



TRAVELLER



The official publication of the General Robert E. Lee Camp #1640

Sons of Confederate Veterans, Germantown, Tennessee

Duty, Honor, Integrity, Chivalry

Deo Vindici

March 2011

CAMP MEETING

March 14, 2011

Speaker: Randy Bishop

Topic: Randy's New Book - Mississippi Civil War Battlefields

(Randy has written several books and is very knowledgeable of the WBTS in our area. We will have a table available for book sales.)

7:00 p.m. at the Pickering Center

Lincoln Mythology is Born

Commentary by Steve Scroggins

March 4th, 2011 marked the 150th Anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's inauguration as President of the United States. Lincoln idolators and court 'historians' are certain to gush forth with fluff and flowery prose about how Lincoln "saved the Union" and "freed the slaves" when history shows that he did neither -- in fact, he did just the opposite, as we'll show below.

First of all, war was NOT required to end slavery. No other country in the world required war to end it; neither did America. Chattel slavery was doomed by the 1850s and on its way to extinction everywhere in the western Christian world. Brazil, a former Portuguese colony, was the last to abolish slavery in the western hemisphere in 1888. It is a lingering fallacy that it took war to end slavery in America.

Lincoln stated in his first inaugural address that he had no intention, no inclination and no legal authority to abolish slavery where it existed. He stated this in writing on numerous occasions. In the same address, Lincoln stated his support for the Corwin Amendment - otherwise known as the "Slavery Forever Amendment" -- which would constitutionally

enshrine slavery permanently beyond the jurisdiction of the Congress.

The Republican party platform opposed the expansion of slavery to the western territories for economic and social reasons. The Republicans didn't want any blacks or Indians living anywhere near them. Illinois, it should be noted, had passed law to prohibit the settling or residence of blacks in Illinois. The Lincoln Dream was for a lilly-white America with no blacks or Indians. His soldiers, trained in the art of making war on southern civilians, did a fair job of genocide against the plains Indians after the war.



"The Northern onslaught upon slavery was no more than a piece of specious humbug designed to conceal its desire for economic control of the Southern states." --Charles Dickens, 1862

"[T]he Union ... will constitutionally defend and maintain itself... In doing this there needs to be no bloodshed or violence, and there shall be none unless it be forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the Government and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or

among the people anywhere." --Abraham Lincoln, from inaugural address, March 4, 1861.

In his inaugural address, Lincoln promised not to invade or start a war EXCEPT to enforce the tariff law and hold federal forts for the purpose of tariff collection. His object was to quell the secession movement and force the recently departed states to return to the union, or at least to pay the tariffs as if they were still part of the Union. Lincoln claimed in the address that states did not have the authority to secede or leave the union. This is, of course, a 180 degree about-face from his stated opinion just 14 years earlier.

"Any people anywhere, being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, --a most sacred right--a right, which we hope and believe, is to liberate the world." --Abraham Lincoln, from the Congressional Record, Jan. 12, 1847.

Lincoln's 1861 argument was logically ridiculous. Lincoln claimed that somehow the union came before the states which formed the union by ratifying the Constitution. That's like saying that a marriage came before the two people who were joined in the marriage.

Lincoln argued in his 1861 Inaugural address that "Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments." Note that the Framers specifically avoided the use of the words "national" and "perpetual" and struck them from proposed documents. James Madison made it clear that the people, their liberties and their "safety and happiness" were more important than any form of government when he said, "The safety and happiness of society are the objects at which all political institutions must be sacrificed."

Lincoln was inaugurated March 4th. After Lincoln's secretary of state promised to evacuate and surrender Fort Sumter for weeks, Lincoln dispatched an armada to reinforce and resupply Fort Sumter in early April, an act of war. Lincoln let the Confederates know it was coming. To minimize the loss of life, the Confederates decided to bombard the Fort into submission before warships arrived. Fort Sumter was surrendered April 12th. It should be noted that there was no loss of life in the attack and the federal garrison was permitted to leave peacefully after the surrender. Lincoln had provoked the South into firing the first shots. Again, there was no person killed or injured at Fort Sumter, but it fired a war fever in the north.

On April 15th Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers with which to invade the South and enforce the tariff laws. He ordered a naval blockade of southern ports, raised an army, gathered war materiel and committed other acts of war without the Constitutionally required Declaration of War from Congress.

When the Congress finally convened in July 1861, they rubber stamped his aggressive military actions since April 15th. They also confirmed his motive and objectives. The Crittenden-Johnson Resolution dated July 25, 1861 stated explicitly that the purpose of the war was to "preserve the union" and "not to interfere in the established institutions of the states" nor to limit their rights and freedoms in any other way.

Once Lincoln started the war by attempting to reinforce Fort Sumter by force, he repeatedly stated that his intent was to "save the Union" and his war effort had nothing to do with slavery. A year and a half after hostilities commenced, in his August 1862 correspondence with Horace Greeley (New York Tribune), he emphatically stated that slavery was irrelevant to the war -- it was only about restoring (preserving) the Union. This was just a month before the Emancipation Proclamation was issued.



President Lincoln's stated, solitary war is aim inscribed in stone in the lower level museum below his statue in the Lincoln Memorial:

"My enemies pretend that I am now carrying on this war for the sole purpose of abolition. So long as I am President it shall be for the sole purpose of restoring the Union."

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

I forbear, I forbear because I do not believe it would help to save the Union." --Abraham Lincoln, from letter to Horace Greeley, Aug. 22, 1862

Regardless of any sophistry or distortions to the contrary, the historical record shows incontrovertibly that Lincoln and the U.S. Congress started and prosecuted the war for the purpose of preventing southern secession and independence and to enforce the tariff collections, to "preserve the union" as they called it. Though slavery (especially expansion) was a source of regional conflict, it was NOT the purpose of the war.

And what did the participants in the war think? General John B. Gordon gives us an assessment:

"But slavery was far from being the sole cause of the prolonged conflict. Neither its destruction on the one hand, nor its defence on the other, was the energizing force that held the contending armies to four years of bloody work. I apprehend that if all living Union soldiers were summoned to the witness-stand, every one of them would testify that it was the preservation of the American Union and not the destruction of Southern slavery that induced him to volunteer at the call of his country. As for the South, it is enough to say that perhaps eighty percent of her armies were neither slave-holders, nor had the remotest interest in the institution. No other proof, however, is needed than the undeniable fact that at any period of the war from its beginning to near its close the South could have saved slavery by simply laying down its arms and returning to the Union." --General John B. Gordon, from *Reminiscences of the Civil War*, page 19

But what about the Emancipation Proclamation, you ask? It was strictly a war measure aimed at weakening the South by creating chaos or inciting slave insurrection. Another obvious purpose was to keep Britain and the European powers out of the war -- many of those nations wanted to trade with the South for cotton. Here's a sample of how the British press saw the Proclamation:

"The Union government liberates the enemy's slaves as it would the enemy's cattle, simply to weaken them in the conflict. The principle is not that a human being cannot justly own another, but that he cannot own him unless he is loyal to the United States." --London Spectator, 1862

"The Northern onslaught upon slavery was no more than a piece of specious humbug designed to conceal its desire for economic control of the Southern states." --Charles Dickens, 1862

As the secession "crisis" started in December 1860 and continued into January 1861, the initial reaction of most people in the North was "let them go in peace." They acknowledged that the principles of the Declaration of Independence, including the 'consent of the governed', prohibited coercion of the southern states to remain in the union by force. But by February and March, the northern industrialists and shipping interests had leaned on the northern editors and made them aware of the financial losses southern independence would bring the northern states. Northern editorials changed from "let them go" to "heck, no, we'll go broke." See a selection of Northern editorials for the flavor of the thought and note the change.

As the saying goes, "follow the money." The real power and wealth wanted war to protect their financial interests and to keep the southern states on the taxpaying plantation to pay for their subsidized infrastructure and favored special interests. It should be noted that the Republican party platform included raising protectionist tariffs (paid mostly by the southern states)... and the Congress passed the Morrill Tariff which doubled the tax rates, and President Buchanan signed it into law just two days before Lincoln was inaugurated.

From this it appears that Charles Dickens summed up the yankee motivation best, a "desire for economic control of the Southern states."



Traveller - Now Online

Traveller, the R.E Lee Camp 1640 newsletter, has caught up with the 21st century and is now available on line. Find it monthly at:

<http://www.tennessee-scv.org/camp1640/>

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**2nd Annual
SHELBY COUNTY HISTORY
FESTIVAL
& HISTORIC DAVIES MANOR
PLANTATION HOUSE
2011 TOUR SEASON OPENING
Sunday April 3 from 12:30 to
5:00PM**

With participation by 25 hereditary historical society chapters, local history organizations, historic preservation groups, museums and historians.

Presenting in the Hillwood Exhibit Hall - A free exhibit of Civil War Displays, historic artifacts, history book sales, history group membership information, networking opportunities and nineteenth century music.

Tours of Davies Manor Plantation House at discount admission rates for those who first visit the Hillwood Exhibit Hall on the Davies Manor Plantation grounds.



Traveller is the monthly newsletter of:

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and

The Mary Custis Lee Chapter,
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Steve M. McIntyre, Editor



**Next Camp Meeting ** March 14, 2011
Germantown Pickering Center, 7771 Old Poplar Pike, Germantown, TN**