

THE TELEGRAPH KEY

THE OFFICIAL DISPATCH FOR THE MAJOR THOMAS J. KEY CAMP #1920 KANSAS DIVISION, SCV JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS

VOL. 12, No. 1

JANUARY 2011

FEBRUARY CAMP MEETING 115TH Regular Meeting

All compatriots are reminded that the next regular meeting of the Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920 will be on Thursday February 3rd, 2011. We will be meeting at Zarda's Barbecue located on the southwest corner of 87th Street and Quivira in Lenexa, Kansas. We will meet between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m. for dinner and start the official meeting at 7:00. For our meeting we have Mr. Shelton Ponder as our speaker. I met Mr. Ponder a few weeks ago and found him to be a delightfully wonderful African American who is tremendously knowledgeable about the Buffalo Soldiers. Therefore his presentation will be about those heroic black soldiers who fought the Indians after the Civil war ended. Many of them were, in fact, veterans of the Union Army before becoming part of the 9th and 10th U.S. Cavalry regiments. Mr. Ponder follows those soldiers all the way into World War I and beyond. He also clarifies how Black Jack Pershing got his nickname, something I never knew until Mr. Ponder's talk. So plan to attend the meeting and see what the buffalo soldiers were really all about. You don't want to miss this one. Be sure to bring your wife or significant other as they are always welcome. Also don't forget to bring that prospective recruit. See y'all there!!!

Editorial Byline and Stuff

"The Telegraph Key" is the newsletter for the Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The SCV is a non-profit organization with a patriotic, historical and genealogical orientation and is not affiliated with any other organization. Opinions in this newsletter reflect the views of the writers and are not necessarily a statement of the views of the SCV, the Kansas Division, the Kansas Brigades, nor any other camp. Comments and articles are solicited.

Officers:

Key Camp

Commander:	James L. Speicher
1 st Lieutenant Commander:	Lee Crutchfield
2 nd Lieutenant Commander:	John Weir
Adjutant:	C. Heath Roland
Chaplain:	Carl Linck
Communications Officer:	Steve Crawford
Historian & Scrapbook:	Dan Peterson
Web Master:	John Weir
Newsletter Editor:	James L. Speicher
Media Coordinator:	Lane Smith
Cadet Member Coordinator:	Lee Crutchfield

Key Camp On The Web

Key Camp: www.majorkey1920ksscvc.org
SCV National: www.scvc.org

NEW MEMBER #73

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Leavenworth Militaria Show

All members are reminded that the Key Camp will be hosting a recruiting/display table at the Leavenworth Militaria Show. The show is on Saturday February 12, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. It will be held at the Riverfront Community Center (same place as last year) in Leavenworth. That means you don't have to try to get onto Fort Leavenworth. I will plan to arrive before 8:00 a.m. to set up the table. If anyone would like to volunteer to help man the table, that would be awesome. My thanks goes to Greg Miller and Jim Tucker for already volunteering to help out that day. It is a good show and you will get time to walk through it. You also won't have to pay the admission donation since you are "working" a table. I do need your names and times you can help so you can get in for free. Just call or e-mail me. Thanks.

WESTPORT ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Here comes the parade(s)!! That's right - our first parade for the year will be on Saturday March 12th at 2:00 p.m. It will be the Westport Saint Patrick's Day parade. We will be helping to represent the Wornall House entry in the parade and since the house was used as a hospital for both sides during the battle of Westport we will fit in historically well. We will march under the Irish flag of the 10th Tennessee Infantry. Everyone is welcome, uniform or not. Uniformed guys will walk in ranks and non-uniform guys will walk along with us. So put on your green uniform or your grey uniform or your green civilian outfit and join the fun. Further details as to where to rally and at what time will be forth coming but go ahead and mark your calendar now to march (walk) in the Westport Saint Patrick's Day parade. By the way - all of our ladies

are invited to join us for the fun so bring wife, daughter, grand-daughter or significant other.

KANSAS CITY ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Parade number two is right on the heels of parade number one so your outfits (military or civilian) won't even get cool in between parades. This parade is actually on the official Saint Patrick's Day of Thursday March 17th. This is the really big one as it is the Kansas City parade and it is one of the largest in the country. Again this year we have been invited to be part of the Harris-Kearney House entry as we were last year. We again will march (walk) under the Irish flag of the 10th Tennessee Infantry. We participated in this last year and had a wonderful time despite the really miserable weather. Come in uniform or your best Irish outfit and bring your ladies. Unfortunately the United States does not recognize this auspicious event as a federal holiday so I know many or most of you need to work but IF you CAN get the day off or you are retired then come on out and support the camp and the Irish soldiers who fought so gallantly in the Confederate Army. Again more details will be provided as I receive the information. Since this is the one year anniversary of the death of Loren Lundy we will be wearing black armbands in his honor.

Tenth Annual Lee-Jackson Banquet

On Saturday 15 January the camp hosted its 10th Annual Lee-Jackson Banquet. Fifty-three stalwart supporters of the camp attended, including long time member Matt Myers with his wife Vonnie, her sister Mary, and his parents. We don't get to see Matt very often as he is in the Navy and stationed in San Antonio, Texas. We had a new caterer this year. The meal was prepared by Kansas City Catering and the food was awesome, so much better than last year. There were several exciting happenings. For one, the Key's Battery Award for outstanding support went to Chaplain Carl Linck. Carl

attended every parade with his 1983 Johnson Motors Presidential Rumble Seat Roadster, which was a tremendous hit with all the spectators. He volunteered to be the camp Chaplain after Tom Ellis moved back to Virginia and he came out for almost all of our displays/living histories and cemetery mowings. Also at the banquet, Mrs. Carrie Martinez received the prestigious SCV Ladies Appreciation Medal for her outstanding support to the camp. Our speaker was Cindy Speicher who gave very enjoyable tongue in cheek presentation on several humorous events that took place during the Late Unpleasantness. She proved herself a "true GRITS" (Girls Raised In The South) with her outstanding performance. The auction proved to be as much fun as ever with the bidding wars between the attendees. As is the tradition we closed the banquet with the Candlelight Memorial Service, read this year by Compatriot Jim King, who did an outstanding job. Overall, the banquet was a wonderful evening of fun, friendship, and food. I especially want to thank Dan Peterson, Tim Peterman, Ron Lucas, Greg Miller, and Steve Crawford for getting there at 4:00 to help with setting up the banquet hall. I also want to thank all those that stayed after to help clean up. There were too many to list but I do sincerely appreciate your help that evening. Thank you all!!!!

The Shattered Glass: On Lee's Birthday, 2011

By Paul Greenberg · Tuesday, January 18, 2011

By now successive generations of historians have set out to capture the uncapturable essence of the man -- the Real Robert E. Lee, they say. And yet, despite all their efforts, the mythic Lee remains, whole. And seems to call each generation to him, like a mountain peak in the distance.

The revisionists have left only a jagged, shattered image behind. Yet it is strangely fitting. For there is something almost unnatural about the portraits of the dashing young Lee, still untouched by time and what would prove his saving grace, defeat.

Just as the most moving picture of Lincoln may be the last one, his visage engraved with every sorrow and sacrifice of that terrible war, the crucible out of which a new birth of freedom would emerge. The final touch is the jagged line across the top of the old photographic plate, as broken

as the old Union itself. Yet the image would not be complete without it, without that scar running across it, somehow binding it together, as the Union itself would be saved and recast, strongest where it had been broken. There, one feels, is the real Lincoln: Father Abraham, mourning his children yet still seeing clear as always.

As for the real Lee, there he is, pictured only after Appomattox, on the steps of a cottage, familiar as one's father, yet somehow more Lee than the Lee of either Chancellorsville or Gettysburg, his greatest victory and greatest defeat. He looks at the camera unmoved, unchanged within, forever serene, duty done. ("Duty is the most sublime word in our language. Do your duty in all things. You cannot do more. You should never wish to do less.") No more need be said. And wasn't. The Army of Northern Virginia had been dismissed, its arms stacked, its banners furled. Its commander looks straight ahead, never back. Gray as his uniform, gray as duty, he awaits only the final Reveille, worn as mortal time.

Imagine if his image were new, shiny, untarnished. What a counterfeit it would be. Instead, like an ancient coin, nicked and rubbed almost clean, Brady's photograph speaks of a different world, one we enter now to be astounded not by the resounding clash of arms, the smoke and fire of the futile Confederate batteries at Gettysburg, but by the utter stillness, the perfect peace within which The General moved, always. He still does.

But why should an ever upwardly mobile society like this one take note of him? Why take time this one day of the year to focus on an old man from an old war? Time is money, as everyone knows. Why waste it? And on a war he lost at that. It is success that counts, as every American who worships it knows. Yet he still speaks to us. The shattered glass of the old icon still glistens, obliterating any need for words. We pause, waiting to hear what the silence says. We have an idea it's important, that it may yet save us.

His birthday arrives like an unexpected sabbath. There comes a stillness. All stops. Perception returns. The daily cacophony of the new and the news ceases. A silence envelopes.

It happens every Jan. 19. The date always comes as a surprise, though it has been there on the calendar all along, held in reserve, like the federals in the center of the line that crucial day at Gettysburg, waiting, holding their fire, unperturbed, immovable. And once again we are caught unawares, unable to change the outcome, paralyzed by the immutable past.

It's like climbing a mountain every year, scrambling up the cliffs, past the shadows and thickets, finally reaching the top, and finding only the clear sky -- a lead-gray Southern sky in the depth of winter lit only by the yellowing, late-afternoon sun of memory. There are names for that view. Call it history, perspective, a sense of proportion. We can see now what is truly important, and what is not. From that coign of vantage, we spy features ordinarily obscured. They disturb. Rank upon rank the dead wait patiently. But as always, a single whispered word is enough to calm the soul: Lee.

The din of the year dissipates, pettiness vanishes, rancor departs, calculation and argumentation no longer matter. History itself fades into a series of sepia photographs pasted in a crumbling

book. On this one day, we look down from the heights of history instead of forever trying to surmount them. We accept. Grant said it: Let us have peace.

We are like strangers just arrived on the scene from the future, looking about, trying to understand what happened here in this other country that is the past, searching for words to describe it, till we realize no words are necessary. It is silence, that rarest of modern qualities, that is called for. Words would only break the spell.

It's as if the day had become a cathedral, and we some heedless tourists who had chanced upon it, come to take needless photographs. For the vista is already ingrained within us. It is our birthright in these latitudes. It only waits to come to life in due season, like the ever fecund South itself.

Jan. 19. The date is somehow preserved intact among the flotsam of time, unaffected by all that comes by. Familiarity has bred not contempt but reverence. We begin to see what has always been there. And what remains ours.

Ever hear a couple of Southerners just passing the time, perhaps in a petty political quarrel, when the name Lee is thoughtlessly interjected? The air is stilled. Suddenly both are ashamed; neither wants to profane the name by taking it lightly, by using it to gain some stupid, fleeting advantage. There comes a pause in the conversation, as if light were breaking in. A stillness descends.

The stillness at Appomattox must have been like that. A stillness accompanied Lee wherever he went. Before or after Appomattox, it made no difference. He was the same Lee in defeat as in victory. Maybe that is what is meant by character, duty, honor, all the old words cheapened by hollow repetition. To look on him again is to bring back their original power, without needing to say them. They are just understood.

What is missing from all the schematic explanations, the cheap debunks, the New Interpretations, is . . . everything. Everything inward that made him Lee. In the end it is not the victorious general nor the defeated one who speaks to us. It is not the Lee of Chancellorsville or of Appomattox that stills us, returning to lift us every year. It is not even the tragic Lee of Fredericksburg, full of passionate dispassion atop Marye's Heights as he watches the poor, trapped federals being destroyed below. "It is well that war is so terrible," he would murmur that day, looking down at the carnage he himself had engineered, "or we should grow too fond of it."

It is not even the Lee of Gettysburg who moves us today, the Lee who would meet Pickett after it was over, all over, and say only: "All this has been my fault." Politic leaders, with one eye on winning the next election and the other on writing their memoirs, don't say such things now. Nor did they then. Only Lee took responsibility. Only Lee did not write his memoirs.

It is not the storybook Lee who stills us this day every year, but the man who inspired the stories. Not the marble man on the pedestal, the sculpted Lee of statuary and a thousand Confederate

Memorial Day speeches, but the solitary, singular Lee -- the Lee who would follow wherever Duty led. And we in turn would follow him. Because he was: Lee. And still is.

REMINDER!!

**THE NEXT MEETING OF THE
MAJOR THOMAS J. KEY CAMP #1920**

WILL BE ON THURSDAY

FEBRUARY 3RD AT 6:30 P.M.

BRING A FRIEND/PROSPECTIVE MEMBER

The Telegraph Key

Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920

Sons of Confederate Veterans

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