

IN THE TRENCHES

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

June, 2014 Issue

Wayne McMaster
Eddy Cresap

Commander
Editor

Commanders Report

Hello Compatriots, Almost time for another meeting.

Mary and I watched the bikers, police cars of every description on the ride to the wall the other morning. I am always impressed with everyone dedication to making this trip. We were in the median just east of the Ms. River Bridges. We were waving our Confederate flags, the guys and gals were blowing there horns and waving back. I took a picture of Mary waving her Confederate flag, thought I would give it to Bill and see what he could do with it. Want to thank the ones that donated money for our bldg. We will appreciate the A/C very soon. Looking fwd. to this meeting, Edward's talk on President Davis and our fellowship afterwards. Do not forget the Civil War Relic show on June 21-22 @ Brandon City Hall.

I am working on getting a Magnolia Flag for the Camp, if anyone would like to have one please let me know asap. Not sure may have to buy more than one. The price I was given was \$20.00. Hope to get a better price if we buy more than one.

Everyone please try to come and bring a friend,
Thank you, Wayne McMaster, Cmdr-1354

Upcoming meetings

Our meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month. The meetings start at 7:00 pm. Our meeting location is 216 Miller Street in the Disabled American Veterans building. Visitors are always welcome. If you would like to present a program, please contact Commander Wayne McMaster at waynemcmasteris@gmail.com.

Below are the list of upcoming meetings and speakers.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Topic</i>
June 3, 2014	Edward Campbell	Jefferson Davis
July 1, 2014	TBD	TBD

Jefferson Davis Birthday Party

Our June meeting will be a birthday celebration for President Jefferson Davis. Please bring finger food for the party. The program will be presented by Edward Campbell

May Meeting

We had a good turnout for our May meeting. . The meeting was opened by a prayer provided by Bryan Dabney and the pledges and salutes lead by Tom Dabney. Tim Cupit presented a program called Tim's Tips. He has traveled throughout the Division and this program is a collection of things that local camps do that are successful. My two favorite topics were to keep God involved in all aspects of your life including the SCV and to continually ask the Commander what you can do for him. The executive council should take Tim's list and adopt those items that make sense for us. We also are sending Edward Campbell to represent us at the Ms Division convention. Thanks to Larry Holman for filling out our annual camp reports. The meeting was closed with a prayer by Bryan Dabney.

Thanks to Josh

Thanks to Josh Edwards for his General Steven D. Lee article in the Vicksburg paper on May 22. Every body should get a paper, read it, and send a thanks to Josh. If you missed the article contact me for a copy.

Friends of the Pemberton camp

Our meeting location is probably the best we have had. Those that have not been there need to come and look it over. Our expenses at this time for the meeting location are utilities. The utilities are going to run \$107.50 per month minimal. Our plan is to accept donations to pay these expenses. Thanks to Wayne McMaster, Sam Price, Charlie Brantley, Joel Bailey, Larry Holman , Eddy Cresap, Sid Ponder, Chris Ponder, Edward Campbell, and Doctor McMillin for committing money for our meeting place. We have enough money committed to pay through Feb 2015. Anyone wanting to commit funds to this account, please contact adjutant Holman at klholman@bellsouth.net or send checks to Larry Holman, 61 Rollingwood Dr, Vicksburg Ms 39183

Meeting Location

We are now meeting in the Disabled American Veteran Building. A lot of hard work went into finding and setting up this room. Thanks for all who helped. We discussed and continue to look for comfortable chairs. Larry Holman is on the bookshelf project. Thanks to Edward Campbell for arranging our state flags in the order they left the Union.

The building is owned by The local chapter of Disabled Americans Veterans. This organization does not use the building and meets at the VFW. We have agreed to pay the building's utilities in exchange for using the building. It is heated and cooled, has bathroom facilities and has good parking available.

Directions to Meeting: From the red light on 61 south and Pemberton Blvd, go south about 0.4 miles and turn right onto Miller Street. Go about 0.1 miles and the DAV building is a metal building on the left. If you get to the campground you have gone too far. Go to our Web site for more directions. Thanks Bill.

Confederate Veterans Hospital Annex to the Mississippi State Charity Hospital

Thanks to Sam Price, Camp Historian

The Vicksburg City Hospital was established prior to January 1832. Smallpox had always been the Scourge of the Valley of the Mississippi. The City of Vicksburg was chartered in January 1826. The City Hospital was and would always be a Charity Hospital and operated under several names, however, the newspapers usually referred to it only as the City Hospital. It was to operate until 1989 when the Governor vetoed the funding and it was closed. Thus The Vicksburg City Hospital operated from 1832 – 1989. They were always very proud that they turned no one away.

There have been many, many Confederate Ladies Organizations, both before the Daughters of the Confederacy and afterwards, They appear to continue to be organized until approximately World War One. However, today the Daughters pretty well represent them all.

The Daughters of the Confederacy were organized in 1894, the Mississippi Division came on line in 1895 and the Vicksburg Chapter # 77 was organized in 1896.

The Situation was very bad for the old veterans; One legislator, in the 1880's, introduced what he thought was a Pension Bill. He was amazed when it was finally passed and had been changed to a bill to allow such destitute and disabled veterans to "Peddle without a license." Some Counties petitioned the Legislature to allow the Counties to assist these men. A few counties, Claiborne being one of them, were allowed to pay \$12.00 per month room and board for the needy Veteran. There were many other acts of various charities, city, county, private, church and whatever. However, it was reported that some of the destitute Veterans were in the County Poor Houses, which was considered intolerable.

Finally in 1892 a small pension was granted by the Mississippi State Legislature, \$50.00 annually for destitute & totally disabled or blind Veterans. By 1900, when the Confederate Annex was ready, the pension had grown some; again only destitute Veterans & Servants were eligible. Men who were blind or had lost two limbs would receive

\$100.00 annually. Men who had lost one limb would receive \$50.00 annually. The other destitute Veterans would receive approximately \$25.00 annually. Obviously more needed to be done.

It was obvious the great need of Confederate Veterans was a Soldiers Home & Hospital. Many Southern States had already constructed them. Mississippi had talked about one for years, but to no avail. Various cities, including Yazoo City, had petitioned for the Home to be constructed in their towns.

The Vicksburg Chapter hit the ground running. They petitioned the City of Vicksburg, The Warren County Board of Supervisors and the citizens of Vicksburg and Warren County for help. They petitioned the state government and the citizens of Mississippi, the citizens of the south and to some extent the citizens for the country. The effort was successful. As one member of the Confederates Veterans remarked; “We had better help them, if we do not they may build it over us.”

The cornerstone was laid by the Masonic Fraternity upon September 19th, 1900. The Grand Master attends to these duties, he had a 36 man team to assist. These men come from all over the State and are obligated to show up when the Grand Master is present. However, upon certain occasions, the Grand Master will appoint someone else to attend to these duties, thus the other Officers are not obligated to attend. This was the situation. The Grandmaster appointed Judge Frederic Speed of Vicksburg. Thus Judge Speed was able to appoint many Vicksburg men to assist. Also remember, Judge Speed had been a Captain in the Union Army. Secretary of State J L Power was on hand and made a massive deposit in the Cornerstone.

The newspapers carried many pages of information concerning this event. The street cars would run from the Piazza Hotel (Corner Washington and Clay Streets.) to the intersection of Openwood and Farmer Streets. It would be necessary for every one to walk and march from there to the location, about One – Fourth Mile. . Everyone was very excited that the Fire Department sprinkled the Street and the location so there would be no dust. This was a big event; The Orators included Past Grand Master Frederic Speed, Captain D A Campbell, and

Judge W H Whitfield from Jackson, the man Whitfield Insane Hospital was later named for..

The contract was let to Curphey & Munday on August 09th, 1900. The consideration was \$2,884.00. The building was ready and turned over to the Daughters on January 08th, 1901, the First Old Soldiers Home & Hospital in Mississippi. They promptly held a reception and opened the facility. The facility contained Seven Dormitory type rooms, (Two men to the room), a sitting room and the other support rooms. Thus - They had space for 14 inmates, as they were called. It was overseen and managed by a Matron and an Assistant Matron.

The Annex was furnished by the friends of the Daughters;

The Fund Raising; The response was very favorable. The City Hospital – The City and Warren County donated the property. The two brick yards donated 8,000 brick, Architect Stanton his fee; A Northern Paint Company through its local outlet donated their best grade of paint; the City of Vicksburg paid the Insurance; and the State donated \$2,000.00, \$1,000.00 to used in the construction and \$1,000.00 to be used to help with the administration for the first year. And The Pearl Street Laundry declined to send a statement for doing the laundry for the first year.

When an inmate died, many of the bodies were sent home to their families, if not they were buried in Soldiers Rest in the Vicksburg City Cemetery. I tried to find a pattern about who held the services, but there appeared to be no pattern. The Funerals were preached by Father Picherit - the Catholic Chaplain, Rabbi Bein, the Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians, it appeared in about the correct percentages. I did find where one old fellow died, he was a Baptist and that preacher was out of town, the Methodist was recruited.

I had assumed that it would be used for and by mostly local men, but this was not the situation. Of course there were many from this area however there were men from over the state and some from other states. Beauvoir came on line in 1904. It soon became a huge facility. The relations between the Annex and Beauvoir appear to have been excellent. The men transferred back and forth regularly. Some men were transferred from Beauvoir to the Annex for medical attention at the

City Hospital. One old fellow came because the salt air agitated his asthma.

Also the relations between the Daughters and the Veterans were excellent, the Veterans referred to the Annex as "Our Beloved Confederate Annex" and the Daughters referred to them always as "A Gallant Confederate Veteran." Mrs. Durham, President of the Chapter, stated. "Only One complaint has ever come to us, and that is the sameness of the hospital diet." Mississippi Secretary of State J L Power promptly petitioned and made arrangements for the Daughters to send jellies, preserves, pickles and other delicacies. The Express Companies would forward free or charge.

There were some strange situations; One fellow took a furlough to go home to Leland, Mississippi, and help the family pick cotton.

It was reported by the Pension Board in 1906, that the number of Civil War Pensioner's had reached the peak, from this time forward the number would begin to slowly decrease.

At 4:00 A.m., September 27th, 1918, Dr. F L Husband at the State Charity Hospital next door, discovered the roof of Confederate Annex adjoining was burning furiously. Only quick and efficient work saved the lives of the five veterans and Miss Maggie Hennegan - the Matron, and Miss Emma Waggener - the Assistant. All escaped in their night clothes but lost everything they owned. The Veterans were H J Powell of Rolling Fork, F C Clark & W H Wright of Jackson, Laurence Ulm and Joe Groome of Vicksburg. Mr. Powell and Mr. Groome were too weak to walk and had to be carried. There were two other Veterans registered at the Annex, but they were on furlough and had gone home to visit their families.

The Veterans were placed in the Hospital while they were checked and recovered and then carried to the homes of various Daughters. Their possessions were replaced to the best ability. Two of the Five Veterans chose to return to the care of their families. The other Three were agreeable to being transferred to Beauvoir. Their Rail Road tickets were purchased and they were given \$5.00 lunch money for the journey. The Daughters also sent them each \$5.00 later for Christmas. The total for replacing clothes for the seven people was \$78.75. The Cash that had

been lost amounted to \$35.00 and was replaced. Tickets and Cash to Beauvoir for Three Veterans amounted to \$24.90.

There was much discussion concerning whether to rebuild. It was finally decided that this was not necessary, the numbers of Veterans was beginning to decline and Beauvoir appeared to have the situation in hand. (Beauvoir had become a huge operation by this time.) Some of the money that had been accumulated to operate the Annex was spent for such things at the City Hospital as the Red Cross Sheet & Towel Fund which was in desperate need. The balance of the Money was placed in Liberty Bonds (The was 1918 – World War 1.) Later, the Residue, whatever was left, was put into a Scholarship at Ole Miss, this was a very small amount. I have been unable to run this down, but one of our Friends' Daughters attended Ole Miss and collected the Scholarship a few years past. She stated that it was a very insignificant amount and it only paid once each four years.

The corner stone of the annex is at the soldiers rest monument and there are veteran's graves markers above the VA stones for some veterans who died in the annex

That Song

It is almost Memorial Day with the Fourth of July not far behind. I will not participate in the glorification of an army that invaded our sovereign nation. The intent of the invasion was to over throw the duly elected government and force the citizens of that nation back into a compact which they had left legally to protect their self- interest. This invading army defiled our altars, burned our homes, raped our women, stole their food, and left the women, elderly and children to starve. All our Confederate ancestors wanted was to be left alone in peace.

No, I will not sing that song!!!

Speaker at National Convention

I am pleased to announce to you that we will be honored with a special guest to offer our keynote address at this year's event in Charleston. Our speaker will be Ben Jones, a former two-term Congressman from Georgia's 4th District. Mr. Jones might be even better known as "Cooter" from the *Dukes of Hazzard*. Perhaps of greatest interest to us is that Mr. Jones is a Compatriot and has been an asset to the SCV by using his high profile to speak up for the worth of our History and symbols

Upcoming Conventions

2014 Division Reunion will be held June 6-8, 2014 in Corinth

The registration forms and details are available at this site - battleofcorinth.com

2014 SCV annual convention July 16-19 in North Charleston S.C.

see <http://www.scv2014.org/> for details

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

Congratulations

Congratulation to camp member Daniel Edney. This spring he graduated from Ole Miss Law School. Good luck.

Invitation

The Sons of Confederate Veterans Brandon Camp Rankin Rough and Ready Camp 265 invites everyone to their meeting on the first Saturday of each month at Penn's of Brandon. The meeting starts at 7:00 PM

Civil War Relic Show

The Sons of Confederate Veterans Brandon Camp Rankin Rough and Ready Camp 265 invites everyone to the third interactive Civil war Relic Show at the Brandon city hall on Saturday and Sunday June 21 and 22. There will be a presentation Sat evening by Grady Howell "Chimneyville, the destruction of Jackson fact of fiction" For details contact Tim Cupit at 769-234-2966. For more information go to www.scv265.com.

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) and I will place it in the next newsletter. Thanks to Commander McMaster, Chaplain Bryan Dabney, our Camp Poet and 2d Lt Commander Joel Bailey, our artist in residence Jerry McWilliams and adjutant Larry Holman for their input to the newsletter

Poets Corner

JUST AN OLD SOLDIER

by: Joel T. Bailey

*He was just an old soldier
Whose time had come and gone
Once surrounded by thousands
But he died sick and alone*

*He had loved to tell his stories
About the years he wore the gray
Then no one listened anymore
To the things he had to say*

*He'd sit on a rock by the water
And watch the riverboats go by
He'd think of the friends he lost
And wipe a tear from his eye*

*Now his life on this earth is over
And he'll be missed by very few
For he was just an old soldier
Who no one really knew*

*In a box covered by a rebel flag
That once flew in a Southern breeze
He has now crossed over the river
To rest in the shade of the trees*

Confederate Catechism

A new set of questions and answers will be posted each month. It is very important to arm ourselves with facts as the generation who lived it understood it.

The following was written by Lyon Gardiner Tyler who *was the son of President John Tyler and First Lady Julia Gardiner Tyler, born in Virginia. He graduated in 1875 at the University of Virginia. From 1888 to 1919, he served as the seventeenth president of the College of William and Mary (W&M), and is widely credited for restoring the college's financial condition following the deterioration which took place in the wake of the American Civil War.*

10. Why did Lincoln break the truce at Fort Pickens and precipitate the war by sending troops to Fort Sumter?

Lincoln did not think that war would result by sending troops to Fort Pickens, and it would give him the appearance of asserting the national authority. But he knew that hostilities would certainly ensue if he attempted to reinforce Fort Sumter. He was therefore at first in favor of withdrawing the troops from that Fort, and allowed assurances to that effect to be given out by Seward, his Secretary of State. But the deciding factor with him was the tariff question. In three separate interviews, he asked what would become of his revenue if he allowed the government at Montgomery to go on with their ten percent tariff. Final action was taken when nine Governors of high tariff states waited upon Lincoln and offered him men and supplies. The protective tariff had almost driven the country to war in 1833; it is not surprising that it brought war in 1861. Indeed, this spirit of spoliation was so apparent from the beginning that at the very first Congress, Grayson, one of our two first Virginia Senators, predicted that the fate reserved to the South was to be "the milk cow of the Union." The New York Times, after having on March 21, 1861, declared for separation, took the ground nine days later that the material interest of the North would not allow of an independent South!

11. Did Lincoln carry on the war for the purpose of freeing the slaves?

No. He frequently denied that this was his purpose in waging war. He claimed that he fought the South in order to preserve the Union. Before the war, Lincoln declared himself in favor of enforcement of the fugitive slave act, and he once figured as an attorney to drag back a runaway Negro into slavery. When he became President he professed himself in his inaugural willing to support an amendment guaranteeing slavery in the states where it existed. Wendell Phillips, the abolitionist, called him a “slave hound.”

12. Did Lincoln, by his conquest of the South, save the Union?

No. The old Union was a union based on consent. The present Union is a great Northern nation based on force and controlled by Northern majorities, to which the South, as a conquered province, has had to conform all its policies and ideals. The Federal authority is only Northern authority. Today the Executive, the Cabinet, the Supreme Court, (with one exception), the Ministers at foreign courts are all Northern men. The South has as little share in the government and as little chance of furnishing a President as Norway or Switzerland.

13. Could Lincoln have “saved” the Union by some other method than war?

Yes. If he had given his influence to the resolutions offered in the Senate by John Jay Crittenden, the difficulties in 1861 would have been peaceably settled. These resolutions extended the line of the Missouri Compromise through the territories, but gave nothing to the South, save the abstract right to carry slaves to New Mexico. But New Mexico was too barren for agriculture, and not ten slaves had been carried there in ten years. The resolutions received the approval of the Southern Senators and, had they been submitted to the people, would have received their approval both North and South. Slavery in a short time would have met a peaceful and natural death with the development of machinery consequent upon Cyrus H. McCormick’s great invention of the reaper. The question in 1861 with the South as to the territories was one of wounded

pride rather than any material advantage. It was the intemperate, arrogant and self righteous attitude of Lincoln and his party that made any peaceable constructive solution of the territorial question impossible. In rejecting the Crittenden resolutions, Lincoln, a minority president, and the Republicans, a minority party, placed themselves on record as virtually preferring the slaughter of 400,000 men of the flower of the land and the sacrifice of billions of dollars of property to a compromise involving a mere abstraction, and they intrigued an unwilling North into the war. Some historians have actually boasted of the trickery.

Gettysburg Magazine

Andy Turner is the former publisher of *The Gettysburg Magazine*, he has recently sold it to the University of Nebraska Press, which is continuing publication. Mr. Turner , however, has an inventory of back issues for sale. They are offered as three sets of magazines at a big discount

If you are not familiar with the magazine, each issue is 128 pages with no advertising, making each more like a softcover book on the Gettysburg Campaign than a traditional magazine. Each article is footnoted and is accompanied by maps and both modern and historic photos. Every article has been reviewed before publication by a panel of Gettysburg experts, including Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service. The magazine has published some of the best Gettysburg material out there. Check the bibliography of any book on Gettysburg and you'll almost surely find *The Gettysburg Magazine* listed as a source.

There is a 25-issue set (3,200 pages of material) for \$60 plus shipping and two 10-issue sets (1,280 pages per set) for \$30 plus shipping available.

This is a great amount of material for the price that many of your members may be interested in purchasing. I would appreciate it if you could pass the information on to them and anyone else you

know who is interested in the Civil War. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Andy Turner

gatehousepress@yahoo.com

Gatehouse Press

PO Box 1311

Dayton, OH 45401

Iowa Division ask for Help, Prison Camp Hell

Go to our web page for the full story including the list of Mississippi boys who died in the Living Hell.

Each year, on Memorial Day, members of the Iowa Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans along with friends, family members, and SCV members from other Divisions gather at the Confederate Cemetery on Arsenal Island, Rock Island, Illinois to place Confederate Battle Flags on each of the 1,950 graves. Then, following the ceremonies at the Rock Island National Cemetery, the SCV members conduct memorial services for their Southern compatriots buried in the Confederate Cemetery.

Our flags are getting worn and faded to the point they need to be replaced. Last year the Iowa Division re-placed 1,000 flags. We would like to replace the remainder this year. We are seeking \$1,500 for this project. The Iowa Division is a small group, as you can imagine, so we need the financial assistance of our fellow compatriots in the Mississippi Division to get the job done.

We have included some additional historical information, a small part of the program from this year, a listing of the soldiers buried here and some pictures that will give you a better understanding of this important work preserving the memory of these great men, celebrating their valor, honoring their sacrifice.

We invite you join us in this work by helping us raise the funds needed to purchase the new flags to decorate the graves each Memorial Day. Please mail you contribution in the form of a check to:

Charles Lott

SCV Iowa Division Flag Replacement Project

120 Byrnes Drive

Waterloo, Iowa 50701

For additional information:

Phone: (319) 231-9432 (cell)

Email: nemo17540@gmail.com

PEARL RIVER COUNTY-AREA CONFEDERATE COMPANIES

The Gainesville Vol's today received final approval from the City of Picayune today for a large, cast-aluminum, historical marker honoring all of the Confederate companies raised in Pearl River County's two parent counties -- Hancock and Marion Counties! We will be ordering the marker within a week!

The marker will read:

PEARL RIVER COUNTY-AREA CONFEDERATE COMPANIES

Pearl River County was formed after the Civil War from Portions of Hancock and Marion Counties. The following Confederate military units were formed in those two parent Counties of Pearl River County. Hancock County: Capt. Robards' Company (Co. G, 3rd Battn. Inf. Minute Men); Gainesville Volunteers (Co. G, 3rd MS Infantry); Hancock Rebels (Co. C, 38th MS Inf. [Mtd.]); Poitevent's Company (Co. B, 17th Battn. MS Cav.); Shieldsboro Rifles (Co. F, 3rd MS Inf.). Marion County: Columbia Guards (Co. I, 38th MS Inf. [Mtd.]); Jeff Davis Sharpshooters (Co. D, 7th MS Inf.); Marion Grays (Co. G, 2nd MS Inf. Minute Men); Marion's Men (Co. F, 7th MS Inf.). The Hancock Rebels were formed at Hobolochitto, now known as

Picayune, and are the city's only known Confederate unit. They served at the Battles of Iuka and Corinth, as well as at the 47-day Siege of Vicksburg. Though originally an infantry unit, they were mounted in 1864 and served under famed Confederate General Nathan B. Forrest at the Battle of Harrisburg, MS.

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 for details

Friends of Vicksburg Battlefield

One of the questions I asked at our March meeting to Mike Maddell was "Why is the Gettysburg Park Museum so large" The answer was, it all came from money from the friends of Gettysburg battle field. The friends of Vicksburg National Park has been established and is seeking membership.

Go to <http://www.friendsofvicksburg.org/> for information.

Chaplains Corner

Awhile back, I was talking with one our brethren about the song: *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*. The gist of our conversation was that it was not a Christian hymn in the sense of orthodox Christian teaching. He asked me if I would post something about that song in our monthly newsletter. While thinking on the subject of this so-called "hymn" I remembered reading a piece by Lawrence Vance wherein he unpacked its meaning. So without much more ado, here is a portion of Lawrence's remarks about this song from a published article on lewrockwell.com in July of 2006.

"Most Americans are familiar with the words of this "hymn":

'Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:

He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword: His truth is marching on.

Chorus

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.

Chorus

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
“As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.”

Chorus

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.

Chorus

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.

Chorus

He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,
He is wisdom to the mighty, He is succour to the brave,
So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of Time His slave,
Our God is marching on.

Chorus'

The chorus is, of course, as follows:

'Glory, glory, hallelujah!

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

Glory, glory, hallelujah!

His truth is marching on.'

Although most Americans who are familiar with this ‘patriotic anthem’ rightly connect it with the so-called Civil War, many probably don’t know who wrote it, and even fewer know anything about how it came about. The author of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* was the abolitionist and social activist, Julia Ward Howe (1819—1910). The song first appeared, minus the last verse, on the front cover of *The Atlantic Monthly* for February 1862. That it originally had six verses can be seen by looking at her first draft, which was written on a scrap of Sanitary Commission paper. Christian hymnbooks that contain this song only include verses one, two, four, and five. The words as it was first published are slightly different than her original draft, which is transcribed here. The tune is from a camp-meeting song with a ‘Glory Hallelujah’ refrain by William Steffe, written about 1856. This tune was in turn used for what became the Union marching song, *John Brown’s Body*, the first verse of which begins by repeating three times: ‘John Brown’s body lies a-mouldering in the grave,’ and ends with: ‘His soul goes marching on!’ Other lines read: ‘They will hang Jeff. Davis to a sour apple tree!’ and ‘Now, three rousing cheers for the Union.’ According to the account in *Julia Ward Howe, 1819—1910* by Laura E. Richards, et al. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1915), in December of 1861, as Howe returned from a review of troops near Washington, her carriage was surrounded and delayed by the marching regiments: she and her companions sang, to beguile the tedium of the way, the war songs which every one was singing in those days; among them — ‘John Brown’s body lies a-moulding in the grave. His soul is marching on!’ The soldiers liked this, cried, “Good for you!” and took up the chorus with its rhythmic swing. ‘Mrs. Howe,’ said Mr. Clarke, ‘why do you not write some good words for that stirring tune?’ ‘I have often wished to do so!’ she replied. Waking in the gray of the next morning, as she lay waiting for the dawn, the word came to her. ‘Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord — ‘ She lay perfectly still. Line by line, stanza by stanza, the words came sweeping on with the rhythm of marching feet,

pauseless, resistless. She saw the long lines swinging into place before her eyes, heard the voice of the nation speaking through her lips. She waited till the voice was silent, till the last line was ended; then sprang from bed, and groping for pen and paper, scrawled in the gray twilight the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. She was used to writing thus; verses often came to her at night, and must be scribbled in the dark for fear of waking the baby; she crept back to bed, and as she fell asleep she said to herself, 'I like this better than most things I have written.' In the morning, while recalling the incident, she found she had forgotten the words. Ignorance of history is no sin, and can easily be remedied with a computer and a search engine or a trip to the library. But more important than the history behind this 'hymn' is the theology behind it. Hymns are sung in church as part of the worship of God. They contain a spiritual message. Hymns should not be sung in church merely because they have a nice tune. The words of a hymn are therefore very important.

Although the Bible likens Christians to soldiers (2 Timothy 2:3), and the Christian life to a battle (1 Timothy 1:18), the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* is not a song that should be on the lips of any Christian. It is not a Christian hymn at all. It is a disgrace that [it] even appears in a Christian hymnbook alongside of such great hymns of the faith as: *Blessed Redeemer, All Hail the Power of Jesus Name, The Way of the Cross Leads Home, That Beautiful Name, and O Worship the King*. Julia Ward Howe was a Unitarian, and wrote the song as a partisan Unionist during the beginning of the Civil War. The *Battle Hymn of the Republic* is religious war propaganda. It is no more a Christian hymn than *White Christmas*. Like many who lived during the nineteenth century, Howe was very familiar with the Bible. Consequently, the language and imagery of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic* are largely biblical. The problem, however, is that Howe applied the judgment of the 'day of the Lord' to the destruction of the Southern armies by the North. A brief historical and biblical analysis of each verse... is as follows:

‘Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are
stored; He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift
sword: His truth is marching on.’

‘Mine eyes have seen’ is from the prophet Isaiah’s vision of the Lord *sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up* (Isaiah 6:1). But rather than seeing the coming of the Lord, Isaiah saw *the King, the LORD of hosts* (Isaiah 6:5). Howe never saw the coming of the Lord, and the very idea that the coming of the Union Army was akin to the coming of the Lord is blasphemous. ‘Trampling out the vintage’ is a reference to the end times spoken of in the Book of Revelation: *the wine of the wrath of God* (Revelation 14:10), *the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath* (Revelation 16:19), *he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God* (Revelation 19:15). Howe originally used the word *winepress* instead of ‘vintage.’ The word ‘trampling’ is taken from the Old Testament: *I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment* (Isaiah 63:3). Lightning is sometimes associated with the judgment of God (Psalm 18:14, 144:6; Revelation 8:5, 11:19, 16:18). The ‘terrible swift sword’ is a reference to Christ’s sword (Revelation 1:16, 2:12, 2:16, 19:15, 19:21). God’s truth is not marching on, it is *fallen in the street* (Isaiah 59:14). And the Union Army marching is certainly not God’s truth personified, not when the Bible reserves that honor for Jesus Christ (John 14:6).

‘I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:
His day is marching on.’

In this verse God is said to be in the camps of the Union Army, a dubious proposition, considering that it was an invading army.

‘Builded Him an altar’ is straight out of the Bible (Genesis 8:20;

Exodus 24:4; Ezra 3:2). God's 'righteous sentence' is perhaps taken from references to God's *righteous judgment* (Romans 2:5) or *righteous judgments* (Psalm 119:160). 'His day' is a reference to the *day of the Lord*, falsely equating the marching of the Union Army with the judgment of God.

'I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:
As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,
Since God is marching on.'

This verse is so blasphemous that it is not included in Christian hymnals... Perhaps if it was then Christians would have their eyes opened as to the true nature of this 'hymn.' The 'burnished rows of steel' refer to the polished Union cannons. This is not the *gospel of the grace of God* (Acts 20:24). This is *another gospel*, of which the Apostle Paul said: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed* (Galatians 1:8). And what grace is this: Punish the evil Southerners and I will give you grace? This concept of grace is foreign to the New Testament. Jesus Christ crushing the serpent with his heel is a perversion of Genesis 3:15 where the Lord says to the serpent: *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel*. And in the New Testament, when the Apostle Paul said that *the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly* (Romans 16:20), he was not referring to anything that was to take place during the American Civil War. And God certainly was not 'marching on' under the figure of the Union Army.

'He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on.'

Howe's reference to a trumpet instead of a bugle has biblical overtones. A trumpet figures prominently in references to the end times (Matthew 24:31; 1 Corinthians 15:52; Revelation 1:10, 4:1,

8:13, 9:14). The judgment seat is a reference to the judgment seat of Christ, mentioned twice by the Apostle Paul (Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10). God has not yet sifted out the hearts of Christians at this judgment, nor yet the hearts of anyone else at the ‘great white throne’ judgment (Revelation 20:11—13). One thing is for sure, Christians had better be swift to answer the Lord at the Judgment when asked why they sang such a blasphemous song.

‘In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on.’

Christ was not born ‘in the beauty of the lilies.’ He was laid in a manger (Luke 2:7), not in a garden. The ‘glory in His bosom’ is certainly scriptural, and is a reference to the account of Christ’s transfiguration before his disciples where *his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light* (Matthew 17:2).

But he was the one who was transfigured. The glory of Christ transfiguring ‘you and me’ is pure universalism as advocated by Unitarians. The third line in this verse is one of the most egregious in the whole ‘hymn.’ Not only does the phrase ‘as he died to make men holy’ also smack of universalism, equating the Atonement of the Son of God with the death of Union soldiers supposedly dying to ‘make men free,’ it is the height of blasphemy. This phrase also shows us that there are other reasons besides biblical ones for not singing the *Battle Hymn*, for, theological questions aside, the Union soldiers didn’t ‘die to make men free.’ This is the great myth of the Civil War, and would be news to Abraham Lincoln since he maintained that freeing the slaves was not what his war was about. In an August 22, 1862, letter to Horace Greeley, the editor of the New York Tribune, Lincoln explained:

‘My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and it is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by

freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union.’ Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation freed no one since not only did it only apply to slaves in the states that were in rebellion against the United States, where the U.S. government had no authority, but it specifically exempted all the territory that was occupied by Union armies, where the U.S. government had authority. The fact that many churches today in the Deep South sing the *Battle Hymn* shows just how strong this myth has taken hold. For the deflating of more myths of the Civil War, see my article on slavery myths and Thomas DiLorenzo’s article on Lincoln myths.

‘He is coming like the glory of the morning on the wave,
He is wisdom to the mighty, He is succour to the brave,
So the world shall be His footstool, and the soul of Time His slave,
Our God is marching on.’

This verse was probably omitted early on because it is noticeably different from the others. Excepting the last line, some of the concepts are biblical, but have nothing to do with the Civil War. In 1901, in the wake of American imperialism in the Spanish and Philippine Wars, Mark Twain penned a parody of the *Battle Hymn*, from the perspective of an American industrialist, entitled *The Battle Hymn of the Republic, Updated*:

‘Mine eyes have seen the orgy of the launching of the Sword;
He is searching out the hoardings where the stranger’s wealth is
stored; He hath loosed his fateful lightnings, and with woe and
death has scored;

His lust is marching on.

I have seen him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded him an altar in the Eastern dews and damps;
I have read his doomful mission by the dim and flaring lamps-
His night is marching on.

I have read his bandit gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:

“As ye deal with my pretensions, so with you my wrath shall deal;
Let the faithless son of Freedom crush the patriot with his heel;

Lo, Greed is marching on!”

We have legalized the strumpet and are guarding her retreat;
Greed is seeking out commercial souls before his judgement seat;
O, be swift, ye clods, to answer him! be jubilant my feet!

Our god is marching on!

In a sordid slime harmonious Greed was born in yonder ditch,
With a longing in his bosom-and for others’ goods an itch.
As Christ died to make men holy, let men die to make us rich —
Our god is marching on.’

The *Battle Hymn of the Republic* ought to be parodied, satirized, and lampooned. It has nothing to do with God or Christianity. It is not a Christian hymn. It does not belong in a Christian hymnbook. It should not be sung in any Christian church — Northern or Southern. It should not be on the lips of any Christian — Yankee or Southerner. It is partisan political paeon to bogus history and faulty theology. For much too long Christians have sung this ‘hymn’ with religious fervor while remaining in ignorance as to its history and theology. For much too long pastors and song leaders have included this ‘hymn’ in church services without stopping to consider whether it is an appropriate song for a Christian worship service. Disparaging the singing of this song has nothing to do with being a Confederate sympathizer, or being unpatriotic or anti-Lincoln, but it has everything to do with exercising biblical discernment. Traditions are hard to break, and especially religious ones, but the singing of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic” is one that must go.”

Let us pray,

Holy Father, as you have given to us thy word, so let us take and inwardly digest its meaning not only for today but everyday; and bless us O LORD, with spiritual discernment, that we may avoid the false messages of false prophets and teachers whose messages contain but a hint of truth which covers a host of lies and distortions; and these things we beg in the name of him who is our Saviour and Lord, even Jesus Christ. Amen.

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