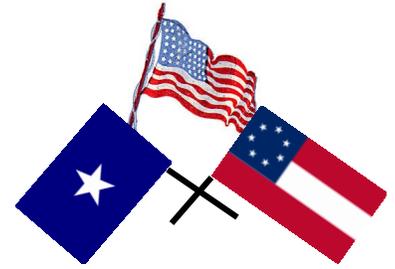


# THE BATTLE CRY



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## JONES COUNTY (MISS.) & THE CIVIL WAR

### “THE FREE STATE OF JONES”

Review by Edward Eliasberg

“Smithsonian” magazine’s March issue has an article on the making of a new Hollywood movie about one of the most colorful instances of dissension within the South during the Civil War. That event occurred in Jones County, Mississippi.

In the spring of 1864, Jones County declared its independence from the Confederacy after having taken up armed resistance the year before. Confederate Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk informed Jefferson Davis that Jones County was in “open rebellion” and that guerrilla fighters were “proclaiming themselves ‘Southern Yankees.’” They had crippled the tax collection system, seized and redistributed Confederate supplies, and killed and driven out Confederate officials and loyalists, not just in Jones County but all over southeast Mississippi.

The Confederacy was never able to quell the rebellion. This was so even though Polk ordered two battle-hardened regiments into southeast Mississippi under the command of a local native, Col. Robert Lowry, to catch the Jones County Scouts. Lowry was unable to do that. The Scouts were deep in the swamps, being supplied with food and information by local sympathizers and slaves. After Lowry left, the Scouts emerged from their hide-outs and once again began threatening Confederate officials, destroying railroads and bridges, and raiding food supplies intended for Confederate troops. The Scouts fought, and won, their last skirmish on January 10, 1865.

The film will center, as the Smithsonian article does, upon the fascinating leader of this rebellion, Newton Knight. Knight “was legendary as a crack shot and formidable tactician,” according to the Smithsonian article. Standing 6-foot-4, he was “a Primitive Baptist who didn’t drink, didn’t cuss, doted on children and could fire a double-barreled, muzzle-loading shotgun faster than anyone else around.” Knight enlisted in the Confederate Army in July 1861 but came to the view after the passage of the law exempting large slave owners from the draft that the conflict was “a rich man’s war and a poor man’s fight.”

After the War, Knight was hired by the Reconstruction government to free black children from white masters who were refusing to emancipate them.

## NEXT PROGRAMS

**Apr. 19, 2016**

**Joe Reinhart**

Germans in the Civil War

**May 17, 2016**

TBA

(Gordon will announce the topic at the April Meeting)

Meetings **3rd Tues. of the month (7 pm) GRACE CHURCH ADULT ANNEX, 8000 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL 34236.** On Occasion time and location of the meeting will be changed.

## TRIVIA QUESTIONS

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- Which Union General was nicknamed "Pap"?
- Who boasted, "I fights mit Sigel"?
- What were "gallinippers"??
- What German was a member of Jefferson Davis's Cabinet?
- What was the "Battle for Kilpatrick's pants"?
- What Rebel cavalry leader was blamed when his men robbed a Kentucky bank of over \$18,000?



In 1875, he accepted a commission in what was essentially an all-black regiment. His job was to defend the rights of freed African-Americans in one of Mississippi's bloodiest elections. He then retreated from public life to his Jones County homestead. He died in 1922, shortly after giving the only interview he ever gave.

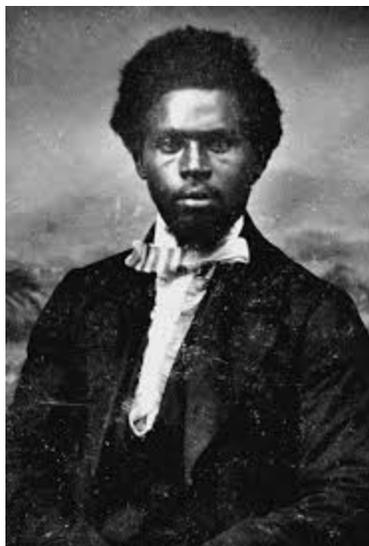
The Smithsonian article, entitled "The Raging Rebellion Of Jones County," also goes into some detail about Knight's private life after the War. Knight had a family with a former slave. After she died, he had additional children with her daughter by another white man. All this was in addition to the nine children Knight had with his white wife. There are Knight descendants that to this day will not speak to, or even publicly acknowledge the existence of, other Knight descendants.

The movie, entitled "The Free State Of Jones," will be released June 24 and will star Matthew McConaughey as Knight. The film's official trailer is already available on the Web.

You may want to acquire and/or read the book on which the article and movie are based. See: Sally Jenkins and John Stauffer. *The State of Jones; the Small Southern County that Seceded from the Confederacy*. 1st edition. NY : Anchor Books, c2009 (Paper edition).—— editor

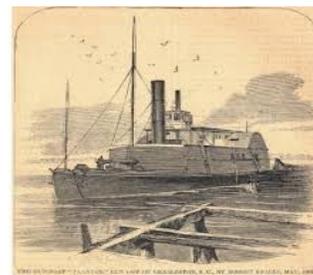
## SLAVE STEALS CONFEDERATE SHIP

Edited by M. Bruce Maxian



Robert Smalls, a 23 year old slave in South Carolina, commandeered the Confederate steamboat *Planter* on May 13, 1862 and took it to Union forces blockading the South Carolina coast. Smalls later went on to become a South Carolina congressman during the Reconstruction era after the Civil War. It was on the Cooper River on a foggy spring night more than 150 years ago that Smalls took over the ammunition laden ship, steamed upriver to pick up family and friends, and then slipped past five Southern batteries in Charleston Harbor. Smalls returned to Charleston a year later to pilot a Union ironclad in an attack on Fort Sumter. After the war, besides serving as a congressman, he was a member of the South Carolina General Assembly and a federal customs inspector.

The Confederate steamship *Planter*,  
1862



Continued on page 3

[Robert Smalls, con't]



The USS Planter, 1862 After conversion  
to an ironclad by the Union



Robert Smalls, sometime  
after the war

For more about Robert Smalls, Google him or go to:

[opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/12/Robert-smalls-great-escape/?\\_r=0](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/05/12/Robert-smalls-great-escape/?_r=0)

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### THE REST OF THE STORY

Atlanta Businessman Michael Boulware Moore is a direct descendant of Robert Smalls. Moore has deep family roots in South Carolina. A \$75 million International African American Museum is planned for Charleston to open late in 2018 with Moore as its President and CEO. Mr. Moore not only has family in South Carolina but he is also a great-great grandson of Robert Smalls.

The museum is planned for a site of a former wharf where tens of thousands of slaves first set foot in North America. “This is by far the most important job responsibility challenge I have ever had,” said Moore, who has worked with businesses large and small and plans to move to Charleston. He said he was standing where his ancestors first stepped foot in the United States and that his great-great grandfather, Smalls “at the age of 23 on the morning of May 13, 1862, created history right out here.” Moore feels “a real connection to this project and to this land.” “I can’t imagine what those people who were offloaded from those slave ships must have felt.” Ralph Applebaum, who designed exhibits for the Holocaust Memorial Museum and the United States Capitol Visitor Reception Center in Washington, is designing exhibits for the museum.





CIVIL WAR POETRY, SONGS, ANECDOTES, HUMOR, ETC. NORTH AND SOUTH

President: Gordon Balme  
Vice President: Matt Donovan  
Treasurer: Pat McInerney  
Newsletter Editor: M. Bruce Maxian

There exists a legacy of writing by soldiers, wives, well known authors and others that were popular during the war as well as many after 1865. Several collections of these exist, for example *Anecdotes, Poetry, and Incidents of the War: North and South, 1860-1865*, collected and arranged by Frank Moore. Moore's works included his editing of *The Rebellion Record*, [11 volumes, plus supplement to vol.1, seldom found in good condition: next to the ORs a heavily sought after source]

DUES FOR THE 2015-2016 CAMPAIGN ARE PAYABLE TO PAT McINERNEY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DUES KEEP THE PROGRAMS AND NEWSLETTERS AVAILABLE TO YOU.

Our Annual Campaign runs from Sept. through May, dues are \$30 .

Anyone interested in receiving "The Battle Cry" by e-mail please see Bruce Maxian at one of our meetings or e-mail me at:  
Sarasota.cwrt@gmail.com

Meetings 3rd Tues. of the month (7 pm)  
GRACE CHURCH  
ADULT ANNEX, 8000 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, Fl 34236. On Occasion time and location of the meeting will be changed.

PLEASE WEAR YOUR T-SHIRTS TO THE MEETING. IN THE MEANTIME WEAR THEM WHEREVER YOU ROAM.  
OUR MONTHLY RAFFLE ALWAYS NEEDS YOUR DONATED BOOKS & MAGAZINES.

A sample follows:

**L-E-G ON MY LEG**

**Good leg, thou wast a faithful friend,**

**And truly hast thy duty done;**

**I thank thee most that to the end**

**Thou didst not let this body run.**

**Strange paradox! That in the fight**

**Where I of thee was thus bereft,**

**I lost my left leg for "the Right,"**

**And yet the right's the one that's left!**

**But while the sturdy stump remains,**

**I may be able yet to patch it,**

**For even now I've taken pains**

**To make an L-E-G to match it.**

Written by a soldier in the hospital at New Haven, Conn., who lost his leg in the Battle of Fair Oaks.



Check our monthly newsletter, *Battle Cry* at:  
<http://www.sarasotacwrt.yolasite.com>