CAP over the Oriskany to provide protection. Heading the lineup was Lt. Claire Elwood – Flight Leader, Lt(jg) John Middleton – Number Two, Lt. Royce Williams – Section Leader and, Lt(jg) David Rowlands – Number



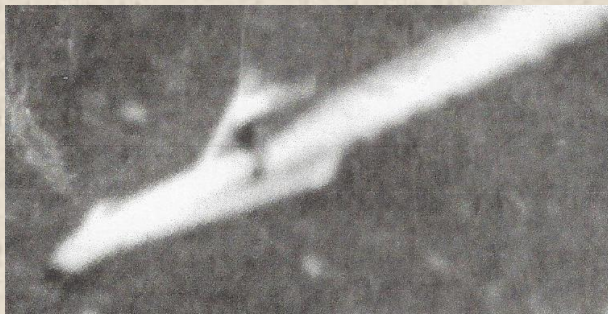
Four. Since there had been no contact or sightings of enemy aircraft during this time, the men assigned to this mission just knew that they were to have a boring, 1.5-hour flight above the clouds orbiting the ship. *To the left, we see Panthers being spotted on the flight deck.* Soon after the CAP launched, the Oriskany's CIC (Combat Information Center) reported multiple bogeys about 83 miles, approaching inbound from the

north of Task Force 77. Shortly before that report, the four CAP aircraft descended from their assigned altitude to 13,000 feet due to Lt. Elwood's aircraft experiencing a fuel boost pump failure.

At this juncture, Lt. Williams took the lead and, after CIC's report of bogeys, took the flight up to 15,000 feet where he reported sighting seven very high contrails and recognizing the silhouettes, identifying them as being MIGS. The MIGS were initially flying on a northeasterly course but changed to a heading of north and descended, splitting up into two groups. Lt. Williams gave a "tallyho" at this time. He left Lt(jg) Middleton with Lt. Elwood, taking his wingman Lt(jg) Rowlands with him as they climbed at full throttle and met the enemy at 26,000 feet where they were fired on by the MIGs. Here, an approximate 15-minute dogfight began about 45 miles from the task force. *At right, an artist's*



*depiction of four of the seven MIGs descending on Rowlands and Williams.* Williams reported the MIGS attacked at reduced power with him losing sight of the other three enemy jets. As he described in his combat report, he made hard turns into the attacking formation which turned into an elongated tail chase. He managed to get behind the "Tail-End Charlie," firing off about 10 rounds in which time the MIG-15 started trailing smoke, spiraling downward uncontrolled with no apparent



effort of the enemy pilot to eject. *Seen at left is the stricken MIG as photographed by Lt(jg) Middleton's gun camera. Lt Williams' gun camera was reported as not working.*

Williams then ordered Rowlands to follow the damaged MIG down. It is at this point that we will have David Rowlands state, in his own words, from his official report, as to what occurred during the melee which eventually brought Lt(jg) Middleton into the dogfight:

*After having observed seven MIG-15 aircraft at 30,000 to 35,000 feet my section leader LT Williams and I were ordered ... to climb to 26,000 feet and keep them under observation. We began our climb at 100 percent, but lost sight of the MIG's temporarily when they left the vapor contrail level. When we first regained contact with the MIG's, we were at an altitude of 26,000 feet.*

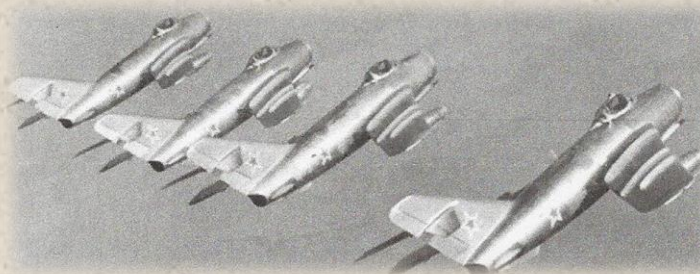
*(Continued on Page Five)*



*(Dogfight Continued from Page Four)*

The MIGs started a coordinated attack of two two-plane sections. They pressed a firing run on us and LT Williams turned into the attack.

After a few seconds of maneuvering for position, LT Williams put us in a propitious position for an advantageous shot at the number four MIG who had strung out into a fairly loose tail chase position with the other three MIG's, who themselves were flying a loose strung out formation. LT Williams fired at the number four man and started him smoking. I followed the damaged airplane to determine how seriously it was hit with the intention of finishing him off if possible. However, I determined that the airplane was out of control when it started a steep spiral towards the water. It is my opinion that the pilot had been wounded or killed. I had to break off when another MIG made a head on firing run at me. This MIG, as did all following MIG's who made runs of this type, fired when out of range of my guns and turned away from attacks when in range. I fired at all of them anyway with hopes of getting in a wild shot. From this point of the encounter to the end of the fight, I cannot remember events in an orderly sequence. I tried to keep LT Williams in sight at all times but couldn't. The fight by this time had developed into a dogfight with every man seeking targets of opportunity for himself. I was the target of many MIG attacks particularly from ahead for several minutes. My only defense was to take the offensive by trying to scissors and get into a Luftberry circle with the MIG's (sic.) I managed to get across the horizontal axis of one MIG from a scissors and stayed in a wrapped up turn to the right. We stayed in this circle for several seconds with neither of us gaining any appreciable advantage on the other. This was ended when the MIG leveled his wings and climbed up at a very high rate of climb. I leveled my wings and almost stalled out.



Previous to this, and between head on attacks, I had often found myself in a series of advantageous positions for firing at MIG's (sic) flying by. I opened up whenever I thought it possible to get a hit, but found that I couldn't keep on any of the MIG's (sic) because of the great burst of speed they would put on when they found themselves at a disadvantage. However, I did manage to get on the tail of one for several seconds and fired continuously. I started him smoking and knocked a piece off his airplane. I continued following him and firing, hoping for him to explode. Unfortunately, he didn't blow up, but started an uncontrolled spiral, smoking heavily. The pilot didn't bail out and I was unable to observe the airplane hit the water as I was interrupted by an attack being made on me. At this time, I had only one gun that worked, the rest being out of ammunition.

After this encounter I got into the Luftberry circle with the MIG that I have mentioned previously. After that encounter, I saw LT Williams heading for a cloud about ten miles away. He had called that he had been hit, and was having difficulty keeping his airplane under control. He was being followed by a firing MIG who was sitting on his tail approximately five airplane lengths behind. I had no trouble joining up on the MIG and found out later that LT Williams had been popping his speed brakes to spoil the MIG's aim. I had no ammo left in my guns at this time and hoped to distract the MIG from LT Williams, or frighten him off. I was almost joined up on the MIG's right wing and apparently had no effect whatever on frightening him away because he kept his position on LT Williams at an almost point-blank range and lobbed shells at him continuously, all of which went over his canopy or under his airplane. I kept my gun camera going hoping to get some good shots of the MIG for Lt MacPhail, the Pacemaker's AIO (Air Intelligence Officer.) I had a good opportunity to look the MIG over closely and saw no markings whatever on him. Unfortunately, the film magazine jammed and this part of the flight didn't come out on film. We continued this formation into the clouds where I broke off sharply to the right, flew instruments to below the cloud level and returned to the task force.

*(Continued on page Six)*



*(The Dogfight Continued from Page Five)*

*In the meanwhile, LTJG Middleton had shot down another MIG and was orbiting its pilot who had bailed out and was floating in the water. LTJG Middleton's IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) was on emergency but couldn't be picked up by the ship's radar, which made it difficult for her to get a fix.*

*I could not understand the frequency with which runs were being made on me during the encounter. It was several days later before I found out that seven MIG's (sic) were mixed up in the fight instead of the four that I had originally thought were there. Observations on performance of the MIG-15:*

- a. At every instance that the MIG pilots were at a disadvantage, they were able to escape by using bursts of tremendous power and speed.*
- b. They could out-turn, out-climb and out-speed the F9F-5 at will, but intentionally slowed down to our speeds to fight.*
- c. Their cannons fire in pairs and have an extremely slow rate of fire and, if they were firing within their range, have a greater range than our 20-mm. I believed we were fortunate to have 20-mm. cannons on our aircraft because I don't believe we could have done as much damage, if any, with 50-cal. machine guns. I have the highest confidence in the Grumman F9F-5, but believe it to be no match for the MIG-15. the story probably would have been reversed if the MIG's (sic) had used their advantages rather than sacrifice them by fighting at our own speeds.*

*During the encounter I ran my engine at 100 percent for almost half an hour and pulled nine G's with no harmful effects upon the F9F-5 whatever. I believe I was over my limiting Mach several times with no apparent loss of control of the airplane.*

Thus, ends Lt(jg) David Rowlands' official account of his participation in the dogfight. While Lt Williams and Lt(jg) Middleton submitted similar reports with some differences regarding their part in the engagement, I will not go over their statements as they are as equally lengthy as David's. But one finds that Lt Royce Williams during the fighting noted one confirmed kill with one probable. He sustained extensive damage after taking hits from a MIG on his tail during a steep right turn, experiencing the loss of



a rudder, an aileron boost and a heavy port wing down tendency. As Rowlands stated in his report, LT Williams headed for the nearest cloud, fighting to control his badly shot-up airplane—having to use both hands on the controls to keep the plane level. The surviving MIGs departed the area and a relief CAP came on the scene. All three men of VF-781 engaged in this epic dogfight returned to the ship.

*Above, The F9F-5 David Rowlands flew during the engagement, traps aboard the Oriskany.*

With the Panther jets safely back aboard the USS Oriskany, it was time to access the outcome of the dogfight high above Task Force 77 that day, and for the aviators to file their reports.

*(Continued on Page Seven)*



*(The Dogfight Continued from Page Six)*



Also, we shall see the combat damage incurred on Lt. Williams' aircraft. Over 200 punctures in the fuselage were counted. Here, he points to one the holes made by a Soviet 37mm cannon shell. The fact that he got his Panther back to the ship shows how well built this Grumman aircraft was. Lt. Williams was led to believe, as he later stated in his talks, that the aircraft was pushed over side shortly after this photo was made. However, it went in for major repairs and flew for several more years. The plane was stricken from Navy inventory in June 1959 at NAAS Kingsville, Texas. This was just another example of the convoluted and misleading reports that were to come out of this incident.



*At right, L. to R. Lt(jg) Rowlands, Lt. Williams, Lt(jg) Middleton & Lt. Elwood.*

The aerial dogfight high in the sky over the Sea of Japan that November day in 1952 was going to prove quite different when it came to the ensuing publicity. The preliminary news reports of the encounter were sketchy in details at the time as international diplomacy was to come into play.

The Navy, most probably on orders from the State Department, ordered all involved to keep mum on the subject. Looking back, it was probably for the best. Not since the very first MIG-15 was shot down two years earlier, flown by a Russian pilot, did the Soviet Union choose not to admit that their aviators were flying combat missions against American forces. We, of course, knew they were. Note Lt(jg) Middleton's statement in his action report after he shot down his MIG: *...I flashed emergency IFF, as I was orbiting a "downed Russian, correction enemy pilot."*

If the U.S. were to press the issue to the United Nations and the world that Soviet pilots were flying and shooting at our aircraft in this un-declared war, and then backing the Russians into a corner and forcing them to finally admit their involvement would surely result in a major confrontation between the two nations. Neither country desired, nor could afford, to have this happen. Therefore, America and the Soviet Union, in the use of diplomacy, wisely kept a tight lid on what happened for many years to come.

The Navy reported that Lt. Williams and Lt(jg) Middleton had confirmed kills on their respective MIGS with Lt(jg) Rowlands given a probable kill. It was subsequently determined the MIG he shot up was heavily damaged but managed to retire from the fight. *(As reported in the September issue, that David had a confirmed kill, this did not happen.)* The fact that his gun camera jammed and failed to capture this was most unfortunate. Lt. Williams and Lt(jg) John Middleton were awarded the Silver Star for their part and David Rowlands garnered the Distinguished Flying Cross for his flying skill while being bracketed by four MIGS and damaging the aforementioned MIG with the remainder of his ammo and continuously making non-firing passes at the others while keeping close to Lt. Williams and his damaged Panther and placing himself between the enemy and the task force. Reading his battle report will confirm all this.

*(Continued on Page Eight)*



*(The Dogfight Continued from Page Seven)*

David, like many his fellow aviators, continued flying in VF-121 off the USS Oriskany after VF-781 was disbanded. He flew at least twenty combat missions over North Korea being awarded air medals and commendations for his actions.

#### The Aftermath.

Many years would pass before light would shine on the events of that November day in 1952. The U.S. declassified the reports of the dogfight, and Russia, in 1992, would disclose that four of their aviators perished during that aerial contest. As they reported, one of the four, in his badly damaged MIG-15, made it back to Vladivostok but crashed before reaching his base. A declassified report from the National Security Agency had disclosed that leading up to the dogfight, at least two Soviet aircraft were vectored on the Panthers and the Chief of PVO (Headquarters, Air Defense Forces) at Vladivostok, ordered the pilots "To Give Battle." Afterwards, NSA indicated in a top-secret report, since declassified, that two MIGs were destroyed and one badly damaged as we have seen.

In a now declassified confidential report from the Commanding Officer of the USS Oriskany to Chief of Naval Operations, citing the carrier's chronological operations from 28 Oct 52 to 22 Nov 52, confirmed the two MIGs destroyed and one badly damaged on 18 Nov 52. After the dogfight, when the stand-by CAP flew to the area, they sighted two MIGs leaving the scene at high speed and breaking through an 11,000-foot overcast.

One might ponder the figures cited here by the Navy and its three pilots, Williams, Middleton and Rowlands, from their action reports and what was revealed in subsequent documents just cited. Perhaps the damaged MIG that David Rowlands had expended his remaining ammo on was the one that crashed before reaching its base. The fourth dead Russian aviator could have been seriously wounded or killed in the fierce dogfight and crashed unseen by the inoperative gun cameras. These, of course, will have to remain as conjectures.

In recent years, Lt Royce Williams has claimed that he shot down four MIGs that day, particularly stating that Rowlands never fired his guns and that Middleton came on the scene late with just enough time to witness the downed Russian pilot parachuting into the sea, clearly contradicting the action statements that he, Rowlands and Middleton made subsequent to returning to the Oriskany. Today, the USS Midway honors Captain Williams (USN Ret) with his actions in Korea by painting four MIG silhouettes on the F9F-5 displayed on the flight deck. He, in a photo there, appears proud of his supposed accomplishment, and has many supporters backing him on this issue. However, The Navy has never officially credited Williams with his claim of four kills for several reasons: 1) There are the official documents just cited. 2) There is a dearth of gun camera footage to support his claims; it was Lt(jg) Middleton's gun camera that captured the MIG Williams initially shot down and, apparently, has been missing for years. 3) Over sixty years have elapsed and a fading memory can alter even the most obvious details. David Rowlands and John Middleton are both dead and therefore cannot refute or shed light on Royce Williams' claim.

One can only surmise, the intense, gut-wrenching actions a fighter pilot experiences along with the life-and-death, split-second decisions he must make while jousting with an enemy intent on shooting him out of the sky. It is for that reason, in the fast-paced action, memories and exact details of what he has done or seen can possibly be lost in the haze of time and the sheer need to survive at that moment in time.

*(Continued on Page Nine)*



*(Dogfight Continued from Page Eight)*

C.J. Machado, producer and veterans advocate who is very close to Royce Williams has told me that she looks upon him as a father figure but feels that it is wrong for him to discredit Middleton and Rowlands based just on his testimony, and he being the only living survivor of that engagement. Carol (C.J.) has told me that in her conversations with RADM Cox, who himself is very familiar with this famous dogfight, has stated that of all of the official documents available and statements made by the participants and in light of the intervening years since 1952, there is nothing new supporting his claim. I agree with Ms. Machado in her feeling that after all these years and with what reports that are available on the Dogfight of November 18, 1952, we must stick with the facts that have survived.

First and foremost, this has been the second installment honoring Camp 302's past compatriot, CDR David Rowlands (USN Ret.) He was a member for the last three years of his life when he passed away in 2000, and his exploits in Korea during that controversial dogfight of November 1952 cannot be overlooked. As Royce Williams kindly remembers, David was a big man and a Gentleman.

**Sources: Photos & Data.**

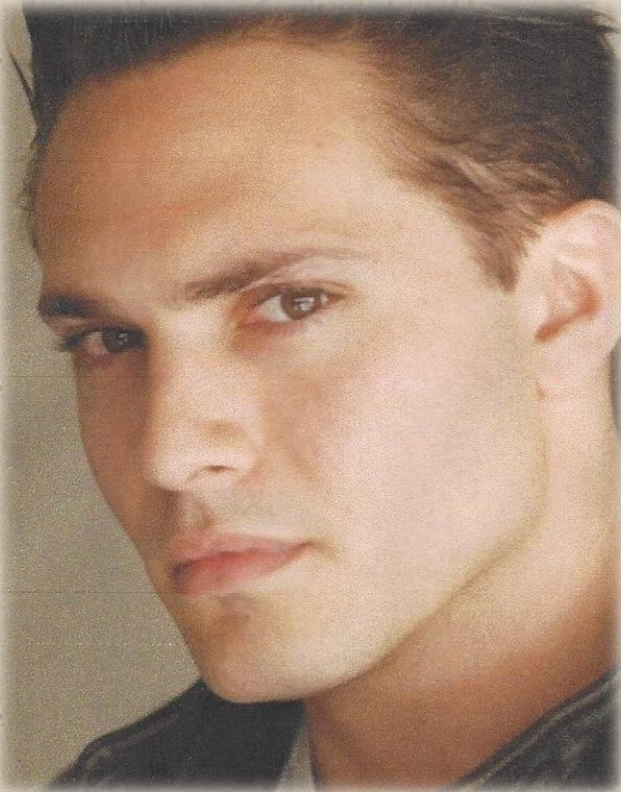
- 1) Office of Naval Intelligence Review, Vol. 8 No 2, February 1953, Declassified 17 Apr 1972. "The Dogfight of 18 November. Statements of aviators involved.
- 2) List of awards from Com7thFlt & ComCarDivFive, May 1953 for Williams, Middleton & Rowlands.
- 3) NSA 254 to DIRNSA re: MIG attack on 18 Nov 52, dated 20 Nov 52, Declassified 15 Jul 2015.
- 4) Naval Inventory Cards 1,2 & 3 for F9F-5 S/N 125459. Lt. Williams aircraft.
- 5) Aircrewremembered.com Re: Royce Williams
- 6) Mikesresearch.com, 06/28/2020.Re: Royce Williams
- 7) Naval History and Heritage Command.
- 8) VF-781 Data on Lt. Williams & Lt(jg) Middleton Re: their two confirmed kills.
- 9) U.S. Naval report for all squadrons & type of aircraft and all wars with results of combat action.
- 10) Naval Aviation News, February 1953. Photo of Rowlands, Williams, Middleton and Elwood.
- 11) Thanks of course goes to C.J. Machado (Carol) for her valuable assistance in providing me with great data and, her thoughts and inputs on the controversy surrounding Captain Williams claim.

***Jim Stephens***

## ***Destin Gabriel Rayes***

***1983 – 2020***

Once again, Camp 302 must assume the unpleasant task of reporting on the untimely death of one of its members. Compatriot Rayes, age 37, died suddenly on November 19, 2020 in Fallbrook, California. Destin



was a recent addition to the camp's ranks and, as his mother Mary, a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy related to us, he expressed himself as being very proud to be a part of The Sons of Confederate Veterans as the descendant of two great-great grandfathers.

Destin was born in Pasadena, California. His family moved to La Jolla, near San Diego, 30 years ago and were residents there prior to moving to Fallbrook in 2019. He attended several schools in La Jolla before graduating from high school there. He was a brilliant guitarist and was preparing to release an album with his friend and fellow musician, Max Miller, before his untimely death.

Several years ago, Destin suffered a leg injury that derailed his dreams of becoming a touring Rock Musician. In 2016, he became a real estate agent with Caldwell Bankers.

Destin Rayes was a unique individual who was witty, well-read and a fascinating conversationalist with intense clarity on a variety of subjects, and by his own admission, "not of this world."

Compatriot Destin Gabriel Rayes has now joined the ranks of all the past members of the SCV

he admired so much, in answering up to *The Last Roll Call*.



## *Sgt William Pittenger Dedication*

Saturday, November 21, 2020, Commander Jim Millsap and Steve Smith of Camp 302 drove the short distance to Fallbrook to participate in the gravesite dedication of Sergeant William Pittenger, Company G, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ohio Infantry. He is the namesake of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Camp 21,

Fallbrook, CA. Commander Millsap reported that about 30 guests were in attendance with the U.S. Army Color guard opening the ceremony.

As with all memorials, the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem were played befitting a memorial to a Union Veteran. There were guest speakers and the Gettysburg Address was recited and the story of the “Infamous” (if I may speak from a Confederate perspective) Andrews Raid of 1862. But, now with that aside, it was time to honor a fellow Civil War Veteran who would later become a Methodist minister settling in Fallbrook. *At left: a young bespectacled William Pittenger.*

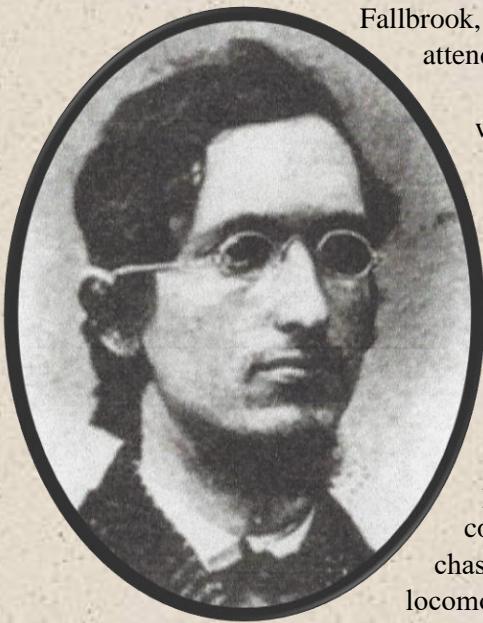
Most of us remember the movie and reading the book *The Great Locomotive Chase* highlighting the Andrews Raid into North Georgia where they commandeered a train at the city of Marietta intending to take it to Chattanooga, Tennessee while destroying the rail line and other property along the way and disrupting Confederate troop movements and communication. The attempt failed with the heroic efforts of a conductor chasing the Andrews raiders in the captured locomotive “General” in his locomotive, the “Texas.” Growing up in Atlanta, I saw many times this famous locomotive on display at a museum there.

William Pittenger was born January 31, 1840 and grew up in Knoxville, Jefferson County, Ohio. He enlisted as a private in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ohio volunteer infantry and first saw combat at Bull Run (First Manassas) and would volunteer for the hapless Andrews Raid but was discouraged to do so by his commander due to his poor eyesight. He went anyway. Several members of the raiding party were executed after their capture that included Andrews who was a civilian spy. As an enlisted soldier, Pittenger was imprisoned until exchanged. Upon his return to the Union ranks, he would be promoted to Sergeant and became one of the first men to be awarded the Medal of Honor. Even though he wanted to continue his army service, he was forced to leave the military due to bad health at a midway point during the war.

He became a theology student and, after ordination as a minister, served in that position for thirty years in pastoral positions in both Methodist and Episcopal churches in the east. After marrying, William and his wife produced six children. He relocated to Fallbrook several years later, assuming duties as pastor for Methodist and Episcopal members meeting in what is now the First Christian Church.

He was active in the small farming community both as a lecturer and writer, penning a number of historical books covering the Civil War. He farmed in rural Fallbrook where he owned a small cottage on twenty acres, growing walnuts and fruit. He and others lobbied the state for legislation creating the local water district. Pittenger was mostly self-taught but he did teach at Fallbrook High School and later became president of the board of education.

*(Continued on Page Twelve)*





*(Pittenger Dedication Continued from Page Eleven)*



The white wood-frame church in Fallbrook still stands where he served and it still has a thriving congregation. The Victorian cottage where the Reverend Pittenger lived across the street from the church is called the Reverend William Pittenger House and is owned by the Fallbrook Historical Society which is used today as an Alzheimer Day Care Center. At left stands Jerry Sayre of Camp 21, SUVCW with Steve Smith and Camp 302 Commander Jim Millsap flanking him. The headstone for William Pittenger, seen below, marks his grave, located in The Odd Fellows Cemetery. It was militarily un-marked until 1988 when the Historical Society contacted the Federal Government who in turn provided the appropriate headstone marking the grave as that of a Medal of Honor recipient.

William Pittenger died April 24, 1904. Camp 302 has had a close relationship with Camp 21, SUVCW for many years. A few members of Camp 302 who also have Union ancestors and have been joint members of their camp. Appreciation is extended to the Sergeant William Pittenger Camp for their invitation to attend the dedication and to Camp 302 Commander Jim Millsap for providing the information on this event.





## ***Glancing Back at 2020***

This strange and perplexing year has come to an end, and what a trying time it has been! There was the political back-and-forth struggle between our President and his challenger and the eventual outcome that is certainly going to affect the Sons of Confederate Veterans and the way we honor our Confederate heritage. No need to pursue this line of thought just now, but instead, let us focus on the Pandemic and too many other negative events of 2020

COVID-19, The Coronavirus that has plagued this country, as well as most of the world since March of this year, has for the most part, taken center-stage and affected just about everything we do in the routine pursuit of the activities in our daily lives, things we previously did with not a moment's thought. We in Camp 302 have, like so many here in the California Division and in the SCV, have been touched in one way or another since this modern-day pandemic began. Fortunately, the division was able to conduct the Annual Re-Confederation/Reunion in Bakersfield before the pandemic hit in full force. The SCV National Convention was held in St. Augustine, Florida in July with many in the California Division attending, including Roy Adair and Steve Smith and, thankfully, none of our people being affected by the virus.

Commander Millsap was forced to cancel two camp meetings in 2020, the first on May 9<sup>th</sup> due to the initial restrictions and at a time when most in the camp chose wisely to remain aloof. Restrictive restaurant closures later in the year due to a surge in cases resulted in the final meeting of the year being canceled in November.

Since the beginning of this pandemic, questions have arisen as to the seriousness of the Coronavirus and who it affects. Many elderly and those with debilitating illnesses have been easy prey to COVID. We must not forget Compatriot Ernie Powell, so ill with failing kidneys, succumbing this year to the devastating effects of this virus. Many of us in Camp 302, and I hate to say it, are not getting any younger, making us more susceptible to the virus than the younger folks. I know many find it hard to accept the precautions laid out for our safety such as wearing masks and practicing social distancing seriously as this writer does, but we must ride this out until the upcoming vaccine is made available to us and we can get back to normal once again.

Just how have the afore-mentioned restrictions impacted the programs and activities we in Camp 302 have participated in?

First of all, the closing of high schools around the country and here in California put a halt to the JROTC programs for 2020 which entailed the presenting of the H.L. Hunley Award, one of the SCV's most prestigious awards that cited the leadership and academic achievements of our young men and women. Unfortunately, beginning in 2019 with the political ramifications of the anti-Confederate push to eliminate all vestiges of this period of history, the military commands overseeing the JROTC programs of the different branches, have seen fit to cease awarding the Hunley, as they state, its clear representation of the Confederacy with the display of the Confederate Battle Flag. Here in San Diego County, we lost two Air Force Schools and one Navy. When schools finally convene in 2021 and if the JROTC Program is bought back in action, we'll have to wait and see if and how many schools will drop out of the program.

We've had to contend with the continuous destruction of Confederate monuments and statues in recent times, and early this year, after numerous instances of defacing and unrepairable damage, the Stonewall Jackson Monument at Mt. Hope Cemetery that the ladies of the UDC so lovingly had maintained and honored all these years, had to be removed and placed in storage. At least we have photos of the monument and the ceremonies we participated in there that will remain in our memory.

*(Continued on Page Fourteen)*

*(Glancing Back Continued from Page Thirteen)*

The days of Camp 302 marching in Veterans parades and participating in memorial services at local cemeteries have long since ended. The camp's color guard activities at the Veterans Memorial Center in Balboa Park and, working with the Marine Corps League, was keeping the camp active in that venue. However, the COVID restrictions placed on museums in the San Diego area halted our presence there for the year. When, and if, this honorable ceremony resumes remains to be seen.

Unfortunately, the camp had to say good-bye to three members in 2020. We just mentioned Compatriot Ernie Powell's sad passing. Long time member David Sanders had to resign from the camp for personal reasons and we just lost Compatriot Destin Rayes in November due to his untimely death (see page ten for his memorial).

We'll have to stand by with bated breath to see what really lies in store for the SCV and for us, in Camp 302, for 2021. All the activities we were so used to being a part of could be irrevocably altered or halted. However, putting negativity aside, let us hope and pray for a better coming year.



December 8, 2020

SCV Camp 302  
c/o Mr. Jim Stephens  
690 Mural Street  
Oceanside, CA 92057

Dear Compatriots,

On behalf of Commander-in-Chief Larry A. McCluney, Jr., Chief of Heritage Operations Walter D. Kennedy, and the entire membership of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, I want to thank you for your generous support of Heritage Defense Fund, donating at the Patrick Cleburne level.

This donation will be helpful to the SCV when it is necessary to enter litigation in support of first amendment rights as well as to fight efforts to remove monuments and change the names of public schools, parks, and city streets wherever the politically-correct attempt to impose their will on the history and groups they do not like. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Adam Southern  
Executive Director

## SCV Defense Heritage Operations

Seen here is the *thank you* letter from SCV Headquarters received on December 21, 2020 in response to your camp's \$500.00 donation in September of this year for the very worthy cause as described there in by Executive Director Southern on behalf of Commander-in-Chief McCluney.

We in Camp 302 can appreciate that our donation has been well directed. Thanks is extended to Camp 302 Compatriot Mike Climo who is also Division Lieutenant Commander for suggesting this venue.



## ***Division Executive Council Meeting***

### ***December 20, 2020***

Camp 302 Commander Jim Millsap submitted his report on the DEC meeting conducted at the home of California Division Commander Robert Williams. Attendees: **Jim Millsap, Steve Smith and Division Lieutenant Commander Mike Climo represented Camp 302. Division Commander Williams and Robert Crook**, the California Division Judge Advocate was there for the division.

The minutes of the August 16, 2020 DEC Meeting were approved.

As proposed in past meetings, it was announced that a new California Division Camp has been officially created. This will be the 13<sup>th</sup> division camp. It was created by division headquarters to allow new members to be assigned a camp in the event there is no local camp for a member to be placed. This is similar to what National Headquarters does for members-at-large. The new camp name will be called *Dan Showalter Camp #2320*. Dan Showalter was a Speaker Pro Tem of the California State Assembly at the outbreak of the Civil War. A Confederate sympathizer who distinguished himself in the Confederate Service, is highlighted in Gene Armistead's book: *An Arch Rebel like Myself*. This great book is part of the Camp 302 library. It is available for anyone to read; please submit a request to the editor.

It was announced that John Hussey has become the temporary camp commander of the Inland Empire Camp 1742.

A goodly portion of the DEC meeting was devoted to the planning of the ReConfederation at Bakersfield, March 12-14, 2021. Division Commander Williams has the contract with the hotel and he indicated that the pricing has improved for 2021. The hotel room rate will be \$99 per night. DEC members in attendance agreed to the pricing and contractual arrangements. The banquet dinner is still a go but will be subject to COVID compliance that could be in place at the time. If further restrictions occur by mid-March, the hotel staff will advise.

Additionally, the DEC agreed that a costs breakdown for the ReConfederation will be provided to division members that is similar to what National Headquarters issues for the National Convention Registration, that is: a cost for just attending the business meeting and the Friday night hospitality suite or, attending both the business meeting and the banquet (i.e. \$110 per member.) Commander Williams will be sending out a summary of convention fees to SCV Division members. Commander Millsap will advise camp members in ample time.

A proposal was made that camp commanders submit the camp report in writing prior to the business meeting—as done in previous years—instead of being read out by each camp commander as it has been found that too much time is taken up in the process. The time allocated can be used for more important business matters.

The next Division Executive Council meeting will occur on January 10, 2021 to finalize planning for convention activities, fees and registration as well as business agenda, special guests, banquet dinner & silent auction.

## ***2021 Camp 302 Schedule***

This is your camp's schedule for the upcoming year. Several events such as the Blue/Gray, Musket Shoot and Wreaths Across America have dates to be determined but should occur on or about the same date as 2020. Also, you will notice that the VMC Color Guard activity is not on the schedule at this time due to the uncertainty of the museum's opening as a result of the COVID restrictions and if and when color guard functions will be required.

### **2021 Camp 302 CALENDAR**

#### **JANUARY**

CAMP MEETING – JANUARY 09  
CONFEDERATE GENERALS DAY PARTY – JANUARY 09 FOLLOWING CAMP MEETING

#### **FEBRUARY**

#### **MARCH**

Confederate Flag Day – March 03  
CAMP MEETING – MARCH 06 (PRE-DIV CONVENTION MTG)  
SCV CALIFORNIA DIVISION CONVENTION – MARCH 12,13,14

#### **APRIL**

Confederate Memorial Day – April 27

#### **MAY**

CAMP MEETING – MAY 08  
Jefferson Davis' Birthday observance (Cake)

#### **JUNE**

Jefferson Davis' Birthday – June 03

#### **JULY**

CAMP MEETING – JULY 10

#### **AUGUST**

GRAY/BLUE BEACH PARTY – TBD

#### **SEPTEMBER**

CAMP MEETING – SEPTEMBER 11

#### **OCTOBER**

ANNUAL MUSKET SHOOT – TBD

#### **NOVEMBER**

CAMP MEETING – NOVEMBER 13

#### **DECEMBER**

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA – TBD



## ***Wreaths Across America***

Despite the restrictions placed on this and other outside events this year due to COVID-19, the annual placing of fresh wreaths on the graves of deceased veterans did take place across the country, and here in San Diego as well, but with a different slant for obvious reasons.

In past years, hundreds of volunteers flocked to Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery on December 10th to

help in the placing of the wreaths on the graves without the necessity of locating a particular individual's grave. This year, however, thousands of wreaths were made available but this time, with limitations on the number of volunteers, donors were asked to designate the actual grave the wreath was to be placed on. Thus, Robyn and Roy, like the others who volunteered, had a lengthy list of names and their respective grave sites on which to place the wreaths. As Roy reported, this was a two-day affair.

For the past several years, Camp 302 has been pleased to donate an annual sum of \$50 for this very worthy event, and Roy and Robyn Adair, as seen at left, are there each year to participate. Unfortunately, Lieutenant Commander George Faircloth who usually accompanies them could not attend this year.



## ***Greetings from the Commander***

It is very difficult for me to summarize and describe the year 2020. One can only hope and pray for a better year in 2021. The removal of the Stonewall Jackson monument in Mt. Hope Cemetery. The lockdowns and closures as a result of the COVID pandemic. The loss of a family member and the loss of two SCV camp members. This is just a brief recap of the tragedies of Camp 302. I do not have any positive words to describe the year, 2020. It is my hope that we can pray for a better 2021.

Please stay safe and healthy for 2021.

Deo Vindice,

Jim Millsap, Commander  
Father A.J. Ryan, Camp 302

