

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 166

By Beavers

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the death of Sam Davis.

WHEREAS, Samuel C. Davis, affectionately known as Sam, son of Charles Lewis and Jane Simmons Davis, was born on October 6, 1842, in Smyrna, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, at the young age of eighteen, Sam Davis enlisted in the Confederate Army, joining the 1st Tennessee, "Rutherford Rifles," fighting in the battles of Cheat Mountain, the Shenandoah Valley, Shiloh, Perryville and Murfreesboro; and at the age of twenty-one, he was transferred to the Coleman Scouts, serving as a courier for Confederate General Braxton Bragg; and

WHEREAS, Sam Davis made his last visit to his parents' home in Smyrna, Tennessee, on November 13, 1863, where his mother gave him a dyed union overcoat; and

WHEREAS, Sam Davis was captured by Union soldiers at Minor Hill, Tennessee, on November 20, 1862, taken to Pulaski, Tennessee, where he was convicted of being a spy, refused to provide the name of his leader, and accepted his sentence of death by hanging; and on the evening before his death, Sam had a short devotional which included his singing "On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand;" and

WHEREAS, Sam Davis, on November 27, 1863, while standing on the gallows after being offered a final stay of execution, spoke these immortal words: "I would rather die a thousand deaths than betray my country or a friend," then stepped upon the trap and said, "I am ready;" and

WHEREAS, Sam Davis's body was returned to Smyrna, buried in a cemetery near his parents' home on Christmas Eve, and reinterred in 1866 behind the home in the family cemetery; and

WHEREAS, a statue of Sam Davis was dedicated at the Giles County courthouse in Pulaski, Tennessee on October 11, 1906, during a reunion of the United Confederate Veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Sam Davis Home and 168 acres were purchased by the State of Tennessee in 1927, placed under the stewardship of the Sam Davis Memorial Association, and is to this day a perpetual shrine to this great Tennessee hero; and

WHEREAS, this being the Sesquicentennial of the War Between the States and the capture, trial, and execution of Sam Davis, "Boy Hero of the Confederacy," it is also time to reflect upon Sam Davis's honor, integrity, and trust, with the hope that as citizens of the Great State of Tennessee, we too can emulate his heroic virtues; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby join with citizens from across this State to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the sacrifice of Sam Davis.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.