

Rodney Clifton Teaches 8th Graders the Facts of the War

My Fellow Compatriots,

I do hope this finds everyone well. On Sept 16th, I had the pleasure of being invited to a local middle school to give a presentation about the War Between the States. The group of around 50 students were all 8th graders who were just getting started studying about the subject. Overall it was a good presentation with a good amount time spent on the subject of slavery. I wanted to express to the students that slavery was not the primary cause of the war, although it was an issue that helped fan the flames that erupted. I also spoke about the realities of the war, i.e. innovations in medicine, industry, etc plus the life of the soldiers who fought it. I was well received and the students asked a lot of very good questions after I had spoken. I always wish I had more time to speak with them because there is never enough of it to tell them everything I would like to. I also had a lot of things to pass around such as some minnie and round balls, authentic copies of Southern currency as well as books with things to look at. We also talked about the uniforms and a little about the clothing that women wore. Getting to talk to our younger generation about a time in the history of our country that impacted us so much and is very hotly debated today I feel is so important so that they know get the truth about what it was all about and not a bunch of lies. The primary reason for the war was about the right of the states to govern themselves, an issue that is just as much a part of us today as it was back then. But then again, I am preaching to the choir.

With that, I wish you all health and happiness in this upcoming holiday time. Yes, it is almost upon us again.

Please take care,
Rodney Clifton
Past Camp Commander
"Deo Vindice"



You Might Be A Yankee If.....

You've never, ever, eaten Okra.

You eat fried chicken with a knife and fork.

You've never seen a live chicken, and the only cows you've seen are on road trips.

You have no idea what a polecat is.

Instead of referring to two or more people as "y'all," you call them "you guys," even if both of them are women.

You get freaked out when people on the subway talk to you.

The last time you smiled was when you prevented someone from getting on an on-ramp on the highway.

You think more money should go to important scientific research at your university than to pay the salary of the head football coach.



Take a Look at President Harry Truman

He is the only U.S. President to have ever belonged to The Sons of Confederate Veterans. Upon learning this tidbit of information I decided to dig deeper. Unlike most of us, he made a few mistakes in life. But he was enormously proud of his Confederate ancestry and with me that goes a long way!

Truman was a member of Sons of the Revolution and a card-carrying member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Harry S. Truman had relatives who were Confederate soldiers.

His uncle, William Young, son of Solomon and Harriet Louise (Gregg) Young, served under Upton Hays. Solomon & Harriet were the grandparents of Harry S. Truman. Federals ("**Redlegs**") stole the family silverware, killed over 100 hogs, and burned his barns and haystacks. This occurred after Harriet had fed the men. Young rode with Hayes, Virgil Miller, Cole Younger, Dick Yeager & Boon Muir in August 1862.



The President's grandfather, Anderson Shipp Truman, was a Kentuckian and Southern in sympathy, but unwilling to fight in the Civil War. His son, John Truman was too young to fight but he had two uncles in the Confederate Cavalry under General Joseph O. Shelby.

Josey Wales will tell y'all all about them "**Redlegs.**"

President Harry Truman's grandmother Harriet (Gregg) Young was put in a "prison camp" due to Gen. Thomas Ewing's General Order#11. Harry's mother was Martha Ellen Young. She, from childhood, remembered her home being burned, following Order #11. In 1861, when Kansas "**Redlegs**" made their first raid on the Truman's family's property, the Youngs were living southeast of Kansas City near Hickman Mills. At this time, the **Redlegs** tried to make Harrison Young, Harry's uncle, turn informant and reveal information about Missourians loyal to the South. Harrison refused and was repeatedly "mock hanged," and his neck was stretched to torture him and make him talk. Harrison Young never broke to this torture: "They tried to make my uncle Harrison into an informer, but he wouldn't do it. He was only a boy... They tried to hang him, time and again they tried it, 'stretching his neck', they called it, but he didn't say anything. I think he'd have died before he'd said anything. He's the one I'm named after, and I'm happy to say that there were people...around at the time who said I took after him."

During Harry's WW1 service, Harry never wore his "dress blues" when visiting home, as Mamma "...didn't like the damned Yankees..." Martha Ellen, the daughter of an old-line Confederate family, had been briefly locked up in a Federal "internment camp" during the Civil War and she never forgave either President Lincoln or the U.S. government. Many years later, when she came to visit her son in the White House and was offered accommodations in the Lincoln Bedroom, **she said she would rather sleep on the floor "than spend the night in the Lincoln bed."** When she was dying, the president flew out to see her. Looking up at him from her bed as he walked into the room she said, "**I don't want any smart cracks out of you. I saw your picture in the paper last week putting a wreath at the Lincoln Memorial."**

President Truman also visited the Confederate Soldiers Home of Missouri on at least two occasions. So proud was President Truman of his uncle that he actually attended some of the Quantrill Reunions of survivors of Captain Quantrill's command and other Missouri Partisan ranger heroes: "**But Quantrill and his men were no more bandits than the men on the other side. I've been to reunions of Quantrill's men two or three times. All they were trying to do was protect the property on the Missouri side of the line..."**

The War in Texas

Although some scholars claim that there were few if any battles in Texas, the reality is that there were many engagements. These engagements were often small in terms of numbers of men involved, although significant in terms of preserving Texas freedoms. Texans faced threats from invading Union forces, naval bombardment fleets, Mexican bandits and marauding Indian tribes during the years 1861-1865.

The fighting in Texas was also being watched by the international community. The French government maintained consulates in Richmond Virginia and in Texas. It was from the French consulate from which the international community watched the events with concern. While the Texas forces were busy protecting Texas borders, French forces (along with Belgian troops) under the leadership of Maximilian were fighting with Mexican forces in Mexico for control of that nation during this time of upheaval. It was during that struggle between the Mexican and French forces that Texas born Ignacio Zaragoza defeated the French at the Battle of Puebla on 5 May 1862, which became the source of "**Cinco de Mayo**".

Texas Regimental Battleflags



The War in Texas

Many of the battles in Texas were defending the coastal areas from naval bombardments from the Union fleet. The common procedure was for the Union naval commander to issue a warning to the community asking for its surrender. When those communities did not surrender, the fleet began bombarding the area, killing men, women and children. The bombardments did not discriminate between civilian or military nor between black, white or Hispanic. The damage was not limited to military targets, but included civilian centers as well. The bombardment of civilian population centers was a common practice of the Union navy along the Texas coast. To protect the people, authorities in Texas began constructing protective forts. Earthen forts were constructed on many of the rivers to protect the nation from invading Yankee troops who often conducted operations on the major rivers.

The other battles consisted of raids or attempted invasions of Texas. The raids were common along the border, where Union commanders recruited troops in Mexican cities across the Rio Grande.

Texas and Florida were the only Confederate States whose State Capitols of Austin and Tallahassee were never occupied during the war.

In the closing days of the war, Governor Pendleton Murrah abandoned the Capitol in Austin with hopes it would be spared. The capitals of many other Southern States such as Jackson (Mississippi) Montgomery (Alabama), Columbia (South Carolina), Atlanta (Georgia), Richmond (Virginia), and Nashville (Tennessee) were each either heavily damaged or destroyed. (It was common practice for federal troops to destroy courthouses and records in the Southern states upon beginning military occupation). Since most of the State Capitols were burned or destroyed by invading forces, there was great anxiety that the same would be done to Austin. For this reason, the governor of Texas abandoned the capitol of Austin in hopes of saving it from the destruction that was wreaked on other State Capitols.

One of the most remarkable battles was that of Sabine Pass, where 52 Confederate defenders faced down and turned back an invading force of 5,000 Union troops. (Consider the odds in that battle. The defenders were faced with over 100 to 1 ratio of attackers to defenders). The Confederates managed capturing several boats with no casualties in this action. Among the vessels captured was one that Union naval officers had surrendered to Confederate forces at Galveston, then refused to honor their arrangements and escaped with it. Governor Pendleton Murrah referred to the battle as "**the Thermopylae of Texas**". In recognition of their achievement a medal was struck for those men who fought in the battle. It was one of the few military medals awarded by the Confederate government.

Whiskey & Fightin'

In one of the bombardments of Corpus Christi, the naval forces shelling the city used cannonballs filled with whiskey. One of the sailors had hidden a supply of the liquor in the hollowed out cannon balls stored on the ship. Whiskey also played a role in the capture of Fort Bliss. When the Yankee soldiers departed from the fort, instead of loading their canteens with water, they were loaded with whiskey. When the Confederate troops encountered the inebriated soldiers, they soon surrendered. During the battle of Sabine Pass, the local hotel matron, supplied the Confederate forces with hot donuts, coffee and whiskey. The supplies kept the Confederate defenders in good morale, as runners braved the bombardment with fresh supplies on a regular basis.

Guerrilla Warfare—Southern Style

It has become accepted that one of the most feared forms of resistance is guerrilla warfare. This was true in ancient times as well as in modern. It was especially so during that horrible conflict most people refer to as the Civil War but which we more correctly know as the War for Southern Independence, the War Between the States, the War of Northern Aggression and by a good many more monikers.

The Unionists were never able to suppress Confederate guerrilla forces. They might win a battle here and there against them, kill a few—even the prominent ones; Quantrill, Bloody Bill Anderson, just to mention a few. But they never succeeded in ridding any section of the country of these men. In Missouri, sometimes as few as 4,000 guerrillas (though usually more) were in arms at any particular time. Yet they tied down 100,000 Yankees in that state, thus prolonging the longevity of the Confederacy. And these guerrillas, also called partisans were the last to lay down their arms. They were so hated by the Yankees that in Missouri, many were persecuted and murdered by the Feds after the war. These same Yankees did not accord them their rights as lawful combatants entitled to parole under the terms granted to other Confederate armies.

Indeed, expressed as a percentage, these men inflicted more damage upon the Yankees than any comparable contingent of Confederates. Add to this unorthodox but ultra-effective warfare carried by General Nathan Bedford Forrest and a few other regulars and we can see an opportunity lost. General Grant's worst fear was that Lee's Army would melt away in the woods and disperse into bands of—as he called them “bushwhackers.”

That suggests that Confederate strategy was sadly lacking in substance. It can be compared to a 120 pound man in a fistfight with a 220 pound man, because that was the honorable and accepted thing to do. Assuming they were somewhat equal in ability, the smaller man might use skill and last for a while, but sooner or later the overwhelming power of the bigger man will usually prevail. Guerrilla fighters look for targets of opportunity; they hit and run; they make their numbers count far more in proportion to what they really are. Thus....

One might conclude that the South didn't have to win that war; it only had to avoid losing it.

Yet, the South allowed its armies to be smashed against the anvil of Union superiority. Frontal attacks usually failed in that war with disastrous results. There were a few exceptions: The Yankees got real lucky at Lookout Mountain, mostly because the Confederates were led by a moron—General Bragg. And the Confederates got lucky at Chickamauga because Longstreet's men were able to exploit a gap in the Union line. **But almost always these frontal assaults resulted in disaster; not just defeat, but outright disaster. Examples are:**

Major Yankee Defeats: Fredericksburg, Cold Harbor, The Crater, The Wilderness (Grant lost 40,000, Lee lost 20,000), Kennesaw Mountain and hundreds of smaller engagements.

Major Confederate Defeats: Gettysburg, four battles fought around Atlanta when drug-crazed General Hood lost 20,000 men in frontal assaults against a numerically superior Union Army, Franklin (the Gettysburg of the West, also under Hood's command), Nashville (this is where Hood almost destroyed the rest of the Army of Tennessee). **The list for both armies goes on and on. But look what guerrilla fighters were able to do:**

Colonel Mosby thoroughly frustrated General Grant in the Shenandoah Valley.

Colonel Dickison thoroughly denied control of Florida to the Yankees.

Cherokee General Stan Watie controlled the Indian Nations (Oklahoma).

Interesting, but don't count on finding it!

Legend of the Lost Gold of the Confederacy



One of Georgia's most lingering and possibly lucrative mysteries is that of the lost Confederate gold. Worth roughly \$100,000 in 1865, when it disappeared, it would be a small fortune in today's dollars--around one million dollars.

On the night of May 24, 1865, two wagon trains filled with gold, one containing the last of the Confederate treasury and the other money from Virginia banks, were robbed at Chennault Crossroads in Lincoln County.

Chennault Plantation, owned by Dionysius Chennault who was an elderly planter and Methodist minister, played a significant role in the story. The gold was to be returned to France who had loaned the money to support the Confederacy. Jefferson Davis had given his word that the gold would be returned regardless of the outcome of the war. Towards the end of the war, Captain Parker of the Navy and a group of other volunteers brought the gold from Richmond, Virginia, to Anderson, South Carolina, by train and from there by wagon hoping to get to Savannah to load it on a waiting ship.

Parker was to camp outside Washington, Georgia, where he was to meet with Jefferson Davis and receive further instructions. Parker's group camped on the Chennault place and then received word to proceed on to Augusta and then Savannah, while avoiding contact with the large number of Union troops present in Georgia.

Accordingly the group set out on their assigned mission, but unfortunately their scouts met Union troops before they got to Augusta. The group returned to the Chennault Plantation. Parker was unable to receive further instructions from Davis because he had already left Washington. It was on this night that the gold disappeared in a hijacking about 100 yards from the porch of the house. One theory says that the treasure was buried at the confluence of the Apalachee and Oconee rivers. Some say that the gold was divided among the locals.

Union troops later came to the Chennault Plantation to find the gold. They tortured the occupants of the house trying to force them to reveal where the gold was hidden but to no avail. The entire Chennault family was taken to Washington, DC to undergo intensive interrogation. They were questioned thoroughly as to the whereabouts of the gold, but the Chennaults could not tell anything that was not already known. They were released a few weeks later and returned to their home in Georgia.

As time went by, the Chennault plantation became known as the "golden farm," and for many years after that people came there to search for the missing gold. Down through the years, many gold coins have been found along the dirt roads near the plantation following a heavy rain storm.

Legend persists that the treasure was hastily buried on the original grounds of Chennault Plantation and remains there today.

Touching Correspondence from the Confederate Veteran Magazine 1903

Our Confederate ancestors were largely impoverished but they had enormous pride. At a certain point in time, the original Confederate Veteran magazine was forced to raise the annual subscription rate from \$1 to \$2 or go out of business. The magazine was highly thought of by our hero ancestors. Shown as follows: I can only show here two pages from many containing comments from our Confederate ancestors, their children and grandchildren upon learning the magazine might shut down. Some of these men were in arrears:

Clarence Ousley.

226 Confederate Veteran May 1903.

EXTRACTS FROM: RECENT LETTER'S.

The following extracts are culled from the answers to a circular letter which the VETERAN recently sent through the mails to remind subscribers of their delinquency in arrears. In perusing the correspondence it was noted with pain that old subscribers who asked discontinuance of the VETERAN did so with unfeigned reluctance, giving the tragically honest reason, "I part with the VETERAN in sorrow, but haven't the money to pay for it."

You haven't a subscriber to the dear old VETERAN that appreciates it more than I. It is a noble work, and I feel like doing all I can to assist you. You are giving the rising generation a true history of the war and the events that caused it.

London, Ark. I hope to be with you soon and settle for the most valuable book I have ever read. Would not fail to pay you on any terms.

Tullahoma, Tenn. Of course I want the VETERAN. Long may it live! I am a friend of the VETERAN and of its editor.

St. Louis, Mo. Believe me, no one on earth reads the VETERAN with more interest than I do. My whole heart and soul was in the cause. Please don't discontinue it. Do not fear to trust me, for I would rather give thousands to perpetuate the VETERAN than to take one cent from the support of it: May God bless and prosper the work you are striving to make permanent after you have gone to your reward.

Florence, Tenn. In reply to your letter will say that your paper is a welcome visitor in my family. My wife holds it next to her Bible.

Sophia, S. C. Yes, I get the VETERAN. I want it, I love it, I will pay for it! Send it on, and if I die I will leave word with my children to pay you and continue to pay you. May you live long to further the true history of our beloved but extinct Confederacy.

Tyler, Tex. I appreciate the VETERAN, and would not like to read it at some one's expense.

Knoxville, Tenn. The VETERAN has so delighted my little war loving son that nothing will do him but he must have it sent in his own name.

Cordell, Okla. I have been a constant reader of your valuable periodical for a number of years and do not see how any Confederate can do without it. I do believe it the duty of every old soldier to read it. I wish you may be spared a long life to carry on the noble work.

Medina, Tenn. Your circular letter to hand. When I wish the VETERAN stopped I will notify you, and when I fail to pay, please notify me. Be assured the VETERAN is appreciated

Union Factory, Ga. I am in a great hurry. Please find inclosed New York Exchange for \$5. I wish you and the VETERAN success.

Gadsden, Ala. Notice of expiration of my subscription is received with thanks. Certainly I want it continued. It should be in the home of every old Confederate and his descendants.

Center Point, Ark. Inclosed find my check for three dollars. Please advance me on your list. You should be upheld in a good cause.

Plaquemine, La. I take great pleasure in inclosing check for two dollars. My delay in remitting was an oversight, and not from the desire for you to discontinue. The VETERAN is a welcome guest.

Archer, Fla. I don't want my testament stopped. Sue me, make all pay that can do so. If you are losing money, charge two dollars. We would rather pay more than do without it. Success to you and the VETERAN.

Camden, Ark. Yours to hand, and in reply I have to say that the VETERAN comes on time, and I want it to come as long as I live.

Brooklyn, Ala. Your circular letter received. I cannot afford to do without it as long as I can pay. I think it should be in the home of every old Confederate, for all who read it consider it one of the most high toned, truthful magazines published contending for principles sacred to all liberty loving people.

Winchester, Tenn. I hasten to reply to your letter. Accept apologies for neglect in so important a matter.

Roanoke, Va. I received your letter giving notice to subscribers. You are right. We cannot expect you to furnish us in reading matter for nothing. It is life to me to read the VETERAN, and understand I do not mean that I will not pay.

Keo, Ark. Yours to hand, and I get the VETERAN with regularity. Would not do without it for anything.

Independence, Va. I like the VETERAN and I like your devotion to the cause you have so faithfully worked for. I hope you may live long to publish the VETERAN and that you may finally reap a rich reward.

Lavergne, Tenn, Inclosed please find money order for my subscription. Please send the VETERAN. I could not do without it.

Augusta, Ga. Continue the VETERAN. It is carelessness that I have not attended to this sooner. Will give you no further trouble.

Farmville, Va. Permit me to thank you for sending it to rue. I do not wish to miss a copy.

Selma, Tex. I don't want it stopped. Had rather do with out almost anything.

Taral, Ark. I want to take the VETERAN as long as I live and am able to pay for it. Am seventy six years old, and served four years under "Marse Robert."

Forreston, Tex. Inclosed find my subscription. Let the VETERAN come on. It is like salt, I cannot do without it.

Woodbury, Tex. I am worn out, got no money, and so am not able to pay for the VETERAN.

Rhome, Tex. You will have to stop the VETERAN. I am not dead of old age, but was wounded nine times at Harrodsburg, Miss., under Forrest, and my left shoulder was crushed by a horse falling on me. At Baker's Creek my hat was shot off my head, and the shoe on my left foot was shot off. I am not able to do anything.

Wichita Falls, Tex. I know I am in arrears, and no one hates it as I do. Am tight up but honest, and will pay at harvest. I am like your grub was at the close of the war short but I can't do without the VETERAN. I belonged to Company K, of the famous Seventh Georgia, Tige Anderson's Brigade.

Robert Lee, Tex. My husband is an old crippled ex Confederate and not able to work. I will pay you this fall.

Hamilton, N. C. Inclosed find \$2 for the VETERAN. I am only twelve years old, but enjoy reading the VETERAN especially the war stories. My grandfather often tells me of the war and the different battles he was in. and how he was taken prisoner at Roanoke Island. I think I can get some more little boys to take the VETERAN if you want me to try.

Washington, D. C. The VETERAN comes to me regularly, and I want it as long as it is published.

Newnan, Ga. I send post office order for the VETERAN. I can't do without it.

Sumner, Tex. I will do all I can for its advancement. Every old Confederate ought to take it. I want to as long as I live.

Orlando, Fla. Thanks that you have continued my VETERAN. Don't ever stop it. Would sell my coat if necessary to pay you.

La Belle, Fla. I send check. I appreciate the VETERAN very much, and don't want to fall in arrears.



The Heritage Page



Who are “They”

While driving home from this year’s National Convention in Anderson, SC, I had time to think about how nice it was to see my old friends and that I was able to make some new ones.

At every Convention I hear the same questions such as why don’t “they” work on getting more members or why don’t “they” have a master list of all the Confederate graves or even why don’t “they” have a better place to store all of our records. Our elected leaders work full time in a position that pays nothing and with a limited staff are expected to make everything work to our expectations, all of these issues and many more are being addressed but there is only so much a handful of people can do alone.

Years ago while in Richmond I asked the same question when I came across the Oakwood cemetery that has 17,000 men buried on 8 acres “why don’t ‘they’ have a record of who is buried there”.

I may have found the answer to my own question, at that point I realized many members believe that the dues they pay will cover the cost for someone to take of all the issues facing this organization and once in a while when we get up off the coach to donate a couple extra dollars we wonder why “they” haven’t completed the hundreds of projects on hand. The truth is that while money moves projects forward and is greatly appreciated, it’s men like Mike Mitchell of Florida who has become an expert on grave stone preservation. Mike assists Camps up and down the East coast. We have Lee Hart of Virginia that is assisting camps in several states with his vast knowledge of monument cleaning and preservation, Frank Earnest traveling to Camps across the South speaking on our heritage, he never turns down a request. Each of these men and many more have one thing in common each of them will drive hundreds of miles every month, pay for their own hotels and expenses, spend hundreds of hours every year to assist our membership. When I hear the question of why don’t “they” it really means we expect the few to protect the Heritage for the many.

Would a tourist visiting your town be able to say why don’t “they” have the Confederate graves listed on a database, why don’t “they” have the graves marked and maintained, why don’t “they” have an educational program for school students or the public and why don’t “they” place a historical marker for the contribution a Confederate soldier made to the community.

The answer is “they” means you and me and all it takes is for one man in a camp to get up and say I am going to try. No one has to work as hard as the men mentioned above but could a few hours a month get a headstone for a Confederate soldier or a cemetery cleaned. Someday we will meet up with our ancestors and they are going to ask why didn’t they try?

John Kindred
Dallas, Georgia