



Henry "Dad" Brown

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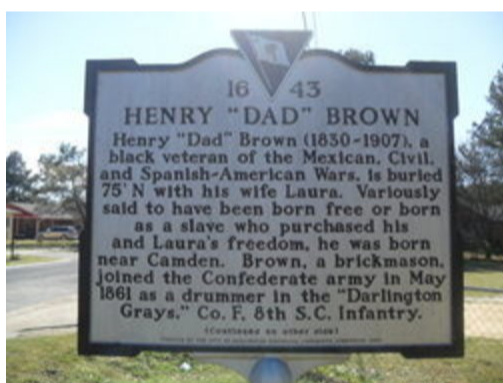
Henry "Dad" Brown | Find a Grave

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania published an article by Daniel Rolph on October 9, 2012, entitled "Pensions for African Americans who Served or Fought for the Confederate States of America." The article stated: "The records show that both free and enslaved African Americans served on behalf of the Southern states." Henry "Dad" Brown is one example cited by the author.

Born in 1830, Henry "Dad" Brown was a free black man and veteran battlefield drummer. He served in the Mexican, Civil, and Spanish-American Wars. He was a landowner and brick mason living in Darlington County, South Carolina.

In 1861, he was at First Manassas, Virginia, serving with the 8th South Carolina. It is believed that Brown captured a pair of Union drumsticks after his had been damaged. He used these for the remainder of the war. In a 1907 *Darlington Press* article, the paper wrote that "he (Brown) followed onto the (Manassas) battlefield and was under fire with the others." By 1862, he was serving in the 21st South Carolina and receiving \$12 per month for his service. The Confederate Congress authorized salaries for black musicians and specified that they were to receive the same rate of pay as white musicians, stating, "whenever colored persons are employed as musicians in any regiment or company, they shall be entitled to the same pay now allowed by law to musicians regularly enlisted."

After the war, Brown returned to Darlington, and when the Darlington Camp #785 United Confederate Veterans (UCV) Camp was organized he had his name enrolled. The *Darlington Press* article stated: "He prided himself on being a veteran and took great interest in the camp."



Marker in Darlington, South Carolina

In a February 1989 issue of *Civil War Times Illustrated*, it was remarked that "Brown had went to war not to preserve slavery or to endorse secession but, like many of his white counterparts, simply to defend his home as did his friends and neighbors."

Henry Brown died in 1907. His casket was covered with a Confederate battle flag and members of his UCV Camp acted as pallbearers. The service was conducted by both a white and a black pastor. A spiraling 20-foot obelisk was erected in his honor on his grave, and in 1990 this monument underwent restoration and was re-

dedicated. The ceremony that year was attended by over 200 people, including retired Army General William Westmoreland and Army Secretary Michael Stone.

The event caused some differing opinions among locals. Arthur Stanley, then president emeritus of the Darlington Branch of the NAACP, remarked: "I feel Henry Brown was a handy man for the white man. There are a lot of other blacks who could have been honored who weren't Uncle Toms."

Wilhelmina Johnson, who is black and founder of the Cultural, Realism, and Charm Complex and director of the Darlington County Museum of Ethnic Culture, said, "While the tribute to Dad Brown might offend some African Americans, especially considering his service in the Confederacy, I feel the tribute is long overdue."

Let's return to that Historical Society of Pennsylvania article to summarize this interesting story.

"The American Civil War and slavery are not cut and dry issues that can be summarized simply by referring to the demarcation line known as the Mason and Dixon. On both sides of the map there were exceptions to the rule, with thousands of Southerners serving in Federal units while Copperhead sympathizers and even native-born Northerners aided, abetted, or served with Confederate armed forces. Thus, why should millions of free or enslaved African Americans be any different than their white counterparts? They too were individuals who were moved by ideas and emotions of their time."



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