



*Varina Howell Davis 2143*  
*United Daughters of the Confederacy®*  
*Chapter Newsletter*



Volume 10 Issue 1

September 2014

2014-2015 Officers

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Parliamentarian ..... Jamie Davis

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Newsletter Co-Editors

Ann Johnson / Barbara Slover

Chapter Website

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~txvhduc>

Division Website

<http://www.txudc.org>

General Website

<http://www.hqudc.org>



Upcoming Events

Sep 16, 2014 – Birthday of Adml Franklin Buchanan  
Sep 20, 2014 – Chapter Meeting @ 2:00 pm  
Sep 27, 2014 – B'day Rear Adml Raphael Semmes  
Oct 2 – 5, 2014 – Texas Division Convention  
Oct 8, 2014 – Birthday of Judge John Reagan  
Oct 18, 2013 – Chapter Meeting @ 2:00 pm  
Nov 6 -10, 2014 - General Convention, Richmond



September 8	Oma Arnold
September 20	Rachel Phillips
September 22	Jill Foster
September 24	Jo Nell Cass
October 4	Patricia Marburger
October 15	Eva Adams
October 20	Lois Lowe
October 23	Candice Hughes
October 26	Jenni Granero
October 31	Amy Thorpe







## Editorial by Chapter President Ann Johnson

Ladies; it is that time again...September starts a new year in UDC. Are you ready? I know I am. Thanks to Cynthia Hardy for the beautiful postcard notifying us of dues and UDC magazine subscription fee.

This newsletter has information on the Division Convention. It is just a short drive to Beaumont. Two of our members are candidates for Division offices next year, Vanessa Burzynski for Recorder of Military Crosses and Barbara Slover for Chaplain. They are continuing a long tradition of Varina Howell Davis members serving the organization.

Congratulations are in order for chapter member Lindsey Adams. She was awarded a General Scholarship again this year.

To recap the summer – several of VHD members met at Cynthia Hardy's office 3 times this summer to create the 2013-2014 Scrapbook.

We had a lot of fun working together and eating lunch. If you didn't join us you really missed out.



Our of our chapter members, Donna Shaw, travelled to Jefferson, Texas to attend the third annual Civil War Symposium held August 9th. The four featured speakers were experts in the Red River Campaign in which the Battle of Mansfield (Louisiana) was the most active event. Maps, photos and thorough investigations were provided to participants who also



enjoyed a special luncheon speaker, exhibits of both Confederate and Union memorabilia,

and books, maps and photos from vendors throughout the South.

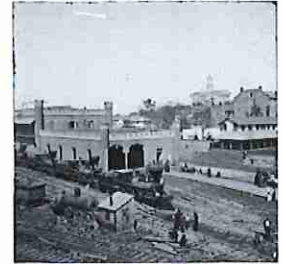
Be sure and join us at our September meeting at St Jerome's at 2:00pm, September 20<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy an informative program and delicious refreshments.

I look forward to seeing you there.

## HISTORICAL TIDBITS

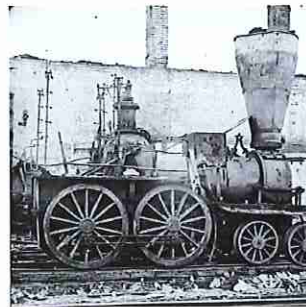
### Railroads of the Confederacy

The Civil War is the first war in which railroads were a major factor. The 1850s had seen enormous growth in the railroad industry so that by 1861, 22,000 miles of track had been laid in the Northern states and 9,500 miles in the South. The great rail centers in the South were Atlanta, Chattanooga, and most important, Richmond. Very little track had yet been laid west of the Mississippi.



Wars have always been fought to control supply centers and road junctions, but the Confederate government was slow to recognize the importance of the railroads in the conflict. By September 1863, the Southern railroads were in bad shape. They had begun to deteriorate very soon after the outset of the war, when many of the railroad employees headed north to join the Union war efforts. Few of the 100 railroads that existed in the South prior to 1861 were more than 100 miles in length. The South had always been less enthusiastic about the railroad industry than the North; its citizens preferred an agrarian living and left the mechanical jobs to men from the Northern states. The railroads existed, they believed, solely to get cotton to the ports.

There was fierce competition between railroad owners who did not want their equipment to ever fall into the hands of their rivals. The lines of competing railroads rarely met, even if they ran through the same town. The railroads also lacked a standard gauge, so that trains of different companies ran on tracks anywhere from four feet to six feet wide. Anything that needed to be transferred from one railroad to another had to be hauled across town and loaded onto new freight cars. Maintaining the trains and rail lines became a major problem as well. Most of the Confederate government's manufacturing efforts concentrated on supplying equipment and ammunition for the military. The railroads were owned by civilians and the Confederate government opposed taking over civilian industries.



The railroads therefore began to run into difficulties very quickly. They did not have the parts to replace worn out equipment. The Southern railroads, before the war, had imported iron from England. Once the war began, the Union blockade of the Atlantic and Gulf ports was very effective in shutting off that supply. Locomotives and tracks began to wear out. By 1863 a quarter of the South's locomotives needed repairs and the speed of train travel in the South had dropped to only 10 miles an

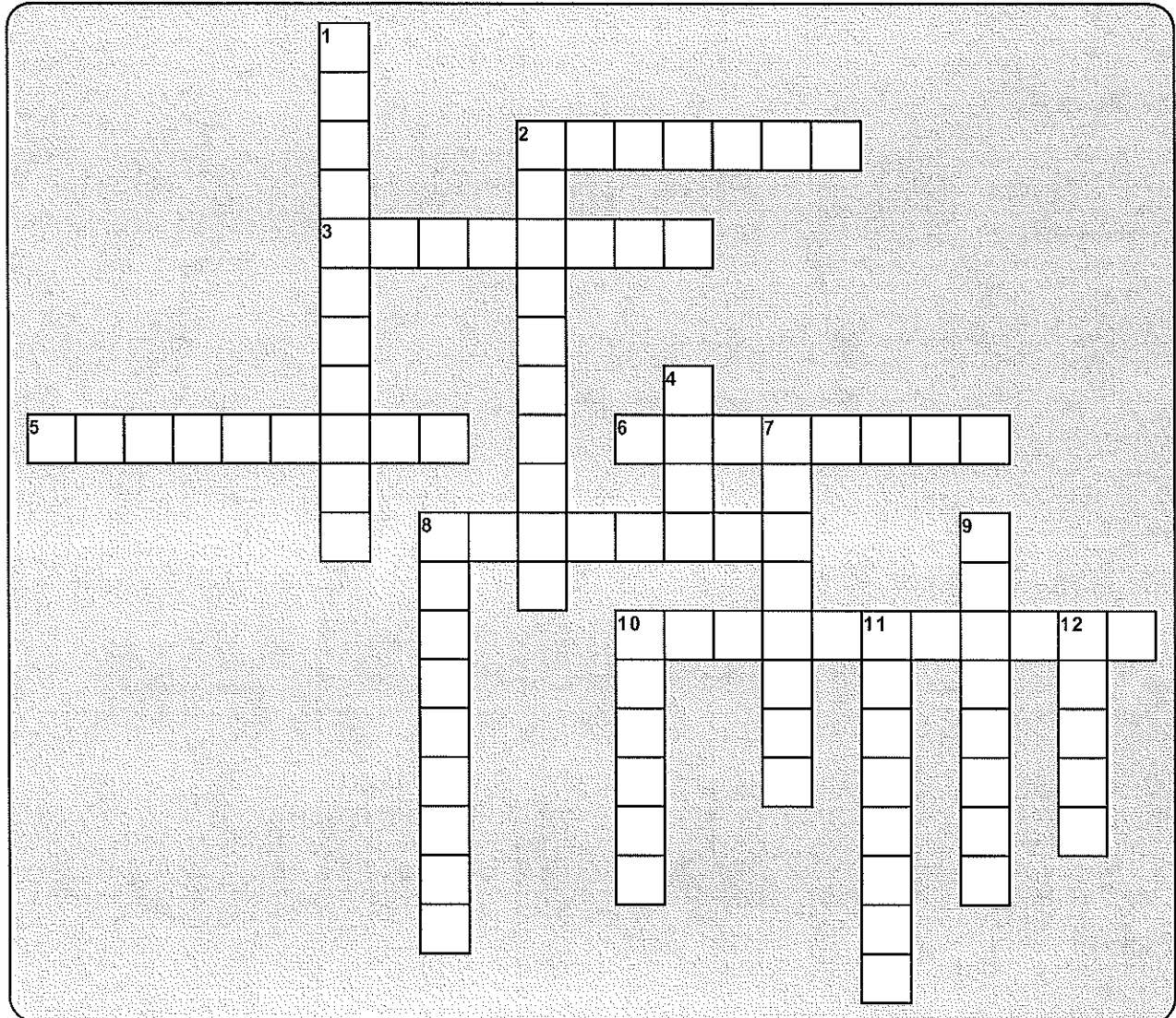
hour (from 25 miles an hour in 1861).

Fuel was a problem as well. Southern locomotives were fueled by wood--a great deal of it. As the Confederate government pulled skilled railroad employees out of their civilian jobs and into the military, the railroad companies became badly understaffed. Replenishing the woodyards at the depots soon became impossible. Train crews eventually took to stopping along their route to chop and load wood as it was needed.

Accidents also wrecked a lot of equipment. Because telegraph communication was sporadic at best, railroad crews were often unaware of broken rails and collapsed bridges. Cattle on the tracks caused accidents, sparks from the locomotives' woodfires burned cars, and boilers exploded.

Track, too, became a problem, and crossties, spikes, and track were taken from the less important railroad lines and used on the major lines. Crossties became rotten, and rails broke (the line from Nashville to Chattanooga had 1,200 broken rails in 1862). Union troops, as they moved South, sabotaged the rails by pulling them up, heating them until they could bend, and wrapping them around tree trunks to make what were called Sherman's Neckties. The Union army also burned bridges and destroyed tunnels and captured as much railroad equipment as they could--their greatest catch was in 1863 when General Joseph E. Johnston abandoned Jackson, Mississippi, leaving 90 locomotives and hundreds of railroad cars behind.

# Railroads in the Confederacy



**Across**

- 2 - Major southern rail center in Georgia
- 3 - Most important southern rail center; in Virginia
- 5 - Because this type of communication wasn't always available, crews didn't know about broken rails, collapsed bridges and other hazards.
- 6 - When this general abandoned Jackson, MS, the Union gained 90 locomotives and hundreds of railroad cars.
- 8 - This word means "not regular" or "not frequent".
- 10 - Major southern rail center in Tennessee

**Down**

- 1 - This word means "to fall apart"; the railroads began to \_\_\_\_\_ soon after the war started.
- 2 - Confederate manufacturing focused on making equipment and \_\_\_\_\_ for the military, not on railroad maintenance.
- 4 - Southern trains used this for fuel.
- 7 - Rails that were pulled up, heated, and wrapped around tree trunks were called Sherman's \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 - This word means "damaged or destroyed on purpose".
- 9 - The Union \_\_\_\_\_ of ports stopped the South from importing iron from England.
- 10 - Many people felt that the main function of the railroads was to get this item to the ports.
- 11 - Many people in the south lived a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ lifestyle, which refers to farm (not city) living.
- 12 - Southern railroads lacked a standard \_\_\_\_\_, so tracks were anywhere from 4 to 6 feet wide.

Answers in the back





*118th Annual  
Texas Division Convention*

*October 2-5, 2014*

[Holiday Inn Beaumont](#)

3950 I-10 South  
Beaumont, Texas 77705  
Phone: 409-842-5995  
Fax: 409-842-7810

**Guest Room Rates**  
**Standard Double or King Room**  
**Contracted Rate \$79 + tax 15%**

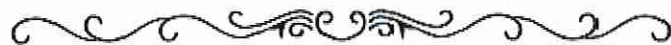
Convention Chairman – [Carolyn Jamail](#)  
Convention Co-Chairman – [Kathy Hillman](#)  
Convention Treasurer – [Bernice Elgar](#)



**Don't forget to bring the following items  
to the Chapter Meetings:**



**Can Goods & Pantry Items**  
**Clothing Donations**



**REMINDERS:**

**Hostess for September Meeting**

April Bass

**Speaker for September Meeting**

Lois Lowe



**General Convention 2014**

**November 6- 10, 2014**

Omni Hotel  
Richmond Virginia



**Please remember the following chapter  
members in your prayers:**

Jamie Davis – fighting Lung Disease  
Davine Hall – ill  
Margaret Taylor - ill



**REMINDER**

**2014 – 2015 DUES are due**

**\$35.00 dues + \$15 Magazine**

**\$50 – payable to Varina Howell Davis 2143**

## Railroads in the Confederacy

