

REDCLIFFE PLANTATION  
181 REDCLIFFE RD  
BEECH ISLAND, SC 29842  
(803) 827-1473

# Redcliffe Southern Times

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2

AUGUST 2015

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT REDCLIFFE

### Hunger Takes No Vacation Food Drive

July 01 - Nov 30

Donate at all 47 SC State Parks

African-American Experience:  
Cabins & Communities  
Sat, Sept 12 FREE

For more information on  
these programs please con-  
tact the park.

## Park Staff

**Park Manager**  
Joy Raintree

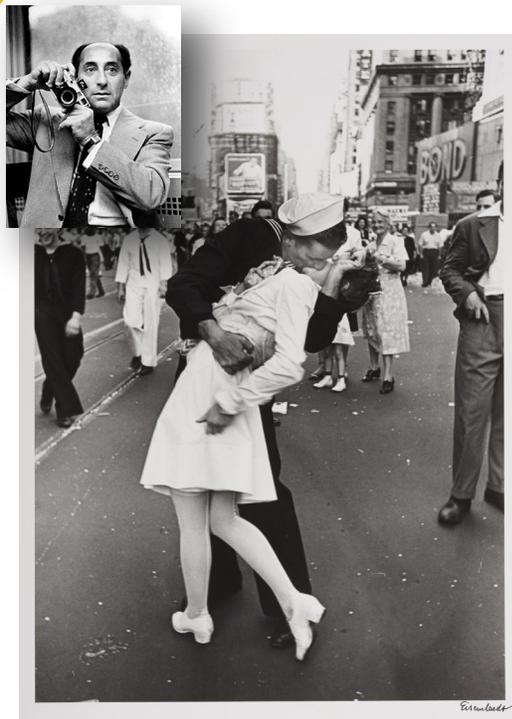
**Park Interpreter**  
Elizabeth Laney

**Park Technician**  
Doug Kratz

**Asst. Park Ranger**  
Theresa Hips

## Pack a Little Extra

the next time you  
visit a state park!  
Help the SC State  
Parks fight hunger.  
Donate non-  
perishable food  
items at any one of  
our 47 state parks  
now thru Nov 30.



## 70TH ANNIVERSARY EISENSTAEDT'S ICONIC V-J DAY PHOTO

One of four original photographers contributing to *LIFE* magazine, Alfred Eisenstaedt became one of the magazine's most well-known photographers. He photographed more than 2,500 stories in his 36-year career (1936-1972) and had more than 90 photos grace the cover of *LIFE*.

Eisenstaedt's most well-known photograph is the iconic image of a sailor kissing a nurse in Times Square, New York on V-J Day (August 14, 1945) following the end of hostilities with Japan. The photograph was taken with a Leica IIIa camera and appeared a week later in *LIFE* magazine.

Redcliffe owner John Shaw Billings was managing editor of *Time-LIFE* when the picture was first published.

## 40TH ANNIVERSARY DEATH OF JOHN SHAW BILLINGS

It is easy to forget that someone was still living in the mansion at Redcliffe just forty years ago. In 1975 the estate was home to John & Elise Billings, who entertained friends and family in the 116-year-old mansion. Just a few years before, in 1973, John had donated the property to the state of South Carolina asking only that he be allowed to continue living in the home until his death. On August 25, 1975, John Shaw Billings passed away after being admitted to University Hospital in Augusta, GA earlier in the month.

Dear Mr. Billings:

We at the Central Office in Columbia were indeed sorry to learn of your recent accident which resulted in a broken hip. We hope that you are resting as comfortably as possible under the circumstances and that soon you will be returning home to Redcliffe.

Please contact us if there is anything that we can do to be of service to you while you are recuperating.

Unfortunately John S. Billings would pass away just about 10 days after receiving this letter from Ray Sisk, the director of SC State Parks, on August 14, 1975.

With Billings' death, ownership of the Redcliffe estate transferred to the South Carolina State Park Service. Gene Cobb, a park ranger who had lived on the property with Mr. & Mrs. Billings for the prior two years, became the park's first superintendent (manager). *August of 2015 marks Redcliffe Plantation SHS's fortieth year as a South Carolina State Park.*

## Former 'Time' editor Billings dies

BEECH ISLAND, S.C.—John Shaw Billings of Beech Island, former editor of "Time" and "Life" magazines, died Monday night in an Augusta hospital.

The funeral will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday at the residence with the Rev. Samuel W. Hale officiating. Burial will be in Hammond Cemetery.

Mr. Billings was born May 11, 1898, at Redcliffe, the plantation home in Beech Island built by his maternal great-grandfather, Gov. James II. Hammond. He graduated from St. Paul's School, Concord, N.H., and attended Harvard University. He served as an ammunition truck driver for the French army during World War I, and transferred to American military services when the United States entered the war. He became a pilot in the Air Force and served with American Expeditionary Forces.

Mr. Billings began his career in journalism in 1921 as a reporter for "The Brooklyn Daily Eagle." He served as the Washington correspondent for that paper for eight years. In

1928, he became a part time correspondent for Time Inc. He became national affairs editor of "Time" on Jan. 29, 1929 and in November of 1933 became managing editor of the magazine.

In November 1936, Mr. Billings became the first managing editor of "Life" magazine. In 1944, Henry R. Luce, editor-in-chief of Time Inc., appointed Mr. Billings to the post of editorial director for all Time publications—"Time," "Life," "Fortune," and "Architectural Forum." He was the only man in the organization authorized to make major editorial decisions in Luce's absence. He retired from the position in 1964.

In 1975, Mr. Billings gave his family home, Redcliffe, to the State of South Carolina. Also in 1975, he donated his book, manuscript and film collections to the University of South Carolina libraries. Mr. Billings received an honorary doctor of laws degree from the university on May 11, 1974.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Elise Lake Chase Billings, Beech Is-



John Shaw Billings

land; one stepson, Henry Hughes Chase, Houston, Tex.; one brother, Henry Hammond Billings, Sag Harbor, N.Y.

Potest. Funeral Home, Greene Street, is in charge.

*Billings' obituary in The Augusta Chronicle, 27 Aug 1975.*

## Bad Jokes are Timeless

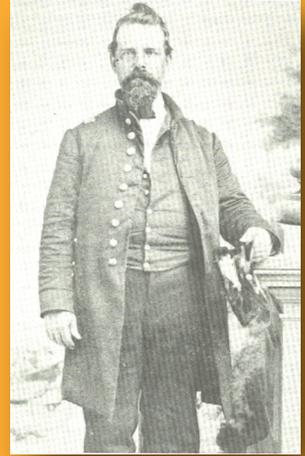
*Call it a joke, a pun, or an anecdote. But, sometimes, good humor might be in bad taste...*

After visiting Beech Island during the summer of 1862 a reporter for Charleston's *The Courier* published the following in the July 6th issue of the paper:

*"At the meeting yesterday [of the Beech Island Agricultural Club], I had the pleasure of meeting and greeting my esteemed friend, the gallant Col. Thomas G Lamar, the laurelled hero and victor of the Battle of Secessionville [June 16, 1862], one of the hardest and best fought battles of our glorious war of independence. He looked well, although his wounds are far from being cicatrized, or even healed, as yet. A minnie ball passed through his neck and the nether part of his left ear, scooping or indenting it. In complimentary allusion to Col. L.'s wound in the ear, my friend Aldrich perpetrated a conundrum –*

*Query –What trophy has Col. Lamar won in battle  
to transmit to his posterity?*

*Answer – An heir [ear] loom."*



Colonel Thomas G. Lamar

Sadly, Col. Thomas Lamar died from malaria just months later in October of 1862, at the age of 35.

## Document of the Month

### Eisenstaedt's Redcliffe Photographs

*"July 1939 On a vacation in the South, Alfred Eisenstaedt, LIFE's crack photographer, went by Redcliffe and took the following pictures."* This note was recorded in the scrapbooks of John Shaw Billings, managing editor of LIFE and owner of Redcliffe in 1939. This series of photographs show landscapes, interior shots and images of the people who lived and worked at Redcliffe in 1939. Eisenstaedt's portrait of Patience Crawford (bottom right) was done more than a decade before his iconic portraits of Albert Einstein and Marilyn Monroe. **To see all of Eisenstaedt's 1939 photographs of Redcliffe visit <http://library.sc.edu/digital/collections/jsb.html>, choose "Entire Volume 1" from the drop down box and view pages 130 - 139.**

