

SON OF A CONFEDERATE

A Veteran of the Spanish War Tells of Experiences When He Enlisted.

Editor National Tribune: In your issue of The National Tribune of July 9 I read a piece written by one John R. Weathers, 17 Iowa Circle, Washington, D. C., in which he seems to have the impression that the only people who have the interests of the old Civil War veteran at heart are the loyal sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters of the Union veterans.

It might surprise him to know there are those whose parents never wore the blue, but who honor the old veteran probably as much as some sons of veterans. For one, I have always felt that I could take off my hat to the Civil War veteran, and certainly I would do as much for him as the son who wrote the article in all probability. I am not a son of a veteran who wore the blue, either!

Next he says: "The living and dead who wore the Federal blue thru the terrors of the sixties have no other friends so usefully true and devoted as have been and are these patient descendants of ours"; meaning, of course, the sons and daughters of veterans.

I must take exception to that statement. I believe I am as true and devoted and as unselfish a friend to the soldier who wore the blue as he, and I am the son of a Confederate veteran at that.

Tried to Keep Out.

My father was born in Columbus, Ga., and reared there. When the war broke out he was drafted into the Confederate army. He first worked in the Confederate bakery, then in a gun and sword factory. From there he was taken with his brother and compelled to go into active service.

They both would have preferred to be loyal to the old flag. They had no fight with the North. In fact their sympathy was always with the North. But what could they do?

My father and his brother said as long as they could not get to the Northern army that they made up their minds they would not fight against the cause they thought to be right any longer than they could possibly help; so, at the very first opportunity, they deserted and hid in a cave.

They made baskets for their living. As they were acquainted with a storekeeper who was also a Northern sympathizer, they made arrangements for him to leave food for them at a hiding place, and they would leave their baskets for him to take away.

They did this until the war was nearly over. Then they got away and came North to old Minnesota, and have lived in the North ever since. My father died here in Oregon.

I defy anyone to show more loyal blood to their country and the dear old flag than I. I was a volunteer in the

War with Spain from start to finish, and never have failed to honor the boys who wore the blue at any and all times, and will do anything in my power for them.

I believe in standing on my own feet and showing to the world that I can be just as patriotic and loyal as any of our sires.

True patriotism needs no encouragement, and does not wait for approval to protect one's country in time of need. Be ready to do and dare, and to die if need be, to protect this country of ours and to uphold the beautiful Stars and Stripes; that's my motto, and that is the kind of patriotism I believe in showing.

I think I can show as real patriotism and as patriotic ancestors as any son of a Union veteran, even though I am a son of a Confederate. Some of my ancestors were in the Revolutionary War, also the War of 1812, on both my father's and mother's sides of the house.

On Both Sides.

In the Civil War relations were on both the Union and the Confederate sides. My father and his brother, and also two cousins and an uncle, were in the rebel army under Lee, marching to the tune of the "Bonnie Blue Flag." In the Union army under Grant and Sherman my mother had two brothers in the Northern army, having served in the 28th Wis., one giving his life at the Battle of Spanish Fort, in Mobile Bay, the other serving on until the close of the war.

My old father-in-law served in the 8th Minn. Co. C, from the beginning until the close of the war, during which time he was captured at Brice's Crossroads, and taken as a prisoner to Florence, Belle Isle, and Andersonville. He was confined in these hell holes for the best part of two years, and nearly died.

A cousin of mine, who was the son of a Northern veteran (one of those who was in the Wisconsin regiment), and myself, a son of a Confederate, marched side by side in the same company in the Spanish-American War.

In the World War I had a nephew and several cousins.

When the Spanish-American War broke out there was a company of sons of veterans being formed in the town where I went from, so, thinking that the only requirements would be that one must have been a son of a veteran of some war, I made application to join them, not the Sons of Veterans organization, but the company, as a soldier. When I went they said they did not know my father had been a soldier, so I told them the story.

Call for Volunteers.

I did not suppose that would make any difference, as there was not supposed to be any dividing line between North and South, but they soon let me know that it did make a difference. They would not take me—a Confederate's son.

A little after that a call came for volunteers, and how many of them do you think answered that call? My name was the first one on the list from our town. The next morning I was on the train on my way to St. Paul to be mustered into the Army, and 10 days from that time left the State for the front.

Well, my worthy friends, the sons of ~~Confederates would not enlist—they must~~ have a company of their own, and must make a showing. So they waited to fill up their company, and are still waiting, so far as I know. I know none of them were even mustered into service, except two, who left them and went in the company I was in, rather than to not go at all.

But when the war was over and we came marching home, the same ones had the face to come and ask me to drill them in the late, or new, tactics and manual of arms. Before that I was not good enough to go in their company, but now it was different.

I was the same son of a Confederate when I came home that I was when I went away. I wonder how they could have forgot so soon. I was not slow in telling them that I had not forgotten the slap in the face they gave me before I went away, and that I thought it would be better for them to get a "son of a veteran" to do it. The "sons of veterans" sounds to me a good deal like "Me and my wife, my son John and his wife; us four and no more."

I am now a Union veteran in my own right, yet I am still a son of a Confederate veteran. It's about time to drop nonsense and be united for the good we can do. We are all working in this old world and aiming at the same point, and remember, there are others like myself, who were sons of the Sunny South, who have hearts that beat just as loyal and true as any in the North.

Let's put aside this war stuff and put our shoulder to the wheel, and work for the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, trying to lift up the fallen brother and save the sin-sick soul, and then we will need have no fear of war. Let's all be loyal to the country we love, to the Stars and Stripes forever, and be true to man and God.

As ever a son of a Confederate veteran, and a Spanish War veteran, and also a soldier of the cross.

SAMUEL A. DIMOND,

526 Leo Ave., Portland, Oreg.