



THE TELEGRAPH KEY

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

Vol. 23, No 2

February 2022

The Confederate's Corner

By Rick McPherson

Greetings to all compatriots and friends of the **Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920**.



Cmdr. Matt Sewell spoke to members and guests assembled at our January meeting. This was our camp's 222nd regular meeting. Then on January 22nd the Camp held the 20th Lee-Jackson Banquet at the Abdullah Shrine Temple.

*As outlined in our camp's by-laws, it was necessary to fill an open officer position. Compatriot **Dan Peterson** was elevated to 1st Lt Commander and **Lane Smith** to 2nd Lt. Commander completing our camp officer position.*



To view the video played at the Lee-Jackson Dinner copy/paste the following link into your browser.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=38gemoyqEsY

Major Thomas J. Key

Camp Officers

Commander

Matt Sewell

1st Lt. Commander

Dan Peterson

2nd Lt. Commander

Lane Smith

Adjutant

Lawson Rener

Chaplin

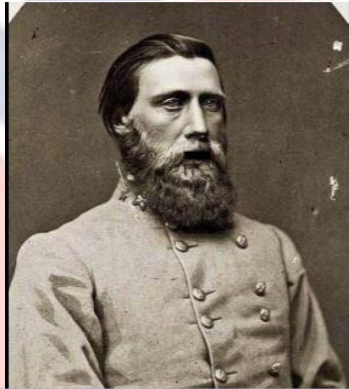
Walt Schley

Newsletter Editor

Rick McPherson

Your ancestor killed my ancestor!

One of the most enjoyable parts of being a member of the **Major Thomas J Key Camp** is our common bond of celebrating our ancestor's service and family heritage. In the course of our Key Camp experiences we've learned of other's Confederate ancestors and their stories. For me, the most interesting story to date is I learning of the connection made of **Adjutant Lawson Rener** ancestor, Gen. John Bell Hood who had a hand in the demise of one of my own, Gen. James B McPherson.



Maj. Gen John Bell Hood



Maj. Gen. James B McPherson

As "SOB's", we both honor all that served on either side of the War of Rebellion however, after 160 years that division no longer carries the same animosity for us as it did for those that lived it. The country would come together, the nation would move on and those that fought are now a part of history. The incident I am going to tell about carries no ill-will or any particular personal pain. It's just history which gives **Lawson** and I, a unique bond to both a relationship and event from the Civil War.

Both *Hood* and *McPherson* became close friends and classmates at West Point in the class of 1853. Among their class mates were Phillip Sheridan and John Schofield for whom both would achieve greatness during and following the war. *McPherson*, three years older, excelled in school and finished 1st in his class of 52 while *Hood* struggled to meet the demands of life at West Point and finished 44th. After graduation both would serve in the US Army, however though his home state of Kentucky did not secede, *Hood* later joined the Confederacy while *McPherson*, from Ohio rapidly rose through the ranks of the Union army.

Both soldiers were among the brightest young officers to serve in their respective armies. John Bell Hood was the youngest officer on either side to independently lead an

army being promoted to command the Confederacy's Army of Tennessee at the age of just 33. That same year, McPherson, had just turned 36 when he was promoted to command the Union's Army of Tennessee succeeding William T Sherman. Their positions would lead them to meet once again, this time in the field of battle.

In March of 1864 both found themselves commanding forces descending upon the city of Atlanta. General Lee, at the encouragement of Hood, relieved Gen. Joseph Johnston of his command due to his strategic failure of maneuver and retreat during the Atlanta campaign and replaced him with Gen. Hood. McPherson knowing his friend Hood would in comparison, maintain an attack, fortified his troops along a line southeast of Atlanta and on July 22nd one of them would be killed.

While riding his horse toward the lines McPherson was ambushed by a group of Confederate soldiers and killed. When one of his aids was asked who it was that the Confederate soldiers had shot, the General's aid replied, "It was General McPherson. You have just killed the best man in our army".

Though he was his adversary, Hood would write, *"I will record the death of my classmate and boyhood friend, General James B. McPherson, the announcement of which caused me sincere sorrow. Since we had graduated in 1853, and had each been ordered off on duty in different directions, it has not been our fortune to meet. Neither the years nor the difference of sentiment that had led us to range ourselves on opposite sides in the war had lessened my friendship; indeed the attachment formed in early youth was strengthened by my admiration and gratitude for his conduct toward our people in the vicinity of Vicksburg. His considerate and kind treatment of them stood in bright contrast to the course pursued by many Federal officers"*.

James B McPherson was just 35 when he died from his wounds. John Bell Hood would pass away in 1879 at the age of 48 from Yellow Fever. They will forever be linked through their unique friendship as classmates and adversaries. And, Lawson and I will have this unique piece of history that we share through our membership in the SCV.



John Bell Hood grave
New Orleans, La.



James B McPherson grave
Sandusky, Ohio



Jim Thornton presented *Battlefield Medical Care of the Civil War* to those gathered which spoke to the issues in staffing in addition to limited medical treatments and diagnosis. Thornton said that it wasn't until the Battle of Manassas, where there were more than 4600 casualties, that both sides of the battle realized they needed to improve both their medical practices and medical corps. This would include improvements in equipment for treatment and recovery and the addition of hospital ships, ambulances and field hospitals. In addition it led to improvements in pharmaceutical knowledge in identifying safe medicines.

Thornton said that the efforts to establish a sanitary commission to support the sick and wounded was created by Congress which led to many of the medical industry companies that we know today including Ely Lilly, the American Red Cross and the Hanger clinic, all which grew out of the result of the Civil War.



Donna Brooks listens intently to the evening's presentation. Meanwhile, in the back corner of the room *Bill Stoker, Lane Smith* and *Jim Thornton* react to their being referred to as the "Yankee boys"

2021 Lee – Jackson Banquet held January 22nd



Cmdr Sewell was the Master of Ceremonies



Lane was the featured Speaker



Walt proved to be an entertaining auctioneer



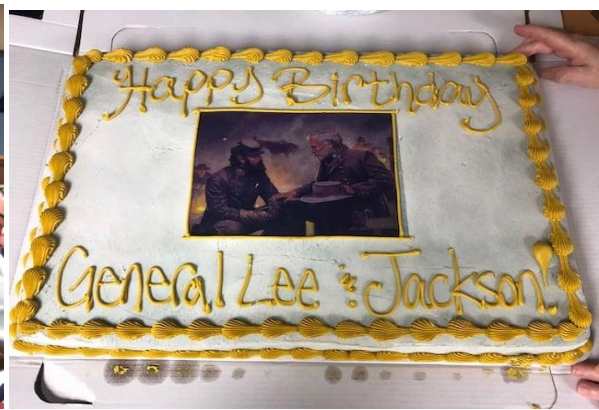
Rick receives the Key's Battery Award for Service



Those gathered enjoyed the Lee-Jackson dinner



Dan, Larry and Walt auction off the uniform while Lawson records the sale



The cake featured General Jackson and General Lee's picture



Matt and Emily < (gottcha)



Jill, Mary and Kathleen
(Someone's ears were burning)



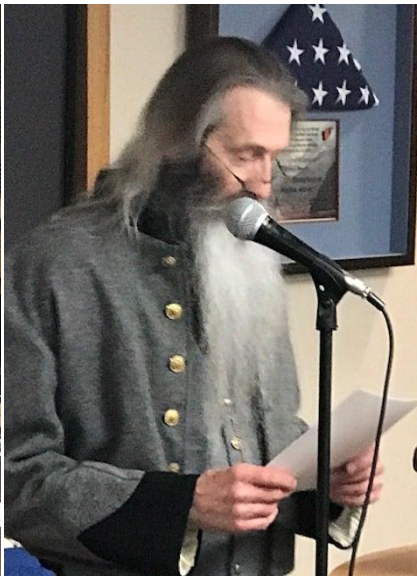
Fraternal twins Larry and Dan



Jason, Steve and Eric catch up on old times



Larry checking through the items prior to the auction



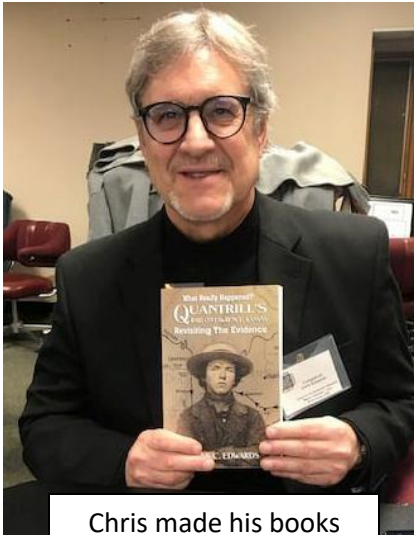
Paul remembers past
Compatriot Spike Speicher



Jason enjoyed the evening, especially the auction



The evening got to be a little long for Tim



Chris made his books available for sale



Walt getting ready to play auctioneer



The fella's got together for a group picture. Because Jim was hidden we had to do it again.



Another angle. Apologies to Gary (hidden behind Jim) PS I didn't take the picture!

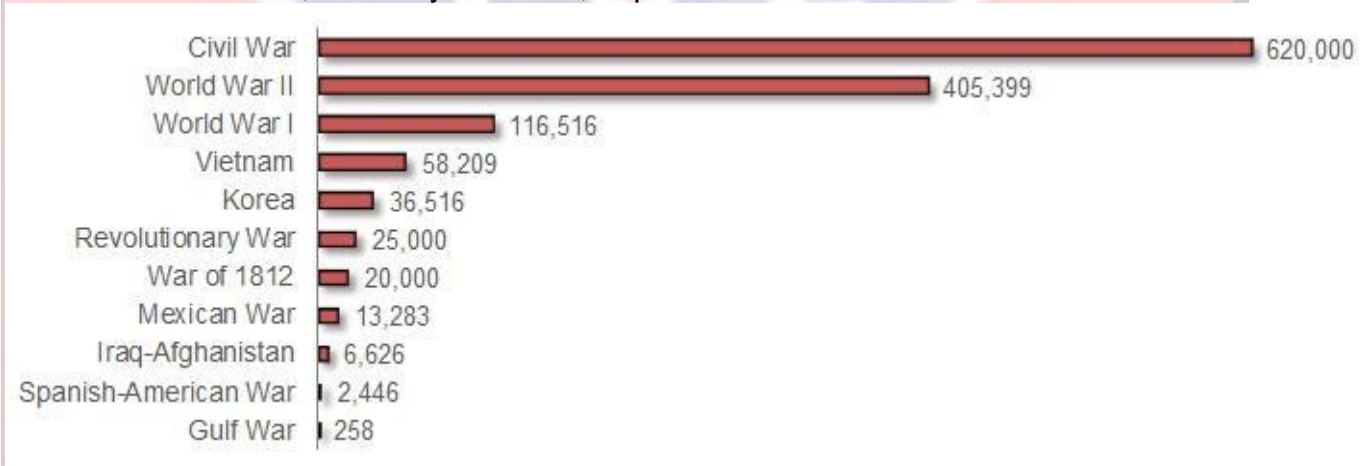
Did You Know?

During the Civil War the average soldier was 25 years old, was around 5 feet 8 inches tall and weighed 143 pounds. The odds of him being killed in battle were 1/65, being wounded 1/10. Around 1 in every 12 men would die of disease.

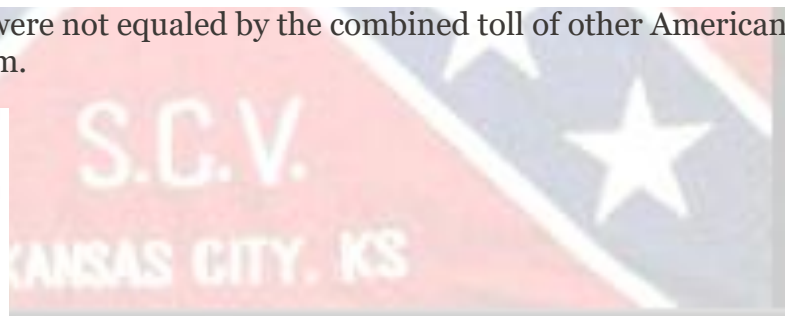
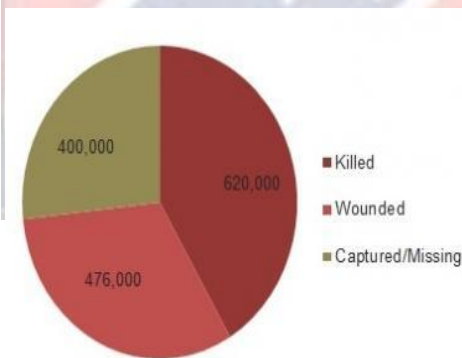
The men came from all walks of life. For example, Company A, of the 24th Virginia, had farmers, students, blacksmiths and even a deputy sheriff in its ranks, this was typical of units both North and South.

When we see images of the dead on the battlefield we have to remember that for every fallen man, there would be approximately 4 more wounded.

These were real men, with very real lives, hopes and dreams.



The numbers of Civil War dead were not equaled by the combined toll of other American conflicts until the War in Vietnam.



There were an estimated 1.5 million casualties reported during the Civil War.



Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920

Johnson County, Kansas
Camp Activities



*As always, we encourage your participation in your Camp's activities.
Email **Commander Sewell** for more information on any events you are interested in assisting*

*****NEXT CAMP MEETING*****

There will be no February Meeting

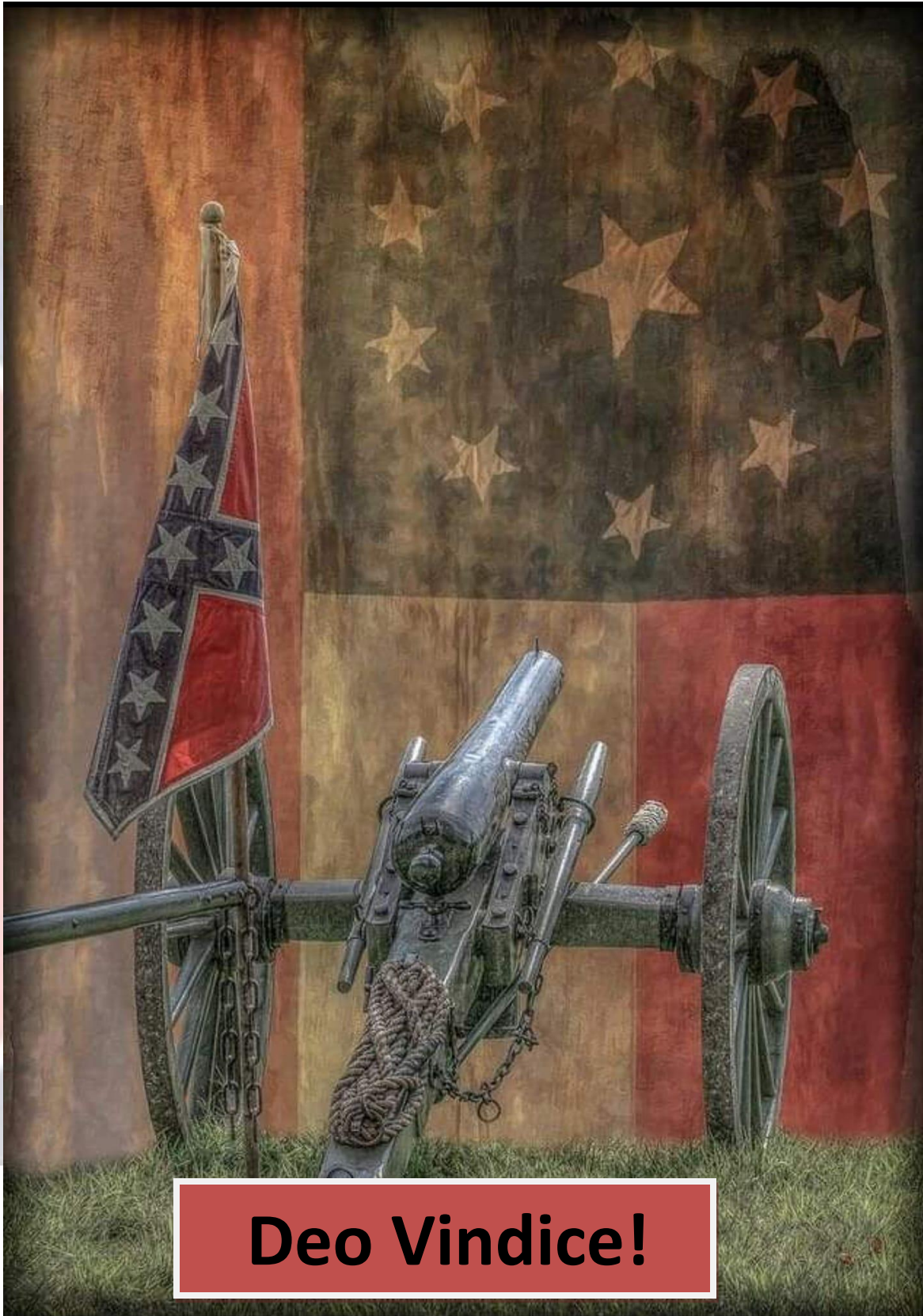
The Key Camp will meet next on Thursday March 3rd at Zarda's Bar B-Q on the southwest corner of 87th and Quivera in Lenexa, Kansas with the official meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. You are invited to arrive early (6:00 p.m.) for BBQ, conversation and camaraderie.

The Telegraph Key is a newsletter published for the Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The SCV is a non-profit organization with a patriotism historical and genealogical orientation and is not affiliated with any other organization. Opinions in this newsletter reflect the views of the writers and contributors 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.

SCV National: www.SCV.org

Facebook: Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920





Deo Vindice!