

# CONFEDERATE GAZETTE

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MAY 2025

TEMPLE, TEXAS

## 160 YEARS AGO – THE LAST LAND BATTLE OF THE CIVIL WAR



## THE BATTLE OF PALMITO RANCH MAY 12-13, 1865

**MAJOR ROBERT M. WHITE CAMP #1250  
CAMP OFFICERS**

**CAMP COMMANDER**

Jonathan Bozeman

**FIRST LIEUTENANT COMMANDER**

Jim Pederson

**SECOND LIEUTENANT COMMANDER**

John Larson III

**ADJUTANT**

James Bozeman

**COLOR SERGEANT**

Vacant

**CHAPLAIN**

James Bozeman

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

James Bozeman

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Greetings,

Welcome to the May edition of the *Confederate Gazette*, our camp newsletter. There are several interesting articles in this issue, so I hope you will read it in its entirety. As you can see from the cover, this month marks the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Palmito Ranch, fought outside Brownsville, Texas, which was the last land battle of the War Between the States. Included in this edition are articles on the Battle of Palmito Ranch and Colonel John "RIP" Ford, the leader of the Confederate troops at Palmito Ranch.

Prior to our April meeting, in honor of Confederate History Month, we had an awesome memorial celebration at the Bell County Confederate Memorial and at the South Belton Cemetery, and a short article with photos is included later in this issue.

With Memorial Day coming up in a couple of weeks, you will not want to miss the article from the Chaplain and why Memorial Day is so important.

Remember, this is YOUR camp newsletter. If you have any ideas, written presentations, photos, book reviews, etc., that you want included in the newsletter, please send them to me either by mail or email at the addresses below. I would be very happy to include your submissions into the newsletter.

James Bozeman  
Editor, *Confederate Gazette*

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### Contact us:

**Major Robert M. White Camp #1250**  
**Sons of Confederate Veterans**  
**P.O. Box 375**  
**Temple, TX 76503-0375**

**Editor:**  
**[james.e.bozeman@gmail.com](mailto:james.e.bozeman@gmail.com)**



# HERITAGE DEFENSE REPORT



## NATIONAL

No National news this month, but this came through from HK Edgerton regarding the participation of a SCV Camp in Tennessee in an annual festival that unfortunately is still indicative of the struggles we face:

*"There I was on Friday, April 4, 2025, in a different part of Dixie, "Pigeon Forge, Tennessee" preparing to participate in a Parade alongside the Longstreet-Zollicoffer Camp #87, Sons of Confederate Veterans in what used to be called the "Dixie Stampede" Dolly Parton 's Home Coming Parade.*

*Now re-named "Spring Time In The Mountain" Parade after Ms. Dolly caved into the Gays and Lesbians who run the Black Lives Matter Organizations who filled her and her Organization with a ton of White folk guilt after the death of the drug dealing, woman beating, children killing George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota... who was forced upon the decent Black folk Floyd as some kind of hero... of which he was not.*

*And then Ms. Dolly 's people went a step further in defaming the reverent term, "Dixie". Even overlooking the fact that Lincoln fell in love with the song "Dixie" which is said to have been written by a Black man.*

*Ms. Dolly proclaimed she did this atrocious act against Dixie because she didn't want to hurt anyone and that it was a business decision. But it hurt the whole of the Southern people."*

## From the Virginia Flaggers:

The Virginia Appellate Court ruled that the High Bridge Memorial Battle Flag pole will not be removed and denied the appeal of Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors.

*"We are thrilled to have just received news that Prince Edward County's appeal of the Circuit*

*Court's Decision in our favor to Virginia's Court of Appeals has been DENIED. We are waiting for details, but wanted to share this GOOD NEWS as soon as received. This is a HUGE victory for supporters of Confederate heritage, and ALL who respect property owners' rights."*

## TEXAS

The Senate Monument Protection Bill, SB317 authored by Senator Creighton made it out of committee and will receive a full Senate hearing.

Johnny Anderson spoke representing the Civil War Project which he established. A link is provided below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9U329HxOHvY>

House Bill 3227, which is an identical bill, is still in the House Culture, Recreation, and Tourism Committee but a public hearing was just scheduled for Thursday May 1st.

To view or provide input on either of the two bills go to [senate.texas.gov](https://senate.texas.gov), select Senator Creighton and fill-out the e-mail info and message on his website. Do the same for Representative Gerdes by using [house.texas.gov](https://house.texas.gov).

The Texas Division has specifically asked that all member and supports take the following action targeting critical support for the House Bill:

The key to our success lies in getting the bill heard by the Culture, Recreation, and Tourism (CRT) Committee to which the bill has been assigned. For a bill to be heard in its designated committee, the bill's author must request a hearing. Texas State Representative Stan Gerdes (R) has taken this step by requesting a hearing in writing and through a personal visit with CRT chair Rep Metcalf. The Texas Legislature runs until June 2, 2025. Given the slow pace of the legislature, it's imperative that we secure the hearing within the next 2 weeks. The urgency of the situation calls for immediate action from all of us.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?**

**I would like all Texas Division compatriots to email Representative Will Metcalf and the CRT committee clerk, Lauren McCarthy, to ask that HB3227 be set for a hearing as soon as possible.**

[will.metcalf@house.texas.gov](mailto:will.metcalf@house.texas.gov)  
[lauren.mccarthy@house.texas.gov](mailto:lauren.mccarthy@house.texas.gov)

## LOCAL

The Williamson County Grays were back on the square in Georgetown for Poppy Days this past weekend.

Here is an image of the two billboards rented in Temple and Waco if you haven't seen them.



Jim Peterson  
1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Commander  
Major Robert M. White Camp #1250

# FROM THE CHAPLAIN

## MEMORIAL DAY – A TIME TO REMEMBER

Memorial Day is a time to remember and honor those who have died in service to this country, particularly during wartime. It's a day for national mourning and reflection, and gives us a chance to express gratitude to the fallen. The first Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, was held on May 30, 1868, at Arlington National Cemetery, just three years after the Civil War ended. It is now held annually on the fourth Monday of May.

Throughout scripture, God calls His people to remember. From the stones placed beside the Jordan River to the celebration of the Passover, remembering is more than recollection – it is a spiritual act. In Deuteronomy 6:12, Moses warns the Israelites, “Be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt.” Memory keeps us grounded. It ties us to our values, our history, and the people who have shaped both. Memorial Day invites us to remember – not only names and battles, but the principles for which our fallen stood: freedom, justice, duty. Their memory calls us to live lives worthy of their sacrifice.

Jesus' words in John 15:13 strike at the heart of Memorial Day – “Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.” This is the very definition of sacrificial love. Soldiers who died in war did not give their lives for medals or recognition – they gave them for people, for communities, for generations to come. Their deaths echo Christ's own sacrifice: giving up His life so that others might live. Freedom is never free. It always carries a price, paid not in dollars but in blood, courage, and selflessness. Memorial Day reminds us that every privilege we enjoy – our ability to worship freely, speak openly, and live peacefully – was secured at great cost.

Honoring the fallen means more than holding ceremonies once a year. It means living in a way that reflects the values they died to protect. The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:1, “Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.” Just as others gave their lives, we are called to live ours in a way that honors God and blesses others. Let Memorial Day challenge us to rise above selfishness, division, and apathy. Let it inspire us to be peacemakers, defenders of truth, and servants of others. Let their sacrifice fuel our commitment to justice, mercy, and humility.

As we remember the fallen this Memorial Day, let us do more than mourn – we must honor. Let us do more than reflect – we must act. Let the memory of those who laid down their lives lead us to deeper gratitude and a renewed sense of purpose. And may we never forget that the greatest freedom of all – freedom from sin and death – was secured not by a soldier in uniform, but by a Savior on a cross.

James Bozeman  
Camp Chaplain



# NOTES FROM OUR APRIL MEETING

The speaker for our April meeting was Camp Adjutant and Chaplain James Bozeman. His presentation was titled “The Faith of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson”. Chaplain Bozeman started by describing what a true Southern gentleman was, and then stated that both of these men were, in fact, true Southern gentlemen. He then expounded on their character, stating that they both came from modest beginnings in broken homes, but that Christian faith and ideals were instilled in both men by the family members that raised them. Here is a quote from the presentation:

“Both Lee and Jackson shared a deep reliance on their Christian faith, which provided them with a sense of purpose and resilience during the Civil War. Their belief in divine providence allowed them to endure hardships and inspired their followers. Their faith also helped them maintain moral clarity and focus in the face of adversity, fostering trust and loyalty among their soldiers. By integrating their spiritual values into their leadership styles, they became models of disciplined, principled command.”

Several items of business were conducted during the meeting:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Commander John Larson III gave an update on the Attack at Fort Parker reenactment coming up at the end of May. He stated that work was completed on the porch area near the barracks buildings. He also reported that Terri Baker-Larson was making hats for the event as a fundraiser for \$20 each.
- Camp Adjutant James Bozeman gave an update on the monument protection bills in the Texas Legislature, stating that they were both in committee.
- Camp Commander Jonathan Bozeman mentioned that the Texas Division erected two billboards along I-35 for the duration of the month of April – one at Nugent Avenue in Temple, and one at New Road in Waco.
- Camp Adjutant James Bozeman presented an amendment to the Camp Constitution that would require a quorum of seven camp members at all camp meetings, and that all camp meetings would use Robert’s Rules of Order as the rules of procedure. The amendment passed with a unanimous vote.
- The camp members present voted in the affirmative to participate in the Belton Fourth of July Parade again this year.
- Camp Commander Jonathan Bozeman reminded the camp of the Texas Division Heritage Picnic at the Confederate Reunion Grounds in Mexia on Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Commander Bozeman reminded everyone of the upcoming 128<sup>th</sup> annual Texas Division Convention, to be held June 6-8, 2025, at the Crazy Water Hotel in Mineral Wells.
- Commander Bozeman let everyone know of the Lampasas Camp Muster on May 2-3, at the CS Ranch in San Saba.
- Commander Chuck Hand of the Lieutenant Jesse Page Camp in Boerne let everyone know about the annual Decoration Day at the Confederate Cemetery in San Antonio on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.



# CONFEDERATE HISTORY MONTH

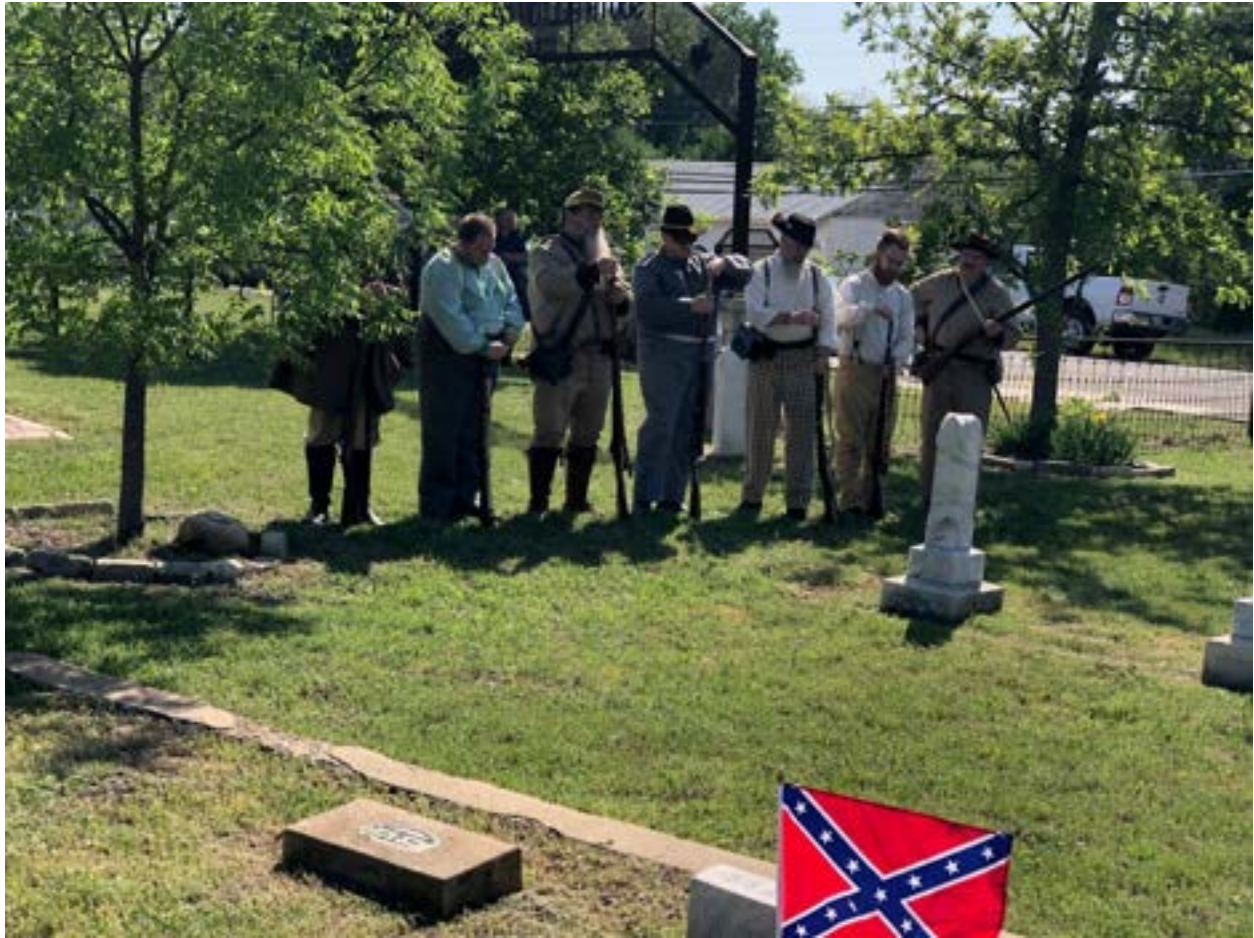
We held our annual Confederate History Month memorial on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, prior to our monthly camp meeting later that evening. We had a turnout of several camp members, but also camp members from five other camps. Joyce Jones and Judy Tyler represented the Bell County Chapter #101 of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and we started the day at 3:30 pm at the Bell County Confederate Memorial on the lawn of the Historic Bell County Courthouse in downtown Belton. The UDC said a few words about the Confederate soldiers from Bell County, then photos were taken of all in attendance.



After the ceremony at the Bell County Courthouse, we adjourned to the South Belton Cemetery, where nearly 100 Confederate soldiers are buried, including our camp namesake Major Robert M. White. There were representatives from six camps in attendance, as well as the ladies of the UDC. Chaplain James Bozeman gave a presentation on the Confederate units from Bell County.







**After the memorial at the South Belton Cemetery, Chaplain Bozeman took the visitors from Georgetown and Boerne to the North Belton Cemetery and told them the story of Sergeant Jacob Hemphill and the nine gold star recipients of Hood's Texas Brigade.**



**A special thanks to those who joined us from other camps – Carleton Wilkes from the Major George W. Littlefield Camp #59 in Austin; Shelby Little, Lee Wallace, and Tracy Wallace from the Williamson County Grays Camp #502 in Georgetown; Commander Michael Oliver and James Oliver from the Salt Works Camp #2353 in Lampasas; Commander Chuck Hand and Dalton Hand from the 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Jesse Page Camp #2351 in Boerne; and our surprise special guest, ATM Commander John McCammon, from the Texas Lone Star Greys Camp #1953 in San Antonio, who graciously volunteered to command our rifle squad.**

**And a very special thanks to Mrs. Casey Hand, who took all of these photos.**

# **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS!**

**Happy Birthday to the following camp members:**

**Michael Moore – May 1**

**Terry Tyler – May 3**

**Charles Anglin – May 14**

**Ralph Snyder – May 28**





## THE BATTLE OF PALMITO RANCH

On May 13, 1865, more than a month after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee, the last land action of the Civil War took place at Palmito Ranch near Brownsville. Early in the war the Union army had briefly occupied Brownsville but had been unable to hold the city. They established a base at Brazos Santiago on Brazos Island from which to blockade the Rio Grande and Brownsville. They were, however, unable to blockade the Mexican (and technically neutral) port of Bagdad, just below the river. The Confederates landed supplies at Bagdad and then transported them twenty-five miles inland to Matamoros to be shipped across the Rio Grande into Brownsville.

In February 1865 the Union commander at Brazos Island, Colonel Theodore H. Barrett, reported to his superiors that his base was secure from attack and that with permission he could take Brownsville. The superiors refused to sanction the attack. Instead, Major General Lewis Wallace sought and received Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant's permission to meet the Confederate commanders of the Brownsville area, Brigadier General James E. Slaughter, commander of the Western Sub-District of Texas, and Colonel John Salmon (Rip) Ford, commander of the southern division of Slaughter's command, at Port Isabel on March 11, 1865, in hopes of arranging a separate peace. Wallace promised no retaliation against former Confederates so long as they took an oath of allegiance to the United States. Anyone who preferred to leave the country would be given time to gather up property and family before doing so. An informal truce was arranged while Ford and Slaughter sent Wallace's proposals up the chain of command, and Wallace informed Grant that the rebels in Texas would soon be surrendering. Slaughter's superior in Houston, however, Major General John G. Walker, denounced Wallace's terms and wrote a stinging letter to Slaughter for having listened to them in the first place. The commander of the Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department, Lieutenant General Edmund Kirby Smith, was not ready to abandon the cause either. On May 9, 1865, he told the governors of the western Confederate states that despite Lee's surrender, his own army remained, and he proposed to continue the fight.

The Confederates in Texas were aware of the fate of the Confederacy's eastern armies. On May 1, 1865, a passenger on a steamer heading up the Rio Grande towards Brownsville tossed a copy of the *New Orleans Times* to some Confederates at Palmito Ranch. The paper contained the news of Lee's surrender, Lincoln's death, and the surrender negotiations between Johnston and Sherman. Within the next ten days several hundred rebels left the army and went home. Those who remained were as resolute as their commanders to continue the fight in Texas. The federals, meanwhile, had received an erroneous report that the southerners were preparing to evacuate Brownsville and move east of Corpus Christi. In light of this intelligence Colonel Barrett ordered 250 men of the Sixty-second United States Colored Infantry and fifty men of the Second Texas United States Cavalry (dismounted) to cross to the mainland from Brazos Island at Boca Chica Pass to occupy Brownsville. Carrying five days' rations and 100 rounds of ammunition per man, the Union troops crossed over to the coast at 9:30 P.M. on May 11, 1865. Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel David Branson, this detachment marched all night and reached White's Ranch at daybreak. There Branson's men halted and tried to conceal themselves in a thicket along the Rio Grande. The camp was spotted by "civilians" (probably Confederate soldiers) on the Mexican side of the river. Realizing that any hope of surprising the Confederates was lost, Branson immediately resumed his march toward Brownsville.

At Palmito Ranch the federals encountered Captain W. N. Robinson's 190-man company of Lieutenant Colonel George H. Giddings' Texas Cavalry Battalion, which skirmished briefly with the Union force before retiring. The federals, too, fell back to a hill overlooking the ranch to rest and cook dinner. Camping for the night, the Union troops remained undisturbed until 3:00 A.M., when Robinson's company reappeared. Colonel Ford, at Fort Brown, had ordered Robinson to maintain contact with Branson's column and promised to reinforce him as soon as possible. Under pressure from Robinson, the

federals fell back to White's Ranch, from where Branson sent a courier to Brazos Santiago asking Colonel Barrett for reinforcements. Barrett himself arrived at 5:00 A.M. on May 13, 1865, with 200 men of the Thirty-fourth Indiana Infantry, bringing the Union strength up to 500 officers and men. Under Barrett's command the column moved on Palmito Ranch once more, and a "sharp engagement" took place in a thicket along the riverbank between Barrett's 500 troops and Robinson's 190 Confederates. The outnumbered but persistent southerners were soon pushed back across an open prairie and beyond sight, while the exhausted federals paused on a small hill about a mile west of Palmito Ranch. At three that afternoon, Colonel Ford arrived to reinforce Robinson with 300 men from his own Second Texas Cavalry, Colonel Santos Benavides' Texas Cavalry Regiment, and additional companies from Giddings' battalion, as well as a six-gun battery of field artillery under the command of Captain O. G. Jones.

With mounted cavalry and artillery, Ford had the perfect force to deal with Barrett's infantry on the flat, open land around Palmito Ranch. Hidden by a group of small trees, Ford's men formed their line of battle. At 4:00 P.M. Jones's guns began to fire. After a brief bombardment, Robinson's men attacked the Union left near the river, while two other companies of Giddings' battalion struck its right. At the same time, the rest of Ford's men charged the enemy center. The southern assault came as a great surprise, and the Union line rapidly fell apart. Barrett later reported that "Having no artillery to oppose the enemy's six twelve-pounder field pieces our position became untenable. We therefore fell back fighting." Ford remembered it differently when he wrote in his memoirs that Barrett "seemed to have lost his presence of mind" and to have led his troops off the field in a "rather confused manner." Forty-six men of the Thirty-fourth Indiana were put out as skirmishers and left to be captured as the federals fell back toward Brazos Island. Only by deploying 140 men of the Sixty-second Colored Infantry in a line running from the Rio Grande to three-quarters of a mile inland did the Union troops slow the Confederate attack enough to allow the northerners to get away. Ford wrote that the battle from its beginning had been "a run," and demonstrated "how fast demoralized men could get over ground." The Confederates chased the federals for seven miles to Brazos Island. There the routed Union troops were met by reinforcements, and Ford's men ceased their attack. "Boys, we have done finely," said Ford. "We will let well enough alone, and retire." The action had lasted a total of four hours. Confederate casualties were a few dozen wounded. The federals lost 111 men and four officers captured, and thirty men wounded or killed. Ironically, at the same time as the battle of Palmito Ranch, the Confederate governors of Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas were authorizing Kirby Smith to disband his armies and end the war. A few days later federal officers from Brazos Santiago visited Brownsville to arrange a truce with General Slaughter and Colonel Ford.

Citation:

Jeffrey William Hunt, "Palmito Ranch, Battle of," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed April 19, 2025, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/palmito-ranch-battle-of>.

## COLONEL JOHN SALMON “RIP” FORD



John Salmon “Rip” Ford, soldier, elected official, and newspaper editor, son of William and Harriet (Salmon) Ford, was born in Greenville District, South Carolina, on May 26, 1815. He moved to Texas in June 1836 and served in the Texas army until 1838, rising to the rank of first lieutenant under John Coffee Hays. Ford settled in San Augustine and practiced medicine there until 1844, when he was elected to the House of the Ninth Congress, where he introduced the resolution to accept the terms of annexation to the United States. In 1845 he moved to Austin and became editor of the *Austin Texas Democrat*; he was later in partnership with Michael Cronican.

During the Mexican War, Ford was adjutant of Hays' regiment and in command of a spy company; he was commended for gallant service by General Joseph Lane. While serving as adjutant, Ford acquired the lasting nickname "Rip." When officially sending out notices of deaths he kindly included at the first of the message, "Rest in Peace"; later, under the exigencies of battle conditions, this message was shortened to "R.I.P."

In 1849, with Robert S. Neighbors, Ford made an exploration of the country between San Antonio and El Paso and published a report and map of the route, which came to be known as the Ford and Neighbors Trail. Later in 1849 he was made captain in the Texas Rangers and was stationed between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, where he had numerous Indian fights during 1850 and 1851.

In 1852 he was elected to the Texas Senate; again he became an editor and, in partnership with Captain Joe Walker, established the *State Times*, which was published in Austin until 1857. Early in 1858 he accepted a commission in the state troops and defeated the Indians in two major battles on the Canadian River. Late in 1859 he was sent to the Rio Grande, where he commanded operations against Juan N. Cortina. In 1861 Ford served as a member of the Secession Convention, commanded an expedition to Brazos Santiago, initiated a trade agreement between Mexico and the Confederacy, and was elected colonel of the Second Texas Cavalry, with a command in the Rio Grande district. Between 1862 and 1865 he discharged with tactful moderation the duties of commandant of conscripts, while at various times he was engaged on border operations protecting Confederate-Mexican trade. In May 1865 he led Confederate forces in the Battle of Palmito Ranch, the last battle of the Civil War.



In 1868 Ford moved to Brownsville to edit the Brownsville *Sentinel*. In 1872 he was a delegate to the Democratic convention in Baltimore. He was a special sergeant-at-arms when Richard Coke was inaugurated as governor in 1873 and quelled a riot of Austin citizens who were aroused against the radicals and Edmund J. Davis. In 1873 Ford served as a cattle and hide inspector of Cameron County, and in 1874 he was mayor of Brownsville. He was a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1875 and served in the Texas Senate from 1876 to 1879, when he was appointed superintendent of the Deaf and Dumb School (later the Texas School for the Deaf). While in the Senate he urged the promotion of immigration to Texas and popular education, supported in part from the sale of public lands.

Ford spent his later years writing reminiscences and historical articles and promoting an interest in Texas history. As a charter member of the Texas State Historical Association, he contributed one of the first articles published in its *Quarterly*. He died in San Antonio on November 3, 1897.

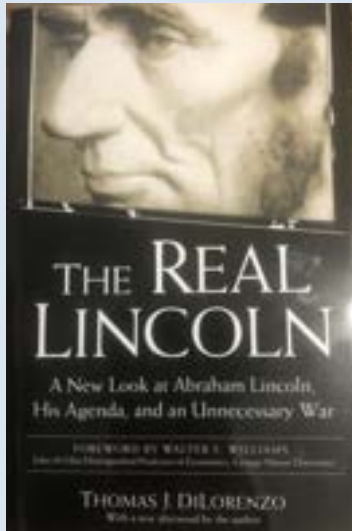
Citation:

Seymour V. Connor, "Ford, John Salmon [Rip]," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed April 27, 2025, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/ford-john-salmon-rip>.

# FROM THE BOOKSHELF

## **The Real Lincoln A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War**

**Thomas J. DiLorenzo**



Most of what you know about Abraham Lincoln is false!

In *The Real Lincoln*, author Thomas J. DiLorenzo uncovers a side of our sixteenth president not told in history books and overshadowed by the immense Lincoln legend. And as DiLorenzo reveals, the myths surrounding Lincoln obscure the true origins of the Civil War.

# UPCOMING 2025 SCV REUNIONS



## 128th Texas Division Reunion – Sons of Confederate Veterans

The members of SVC Camp 2283, 34th Texas Cavalry and SCV Camp 1904, 2nd Texas Frontier along with TSOOCR Chapters Painted Rose #66 and Cactus Rose #23 extend an invitation to all members of SCV Texas Division Camps and their guests to join us in Mineral Wells, Texas, June 6-8, 2025, for the 128th Reunion of the Texas Division of Sons of Confederate Veterans.

<https://scvtexas.org/128th-texas-division-reunion/>



## 130th Annual National Reunion – Sons of Confederate Veterans

We are thrilled to welcome you to the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) 130th National Reunion, taking place from July 16-20, 2024, in the vibrant city of Houston, Texas. This milestone event promises to be a memorable gathering as we come together to honor our heritage, celebrate our shared history, and forge lasting connections.

<https://scv130.com/>

## **UPCOMING CAMP MEETINGS**

**TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2025**

**SPEAKER – JOHNNY ANDERSON**

**COTTON PATCH CAFÉ**

**TEMPLE MALL, 3111 SOUTH 31<sup>ST</sup> STREET**

**SOCIAL/DINNER @ 6:00 PM, MEETING @ 7:00 PM**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 2025**

**NO SPEAKER – DIVISION CONVENTION REVIEW**

**COTTON PATCH CAFÉ**

**TEMPLE MALL, 3111 SOUTH 31<sup>ST</sup> STREET**

**SOCIAL/DINNER @ 6:00 PM, MEETING @ 7:00 PM**

**SATURDAY, JULY 12, 2025**

**SPEAKER – TBD**

**COTTON PATCH CAFÉ**

**TEMPLE MALL, 3111 SOUTH 31<sup>ST</sup> STREET**

**SOCIAL/DINNER @ 6:00 PM, MEETING @ 7:00 PM**