

22-D THE MIAMI HERALD Monday, May 2, 1977



Al Burt

The South's Roots: A Different View

JACKSONVILLE — Black children peered through the fence at the Old City Cemetery here the other day as men dressed in Confederate gray led a different celebration of roots.

These were not the roots the children may have seen on television, or surely have heard about, but another version.

A drummer boy, rapping out a hesitation beat, set the pace for an honor guard marching through the cemetery bearing the U.S. flag and the Confederate flag.

Officers resplendent in gray uniforms and blue clip-on sashes came first — sabers drawn, the plumes on their hats waving — and the drummer boy and his companions came last in ragtag uniforms typical of the ranks.

IT WAS a cloudy, windy day occasionally broken

WORD SLEUTH • Big Bands

M L W A H C N R T E A G A R D
I W A H T A L N G T L E S Y K
L H H M G R B E D R L B O N Y
L I S I H L O D R A B M O L S
O T R L T E N R N G Y J S N E
M E S L S E M A J L R R K G R
B A S I E A M G A E O E Y R M
A A Y D R R J A E D M L S A A
R E S K E R W E N E B L S Y K
Y N O H T N A T J H A I R L K
K E L G A N T H O N R M S A C

Saturday's unlisted clue: BUTTER
FIND the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions—forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.
Unlisted clue hint: MUSICAL COUNT

Gray	Carle	Anthony	Whiteman
Shaw	Noble	Harris	Berigan
James	Elgart	Herman	Lombardo
Kyser	Miller	Teagarden	

5 - 2

by hot sunshine beaming through moss-hung live oak, camphor and palm trees. A scattering of people sat on folding chairs among granite tombstones. Tiny Confederate flags rippled over some graves.

A funeral canopy shaded the speakers' stand and the breeze tumbled dead leaves in the grass. While waiting for the ceremony, I heard bits of crowd whispers. "Last few diehards . . ." one said. "According to 'Roots' . . ." said another.

A minister gave the invocation, mentioning "freedom of choice" and "self-determination." The group sang "My Country 'Tis of Thee," pledged allegiance to the U.S. flag, saluted the Confederate flag, and a boy in uniform read Gen. Robert E. Lee's farewell address at Appomattox. "The old South did not die; it is here with us today," the boy commented.

Finally, the Confederate Memorial Day speaker was introduced. Dean Boggs of Jacksonville, national commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, noted that the gathering was to pay tribute to the Confederate soldier. He said the Confederate soldier was not a rebel, or a traitor, that he did not fight to preserve slavery but to repel invasion and for the right to a government of his own choice.

"WHY IS IT that our hearts beat quicker and our eyes brighten when we see the stars and bars . . . or hear the stirring strains of Dixie?" he asked.

He said it was because of pride in the talent, courage and honor of the Confederate soldier.

Commander Boggs wrapped it all up with a warning and a criticism.

"The enemies of our country know that any people with a contempt for the traditions of their heritage will not long remain an independent nation and so a campaign has been carried on in this country in recent years to persuade the American people, and particularly the young people, to be contemptuous of their heritage and tradition . . .

"The tradition and heritage Southerners have is one of the best weapons we have for combatting these undesirable trends . . ."

THEN HE added the criticism:

"I would like to say a few words about this television movie 'Roots' . . ." He said he would not go into the merits or demerits of its historical accuracy, except to say that it was inaccurate.

"The showing was a great disservice to our country. It could do nothing but create hatred by the blacks toward the whites . . . and result in greater divisions of our people."

He said he was writing a letter of protest to the Federal Communications Commission, the American Broadcasting Company, to his senators and congressman. Then it was over, this celebration of heritage, with a rifle salute and the playing of Taps.

The little black children peering through the fence appeared to like the last part best.