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**The Last Full Measure (66) – Mammy
Kate**

Lead: For 400 years service men and women have fought to carve out and defend freedom and the civilization we know as America. This series on A Moment in Time is devoted to the memory of those warriors, whose devotion gave, in the words of Lincoln at Gettysburg, the last full measure.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Stephen Heard was born in 1740 in Hanover County, Virginia. Heard served under George

Washington during the French and Indian War and was promoted to the rank of captain because of his courageous and exceptional leadership. In 1769, with his father and brother, Heard moved to Georgia and, like many Americans, tried to stay out of the fight during the early days of the Revolution. The loss of members of his family at the hands of Tories, Crown loyalists brought him into the war on the patriot side where he distinguished himself in the ranks of the Georgia militia at the crucial Battle of Kettle Creek near Augusta, on Valentine's Day, 1779. Unfortunately, at that battle Heard was captured and transported to Fort Cornwallis, a military jail in the village of Augusta, then held by the

British.

Shortly after his incarceration, there appeared at the gate of the prison, one of Heard's house slaves, Mammy Kate, a woman of impressive physical dimensions, over 6 feet tall, who may have been born in Africa. She and her husband, Daddy Jack, a gardener on the family plantation, Heardmont, located not far from Augusta, made the journey when they heard of their master's capture and impending execution. She convinced the guards to allow her to keep Heard in clean clothing and likely also provided this service to the Fort guards as well. Every day or so she would show up with a clothes basket on her head and gradually blended

into the life of the prison.

One evening, a guard let slip that Heard was about to be executed and Mammy Kate put into action a plan that she had been considering for some time. Apparently, Heard was of diminutive stature -- small as Mammy Kate was large. She convinced her master to get in the clothes basket, covered him with linens, but the basket on her head and carried him right out of the prison. They made their way to the outskirts of Augusta where she and Daddy Jack had stashed a couple of horses and the little party made its way back to Heardmont and freedom.

For her heroism, Stephen Heard

granted manumission, freedom, to Mammy Kate and probably Daddy Jack as well. Recognizing the perils of being cast out on their own in world that did not particularly welcome freedmen, and demonstrating the loyalty and affection that prompted her heroic rescue, as legend would have it, she refused, saying, “Na, Marse Stephen, you may set me free, but I ain’t ‘gwiner set you free.” She was given a small tract of land and a small cottage, but remained in service to the Heard family until her death. Mammy Kate was buried in the family plot at Heardmont between her master and her husband.

Research by Katherine Mariani, at the University of Richmond, this is

Dan Roberts.

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