

Next Meeting
February 28th
6:00 P.M.
Rose Center

Southern Heritage

Bradford / Rose Camp # 1638

February 2004

Volume 12, Issue 2

With the cold weather still hanging around, many of us are getting some reading in. It is, also, a fact that most, if not all, of our camp are practicing Christians. With these two things in mind, I have a book to recommend that has nothing to do with Southern history. It is 'Mere Christianity' by C. S. Lewis. I have heard about this book for years and, finally, bought a copy. It is all that I was led to believe. If you are not familiar with C. S. Lewis, he was a literature professor at Oxford and a converted atheist who became, in the opinion of many, the most influential Christian writer of the last century. I think that you will find it worth reading.

DEO VINDICE

Larry W. Watkins

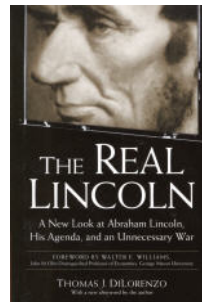
Lee Jackson Dinner

Another year has rolled around and another Lee - Jackson Dinner has passed into history. The event took place, as the last several, at The Foundry on the World's Fair site. Also, as typical, it was a full house.

After some time for socializing, the event opened with the entrance, and display, of a wide assortment of Confederate flags; always effective in exciting the blood of a Southerner, especially those of us with that hot headed Celtic DNA.

There were some introductions and awards to cool us down and some excellent music. One pleasant surprise was a proclamation honoring Lee and Jackson from our new governor.

The focal point of the evening was reached as another impressive guest speaker took the stage. This year we were privileged to hear Thomas J.



DiLorenzo, author of 'The Real Lincoln'. His subtitle is even better: 'A New Look at Abraham Lincoln, His Agenda, and an Unnecessary War'.

With a label like that, you have to expect something refreshing.

Professor DiLorenzo's presentation was well delivered with wonderful content. He pointed out, for one thing, that historians seem to evaluate Lincoln by his prepared speeches and completely ignore his contradictory actions. He continued by pointing out that almost any politician would look good by this standard.

As Southerners, we know why Lincoln has been deified by United States historians. To allow the truth to be told about him is to allow people to question the lofty motivations claimed by our invaders. The whole ridiculous facade could come crashing down.

P. S. I couldn't resist putting some flags over the Great Tyrant's head.

LWW

MOTIVATIONS

MOTIVATIONS

by - Charles Wilson

The motivation of those who went to war in 1861 have been the subject of much discussion for 129 [now 137] years. For the reenactor [or SCV member], it is important to draw a distinction between the "causes" of the conflict and the motivations of the soldier of the South which led him to fight, or of the women to support the Confederacy. While the causes will undoubtedly be debated into the next century, the motives can be captured through a review of

the first person accounts, diaries, letters, and occasionally official documents.

Jefferson Davis probably reflected the sentiment of many when he said the South was fighting for the "sacred right of self government". The South, Davis said, sought "no conquest, no aggrandizement, no concession, of any kind from these states with which we were lately confederated: all we ask is to be let alone." First person accounts appear to share this belief. Many a soldier chose to fight in defense of his

home, wife, family, farm or business, and a way of life--defense from what he saw as foreign invaders. Others were propelled into service by a romanticized image of soldiering and of war itself, and still others joined because of strong pressures of society such as the expectations of the ladies or the patriotic encouragement of political orators. Some individuals were compelled to serve by the force of law (conscription).

Motivations Cont.

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Upcoming Dates

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Upcoming Dates to Remember!

**The February
Monthly Meeting
will be on
February 28th
at 6:00 P.M.
At The Rose Center**

**The March
Monthly Meeting
will be on
March 27th
at 6:00 P.M.
At The Rose Center**



MOTIVATIONS continued

One analysis is contained in the little known words of Randolph McKinn who delivered the oration at the 14th reunion of the United Confederate Veterans in Nashville in 1904 (a copy of the manuscript is on file at the Nashville Public Library). He examined the motives and aims of the soldiers of the South "while the wounds of reconstruction were still painfully present." McKinn argues that the southern soldier did not fight to destroy the Constitution as Lincoln had charged, but rather to exercise his constitutional right to secede. While he acknowledged the 14th Amendment resolved the questions of secession after the war, McKinn stated: "When we surrendered at Appomattox, the right of secession was surrendered forever. But when we say that right does not exist today, we do not acknowledge that it did not exist in 1861. On the contrary, we maintain that it did exist, and that those who maintained its existence had upon their side, locally and historically, the overwhelming weight of evidence." He also stated that the "South had as good a right to her opinion of the meaning of the Constitution as the North had to hers. There were in 1860 two interpretations of that instrument, there were two views of the nature of the Government which was established. On what principle and by what authority can it be claimed that the view taken by the South was certainly wrong, and that the view taken by the North was certainly right? Or, waving the question which view was really right, we ask our Northern friends to tell us why the South was not justified in following that interpretation which she believed to be the true one? She had helped to build--nay, was the chief builder of the fabric of the Constitution ... Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Marshall; and though these great men differed in political opinion, yet three at least, Washington, Jefferson and Madison, are on record as declaring that the Constitution was a compact between the States, and that those thirteen States were thirteen independent sovereignties."

"I ask then, in the view of all this, whether the South was not

justified in believing that the views of Constitutional interpretation which she had inherited from such a political ancestry were not the true views?" Can the South be blamed for saying, "We will follow that interpretation of the Constitution which we received from our fathers--from Jefferson and Madison and Washington?"

McKinn argues that many, particularly in the upper South, were not eager to leave the union for which their fathers had fought. It was rather the actions of the central government of Lincoln which created the popular support for secession and caused many to bear arms in defense of the South. "On the 15th of April, 1861, President Lincoln issued a proclamation calling for 75,000 men to coerce these seceded states back into the Union. The border states were called upon to furnish their quota of armed men to march against their Southern brethren. Thus an issue was forced upon them which the future historian, however antagonistic to the South, must ponder with sympathy and emotion. The men of these border states were compelled to decide either to send soldiers to fight against their brethren, or to say 'We will throw in our lot with them and resist military coercion. 'Now, whatever division of sentiment existed in regard to the policy, or even the right of secession, there was almost complete unanimity in these states in repudiating the right of coercion."

Interestingly, McKinn observes, "certain it is that but for that policy those great States just enumerated (including Tennessee) would not have thrown in their lot with the Southern Confederacy, and it is a supposition by no means destitute of rational foundation that without their support the seven states which

had already seceded would have ultimately have sought re-admission to the Union, and the Union might have been saved, without the dreadful cost of a fratricidal war and without the unspeakable horrors of that reconstruction period."

McKinn also ably challenges the argument that the southern soldier fought to uphold slavery as a morally acceptable institution. While many Southerners, understandably bore arms in defense of this peculiar institution, or at least the social order it represented, McKinn points out that slavery was on its way to extinction in the South until the disruptive intervention of northern interests. In 1826, he notes, 103 separate emancipation societies existed in the South and Virginia came within one vote of abolishing the institution in 1833. It was the actions of the northern zealots which altered public opinion and delayed emancipation. McKinn points out many in the Southern army, even slave holders, had qualms about the institution and some, such as Robert E. Lee, freed their slaves during the war. He observes that the emancipation of their slaves made them no less dedicated to the cause of the Southern Confederacy.

McKinn was able to reflect upon the motives of southern soldiers nearly forty years after the war. A learned man, his oration involved thirty-four pages of text delivered to an audience of septuagenarians on a hot June afternoon. His analysis is thoughtful and well presented, but of all the explanations of why the Southern soldier fought I have found the words of one young Confederate captured early in the war to be the most eloquent. Standing in his tattered homespun uniform, he was asked by his captors why he, a non-slave holder, was engaged in rebellion. His reply was simply, "I'm fighting because you all are down here."

[This was written in 1990 by Charles Wilson, 1st Lt. in Co. A, First Tennessee reenactment unit, and was in "The Rock City Guardian" the newsletter of that group.](#)