



The Gist Gazette

West Springs Community Center
116 West Springs Ballfield Rd.
Pauline, SC 29734
www.sevgist.com

January, 2015



General States Rights Gist Camp 1451
South Carolina Division Sons of Confederate
Veterans

Third Brigade
Brigade Commander - Kirk Carter

Camp Commander: Mark Sanders
Adjutant: Wayne Henderson
1st Lt. Commander: Brad Thompson
2nd Lt Commander:
Chaplain: Herschel Browne
Editor mc.martin.138@gmail.com

"Dear Compatriots,

"I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a future Happy New Year full of God's blessings. I also want to thank you all for the support this year for the camp and its activities. Let's keep up the good work.

The camp has had a good year. We updated and amended our By-Laws. We have restored and rededicated many graves of our fallen. We have educated the public on how important the Iron Crosses are and how they belong to our honored soldiers. We have been blessed with members who put on an extraordinary evening of Southern dance and fellowship. (Thanks Dr. Rucker and all.) We have supported the education of young people at the Sam Davis Youth Camp. We have a new web site that many have contributed to its success and that in nine months has had more than twenty one hundred pages read. We have our first associate member and he told me to personally thank the camp. Hopefully there will be many more to come and they in turn will become full members as we help them with their ancestry. Yes, we have had a good year and yes, we face challenges and opportunities. I can't think of a better crew with more talent than what is found in the States Rights Gist Camp.

Our January meeting will be on the 24th at 6:30 for our annual Lee Jackson Dinner. Tim Foster has secured a private room at "The Clock" restaurant at 2725 Reidville Road in Spartanburg. Our guest speaker will be Mr. Detron Burdine, a summer attendee of the Sam Davis Youth Camp and our roommate for the week. I believe you will be impressed and proud of this young man. He proudly stands for Dixie and wants to go back to the youth camp. Come and support while we all receive a blessing.

Deo Vindice,

Mark Sanders
Cmdr. S.R. Gist Camp, SCV"

Next Meeting - January 24 at 6:30pm

Where - The Clock Restaurant at 2725
Reidville Rd in Spartanburg

Mark the Date Saturday January 24 for our
Lee/Jackson Dinner

Speaker - Detron Burdine

Below is an article I found in my archives, written by Bernice McCullar and printed in the "The Atlanta Journal Constitution" January 16, 1972. It is an informative article, but more important notice the attitude toward Lee and the South, I doubt a major newspaper would publish this article today. Its amazing how things have changed in 40 years.

M.C. Martin

The Atlanta Journal Constitution

Why Are Lee's Eyes So Sad

By Bernice McCullar

January 16, 1972

Every January 19 when we celebrate the birthday of Robert E Lee, I ask myself the same question: "Why are his eyes so sad?"

His birthday – he was born January 19, 1807 – has been an official holiday in Georgia since 1889, and is important to the South. I observed it with reverence, for I think he was one of the greatest men since the legendary King Arthur of Camelot.

And he takes on a new interest for us since the dedication of our Stone Mountain Memorial. There he rides forever into history, on the mountain with his fellow giants, Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and that fabulous old warrior, Stonewall Jackson.

Sometimes I ask my friends why they think Lee's eyes are so sad. To most of them, the answer seems obvious: "He lost the Civil War," they remind me. And that was indeed cause for sadness. A Georgia editor wrote after seeing Lee when he came to Georgia in 1869, "I never saw a sadder expression. He looked as if he were bearing the grief of all his people."

A maverick among my acquaintances commits lese majesty, if not sheer blasphemy, by suggesting that Lee was saddened by a wife who was a petulant invalid and henpecked him. And she, a great-granddaughter of Mrs. George Washington? But there is some evidence, thereof. She was wheelchaired by arthritis, and constantly in pain. Besides, she had lost her beautiful home, Arlington, built by her father and taken from her by the Federals. She would never let Lee pose for a picture until she saw that it was just right. And on nearly the very last day of his life, when he came in cold and wet – and virtually dying – after a three-hour church session at which he presided and got the preacher's salary raised, she complained.

"You have kept us waiting supper a long time," she said "Where have you been?" Patient as always with her, he just bowed his head to say the blessing. But the words would not come. Lee knew that he had come to the end of his journey, and in a few days, it was so. His long, long sadness and his bright, brief gladness were all over.

In fairness to his wife, who deeply loved him, I add that she hastily summoned the doctor. His daughters – none of the four ever married, oddly enough – rallied round. Soon his tall sons came.

The doctor, a longtime family friend, told him that his beloved horse Traveller (bought in West Virginia for \$200) waited in the stable. But Lee shook his head. He would ride Traveller no more. The horse is now buried on the campus of Washington and Lee College, which Lee headed after the war. Lee himself and his heroic father, who died in Georgia, are buried inside the little chapel. Not side by side, as I had envisioned them, but in a wall mausoleum, with many other Lees. All you can see is a white expanse of wall, with various Lee names written where the end of the casket would be.

It is that father, the famous, colorful Col. "Light-horse Harry" Lee who provides me the answer to why Lee's eyes were so sad. I admit there were many heartaches in Robert E. Lee's life. But I think his sadness had its deep and troubled beginning when he was a very little boy, and his daddy left home, never to come back again. That's enough to make a little boy sad. It happened to Robert E Lee.

The tragic situation started when he was barely two. His father though a war hero and a three-time governor of Virginia, was jailed for debt. One biographer tells of big bars being put on huge doors of Stratford to keep the creditors out. Another tells of his hiding, and asking his beautiful, proud second wife, Ann (who had been first lady of Virginia when he was three times governor) to say he was not home.

Being jailed for debt was galling to the spirit of a superb military hero like "Lighthorse Harry" Lee. But during his prison term, he wrote his war memoirs. His heroic exploits had made him known the world over. We in Georgia certainly have reason to be indebted to him. He helped save Georgia from the British during the American Revolution. He it was who revived the idea of the Mayham Tower, a structure that enabled Americans to retake Augusta after it was captured by the British. A marker in Augusta noted the exploit.

He was a marvelous statesman, a graduate of Princeton, and one of the bright shining lights of Virginia history. He was an intimate of three Presidents – Washington, Madison, and Monroe. But he despised Jefferson. It was Lee who had given George Washington's funeral oration. He had coined the immortal tribute: "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

Harry Lee was no business man. He got into land speculation, which hit the country like a fever. He lost money. The Lees were hard pressed for cash. When he was jailed for debt, he had forbidden Ann (the second heiress he had married) to come or to let their children see him behind bars. She took food to the jail, since he had been ill and could not eat prison fare. He thought a servant brought it, not knowing that there was not one servant left at beautiful old Stratford. So inept was he in money matters that the families of both wives (the first, his cousin Matilda Lee, who died) legally entailed their estates so that he could not spend the inheritance and leave their children deprived.

When little Robert Lee asked where his daddy was, Ann Lee evasively said, "Away." Finally, she had to move her family to Alexandria. They took along a little pony and cart for young Robert, It was from Alexandria that the elder Lee left home forever.

Leaving was no doubt necessary. He had been brutally, savagely beaten by a mob of hoodlums when he went to see an unpopular Boston editor. He was left for dead. His doctors advised him to go to a warm climate for his health. He chose the West Indies. So highly regarded was he that even though we were at war with England, they let him go to a British Isle, Barbados. He had so little money that his clothes were threadbare. He wrote Ann that he had only one hat. Since he was saving that to wear home, he went bareheaded. He stayed in cheap little hotels and barely had money to eat well. Yet out of his meager funds, he sent President Madison fine Madeira wine and the biggest turtle he could find, for soups and stews. "Think of me when you eat it," he wrote wistfully. Probably remembering the many times he had eaten at the Presidential mansion.

It was February, 1813. He had been there more than five years. He embarked on a ship for home. But he never got home. Passing the coast of Georgia, he asked the captain to let him off at Cumberland Island. He was ill, and he remembered that the family of his old commander, Gen. Nathaniel Greene, lived there. The Greene's daughter and her family received him with gentleness and love, irascible though he was. He said he had come to die. And die he did, a few weeks later. None of his family was able to attend the funeral, and it was many years before any could visit his grave. In 1869, Robert E Lee, came South in search of his own health and with just six months to live, went to Cumberland and watched his daughter Agnes put their first flower on the grave.

Here on Cumberland, Lighthouse Harry Lee lay for 90 years. Then Virginia sent for the body of her heroic former governor, to re-inter him by the side of his illustrious son.

I stood recently with a friend there in the chapel looking at those two names among many other Lee names on that wall. Both heroes, both proud Virginians, both with secure places in history. I thought whimsically that now, somewhere, maybe they have time for something that they never had time for in life: just to be together. A biographer says, "Lighthouse Harry Lee was a good father, by any standards. He taught his children Latin, read the classics to them, and taught his boys to shoot and hunt and to consider character and duty life's most important things." It's just that he didn't get to be around long enough, in the case of his youngest son. And when a little boy is just getting acquainted with the world, at six, and his daddy leaves home forever, there's sadness in the heart. And it sometimes shows in the eyes – forever.

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.