Lee and the Confederacy After Sixty Years

By H. H. SMITH

The year 1925 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the close of the war Between the States. From 1865 to 1925 is not a long period of time as history counts time, but it has brought a marvelous change in the attitude of many thinking people of the North toward the Southern Confederacy. For instance, shortly after the death of General LEE Charles Sumner, a Massachusetts Senator, speaking upon the question of a return to Lee's family of the ancestral estate of Arlington, used these words: 'Eloquent Senators have already characterized the proposition and the traitor it seeks to commemorate. I am not disposed to speak of General L. . . . It is enough to say he stands high in a catalogue of those who have lifted their hands in their country's blood. I stand here [illegible] History."

Only a generation later Charles Francis Adams, grandson of Massachusetts and grandson of John Quincy Adams, [illegible]

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in the bone Yankee, as he called himself, delivered a notable address at the Lee Centennial fête at Lexington, Virginia. Among other things he said: "One of a community which then took I mean Lee as a runaway from the flag he had sworn to serve and a traitor to the Nation which nurtured him, in my unfeigned place I directly, I directly confronted Lee himself at the large portion of the War of Secession. During all those years there was not a day in which my heart would not have been gladdened had I heard that his also had been the fate which at Chancellorsville befell his great lieutenant; and yet in my soul I felt it been the fortune of an enemy which I served to slay that face upon a bier. Forty years have since gone. Your close finds me here today certainly a much older, and in my own belief, at least, a wise man.

"The charge commonly made against Lee in that section of the common country to which I belong and with which I sympathize, is in plain language, he was false to his flag—educated at the national academy, an officer of the United States Army, he abjured his allegiance and bore arms against the government he had sworn to uphold. In other words, he was a military traitor. I state the charge in the lowest language possible. Having done so and admitting the facts as technically true, I add as the result of much patient study and most mature reflection, that under similar conditions I would myself have done exactly what Lee did."

He further said:

Coming directly to the point, I maintain that every man in the eleven states seceding from the Union had, in 1861, whether he would or no, to decide for himself whether to adhere to his State or to the nation, and I finally assert, that, whichever way he decided, if only he decided honestly, putting self-interest behind him, he decided right."

He puts Lee in good company and further says: "But he stands awaiting sentence at the bar of history in very respectable company. Associated with him are, for instance, William of Orange, known as The Silent, John Hampden, the original Pater Patriae, Oliver Cromwell, the Protector of the English Commonwealth; Sir Henry Vane, once a governor of Massachusetts, and George Washington, a Virginian of Note. . . . As to Robert E. Lee, individually, I can only repeat what I have already said—if in all respects similarly circumstanced, I hope I should have been faithful and unselfish enough to have done as Lee did."

At the time he uttered those words Charles Francis Adamas was the head of the Historical Society of Massachusetts. And thus it happens that "the avenging pen of History," instead of denouncing Lee as a traitor lands him as a patriot and places him by the side of the immortal Washington.

About five years after Mr. Adams delivered his remarkable address, Gamaliel Bradford, a noted writer of New England, published his book, "Lee, The American." He took the same position as to Lee's decision on the beginning of the war, and said that, if similarly circumstanced, he would have done exactly as Lee did. Referring to Lee's death as occurring only five years after the close of the war, he asks, "Was he not a loyal citizen, a loyal Southern, and one of the very greatest?"

About the time Mr. Bradford was publishing his book, "Lee The American," only a dozen years ago and

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eulogizing Lee as one of the greatest Americans, Thomas Nelson Page was writing his great book, "Robert E. Lee: Man and Soldier," in which occurs these prophetic words:

"Some day, doubtless, there will stand in the nation's capital a great monument to Lee, erected not only by the Southern people whose glory it is that he was the fruit of their civilization and the leader of their armies, but by the American people, whose pride it will be that he was their fellow citizen. Meantime, he has a nobler monument than can be built of marble or of brass. His monument is the adoration of the South; his shrine is in every Southern heart."

Hitsory's Verdict Concerning Lee As A Soldier

The London Times, referring to Lee's incomparable strategy, said: "No one, certainly since Napoleon, has conquered against such immense odds."

Col. Henderson, an eminent English military authority, says: "The victory of Chancellorsville, in which Lee, with 62,000 men, 170 guns, completely routed Hooker on his own ground, with 130,00 men, and 448 guns, was the most brilliant feat of arms of the century."

Col. Swift, of the general's staff, of the United States Army, says: "The odds of numbers were against Lee in the Wilderness campaign than against Napoleon in the Waterloo campaign, but Lee had his army at the end, and Npoaleon's disaster was complete."

Roosevelt said: "Lee will undoubtedly rank as without exception the greatest of all great captains that the English-speaking people have brought forth."

General Meade had been an associate with Lee as an officer of engineers in the old army. After the surrender, Lee remarked to him, "Meade, years are telling on you; oyur hair is getting quite grey." "Ah, General Lee," was Made's prompt reply. "It is not the work of years; you are responsible for my grey hairs."

Lee was a most humane commander. Charles Francis Adams says: "As a leader he conducted operations, on the highest plane. Whether acting on the defensive upon the soil of his native state, or leading his army into the enemy's country, he was humane, self-retsrained and strictly observant o fthe most advanced rules of civilized warfare. He respected the noncombatant; nor did he ever permit the wanton destruction of private property."

History's Verdict Concerning Lee as A Man

Volumes could be written on this subject. In the limited space at hand we quote just a few paragraphs from the most unbiased sources:

"Essentially a man of character," is the terse way Charles Francis Adams puts it.

The New York Herald said: "Never had mother a nobler son. In him the military genius of America was deevloped to a greater extent than ever before. In him all that was pure and lofty in mind and purpose found lodgement. He came nearer the ideal of a soldier and Christian general than any man can think of, for he was a greater osldier than Havelock, and equally as devout a Christian. Displaying neither bitterness nor regret over the irrevocable past, he conquered us in misfortune by the grand manner in which he sustained himself, even as he dazzled us by his genius when the tramp of his soldiers resounded through the vaileys of Virginia."

Professor eGorge Long, a distinguished scholar of England, wrote to a friend in Virginia: "If I were not detained here by circumstances, I would cross the Atlantic to see the first and noblest man of our day."

Professor Worsley, of Oxford, sent Lee his translation of The Iliad of Homer, and on the fly leaf wrote the following dedication: "To Gen. R. E. Lee, the most stainless of living commanders, and except in fortune, the greatest—this volume is presented with the writer's earnest sympathy, and respectful admiration."

The London Standard, announcing the death of Lee, said:

"Truer greatness, a loftier nature, a spirit more unselfish, a character purer, more chivalrous, the world has rarely ever known. Of stainless hue and deep religious feeling, yet free from all taint of cant and fanaticism. A country which has given birth to men like him and those who followed him, may look the chivalry of Europe in the face without shame, for the father-lands of Sidney and of Bayard never produced a nobler soldier, gentleman, and Christian than Gen. Robert E. Lee."

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NORTH CAROLINA—Cherokee County. Murphy, Jan. 7, 1925.

The Board met January 5th, 1925, T. W. Axley, chairman, W. J. Martin and W. T. Holland, members.

It appearing from the report of the registrars and judges of the election Nov. 4, 1924, at Rolling Springs, Whereas at the general election this particular boundary for stock law was voted on and it appearing that 36 votes were cast in favor of stock law and 35 against stock law, a majority in favor of stock law, this boundary hereinafter set out, viz:

Beginning on Graham County line in what is known as Snow Bird Gap, and runs a South course to East corner of Ben Dockery's land; thence wita said lands an eastern course including said Dockery's land across Hangingdog Creek to top of dividing mountain between Owl Creek and Hangingdog Creek and to present stock law line; thence with said stock law line a S. W. course with said line to what is known as the Allen Gap between Beaverdam and Davis Creek section; thence with highest ground a N. E. course to what is known as the Dead Tre Gap; thence with the meanders of the dividing mountain between Tellico and Davis Creeks; thence an East course to what is known as the McDonald Ball and corner of Graham County line; thence with said line S. E. direction to Snow Bird Gap and the beginning.

Now, therefore, the above mentioned boundary is and the same is hereby declared a stock law territory and shall be from and after this date, and any person or corporation or company are forbidden to allow horse, cattle, sheep, hogs, or any other stock of any description to run at large in said boundary, from and after this date.

It is further ordered that the provisions of the law relating to stock law and particularly of Chapter 36 of the Consolidated Statutes of North Carolina shall be in effect in said boundary from and after the above date.

It is further ordered by the Board that a copy of this order be posted at the Court house and published in the Cherokee Scout.

This January 5th, 1925.

T. W. AXLEY, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners
A. M. Simonds, Ex-oficio Clerk to
Board of County Commissioners
of Cherokee County, N. C.
(22-4t-co)

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WOLF CREEK.

It did a lot of raining here last week.

A native son and two of a neighboring community tried to run a "bluff" game in the community on Thursday night of last week. According to the most authentic reports there was some running done but the community was still all together when the young upstarts were gone. About 15 or 20 shots were fired.

The recent heavy rains have about cleaned up all the filthiness about here but the bootlegging business. It stills seems to thrive.

Mrs. Rachel Ricks celebrated her 83th birthday last Sunday. She is the oldest citizen in our section. The following relatives were tresent: One daughter, Mrs. Sarah Garren; two granddaughters, Mrs. Nora Morgan, and Mrs. Martha Burgess, of Belltown; seven greatgrandchildren, Elbert and Charles Morgan, Howard Garren and Pauline, Wayne and Inez and Billy Burgess, with two great-great-grandchildren present, Clyde and Thelma Morgan. In all 18 persons were present at dinner and several more would have been present had they not been hindered by sickness.

Mr. John Cook has his grist mill in fine running condition and is grinding for nearly the whole community. He has just about put both water mills out of commission.

NOTICE OF SALE UNDER DEED OF TRUST

Default having been made in the payment of the indebtedness secured by a certain deed of trust from F. M. Johnson and wife, to the undersigned, as trustee, dated 4th day of January, 1924, and registered in the office of the Register of Deeds of Cherokee County, North Carolina, in Book 74, page 358, and demand having been made upon the undersigned to execute the power contained in said deed, I will for the purpose of satisfying the indebtedness secured thereby, offer for sale at public auction at the court house door in Murphy, N. C., on the 17th day of February, 1925, at 11 o'clock, a. m., the following described tract of land in Cherokee County, situated and located in Murphy Township, on the waters of Little Brastown Creek, and adjoining the lands of Thad Laney heirs, Strongs and others, being the home place of F. M. Johnson, beginning on a chestnut oak, the North West corner of said tract, and runs East 110 poles to a stake and pointers on the line of No. 124; thence South 290 poles to a post oak on the South boundary line of No. 129; thence West 110 poles to a pine, the Southwest corner of No. 129; thence North 290 poles to the beginning, containing 137½ acres, excepting and reserving from said boundary forty five acres sold and conveyed by F. M. Johnson to Thad Laney by deed which is recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds of Cherokee County, reference to which is made for particularity.

Terms of sale cash. This 12th day of January, 1925.

SAM CARRINGER,
(23-4t-pd) Trustee.

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Two men were boasting about their brothers. The first one said: "My brother once went to a billard match, picked up a ball in his right hand, another in his left, squeezed them and the result was powder."

"That's nothing," said the other. "My brother once went to a farm, and taking a bull in the left hand and one in the right, squeezed them; result, bottle of beef extract."

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Patient—Yes, I practiced a lot during the night.

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