

THE SCOUT

SAM DAVIS CAMP #596

JUNE 2019

CONOR BOND

IS THE NEW COMMANDER,
MISSISSIPPI DIVISION SCV!



**DR. RICHARD MARKSBURY
SPOKE TO SAM DAVIS CAMP JUNE 11TH.**



**TULANE PROFESSOR WHO STOOD UP TO
MAYOR LANDRIEU DURING THE NEW ORLEANS
MONUMENT FIGHT.**

Below is an article that he wrote for Confederate Veteran magazine:

**CULTURE WARS & REVISIONIST HISTORY: THE NORTH vs THE
SOUTH**

Author's note: I am a cultural anthropologist by training having earned my Ph.D. in 1979. However, I grew up in Mechanicsville, VA surrounded by Civil War battlefields and later majored in history at East Carolina University. As an adult, my interest in the Civil War never faded. I have managed to visit most every major battlefield of the

war and most southern coastal forts. It has been a hobby of love. When the mayor of New Orleans decided in the summer of 2015 to initiate the process to remove three Confederate monuments (Lee, Davis, Beauregard) in the city, I decided to leave the sidelines and get involved. In doing so, I witnessed first-hand the ignorance about the war that is an integral part of our contemporary world. I became a member of the SCV and after reading my first two issues of *Confederate Veteran*, I decided to write this article hoping that I might be able to make a difference.

When George Washington gave his Farewell Address (1796), he warned of the growing problem of sectionalism in the fledgling United States of America. Washington asked Americans not to focus on the differences that divided the sections (north and south), but beseeched citizens to put independence and liberty at the forefront. Washington recognized the cultural differences between the north and south when it came to religion, politics, social organization, and mannerisms. Focus on the differences, Washington said, and the newly founded union might be destroyed. He warned against the formation of political parties seeing them as divisive. Two years later (1798), in a letter to John Taylor, Thomas Jefferson wrote:

“It is true that we (the South) are completely under the saddle of Massachusetts & Connecticut, and that they ride us very hard, cruelly insulting our feelings as well as exhausting our strengths and substance. Their natural friends, the three other eastern States, join them from a sort of family pride, and they have the art to divide certain other parts of the Union as to make use of them to govern the whole. This is not new, it is the old practice of despots to use part of the people to keep the rest in order...” (Oberg, 2003: pp.588-590).

For the next sixty-one years (until 1861), subsequent Southern leaders, e.g., Jefferson Davis, Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, and John Calhoun, witnessed first-hand the dangers associated with divisive sectionalism. These men did not refer to the problem as a *Cultural War*, but that is what it would be called today. The Culture Wars between the North and the South began in the 18th century and they still thrive in 2016! Secession, slavery, The Lost Cause, and Reconstruction have all been explained through the looking glass of historians who have been influenced by these Culture Wars. Why is it most Americans think *Jim Crow* laws existed only in the South, or fail to acknowledge that the

KKK had millions of members in many states north of the Mason-Dixon Line, or do not know that slavery existed in twelve of the thirteen colonies when the *Declaration of Independence* was written? Perhaps the answer is that today's revisionist history is a logical consequence of 250 years of Cultural Wars between the North and the South during which the South has been "under the saddle" of the North.

The war-of-words is a war that the South and Southerners have been losing since 1865. *The pen is mightier than the sword* and history can turn on a single word. For example, consider President William Clinton's statement, when clarifying a comment made by his attorney in which the attorney used the word 'is'. In his retort, President Clinton said, "It depends upon what the meaning of the word "'is' is." If the word "is" can be confusing, vague, or ambiguous, then our understanding and interpretation of historical events most assuredly rest on a foundation of words with multiple meanings. Joseph Conrad wrote, "Give me the right word and the right accent and I will move the world" (Ford 1924: xii). Specific words, groups of words, or the omission of specific words, have been used strategically to explain, define, redefine, persuade, and influence our contemporary interpretations of the War for Southern Independence or, do I mean the Civil War? Referring to the conflict as The War for Southern Independence, as Jefferson Davis called it, leads one to ask the obvious question, *why did the South desire independence?* On the other hand, calling the conflict The Civil War does not generate the same response. Thus, calling it The Civil War fit the agenda of the northern standpoint in their Cultural War with the South.

Whether they admit it or not, historians and writers of historical events choose their words carefully and strategically. With the written word came the opportunity to write down personal thoughts and observations which could be preserved for future generations to read, analyze, and interpret. Historians make their living through a process of reading and construing what others before them wrote. The societal values of the time influenced the written word and when societal values change, historical revisionism follows. In a most subjective manner, historians recapture the past using their own words which are influenced by contemporary societal values. By tapping into this great storehouse of events, historians have been able "...to validate or discredit practically every major theory, precept, or principle." (Echevarria II 2005: 78). Perhaps Napoleon was correct when he supposedly asked, "What is history but a fable agreed upon?"

History may be considered a social science but there is nothing scientific about it. The foundation of science rests on measurable results gained through a process of testing and analysis. Science is based on fact, not opinion or preferences. There is nothing scientific about one human reading what another human wrote and then “scientifically” determining what the original writer meant. Opinions are not science. Yet, we teach history as if it is something more than the opinions, preferences and interpretations of humans reflecting and surmising on what others before them wrote.

Two months before he died, Jefferson Davis sent a letter to an author who was the nephew of an old friend. Davis wrote to congratulate the author, Philip Bruce, on a book he had recently published. In this letter Davis wrote: “*In this and many other matters history is being made by the grossest perversion of facts and schoolbooks are introduced in our own country which intentionally or otherwise, are calculated to mislead the minds of our children*” (in author’s possession). Do Davis’ sentiments ring just as true today?

To underscore Davis’ argument that history can be written to intentionally mislead, let us consider an illustration involving the Thomas Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. On panel three along the northeast wall of the Jefferson Memorial are five strung-together quotes from our third President. I cite only the first sentence as a prime example of historical revision/manipulation. Carved into the marble placard is Jefferson’s quote: “Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate that these people (Negroes) are to be free.” This quote appears to be a fitting tribute capturing the sentiment of Jefferson. Or, is it? The more complete statement by Jefferson in his Autobiography follows:

“Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate that these people (Negroes) are to be free. Nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government. Nature, habit, opinion has drawn indelible line of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably and in such slow degree that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be *pari passu* (on equal footing) filled up by free white laborers.
“(Jefferson, 1829:1)

The first sentence fits an agenda. Sentences 3,4,5 in Jefferson’s statement did not fit the agenda and were eliminated. The Jefferson Memorial was

constructed during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency. Great care was taken to select quotes that would be emblazoned in stone for generations to read. The agenda - select Jefferson quotes that aligned with the progressive elements of Roosevelt's New Deal. (Ronald Hamowy (Mr. Natural Rights). The millions of visitors to the Jefferson Memorial who have read this single quote left with an impression of Jefferson that simply is inaccurate. In this instance, the single-minded omission of words *changed history*.

More than fifty years after The War for Southern Independence ended, the United States was embroiled in World War I. How many Americans can cite the cause of World War I? I would submit not many and would include myself in that group. The correct answer would be there was not just one cause, but multiple factors led to World War I. Yet, for The Civil War, it now has been affirmed by historians, and reaffirmed by the media, that there was a single cause and it was slavery. (Note: It is more difficult to cite slavery as the single cause of The War for Southern Independence than it is to cite it as the singular cause of the more generic, The Civil War.) How can historians be so confident about a so-called singular cause of a war that began in 1861 while unconvinced about a singular-cause of a war that began in 1914?

By 1864, Southern slaveholders were the target of a rapidly emerging narrative that focused on one theme - The *Civil War happened because of slavery*. This was not the prevailing opinion in 1861 when the war began. On July 2, 1861 the United States House of Representatives (minus members from the seceded states) overwhelmingly passed the following resolution

“That this war is not waged upon our part in any spirit of oppression, nor for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, nor purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights of those states; but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several states unimpaired; that as soon as the objects are accomplished the war ought to cease.” (Morse, 1887: 472)

In essence, this resolution affirms that slavery will be protected and preserved if and when the Union is restored. A year and half later, Lincoln introduced slavery into the war's equation when he issued the Emancipation Proclamation. When the Republican National Convention (RNC) met in

1864, slavery had moved to forefront as the cause of the war when the following resolution was adopted as part of the NRC's official platform:

That as slavery was the cause, and now constitutes the strength of this rebellion, and as it must be always and everywhere, hostile to the principles of republican government, justice and the national safety demand its utter and complete extirpation from the soil of the republic; and that while we uphold and maintain the acts and proclamations by which the government, in its own defense, has aimed a death blow at this gigantic evil, we are in favor, furthermore, of such amendment to the constitution, to be made by the people in conformity with its provisions as shall terminate and forever prohibit the existence of slavery within the limits or jurisdiction of the united States.” (Morse 1887:472).

Revisionist history, regarding the cause of the war, had officially begun. Three years into this bloody conflict, the narrative had changed. In this phase of the Cultural War, opinions that the southern states seceded for other reasons, *in addition to slavery*, were given no credibility. States' rights, as even a partial cause, faded from the narrative. By the 1970's the South had lost the battle that states' rights had anything to do with the cause of The Civil War. In fact, anyone who suggests states' rights had something to do with the cause of the war face immediate ridicule. Had the war been called the War for Southern Independence in the thousands of books printed after 1865, things might have evolved in a different way. However, those following the agenda to vilify the South realized calling the conflict The Civil War lessened the chance that any southern rationale for secession would be entertained.

In contrast to what his party said about slavery being the cause of the war, Lincoln, in his second inaugural address on March 4, 1865 stated that slavery “was somehow the cause of the war”. Lincoln is well known to have selected carefully the words for his speeches and letters. His use of *somehow* in his inaugural address was not inadvertent. In general, the word *somehow* means *in a way not specified, understood, or known*. Why did Lincoln insert *somehow* and not simply state that slavery was the cause of the war? Was he suggesting that slavery played a role in the cause of the war, but was uncertain as to the exact role it played? Was Lincoln proposing that in addition to slavery, there were other causes, such as states' rights and/or a desire for independence? Lincoln lived the war and he was uncertain by his words; today's historians, who did not live the war, are certain!

How often do we hear or read, *“The South fought to preserve slavery”*; *“The war was fought because of slavery”*; *“The South fought to keep their slaves”*; *“The war was about slavery and not states’ rights”* and so on? Each of these so-called explanations turns on a single word or group of words, e.g., “preserve”, “about” “keep” “because of”, etc. They are used interchangeably by the media in buttressing the claim that slavery, and slavery alone, took the nation to war in 1861. There can be no doubt that slavery played a significant role in the cause of the war, but the South did not fight to “preserve”, “keep”, or “maintain” slavery; it already was protected by the U.S. Constitution and the 1857 ruling of the Supreme Court.

What evidence supports the statement the South started the war “preserve slavery”? Wasn’t slavery already preserved following the Dred Scott ruling in 1857? The Supreme Court held that the fifth amendment of the Constitution guaranteed that citizens could not be deprived of their property and slaves were considered property. Then there was the Corwin Amendment, the original 13th amendment, which was passed by the Congress on March 2, 1861 (without the presence of representatives from the seceded states!). This amendment guaranteed the protection of “domestic institutions”, i.e., slavery, from any future Congressional interference to include abolition. President Lincoln signed this amendment on March 16, 1861 and sent it to the governors of all states, including those which had seceded, for ratification. In his inaugural speech Lincoln, when referring to this amendment, stated he “had no objection to its being made express and irrevocable”. Ohio, Maryland, and Illinois ratified this amendment. The firing on Ft. Sumter brought the ratification process of the original 13th amendment to an end and the war commenced.

For the South, the issue of slavery was not about its preservation, but expansion. Lincoln was always clear that he would oppose the spread of slavery into new territories. He also recognized he had no authority to abolish slavery where it existed so he faced no personal dilemma in signing the Corwin Amendment which guaranteed the future of slavery where it was constitutionally protected. This piece of history has gotten lost in the present-day narrative. Historians and Hollywood gloss over the fact that President Lincoln signed a congressionally passed amendment protecting and preserving slavery in all states in which it was legal in 1861. Once slavery was elevated to be the single cause of the war, Lincoln needed to be known as the “freer of slaves” not the President who “had no objection” to the Corwin Amendment.

How did it happen that *states' rights* was eliminated as one of the causes, let alone the cause, of the war? I would offer two explanations: 1) the element of passing time with no living veterans to challenge contemporary thought and perspectives, and 2) a new phase of the Cultural Wars that came about during and following the Civil Rights Movement, i.e., the South was once again the target. A select group of historians (beginning in the 1970's) determined that it was slavery, and slavery alone, that caused the war. The primary sources cited for reaching this conclusion were the Articles of Secession of the Deep South states. Yes, slavery was mentioned prominently in them, but they should be read within the context of the sectionalism that divided the North and South since the founding of the United States. As stand-alone documents, they reflect only the sentiments of the few men who drafted them. How many of the thousands of preserved Confederate soldiers' diaries and letters include passages in which the authors proudly claims they are fighting to preserve slavery? More often, Confederate soldier wrote about fighting for independence and liberty. Has anyone discovered a song routinely sung by Confederate soldiers in which they sang proudly about fighting to keep the black man in bondage? I think the answer is, no.

What about the second wave of seceding states, the Border States? They too have been thrown into the slavery-was-the- one cause category. Yet, the May 18, 1861 edition of The Illustrated London News, stated that "...the governing fact that the immediate cause of the revolutionary movement in the Border Slave States in April is quite distinct from the occasion which led to the secession of the seven Confederate States in December and January (Vol. 38, #1089, pp.455-456). In 1861, the rationale for the secession of the Border States seemed clear to those on the ground, but in 2016 it is not so clear. Why? - the Culture Wars' narrative that slavery alone caused the war must be sustained.

If one can cherry-pick documents to make the case that states' rights was not instrumental in bringing about the War for Southern Independence, allow me to cherry-pick some of Jefferson Davis' pre-1861 letters and speeches.

Why it difficult to understand that *states-rights* and *slavery* are interwoven and inseparable concepts when seeking a comprehensive understanding of the causes leading to the War Between the States? Slavery is a singular issue, whereas, states-rights covers a multitude of issues. Whereas, most Southern leaders viewed all matters pertaining to slavery as state's rights issues; they also

appreciated that not all state's rights issues focused solely on slavery. How has this distinction become lost? Do historians need to simplify history for pedestrian consumption? Or, does this revision fit an agenda?

In his farewell address, President George Washington warned about the growing danger of sectionalism in the United States.

ADMIRAL RAPHAEL SEMMES CAMP #11 SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS MOBILE, ALABAMA

2019 Sons of Confederate Veterans
Annual Reunion
July 10-13, 2019
Reunion Meeting Location:



Events and vendor hall will be at the [Mobile Convention Center](#) located on Water Street at the Mobile River.



The 2019 Reunion Hotel is the Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel. This hotel is across Water Street from the [Mobile Convention Center](#). [Direct Marriott Hotels booking for the Renaissance Riverview Hotel using the SCV group rate may be may be done here ↗](#)
For any special requests, please call +1-800-922-3298

PHOTO ALBUM

**BELOW ARE PHOTOS OF COMMANDER BRUCE ROBERTS
AND HIS FATHER VISITING BEAUVOIR, CIRCA 1971**

