

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

# Redcliffe Southern Times

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 8

FEBRUARY 2015

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT REDCLIFFE

### MRS. CLAY AT REDCLIFFE & the African-American Experience

Sat, March 07 @ 4:00  
\$8/adult, \$6.50/SC Senior  
Registration required.

Redcliffe's  
Evolving Landscape  
Sat, April 11 @ 10 AM  
Free for all ages

Contact the park  
for more information  
or to register for  
these programs.

## Park Staff

**Park Manager**  
Joy Raintree

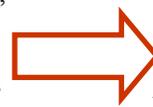
**Park Interpreter**  
Elizabeth Laney

**Park Technician**  
Doug Kratz

& many wonderful  
park volunteers.

## 5 Interesting Facts about Sherman's March

**1** In the Georgia capital of Milledgeville, Union soldiers and officers produced a "mock" Georgia legislature on November 19, 1864. The intoxicated soldiers acted as Georgia congressmen until a Union soldier dramatically entered the building and yelled, "THE YANKEES ARE COMING!" The Union soldiers fled from the building in laughter.



**2** Sherman met his **FIRST MAJOR RESISTANCE** in South Carolina at the Battle of River's Bridge on February 3, 1865. Union soldiers waded through the Salkehatchie River to flank the Confederates. [SouthCarolinaParks.com/riversbridge/](http://SouthCarolinaParks.com/riversbridge/)



**3** *The Battle of Aiken* was fought on Main Street in downtown Aiken on February



11, 1865. The Confederates had an element of surprise until an accidental fire. [Learn more at: www.battleofaiken.org/](http://www.battleofaiken.org/)



**4** Sometime in late 1864 or early 1865 Redcliffe's prized possessions were **BURIED** away from the property. Silver, money, and other possessions. (See next page.)

**5**

Union Cavalry Major General Kilpatrick *escaped capture* one night while sleeping with a young Southern woman in her house. Kilpatrick escaped in his underclothes on two nightly occasions in South Carolina. Battle of Monroe's Crossings on March 10, 1865.

*Special thanks to former assistant park ranger Josh Snipes for his work on this article.*

## 150th Anniversary of the BATTLE OF RIVERS BRIDGE

Feb. 7 - The **ARCHAEOLOGY** of Sherman's march through South Carolina

Feb. 28 - The life of **AFRICAN-AMERICAN** soldiers in South Carolina during the Civil War—FREE

### ADMISSION

\$5/adult, children 15 & under free  
Tours begin at 1:30 p.m., Speakers begin at 3:00 p.m.

### RIVERS BRIDGE STATE HISTORIC SITE

325 State Park Road, Ehrhardt, SC 29081  
[riversbridge@scprtr.com](mailto:riversbridge@scprtr.com) or 803-267-3675

# BURYING THE FAMILY SILVER

January 04, 1865 "Dear cousin Geo. Tunstall, Fielden, Loula & I spent a quiet day together. Loula buries her silver."

In January of 1865 with a portion of Sherman's army moving rapidly up the Savannah River Valley towards Redcliffe Plantation, refugee Virginia Clay wrote that her cousin Loula Hammond had decided to bury the family silver to keep it from being stolen by the advancing Union army. In her 1904 memoir the story of the buried silver becomes a bit more elaborate with the silver being put into crocus sacks (burlap), taken ten miles down the road on a clandestine carriage ride and buried in the forest. The Union army ended up bypassing Redcliffe but the Hammonds had a hard time locating the silver when the war ended. Apparently it was missing for months!

*Mrs. Clay at Redcliffe*  
& the African-American Experience

Saturday, March 07, 2015 @ 4:00 p.m.

Themed house tour and presentation.

\$8/adult, \$6.50/SC senior

Register in advance by calling 803-827-1473.

## Document of the Month



## *Belle of the Fifties:* The Memoirs of Mrs. Clay of Alabama

"Stray newspapers reached us at 'Redcliffe' occasionally, from even so distant a point as our capital, and efforts were made by local editors to purvey the news of battles and the movements of the armies..."

Virginia Clay, wife of Confederate Senator C.C. Clay, spent three months in Beech Island near the end of the Civil War. In 1904 her personal papers, including letters and diary entries describing Redcliffe, were used to create a highly romanticized account of the war. Her memoir, *Belle of the Fifties*, is one of the best sources for Redcliffe during that period, outside of the Hammond family's own papers.

John Shaw Billings purchased a copy of the original printing of *Belle of the Fifties* which resides in the Redcliffe library today. The green bound volume is in good condition but Billings cut out the pages describing Mrs. Clay's stay at Redcliffe for his scrapbooks. The memoir's descriptions of Redcliffe slaves, the Civil War and social events at the plantation are an important resource for the time period.

