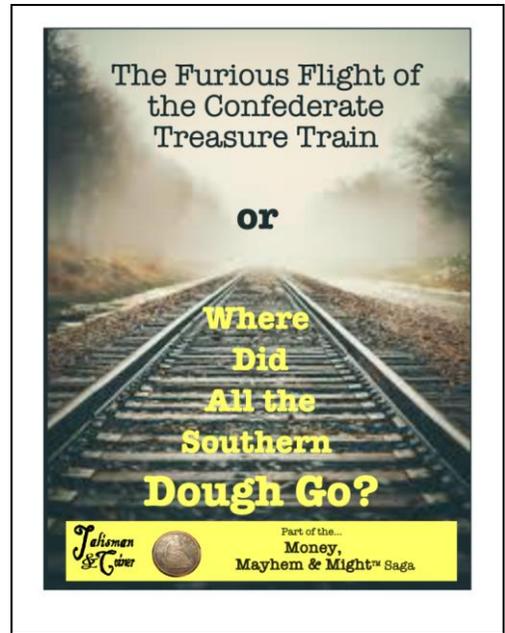


The Furious Flight of the Confederate Treasure Train

is a turbulent ride — a blend of forensic accounting (“Where did all the Southern Dough Go?”), riveting accounts of money on the move after the fall of Richmond (“Follow the Money”), titillating tales of “Confederate Gold” being strewn, purloined or buried in South Carolina and Georgia as the Treasure Train rattled along, and finally how the Confederacy itself dissolves all around the “Train” by the time it is captured by the Union forces in Washington City, Georgia.



“The Furious Flight...” also weaves together a kind of *“Treasure Train Travelogue”* – following the Treasure Train’s trajectory as the money on-board and the exiled Confederate Government roll on southward – destination unknown – describing the exploits as it passed through Danville, VA to Charlotte, NC, onto Chestertown, SC and then to Abbeville, SC (where many local rumors once abounded about the Richmond Bank Gold), across a pontoon bridge that once crossed the Savannah River over to the now-submerged town of Petersburg, GA – and then followed a convoluted path (by wagon train and rail line) that went from Washington City GA to Union Point GA (on the way to Macon – a pathway that was abandoned) and circling around to Augusta, GA and back to Abbeville, SC and finally – the “end of the line” for the Confederate money – trudging back to Washington City, GA. We also contrasted the towns as they were in 1865 and today – some have flourished and grown enormously - and some have remained much as they were, at least size-wise. (Perhaps that is itself a hint as to where the “Confederate Gold” went!)

(President Davis, on the other hand, with his separate entourage, was arrested in Irwinville, GA, 200 miles to the south a few days later... there he lost his special fifty-cent Confederate piece – which we call his “talisman” – when it was confiscated upon his arrest.)

“The Furious Flight...” sheds light on how dire the circumstances became for the Confederate leadership when the Confederacy was collapsing literally all along the path that the Confederate Treasure Train was taking from April into May of 1865. And we shed fresh light on the perilous relationship between the “Depository Banks” from Richmond, the State of Virginia and the War Department of the Confederate Government – as hundreds of thousands of dollars in gold hung in the balance as the Train made its way from Danville, VA south. \$300,000 of bank-issued gold was earmarked for General Robert E. Lee – but he surrendered while the Train was in Danville and the whole game of the money’s custody changed... and stakes rose as to how to handle the Richmond Bank “Trove.”

Confederate paper currency and bonds go up in smoke; not one — but two — major heists of gold from Richmond banks takes place; Cabinet members get money bags ***to tote gold “in case they make it to foreign shores...”*** As they reach the “end of the line” in Washington City and finally Irwinville, Georgia, it becomes an “every man, woman and child for themselves” situation!! Several leaders went into exile overseas, each taking some gold along. Other leaders, such as George Trenholm, were accused of pillaging the Treasury... and spent some time in jail. And most simply were arrested and immediately paroled, and then headed home to live in peace... including General Lee himself.

But it doesn’t end there.....

The Saga...the story of the exploits of the Treasure Train and the treacherous trek of the Richmond Bank Gold – which were largely co-joined for hundreds of miles in railroad cars and wagon trains – created controversy for years to come.

The “Confederate Gold” or the Confederate Treasury – how money was there and how much was really parsed out and to whom – was still being argued about twenty years after the fact by the various key Confederate personnel who were on the “Treasure Train.” George Trenholm was suspected of purloining a good chunk; there was a massive disbursement to a contingent of cavalymen down by the Savannah River; paper money was burned by the bale in Georgia – and venerable General Joe Johnston publicly decried the handling of the funds after the smoke cleared and the War was over.

The “*Richmond Bank Trove*” – consisting of hundreds of thousands of gold coin and bullion that was (for a time) dedicated to the Commissary Department of the War Department of the CSA – was subject to even greater scrutiny, rumors and ultimately legal action. After the Confederacy had dissolved, the Bank money – which included other private funds – was permitted (for a while) to be conveyed by wagon train back to Richmond from the Deep South. But it didn’t turn out to be a smooth ride --- and some of that money ended up in the hands of bushwhackers and some in US Treasury.

A lengthy legal battle – with ton of witnesses and affidavits – ensued in *the Court of War Claims (U.S. House of Representatives)*, beginning in 1866 – not long after the War ended and it all began because of that wandering wagon train full of Richmond gold. It got held up not once, but twice. And to make matters worse, authorities wondered “who really is entitled to claim this money?”

We’re not letting the cat out of the bag, not yet... but the case wasn’t settled until eighteen hundred and ninety-three!!! *Twenty-seven years after the case began!!* Quite possibly making this the longest, most drawn-out battle of the War of the Rebellion!!!

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