



Karen Stokes

Karen Stokes has been an archivist with the society since 1994. She has a BA in English from the College of Charleston and an MS in library and information science from the University of South Carolina. Her main focus is the processing and cataloging of our wonderful manuscript collection, and her primary area of interest is South Carolina in the Confederacy. She has published a number of articles and books on this subject including *Faith, Valor and Devotion: The Civil War Letters of William Porcher DuBose, A Confederate Englishman*, *Days of Destruction: Augustine Thomas Smythe and the Civil War Siege of Charleston*, *The Immortal 600*, *Confederate South Carolina*, and *South Carolina Civilians in Sherman's Path*.

Current Talks, additional topics available upon request

The Siege of Charleston, 1863-1865

This talk focuses on the relentless artillery bombardment of Charleston which began in August 1863 and continued until the occupation of the city in February 1865. Using the latest weapons, Northern forces fired into Charleston night and day from Morris Island—a distance of more than five miles. This was the longest siege of the war, and it is well-documented in many eyewitness accounts in the forms of letters, diaries, and military records.

Sherman's March through the Carolinas

In the winter of 1865, General William T. Sherman led a massive army of more than 60,000 troops on a campaign through South Carolina—burning farms, plantations, and towns; demolishing railroads; destroying or confiscating crops and livestock; and plundering civilians. Many South Carolinians left behind graphic accounts of their encounters with this army, which continued its destructive march into North Carolina in March 1865.

The Burning of Columbia, 1865

On February 17, 1865, the mayor of Columbia surrendered the city to General William T. Sherman, who assured him that the city and its citizens were perfectly safe. Sherman's soldiers, however, pillaged the city throughout the day, and that night, much of Columbia was consumed by fire. This talk recounts the events through the letters and diaries of those who lived through them.