

Sam Davis Home  
Smyrna, Tennessee  
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Tour Guide and Intern

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During my time at the Sam Davis Home, I was responsible for guiding guests through the main house and grounds of the historic site. I also worked in the gift shop and museum as a retail associate and receptionist. In addition, I assisted the Educational Coordinator and Event Coordinator with various educational programs and events that took place throughout the year at the site. Through this process, I learned about public history and leadership as a public historian for college credit at Middle Tennessee State University.

As part of an independent study during my final semester at MTSU, I developed an education program that the staff could implement for groups that visit the Sam Davis Home. I researched the background information for this program, curriculum standards, teacher expectations, and staff expectations to complete a comprehensive program. The program, Children in the Civil War, provides teachers with activities to complete before and after their visit to the Sam Davis Home, so students gain a better understanding of the subject.

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## Summary

This education program was developed to help students learn about the life of children on plantations during the American Civil War. This program will cover the child's role within the family, with special emphasis on the Davis family children. It will also cover the day in the life of a child including chores and school, and manners and morals. The final section of this program will cover children in the war and the effects of the war on children.

## Outline

- I. Children in the Family
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## The Life of Children During the American Civil War – Script

**Introduction:** Daily life was so different for children your age than it was for children who lived during the Civil War on a plantation like the Sam Davis Home. Can you think of any differences? (*Ask students about their chores, how many siblings they have, what they do on a daily basis, their manners and morals*) Today we are going to talk about what it was like to grow up in the south during the Civil War, and you can decide if you would rather grow up then or now.

**I. Children In the Family:** In the mid-1800's, families were a lot bigger and different than most families are today. The roles within the family were also very different.

**A. Families of the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century:** (*most of this information is paraphrased from Censer, Jane Turner. NC Planters and Their Children 1800-1806. Louisiana State University Press, 1984*) Mothers were some of the busiest people during the Civil War on plantations. They were responsible for running the household which was a huge job. They were so busy, that many women never left the plantation. They occasionally went out to church, markets, or to friends houses, but they were usually so busy that they stayed at home to supervise the house. Most families had around seven children.

They had a lot of children to do chores and help run the household. However, usually about one child out of five would get sick or get hurt in an accident and die before they were five years old.

**B. The Davis Family:** In the Davis family, there were thirteen children! Not only did the children and parents live in the house, but Sam Davis' grandmother also lived there. That means there were 15 people living in one house! (*Show the students the family tree page and explain how it works*) In the Davis Family, there were thirteen children. The father, Charles, had 4 children with his first wife, Margaret, and 9 children with his second wife Jane. There were 8 boys in the family, and 5 girls. The first of the children was born in 1825, and her youngest brother was born in 1861 which is a 31 year difference! (*Ask students if this is anything similar to the way their family is*) The Davis family was really very lucky with all of their children. A lot of times, babies would die before they grew up. Of all thirteen children, they all reached adulthood except one, Everard, who died within one year of being born.

**II. A Child's Day in the 1800's:** (*Ask students about their day. What chores do they have, what do they do at school, what kind of manners are they expected to have??*) During the 1800s children were expected to do a lot more than they are today. Children had many chores, school was a lot different than it is today, and they were expected to have perfect manners and morals. (*Following information from A Child's Day by Bobbie Kalman and Tammy Everts*) Children were always up at 5am to do their morning chores. They usually had a big breakfast then went to school, did chores and then had dinner, and evenings by the fire after cleaning the kitchen. By the fire they would whittle and play with blocks, or knit and mend. Bedtime was at 9pm to have rest for the next day.

**A. Chores:** (*Much of this information was taken from Ultimate Field Trip 4 by Susan Goodman*).

**1. Women's Work:** Did everything by hand! Milking cows for butter and cheese, Churning butter which is really hard work, spinning yarn and thread from sheep's wool or cotton, cleaned, pulled, stretched, brushed on card and rolled into a cylinder, then spun to twist into yarn for knitting and weaving. Needlework was important skill for women and they started making samplers with needle and thread around age four! Women did laundry with soap made of beef or pork fat and lye. It was lots of work, and women only had one outfit besides Sunday Best, because they didn't wash clothes as much. Baking was a whole lot different with no electricity! Women made their own bread and biscuits.

**2. Men's Work:** Boys didn't choose what work they would do, but instead they usually did fathers work or were apprenticed out to work. Some common jobs were: farming: grew crops to feed family, sheep for wool, cows for dairy and beef; working in a sawmill: waterwheel powers to haul logs to mill makes it easier to saw logs into wood used for building; blacksmith: made tools for farm and kitchen, heat and pound iron on the anvil. Boys and men often went deaf from the noises.

**B. School:** (*Most of this information was taken from Ultimate Field Trip 4 by Susan Goodman and from the Sam Davis Home education program "Slates and Pails"*) At school, children had to curtsy or bow before entering the school house. There was no music, art or gym, and many schools didn't have textbooks or supplies, and sometimes used just one book for all the students! Instead of paper and pens, students used slates to read and write on- paper was too expensive except for working on penmanship. Children didn't go to school everyday when they were

needed for helping on farms. After grade six, boys were apprenticed to learn a trade, and girls learned to keep house from mothers.

**C. Manners and Morals:** (*Handouts from Manners and Morals pamphlet book. Most of this information from Duncan, John.*) Children were always reminded to mind their parents and not lie, even in their school lessons! In school if children didn't mind their teacher, they could be hit with a ruler or a sapling from a tree. Many people thought that talking loudly or laughing were signs that you were not raised right. Manners at the table were somewhat similar to what is acceptable today. Children were advised to not talk with their mouth full, not to argue, not to put their elbows on the table, or pick at their teeth. Advice from George Washington includes: respect those who are present, not speaking over others, be pleasant and don't show anger. How are these manners and morals different from what is expected of you today?

### **III. Children in the Civil War:**

The Civil War went on for many years and in that time there were many deaths (*War Deaths math activity*). Some children even went to battle and fought in the war! Even if children were left at home during the war, they would know family members or neighbors or friends who were off fighting in the war.

**B. Children in the war and battles:** During the Civil War, even children were expected to fight in the battles! If children were not needed at home to work on farms, they were often sent to the army to fight for their country. Many children were trained as drummer boys or as workers to help in the kitchen. (*Pictures of Johnny Clem and Boy by Cannon*)The boy in this picture was Johnny Clem and he was only twelve years old when he fought at the battle of Shiloh!

**C. Effects of the war on children:** (*Some information from Cashin, Joan; Marten, James.*) Even if the children weren't taking place in the battles, they certainly knew that their fathers, brothers, neighbors or friends were off fighting. If children lived near where the battles took place or where soldiers were camped, they realized that the war was loud. Many southerners could literally hear the war outside their homes of cannons, shells, and gunfire. How would you feel if this happened outside your home? People could also hear the Sounds of soldiers who were often in pain or dying. They could also hear the drums and bugles of their camps. Many people in cities in the south had to deal with siege of cities, battles, occupation by soldiers, and the burning of buildings. Many times this would mean having only bread to eat, because food was scarce. Many roads and railroads wore out from the use of them by armies. Schools closed because many of the teachers had to be soldiers. And many women and children had to work to survive.

**Conclusion:** Times were very different then than they are today. Children had to work a lot harder and a lot more was expected of them. What do you think of the differences between then and today? Which time would you rather live in?

## Pre-Activities

Choose any of these activities to use with the students before their trip to the Sam Davis Home. Handouts are included in this packet.

- ❖ Discuss the roles within the family: chores, number of siblings, family structure
- ❖ Use Davis Family Tree and worksheet pages
- ❖ Draw your family and your home
- ❖ Vocabulary handout
- ❖ Make a list of everything you do in a day including chores, school work, and what you eat
- ❖ Map Activity
- ❖ Make your own family tree
- ❖ Brainstorm and guess what life would be like during the 1800s

Suggested readings:

*The Civil War for Kids: A history with 21 Activities*  
*Strange But True Civil War Stories* by Nancy Clayton  
*Your Travel Guide to the Civil War* by Nancy Day  
*Ultimate Field Trip 4* by Susan Goodman  
*If You Lived In the Time of the Civil War* by Kay Moore  
*Children of the Civil War* by Candice Ransom  
*Kids During the American Civil War* by Lisa Wroble

## Post-activities

Choose any of these activities as a follow-up to the students' visit to the Sam Davis Home. Handouts are included in this packet.

- ❖ Draw and 1800s family and home
- ❖ Compare the differences between life during the Civil War and life today
- ❖ Coloring pages
- ❖ Deaths in the Civil War worksheet
- ❖ If the Dead could Talk activity
- ❖ Game or activity learned at the program, or from handouts

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# Vocabulary

Abolitionists

**Artillery**

**Cavalry**

**Commissary**

Confederates

**Enlist**

**Federals**

Hardtack

**Haversack**

**Minie Ball**

**Ration**

## Vocabulary Answer Key

Abolitionists – people who supported the ending of slavery in the United States

Artillery – large guns, also the name of a unit of soldiers armed with large guns

Cavalry – sword carrying troops who rode horses into battle

Commissary – the department in charge of providing food for the army

Confederates – southerners fighting for the Confederate States of America

Enlist – to join the military

Federals – a name for soldiers fighting for the Union

Hardtack – a hard biscuit made of flour, salt, and water

Haversack – a canvas shoulder bag used to hold rations

Minie Ball – a cone shaped lead bullet designed for used in the rifle-barreled musket

Ration – a soldier's daily allowance of food

## Davis Family Tree Worksheet

1. How many children were there total? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many more children did Jane have than Margaret? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many boys are there? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many girls are there? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What year was the oldest child born? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What year was the youngest child born? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What is the biggest difference in age? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Who is the youngest child? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who is the oldest child? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who has the most unusual name? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Which child lived the longest life? \_\_\_\_\_ How old were they? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Which child lived the shortest life? \_\_\_\_\_ How old were they? \_\_\_\_\_

## Davis Family Tree Answer Key

1. 13
2. 5 more than Margaret
3. 8
4. 5
5. 1825
6. 1861
7. 36 years between oldest and youngest
8. Hickman
9. Mary
10. ???
11. Andromedia – 89
12. Everard – 1

Elizabeth Collier Simmons

(1806 – 1890)

|  
|  
|

Margaret Saunders Davis

(1806 – 1840)

|  
|  
|  
|

Charles Davis

(1800 – 1874)

|  
|  
|  
|

Jane Simmons Davis

(1823 – 1875)

Mary  
(1825 – 1903)

Alfred  
(1830 – 1913)

William  
(1833 – 1894)

John  
(1839 – 1867)

Sam  
(1842 – 1863)

Margaret  
(1844 – 1910)

Oscar  
(1847 – 1927)

Andromedia  
(1849 – 1938)

Everard  
(1852 – 1853)

Lizzie  
(1854 – 1889)

Fannie  
(1857 – 1917)

Charles  
(1859 – 1929)

Hickman  
(1861 – 1926)

## Games of the 1800s

### **Going to New Orleans :**

All the players sit in a circle. One starts by saying, "I'm going to New Orleans and I'm going to take my guitar." Another says they are going to take their horse, and another their hat, etc. Then the first says he's going to play his guitar. Everyone is then going to say the previous, their own.

### **Hop Step and Jump:**

A line of players hop, then step, then jump to see who can go the farthest.

### **Leap Frog:**

Children line up one behind the other. They are on their hands and knees. Another child gets at the end of the line and jumps over all the others one at a time. If the jumper can jump over all without falling, he or she then takes the front position on hands and knees and the last person in the line becomes the jumper. When a jumper falls, he is out of the game.

## **Life of American Citizens 1861-1865**

Your task is to live the life of an American between 1861 and 1865. You will choose a role from the list below and look at books and websites to learn about their lives. Write a few pages about this person, or in diary form about a week in the life of this person.

### **Roles:**

African American Slave	Army Doctor
Army Nurse	Confederate General
Confederate Soldier	Prisoner of War
Union General	Union Soldier
Woman on the home front	African American Freeman
Child in the Battle	Child at home

You may either divide into a group for each role, or choose to do this project individually.

Name, date of birth, names of parents, siblings, spouse, any children.

What city and state are you from? North or South?

What is your job during the Civil War? What tools do you use?

Give a final analysis of this person, why you chose him/her, what you admire about this person, and what you learned from this project. Find out what makes you and your time different from your person and their time. Try to find photographs or drawings of the people, place, and clothing.

## Map Activity

1. Which states were Confederate States?
2. Which states were Union States?
3. Which state is southernmost?
4. Which state is the furthest in the North?
5. Which state is Vicksburg located?
6. In which state is Fort Sumter located?
7. Which states border Tennessee ?

### Map Activity Answer sheet:

1. Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas,
2. Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Missouri
3. Florida
4. Maine
5. Mississippi
6. South Carolina
7. Kentucky , Virginia , North Carolina , Georgia , Alabama , Mississippi , Arkansas, Missouri

## Deaths in the Civil War

1. Which state had the most deaths total during the Civil War? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many people from Iowa died from accidents? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many people from California died of disease or accident? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many people in Pennsylvania died of causes not related to battle? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many more people died in Missouri than in Connecticut? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What percentage of deaths in Dakota were battle-related? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How many residents of Tennessee did not die of disease? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Which state had the most prisoner of war deaths? \_\_\_\_\_
9. How many US Citizens died during the Civil War? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Which state had the least amount of deaths total? \_\_\_\_\_

## Deaths in the Civil War Answer Key

1. New York
2. 227
3. 406
4. 1,381
5. 8,531
6. 33 1/3%
7. 2,691
8. Pennsylvania
9. 359,528
10. Dakota

States & Territories	Killed/ Wounded	Died of Disease	Died Prisoner	Died from Accidents	Died Causes except Battle	Total Deaths
Alabama	50	228	22	5	40	345
Arkansas	305	1,254	8	25	121	1,713
California	108	344		62	59	573
Colorado	153	120		25	25	323
Connecticut	1,947	2,542	526	101	238	5,354
Dakota	2	4				6
Delaware	383	356	75	21	47	882
District of Columbia	41	150	44	10	45	290
Florida	18	189			8	215
Georgia		13			2	15
Illinois	9,884	21,065	1,721	1,028	1,126	34,834
Indiana	7,243	16,663	1,152	791	853	26,672
Iowa	3,540	8,498	515	227	221	13,001
Kansas	737	1,638	36	104	115	2,630
Kentucky	2,478	6,383	860	454	599	10,774
Louisiana	214	624	15	36	56	945
Maine	3,184	5,257	541	118	298	9,393
Maryland	909	1,160	647	98	168	2,982
Massachusetts	6,115	5,530	1,483	257	557	13,942
Michigan	4,448	8,269	1,268	339	429	14,753
Minnesota	626	1,677	159	43	79	2,584
Mississippi	3	66		1	8	78
Missouri	3,317	9,243	225	487	613	13,885
Nebraska	35	159	1	23	21	239
Nevada	2	29		1	1	33
New Hampshire	1,903	2,427	294	76	182	4,882
New Jersey	2,578	2,415	419	134	208	5,754
New Mexico	73	144		19	41	277
New York	19,085	19,835	4,710	914	1,990	46,534
North Carolina	43	216	49	3	49	360
Ohio	11,588	19,365	2,356	1,168	998	35,475
Oregon	11	21		7	6	46
Pennsylvania	15,265	11,782	4,119	636	1,381	33,183
Rhode Island	460	648	84	69	60	1,321
Tennessee	744	4,086	1,150	375	422	6,777
Texas	12	101	1	6	21	141
Vermont	1,809	2,597	486	70	262	5,224
Virginia	10	16	13	2	1	42
Washington Territory		12		5	5	22
West Virginia	1,247	1,878	617	150	125	4,017
Wisconsin	3,802	7,464	604	212	219	12,301
Indian Nations	107	775		10	126	1,018
Regular Army	2,283	2,552	540	197	116	5,798
Colored Troops	2,894	29,658	98	576	3,621	36,847
U.S. Volunteers	12	202		11	18	243
U.S. Sharpshooters	263	247	25	6	11	552
Veteran Reserves	27	1,424		131	90	1,672
Generals and Staffs	85	142	1	10	1	239
Miscellaneous	16	200	2	1	13	232
<b>Total:</b>	<b>110,070</b>	<b>199,720</b>	<b>24,866</b>	<b>9,058</b>	<b>15,814</b>	<b>359,528</b>

