

# IN THE TRENCHES

A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
LT GENERAL JOHN C. PEMBERTON CAMP 1354  
VICKSBURG MISSISSIPPI  
SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS  
February 2015 Issue

Edward Campbell Commander  
Eddy Cresap Editor

## **Commander's Column**

Dear Compatriots,

I would like to wish each and every one of you a Happy Lee-Jackson Birthday Celebration. These two men are the Forgotten heroes of our country and it is indeed a shame that so few people know the real facts about them. Both men were of impeccable Christian character and Stonewall Jackson is famous for having started a Sunday school for the slaves and free blacks of Lexington, Va. I bet that is not taught in our History classes these days. Please proudly honor the memory of these great men each and every day of the year, not just in January.

Our next meeting will be on February 3. Please bring a friend. I want to talk about recruitment at the next meeting, if each one of us just brought one friend to one meeting; that would start the ball rolling. New members are the lifeblood of our organization.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the next meeting.

Sincerely,

Edward Campbell,  
Commander

## **Prayers**

Keep Edward Campbell's family in your Prayers

## **Upcoming meetings**

Our meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month starting at 7:00 pm. Our meeting location is 216 Miller Street in the Disabled American Veterans building. Our website contains direction to the meeting location. Visitors are always welcome. If you would like to present a program, please contact Commander Edward Campbell at [ewccrystalsprings@yahoo.com](mailto:ewccrystalsprings@yahoo.com). Bring a visitor to our next meeting.

Below are the list of upcoming meetings and speakers

<i>Date</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
February 3	Josh Edwards	John Cashman CSA
March 3	Marion Roberson	J.S. Gage of the 11th Ms.
April 7	Thomas Watts	the Hinds Family

## **Lincoln the War Criminal**

There will be a lot of talk about Lincoln over the month of February. Do not get tricked into the Yankee myths about how Lincoln was good for the South. The death of all of our Southern Patriots, the suffering of Southern families, the desecrating of our Churches, the burning and looting of our homes, the raping of our women and many other atrocities can be directly laid at his feet.

## **January Meeting**

We gathered to honor Lee and Jackson and had a real good night. The meeting was opened with prayer, our salutes and pledges. The food was very good and the fellowship was a joy. We were blessed by having Sam Price and Jerry McWilliams attend our Lee Jackson meeting. After we ate, Commander Campbell gave us our program on General Lee. The focus of the presentation was on the character of General Lee not his military genius. The meeting was closed with a prayer.

## **General Lees Birthday Party**

On the General's birthday on January 19, members of the John C. Pemberton met at noon. We celebrated his birthday with a brown bag lunch, a birthday cake, and Confederate fellowship. Thanks to Wayne for arranging this celebration. Thanks to Josh for newspaper coverage.

## **A Member Passes Over The River**

Major Robert Armstrong died on Jan 12th. He is to be cremated and burial will be in the Natchez Military Cemetery at a later date. His wife Jonette has requested representation from someone in the S.C.V. to be at the funeral. We will let everyone know when we receive details. His ancestor was General Frank Crawford Armstrong who served under General Forrest.

## **Patriot Wall**

We (Wayne and Joel) have mounted a cork board on the wall of our meeting room. Joel reports that the enclosed cork board is pretty heavy. We would like to mount a picture of the patriot you joined the SCV under or any other Confederate family veteran on this board. You can bring a picture to the meeting or e mail it to me at chaerlescresap33@att.net. I will print out and post your ancestor. If you need help scanning your picture for printing and posting also contact me and we will work through the technology needed.

## **Heritage Month in Vicksburg**

We have tentatively scheduled the John C. Pemberton Confederate Heritage month memorial service for Sunday April 26 to be held in Soldiers Rest. We usually start the event after church services about 2:00. We will start discussing details at our February meeting. If you have any ideas for the service or other ideas for Heritage month please share them at our February meeting

## **March Meeting**

The program for our March meeting will be done by ancestors of J. S. Gage, 11th Mississippi Infantry. For a short review of J. S. Gage go to the October newsletter. The archived newsletters are on our website. This will be a do not miss

## **IMO**

Much has been written and argued about the "Cause of the War". The Yankee myth is of course the never ending "slavery story". My take on the matter is the Yankee myth confuses several questions.

One real question is "Why did the Southern States leave the union?" The answer to that question is as varied as the number of people who cast their ballot for secession. The Yankees tried to paint this subject as a takeover of the Southern State governments by a small group of traitors with troops sent to put down the rebellion. The truth is each state in fact followed an orderly, democratic and legal approach to secession. This idea of secession was not new but was an action that had been threatened several times before by the New England States when things did not go their way. It is true that several of the Deep South states mentioned slavery in their secession papers.

It is also true that the states of the upper South said they were leaving the union because of the illegal actions of the Yankee President. Now comes the question of "Why the Yankee government invaded the South". The stated reason by the Yankee government at the beginning of the war was to reunite the union. Lincoln himself said "Who will fund my government?" Lincoln badly needed the "Tax Cow" of the Southern States.

The firing on Fort Sumter was a carefully orchestrated event. The state of South Carolina did not want a foreign government maintaining a tax collecting facility in their sovereign country. And the North needed a "battle cry" to raise public opinion to force the South back into the union. It was not until later in the war that Lincoln evoked ending slavery as a "noble cause" of the war. Even with that the proclamation, as it was written, slavery was only ended in the areas the North did not control.

The most important question for me is "Why did the men of the South fight the War of Southern Independence?" Just as the name says, they were fighting to establish a government using the ideals their fathers and grandfathers had fought the British for in the First War of Independence. They saw themselves defending the original concept of the Constitution. Why did the brave men fight the ruthless Yankees in the War of Northern aggression? To protect their families, homes and altars from an invading horde. Have you ever seen a battle flag or heard a battle cry that said "I want my slaves". Do you think the brave men of the South suffered and died so the rich plantation owners had someone to pick their cotton?

## **Flag Restoration**

In many cases the old veteran's battle flags are our last physical link to their valor. Many of their flags are in possession of the State of Mississippi Archives and History. There they are rotting away to dust. It is up to us as decedents of these brave men to preserve their battle flags for our descendants to see. There are three funding activities. Direct donations, SCV car tags, and sale of coffee cups. Our camp has a supply of coffee cups.

## **The War in California**

Thanks to Sam Price for putting me on this story

Asbury Harpending was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky in 1839. the son of a large landowner. At the age of fifteen, he was sent away to college, but within the year he ran away to join a plot hatched by General William Walker. Walker, acting as a private individual, without official U.S. sanction, planned to lead an expedition to Nicaragua to overthrow the government. Harpending didn't quite make it to Nicaragua because the U.S. authorities caught him on the Mississippi River and returned him home. At this point, his father decided the best thing to do with the teenager was to let him sail to California. Harpending left from New Orleans with \$5 in gold in his pocket and a revolver. Showing the business savvy that would make him a millionaire several times over in his future, he spent the \$5 on bananas and oranges, which he sold on board at a \$400 profit to fellow travelers desperate for fresh fruit. He made his early fortune mining in California and Mexico prior to the War for Southern Independence. In the run-up to the war, California was torn between Southern sympathizers and partisans of the Union. He

was determined to do anything he could to help the Confederacy, and he knew that if the supply of California gold could be cut off, the Union would suffer a serious blow. In 1861, he joined in a conspiracy, which failed, to seize San Francisco and create a "Pacific Republic" in California and Oregon. In 1863, after traveling secretly to Richmond, Harpending obtained a letter of marque from the Confederate Government. After fighting at the battle of Shiloh, he returned to join with other California members of the Knights of the Golden Circle in San Francisco to outfit the schooner J. M. Chapman, as a Confederate privateer in San Francisco Bay. The cover story would be that they needed the arms to protect a mine in Mexico. They enlisted 20 Southerners as soldiers and engaged a regular crew to sail the ship. Their plan was to sail to Manzanillo in Mexico, lie in wait for a steamer, capture it, convert the prize into an armed privateer, and then intercept two more steamers. The goal was to carry gold and silver shipments back to support the Confederacy. Their attempt was detected when a member of his crew betrayed the plan and they were seized on the night of their intended departure by the USS Cyane, revenue officers and San Francisco police. The conspirators were tried and found guilty of treason. Asbury Harpending, and the other leaders were each sentenced to ten years in prison and confined at Alcatraz. A few months later President Lincoln issued an amnesty proclamation granting full pardon to all political prisoners upon the condition that they take and keep the oath of allegiance. Harpending was given his freedom in February 1864.

### **Changing the Name Against the Law**

Our case against the University of Mississippi is still in the discovery stage. The Division Judge Advocate hopes to have a court date in 6 months or so.

## Poets Corner (Thanks Joel)

### **THE MEN IN GRAY**

**Joel T. Bailey**

**The men in gray are marching  
And it's such a sight to see  
Men from all walks of life  
Off to meet the enemy**

**With the Stars and bars flying  
And thousands of rebel yells  
The men in gray charges  
Into musket and cannon shells**

**The weeks turn into months  
And the victories now are few  
The men in gray are wavering  
Against the lines of yankee blue**

**After four long years of fighting  
They were battle worn and sore  
They had gave their very best  
But now they could fight no more**

**General Grant is in Richmond  
There to meet with General Lee  
The men in gray had surrendered  
It's the end of the Confederacy**

**The civil war is finally over  
The men in gray now a memory  
But they will live on forever  
In the annals of history**

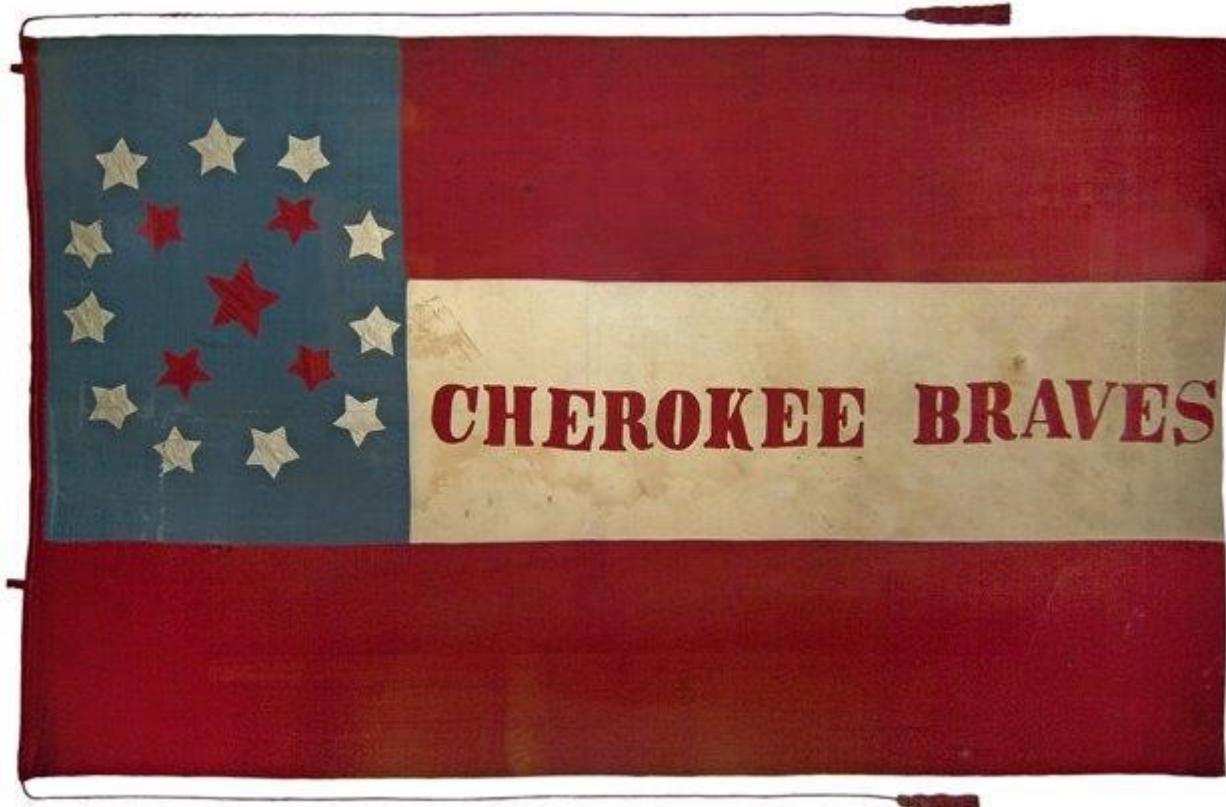
### **John C. Pemberton Camp Website**

Go to <http://scv-camp-1354.com/> to view our website. Thanks to our Webmaster Bill Fryer. Bill is creating a "Wall of Honor" for our ancestors. Check it out on the web site and add your ancestor. Also find directions to our meeting location.

## **Newsletter**

If anyone has read a good book, visited an interesting place, would like to post a bio of their Confederate ancestor, or just has a thought they would like to share with the membership, forward the article to me: [charlescresap33@att.net](mailto:charlescresap33@att.net) and I will place it in the next newsletter. Also if you have any ideas for making the newsletter better serve you, please let me know.

## **Confederate allies**



This flag was carried by Colonel Stand Watie's Cherokee Mounted Rifles; the body of the flag is the First National pattern flag of the Confederate States; the canton is blue with eleven white stars in a circle, surrounding five red stars representing the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw and Seminole); the large red star in the center represents the Cherokee Nation.

"Cherokee Braves" is lettered in red in the center of the white stripe. The 1st Cherokee Mounted Rifles was organized in July 1861, under the command of Colonel John Drew, and consisted of full-blood Cherokees. The 2nd Cherokee Mounted Rifles was organized under the command of Colonel Stand Waite, and consisted of Cherokees of mixed blood. The members of Drew's regiment combined with Waite's regiment and were reorganized as the 1st Regiment Cherokee Mounted Rifles; during the War of Northern Aggression, Waitie's regiment participated in twenty-seven major engagements and numerous skirmishes. Most of his activities utilized guerilla warfare tactics.

## **Mississippi Division Memorial service**

The Division Memorial Service will be held in Oxford, Mississippi at the Confederate Cemetery on the Ole Miss campus on April 25th. The time will be announced later. Sons of Confederate Veterans Past Commander-in-Chief Chuck McMichael will be our guest speaker at the Division Memorial Service So come on out and hear Chuck. His talks are always good and very motivational.

## **From the Division Commander**

January 10, 2015

Compatriots,

What I am going to write some would say I do not need to because as a Commander you shouldn't have to explain everything you do. While I appreciate that sentiment it is not the way I work. In all my "controversial" actions I have always sought counsel from my God, members whose opinions I value or from the Executive Council of this organization. I am not the commander of one brigade or one group of individuals but the commander of the Mississippi Division Sons of Confederate Veterans which encompasses 45 camps throughout the State of Mississippi. I have tried to consider everyone in my decisions whenever possible. If you think that is wrong you are entitled to your opinion but the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few.

It was my desire to hold the 2015 Division Memorial Day service at Oxford. Originally it was thought to be a way to allow our members in other areas of our State that cannot for whatever reason make the trip to the Coast to attend the service that has been held for so many years at Beauvoir. While some have chastised me for breaking a long held tradition I do not see it as that. I may be wrong but this type of event should be shared among the Division members, in my opinion, and I believe it should be moved around the Division every year. But, I did not solely make that decision on my own. I expressed my desires to the Executive Council of this Division and asked if everyone was okay with that decision. No one spoke out against it or questioned it. So, based on that response I proceeded to ask the University Greys to host the Division Memorial service in Oxford. They agreed. Over the months since we have engaged in a lawsuit against the University of Mississippi I have to come to see the service in Oxford as an opportunity to demonstrate to the community and State a show of solidarity against the attacks to our Southern heritage. This was not a part of my initial object for holding the service there because we had not engaged in the lawsuit when the idea to move it there came to me. However, as you all know we are engaged in a continuing battle against the principles for which we stand and against the attacks on our ancestors. If we could show up at this service to show them what we stand for and who we are it may be extremely beneficial. So, with that said I am asking each of you to consider attending the Mississippi Division Memorial service to

show our solidarity to that community. I know that not everyone can attend because just as the drive to the coast is hard for some in upper Mississippi so will the drive to Oxford be difficult for some in South Mississippi. If you cannot make it then please attend whatever Confederate Memorial service you can. The object being to demonstrate to those that are watching us that we still and will always honor our ancestors' memory.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those members, that have expressed it to me, for your support and I also want to thank those members that do not like some decisions I have made or just plain do not like me for whatever reason, as I know we cannot like everyone but we are charged by Jesus to love them. No one can please everyone. I can say though I appreciate those that have spoken out against me for helping become a better man and Christian. At times I have gotten angry and wanted to say bad things against them but my Savior, Gen. R. E. Lee and my Masonic obligations have been my guides in my conduct toward my fellow man and I have held my tongue and prayed for forgiveness for those thoughts and I have prayed for my enemies. I am no better than any of you and I do make my share of mistakes. You are all my brothers in the Cause and I appreciate what you have done to help me grow along the way. I just pray that when my term is over that maybe I will have left the Division somewhat better as we move into an unknown future and as we continue to uphold our Charge as Sons of Confederate Veterans.

I am your obedient servant,  
Allen C. Terrell, Commander  
Mississippi Division Sons of Confederate Veterans

### **From the Chief of Heritage Defense**

This New Year is the 150th anniversary of the end of the fighting between the armed forces of the United States of America and the Confederate States of America. May it also be the end of the ongoing mendacious attacks on the honored heritage and history of the men who carried that fight for the Southern cause. May this be the year when the national media recognizes that the War Between the States was about the cultural, political, economic and Constitutional differences that had evolved from the shared national experience and not about the single issue of slavery in the Southern region. May this be the year when the full truth about slavery as the "American Sin" and not the "Southern Sin", be fully understood. May Americans learn that slavery was financed in the North, controlled by the Northern slave traders, and that the profits from the trade and from the cotton went mainly to the North. May this be the year when the divisive demagoguery of "political correctness" is exposed as the idiocy that it is and becomes a thing of the past, remembered only

as a sad and silly period when decisions were made by an odd and distorted view of relationships, sensibilities, and common sense. May it be the year when people go back to making decisions based on the admonitions of our great religious teachings, and not on appeals to victimhood or prejudice. May this be the year when we begin to judge people by the content of their character and not by the color of their skin. May this be the year when the 70 million American descendants of those who fought for the Confederacy proudly stand up and be counted. May our voices be heard in such numbers that it will turn the tide of hatred and ignorance that comes daily against us.

May this be the year when those bigots who use the beloved symbols of our courageous ancestors to spread a gospel of racial hatred and superiority be exposed as the fools they are. May this be the year when the flags of our forefathers once again stand for that which is the best within us, rather than the worst.

May this be the year when we counter-attack the demagogues who wish to destroy every vestige of our Confederate heritage. May this be the year when our statues, monuments and gravestones are not attacked by vandals of every stripe, and when our flags fly more than ever in places of deserved honor. May this be the year when every member of our brotherhood becomes more involved as spokesmen for the Cause, and when all of us do something of active service every day to carry a positive message about our ancestry. May this be the year when the national media stops portraying our ancestors as "traitors" and portraying us as "Nazis", "white supremacists" and "racists". May this be the year when they recognize their own sanctimonious posturing and when they realize the stupidity of anyone assuming a moral superiority in matters of the heart.

May this be the year when our national leaders transcend the weary, mean-spirited and divisive politics of yesterday and break through to policies that bring Americans together in mutual respect and purpose. May this be the year when we Sons of Confederate Veterans lead a victorious struggle for an honest modern understanding of the extraordinary and exemplary courage of our honored and beloved ancestors. May this be the year when we stand fearlessly together against the orchestrated smear campaign of those who would "culturally cleanse" the nation of any positive thought of our forefathers.

May this be the year when our membership puts aside our petty differences and our personal ambitions and solidly unite for a higher and more important cause.

May this be the year when we Sons of Confederate Veterans restore the good name of Robert E. Lee and the million men who left home and hearth to follow him.

May our nation realize that the men of the Confederacy were thoroughly American, and that they were of many ancestries and races and creeds, and that they did what they did in their time because their forefathers had done the same. And above all, may this be the year when a Loving Creator guides all of us in every moment as we face the challenges of protecting our heritage while building

our future. May the Great Healer intervene in the hearts and souls of all of us, and bring to closure the ancient wounds of our Nation's past.

Ben Jones

Chief of Heritage Operations

### ***Mississippi Division Guardian Program***

The Purpose of the program is to honor the memory of our Confederate ancestors and through its implementation will provide the preservation of their final resting places and will document for future generations their sacrifices. Any Mississippi Division camp member in good standing, who is at least 12 years of age and who has demonstrated his desire and ability to serve as a GUARDIAN may apply for the program. All compatriots are encouraged to participate in the program to honor our ancestors and to protect their final resting place.

The guardian shall care for and protect the grave(s) of a Confederate Veteran, ensuring that the grave site is kept clean and well maintained year round. He shall perform these duties personally unless he is physically unable because of health reasons. At no time shall these responsibilities be passed on to another without the approval of the GUARDIAN committee for the Mississippi Division.

He will be responsible to appropriately mark the grave so it is designated as a final resting place of a Confederate Veteran. This can be by stone, plaque, Cross of Honor, etc.

He will also be responsible for replacing or repairing any marker that is worn, damaged or destroyed.

He shall personally visit the grave a minimum of two times a year to include Confederate Memorial Day or at least one week prior. He shall place a wreath or a small Confederate flag or both on the grave.

If you are interested in the program contact me at [charlescresap33@att.net](mailto:charlescresap33@att.net) for an application and more details

### **Friends of Beauvoir**

Beauvoir the Home of Jefferson Davis is Owned and Operated by the Mississippi Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Here is an Invitation to give the Past a Future!

Go to [http://www.beauvoir.org/Support\\_Beauvoir/index.html](http://www.beauvoir.org/Support_Beauvoir/index.html) for details

## **Bricks for Beauvoir**

The plans are for a brick plaza around the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Each brick would cost \$50.00 and would have the name of a Confederate ancestor of members of the SCV who give to the effort. “The Bricks for Beauvoir” Project is spearheaded by Larry McCluney, Past Commander of the Mississippi Division. Thirteen columns, in a crescent, will represent the 13 States of the Confederacy and will fly the flag of each respective State.

## **Confederate Memorial Service at Beauvoir**

Beauvoir's Annual Confederate Memorial Day will be held Saturday April 25, 2015 on the very historic property of beautiful Beauvoir: The Jefferson Davis Home & Presidential Library. There will be a potluck lunch on the grounds around noon. The program will begin at 2pm with a speaker to be named at a later date. We will have more work completed on the Bricks for Beauvoir Project to view. Anyone who would like to come dressed out in Confederate Uniform would be welcome to be a part of the Honor Guard.

SCV & UDC Camps who wish to lay a wreath are welcome to do so. Anyone who would like to participate & take part can get with Beauvoir personnel & staff to make plans & accommodations. We have a hotel partner, Regency Hotel, in the Promenade that can give you a good deal on a very nice affordable hotel room.

## **Beauvoir Board Meeting**

The next quarterly meeting of the Combined Boards of Beauvoir will be Saturday, February 14, 2015 @ 10am in the Board room of the Jefferson Davis Presidential Library. Mississippi Division members are welcome to attend. Seating is limited. Division members must be on the agenda to address the Board

## **Division Board Meeting**

The next Mississippi Division Executive Council meeting will be held on February 21, 2015 beginning at 10 AM. It will be held at the SCV office in the War Memorial Building.

## **Fourth Brigade Picnic**

The Fourth Brigade Picnic will be Co-Sponsored by the Jefferson Davis Camp 1862 and the Lowry Rifles 1740. Start time will be 10.30 at the Historic Newton Doolittle C.S.A. Cemetery on Saturday March 28, 2015.

## **The Fourth Brigade Johnston - White Picnic**

The Fourth Brigade Picnic and Memorial Service will start at 10:30 am at the Historic American Legion Post 89 on Saturday March 28. There will be a general meeting followed by a pot luck dinner at 11:45 am. The Memorial Service will be at the Historic Newton Doolittle CSA Cemetery at 2:00 pm. There we will honor our Confederate Heroes by placing a Mississippi Division SCV Memorial Bench at the Historic Cemetery.

## **120th Mississippi Division Convention**

2015 Division will be in Columbus MS hosted by the General William Barksdale Camp 1220 on June 5 - 7, 2015.

## **Upcoming National Conventions**

2015-Richmond Virginia July 15 - 19 2015

<http://www.jebstuartcamp.org/jebstuartcamp.org/2015reunion/> for details

2016-Dallas/Ft. Worth, Texas

2017-Memphis, Tennessee

## **Stephen Dill Lee Institute**

The Stephen Dill Lee Institute will be held Dallas, Texas at the Double Tree Hotel on February 6-7, 2015 and will be hosted by the Texas Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. The overall topic will be THE REAL RESULTS OF 1865. Please register on the website or contact Ms. Cindy White at 1-800-My Dixie. Hotel reservations can be made directly at the hotel or as specified on this website. Please feel free to contact me at 804- 389- 3620 or visit our website at [www.StephenDLeeInstitute.com](http://www.StephenDLeeInstitute.com) for further information.

## **Division Newsletter**

At our Division Convention in June, a motion was made and passed to go electronic with the Jeff Davis Legion Newsletter. Our method to distribute the "Legion" will be to notify the Camp Adjutants and/or Commanders when the Legion is posted on the Mississippi Division website. A link to the newsletter will be provided. It will be the duty of the Camp Adjutant to provide the link to their members. The Adjutant will have to print copies for members who do not have computers or access to the internet for mailing or handout. If the mailing of the "Legion" becomes too great a financial burden for a Camp, the Division will consider re-assuming the mailing of those copies. If you have not received your Jeff Davis Legion (Division Newsletter) for the fall 2014 issue please contact me.

## Chaplain's Corner

For the Brethren:

It would seem the rule rather than the exception that we will be confronted with those temptations which we, in former times, once indulged in to please our flesh. St. Paul understood this well. As he explained to the youthful Timothy in his second epistle: ... in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these (iniquities), he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work (2:20-21).

In his first epistle to the Corinthian church, the apostle penned the following admonition: Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are (3:16-17). And our Lord's testimony affirmed that understanding which the apostle set forth when he said, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come and make our abode with him (St. John 14:23).

In his epistle to the Ephesian church, St. Paul called on his readers to, put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts and be renewed in the spirit of your mind and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (4:17-32). But the devil has been ever ready to put forward his alternatives to the sound doctrines of the Bible. The heresy of the Antinomians stressed the notion that once a person became a Christian, said individual was then freed from the obligations of the moral law. The heresy of the Pelagians espoused the belief that Christians were born into a state of grace and did not need to do good works. As stated, these and other cleverly devised falsehoods were crafted by our adversary to lead souls away from sound Christian doctrine and into those churches which may be properly described as synagogues of Satan (Revelation 3:9). Matthew Henry once noted that these are "Assemblies that either worship false gods, or the true God in a false manner..." To counter these and other false teachings, the apostle advised all who are of the faith to properly arm themselves against such erroneous beliefs (Ephesians 6:10-18). As a Roman soldier's armor protected him from being seriously injured in earthly combat, so our spiritual armor guards our vessels and promotes the furtherance of the work of the Holy Ghost in our lives. We cannot do ourselves or others any good if we have been injured or degraded by the adversary. Only by keeping our armor on and in good shape will we be able to fight the good fight in our Lord's service. With that in mind, let us take a few moments to examine the apostle's prescription for arming ourselves in this great cause. First of all, the apostle informed us with whom we are wrestling. While it is true that we

confront fellow mortals, we should understand that these human agents are only the visible representations of our true enemies in this fight. For behind our earthly enemies are the dark forces of satanic power. Some will attack us with anger and vitriol, while others will subtly seek to overthrow us by appealing to our desires for goods, entertainment and the like. Our adversary knows each of us better than we know ourselves, so it would be wise to keep up your guard against such temptations. Now, not all things that are pleasurable are anti-Christian, or evil. Still, we ought to be discerning so that we do fall again into sin. We must stand girded with the truth of God's word. And to be effectively garbed will require each of us to familiarize ourselves with the Scriptures. For it is only through the study of God's word that we are enabled to learn of and thus adopt those behaviors which will affirm our relationship with God and keep us out of the camp of the wicked one. That is why it is imperative that we be properly supported spiritually to avoid being overthrown and made a castaway.

We should be shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. The apostle wrote in his epistle to the Romans (12:18) that we should live peaceably with all men. The gospel we have been entrusted with is a gospel of peace. It is not an earthly panacea or cure-all which can be employed by the profane and the godless. It is of a spiritual nature which will one day result in everlasting joy for those of the household of faith. To possess God's peace means that we are satisfied within ourselves that God will do as he has promised. And that settled nature will be communicated to others around us in more ways than just through our words. As my father taught me, "actions speak louder than words." And so it is through our life and witness, others may also receive the blessing of God's grace. We need to take up the shield of faith which quenches all the fiery darts of the wicked one. Satan's minions are constantly battering at our defenses. If subterfuge does not work, then they will attack us directly and in some cases, unexpectedly. But if we have our shield of faith in the atoning work of Christ, we will quench their malicious missiles. We also need to put on the helmet of salvation. Your vessel needs protection from head to foot and the helmet will protect you from the sharp blows of the devil's assaults because we can rest assured that we are saved and that our armor is the best for it is from God. And we need to take up that weapon which enables us to strike our foe and that is the sword of the Spirit. The Spirit of God gives us the courage to go forward every day to fight off the forces of evil. It is a blade that is sharper than any two-edged sword for the Holy Spirit brings to us the will and word of God. In the past, the devil has used his weapons of lies and deceit to counter the efforts mere mortals, but he is powerless against the Sword of the Spirit. St. James in his epistle advised the faithful to resist the devil and he will flee from them (4:7). And so through our proper use of God's word and the empowerment of the Holy Ghost, we are able to both withstand and to strike against the powers of darkness. The truth of the word through the power of the Spirit spells defeat for Satan. Finally we are able to bring to full utility our spiritual armour through the power of prayer. St. James wrote that, The effectual and fervent

prayer of a righteous man availeth much (5:16). If we truly are vessels of the Holy Ghost, then our prayers will be heard as we have God's abiding Spirit operating within us. So when we consider what it means to possess our vessels in a godly manner, we will then purge out the leaven of malice and wickedness through our private confession to the Father in the name of his only begotten Son. God would rather we engage in self-discipline and self-judgment so that he does not have to chasten us for our unconfessed sins. Therefore learn to possess your vessel in sanctification and honour unto the LORD. Let us pray,

Father, assist us in our efforts to properly possess our vessels which are temples of thy most holy Spirit; that we being guided daily in thy paths of righteousness, will avoid the devil's broad way which leadeth to destruction; and this we ask in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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