

M1816 (conversion) 1st North Carolina Militia, 1844



George W. Wray, Jr. (1936-2004)



- 1,000 objects
- 184 longarms
- 200 bayonets
- 21 swords
- 7 cannon
- 8 flags
- 17 uniforms
- Accoutrements
- Ammunition
- Research files



The Atlanta History Center



Turning Point: The American Civil War
9,200 square-foot permanent exhibit with 1,500 artifacts

Confederate Odyssey: The George W. Wray Jr. Collection at the Atlanta History Center

By Gordon L. Jones

Photos by Jack W. Melton, Jr.

He was a very private man who lived in an ordinary house in suburban Atlanta. He loved his family, friends, and the University of North Carolina Tar Heels. But his real passion was Confederate history.

He was George W. Wray Jr., well-known for his keen eye for detail, encyclopedic knowledge of weaponry, and penchant for making a bargain. Beginning at the age of twelve in 1948, Wray spent the next fifty-six years building a world-class collection of one thousand Confederate artifacts, including 184 longarms, virtually all known varieties of Confederate bayonets, seven rare Confederate artillery pieces, handguns, uniforms, headgear, flags, swords, knives, ammunition, and accoutrements. Along the way, he spent thousands of hours meticulously tracking down the original owners of attributed artifacts, building “womb to tomb” biographies of their lives, complete with photographs and family histories. He filled up fourteen file boxes with articles, notes, and copies of all his research correspondence, making his collection one of the best documented in the nation. He possessed a true passion for history and learning, a passion he pursued until the very end. George Wray bought his last gun just two weeks before he died.

In 2002, Wray approached the Atlanta History Center about purchasing his collection. Because most of his personal worth was tied up in the collection, Wray could not afford to donate the collection in its entirety. He wanted to see his life’s work permanently housed and exhibited alongside the collections of his contemporaries Beverly M. DuBose, Jr. and Thomas S. Dickey. Wray knew then what we only discovered later: he was suffering from terminal cancer. In August 2005, a year after his death, the History Center signed an agreement with the Wray family, agreeing to purchase the collection at a price well below its full appraised value, with payments spaced over five years. Today the Wray Collection is on deposit at the History Center, housed in our secure climate-controlled storage area, pending the final two payments.

Completing the acquisition of the Wray Collection will enable the Atlanta History Center to invest in a dramatic upgrade of our 9,200 square-foot permanent exhibition *Turning Point: The American Civil War*. This exhibition of approximately 1,500 artifacts from the DuBose and Dickey collections explores the conflict from start to finish, with heavy emphasis on the tools of war used by ordinary Union and Confederate soldiers. Though designed to educate the



public through text, videos, and interactive exhibits, *Turning Point* is firmly rooted in artifacts and the stories they tell—both individually and collectively. Perhaps more important still, the acquisition of the Wray Collection will greatly enhance our capacity to serve students, researchers, and collectors by providing an accessible and permanent reference library of Confederate artifacts. At the Atlanta History Center we believe strongly in the power of artifacts to inspire emotion and stimulate learning. It is essential that we save the Wray Collection for the sake of generations yet to come and books yet to be written.

The Wray Collection is best known for its extensive array of firearms and bayonets, nearly all of which are Confederate-associated, -made, or -imported. Wray assembled these arms as examples of Confederate arms procurement through its many sources: pre-war issue or purchase, domestic manufacture, battlefield pick-up, purchase and importation from abroad. To this basic intellectual structure he added three specialty fields: sharpshooter rifles, Confederate breech-loading or experimental arms (especially those of George W. Morse) and Confederate flags, uniforms, and other textiles. The following pages comprise a summary of the types and numbers of artifacts in the Wray Collection with details on a few of the most significant individual items. Each and every one of them has an important story to tell about the fate of the American experiment as it hung in the balance between 1861 and 1865.

CONFEDERATE-ASSOCIATED LONGARMS

The great majority of arms available to the southern states in 1861 were those issued from the United States

Government under the Militia Act of 1808 or purchased by individual state governments and volunteer militias. The Wray Collection comprises an excellent sampling of forty-one such arms. These include Model 1816 and 1842 muskets stamped with North and South Carolina state markings, three arms assembled by the Palmetto Armory in South Carolina, a Model 1795 musket made (and later converted to percussion) by the Virginia Manufactory, and three well-used (with soldiers' initials carved into the stocks) Whitney Model 1841 derivative rifles of the type purchased by the state of Mississippi just prior to the outbreak of hostilities.



Among these pre-war arms is an elaborately-decorated Model 1816 musket conversion presented in 1844 to Albert Bogart, a North Carolina school teacher and militia captain whose son became a Confederate officer. Displaying beautiful brass eagle and sunburst designs applied to the stock, this was one of George Wray's favorite arms—he kept it above the mantle in his living room. Another significant arm is a Model 1855 rifle-musket stamped “REPUBLICAN BLUES” behind the trigger guard tang, indicating its use by the elite Savannah, Georgia, volunteer militia company. Of the many Harper's Ferry-produced arms in the Wray Collection, the most unusual may be an 1858-dated Model 1855 rifle with no provision for a rear sight, distinguishing it as one of only a few that survived the fires set by the retreating Federal garrison there on the night of April 18, 1861. Another Model 1855 rifle, this one dated 1859 and obviously well-used, lacks the usual patch box, and is thought to have been one of the arms sent to the Kansas Territory at the behest of Jayhawker General and U.S. Senator James H. Lane.

CONFEDERATE-MADE LONGARMS

Of the eighty-one Confederate-made longarms in the Wray Collection, twenty-five are Model 1855-types produced at the Confederate States Armories at Richmond and Fayetteville, using machinery and parts captured at Harper's

Ferry. These include the full range of early to late Richmond rifle-muskets, short rifles, carbines, and musketoons, as well as all four indentified sub-types of Fayetteville rifles from 1861 through 1864, plus transitional variants. Among the most significant are two of the very first arms assembled at each armory, both made entirely with Harper's Ferry parts using unfinished (and unmarked) “high-hump” lockplates. Some of the Richmond arms are especially revealing illustrations of makeshift Confederate production techniques. One of the “new” short rifles, for example, is a marriage of an 1864-dated Richmond-made barrel with a recycled 1860-dated Harper's Ferry lock. Together the Richmond and Fayetteville arms demonstrate the essential conundrum of Confederate arms manufacture: even equipped with some of the best machinery in the world, the South's lack of industrial infrastructure slowed production to a crawl and forced improvised solutions.



In addition to these Confederate Government arms, the Wray Collection demonstrates the remarkable diversity of southern private and state longarms production (including conversions), with examples from every Confederate state except Florida. These include arms from North Carolina (Henry C. Lamb, Mendenhall, Jones & Gardner, Gillam & Miller, Clapp, Gates, & Company, and Charles Kuester), Alabama (Lewis G. Sturdivant, Davis & Bozeman, Mobile Depot), and Georgia (Cook & Brothers in New Orleans and Athens, J.P. Murray, and Dickson, Nelson & Company). Of about 300 rifles produced by or for the Georgia Armory in Milledgeville, Wray's 1862-dated example (number 30) is one of only a handful known to survive; it is accompanied by both the early brass-hilted sword bayonet (number 32) as well as the later iron- and wood-hilted version (number 289).

One of the most interesting (yet least attractive) arms in the Wray Collection is a Billups & Hassell Texas contract rifle, distinguished by its crude French-style back-action lock, extraordinarily heavy barrel, and tiny barrel bands.

Kemper, Shrivvers & Company



Cook & Brothers Bayonet

Texas Contract Rifle



William Malloy
29th Texas Cavalry



Carving on the stock identifies its owner as Private William Malloy of the Twenty-ninth Texas Cavalry, which fought several unsuccessful battles in the Indian Territory soon after this rifle was issued in 1863. In size and overall configuration, this rifle is quite similar to a rifle thought to be a product of the Arkadelphia Arsenal in Arkansas. Unfortunately, the latter arm is missing the lockplate, making positive identification almost impossible.



The collection also includes five civilian rifles converted for military use by Tennessee gunsmiths prior to the fall of Nashville in February 1862. These include examples from the Pulaski Armory, Michael Cody & Sons, Alexander Stalcup, and Kemper, Shrivvers & Company. The heavy octagonal barrel of the latter rifle has been cut down, bored to .54 caliber,

and fitted with a sword bayonet featuring a specially-designed octagonal mounting ring. Believed to have been made by the Cook & Brothers Company in New Orleans, this unusual (and probably sole surviving) bayonet was originally purchased on e-Bay. The story is told that when first asked to identify the then-unknown bayonet at a gun show, George Wray immediately purchased it, then casually mentioned that he already had the gun that matched it.



CONFEDERATE-IMPORTED AND FOREIGN-MADE
LONGARMS

One of the key components of the Wray Collection that distinguishes it from other Confederate arms collections is the thirty-seven British-made longarms identified as having been



imported through the Union blockade. Twenty-nine of these are Birmingham or London contractor copies of the British Pattern 1853 rifle or rifle-musket, with most of the remainder being carbines. Thanks to an almost infinite variety of English part maker marks as well as distinctive Confederate import or inspection markings such as the cartouches of S. Isaacs Campbell & Company, Sinclair Hamilton & Company or the famous “JS anchor” mark, no two of these imported arms are exactly alike. Five have Confederate inventory numbers on the buttplate tang, ramrod or other locations, and two have state cartouches (South Carolina and Georgia) stamped in the stock. Two others are marked “LSM” indicating use by the Louisiana State Militia during the Reconstruction period. Of particular note is a Wilson patent breech-loading rifle of the type purchased by the Confederate Navy.

These imported arms will be vital additions to the Atlanta History Center’s collections. When the DuBose Collection was assembled in the 1960s and 1970s, the research identifying Confederate import marks simply did not exist. None of the British arms in that collection bear evidence of having been imported and, indeed, most were clearly used by the British Army. Wray’s assemblage of blockade-run imports now enables us to show our visitors the actual arms upon which the Confederacy’s survival depended. We can also show how southern states competed with the Confederate Government and with each other to purchase the same arms (a literal case of state rights in action), as well as the differences between the traditional cottage-industry approach to arms production in England and the “American system of manufacturing” as pioneered at the Harper’s Ferry Armory.

The Wray Collection also includes Belgian- and Spanish-made copies of the Pattern 1853 rifle-musket, a near-mint example of a Liege-produced French Model 1853 *carabine a tige* (one of the inspirations for the U.S. Model 1855 system), and a Paris-made percussion LeMat carbine, serial number 31. Another of George Wray’s personal favorites was the Belgian-made “Little Enfield,” a half-scale working replica

of a British Pattern 1853 rifle-musket produced as a children’s toy in the 1890s.

SHARPSHOOTER’S RIFLES

George Wray was especially enchanted by military target rifles of the 1860s. His collection of twenty-four Union, Confederate, or British-made sharpshooter arms affords the Atlanta History Center a dramatic opportunity to explain the role of Civil War sharpshooters. One of the few arms in the collection associated strictly with the Union Army is a Model 1859 Sharps rifle with double-set triggers (serial number 57192) of the type used by Berdan’s Sharpshooters, as well as two other northern-made target rifles whose makers are associated with Berdan’s regiments.

There are five southern-made target rifles in the Wray Collection. These include two .45 caliber double-set trigger rifles made by J.P. Murray in Columbus, Georgia, as well as a similar arm (with a Confederate battle flag engraved on the patch box) made by Dickson, Nelson & Company in Dawson, Georgia. Undoubtedly the most spectacular arm in the collection is a unique breech-loading target rifle made by an obscure gunsmith in Macon, Georgia, named Thomas Morse (no relation to George Morse). Stocked in beautiful bird’s eye maple, this .40 caliber double-set trigger rifle breaks down at the breech using a horizontal pivot mechanism for which Morse received Confederate patent number 199 in September 1863. According to George Wray’s research, this obviously talented gunsmith was exempted from military service for all of nine months during the entire war, another example of the Confederacy’s short-sighted practice of confining artisans to the ranks when their skills were so badly needed in the armories. One additional example of Thomas Morse’s work is an 1863-dated muzzle-loading bench rest target rifle, weighing some twenty-eight pounds. This is the arm that George Wray purchased (after years of haggling over the price) just two weeks before his death.



The balance of the target rifle collection consists of fourteen British-made Whitworth and two Kerr rifles, including five in cased sets with accessories. Of the Whitworths, only four are likely to have seen Confederate service: a “Best Quality” three-band rifle (number 898) in a cased set with the name of a North Carolina sharpshooter written on the sling, another three-band rifle (number B347) attributed to a sharpshooter in Doles-Cook’s Georgia brigade, and two “2nd Quality” two-band rifles (numbers B933 and B547) the latter with the correct side-mounted Davidson scope. Although the scope is probably a later replacement, this Whitworth is an excellent representation of a typical Confederate sharpshooter’s arm, and certainly one of the most significant pieces in the collection.



CONFEDERATE BREECH-LOADING ARMS

Another distinguishing feature of the Wray Collection as a research tool is its unique assemblage of Confederate breech-loading arms, especially those of New Hampshire-born inventor George W. Morse. Morse, the nephew of telegraph inventor Samuel Morse, is one of the least-known yet most important American gunsmiths of the Civil War era. The Wray Collection comprises at least one example of every significant Morse-designed firearm, making it perhaps the most complete representation of his work in existence.



Morse is best known for his invention of a breech-loading system using internally-primed brass cartridges. Based on his October 1856 patent, Muzzy & Company of Worcester, New York, produced about one hundred cased sets of sporting arms, each with three interchangeable barrels. The Wray Collection contains two examples at either end of the Muzzy production run: numbers seven and ninety-four. Based on his June 1858 patent (the collection includes the patent model), the U.S. Ordnance Department in 1860 converted fifty-four rifled and converted Model 1816 muskets and four Model 1841 rifles to Morse’s system, making them the first breech-loading cartridge arms ever produced by the United States Government. The Wray Collection has one example of each. Numbered nineteen on the breech mechanism, the musket is a remarkable example of an arm that bridges the gap between the eighteenth-century technology of the smooth-bore flintlock and the twentieth century technology of the rifled cartridge-firing breechloader. The rifle, marked with the letter “E” on all its parts, is accompanied by two unfired .54 caliber Morse cartridges, both of which fit perfectly into the breech. These Morse conversions are two of the rarest and most historically significant arms in the United States, representing a true milestone in firearms history.

Siding with the Confederate States in 1861, Morse eventually oversaw the manufacture of approximately one thousand carbines of a similar breech-loading design in Greenville, South Carolina—the most breech-loading arms of any original design produced in the Confederacy. Spanning all three production sub-types, six of these .50 caliber carbines are in the Wray Collection (with serial numbers between 126 and 999). There is also a seventh and yet unexplained variant with a second-type receiver but a thirty-two-inch .58 caliber smooth-bore barrel. The Wray Collection also includes two examples of Morse’s famous “inside-lock” system in both musket and rifle configurations. The rifle, a rough copy of a Model 1841, is easily distinguished by the functionless brass plate inserted into the lockplate cavity in place of the usual steel lock. So far as is known, it is the only surviving example.

Included with these Greenville-made arms are approximately twenty fired and unfired Morse cartridges (including one in .58 caliber), ten of the specially-designed Morse cartridge boxes (four on webbing belts and two with names carved into the flaps) and the only known daguerreotype image of George W. Morse and his family, taken about 1854. There is also a Model 1866 Allin conversion rifle-musket, and a Whitney-Burgess-Morse lever-action rifle, both arms derived in part from Morse’s patents. Morse’s successful 1875 patent infringement lawsuit against the U.S. Government and Winchester Repeating Arms Company was the final chapter in an unusual career that profitably negotiated both sides of Mason and Dixon’s line.

Alexander-Burton Carbine Prototype



Southern attempts to manufacture breech-loading arms are also represented by a rare Keen, Walker & Company “tilting breech” carbine, a Holly Springs Armory (Mississippi) percussion conversion of a Hall U.S. Model 1819 breech-loading rifle, and both types of Read & Watson muzzle-loading alterations of Hall rifles—the latter being outstanding illustrations of make-do creativity in a technologically-barren economy. The most successful Confederate breech-loaders (if a production of about 5,000 can be called successful) were the copies of Sharps carbines made in Richmond by Samuel C. Robinson and later by the Confederate Government. The Wray Collection includes an 1862-dated Robinson carbine (number 531) and an 1863-dated Richmond Armory carbine (number 3526).

THE ALEXANDER-BURTON BREECH-LOADING CARBINE

The “Confederate Sharps” carbines illustrate another cold reality of southern war production: the Confederate Government barely had the capacity to manufacture a proven breech-loading design, let alone a new and untried invention, especially when it was to be produced by a private contractor. It was a lesson Superintendent of Armories James H. Burton learned the hard way. In the fall of 1861, a Virginia artist and

inventor by the name of Charles W. Alexander approached Burton with a home-made carbine featuring a patented revolving breech (the Wray collection includes the patent model). Burton believed that with the addition of a Lawrence gas-check—as employed on Sharps carbines—the .31 caliber Alexander carbine could be of potential military service. At the Confederate Armory in Richmond, Burton assigned Alexander the space, tools, and workmen needed to modify his design. The result was a prototype arm with the appropriate gas check in the breech.



Pleased with the outcome, Burton suggested that 20,000 arms of this design might be produced in the privately-run carbine factory then being proposed in Macon, Georgia by entrepreneur Thomas E. McNeill—who was to pay Burton a share of the profits for his “advice.” Almost immediately, things began to go wrong. Chief of Ordnance Josiah Gorgas chastised Burton for the obvious conflict of interest and McNeill turned out to be an unscrupulous (or at least incompetent) businessman who never got the factory off the ground. Meanwhile, Charles Alexander absconded with the one and only prototype—perhaps looking for his own lucrative venture in the firearms business. Neither the carbine nor its supposed inventor could be located, even by the Confederate Provost Marshall, and even after Alexander submitted a patent application generously crediting himself for the design perfected by Burton and his workmen at government expense. Hence, in addition to chronic shortages of raw materials, a lack of skilled labor, and an inefficient railroad system, the Confederacy also had to wrestle with greedy and undependable (and perhaps less-than-patriotic) contractors. In the end, Burton and the Confederate Government gave up and went back to the familiar Sharps design, while the Alexander-Burton carbine faded into the footnotes of firearms history. The missing carbine finally surfaced for sale through a Nevada newspaper ad in 1980; shortly thereafter George Wray purchased it sight unseen. Today it is among the most historically significant firearms in the Wray Collection and certainly worthy of additional research.

HANDGUNS

The Confederacy’s efforts to produce and procure reliable handguns are also represented in this collection. Of particular note are Spiller and Burr revolver number 1086, Griswold and Gunnison revolver number 3024, a U.S. Model 1836 flintlock pistol converted to percussion and fitted with the distinctive “S”-shaped hammer at the Confederate States Armory at Fayetteville, and what is thought to be a J. F. Garrett single-shot pistol (serial number 50) made in Greensboro, North Carolina. Also included are two Kerr’s Patent revolvers made by the London Armoury Company (numbers 3398 and 3418), both of which bear the distinctive JS and anchor inspection or import stamps near the base of the grip.

EDGED WEAPONS

The two hundred bayonets in the Wray Collection include examples of virtually all known Confederate-associated, -made, or -imported bayonets and their variants, making it one of the most complete assemblages of such weapons in existence. When combined with so many examples of Civil

War-era longarms (including an additional 172 in the DuBose Collection) this bayonet collection allows researchers an excellent opportunity to match previously unidentified bayonets with identified longarms. Confederate-made bayonets include Cook & Brothers, Boyle, Gamble & McFee, Fayetteville and Froelich sword bayonets, Richmond and Fayetteville (“Drake-type”) socket bayonets, as well as fifteen miscellaneous or unidentified variants. Of particular note among the latter are two brass-handled sword bayonets with extreme yataghan curvatures believed to be products of Tyler, Texas.

The twenty-six swords and knives in the collection include some of the rarest examples of southern and foreign craftsmanship, including products of the Palmetto Armory, Thomas Griswold & Company, Boyle & Gamble, Hammond Marshall, Louis Haiman & Brother, B. Douglas, the Nashville Plow Works, and the Confederate States Armory (Louis Froelich). Of particular note are two British weapons: a Pattern 1853 enlisted cavalry saber bearing the “S. Isaacs” maker’s mark and “G” (Georgia) property stamp as well as a beautiful Confederate naval officers’ sword made by Robert Mole in Birmingham and marked by Courtney & Tennant on the ricasso. Also in the collection are a Cook & Brothers naval cutlass, an E. J. Johnston artillery short sword (both marked), as well as a brass-hilted “fighting knife” made by William J. McElroy, and a D-guard knife made for the Georgia State Arsenal in Milledgeville—prime examples of valuable resources wasted on obsolete weapons.

ARTILLERY

The Wray Collection’s seven Confederate-made or-imported artillery pieces are extraordinarily rare examples of small-caliber specialized field guns. The acquisition of these pieces by the Atlanta History Center will greatly enhance the interpretation of the Dickey Collection, which contains some of the only known ammunition used by these guns. Included in the Wray Collection are a 1.5-inch British Armstrong bronze mountain rifle on an original carriage, a 1.25-inch Armstrong breech-loading mountain rifle, a type ten 2.9-inch Blakely rifle (inexplicably spelled “Blakeley” on the trunnion), and another unmarked gun of the same caliber which Wray speculated was a Belgian copy. Of particular note are 2.17-inch (“six-pounder”) and 1.92-inch British Whitworth muzzle-loading rifles, both mounted on authentic reproduction carriages. George Wray’s research suggests that the latter gun was specially produced as a naval deck gun for a Confederate raiding ship, although he was never able to determine which one. The other known 1.92-inch rifle (bearing a serial number one digit higher) is in the Royal Armouries Collection in England.

By far the most intriguing artillery piece in the collection is an unmounted 1.75-inch iron “infantry gun” believed to have

been cast by the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond, Virginia in 1862. Made as a swivel gun, its precise function and mounting arrangement is unknown. The Dickey Collection includes a 1.75-inch rifled projectile recovered from a test range near Richmond, but unfortunately the rifling pattern imprinted on the lead base does not match the rifling pattern of this gun. As with many other items in the Wray Collection, the historical verdict on this piece has yet to be written.

ACCOUTREMENTS AND AMMUNITION

Accoutrements in the Wray Collection, including at least thirty leather cartridge boxes or cap pouches, sixteen canteens, and forty-five linen gun slings, round out the story of Confederate manufacturing and procurement. Among the most significant of these is a cavalry cartridge box made at the Richmond Arsenal in 1863. The rough stitching on the bottom seam and the re-soldered interior cartridge tin indicates that the body was cut down from a larger infantry cartridge box—another example of practical ingenuity in the face of material shortages. Also of particular interest is a British Pattern 1860 fifty-round cartridge box bearing the S. Isaacs and Campbell stamp and fitted with a Confederate-made cotton sling. Accompanying it is an unmarked Pattern 1861 expense pouch. Among the other noteworthy accoutrement items in the collection is a militia-style cartridge box used by an Alabama volunteer cavalry company, an 1840s tin drum canteen decorated with the lettering “GA” (Georgia), two U.S. Army-issue blankets, a haversack, three pairs of brogans, a Pattern 1859 McClellan saddle, as well as several Confederate officers’ sword belt rigs.

The Wray collection also contains a representative sampling of Confederate- and British-made bullets, bullet molds, and cartridges, as well as twenty-eight artillery projectiles, including seventeen Whitworth bolts and shells. A particular rarity is the wooden ammunition box made at the Confederate Arsenal in Columbus, Georgia, in October 1862, which includes one of its original bundles of .69 caliber buckshot cartridges. Also of note is a wooden shipping crate for Colt’s Special Model rifle-muskets, complete with wooden spacers—George Wray used it for storing his bayonets.

UNIFORMS

In addition to its many insights on Confederate manufacturing, the Wray Collection offers a treasure-trove of stories about ordinary soldiers living, fighting, and dying during the Civil War. All but two of the five enlisted and twelve officers’ uniforms in the collection have firm personal attributions with extensive biographical research files. Many reveal tragic personal tales of death and defeat.

Probably the most unusual uniform in the Wray Collection is hardly a uniform at all. This brown heavy cotton overshirt with brass civilian buttons was issued to Private Lucius W. Gash upon his enlistment in the Fourteenth North Carolina Infantry in 1861. Gash was subsequently discharged when it was discovered that he was under the legal age of enlistment. After reaching his eighteenth birthday, Gash re-enlisted in the Eleventh North Carolina, only to be bayoneted to death at the “Bloody Angle” during the Battle of Spotsylvania in May 1864.

Another rare garment in the collection is a second type Richmond Depot enlisted jacket, with Virginia buttons and matching trousers. This one was captured during a Union raid on the supply depot at Dublin, Virginia, in May 1864, and taken home as a war trophy by a West Virginia lieutenant. A small New Testament printed in England and dated 1862 was found in the jacket pocket. Also in the collection is a beautiful tailor-made copy of a Richmond-Depot jacket (complete with chevrons) worn by First Sergeant John T. Lewis of the Sixth Virginia Cavalry. Lewis was killed at Yellow Tavern in 1864, though he was not wearing this jacket at the time.

The most complete clothing set in the Wray Collection is a brown jean suit consisting of a shell jacket, trousers, and vest, as well as a dark blue wool fatigue jacket, all worn by Cadet John M. Hazelhurst of the Georgia Military Institute. Hazelhurst and his young comrades fought in the Atlanta campaign before forming part of a last-ditch attempt to stop Sherman at the gates of Savannah in December 1864. The Hazelhurst set includes a small bag used for carrying his rice ration during the siege of Savannah.

An extraordinarily rare Confederate naval officer’s uniform also survives as part of the Wray Collection. This one is a gray domestically-made frock coat, believed to have been worn by John McIntosh Kell, executive officer of the C.S.S. *Alabama*. Another of the most significant officer’s uniforms in the collection is the red-trimmed frock coat and trousers of Major John A. A. West, Chief of Artillery for Lieutenant General Richard Taylor. Also of note is the frock coat of Colonel Robert C. Wood, a nephew of Jefferson Davis who commanded the sub-district of Mississippi near the end of the war.

Perhaps the most poignant story told by the Wray Collection is that of sixteen-year-old Private Benjamin H.G. Schumpert, who was a student at Newberry College in South Carolina when the war broke out. After enlisting with his cousin and classmates in the Third South Carolina Infantry, Schumpert survived the battles at Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg without a scratch. Then, on September 20, 1863, at the foot of Snodgrass Hill at Chickamauga, young “Ben” Schumpert’s luck finally ran out. Here he was shot in the head and killed instantly. Schumpert’s cousin, who had probably been standing next to

Schumpert Frock Coat

Pvt. Benjamin Schumpert, age 17, killed at Chickamauga, September 20, 1863



the boy when he was killed, saved his blood-stained cotton ticking frock coat and returned it to Schumpert's father in Americus, Georgia. Having lost both his sons to the war, Mr. Schumpert was then conscripted into Georgia state service. His was a family that literally gave all it had to the cause of Confederate independence.

constructed of a flimsy unlined wool twill and has a bill made entirely of heavy cardboard. By contrast, another cap in the collection is constructed of sturdy cotton-wool jean cloth with a printed calico lining and has a fine gesso-coated leather bill edged with oilcloth. Both caps have painted cloth in place of leather for the sweatband and chinstraps.

HEADGEAR

The Wray Collection also contains nine Confederate caps or hats, including four enlisted forage caps and kepis. These caps represent the result of a thirty-year search by George Wray and are the first ever acquired by the Atlanta History Center. Unfortunately, most of the caps do not have personal attributions, yet the details of their construction provide fascinating insights into the uneven quality of Confederate clothing and the widespread use of ersatz leather. One of the forage caps, for example, is

Atlanta History Center Collections



Approximately
12,000 Civil War
artifacts

Wilbur Kurtz
Sydney Kerksis
Thomas Dickey
Beverly DuBose

George Wray
(in funding)



Additional caps include a dark gray wool early war "McDowell"-style tall forage cap, an unusual officer's kepi made of black wool cloth and conforming to state of Mississippi uniform regulations, and a black slouch hat of the type issued by the state of South Carolina and adorned with the metal letters "PG," presumably for "Palmetto Guard." A plain brown linen kepi with a faded red painted band on the exterior could be of Confederate origin, but, perhaps just as interesting from the standpoint of educating our visitors, it could also have been used in 1860s political rallies.

FLAGS

Documented Confederate flags, especially battle flags, are extremely rare outside of state museum collections. In forty years of collecting, the DuBose family was able to acquire only two battle flags, only one of which is firmly attributed. The Wray Collection features eight Confederate flags, all but two with firm attributions, including three battle flags.



The first of these is a Beaugard-pattern battle flag attributed to the Fourth South Carolina Infantry Battalion. Made at the Richmond Clothing Depot in the early summer of 1862, this first wool bunting issue flag has honors for the Battles of Seven Pines and Williamsburg painted onto a silk panel stitched to the upper edge of the flag. This flag accompanied the battalion into combat at Second Manassas and Sharpsburg. The other Beaugard-pattern battle flag is a Charleston Clothing Depot product issued to the First Georgia Regiment (Olmstead's) in May of 1863 while its companies were serving in the defenses of Charleston and

Savannah. The regiment later fought under this flag at Kennesaw Mountain, Peachtree Creek, and other battles of the 1864 Atlanta campaign. Perhaps the rarest battle flag in the Wray Collection is the second national pattern flag of the Thirty-third Texas Cavalry. Commanded by Mexican-born Colonel Santos Benavides, this regiment patrolled the Rio Grand valley from 1863 through 1865 and did not surrender until nearly two months after Appomattox. The flag survived in the family of one of Colonel Benavides's officers.

Another rarity in the collection is the second national pattern Confederate naval ensign taken from the schooner *Pocabontas*. In July 1864, this blockade-runner was bound for Bermuda with a cargo of cotton bales and tobacco when it was captured by the U.S. Navy off Charleston. Soon after being captured, Joseph Hester, the ship's skipper (and former executive officer of the famous C.S.S. *Sumter*) abruptly switched his loyalties to the Union. The Wray Collection also includes a shot-torn first national pattern garrison flag flown by a signal corps detachment at

Battery Gregg in Charleston Harbor in 1863. This flag was flying over Confederate positions during the July 18, 1863, attack on nearby Battery Wagner by the famous Fifty-fourth Massachusetts regiment.

Additionally, the Wray Collection features an unusual 1861 headquarters banner of an unknown Mississippi regiment in the shape of a first national pattern with eight six-pointed stars. Also of note is a small first national pattern cavalry pennant accompanied by a note attesting to its liberation from a Richmond warehouse by a Union soldier in April 1865.

SAVING THE WRAY COLLECTION

Upon gifting his Civil War collection to the Atlanta History Center in 1985, Beverly M. DuBose, Jr., expressed his wishes for the future of his collection. Above all else, he wrote, "this is not to be a static collection, but one I fervently hope will expand over time." Over the ensuing decades, DuBose's vision of a living and growing collection has been consistently honored by the Atlanta History Center. Through the purchase of the Thomas S. Dickey Collection of

Civil War artillery projectiles in 1988, Confederate-made war materiel and Atlanta campaign artifacts in the 1990s, and numerous Civil War book and document collections in recent years, the Atlanta History Center is committed to building the nation's finest Civil War collection.

Because the DuBose Collection was built as a general Civil War collection, the vast majority of its objects are of northern origin. The Wray Collection, focused almost entirely on objects of southern origin, would enhance the DuBose collection with virtually no duplications. Uniting the Wray Collection with the DuBose and Dickey Collections as well as additional Atlanta History Center holdings (including the Syd Kerksis collection, the United Daughters of the Confederacy Collection, and the Wilbur Kurtz art and manuscript collection) will create perhaps the most comprehensive Civil War type example collection in the world. Having such a collection in a single location will be an invaluable resource for researchers who need to make side-by-side object comparisons in order to determine authenticity, or who want to examine many different type examples and variations. Additionally, through a partnership with a major university press, the Atlanta History Center is planning a series of heavily-illustrated publications focused on our Civil War collections; the first of these will address the Wray Collection. In these ways and others, we hope to exploit the full research potential of a collection that has so much to tell us about the past.

More important is the power of these objects as educational tools for our visitors. Artifacts speak to us as nothing

else can, touching our minds, inspiring our hearts, and firing our imaginations. They are the primary tools for teaching future generations about courage and sacrifice. They are the tangible reminders of why the Civil War was a vital turning point in the history of our nation and what it meant to those who experienced it personally. Today it is up to us, the descendants of those who freely gave their lives and futures in a struggle over democratic ideals, to collect, preserve, and interpret the material reminders of their sacrifices. Caring for these artifacts—large and small, common and personal, written and unwritten—is what the Atlanta History Center is all about.

But we need your help. The two remaining payments needed to secure this collection total approximately \$1.7 million. Failure to make these two payments could result in the History Center forfeiting to the Wray estate significant portions of the collection. As stewards of history, we cannot allow that to happen. If you or someone you know can help us with a donation to complete the purchase of the Wray Collection, please contact us. Your tax-deductible gift to help save the Wray Collection is not only an investment in the educational mission of the Atlanta History Center, but also an investment in a nation that can honor its past without repeating its mistakes.

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