

Confederate Gazette

DMV Rejects SCV License Plates

The Texas Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has put the brakes on the proposed specialty state license plate planned by the Texas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans. In an 8 to 0 vote, one member was absent, the DMV rejected the SCV's proposed plates which featured the SCV logo and a background image of the Confederate battleflag.

The SCV's Commander-in-Chief Michael Givens said, "We are very disappointed. The Confederate flag represents people who fought in battle." Granvel Block, Texas Division Commander, said, "The vote was disappointing, but considering the PC cor-

rect board that we were dealing with it was expected. The board did not do justice to Texas or our organization. Even though our organization had every right to have our application approved, the board chose the easy way out by conceding to the misconceived remarks of a few."

Nine other states have the SCV logo on license plates, including three states where the SCV took the states to court and won, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia. A case in Florida is pending, although the initial court ruled in favor of the SCV.

Block said, "We will have our SCV license plate along with

nine other states before us, and we will win our case on the same grounds as the three states that were forced to go to court."

Since an April vote of the DMV Board ended in a 4 to 4 tie, there has been organized opposition to the SCV's license plate effort. Progress Texas, a liberal organization, and the NAACP led an effort to stop the plates and helped get over 22,000 signatures on a petition against the plates.

At least 19 members of the state legislature also opposed the plates. US Congresswoman Sheila Jackson

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Camp Christmas Party on 12/3

The Major Robert M. White Camp #1250's ninth annual Christmas Gala will be held at the Cotton Patch Café in the Temple Mall on Saturday, December 3rd.

The Christmas party will kick off with a social hour beginning at 6:00 PM followed by a dinner at 7:00 PM. As usual people in attendance can

simply order off the Cotton Patch Café's menu.

This event follows similar events held each December for the last eight years, where camp members, friends, and guest reviled in an old time Southern Christmas party.

At the event there will be an election of camp officers for

2012. Officers elected at the December meeting will be installed at the Lee-Jackson Dinner in January, 2012.

Dress for the Christmas Gala can be either period or modern clothes, casual wear or party wear.

The party will be in lieu of the regular December Camp meeting.



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CONFEDERATE PROFILE

North Texas Rebel



**John Summerfield
Griffith**

**Griffith
commanded the 6th
Texas Cavalry**

He came to Texas at age 10, raised a cavalry company during the War for Southern Independence and served in the Texas Legislature on two occasions, once while Texas was part of the Confederacy.

John Summerfield Griffith was born to Michael B. and Lydia Crabb Griffith on June 17, 1829 in Montgomery County, Maryland. His grandfather, Samuel Griffith, was a captain during the American Revolutionary War.

In 1834 Griffith's father moved the family to Missouri and then in 1839 Griffith's family relocated to Texas, originally settling in San Augustine. He was home educated by his mother and entered the business world in 1850 in San Augustine, clerking at a local store. He later borrowed funds and opened his own store.

Griffith married Emily Simpson on December 18, 1856 and the

couple would have a total of four children and maybe as many as six. In 1859 Griffith and his family moved to the small town of Rockwall in Kaufman County where he established a mercantile business. He also farmed and ranched in the area and was one of the early cotton planters in north Texas and the first farmer in the area to plant potatoes. Griffith was quite successful and was one of the leading men in Kaufman County and owned a number of slaves.

When the war began in 1861 Griffith raised a cavalry company of men from around Rockwall. The company would eventually become Company B of the Sixth Texas Cavalry. He entered Confederate service as a captain and would later be promoted to lieutenant colonel of the 6th Texas.

Griffith saw his first combat in what was then Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, at the Battle of Chustenahalah in Osage County

in December of 1861. Confederate forces attacked Indian troops loyal to the U.S. and easily routed them sending them retreating back to Kansas. Griffith had his horse shot out from under him during the fight and a bullet pierced his hat.

Griffith and the 6th Texas also saw action at Elkhorn Tavern, Oak Hills and other skirmishes in southern Arkansas. Griffith is best noted for his leadership in leading a December 20, 1862 raid on Holly Springs, Mississippi. Griffith proposed the raid of the town, home of an arsenal that was under Federal control, commanded by U.S. Grant. When the raid was approved Griffith planned the entire effort.

The attack was a great success, one that was a total Confederate victory, and allowed the destruction of over \$2 million of Federal supplies and

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Mrs. U.S. Grant Captured?

When Confederate forces under Lieutenant Colonel John Summerfield Griffith attacked the Union held town of Holly Springs, Mississippi initial news reports reported that Griffith had captured Mrs. U.S. Grant.

The Holly Springs attack was a total surprise and caused Un-

ion troops that weren't captured to quickly flee the town.

Confederate forces searched the town hoping by chance to find Federal commander, U.S. Grant. There was one house where three females blocked the gated entrance at the front fence. They challenged Griffith

to go through them to search the house. Rather than physically remove the ladies, Griffith simply had his men dislodge the fence to the side of the house and went around the defiant ladies.

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DMV Rejects SCV Plates

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Lee, Democrat out of Houston, told the *Austin American Statesman* that the vote was a victory against Texas' racist past. "Texas is better than

plates and he said, "We don't need to be opening old wounds."

Perry spokeswoman, Lucy Nashed, told the Associated Press after the DMV vote,



this," she said.

Speaking in favor of the plates at the DMV meeting was Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, whose office was a sponsor of the SCV plates. Patterson said, "This plate is not to honor the reason for the war," urging the approval of the SCV plate. "I'm able to separate the good from the bad. I believe there was nobility in the cause," Patterson told the DMV Board.

Texas Governor Rick Perry, now running for the GOP presidential nomination, was asked last month about the SCV

"Again, he wasn't in favor of the plates."

On the same day the SCV plates were rejected the DMV Board approved, on a 5 to 3 vote, a specialty plate which honors Buffalo Soldiers, who were African-American troops that fought Indians in the west after the War Between the States.

That plate was also sponsored by Patterson and the proceeds from the sale of the plates will benefit the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum located in Houston.

North Texas Rebel

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forced Grant out of Mississippi giving some temporary relief to Confederate forces in Vicksburg.

Griffith experienced health problems in 1863 and he resigned his commission and returned home to Texas. Once home, he was elected to the Texas legislature and became chairman of the committee on military affairs. On March 1, 1864 Texas Governor Pendleton Murrah appointed Griffith as a brigadier general of the Texas state troops. He was given command of Military District 2 where he served until the war ended.

Griffith who had considerable wealth before the war was basically penniless post war. He helped organize his former slaves and reentered the world of agriculture where he found success.

He relocated to the Oak Cliff area of Dallas in the late 1860s where he was involved in land speculation. In 1873 when the town of Terrell was founded he moved back to Kaufman County

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Court case to decide SCV's Texas license plate?

Camp Schedule

December 3, 2011

Annual Camp Christmas Party, 6:00 PM. Location: Cotton Patch Café, Temple Mall.

January 21, 2012

Annual Lee-Jackson Dinner, Cultural Activities Center, 6:00 Social 7:00 PM Meeting.

February 14, 2012

Regular Camp meeting at Cotton Patch Café, Temple Mall, 7:00 PM. Speaker: TBD

March 13, 2012

Regular Camp meeting at Cotton Patch Café, Temple Mall, 7:00 PM. Speaker: TBD



April 14, 2012

Quarterly Camp Dinner meeting at Cotton Patch Café, Temple Mall, 7:00 PM. Speaker: TBD

**Next Meeting:
December 3rd
Cotton Patch Café
Temple Mall
6:00 PM Social
7:00 PM Dinner**

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Slave Museum Goes Under

The United States National Slavery Museum in Fredericksburg, Virginia recently filed for bankruptcy in a federal court. The planned

museum was the brain-child of former Democratic Virginia Governor L. Douglas Wilder.

Wilder conceived the idea of the museum in 1992 and first publicly spoke about it in 2001. Fredericksburg was selected as the location of the museum when a 22 acre track in a planned entertainment district was given to the museum.



Architectural rendering of museum's interior

The site was later expanded to 38 acres and fund raising began in 2002, with a planned opening in 2007.

A number of national entertainers, including comedian Bill Cosby, held benefits on behalf of the museum. Site clearing began in 2004, but the effort stalled

due to lack of funds.

Cosby and Wilder asked everyone in the U.S. to donate \$8, representing the number of slave shackles. With few donations the project slowed to a stop.

North Texas Rebel

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where he owned a mercantile with his brother and once again was involved in the cattle trade.

In 1876 he was again elected to the Texas legislature, where he earned the nickname of "watchdog of the state treasury." He also was a key player

in getting a state mental institution located in Terrell and served on its Board of Governors.

On August 6, 1901 in Terrell, Griffith had an appendicitis attack with emergency surgery, but he did not survive. His obituary said

that he left an estate of over a half million dollars, mostly in farm land and property in Oak Cliff. He was buried in Oakland Memorial Park in Terrell.

His wife died on December 31, 1913.

Monument to John S. Griffith at his grave site.



Mrs. U.S. Grant Captured?

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Some press reports had that the ladies were Union officer wives, one being Mrs. U.S. Grant. It was later learned that Mrs. Grant wasn't one of them that she had fled by train the night before.