

### Civil War Hunting Can Be Productive at Any Age



*(Left)* Lucas Hall proudly holds the Civil War sword he found near his Berryville, Virginia, home one week after receiving a new metal detector for his seventh birthday.

*(Above)* Closer view of Lucas' recovered sword after it had been cleaned by a local restoration expert.

Don't tell 7-year-old Lucas Hall that he's too young to understand relic hunting for Civil War artifacts. He might just smile and show you some of his recoveries.

This first-grader from Clarke County, Virginia, became interested in metal detectors at age 6. According to his mother, Tina, Lucas became very interested in owning his own detector thanks to a neighbor who had been a relic hunter for some 25 years. The man gave the youngster a few minié balls that he had dug.

Lucas was already fond of the Discovery Channel program "Meteorite Man," which chronicles the efforts of two men in finding meteorites with their metal detectors. The Civil War bullets only further fueled Lucas' desire to obtain a metal detector to search for his own artifacts.

He was naturally thrilled when his parents recently bought him a Garrett *ACE 150* for his seventh birthday. His hometown area of Winchester was the site of six key engagements during the Civil War. The Battle of Opequon, or more commonly known as the Third Battle of Winchester, was fought in September 1864, not far from his own home.

More than 40,000 Union troops engaged some 12,000 Confederates in a battle that marked a turning point in the Shenandoah Valley in favor of the North. Clarke County had other engagements and numerous troops camped around this area during 1864.

Lucas, along with his 9-year-old sister Samantha and their father Gary, quickly learned the basics of his new *ACE 150* and began searching on private property. During their first days of searching, both Lucas and Samantha were excited to dig their own Civil War minié balls and rim-fire rifle-musket cartridges.

About a week after his birthday, young Lucas and his dad set off on their four-wheelers on a November Saturday with the detector. Gary recalled, "We reached a spot where Lucas said, 'Right here.' So, we stopped our four-wheelers and he began hunting."

Lucas very quickly announced that he had something. As he began digging up a sizable object, Gary was at first skeptical. "It's probably an old fence post," he said as his son began pulling a long object from the dirt. Gary, kneeling down to help Lucas un-