

# Blue Mud Chronicles

November 25, 2008



Greenwood2

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Singer Jimmy Buffett, guitarist Bo Diddley, novelist William Faulkner, puppeteer Jim Henson, actor James Earl Jones, historian Shelby Foote, novelist John Grisham, talk-show host Oprah Winfrey and singer/actor Elvis Presley. What commonality do they share? Mississippi (The Magnolia State). From Corinth in the north to Biloxi (bordering the Gulf of Mexico) in the south, from Vicksburg in the west to Meridian in the east, those cities surround Mississippi's largest city and State Capital, Jackson. (Here's your trivia for the day – the two states with three sets of double letters border each other, Mississippi and Tennessee.)

Get in your "way-back" machine and go; 25 years...50...75...100...125...150...oops! Too far! Back up a little.

**January 21, 1861**

There was no television or radio; no CNN; no AP or UPI; CBS, NBC, ABC and FOX weren't even dreamt of yet (who remembers DuMont TV or the Blue Radio Network?); forget movies or DVDs; no Blockbuster, Netflix or You Tube. If you did not see it live, then you missed it. *"Is it live or is it Memorex?"* Not even a consideration.

The Senate in Washington, D. C. , the "world's greatest deliberative body," had provided some pretty memorable and heady times (especially during "The Great Triumvirate" [Massachusetts' Daniel Webster, Kentucky's Henry Clay and South Carolina's John C. Calhoun] era; such as the Censure/Expunging Resolutions (of Andrew Jackson), Webster's Reply to Hayne ("*...liberty and union, now and forever; one and inseparable!*"), The Compromise of 1850 and then Massachusetts antislavery Republican Senator Charles Sumner's "Crime Against Kansas" speech in May, 1856 (after which, it briefly turned the "world's greatest deliberative body" into a war zone when South Carolina Representative Preston Brooks entered and savagely beat Sumner about the head with a cane. Bleeding copiously, Sumner was carried away. Brooks walked coolly out of the chamber without being apprehended by the shocked spectators.).

And this would be a "*You are there*" moment:

Mississippi Senator Jefferson Davis' Farewell Speech to the U.S. Congress

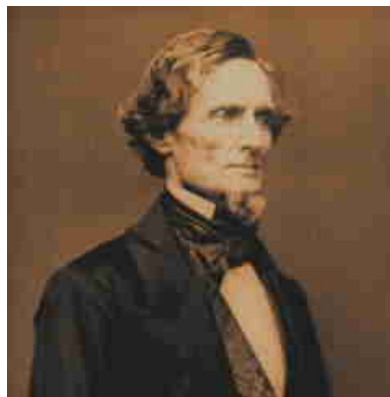
*"I rise, Mr. President, for the purpose of announcing to the Senate that I have satisfactory evidence that the State of Mississippi, by a solemn ordinance of her people, in convention assembled, has declared her separation from the United States. Under these circumstances, of course, my functions are terminated here. It has seemed to me proper, however, that I should appear in the Senate to announce that fact to my associates, and I will say but very little more. The occasion does not invite me to go into argument; and my physical condition would not permit me to do so, if it were otherwise...."*

*It is known to Senators who have served with me here that I have for many years advocated, as an essential attribute of State sovereignty, the right of a State to secede from the Union. Therefore, if I had thought that Mississippi was acting without sufficient provocation, or without an existing necessity, I should still, under my theory of the Government, because of my allegiance to the State of which I am a citizen, have been bound by her action.*

*I, however, may be permitted to say that I do think she has justifiable cause, and I approve of her act. I conferred with her people before that act was taken, counseled them then that, if the state of things which they apprehended should exist when their Convention met, they should take the action which they have now adopted. A great man who now reposes with his fathers, and who has often been arraigned for want of fealty to the Union, advocated the doctrine of nullification because it preserved the Union. It was because of his deep-seated attachment to the Union -- his determination to find some remedy for existing ills short of a severance of the ties which bound South Carolina to the other States -- that Mr. Calhoun advocated the doctrine of nullification, which he proclaimed to be peaceful, to be within the limits of State power, not to disturb the Union, but only to be a means of bringing the agent before the tribunal of the States for their judgment.*

*Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign....*

*Mr. President and Senators, having made the announcement which the occasion seemed to me to require, it only remains for me to bid you a final adieu."*



Jefferson Davis

Nullification, State's Rights and Secession are often used interchangeably and while they are quite similar, they are different. The idea of an individual state's ability or correctness in nullifying a federal law or decree was first broached in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions in 1789 in protest of The Alien and Sedition Acts. During the War of 1812 and immediately prior to it, several New England legislatures discussed it to protest the war (The Hartford Convention December 15, 1814- January 5, 1815) and the Non-Intercourse Act. Prevailing changes or events caused the various political bodies to not act upon **Nullification**. It basically allows each state to "pick and choose" which laws it will follow **State's Rights** claimed that each State is sovereign and may repossess the powers it has freely given to any union. **Secession** is like the last option; the physical withdrawal from a union.

During his political career, Davis (born June 3, 1808) [more trivia – USA President Abraham Lincoln and CSA President Jefferson Davis were born about 60 miles apart, both in Kentucky]. He served in the U.S. House of Representatives, as United States Secretary of War under President Franklin Pierce, United States Senator and finally elected to a six year term as President of the Confederate States of America in 1861 (inaugurated on February 22, 1862). (Yet still even more better trivia – He had never served a full term in any elective office, and that would turn out to be the case this last time, too.)

I could go into the US Civil War but everybody knows how it ends. BUT, are you ready for "Trivia Overload"? Davis' first wife, who died after contracting malaria, was Sarah Knox Taylor, the daughter of President Zachary Taylor. Davis' likeness appeared on a postage stamp making him the only "American" President honored in such a way while he was alive (CSA...it still counts).



Davis suffered from recurring bouts with malaria, facial neuralgia, cataracts , unhealed wounds from the Mexican War (bone spurs) and insomnia.

On May 10, 1865, in Irwinville, Georgia, Davis was surrounded and captured by members of the First Wisconsin and Fourth Michigan cavalries and he was transported to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, where he remained a prisoner for more than two years. He had thrown his wife's raglan, or overcoat, on his shoulders. as he was fleeing the U.S. troops but the Northern press was soon reporting that Davis had been wearing a dress, trying to disguise himself as a woman; a myth that still survives. Some made it seem as if Davis were wearing petticoats and performing the can-can. Not since Hollywood "jazzed-up" Mary Shelley's Frankenstein has a story been so distorted.

(from Dr. John Craven: The Confederate Patient by Rebecca Blackwell Drake) "*The Carleton Publishing Firm in New York, released Dr. Craven's book, The Prison Life of Jefferson Davis [in 1866]. The contents shocked the nation. Page after page of entries revealed how General Miles had mistreated the Confederate prisoner. He had placed him unnecessarily in iron shackles, fed him food not fit for human consumption, kept him in a musty and damp cell, and, worst of all, forbidden him to have contact with his wife and children. Northerners as well as Southerners were outraged by the atrocities. The Union doctor had managed to swing the tide of public opinion. Instead of his Confederate patient facing years of imprisonment, it was now possible that Davis would be released from prison and reunited with his family. And, within another years' time, he was.*" After two years of imprisonment, he was released on bail which was posted by prominent citizens of both northern and southern states, including Horace Greeley and Cornelius Vanderbilt.

In 1869 Davis became president of the Carolina Life Insurance Company in Memphis, Tennessee. After Robert E. Lee's death in 1870, Davis headed the memorial in Richmond, Virginia. Elected to the U.S. Senate again, he was refused the office in 1875, owing to being barred from Federal office by the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. He turned down the chance to become the first president of the Agriculture and Mechanical College of Texas (now Texas A&M University).

From 1878-1881, Davis wrote The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government. He finished A Short History of the Confederate States of America in October 1889. Two months later, on December 6, Davis died of unknown cause at the age of eighty-one.



Statue of Jefferson Davis



Jerry Clower

*"Ain't much between you and a fool is there?"  
"Just this here fence"*

*"Shoot.... Haaaaaaaaw!... This thang is killin' me."  
"I can't shoot up there, I might hit you"*

*"Just shoot up in here amongst us, one of us has got to have some relief" (A Coon  
Huntin' Story)*

*"Uncle Versie and Aunt Pet...Ardell, Burdell, Raynel, W. L., Lanell, Odell, Udell,  
Marcel; Claude, Newgene and Clovis .... Here they come." (The Burning  
Building)*

## *Southern Speak*

During a drought,  
*"It's been so dry, the trees are bribing the dogs."*

Hostessing,  
*"Why don't you at least have a cup of coffee? It's already been saucered and  
blowed."*

Heat,  
“Lord, it’s *hotter 'n a Billy goat's butt in a pepper patch.*”

A “nice” putdown,  
“*The two things I like most about you are your face.*”

Frazzled, preoccupied  
“She’s *busier than a moth in a mitten*”

“Calling out” a double-talker,  
“*My cow died last night so I don't need your bull.*”

None,  
“*I didn't get (n)ary* a bite of food ‘for the phone rang.’”

Ailing,  
“I feel *like I've been chewed up and spit out.*”

Quickly,  
“He *took off out o' there like a turpented cat.*”

Not trustworthy,  
“Watch out. *He's as crooked as a barrel of snakes.*”

Improper move,  
Somebody *threwed a clod in the churn.*”

One of the best sites on the web covering all things Southern:  
**USADEEPSOUTH** <http://usadeepsouth.ms11.net/index.html>



Tuscan farmhouse

## THE BLUE MUD CHRONICLES

### Archive

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Oldfield4

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< <http://www.blue-mud.net/ARTthankMain.html> >

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