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Lee Camp, #1640

Sons of Confederate Veterans, Germantown, TN

Duty, Honor, Integrity, Chivalry

DEO VINDICE!

January 2020



CAMP MEETING

January 13, 2020

**Speaker: Bradford Waters, Captain, MC,
USN (ret)**

**Topic: "The Trent Affair. How the North
risked war with the United Kingdom in
November, 1861"**

**7:00 p.m. at the at the Germantown
Regional History and Genealogy Center**

Don't miss our next meeting!

The future existence of groups such as ours is at a critical junction. With all respect to those north of my age, I think you will agree unless those near my age of 51 do not reach up to grab the colors and march them forward, these important organizations will die.

So, I was presented with an important decision. I could sit in the back row every month, hands behind head enjoying the presentations knowing all along the situation described above is real. Or, I could move to the podium and do my very best to reverse this trend. I chose the latter so hopefully with your help we can ensure there is a Robert E. Lee Camp for many years to come!

I have two primary objectives for these next two years. #1 is to increase our membership and as a result; increased attendance at meetings and events. My vision to do so involves several elements.

While certainly not abandoning our advocacy activities with local, state and national government entities, I believe our meetings and events need to make the primary emphasis be on subjects and formats that will interest *new* visitors and make them more inclined to attend regularly and become more involved. We need to make our gatherings easier to recruit to. I believe very few people join a historical organization with activism being their first and primary interest. For the vast majority of us that have been involved for a long time, the attraction for us to the SCV initially was interest in learning more about the Civil War, Confederate history, reenacting, genealogy research, etc. The passion for personal activism grew organically in us over time. I firmly believe the same situation still exists in the mind of a new potential member who has never attended an SCV meeting.

Again, I want to make very clear to my fellow compatriots that do such a marvelous job in guiding us on the political front, I'm still one of your obedient soldiers. Over the years I've done my share of letter writing, emailing, phone calling, court hearing attending, etc. and I will continue to do so. However, in my new role as Commander of the Robert E. Lee Camp, my primary focus will be the future vitality of the Camp and by expansion the entire local SCV presence. My

Commander's Corner

Compatriots – I am very humbled and excited to be the new Commander of The Robert E. Lee Camp. I am very grateful to all the Commanders and officers that have gone before me and for the trust you have bestowed on me to carry on their legacy. It will be my earnest endeavor to meet your expectations.

After much thought, I decided to accept the nomination for this position largely out of a sense of duty. Stating the obvious, our numbers are not what they once were and our ranks are aging. This is not unique to our Camp or the SCV as a whole. Other historical groups like United Daughters of the Confederacy, Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, etc. have felt it too. Sadly, membership in all civic groups such as Masonic Lodges, Shriners, Rotary Club, the Boy and Girl Scouts, are becoming less and less popular.

This is a trend that I have watched for some time and it's very concerning to me. These institutions are part of the fabric of America and I feel they are important. The Lee Camp has been part of Germantown for 26 years now and I believe we are a treasured community resource for historical information and preservation that must be kept.

observations in the previous paragraph are very real. If we never “get to first base” with a green local guy who *might possibly* be interested in what we do, we will doom our advocacy voices to smaller and smaller numbers. Nearly always, the active Confederate defender is a member first, and they don’t become members until they have been around for a while and had their interests captivated. It takes time. We HAVE to get new folks in the door and interested in us.

Additional visibility for our Camp is also another important step in gaining the interest of a potential new person. We have to be in front of people that don’t currently know us. Booths at local events like the Germantown Festival were very successful for the Camp in years past. Collierville, Bartlett and Southaven have similar events. Presence at things like the annual Civil War Show, gun shows and reenactments should also be effective as attendees of these types of events have common interests to us. Promoting “field trips” such as Lee Millar’s Vicksburg trip a few months ago has a lot of potential and are quite fun and interesting to everyone who goes.

Success at such events going forward will require a different way of thinking. I want to promote more collaborative assistance among all of our local Camps. It’s very tough to staff a booth for a weekend if only two people are going to help. A better way is to have such events staffed by members of all of our collective Camps. With thinned ranks we really need the manpower and I believe that if ANY of our Camps gain a new member, it’s a win for all of us. For example, if I’m talking to someone visiting our booth at the Germantown Festival who says they live in Bartlett, I want to do all I can to encourage that guy to attend a Jobe Camp meeting. This is much easier done if I happen to have a Jobe Camp member working the booth with me or at least if I have materials to promote their events. Expanded thinking and multi-camp participation at recruitment efforts helps us all.

The subject of visibility brings me to my #2 objective as Commander. I hope to inspire each of us as individuals to become more visible Confederates. By that I mean considering to fly a First National, Bonnie Blue or regimental flag in front of your house. I live in Collierville and know of only 3 houses (Lee Millar & myself are two of them) that regularly do this. I’d like to see many more in our neighborhoods. Doing so shows the world it’s OK to be a Confederate. We are already known to be good neighbors and citizens. Flying our colors in your yard lends credibility to our cause and organization.

Consider getting an SCV license plate. I swapped out my

“Save Our Battlefields” Tennessee plate for one immediately following the tragedy years ago of the Charleston church massacre. My motivation was quite simple and passionate; the world needs to know that being an SCV member and historical preservationist does not make one a racist zealot and all the other things we are portrayed as being. I wanted to let my own well-established good reputation in the civic and business communities debunk the unfair and untrue portrayal of who we really are.

Think about this: What is the profile of a typical SCV member actually? He’s a positive contributor to society, always has held a job or successfully retired from a career, pays taxes, donates money and time to a number of charitable organizations, is well read and educated, he’s a teacher, church deacon, Scout leader, Salvation Army bell ringer, youth ball coach and so on; you get the idea. See anything not to like about this profile? There isn’t. We are the pillars of our communities and business and we have that well deserved reputation in the eyes of those who know us personally. Just by simply being yourself lends immense credibility to our cause when you become a visible Confederate. I hope my tenure as your Commander will inspire you to do so in some way.

Future editions of Commander’s Corner will not be this long I promise but initially I wanted to share with you my motivations, objectives and vision. I hope to earn your enduring support these next two years and look forward to good times together.

Sincerely,

Shane Miller, Commander

smillerucl@aol.com

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40,000 Irish fought for the Confederate Army in the US Civil War

Phillip Thomas Tucker, Ph.D

A new book, *The Irish at Gettysburg*, says the real story of the Irish who fought with the Confederate Army is only just starting to be told.

Seemingly everything possible has already been written about the climactic battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania—three nightmarish days of intense combat in early July 1863—that determined America’s destiny.

Consequently, for people craving something new beyond the standard narrative so often repeated throughout the past, they were sorely disappointed by the new Gettysburg titles released for the 150th anniversary.

In fact, this unfortunate situation that has fully revealed

the overall sterility of the Gettysburg field of study has resulted in the writing of this book to fill this significant void in the historical record. It tells the story of the Irish and their key roles at the battle of Gettysburg and the overall Civil War.



This important chapter about the vital contributions of the most uniquely ethnic and obscure fighting men, especially in the ranks of the Army of Northern Virginia, has not been previously revealed in full, even in books about the most written-about and decisive confrontation in Civil War—and American—history. Therefore, this analysis of the importance of the Irish role at Gettysburg represents one of the final frontiers of Gettysburg historiography.

Because of their longtime absence from the historical record, the contributions of these young Irish men and boys at the decisive Battle of Gettysburg will be explored. The unforgettable story of a large number of Irish Confederates who played leading roles in the most climactic moment of the battle, “Pickett’s Charge,” on the hot afternoon of July 3, 1863, needs to be told.

These young men and boys from Ireland, especially the most recent immigrants, were literally caught between two worlds—the ancient homeland and the New World—when they stoically advanced across the open fields in the ranks of Lee’s greatest offensive effort. The Irish on both sides included soldiers who still spoke the Irish language.

Large numbers of Irish on the Confederacy side marched to their deaths during the audacious bid including Pickett’s Charge to pierce the right-center of the Army of the Potomac at a weak point of the Cemetery Ridge defensive line. Before the most famous attack of the Civil War, Irish Confederates played leading roles in equally determined assaults on the second day at both ends of Major General George Gordon Meade’s lengthy defensive line centered on the expanse of Cemetery Ridge: East Cemetery Hill on the north, where large numbers of Louisiana Irish Rebels charged the heights

with the war cry “We are the Louisiana Tigers!”; and in the all-important showdown for possession of strategic Little Round Top, where Irish soldiers of the Alabama Brigade and the Texas Brigade performed magnificently in determined assaults on the line’s southern end.

Sadly for the historical record, these Irish Confederates have left us with relatively few letters, diaries or memoirs in private collections and archives around the United States, an unfortunate development that has doomed these Sons of Erin and their notable battlefield achievements to obscurity, especially in relation to the Battle of Gettysburg.

In fact, no aspect of Gettysburg historiography has been more overlooked than ethnic studies that have revealed new insights into the overall American experience. This has been an ironic development because of the important roles of Irish Confederates during the three days at Gettysburg, providing additional evidence of an especially rich field of study.

By 1861, the largest immigrant group in the South was the native Irish (Catholics) and Scotch-Irish (Protestants). Contrary to the stereotype that the South consisted of a homogenous Anglo-Saxon society transferred from England, the South was overflowing with hardworking and devout Emerald Isle immigrants.

Fortunately for the Confederacy in terms of its war-waging capabilities—in a parallel that had been seen in the thirteen colonies just before the American Revolution—the South possessed a vast Irish manpower pool by 1860. Tens of thousands of immigrant Irish had flooded into the South, especially major urban areas (most of all New Orleans) because of the exodus created by the Great Potato Famine of 1845–1849. Known as the An Gorta Mor—ancient Gaelic for “The Great Hunger.

Unlike in major northeastern cities, the much easier assimilation of Irish immigrants into the overall mainstream of a more open and tolerant Southern society—the unity of whiteness in a slave society enhanced equality for whites—ensured a deep loyalty, including Democratic Party adherence, to their adopted homeland and a widespread wearing of the gray.

Most revealing, during the 1850s, ugly anti-Irish riots swept through the ethnic slums and ghettos of New York City, Philadelphia and Boston and even targeted Catholic churches, while the Irish were accepted as full-fledged citizens in Richmond, Mobile and Charleston. Clearly, this was a significant difference not lost on tens of thousands of Sons of Erin across the South with their adopted homeland’s call to arms in April 1861, after the firing on Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina.

Therefore, the majority of the Irish people found that the South, not the North, was the true land of liberty, offering greater social and economic opportunities and easier access into the overall mainstream of everyday life. Indeed, since before the nation's founding in the fiery forge of a people's revolution, the South and its people—not only in the cities but also in the rural areas and in the western frontier regions (as far west as the plains of west Texas)—were fully receptive to the Irish refugees from hard economic times, famines and British oppression.

In total, an estimated forty thousand Irishmen fought for the Confederacy. During the climax of the bloody showdown at Gettysburg, large numbers of Ireland-born Confederates marched forth in lengthy formations that flowed with mechanical-like precision over the open fields during Pickett's Charge.

Fighting against centralized authority had become a way of life to generations of Irish, and the Civil War was only the latest chapter of what had become almost a cultural tradition to the Sons of Erin. The ancestors of many Irish Catholics of the Army of Northern Virginia (ironically, like the blue-uniformed men of the Irish Brigade) had been liberty-loving rebels who had risen up against English invaders centuries before on the ancient homeland.

Consequently, during Lee's assault on the afternoon of July 3, these Sons of Erin were still proud of carrying on the distinguished revolutionary heritage of Irish rebels that extended back far beyond America's own revolutionary heritage.

During what was actually only their most recent revolution against the domination of centralized authority (now located in Washington, D.C., and not London, but still a faraway power that represented arbitrary rule) and a dissimilar opponent, Irish Confederate companies of numerous regiments attacked over the open fields of Gettysburg with colorful battle flags of green emblazoned with ancient patriotic slogans while unleashing Irish war cries that had been heard on Ireland's most famous battlefields in a storied past.

In regard to explaining the common motivations of the Irish soldier that were atypical compared to other Southern soldiers, no Confederates at Gettysburg fought, in general, less for slavery than the Irish. After all, the vast majority of these Irish immigrants in gray and butternut were relatively poor and primarily menial workers of the lower class—the former peasantry of the so-called old country. These tough men had mostly been common laborers who had worked on the docks, railroads, levees and small farms of the South.

Consequently, relatively few Irish (more the case of

Catholics than Protestants—the Scotch-Irish—especially the Great Famine Catholics) in the South owned slaves by 1860. In fact, by inclination, the Irish, especially Catholics, in general were the least likely to be slave owners, in part because they had hailed from a long-oppressed minority and were more empathetic than Anglo-Saxons, who possessed a long history as conquerors.



In truth, these Irish also fought from a sense of sincere gratitude to a Southern society that had accepted them and treated them more fairly than Northern society. Consequently, they were infused with a vibrant new nationalism of a kind experienced by their Irish ancestors in battling the English invaders over the centuries. Because the South had so thoroughly accepted Irish (Catholics and Protestants) for generations and given ample economic opportunities for them to advance up the social ladder unlike in northeastern cities, this path of upward mobility helped to open up many leadership positions in Confederate armies. Most of all, a vibrant sense of Irish nationalism evolved smoothly into the overall mainstream of Southern nationalism by 1861, because the two revolutionary struggles of the common people were seen as largely one and the same, despite existing on opposite sides of the Atlantic and separated by thousands of miles—a righteous, if holy, struggle for self-determination (“home rule”) by the common people.

And no enduring idea from the pages of history and a misty Celtic past was more foremost in the hearts and minds of hundreds of these brave Sons of Erin than that Ireland's centuries-long struggle against the oppression of Great Britain was the same as the Confederacy's struggle for self-determination.



**Image
Courtesy
State
Historical
Society of
Missouri**

The first reunion of the men who rode with William Clarke Quantrill was held in September 1898 at Blue Springs, Missouri. They continued to hold annual reunions for thirty-two years, until 1929. The reunions were held in various locations, including Wallace Grove (the home of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Wallace) in Independence, Mo.

This 1906 reunion photo was taken in Independence. Among the attendees was John Noland, first from right on the third row. Born a slave in 1844, he served as Quantrill's hostler during the war and was used by the guerrilla commander as a scout and spy. Noland died in 1908.

Hiram J. George, second from right on the third row, was born in 1834. He fought as both a guerrilla and a regular Confederate soldier, serving at the battles of Independence and Lone Jack, in the raid on Lawrence, and at Baxter Springs. He died in 1911.

William W. "Buck" Fields, sixth from left on the first row, was born in 1844. He served with the Missouri State Guard and with Quantrill. Fields participated in the siege of Lexington, the battles of Independence, Lone Jack, Cane Hill, Prairie Grove, and Westport, and in the raid on Lawrence. He died in 1937.

William H. Gregg, fifth from right on the first row, was born in 1838. He served as a lieutenant in Quantrill's command, and fought at Independence, Prairie Grove, and Springfield. He also participated in the raid on Lawrence and in the destruction of General James Blunt's command at Baxter Springs. Later in the war, Gregg left Quantrill and joined the regular Confederate army. He died in 1916.

John Hicks George, fourth from right on the first row, was born in 1838. He fought with Quantrill at Independence, Lone Jack, Prairie Grove, Lawrence and Baxter Springs. Later in the war he joined the regular Confederate forces and was captured by the Federals in 1864. He died in 1926.

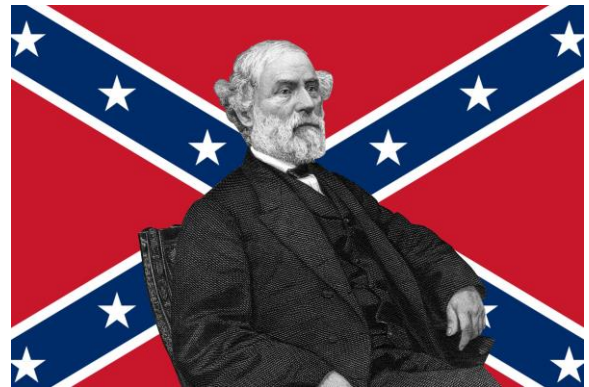
LINCOLN'S PLAN FOR STARVING FREED SLAVES, "LET THEM ROOT HOG OR DIE"

It comes from the idea that when pigs or hogs couldn't be fed, they'd be turned out into the woods to fend for themselves. They could either root hog or die. But, it was politically popularized by Abraham Lincoln. In a meeting with the Confederate emissary Alexander Stephens in February 1865 at the Hampton Roads Peace Conference, Lincoln was asked what his plans were for the freed slaves. Stephens' interest in the freedmen, was in how Lincoln planned to provide for their well-being, particularly since the latter was responsible for their dire plight. The "Great Emancipator," replied: "Let them root hog or die."

And in the starving war-ravaged South, they did die. According to Professor Downs, a Yankee, of Connecticut College, in his book *Dying for Freedom*, approximately 1 million black southerners, one out of four, died from 1862-1870 of war violence, disease, and starvation.



The Great Emancipator



The General Robert E. Lee Camp #1640 Sons of Confederate Veterans

Go to our website:

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

Or visit our Facebook pages at:

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53rd Mid-South Military History & Civil War Show XXX Speaker Series

Saturday, March 7

11am—**Larry Daniel**, author of 7 books of Civil War History. His topic his recent book, ***Conquered, Why The Army of Tennessee Failed.***

Noon—**Ed Frank**, retired History Professor and head of Special Collections at the University of Memphis. His topic, **“Little Bugs Speak: Letters, Diaries and Memoirs of the Civil War”** at the University of Memphis, Mississippi Valley Collection.

1pm—**Andrew Pouncey**, President of the Shelby County Historical Commission and author of the award-winning website [‘WarUntold.com.’](http://WarUntold.com) His topic, **“Walking the Western Front of WW1.”**

2pm—**Willy Bearden**, a documentary film producer and author who had a major role in developing the Elvis Presley Birthplace Museum in Tupelo. His topic, **“Military Service of Elvis Presley and His Family.”**

3pm—**Louis Intres**, retired History Professor from Arkansas State University and President of the Sultana Museum in Marion, Arkansas. His topic, **“The Villainy of Reuben Hatch and His Relation to Abraham Lincoln.”**

Music by the **52nd Regimental String Band** on Friday, March 6 from 5pm-8pm and at 4pm Saturday, March 7.

Landers Center, Southaven, Mississippi located at Exit 287, the intersection of I-55 and Church Road.



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Contact: Mid-South Military History & Civil War Show
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and

The Mary Custis Lee Chapter,

Order of the Confederate Rose

P.O. Box 171251

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Steve M. McIntyre, Editor

Next Camp Meeting ** January 13, 2020
Germantown Regional History and Genealogy Center, 7779 Old Poplar Pike, Germantown, TN