

**ROBERT E. LEE, CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION OF HIS BIRTH HELD UNDER
THE AUSPICES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA ON THE NINETEENTH
DAY OF JANUARY 1907**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649195466

Robert E. Lee, centennial celebration of his birth held under the auspices of the University of South Carolina on the nineteenth day of January 1907 by Anonymous

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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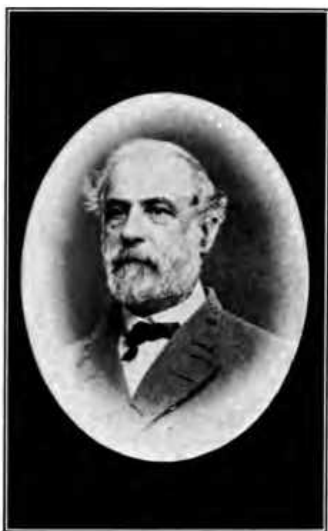
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ROBERT E. LEE

Centennial Celebration of His Birth Held Under the
Auspices of the University of South Carolina
on the Nineteenth Day of January, 1907





PRESENTED TO MRS. JOYNES BY MRS. LEE, AS
THE BEST LIKENESS OF THE GENERAL.

ROBERT E. LEE
Centennial Celebration

OF

His Birth

Held Under the Auspices

OF THE

— University of South Carolina

ON

the Nineteenth Day of January

1907

Columbia S. C.
The State Company, Printers
1907



PRESENTED CHRISTMAS, 1867, BY MRS. LEE TO
WALKER W. JOYNS; THIRN FIVE
YEARS OLD.

MAJOR YOUNG'S ADDRESS

Mr. President, and professors of the University of South Carolina: Let me in the first place thank you, and thank you very sincerely for the honor you have conferred on me in giving me the opportunity of doing myself honor by showing my appreciation of and admiration for the great soldier and man—"the greatest of all modern leaders," and "the most perfect man"—under whom I had the honor of serving personally during the late war. It is needless to say how greatly I value and cherish the memory of my almost daily association with him during the later years of the war.

There are two men with whom in life I have associated intimately and who, though very different in some respects, always impressed me as great men—the greatest I have been privileged to associate with. And yet how different their fates. The one sinking slowly from the ken of men and now within a generation nearly forgotten—the other growing greater day by day—a world hero—Mr. James L. Petigru and Gen. Robert E. Lee. (Both were absolutely fearless, both absolutely upright, both absolutely truthful, both devoted to duty, both exercising during life a wide influence. Both ready to help in distress. To whom the poor and needy and weak never appealed in vain; both with intellects that placed them in their several spheres far above all their contemporaries.) And yet, before the generation that knew him has passed away, I have been asked in a body of lawyers, when I mentioned Petigru as the highest type of the lawyer I had ever had the privilege of knowing, who he was, when he lived, and what he had done. He lived and worked and toiled faithfully for that jealous mistress the law, and already his great reputation is seen to have been written on the seashore of time and is rapidly washing away.

(With Lee, on the contrary, the great reputation graven on the monuments more eternal than brass are but graven deeper and deeper by time. And whatever in the future may happen to the

South, whether it produces statesmen again, known to the whole world—without whose name the world's history cannot be written—and who shall join in the building up of this mightiest empire the world has ever known—or be, as at present, the mere fly on the chariot shaft; its name and history as identified with Lee and his glorious Army of Northern Virginia will be engraved deeply on those same tablets of brass and will not sink to oblivion. But it is time that I turn to the duty you have so kindly assigned to me as one of the staff of General Lee.

To sketch even the outline of General Lee's military career till his life, begun by Colonel Marshall and yet to be completed, is given to the world, laying open more than what mere official records can show, will necessarily be unsatisfactory.

Of course it is easy to sketch his career from West Point, through the Mexican war, to the opening of the great Civil war. The history of those days has been fully written, and no doubt finally written; but from that time on no full history, sanctioned and approved by him, or those naturally acquainted with his views, as, for instance, Colonel Taylor, perhaps his most intimate staff officer during the war, has been written. That by Colonel Long, his staff officer, fills the void only in part—it is so brief. The campaign of West Virginia is not now recognized as the absolute failure it was considered in 1862, and the clamor of the South Carolina papers when the "mud-digger" was given command over the coast of South Carolina, Georgia, etc., against him, and the demand that a brigadier general of this State should have the command, sounds now as the mere madness of the passing hour; fortunately it was then treated as the madness of the ignorant, and was without influence.

While it is true that the defense of the seacoast of Georgia and South Carolina as planned by General Lee remained substantially unchanged during the four years of the war, and was successfully maintained, yet the most interesting part of Lee's career, and that most known to the world, which, from no mean soldier (Lord Wolseley), has won for him the well-earned praise of being not only the "greatest soldier of his age," but also of "the most perfect man I ever met," dates from his taking command of the Army of Northern Virginia—great praise, certainly, when we recall that the man thus placed above his compeers was the unsuccessful

Lee compared with the unsuccessful Sydney Johnson, Joe Johnston, "Stonewall" Jackson, etc., the successful Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, McPherson, etc., of this country, and the successful von Moltke and Skobelev, etc., of Europe. Von Moltke, too, we should recall, places General Lee above Wellington.

Lord Wolseley wrote thus just after Lee's death: Forty years later, in his personal memoirs, when time had matured his judgment, Lord Wolseley styles himself: "A close student of war all my (his) life, and especially of this Confederate war, and with a full knowledge of the battles fought during its progress," repeats his judgment that General Lee was "the greatest of all modern leaders," and compares his campaign of 1862 with that of Napoleon's of 1796. Speaking of his visit to General Lee, he says: "I have taken no special trouble to remember all he said to me then (1862) and during subsequent conversations, and yet it is still fresh in my recollection. But it is natural that it should be so, for he was the ablest general, and to me seemed the greatest man I ever conversed with; and yet I have had the privilege of meeting von Moltke and Prince Bismarck, and at least on one occasion had a very long and intensely interesting conversation with the latter. General Lee was one of the few men who ever seriously impressed and awed me with their natural and their inherent greatness. Forty years have come and gone since our meeting, and yet the majesty of his manly bearing, the genial winning grace, the sweetness of his smile and the impressive dignity of his old-fashioned style of address, come back to me amongst the most cherished of my recollections. His greatness made me humble, and I never felt my own individual insignificance more keenly than I did in his presence. His was indeed a beautiful character, and of him it might truthfully be written: 'In righteousness he did judge and make war.'"

Nor does Lord Wolseley in these opinions stand alone. His judgment is that of such military writers and critics as Chesney, Lawler, and of the higher press, Northern as well as foreign.

Says Lord Wolseley again: "I desire to make known to the reader not only the renowned soldier, whom I believe to have been the greatest of his age, but to give some insight into the character of one whom I have always considered the most perfect man I ever met."