



THE LEGIONARY

November 2008

A Publication of the Sons of Confederate Veterans

Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton Camp No. 273

Columbia, South Carolina ♦ www.wadehamptoncamp.org

A FRATERNAL ORGANIZATION OF SOUTHERN MEN

THANKSGIVING. A SOUTHERN TRADITION

By Fred D. Taylor

As Thanksgiving is just days away, I decided to change the pace away from simply talking about someone of local significance or an historic event, and talk a little about the history of the first English Thanksgiving in America.

While most school children in the last few weeks have been performing plays celebrating that great gathering between the Pilgrims and the Indians, the truth of the matter is they got it all wrong. Gasp! Yes, I'm here popping the bubble of all the little kids who dressed up in their pilgrim hats and buckled shoes, or Indian headdresses, to tell the story the history books didn't want them to know.

Despite popular American nostalgia that the first Thanksgiving was held by the Pilgrims after the arrival of the Mayflower at Plymouth Rock, it actually had its beginnings just a few miles from us along the James River at present-day Berkley Plantation in Charles City County.

The year was 1619, twelve years after the establishment of Jamestown, when a group of thirty-eight settlers aboard the ship Margaret arrived after having made a ten-week journey across the Atlantic. Upon their landing, they knelt and prayed on the rich Tidewater soil, with their Captain John Woodlief proclaiming:

"Wee ordaine that the day of our ships arrivall at the place assigned for plantacion in the land of Virginia shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God."

As historically recorded, this event was the first English Thanksgiving in the New World. So why the big deal about the Pilgrims and the first Thanksgiving being at Plymouth Rock? Good question. Some historians follow the trail to northern-written textbooks (after the War Between the States, of course), but even then anything more than a cursory study of colonial history will lead one to the discrepancy between the dates of the first Thanksgiving. Yet, we continue today to recognize the Plymouth Thanksgiving as the first, despite the clear evidence to the contrary. In fact, the irony of all ironies is that not only did Virginia's Thanksgiving celebration occur before the one in Massachusetts, the Pilgrims had not even landed in America yet! The Pilgrims arrival would come one year and seventeen days later in 1620, and their Thanks giving celebration nearly two years later in 1621.

Celebrations of "thanksgiving" would become a deeply rooted American tradition though, usually brought on by periods of great hardship. During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress proclaimed days of Thanksgiving every year from 1778 to 1784. Likewise, George Washington issued the first Presidential proclamation of Thanksgiving in 1789,



See THANKSGIVING, Page 3

As the year comes to a close I would like to thank everyone that has stepped forward this year to promote their Confederate heritage and support the Sons of Confederate Veterans. We belong to the premier organization in the country that protects the Confederate Soldier's good name. For those of you that have been less active I would ask each of you to reexamine your commitment and become more supportive next year. Your ancestor would expect no less from you.

At this time of the year we have many reasons to be thankful. While I have many concerns about the ever increasing size and role of the Federal Government in our lives and businesses, I still believe we live in the greatest country on the face of the earth. I am also thankful for family, friends, employment, good health, freedom to worship as I choose and for being born in the South.

Our November meeting will have a great impact on the direction our camp takes over the next year as we elect Adjutant and Commander. We will also present Certificates of Appreciation and our two camp awards to deserving members.

I would like to thank Compatriot John Culler for the fish fry and fellowship offered to camp members on November 15. We all enjoyed the day and extend to you a big thank you.

I continue to stress recruiting new members as I believe it is the lifeline of the organization. With new members come new ideas and new energy that will propel our camp and organization forward in an ever increasing hostile community. I encourage each of you to make an effort to recruit at least one new member next year.

On Friday December 5, 2008, in conjunction with Christmas in Cayce, there

will be a Living History Encampment at the Cayce Historical Museum from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. The Cayce Museum will be open to the public and the Black Bottom Biscuits Bluegrass Band will be performing. On Saturday December 6, 2008, at the same location, there will be a Lantern Tour from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. The Cayce Museum will also be open and the SC Relic Hunters will have artifacts displayed in the basement of the museum. There will be no charge for any of these activities.

Our November meeting will be November 20, 2008 at 6:00 pm with Past Commander Tommy Rollings delivering our program. His topic for the evening will be a show and tell of the Confederate Soldier's uniform and accouterments. I look forward to seeing everyone on that evening

CHAPLAIN'S PULPIT**- LARRY BATES**

I would like to look at what Church life was like for the Confederate soldier and why did he attend Church? The army wanted Chaplains who had a burden to preach the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified. While not giving up the teachings of their denomination, Chaplains were expected not to be denominational in their preaching and to focus on the common ground to which believers stand together. For instance, at one service during the war, the preacher was a Presbyterian, introduced by Baptist services under the direction of a Methodist chaplain, in an Episcopal church. Again, they preached the Gospel and had no discussion of any theology newer than the New Testament.

Much of the time, services were held outside, and if the Chaplain was fortunate, he might have a barrel or a stump to use as a pulpit. The bugler played "Church call", but just as often the men responded by a few drum taps or when hearing the singing of a familiar hymn. Then from every part of camp they came, just as they were, "weather-beaten soldiers in faded and tattered uniforms." They sat on logs or on the ground. The Chaplains knew their men and knew which of those heroes of battles he could call on to lead in

prayer. When these soldiers prayed, they didn't "tell the Lord the news of the day or make a stump-speech on the war, but from the depths of his heart tells God of their present wants, asks for present blessings and begs for the Holy Spirit in His convicting, converting power."

The Chaplain would preach the "old, old story of Jesus and His love." How all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, that our sin separates us from God and that the wages of sin is death. The good news of while we are yet sinners, Christ came and took the penalty for our sin on Himself by dying on the Cross and then rising from the dead three days later. If we believe in Him, Christ Jesus, we can receive forgiveness and the free gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Soldiers would give their undivided attention and at the close of service a hymn would be sung and anywhere from 20 to 100 to even 500 (like at Fredericksburg) would come forward asking for prayer or wanting to make a profession of faith in Christ Jesus.

The Scriptures tell us to "not give up meeting together ... but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching." How much did going to Church and worshipping God

mean to the Confederate soldier? Let me close with this example. One Sunday in early winter 1863 the snow was falling pretty good. The Chaplain figured there would be no service at the usual hour but he heard singing coming from the place of worship. When he got there, he saw a large congregation of soldiers assembled. He preached to these men who stood in several inches of snow. He counted fourteen who were barefoot and scores of others wearing beat up shoes that protected their feet little from the weather. These soldiers were heroes in battle and were men who desired a close relationship with God.

**Adjutant's Desk**

Gentlemen,

As of November 7th, we have 178 regular paid members and 18 paid associate members. We lost 30 regular members and 5 associate members during the renewal process.

See you at the next meeting and remember, RECRUIT A NEW MEMBER.

**www.wadehamptoncamp.org**

THANKSGIVING

and a few of his successors followed suit. Interestingly, Thanksgiving was not a specific day or even month, and apparently was issued on the whim of whoever was in office. Sporadically between the years 1789 and 1815, days of Thanksgiving were recognized in January, March, April, October, and November. This recognition of Thanksgiving ended in 1815 following the term of President James Madison, and a President would not issue such a proclamation for another forty-six years.

That President was Jefferson F. Davis, who recognized a day of thanks, humiliation, and prayer for the young Confederate States of America for October 31st, 1861. Not to be outdone, President Abraham Lincoln resurrected the forgotten day in the United States as well, and issued a similar proclamation in April of 1862. In 1863, Thanksgiving was made a national holiday, and in 1866, the tradition of recognizing Thanksgiving on the fourth Thursday of November was started by President Andrew Johnson.

From that time on, every sitting

President has recognized Thanksgiving as a national holiday. Nonetheless, the twists in the story continue. While the recognition of the holiday has been uninterrupted since 1861, the explanations of the origins of Thanksgiving have been numerous. For years, the residents of the Oval Office ignored Virginia's claim to the first Thanksgiving, but that all changed in 1963. It took a Massachusetts Yankee by the name of John F. Kennedy to take the risk of alienating his constituency back home to tell the rest of the story. President Kennedy honored Massachusetts's and Virginia's claim in his proclamations of 1963 at the urgency of his Special Assistant Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., a noted historian and political scientist. After Kennedy's death, President Johnson mentioned Virginia twice, President Jimmy Carter recognized it in 1979, and the last to recognize Virginia's claim was President Ronald Reagan in 1985.

Today, the struggle to tell the true story of Thanksgiving continues in classrooms across America, and even more

so here at home in Virginia where it all started. For several years now, a group of concerned citizens have organized an annual event to celebrate the First Thanksgiving at Berkley, and each year they recreate that historic event on the shores of the James River.

As we approach America's 400th Anniversary in 2007, the necessity to tell the real Thanksgiving story and its Christian roots is all the more important. So as you prepare for Thanksgiving this year, take a few minutes to reflect on this story, and to pass this tidbit of history along to others. Every little bit helps in getting the truth out. As for me this year, I've certainly got plenty to be thankful for, but in honor of those thirty-eight who arrived on the shores of Virginia in 1619, I'll be substituting my turkey and stuffing for Smithfield Ham and Chesapeake Bay Oysters.

Source: *Suffolk News-Herald*, November 2005

PROCLAMATION TO THE CONFEDERATE PEOPLE, 20 FEBRUARY 1862

PROCLAMATIONS.

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
CONFEDERATE STATES.

A PROCLAMATION.

To the People of the Confederate States.

The termination of the Provisional Government offers a fitting occasion again to present ourselves in humiliation, prayer, and thanksgiving before that God who has safely conducted us through our first year of national existence. We have been enabled to lay anew the foundations of free government and to repel the efforts of our enemies to destroy us. Law has everywhere reigned supreme, and throughout our widespread limits personal liberty and private right have been duly honored. A tone of earnest piety has pervaded our people, and the victories which we have obtained over our enemies have been justly ascribed to Him who ruleth the universe.

We had hoped that the year would close upon a scene of continued prosperity,

but it has pleased the Supreme Disposer of events to order it otherwise. We are not permitted to furnish an exception to the rule of Divine government, which has prescribed affliction as the discipline of nations as well as of individuals. Our faith and perseverance must be tested, and the chastening which seemeth grievous will, if rightly received, bring forth its appropriate fruit.

It is meet and right, therefore, that we should repair to the only Giver of all victory, and, humbling ourselves before him, should pray that he may strengthen our confidence in his mighty power and righteous judgment. Then may we surely trust in him that he will perform his promise and encompass us as with a shield.

In this trust, and to this end, I, Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States, do hereby set apart Friday, the 28th day of February, instant, as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer; and I do hereby invite the reverend clergy and people of the Confederate States to repair to their respective places of public worship to humble themselves before

Almighty God, and pray for his protection and favor to our beloved country, and that we may be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.

Given under my hand and seal of the Confederate [L.S.] States at Richmond, this 20th day of February, A.D. 1862.

JEFFERSON DAVIS



Individuals interested in joining the SCV or this Camp should contact
Compatriot Scott James: Phone (803) 781-1836, E-mail wscottjames@bellsouth.net
WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD MEN!

Important Dates in *The War to Suppress Yankee Arrogance*:

- Nov. 02, 1861 – The British steamer *Bermuda*, runs through a Federal blockade and escapes Charleston, SC, with 2,000 bales of cotton.
- Nov. 03, 1863 – Charleston, SC. Federal artillery bombards Fort Sumter with 661 rounds.
- Nov. 04, 1864 – Gen. Forrest attacks and bombards Johnsonville, TN, destroying Federal gunboats, transports and storage warehouses, and causing over two million dollars in damages.
- Nov. 05, 1861 – Gen. Lee is named the commander of the new Confederate Department of SC, GA and East FL.
- Nov. 07, 1863 – Severe fighting erupts on the Rappahannock River at Kelly's Ford and Rappahannock Station.
- Nov. 12, 1861 – The Confederate blockade runner *Fingal*, bought in England, arrives in Savannah with military supplies.
- Nov. 18, 1864 – In GA, Sherman's "march to the sea" continues as Union troops move between Ocmulgee and Oconee Rivers.
- Nov. 19, 1861 – Round Mountain, Indian Territory. Texas Confederates and pro-Southern Cherokees attack pro-union Creek Indians who are fleeing to Kansas.
- Nov. 23, 1863 – The Battle of Chattanooga begins.
- Nov. 27, 1864 – In VA, the U.S. Army transport ship *Greyhound* is sunk by a Confederate torpedo in the James River.
- Nov. 28, 1861 – MO is officially admitted into the Confederate States of America.
- Nov. 30, 1864 – Battle of Franklin, TN. Six Confederate generals lose their lives in the largest frontal assault of the war.

Y'all Come!!!

Next Camp Meeting
Thursday, 20 November
6:00 p.m.



Jefferson Davis

Seawell's Restaurant
1125 Rosewood Drive
Columbia, SC

Guest Speaker:
Tommy Rollings,
Past Camp Commander
Topic:

"The Confederate Soldier's
uniform and accouterments"

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