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*The Veteran*

April - June 2009

## 1883 G.A.R. National Encampment Ribbon Badge

By George G. Kane

Every year that I have attended the Civil War Show in Mansfield, Ohio, I've seen at least one Grand Army of the Republic memorabilia piece that I've never seen before. So when Warren Barber came over to my table to show me a ribbon he had just purchased from Vann Martin, I was amazed. The ribbon was made up of a hanger, a gold ribbon with silver print and silver fringe, a second red ribbon with the word "Maryland" printed in black and a silver pendent with the GAR monogram in the center. What surprised me was the silver pendant, which was the same as the pendant from the accepted national delegate badge.

The story of the 1883 Grand Army of the Republic National Encampment badge begins, not in Denver, Colorado, but in Georgetown, Colorado, sixty-five miles west of Denver. Georgetown was a sleepy little Mining camp established in 1859 nuzzled in the Rocky Mountains. In 1864, silver was discovered in the *Argentine Pass*, a few miles up the canyon from Georgetown. The original miners had come looking for gold, but settled for silver. The town was incorporated in 1868. It became the Clear Creek County Seat, a few months later. A narrow gauge railroad was built in the early 1870's and connected Georgetown to Golden, another small mining town in the foothills just west of Denver. In the 1880's, a silver boom swelled the town population in excess of 10,000 citizens. At the time, it was the third largest town or city in the state. In 1893, the silver boom collapsed. The population quickly dwindled. It became a town of abandoned mines and shuttered stores. In the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, it became an upscale tourist destination.

Georgetown's most famous citizen was William Arthur Hamill. He was born in England in 1836 and came to the United States with his parents at the age of six to Philadelphia. During the civil war, he was commissioned a Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 156<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. After the war, he traveled west in search of his fortune, arriving in Colorado in July of 1865. He gravitated towards the mining industry and became the owner of two of the most famous mines in the Georgetown area, the *Pelican* and the *Dives*. He threw millions of dollars into the expansion and renovation of his home in Georgetown. Today it's a museum. The 1893 silver collapse ruined Hamill. He died in 1904, no longer wealthy. (Continued on page 39)



1883 Ribbon courtesy  
of Vann Martin

## The President's Message

Dear Members:

We are all saddened at the death of Don Williams, the creator of the Ohio Civil War Show. He was instrumental in helping our group have a "good spot" at the show. His family will continue his work.

If you are traveling to other Civil War shows this summer, good luck, stay cool and good hunting.

Dan M. Mitchell  
President

## CWVHA Officers

President	Dan M. Mitchell	<a href="mailto:dmitc874@aol.com">dmitc874@aol.com</a>
VP	John Mullan	<a href="mailto:jj318@comcast.net">jj318@comcast.net</a>
Secretary	Shane Bowles	<a href="mailto:badgesu2@bellsouth.net">badgesu2@bellsouth.net</a>
Treasurer	Dave Aeberli	<a href="mailto:dla9372@verizon.net">dla9372@verizon.net</a>
Editor	George G. Kane	<a href="mailto:gkane217@live.com">gkane217@live.com</a>

## Contributors

\* Vann Martin \* Peter Eisert \* George Finlayson  
\* Tom McCrory \* Noel Preston \* Cindy Zerkowski

## Obituaries

**David Herbert Donald**, 88, was the preeminent Lincoln scholar and Civil War author and historian, died 5/17/2009. He was a professor of history at Harvard University. He lived on Lincoln Road in Lincoln, Massachusetts.

**Dr. Richard H. Zeitlin**, 63, the longtime director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum died of cancer 12/3/2008. He went from a young curator in the original one-room G.A.R. Civil War museum in the state Capitol to director of one of the premier military museums in the United States.

**Len Benson**, 80, longtime New Jersey Civil War memorabilia dealer died December 27, 2008. For many years, Len set up in the Arts and Crafts building at the Ohio Civil War Show. Len was a district sales manager for McCann Shoes for 49 years.

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## The Editor's Message by George G. Kane

The Ohio Civil War show has come and gone. A good time was had by all.

In this issue I wrote a 4½-page article on Winnie Davis, the world-traveling daughter of Jefferson Davis. I have wanted to do this story for some time. When I first began collecting UCV material some years ago, I noticed that a number of pieces had the head of a young woman as a graphic. I always thought that it was a picture of President Jefferson Davis' wife. It became apparent that it was his daughter not his wife on these pieces. Known as the "Daughter of the Confederacy," Winnie led a short tragic life, dying at the age of 34. The contradiction of her title and her actual short life will become obvious to all.

George

## The Veteran

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Articles may be submitted either in typewritten form or electronically (e-mail or disk) MSWord, or Excel is the preferred software choices.

All materials will be returned. If you have questions, please call George Kane at (413) 592-2166. 123 Springfield St., Chicopee, MA 01013-2627.

An e-mail address is listed above.

1883 GAR National Encampment Ribbon *(continued from front page)*

Hamill was a member of the Grand Army Post in Georgetown, Thornburg Post No. 2. In the 1883 "Journal" of the encampment, he is listed as the "Representative at large" from Georgetown, Colorado. On page 208 of the 1883 "Journal", he is thanked by the encampment for distributing a delegate badge to each delegate. Evidently he presented the badges to each delegate personally, probably at registration. Thankfully, this passage not only thanks Mr. Hamill, but also gives us a very precise description of the badge.

*"At the opening of the encampment each delegate was presented by Comrade William Hammill, of Georgetown, Colorado, with a silver badge denoting his membership in the Encampment. The badge was a very elaborate piece of workmanship, consisting of a representation of a rising sun, in silver, two inches in diameter, bearing the inscription around the outer edge, "Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty - 1861 -1883." In the center is the monogram, "G.A.R." On the obverse are the words, "Seventeenth Annual Encampment, Denver Colorado, July 1883. Nil Sine Numinae," and in the center a shield with a representation of mountains on the upper half and a pick and hammer crossed on the lower. This is suspended from a silver pin by a buff ribbon bearing the name of the department to which the comrade belonged."*

C. E. Little, a Denver jeweler, produced the badge.

The G.A.R. was so grateful, that they spelled his name wrong in two places in the Journal (Hammill / Hamill).

Over the years, there has been some debate as to how many badges were produced. If the badges were only presented to attendees, then 267 members were asterisked as attending. If this is true, how did Hamill know how many badges would be needed for each department? 662 members were listed as eligible. Did he make that many badges? Because of the specific department ribbons, did he put the badges together at the encampment as many sutlers had done at other reunions with ladder badges? Had there been left over pieces? Had he sold the remaining pendants to departments or posts? The professional sewing on the back of the Maryland badge suggests that the department acquired the pendants from Hamill and had them attached to their original dept. badges, sometime after registration. How many similar post or department badges with this pendant still exist?



1883 badge courtesy of Noel Preston

# The Connecticut Minuteman Medal

by Peter Eisert

On May 21, 1903 the State of Connecticut passed a law that would create and distribute medals to members of the first three Connecticut regiments that were formed in response to Abraham Lincoln's first call for troops on April 15, 1861. The state appropriated \$2,000 for the project. The law also stated that this medal was "in lieu of any future appropriation for the erection of any monuments or memorial tablets to any of the hereinbefore mentioned regiments." The State would pay for the medals, but not for monuments to the three regiments. The law gave very specific details as to the design of the medal. A photo of a prototype of the medal was attached to the law. The medal was designated the "Connecticut Volunteers Medal," but it is usually called the "Connecticut Minutemen Medal," due to the inscription on the hanger. Below these words is the date April 1861 and below the date is the Connecticut Seal. Civil War Governor Buckingham is pictured in a left profile in the center of the pendant. The pendant is a Maltese cross with ivy filling in between the arms. The top three arms have shields with the numbers 1,2, and 3 in the shields with cannon balls to the outside. The bottom shield has "CV" in the center. Two crossed rifles are behind the cross. The reverse has the following statement:

*" The State of Connecticut to the members of the 1st 2nd and 3rd volunteer regiments who enlisted in the United States service in response to President Lincoln's first call for troops for the defense of Washington April 1861"*

Above the aforementioned statement is a serial number with a unique number for every soldier who received the medal. Medals had to be requested from the Adjutant General's Office. Families of deceased veterans could apply for the medal.

Recently I was able to acquire a listing of the names and serial numbers of the 730 medals issued by the Connecticut Adjutant General's Office. The list includes the Serial Number, Name, Regiment and Company of the soldiers who received the medal. George Kane is adding residence for each soldier from a complete roster of these regiments. The list will be sent **FREE** to any member who requests it by e-mail at [gkane217@live.com](mailto:gkane217@live.com).

Mailed printed unfolded versions are \$3 Postage.

George G. Kane  
123 Springfield St.,  
Chicopee, MA 01013-2627.



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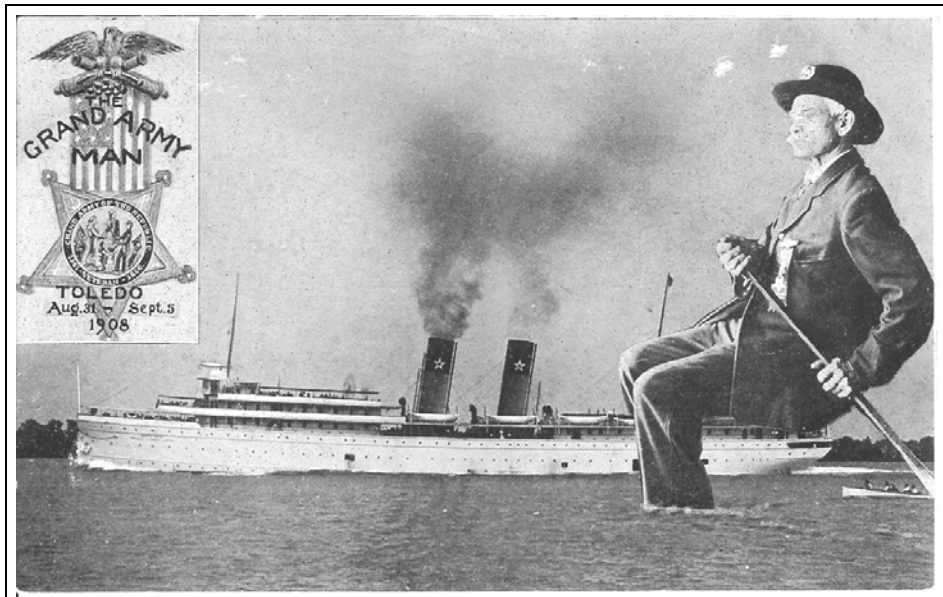
Serial Number 158  
Louis Singlaub  
Private  
Co. A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment  
Waterbury, CT  
later  
Co. B, 14 CT Inf.



## The G.A.R. Meets Gulliver

By Tom McCrory

Like many encampments before and after, the 1908 G.A.R. 42<sup>nd</sup> National Encampment produced a number of postcards. One of the more bizarre postcard sets was issued during this encampment. Not since Gulliver met the Lilliputians has there been such a size mismatch. In this set a man dressed in a G.A.R. uniform, complete with a post ribbon, looks like a giant next to various Toledo, Ohio buildings and equipment. In the first postcard below, the G.A.R. man sits on the aft deck of what looks like a lake steamer and is paddling his way to the encampment. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> postcard, the G.A.R. member dwarfs the local G.A.R. Hall. The man appears to be as tall as the steeple on top of the three-floor Memorial Hall. It's the same man in both postcards.



## More G.A.R. Cover Art by Noel Preston

Below is the cover for May 30, 1925 issue of the magazine, *The Country Gentleman*. The scene depicts a civil war veteran in his wheel chair, saluting as he is listening to his crystal radio through a set of headphones. The veteran has a G.A.R. membership badge on his left breast and his G. A. R. uniform kepi on top of the 3-dialed crystal radio. Across his lap lies a civil war era rifle, with a tartan blanket in the process of falling off his lap. The coat appears to be G.A.R. with 3 buttons down the front and two buttons on each sleeve. Many May editions of popular magazines had a patriotic theme to coincide with Memorial Day. The veteran is obviously listening to some patriotic song, hence the military salute and stern face.



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## A G.A.R. Cigarette Lighter by George G. Kane

The lighter shown below is a lift arm type of the 1920's and 1930's. A G.A.R. monogram, which was probably inscribed aftermarket, is on one side. The striker wheel is horizontal and positioned below the wick.

On the bottom of the lighter is printed "The GOLDEN WHEEL LIGHTER". On the other side is "US PATENT / 1537355 / OTHER PATS / PEND. / QUADRUPLE PLATED." A dime sized filler cap is in the center. On the filler cap is "Lifetime Guarantee" printed very lightly.



# Winnie Davis, Daughter of the Confederacy

By George G. Kane

She was born Varina Anne Davis on June 27, 1864 in Richmond, Virginia in the White House of the Confederacy. She was the sixth and last child of Jefferson Davis and Varina Banks Howell Davis. When she was a child she was nicknamed "Winnie", which was purportedly a Native American word meaning "bright and sunny." Her father was the first, last and only President of the Confederate States of America. In her early twenties she was given a title that will always be attached to her name, but in fact her life was nothing close to what the title implied.



Winnie Davis' life in the Confederacy would last about ten months with the capitulation of Confederate forces soon after the battle of Appomattox and the flight of her father, his cabinet and his family from Richmond to Georgia. After her father's capture, her mother sent all her children but Winnie to live with relatives in Canada. In April of 1866, Mrs. Davis was given permission to leave Georgia. This would be Winnie's first exile, when she traveled to Canada with her mother to join her other siblings. A few months

after their arrival in Canada, Mrs. Davis received word that her husband was ill and might die at any time. She frantically wired President Johnson for permission to rejoin her husband at Fort Monroe in Virginia, where he was imprisoned. After a few months, permission came and Varina and Winnie joined Jefferson Davis in his four-room apartment at that Prison.



Davis' Wedding Photo 1845

On May 13, 1867, Jefferson Davis was paroled and released from Fort Monroe. Soon after, Winnie would begin her second exile when her parents traveled to Canada to be with their other surviving children (Margaret, Jefferson and William) in Montreal. On July 25, 1868, the family sailed from Quebec for Europe, and arrived in Liverpool on August 4<sup>th</sup>. During the first two weeks of 1869, the family vacationed in Paris, visiting the *Louvre* and other tourist attractions. In February of 1869, her father would receive word that the indictment against him had been dismissed. That summer, the family went on an extended trip to Scotland. In September, Jefferson received an offer

of employment from the Carolina Life Insurance Co. of Memphis, TN. Soon after, he sailed for America, leaving Varina, Winnie, Margaret, William and Jefferson, Jr. in London. The family would not see him again for a year when he would return to bring them back to America. In October of 1870, the family arrived in Baltimore. The family would remain in Maryland while Jefferson traveled on business for the life insurance company. A year later, the family would join Jefferson in Memphis. On October 16, 1872, Winnie's brother William died of diphtheria. He was ten years old.



In 1873, Varina and Winnie spent seven months in Canada because of her mother's health. A year later, Jefferson traveled six months in Europe on business. While there, he visited an austere girl's Protestant boarding school in Karlsruhe, Germany, the Friedlander

Institute. In 1876, Winnie was enrolled in that school and would spend the next five years at that institution. This education would be in stark contrast to her sister's education at a school run by nuns in Paris. When the school term ended in 1881, Winnie was given permission to visit Paris, staying at a family friend's house.



In the fall of 1881, Jefferson and Varina Davis traveled to Europe to collect their youngest daughter. Jefferson was struck by the change in his daughter's appearance. She had grown tall and statuesque, physically resembling her mother at the same age, but facially resembling her father. By the time Winnie returned to the United States, she spoke German and French more fluently than her native English tongue. For the first time since she and her mother traveled to Canada in April of 1866, she was back in the Confederacy. She was seventeen and had lived less than two years in the former Confederacy. During her exile,

Jefferson's last remaining son, Jefferson Davis, Jr., died of yellow fever at the age of 21 in Memphis. Now, only his two daughters remained of the Davis' six children.



#### UDC Winnie Davis Pin

In early 1882, Winnie had taken up residence in "Beauvoir," the Biloxi, Mississippi estate her father had inherited while she was abroad. She became the constant companion of her father. In the morning, they would walk the grounds with a pack of dogs in tow. In the afternoon, she would read novels and poetry to him on the porch. They often rode horses through the adjacent woods. At night she would play classical music or popular songs on a piano. She also painted landscapes.

In the last seven years of his life, Jefferson Davis became the symbol of the "Lost Cause." Besides the writing and publishing of his wartime reminiscent, Jefferson Davis spoke publicly at many Confederate veteran reunions. Winnie accompanied her father on many of these engagements. In April of 1886, Winnie traveled with

her father to Atlanta, where he was to give a speech at the dedication of the Ben Hill monument. Jefferson Davis became ill and was unable to leave his carriage. The master of ceremonies, General John B. Gordon, convinced Winnie to address the crowd in her father's absence. As she stepped onto the platform, General Gordon announced to the crowd that President Davis was ill **"But I wish to introduce to you, Winnie Davis, the Daughter of the Confederacy."** The crowd and the press reacted positively to Winnie's new title. From that point on, this moniker would almost always be attached to her name. The use of this label would always make her ill at ease. Her celebrity grew rapidly after this point. Her charm, poise and manner were held up as the epitome of Southern womanhood. Soon after, the *Atlanta Constitution* distributed 100,000 pictures of her. A patent medicine company gave away her picture with every purchase.

During the same year, Winnie traveled north to Syracuse to visit with friends of her parents, Dr. Thomas Emory, a West Point classmate, and newspaperman Joseph Pulitzer and wife Kate. Kate claimed to be a distant cousin of Jefferson Davis. At a reception in her honor, she met Alfred Wilkinson, a patent lawyer from Syracuse. There was an instant attraction that bloomed into love. Winnie visited Syracuse several times after that night and they wrote each other often. The affair was kept secret, as Winnie feared a reaction to the young man's ancestry. Alfred was the grandson of a prominent abolitionist, Reverend Scott May. With her crowning as the "Daughter of the Confederacy," it was assumed that she would marry a son of another great

Confederate hero. Many names were mentioned as suitors, but Winnie would have none of it. In September of 1888, Alfred visited “Beauvoir” seeking the hand of Winnie. Her parents were aghast and no permission was granted. Soon after, rumors of this betrothal circulated. As Winnie had feared, the reaction to her affair was quick and negative. In September of 1889 she traveled to Europe with the Pulitzers to escape the negative press. When her father died in December of 1899, she had a nervous breakdown. Her mother sent Alfred to Europe to help console her daughter. In Europe, Alfred again asked her to marry him and she eventually accepted.

In March of 1890, Varina Davis announced the engagement of her daughter to Alfred Wilkinson. The reaction was instantaneous and blunt. Alfred began receiving hate mail almost immediately. Now that her father was dead, Winnie became the symbol of the “Lost Cause.” The stress created by this firestorm eventually led to the canceling of the engagement. Wilkinson’s financial condition may also have weighed heavily in the decision.

Soon after her return from Europe, Winnie and her mother moved to New York City in search of literary careers. Both wrote articles for various newspapers and magazines. Winnie would write three books, two of which were novels. With the end of her engagement, Winnie was once again in demand to appear at various Confederate events. In early 1898 she traveled to Egypt on vacation. In April of that year she attended a Confederate reunion in Atlanta. It was there that she first started to feel ill. During the summer, Winnie and her mother vacationed in Narragansett Pier, Rhode Island. About

mid-August her health took a turn for the worse. She was confined to a bed at her hotel. The disease was diagnosed as *malarial gastritis*. Whether she contracted it in Atlanta or Egypt was never verified. Just before her death she seemed to rally, but she died at Noon the next day, September 18, 1898.

Seven members of the Sedgwick G.A.R Post No. 7 in nearby Wakefield, RI acted as a Guard of Honor when Winnie’s body was transferred from the hotel to a waiting Railroad car. Later, her mother had pictures of these G.A.R. men printed in the *Confederate Veteran*, the national organ of the United Confederate Veterans.

The outpouring of grief at news of Miss Davis’ death was profound. She was given a military funeral and laid to rest next to her father in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia. A large statue, *The Angel of Grief*, would later be placed on her grave.



Her ex-fiancé attended the funeral, but did not mix with the family. He would die twenty years later in Atlantic City, where he had gone to recuperate from heart problems. He never married.

Soon after her death, her legend began to grow. Newborn baby girls were named after her. In the South, two college halls and numerous municipal buildings were anointed with her name. Her face and profile decorated many veteran badges, ribbons, canteens and

other memorabilia. Music was composed in her name. Five UCV Camps were eventually named for Winnie. Many UDC camps were also named for their heroine and namesake.

In death, Varina Anne “Winnie” Davis has become what she never was in life, the embodiment of all that is good and decent in Southern womanhood. Many had misread her devotion to her father as a blank endorsement of the “Lost Cause.” She was a European educated, intelligent and independent woman much like her mother, who had been despised by most of Southern society during the war. Her legend and myth exist to the present day.



The painting above is a postcard sold by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. See their web site at: <http://www.hqudc.org/supplies/stationery.html> Postcards are sold to members only, but other outlets on the web also carry this postcard.

### The Jefferson Davis Home Association Certificate By George G. Kane

The Jefferson Davis Home Association was founded in 1907 at a reunion of the Orphan Brigade at Glasgow, Kentucky. The Association proposed building a monument in memory of Jefferson Davis in his hometown of Fairview, KY. In 1909 the association bought 20 acres of land in Fairview. In the next eight years they raised \$150,000 to build the monument. With any donation, the donor received the certificate shown below. Davis is shown in the upper center with drawings of the house where he was born, the house where he was wed and the college he attended positioned beneath his picture.



In 1917, construction of the world's tallest concrete obelisk (351 feet) began. Construction was halted in 1918 because of WWI. Financial problems after the war left the tower unfinished until new funds could be raised. Finally, the completed monument was dedicated on June 7, 1924. The obelisk is the fourth highest monument in the United States.



# The 2009 Ohio Civil War Show

By George G. Kane

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Ohio Civil War Show in Mansfield, Ohio had another successful weekend, May 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009. With 750 tables in 6 buildings and 380 exhibitors from 38 states, this show is one of the largest collector shows in the nation. This year's edition of the show had a dramatic increase in attendance from last year's "slow gate." To help attendance, the management allowed military memorabilia up to 1945 for sale or exhibit.

Besides its usual Civil War re-enactors and encampments, this year's show featured a 1776 Revolutionary War living history encampment by the 8th Pennsylvania Regiment. Four "defensive compounds" featuring U.S., French, German and British re-enactors of World War II depicted life on the front lines during that war. German Mountain Troops participated in this re-enactment. It was rather chilling to see Nazi troops walking around with automatic weapons slung over their shoulders. With a large ethnic German population in the Mid-West, German World War II re-enactors are not unusual in this part of the country. I was told that one group has their own Panzer Tank. Luckily that wasn't rolling around the parking lot.

The artillery show was a loud as usual. There was a number of fife and drum corps that performed on the common. I saw one American Revolution and one Civil War fife and drum corps perform. There may have been more of these units.

One of our members, Cindy Zerkowski had the winning display in the Veterans category for her presentation of Woman's Relief Corps badges and ribbons. The annual CWWHA banquet and program was also very successful. After a delicious meal, Joyce Dowler and Chris Beisel gave an excellent slide show presentation on the restoration of the G.A.R. Hall, which their families recently purchased in downtown Johnstown, PA.



**Cindy Z's Winning WRC Display**

On a sad note, Ohio Civil War Show founder, Donald B. Williams died on June 19<sup>th</sup>, a little over a month after he completed his 32<sup>nd</sup> Show. Don, 83, was a WWII veteran of the Army Air Force. In 1950, he graduated from Penn. State University with a Civil Engineering degree. He worked as a Construction Engineer for the State of Ohio, retiring after 39 years. After moving to Ashland, OH in 1953 he founded two civil war reenactment groups. In 1977 he founded the Ohio Civil War Show at Ashland with 60 tables. The ever-enlarging Civil War Show moved to Mansfield in 1993. A quiet unassuming man, Don always had time to talk with the dealers and collectors. He will be missed.



**Don Williams**