

# MEMORIAL DAY ADDRESS TO CONFEDERATE VETERANS

OF WILLIAMSBURG COUNTY DELIVERED  
BY REV. J. E. MAHAFFEY ON  
MAY 10, 1907.

Mr President, Ladies, Gentlemen  
and Fathers of the Confederacy:

I deem it a very great honor you have conferred upon me, one of the sons of the Confederacy, in calling upon me to address you on this occasion. Ours is a great nation—great in history, great in achievements, because great in manhood and character. I am proud of it. But I am especially proud of this, our Southland, which in so many respects is the Fatherland in those things that have made our nation great.

I am not a native of the United States. I was born in the Confederate States of America, upper South Carolina, in 1864. I am proud of that Southern spirit which has incarnated itself into a type of manhood and womanhood that it is distinguished above all other types under the shining sun. I am especially proud of the achievements that have been attained and the positions occupied by Southern men, as from time to time the light of their superior genius and patriotic daring has flashed from the great mountain peaks of the world's progress. Beginning with the very foundations of our government, it is the Southern man who has taken the conspicuous initiative in nearly all of the great movements that have resulted in the betterment of society and humanity.

The first president of the United States, and the most illustrious American that has ever lived—"the man first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen"—the chief-commander of the army which won the independence of the colonies and whom by common acclaim we still delight to call "the Father of His Country"—was a Southern man. The commander-in-chief of the continental navy in the war of the Revolution was a Southern man, James Nicholson, and so also was the first president of the continental congress,—Peyton Randolph—and it was Richard Henry Lee, a Southern member of that congress, who was the author and mover of the adoption of the resolution declaring the colonies to be free and independent States. The greatest American orator—the man whose words most inspired the American heart and moved the American arm in the struggle for independence, was a Southern man. It was the world's greatest Democrat, a Southern man, who was the author of the Declaration of Independence, which is the most famous production of any American pen, and when the American people met to celebrate the centennial of that Declaration, it was Sidney Lanier, a Southern man, who was selected to write the poem for the opening of that occasion. James Madison, the "Father of the Constitution," was a Southern man; John Marshall, its greatest expounder and the greatest American jurist, was a Southern man. And when, in the fullness of time, the Union came to celebrate the centennial of that immortal instrument, it was Samuel F Miller, a Southern man, who was chosen as the orator of that memorable and imposing occasion. For more than half the period of its existence, the government formed by that constitution was administered by presidents, who were Southern men, and the years of their administration mark by far the happiest, most illustrious and beneficent eras of the Union.

It was the statesmanship of President Thomas Jefferson, a Southern man, seconded by the able and clean diplomacy of James Monroe, another Southern man, that extended the boundary of the United States from the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi river to the Pacific ocean on the Northwest, thus more than doubling the territory of the Union. It was Southern valor and Southern statesmanship that carried the boundary on Southward and Westward from the Sabine to the Rio Grande, adding Texas, New Mexico

and California, which was 20,000 square miles more than the original thirteen States contained. It was the prowess of a Southern soldier, George Rogers Clark, that secured to the United States all that territory Northwest of the Ohio river, out of which the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin and part of Minnesota, were afterwards formed. The policy that secured this territory is the policy that has done more than any other to build up the Union, and for this policy we are indebted to the wisdom and patriotism of the Southern States of Maryland and Virginia; to Maryland for proposing and urging it, and to Virginia for acceding to it, (for that territory belonged to her,) and in giving it to the United States for the sake of the Union (a gift from the South to the North,) Virginia furnished the crowning proof of her devotion to the Union and showed that she was worthy to be called "the Mother of States."

It is to Southern men that our nation is indebted for blazing the way for civilization in the vast region beyond the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains—Meriwether Lewis and William Clark—the most famous explorers and adventurers in America—were the first white men who ever crossed the American continent. Writing of them, Noah Brooks, the historian, says: "Peaceful farms and noble cities, towns and villages, thrilling with the hum of modern industry and activity are spread over the vast spaces through which these explorers threaded their toilsome trail amid incredible privations and hardships, showing the way Westward across the boundless continent which is ours. Let the names of these two men long be held in grateful honor by the American people."

The supreme court of the United States, which is the sheet anchor of the government, has been presided over by Southern men for nearly two-thirds of the period of its existence, and their decisions constitute by far the wisest, purest and most luminous pages of the record of that august tribunal. The first shot in the second war of the United States with England was fired by a Southern man, and the most distinguished soldiers of that war were Southern men. The most complete and overwhelming defeat that any English army has ever experienced, was inflicted by Southern troops, commanded by Andrew Jackson, a Southern man; and the man who performed what Admiral Nelson called "the most daring act of the age," and who received the thanks of all Europe for overthrowing the Barbary powers and putting an end to their inhuman cruelties, was Stephen Decatur, a Southern man. The most distinguished soldiers in the war with Mexico, as in all the wars in which they have ever engaged, were the men from the South, and strange as it may seem, it was Lieut. James B Lockwood, with his thermometer 49 degrees below zero, who planted the "Star-Spangled Banner" nearer the North Pole than any other mortal had ever done, thus wresting from England an honor she had held for three hundred years.

The first public or circulating library in America was in the South, and a Southern State was the first to secure religious liberty by organic law. The first Sunday-school in America was in the South, at Savannah, Ga., and the first native Methodist itinerant preacher in America was William Waters, a Southern man. Another Southerner, Jesse Lee, was the founder of the Methodist Episcopal church in New England, and another, John Lyle, was the first American to establish a school exclusively for the education of women. The first female college founded on the face of the earth was the Wesleyan Female college in a Southern State, and the first college of dental surgery in America was established in a Southern city. Dr John Archer, the first man in the United States to receive the degree of Doctor of Medicine, was a Southern man, and so also was the first professor of pathological and surgical anatomy—Dr John Wagner of South Carolina.

The first agricultural journal in

this country was established by a Southern man, and the first successful commercial paper in the United States was a Southern publication. Mrs Harriet Martineau, the gifted and famous English authoress, says that for more than fifty years after the Revolution days, "the best specimen of periodical literature that the country afforded was the Southern Review, published at Charleston"—the Charleston of the Old South.

The man who first gave a complete description of the Gulf stream—who first marked out specific routes to be followed in crossing the Atlantic—who first instituted the system of deep-sea sounding—who first suggested the establishing of telegraphic communication by a cable on the bed of the ocean, and who indicated the line along which the cable was laid—whose Treatise on Navigation has been a text book for the United States navy—who was declared by Humboldt to be the founder of a new and important science—and on whom France, Austria, Russia, Prussia, Denmark, Belgium, Portugal, Sweden, Sardinia, Holland, Bremen and the Papal States bestowed orders of knight-hood and other honors, was M F Maury, a Southern man.

The first steamship that crossed the Atlantic went from a Southern city, whose citizens had it built, and even its engine was constructed by a Southern man. The first railroad ever built and operated in the world was in South Carolina, and the first iron-clad war-ship that ever ploughed the billows of the ocean was constructed by John M Brooke and John L Porter, who were officers in the navy of the Confederate States of America. The organizer and constructor of the United States Naval Observatory, one of the best in the world, was James Melville Gillis, a Southern man, who was also the first constructor of a working astronomical observatory and the first publisher of a volume of astronomical observations in the United States. The most learned American mineralogist, the greatest American naturalist, the most famous musician, the greatest American architect, the most noted dramatist, and the first Greek scholar in America today, are all Southern men.

The first woman in the world to receive a college diploma was Miss Catherine E Brewer, a Southern woman of the State of Georgia; so was the first woman in the world to direct and conduct a great daily political newspaper, and the only woman on record who was the wife of a governor, the sister of a governor, the niece of a governor, the mother of a governor and the aunt and foster-mother of a governor was a woman of South Carolina.

With all this array of bright shining stars that sparkle in the firmament of Southern history, who could fail to be proud of being associated with so noble a company? Our own South Carolina has been distinguished as "the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise," where is to be found in the highest degree, "that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honor which feels a stain like a wound and inspires courage while it mitigates ferocity." South Carolina, with her long line of statesmen, orators and scholars who have illumined the pages of our history with their words and deeds, presents a phalanx of talent and patriotism unequalled in the Union.

Bur hark! This is Memorial Day! "Backward—Turn backward, O Time in your flight!" and let us contemplate in solemn awe and wonder, as we take one brief glimpse into the years from '61 to '65. I hear! I see! I feel! It is like the noise of great waters, mingling with streams of lightning, the crash of thunders and the roar of volcanoes! Manassas, Murfreesboro, Sharpsburg, Fredricksburg, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Chickamauga, Pittsburg, Appomattox. Draw the veil, it is too much! What tongue or pen of mortal man, can tell the tale of valor, patriotism, privation, endurance, and self-sacrifice of the Southern Army, the army that fought, bled and died, inch by inch for the life of a principle that was murdered with it? No cause then, and no

cause today, is dearer to the Southern heart than the "Lost Cause," the cause of liberty and free-agency. It is the cause of humanity, it is the doctrine of God. And since, by aspersion, perversion and misrepresentation the South is frequently placed in a false position by those who seek to hide the spirit of greed and imperialism that is the menace of our country today, we, the sons and daughters of the Confederacy, must keep swept the dust from antique time, uphold the facts of history, and wait for the truth that once crushed to earth, shall rise again.

In 1861 the American Union was composed of thirty-three States, joined in a voluntary political association, partnership or government, called the United States of America. The people of eleven of these States, numbering about 5,000,000, finding that under that union, their safety and peace were constantly and seriously threatened and disturbed, instead of being secured as contemplated by the union, decided to institute a new government—one that to them seemed more likely to effect their safety and happiness. In accordance with the principle enunciated in the Declaration of Independence, they instituted such a new government and called it the Confederate States of America; whereupon, the people of the other States, numbering about 22,000,000, in defiance and subversion of the great principle of the Declaration of Independence, made war upon the eleven Southern States to compel them to renounce the government of their choice and come back under the government from which they had withdrawn because it had ceased to secure to them the ends for which it was designed.

It must be remembered that the statesmanship of the South had always consistently maintained that the Federal Constitution regarded ultimate sovereignty as resting, not in the nation as a whole, but in the individual States themselves, as supreme and independent commonwealths. According to the view of the South, these sovereign States had entered into a league of union for purposes of mutual advantage, and this partnership, like others, was to endure only so long as its original purpose was maintained with regard to all the States. Events seemed to indicate that the time for the dissolution of the compact had arrived.

In the first place the balance of political power was passing rapidly into the hands of a party inimical to the interests of the South—a party not only pledged to the abolition of slavery, but also to a commercial system of Protection which was peculiarly unfavorable to an agricultural community. As to slavery, it is unfair to represent the South as, in the abstract, devoted to a servile system. Many of our greatest statesmen deplored the existence of slavery as an economic and social injury, and that question would likely have settled itself if it had been given an unmolested opportunity.

The truth is, it was the ill-judged zeal, and ungodly greed and envy of Northern extremists that precipitated the trouble. It was the crusade of extremely bitter and violent denunciation and indiscriminating abuse heaped upon the sensitive and high-spirited people of South, because there existed among them an institution originally planted and fostered by New England slave dealers and Northern traders who had grown rich by importing and selling negroes in the South; and now, when the country is stocked and fast becoming a source of profit to the owners—woich it never could be in the North—envy and jealousy seize the sword and say to the South, "If we cannot, you shall not." The South said: "We will dissolve partnership then." "No," said the North, with its millions of men, money and machinery, "we will not dissolve; we will make slaves of you—might is right." And so, for forty years, the heel of the North has ground upon the neck of the South. But thank God, after forty years in the wilderness, Israel walked over into Caanan and so shall it be with this Southland. "The

wilderness and the desert place shall rejoice and blossom as the rose."

And now, to you, brave old heroes of the Confederacy, let me say: We are proud to be called the sons and daughters of the bravest men that ever looked upon a battle flag or sang a battle song, and we feel that we can give you no better assurance of our purpose to honor your noble memory and cherish the glory of your immortal deeds, than that contained in the recent eloquent words of Miss Grace Lumpkin, your sponsor in the Palmetto State:

"Confederate Veterans, your daughters will beat into history the true story of the blood, the scars and the storm the storm-swept nation of the men who wore the gray. They will keep your memories until there

shall be nations no more, and when you brave old men shall go out one by one, when the trumpet shall sound for you the last great battle, the battle of grim old death, your daughters will keep the vigils of Camp Hampton and Camp Gordon and Camp Robert E. Lee.

Your daughters will meet each year, and for the love they bear you and your glory, will salute your old battle-flag and tenderly place the roses above your silent hearts."

NOTE:—For many of the facts here presented we are indebted to "Some Truths of History," by T K Oglesby (The Byrd Printing Co., Atlanta, Ga.), which volume is especially recommended to those desiring a larger presentation of historical matter on this subject.

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