



SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS, TEXAS DIVISION

THE JOHN H. REAGAN CAMP NEWS

www.reaganscvcamp.org

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 10

NOVEMBER 2009

COMMANDER'S DISPATCH

Greetings Compatriots,

We have covered a lot of ground in the 10 months since our first meeting to organize our camp in January of this year! October was no exception as it was a very active month for our members. In addition to our regular monthly meeting, compatriots from our camp were involved in many events. I would like to thank all of you and our lady supporters for your hard work and dedication to our worthy cause.

Calvin Nicholson, yours truly, and my family participated in the Battle for Fort Crawford reenactment at Hallsville on October 2-3. A few photos from that event are on page 6.

The John H. Reagan camp and the Cross of St. Andrews Camp supported the Davis-Reagan Chapter 2292 UDC at the John H. Reagan birthday ceremony held at the Reagan Memorial monument in Palestine on October 10th.. I have included the poem that Ronnie Hatfield recited on page 3, there are photos on page 7, and the address I gave is printed on pages 10-12. Ken McClure, commander of the Cross of St. Andrews Camp #2009 read a great quote titled "Confederate Heroes". It went as follows: *"Resistance is our heritage, defiance is our virtue, and independence is our destiny. The Confederate Soldiers were our kinfolk and our heroes. We testify to the country our enduring fidelity to their memory. We commemorate their valor and devotion. There were some things that were not surrendered at Appomatox. We did not surrender our rightful place in history, nor was it one of the conditions of surrender that unfriendly lips should tell the story of that war or that unfriendly hands should write the 4 epitaphs of our Confederate*

dead. We have a right to teach our children the true history of that war, the causes which led up to it and the principles involved. Senator Edward W. Carmack, 1903"

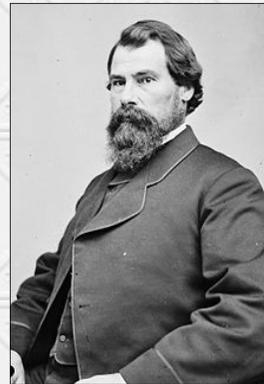
On October 17th, we hosted a reinterment and Confederate marker dedication for 1st Lt. James G. Blackmon at the Bonner Cemetery near Fairfield (see page 8).

I met up with our friend, Paul Duff, at the Reagan home site one morning during October to spray the tall Johnsongrass growing on one half of the .9 acre lot. Paul hauled his tractor and sprayer to the Reagan home site to spray the Johnsongrass. It looks like we got a good kill on those tall plants which will make it easier to keep the grounds mowed and establish some better grass this spring.

Compatriot Dan Dyer with occasional help from myself, has been mowing and edging the home site. If anyone else would like to volunteer to help with this project, please contact Dan.

Also during this past month, the executive committee met to discuss short and long term goals and objectives for our camp along with officer nominations for the 2010 year which will be recommended to the camp for election at our annual meeting on January 9, 2010. Nominations from the floor will also be accepted.

Our camp was represented at Oktoberfest (sic) in Palestine on October 31st by compatriots John Barnhart and Marc Robinson. We set up our new recruiting display, made by Ronnie Hatfield, on a table with camp photos and information and displayed the U.S., Texas, and Confederate flags. One of the Val Verde cannons was set up as well (page 5).



John H. Reagan

Oct 8, 1818 – March 6, 1905

Post Master General of the Confederate States of America

Secretary of the Treasury CSA

U. S. Senator from Texas

U. S. Representative from Texas

Chairman - Railroad Commission of Texas

A Founder and President of the Texas State Historical Association

First Lt. Commander Calvin Nicholson is setting up some great programs for our monthly meetings over the next few months. Some of the speakers will be Forrest Bradberry, Jr., Ronnie Hatfield, Charlie Akin who is a history professor and Provost of the TVCC Palestine Campus, and Judge Bascom Bentley. The Camp Christmas party will be discussed at the November meeting, so please bring your ideas!

Again, I appreciate all of you for being so dedicated to the cause of honoring our Confederate ancestors and preserving their true history!

Respectfully your obedient servant,
Marc Robinson

CAMP MEETINGS

2nd Saturday of Each Month
06:00 PM
Meal served at each meeting.
Museum for East Texas Culture
400 Micheaux Avenue
Palestine, Texas

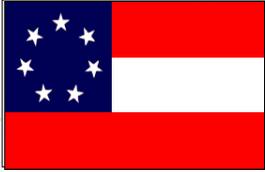
(Old John H. Reagan High School Building, Near State Hwy 19, five blocks east of courthouse)

Guests are welcome!
Bring the family.

www.reaganscvcamp.org

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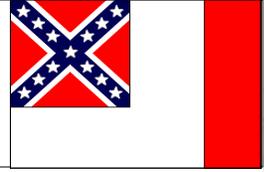
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ON THIS DAY IN CONFEDERATE HISTORY

November

by Kirby McCord



1860

November 6, 1860: Abraham Lincoln wins the presidential election with a clear majority of electoral votes (180 out of 303), but the smallest plurality in the popular vote in American presidential history (39.8%). A clever politician, Lincoln is surprisingly inexperienced. Born in Kentucky a year after and just a few miles from future Confederate President Jefferson Davis, Lincoln had practiced law the majority of his career, serving as a state senator for Illinois for seven years and U.S. Congressman for that state for two; although his last public office was 1848, Lincoln's greatest claim to fame was his losing campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1858, in which he famously debated Democrat Stephen Douglas. Still, due to his masterful manipulation of the Republican convention in Chicago, Lincoln secured the nomination. Based on the sectionalism rampant in the country at that time, the split of the Democratic Party, and the rise of the Constitutional Union Party, Lincoln's election was perceived by pundits of the time as a foregone conclusion. Within days of Lincoln's electoral victory, Southern leaders are speaking of secession as an inevitable necessity.

1861

November 1, 1861: 75-year old Union General-in-Chief Winfield Scott voluntarily retires, allowing 34-year old George B. McClellan to assume that post.

November 6, 1861: Jefferson Davis is elected to a six year term as President of the Confederate States of America. Previously, he had held his office only provisionally. Davis had never sought the presidency, and in fact was a latecomer to secession, reluctantly embracing that course of action only after President-elect Lincoln had declared his opposition to expansion of slavery into the territories in January, 1861. Davis withdrew as Senator from Mississippi on January 21. Having graduated from West Point in 1828, serving as Colonel in the Mexican War and Secretary of War under U.S. President Franklin Pierce, he hoped to receive a military command. Instead, he was named provisional President of the Confederacy. Considering himself inadequate to the task of Chief Executive, Davis attempted to refuse the appointment, but was inaugurated over his objections February 18, 1861. The election this day confirms Davis' worst fears, but honor compels him to serve.

November 8, 1861: Confederate commissioners James Mason and John Slidell board the British packet, *Trent* in Havana, Cuba, en route to their postings in Europe. U.S. Captain Charles Wilkes, commanding the *USS San Jacinto*, threatening the smaller vessel with a broadside, boards the *Trent* in international waters, seizing Slidell and Mason. The British government protests. Recalling that such activities by British warships led directly to the War of 1812, U.S. Secretary of State William Seward apologizes to Great Britain and releases the commissioners to the British on December 30, 1861. For his illegal acts, Wilkes is feted throughout the North as a hero.

November 18, 1861: The chaotic nature of secession is revealed today. A convention of pro-Union delegates convenes at Hatteras, North Carolina, repudiating the May secession of that state from the Union; they appoint a provisional government. Meanwhile, invading Confederate soldiers convene in Russellville, Kentucky, adopt a secession ordinance, and appoint a pro-secession government. Kentucky and North Carolina now find themselves with two separate state governments.

November 25, 1861: Armor plating is attached to the *USS Merrimack*, beginning the process of turning the former US Navy ship into the first ironclad, the *CSS Virginia*.

1862

November 5, 1862: US President Abraham Lincoln dismisses General George B. McClellan as head of the Army of the Potomac saying, "sending reinforcements to McClellan is like shoveling flies across a barn."

November 18, 1862: US General Ambrose Burnside steals a march on Confederate General Robert E. Lee, positioning his men across the Rappahannock River from Fredericksburg, Virginia. The auspicious beginning of Burnside's campaign is quickly wasted, as the Federals fail to ford the River before the arrival of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Northern foul-ups continue as Burnside demands that the mayor surrender the town, then promises the town will not be fired upon so long as no hostile demonstrations come from the town. Alas, the mayor has no control over the situation as Lee posts sharpshooters in the city to harass Union pontoon bridge engineers. In response, Union guns begin shelling the city, causing massive destruction but failing to diminish Confederate resistance.

1863

November 4, 1863: Confederate General James Longstreet's 20,000 man corps had been instrumental in achieving victory for Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee at Chickamauga in September. However, Longstreet and Bragg do not get along. In an attempt to smooth over differences, President Davis detaches Longstreet from Bragg's army besieging Chattanooga, assigning Longstreet an independent command to attack Knoxville. It is a foolish strategic move: Longstreet fails to take Knoxville, and Bragg's army is weakened in the face of two Federal armies under Grant: Sherman's Army of the Tennessee and Thomas' Army of the Cumberland.

November 19, 1863: The National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania is dedicated today. Massachusetts abolitionist Edward Everett gives the almost three hour presentation. He is followed by US President Abraham Lincoln, who is scheduled to make "a few appropriate remarks." Lincoln's ten sentence Gettysburg Address receives polite compliments over the next few days, but is now widely regarded as one of the greatest orations in American history.

November 24, 1863: Confederate General Braxton Bragg believes his army to be in an impregnable position. His left is anchored on Look-

out Mountain, and Missionary Ridge, a high promontory, overlooking the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee protects his right and center. He considers the departure of the contentious Longstreet a positive good, until he is attacked today. His left on Lookout Mountain is lightly defended and taken with surprising ease by Federal troops in the "Battle Above the Clouds." Bragg's troops are more successful repelling Federal attacks on their right flank. The next day, the Union General Grant orders a "demonstration" on the center of Missionary Ridge to divert Confederates from Bragg's right where Grant intends the main assault to be. But the Union troops storm up the steep slope of Missionary Ridge without orders. The attack seems suicidal, but Bragg has positioned his troops badly, and they are unable to support one another and when the day is done, Missionary Ridge has fallen to the Federals. The Union attackers have lost 5,824 men out of 56,000 engaged; the Confederates 6,667 out of 64,000. More importantly, Bragg's army has been dislodged, the siege of Chattanooga lifted, and the South's best chance at destroying a Federal Army has slipped away.

November 30, 1863: Confederate President Davis accepts the resignation of General Braxton Bragg.

1864

November 6, 1864: U.S. Colonel Benjamin Sweet arrests 100 men in Chicago on charges of plotting against the United States. Confederate agents and Copperhead sympathizers, according to the alleged plans, were to engineer a massive prison escape from the notorious Camp Douglas in Chicago on Election Day. The escaped rebels, it is charged, were then to stuff the ballot boxes, causing the U.S. Presidential Election to be either tainted or to give the election to McClellan. Following the political skullduggery, the now free soldiers were alleged to be charged with burning Chicago to the ground. The plot is never substantiated, and all but a few of those arrested are released without charges ever being filed. Still, Sweet has apparently obtained his immediate objectives: garnering much attention to himself, and demonizing anyone who might support an independent South.

November 8, 1864: With help from absentee ballots allowing soldiers the vote, incumbent Republican Abraham Lincoln soundly defeats Democrat General George McClellan for the U.S. Presidency. Only three states vote for McClellan and the peace platform his party has engineered. Southerners had hoped that the bloody stalemate in Virginia would turn public support from Lincoln, but Sherman's capture of Atlanta ices Lincoln's re-election and dooms the South. The Northern military juggernaut will now bludgeon the Confederacy into submission.

November 16, 1864: Ignoring Confederate General John Bell Hood's 38,000 man Army of Tennessee, now located in Florence, Alabama, Union General William T. Sherman sets out from Atlanta on his infamous March to the Sea. His 62,000 man army is instructed to forage and live off the land, and should they meet any resistance to such scavenging, relentlessly devastate the surrounding area. Sherman's Gorilla's happily comply. The only Confederate opposition is Joe Wheeler's 10,000 man cavalry force, and about 3,000 Georgia militia under George W. Smith. They are easily brushed aside.

November 21, 1864: In an attempt to divert Union General Sherman from his destructive march through Georgia, Confederate General Hood marches into Tennessee, threatening Union General Schofield's smaller force, which retreats toward Franklin.

November 27, 1864: Southern saboteurs blow up the *USS Greyhound*, Union General Benjamin Butler's floating headquarters on the James River. Butler escapes harm.

November 29, 1864: Stealing a march on Union General Schofield, Hood's Confederates nearly surround Schofield's force near Spring Hill, Tennessee. But fatigue and botched communication among the Confederates allow Schofield's army to escape. Hood is enraged at his subordinates for their apparent incompetence. He demands an immediate pursuit, even though his army of 40,000 is near exhaustion.

November 30, 1864: Schofield has been reinforced and entrenches at Franklin, Tennessee. Hood's weary Confederates arrive, the constant forced marches having reduced their numbers to 27,000. Still fuming over the Federal escape at Spring Hill, Hood orders an immediate attack on the now numerically superior Union force of 28,000. Charging across a mile and a half of open ground, the Army of Tennessee is shot to pieces, losing 6,252 men, including six generals killed, among them the great Patrick Cleburne. Schofield loses 2,326 men, but retires to Nashville that night. Stubbornly, Hood follows.



KEEP YOUR GRUBBY PAWS OFF OF MY FLAG BY RONNIE HATFIELD, COPYRIGHT 1993



I'm tired of all you hooded bums paradin' in the streets,
with the flag my grandpa fought for, hung shamefully at your feet!

You clowns should swap them hoods you wear,
for a wrinkled paper bag!
'Cause you ain't fit to shine the shoes, of the men
who bore that flag!

And you neo-nazi skinheads, just who the hell do
you think you are?
You've got no right to wear my flag tattooed
upon your arm!

Go adopt the skull and crossbones, as a banner
for your hate,
and leave St. Andrew's Cross alone! Or better
still, don't hate!

For a hundred years you've shamed those gallant
warriors in gray,
but us Southerners have had enough, and a new
war starts today!

The Cause, once more, is honor! And the foe
again is strong!
But if you think you own my flag, you'll soon
find out you're wrong!

We're takin' back the Stars and Bars, and the
Stainless Banner too!
No longer will they bear the shame brought on
by fools like you!

So consider this as good advice, from a hound
whose tail don't wag!
Don't touch what don't belong to you...
And KEEP YOUR GRUBBY PAWS OFF OF
MY FLAG!

Editors note: This poem was recited by Sergeant
Hatfield at the UDC's John H. Reagan birthday
ceremony, October 10, 2009

HONORING OUR CONFEDERATE ANCESTORS

**"Greater love hath no man
than if he give up his life for
another..."**

**Address for Lt. James G.
Blackmon's Re-interment and
Marker Dedication
Bonner Cemetery, Freestone
County Texas
October 17, 2009
By Ronnie Hatfield**

If I were asked, "what 3 things best described the Confederate soldier, what 3 things mattered most to him, I would answer immediately GOD, FAMILY, & COUNTRY.

A love and devotion to those things he felt were right and just under the laws of God and man. A love and devotion to his family, wherein he felt no remorse in sacrificing his very life if necessary to prevent harm, or to bring prosperity, to those whom he cared for, and who brought him the most joy. And finally, an unyielding love and devotion to his country, even if it meant personal hardship and deprivation, up to and including the ultimate sacrifice.

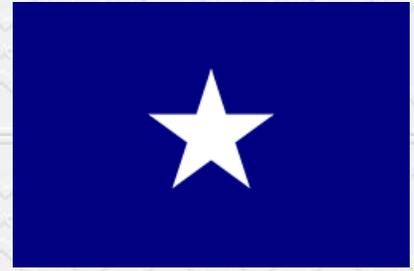
Acknowledged by friend and foe alike as the most feared fighting man in history, he fought the largest and best equipped army in the world to a bloody standstill for 2 years and then survived attrition, blockade and isolation for another 2 years before laying down his arms, defeated militarily, and yet still defiant in spirit and courage. A trait not uncommon in the people of the South then as well as today. It is no coincidence that the bulk of this country's highest leaders claim Southern roots. Washington, Jefferson, Polk, Tyler, Taylor, and

in more modern times, Bush, Clinton, Johnson, and Eisenhower to name a few. It is also no coincidence that some of our greatest military figures also come from states below the Mason-Dixon. Ike, Washington, Old Hickory, Alvin York, Audie Murphy, Stonewall Jackson, Jeb Stuart, and of course, Robert E. Lee. We gather here today to honor the epitome of that Southern soldier. A man who by his letters demonstrated those principles that he cherished and that we also love. We gather here today, to not only mourn his loss, but more so to perpetuate his cause and those principles. We gather to rejoice in the return of this soldier from foreign soil, and to once and for all reunite him with his family and country.

For the soldier to die on the battlefield, though not his intention, was an accepted possibility. It was relatively quick, and allowed little or no time to consider the wider reaching effects of his death. The Prisoner of War however had nothing but time to consider those consequences. Consider if you will, the physical conditions of confinement, the uncertainty of your future and that of your family, the deprivations, hunger, cold, disease, and other hardships forced to endure, with no way to defend from or foresee an end to.

That struggle, that concern, that separation from all he held dear, comes to an end today for James G. Blackmon.

The reason he lived for then, and the reason he is remembered today can be summed up in one word... FAMILY.



The Bonnie Blue Flag

James was lucky. Where you and I have one family. He had 3. The first was his immediate. His parents, his wife Mary and beloved daughter Mary Charlotte. They gave him joy and comfort at home and in his heart. His 2nd family were his comrades in uniform. The men he served with, fought alongside, and suffered within the nightmares that were Gratiot Street Prison, Johnson's Island, Point Lookout, and finally Ft. Delaware.

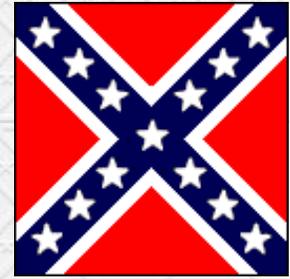
His 3rd family is the one I am proudest of. That family keeps a candle in the window for James G. Blackmon. Speaking his name and eternally looking down the long road that he and others like him travel to finally come home. WE are that family. We, who as the descendants of those heroes have vowed never to forget, never to neglect, never to bring shame on their service. We who rejoice in this homecoming today receive Lt. James G. Blackmon with open arms and joyful tears.
GREATER LOVE HATH NO
MAN.....

Editors Note: Ronnie Hatfield is Sergeant-at-Arms for the John H. Reagan Camp 2156, Palestine, Texas

OCTOBER 10TH MEETING



Above left, L-R, Reagan Camp Historian Dan Dyer and Landscape Architect for the Anderson County Master Gardeners Nancy Waggoner. Mrs. Waggoner presented the landscape plans she developed for our John H. Reagan Home Site Project. This includes a courtyard with three flag poles, a Confederate Monument with all of the Confederate Soldiers from Anderson County engraved on it, history walking paths, and a block house type fort.. These plans are at the Museum for East Texas Culture in our monthly meeting room.



“DUTY IS THE MOST SUBLIME WORD IN OUR LANGUAGE. DO YOUR DUTY IN ALL THINGS. YOU CANNOT DO MORE. YOU SHOULD NEVER WISH TO DO LESS.”

-GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE-



OKTOBERFEST (sic)
Left—John H. Reagan Camp 2156 recruiting display with one of the Val Verde Battery cannon's at the Oktoberfest, Palestine, Texas, 10-31-09. Left to Right: Marc Robinson and John Barnhart spoke to many people that day about the SCV, the Reagan camp, and our Southern heritage.

NOTHING FILLS ME WITH DEEPER SADNESS THAN TO SEE A SOUTHERN MAN APOLOGIZING FOR THE DEFENSE WE MADE OF OUR INHERITANCE. OUR CAUSE WAS SO JUST, SO SACRED, THAT HAD I KNOWN ALL THAT HAS COME TO PASS, HAD I KNOWN WHAT WAS TO BE INFLICTED UPON ME, ALL THAT MY COUNTRY WAS TO SUFFER, ALL THAT OUR POSTERITY WAS TO ENDURE, I WOULD DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN.

-PRESEDENT JEFFERSON DAVIS-

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 14th, 06:00 PM—
John H. Reagan Camp Meeting at the Museum for East Texas Culture.
Program: Forrest Bradberry, Jr. presents—”Reflections of My Southern Heritage”

December 12th, 06:00 PM—
John H. Reagan Camp Christmas Party at the Museum for East Texas Culture.
Program: Ronnie Hatfield will recite several of his **Confederate poems**

Reenactment events calendar at: www.12thtexasartillery.org or contact Lt. Commander Calvin Nicholson, 903-391-3243 cwnicholson@hotmail.com



Above—Reagan Camp Color Guard at the UDC hosted Event on October 10, 2009, Honoring John H. Reagan on his birthday. He was actually born on October 8, 1818 but the Davis-Reagan Chapter 2292 UDC has the event on the Saturday closest to his birthday each year. Pictured from L-R, Johnny McVey, Marc Robinson, Dan Dyer, Ed Furman, and Calvin Nicholson



VAL VERDE BATTERY REENACTS AT THE BATTLE FOR FORT CRAWFORD HALLSVILLE, TEXAS OCTOBER 2-4, 2009



The Val Verde Battery in the parade Saturday morning.



Calvin Nicholson cooking bacon and biscuits Sun. morning in the pouring rain



The parade in Hallsville was well attended



Caraline Robinson with her pet chicken, Photo by Stephanie Ford



Children playing "Graces", photo and game pieces provided by Stephanie Ford



The Val Verde Battery Flag, photo by Stephanie Ford



The Val Verde Battery Drill Before the Battle

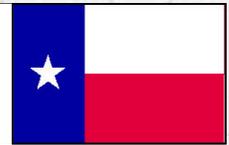


Deborah and Channa Robinson pause by the Val Verde Battery Camp for a photo.

← From L-R: Johnny McVey, Brandon Ford, Calvin Nicholson, Billy Ford, Bradley Ford, Tom James, Kirby McCord, Marc Robinson, Photo by Stephanie Ford



**HONORING JOHN H. REAGAN ON HIS BIRTHDAY
REAGAN PARK, OCTOBER 10, 2009
HOSTED BY DAVIS-REAGAN CHAPTER 2292 UDC**



John H. Reagan Camp 2156 and the Cross of St. Andrews Camp 2009 helped the Davis-Reagan Chapter 2292 UDC in honoring John H. Reagan on his birthday.



John H. Reagan Color Guard, L-R Sgt. Ronnie Hatfield, Johnny McVey, Calvin Nicholson, Ed Furman, Dan Dyer, and Marc Robinson



Above - Reagan Camp Chaplain, Ed Furman, giving the Benediction

Right—Sergeant-at-Arms Ronnie Hatfield reciting a poem he wrote , titled, "Keep Your Grubby Paws Off of My Flag"
John H. Reagan Memorial Monument, Palestine, Texas in background.



Right - Davis-Reagan Chapter UDC President, Jane Biddle thanking ceremony participants and guests for their help and attendance



Left - Reagan Camp Commander Marc Robinson delivering the address. Address can be read on pages 10-12.





1ST LT. JAMES G. BLACKMON RE-INTERMENT & CONFEDERATE MILITARY MARKER DEDICATION BONNER CEMETERY, OCTOBER 17, 2009



Waul's Texas
Legion



Ronnie Hatfield was the MC and Event Coordinator for this ceremony.



Val Verde Battery members preparing to fire



Davis-Reagan Chapter 2292 UDC President, Jane Biddle, dedicates the marker



Pall bearers for Lt. Blackmon, were John Barnhart, Chance Robinson, Johnny McVey and Stanley Black



Marc Robinson places box containing Lt. Blackmon's earth and a single Texas Confederate jacket button in small grave.

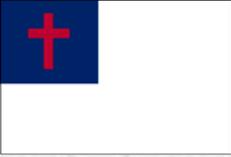


Ronnie Hatfield presents the Confederate Flag covering marker to oldest relative present, Carl Y. "Pete" Bonner



Soldier's relative, Mary Sue Thornton, places rose on grave and was escorted by Forrest Bradberry, Jr.

← From L-R standing: Ronnie Hatfield, Calvin Nicholson, Ed Furman, Dan Dyer, John Barnhart, Forrest Bradberry, Jr. Josh Pullin, Chance Robinson. L-R Kneeling: Johnny McVey, Marc Robinson, Stanley Black



HAVE WE?

BY BRO. L.E. "LEN" PATTERSON, THD.
SCV CHAPLAIN, ARMY OF TRANS-MISSISSIPPI



Perhaps this is the dilemma into which we have fallen. We have felt the surge of righteous ambition. Our hearts have burned within us. We have dreamed dreams and seen visions. But we awaken to a dull sense of futility and feel as though we are beating the air or trying to build castles in the sky.

It is the natural impulse for a man to be moved with compassion for his country and forefathers. There is nothing evil, there is nothing implicitly sinful or wrong in the thoughts that fill our hearts. It is only natural to feel resentment and anger against a tyrannical government and it's merciless army whipping the memory of our brave Confederate ancestors and trying to destroy our proud Southern heritage.

Many of us are committed to the mission of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and this is all well and good. But it may be the reason for our feeling of futility. You see, we are not called upon to commit ourselves to a task or cause. We are called upon to commit ourselves to God. God is the Lord of all, and He is completely able to assume His own responsibilities and accomplish His aims. Where we fail, He is able to succeed. God does not need us. We need God!

This nation was founded by Christian men to be a nation "under God," and God is perfectly capable of taking care of those who would usurp His authority. And, He will. Too often we organize, promote, work, and spend God out of our business, and then ask for His blessings. It really doesn't work that way.

There's not a man reading this that would not follow Lee or Jackson into the very jaws of death. But God is a greater leader than Lee or Jackson and even more worthy of our trust. I believe we must follow Him if we are to achieve victory over those who oppose us and our just Cause. The challenge we hear so often today is "Do more! Give more! Be more!" Go! Go! Go! Do! Do! Do! But God says, "Be still and know that I am God." In other words, quit the panic; quit beating the air; quit

building castles in the sky, and just let God be God.

Have we as a Confederation made this discovery? Have we come to the point where we realize that all we can produce, at our best, is ashes? Have we come to the place where we can accept ourselves for what we are: Helpless without Him? Have we reached the time in our struggle when we can commit ourselves to God and follow His guidance and direction? Have we arrived on the field of battle knowing that our God is leading us to victory?

Have we heeded the admonishment of God's Word in Romans 12:2, where the Apostle Paul writes, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God?" Have we put God at the head of our lives, our homes, our businesses, and at the head of the Sons of Confederate Veterans? Have we?

Brother Len Patterson, Th.D
Chaplain, Army of Trans-Mississippi
Chaplain, Central Texas Brigade

"IN ALL MY PERPLEXITIES AND DISTRESSES, THE
BIBLE HAS NEVER FAILED TO GIVE ME LIGHT
AND STRENGTH."

-GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE-



HONORING JOHN H. REAGAN ON HIS BIRTHDAY

ADDRESS BY MARC ROBINSON, OCTOBER 10, 2009



I would like to begin by thanking the Davis-Reagan Chapter 2292, United Daughters of the Confederacy, for allowing me this opportunity to honor a very special Texas son, John H. Reagan. He was, to say at the least, a great man. Mr. Reagan was not born in Texas, but neither were most of the citizens who settled and founded the great Republic of Texas in the early 1800's. He came to Texas from Sevierville, Sevier County, Tennessee in 1839. He did not come from the aristocratic slaveholding class of the Old South, but instead, and in comparison, would have been considered raised in poverty. His economic situation was probably the deciding factor that brought the young Reagan to Texas to seek larger opportunities. He was born on October 8, 1818, the oldest son of Timothy and Elizabeth Reagan, who were farmers. All four branches of his immediate family were in America prior to the revolutionary war. His great-grandfather Timothy Reagan, was a soldier in the revolution, and was seriously wounded at the battle of Brandywine. His early education was limited for one, because of the rural area in which he was raised and two, because his father got into financial difficulties and was unable to give his children the education he had received. John H. Reagan did at various times briefly attend some formal academies. To do this, he would work and save enough money to attend for one or two sessions at a time, and then return to work, to raise more money for tuition.

When he came to Texas in May 1839, he originally settled in Nacogdoches. He joined the local militia during the Cherokee War. He participated in the battle on July 15, 1839 where the Indian leader Chief Bowles was killed in what is now Van Zandt County. His early career path in Texas was first working as a frontier scout, then surveyor, justice of peace, and captain of a militia unit in Nacogdoches. Mr. Reagan then began to study law and received a temporary law license in 1846. With this license, he opened a law practice in the old settlement of Buffalo near the Trinity River in what is now Henderson County, a county that he later named when he submitted the petition to the state of Texas for it to be formed. He actually submitted petitions to the state to form three new counties and the state accepted the names he submitted with these petitions. Those counties were Kaufman, Van Zandt and Henderson Counties named after

the Honorable David S. Kaufman, the Honorable Isaac Van Zandt, and the General J. Pinckney Henderson, each of whom were distinguished for his public service to the Republic and State and were friends of John H. Reagan.

Mr. Reagan cultivated a small farm in Kaufman County from 1844-1851. He was elected probate judge and Lt. Colonel of the battalion of militia in newly formed Henderson County. In 1847, he was elected as a State Representative from the Nacogdoches district which included counties from Angelina all the way to the northern portion of Dallas County and Hunt counties. He lost reelection to the State House. In 1850, Judge Reagan was elected district judge for the counties of Houston, Anderson, Henderson, Van Zandt, Navarro, Ellis, Kaufman, Tarrant, and Dallas for a term of six years. In the summer of 1851 Judge Reagan moved to Palestine, Anderson County, Texas. At that time it was the largest city in the judicial district with the ablest lawyers according to Judge Reagan. In 1860, he bought a farm on land west of town which had originally been the site of Fort Houston, a post for the Republic of Texas. He did not live on the property until after the War Between the States in what was at that time a one-story Greek revival cottage. He named his home, appropriately, Fort Houston. In 1880 it was enlarged to a two-story stately and beautiful home. Shortly after being elected for a second 6 year term as district judge in 1856, he was nominated to a seat in the U.S. House in which he was later elected. He had originally declined the nomination on the basis of just being re-elected to his judicial seat and also because he did not want, as he put it, to go into politics. Judge Reagan was subsequently convinced that he was greatly needed in this office and must accept the nomination. He took his seat in Congress of the United States of America on December 7, 1857.

John H. Reagan was a man that didn't mind taking a stand on what he believed to be right, no matter what the political outcome. Toward the end of his first term in the U.S. Congress, his views were being challenged on the issue of extreme Southern Rights men being in favor of filibustering Congress to acquire additional territory from Mexico, Cuba, and Central America, and for the reopening of the African slave-trade, and for the creation of additional slave States, to restore the balance of power

between the North and the South. Congressman Reagan made a brief statement of opposition to filibustering and the reopening of the African slave-trade. This statement caused very bitter denunciation of him by the leading newspapers of the State, such as the Galveston News, the Houston Telegraph, the State Gazette of Austin, and the Marshall Republican and by nearly all the newspapers of the State and by nearly all the active politicians. In Judge Reagan's autobiography, published in 1906 and titled, *Memoirs with Special Reference to Secession and the Civil War*, he stated, "the personal attacks were so bad that I would burn the newspapers so my wife couldn't see what they were writing about me." He had no plans to run again for Congressional office in 1859, but his wife, after finally reading some of the personal attacks of him by the newspapers, encouraged him to run for re-election. During the canvass for his re-election, he gave to the public a circular letter illustrating his position. In his *Memoirs*, Mr. Reagan stated the following concerning the outcome of this election, "the result was that I defeated him by one of the largest majorities that any candidate for Congress ever got in the State". In honor of Mr. Reagan, and to get a better feel for whom this great man was, I hope you don't mind that I will be reading other various excerpts from his *Memoirs* during this address. At this time I would like to read a portion of the letter that Mr. Reagan circulated to the public during this same 1859 re-election campaign. He states:

"These doctrines of filibustering and the reopening of the African slave-trade are chosen as those best calculated to secure the execution of their designs, because they appeal directly to the bad passions most easily awakened, and most difficult to reason with, those by which the people are encouraged to believe they are to be enriched suddenly and without patient toil, which has heretofore been regarded as necessary to secure wealth. These doctrines are not, and are not intended to be Democratic: but they are, and intended to be purely sectional and revolutionary. And I appeal to the Democracy of Texas, in the name of the Constitution and the Union, in the name of the rights of the States and the liberties of the people in the name of law and order, in the name of good government and sound morals, and for the happiness of our people and perpetuation of our institutions to sustain the old, the pure, the time-honored doctrines of our party; and put down these

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HONORING JOHN H. REAGAN ON HIS BIRTHDAY

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sectional and revolutionary doctrines. I know those who favor these doctrines will apply to me their cant expressions of submissionist! Submission to what? To be happy in a good government and obedient to just laws, and observant of sound morals? Certainly to these I submit. But I shall be called a Union savor, and charged with yielding to Northern aggression and surrendering the rights of the South. But no act, no vote, no speech of my life will warrant this. I have seen and understood the baleful effects of the sectional and revolutionary doctrines of the Abolitionists of the North, and have resisted and denounced them whenever and wherever I could do so. And I have often declared, and now repeat the declaration, that if they obtain the power to do so, and so attempt to abridge the constitutional rights of the States, or deprive the people either in the States or the Territories of their constitutional rights, I would regard it as an act of revolution, and appealing to the first great law of nature, the law of self-preservation, I would urge the States to fall back on their sovereignty, and resist the power to the usurpation by every means necessary to secure their rights. The Abolitionists are a sectional, a revolutionary and fanatical party who have no respect for the Constitution and laws of our country or for the rights of their fellow-men. Our Southern agitators are alike sectional and revolutionary, and are now beginning in their meetings and speeches to show the same disregard for the Constitution and laws, and the same disposition to violate the rights of others. Both claim rights superior to the Constitution and laws of the land and claim the right to invade other people and despoil them of their property at whatever expense of human life and suffering. I denounce and defy them both, and appeal to the people to arrest the lawless career of each of them and restore our country to its former security. We expect Northern and Northwestern Democrats to resist the Northern sectionalism at whatever cost to themselves. They respond like pure patriots to our expectation, and often fight the most hopeless battles for the Constitution and the Union. We admire their self-sacrificing patriotism, and glory in their illustration of the pure principles of Democracy, and in that sublime grandeur of faithful integrity and moral courage which enables them to fight a hopeless battle bravely and meet defeat and proscription without a murmur, for the sake of maintaining such a government and such institutions as ours. And now that the sectional storm lowers here; now that sectionalism requires its victims here, who will go with me to the sacrificial altar if need be? Who will prove with me that the Democrats in the South are as ready to make the sacrifices which we expect the Democrats in the

North to make? I know not what others may do, I only speak for myself; I will maintain the Constitution and laws of my country. I will maintain the moral law and the principles of justice. I will maintain the rights of the States and the liberties of the people. I will maintain the principles of the Democratic party in the construction of the Constitution, the powers of Congress, and the reserved rights of the States. I will resist sectionalism and revolution and fraud and force and wrong alike faithfully, whether they come from the North or from the South."

Mr. Reagan continues in his Memoirs by stating:

"I remained thus devoted to the Union until the Republican party obtained the control of the government and answered our appeals for the protection afforded by the Constitution, by saying they were in the majority and that we had to submit; thus proposing to substitute the will of a popular majority of the people of the Union for the Constitution of the United States, with its limitations on the powers of the Federal Government. I loved the American Union with a passionate devotion, and witnessed with an aching heart the unjust and unconstitutional crusade which led to disunion and war."

Congressman Reagan was a member of the Texas Secession Convention of 1861 and was appointed a delegate to the Convention of Southern States in Montgomery Alabama. At this convention, he accepted the appointment as Postmaster General of the Confederate States of America by Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederacy. It is worth mentioning that the Confederate Postal Service was the only national postal service to have actually made a profit. Mr. Reagan became a trusted friend and confidant of President Davis and remained in this position throughout the war and held the President in high regards the rest of his life. Judge Reagan, in writing the last few remarks in his Memoirs, lists many names of distinguished men he was personally acquainted with during his lifetime. These leaders included several U.S. presidents, Republic of Texas presidents, and state and federal military leaders. Mr. Reagan also stated the following concerning his acquaintance to President Davis:

"I enjoyed the personal friendship, as well as close official relations, with Jefferson Davis, the President of the Confederate States, and the association and friendship of the distinguished men who were members of his Cabinet, and of many of the men who distinguished themselves in the legislative, military,

and the naval service of the Confederacy.

It has been my fortune to know many of the distinguished citizens of the United States during the past sixty years, and to have formed opinions as to their respective characters and abilities. There may have been among them some equal to or even superior to President Davis in some one department of study or branch of knowledge; but taking into view the combined elements of character and ability I regard him as the ablest man I have known. There is a maxim that distinguished men diminish in greatness as we get closer to them. This view did not apply in his case. In all my association with him I found him thoughtful, prudent, and wise. I never heard him use a thoughtless, vain, or idle expression.

I only mention these associations to indicate the opportunities I have had for becoming familiar with matters of public and historical importance which have occurred within my experience.

If this great Republic could be administered on the principles upon which it was founded by the fathers, it might continue to be an asylum for the most prosperous, the most enlightened, and for the freest, the happiest people on earth."

During the final days of war, Mr. Reagan was the last of the original cabinet appointees that accompanied President Davis as the Confederate Government was fleeing south from Richmond. Mr. Reagan wrote in his Memoirs that they were headed west of the Mississippi. Some historians speculate that they were headed to Texas, possibly Palestine, to set up the Confederate Government here and continue the fight for Southern Independence. President Davis appointed Mr. Reagan Secretary of the Treasury shortly before they were captured in Georgia in May 1865. Upon his capture, he was imprisoned at Fort Warren in Boston Harbor for a few months. On May 28th, while in solitary confinement, he wrote a lengthy letter to President Johnson, asking that the Government be understanding and lenient on the eleven Southern States and those individuals who served the Confederacy including those that were still in federal prison. Judge Reagan stated in his Memoirs, "To be able to understand why such a letter as this one to the President, and the one to Secretary of State Seward were written, it would be necessary for the reader to call to mind the extraordinary condition of the country at that time; and especially the condition of the Southern States, and their people.

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HONORING JOHN H. REAGAN ON HIS BIRTHDAY

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The people of eleven great Southern States, and the greater part of the people of four others having the heel of oppression on their necks, it became the sacred duty of all those who could speak to do whatever they could do to ameliorate (make better) those conditions, and to influence the abatement of the passions of war, and the adoption of the policies of peace. And on that view of the subject I acted in my Fort Warren letter, to the people of Texas, which follows this. It can now be seen whether the course I adopted, in the hour of painful trial, was wise and patriotic or not.

On August 11, 1865, from prison in Boston, he also wrote the "Fort Warren Letter." He wrote this letter to encourage the people of Texas to recognize the war's outcome, emancipation and suffrage of their former slaves and the terms of the federal government. He hoped Texas would avoid conflict and retribution by the occupying Federal forces. The Fort Warren letter made Mr. Reagan extremely unpopular for years in Texas. He regained his popularity when his premonitions were proven right and Texas suffered the ruthlessness and indignities of reconstruction. The courage he demonstrated in sacrificing his personal popularity, for the people of Texas, acquired him the honored nick name "The Old Roman."

Mr. Reagan began rebuilding his farm and his life after returning to Palestine and his home at Fort Houston. He made his living farming for two years as no one had money to pay attorney fees and because of his Fort Warren letter, he was too unpopular at that time to engage in a canvass for public office.

During the summer of 1866, Mr. Reagan was offered the appointment to the Governorship of Texas. From his Memoirs, Mr. Reagan again writes, "General Griffin, then in command of what was called the Department of Texas, with headquarters at Galveston, sent one of his staff officers to inquire whether I would accept the appointment as Governor of Texas. The officer found me plowing. I asked what I had done to cause General Griffin to suppose I could accept such a position. He said, "General Griffin thinks you are a conservative man, and that you may aid in the restoration and preservation of good order in the State." I told him to take my compliments to General Griffin, with my thanks for the proposed honor, but that I could never be Governor of Texas except as the choice of the people of the State."

As mentioned before, Mr. Reagan regained his popularity and in 1872 he was elected to the State Constitutional Convention. He served as U.S. Representative to Congress for the 1st District from 1874 to 1887. In 1887, he was elected US Senator. In 1891, Governor Hogg asked him to head up the newly formed Railroad Commission of Texas. Senator Reagan resigned his U.S. Senate Seat, and accepted this new post as he was appointed the Chairman of the Railroad Commission of Texas. This was a position he held until he retired in 1901. He was also one of the founders of the Texas State Historical Association and served as their first President. Before Judge Reagan passed away at Fort Houston from pneumonia on March 6, 1905 he had completed his "MEMOIRS". The entire Texas Legislature turned out to remember John H. Reagan and attend his funeral.

At the very beginning of John H. Reagan's book, titled, Memoirs, With Special Reference to Secession and the Civil War, he dedicated his work to three groups of men and women. That page reads: "This volume is dedicated with reverential respect TO THE PATRIOTS, who in the council and on the field, pledged life and fortune to the Cause of the Confederate States of America; TO THE DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY, who endowed with the self-sacrificing virtues of their noble mothers, are doing so much for the preservation and perpetuation of the true history of the causes and conduct of the War Between the States; and TO THE SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS, upon who devolves the great duty of vindicating their fathers against the calumny of rebellion and treason, and upon whose wisdom and patriotism largely rests the hope of this great Republic."

If you look closely at a portrait of Judge Reagan that hangs today on the wall in the Reagan Room at the Museum for East Texas Culture here in Palestine, you will see in the background behind Judge Reagan hanging on the wall of his home, two portraits, one of General Robert E. Lee and the other of General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Judge Reagan obviously held these great God fearing Confederate military leaders in high esteem as many Americans still do today.

George P. Garrison who was a renowned history professor at the University of Texas, wrote the introduction for Judge Reagan's Memoirs many years ago. He wrote about the

greatness of Judge Reagan when he stated, "Suffice it to say that his environment was such as strongly to develop his native instinct of rugged self-dependence, and this became one of his most prominent characteristics. He was always ready to take upon himself the burdens of others, but he sought no help in carrying his own. None ever accepted such responsibilities as fell to him with greater bravery and determination, or bore them in manlier fashion. It was no vain show of loyalty, but consistent obedience to the dictates of his heart and conscience that led him to ask, when he was captured along with President Davis, that he might share the fortunes of his fallen chief. How little of demagoguery or selfish ambition was in him is shown by his Fort Warren letter, whose distasteful advice to the people of Texas seemed at the time to have broken completely the hold of its writer upon them, and by his refusal to accept the governorship of the State by appointment of the Federal authorities during the period of Reconstruction. Judge Reagan died without an apology for his record, and in complete willingness to be judged thereby. The impartial verdict of history may find in it mistakes, but no cowardice or conscious wrong. May his type of pure, robust, and strenuous manhood never fail among those for whom his work was done."

I would like to close by making one last remark, and that is, our country today is in dire need of more strong, honest, and courageous leaders like Judge Reagan.

Thank you for being here today and may God bless the memory of John H. Reagan.

Charles Marc Robinson, Commander
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Sons of Confederate Veterans

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The citizen-soldiers who fought for the Confederacy personified the best qualities of America. The preservation of liberty and freedom was the motivating factor in the South's decision to fight the *Second American Revolution*. The tenacity with which Confederate soldiers fought underscored their belief in the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. These attributes are the underpinning of our democratic society and represent the foundation on which this nation was built.

Today, the **Sons of Confederate Veterans** is preserving the history and legacy of these heroes, so future generations can understand the motives that animated the Southern Cause.

The SCV is the direct heir of the United Confederate Veterans, and the oldest hereditary organization for male descendants of Confederate soldiers. Organized at Richmond, Virginia in 1896, the SCV continues to serve as a historical, patriotic, and non-political organization dedicated to ensuring that a true history of the 1861-1865 period is preserved.

Membership in the **Sons of Confederate Veterans** is open to all male descendants of any veteran who served honorably in the Confederate armed forces. Membership can be obtained through either **lineal or collateral** family lines and kinship to a veteran must be **documented genealogically**. The minimum age for full membership is 12, but there is no minimum for Cadet membership. **Camp associate membership** is available as well to those who are committed to uphold our charge and do not have the Confederate lineage.

CHARGE TO THE SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS

"To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish."

Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee, Commander General,
United Confederate Veterans,
New Orleans, Louisiana, April 25, 1906.



Camp meetings: 2nd Saturday of
Each Month - 06:00 PM
Meal served at each meeting.
Museum for East Texas Culture
400 Micheaux Ave.
Palestine, Texas

(Old John H. Reagan High School bldg.
Near State Hwy 19, five blocks east of
courthouse)