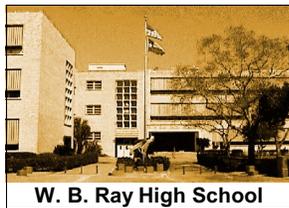
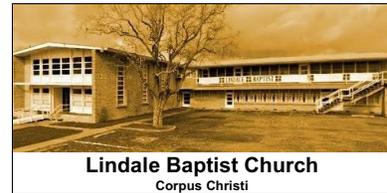


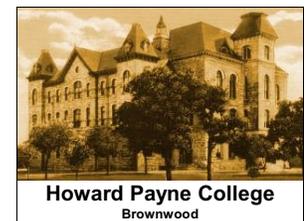
Resolutions From the Southern Baptist Convention in 1861

By Richard Lee Montgomery

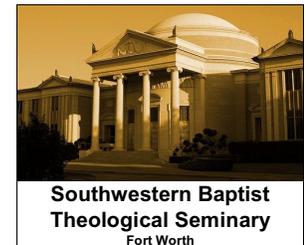
As far back as back as I can remember, I was raised a Southern Baptist in Corpus Christi, Texas. I heard the Gospel preached at Lindale Baptist Church and it was there, that the mercy and grace of God was extended to me – it was there that the Lord Jesus Christ regenerated my soul – it was there that I was saved and in obedience to my Lord, I received believers baptism.



When I was a Junior at W. B. Ray High School in Corpus, God extended to me, the call to the Gospel Ministry of Jesus Christ. One Sunday morning at Lindale we had a guest preacher who introduced me to a college in Brownwood, Texas, called Howard Payne College, which was a Southern Baptist institution. After high



school graduation, I was enrolled at HP and eventually would received my Bachelors Degree. From there I went to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, another Southern Baptist institution, and in time graduated with a Masters Degree.



I now began my full-time work in ministry in Southern Baptist churches. My first stop was in Stanton, Texas serving as Minister of Education. Next was San Antonio serving as Minister of Education and Youth. Then came my first pastorate position in Sheridan, Wyoming. After seven years as pastor I resigned and began working and eventually received my Doctorates Degree from an institution where many Southern Baptist attended, called Covington Theological Seminary, then in Rossville, Georgia. My next pastorate was in Denton, Texas and served in a Southern Baptist church there, for almost twelve years.



I stated all of this background, whether it was needed are not, to show that Southern Baptist principles, theology and history played a pivotal roll in my life. In February of 2012 I became a member of the Sons of Confederate Veterans under my great, great Grandfather, John L. Wynn, who served in the Thirty-Second Alabama Infantry for the Confederate States of America.

Today, with the banning of “*All things Confederate*” based on the idea that the “*War For Southern Independence*” was over the institution of slavery and now we see that my dear Southern Baptist Convention’s Resolution Committee has made resolutions at the June 2016 meetings in St. Louis stating, “*RESOLVED, That we call our brothers and sisters in Christ to discontinue the display of the Confederate battle flag as a sign of solidarity of the whole Body of Christ, including our African-American brothers and sisters...*”¹ Suffice to say – I was dismayed.



¹ <http://erlc.com/resource-library/articles/resolution-7-on-sensitivity-and-unity-regarding-the-confederate-battle-flag>

According to documented history of this Confederate Battle Flag, it was never associated with slavery – never. It originated with the Confederate States of America, especially known in the Army of Northern Virginia as the “*soldiers flag*” – nothing more, nothing less. It did not originate with anyone else. Yes I know we are told of its use in the KKK and other hate groups. But if this the basis for banning a flag, simply because hate groups have taken use of it, to advance their cause, then a precedent has been set in motion for all flags used in these hate groups to be banned. Now, just a side-note: I am not for the banning of any historical bonafide flag, that has been stolen from its historical meaning, by any hate group. In fact, according to research, the Confederate Battle Flag is not the flag that is used most by the KKK and other hate groups. It is the United States Flag.

With this said, the Southern Baptist Convention has alienated who knows how many Southern Baptist, who are members of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. As a Chaplain of a local camp in Denton, Texas, I know of many who now state they are no longer Southern Baptist, based on the newest resolution that Southern Baptist are no longer to fly the Confederate Battle flag. This flag, by the way, is the logo for the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Also, every member is given this charge, taken from a speech by Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee, Commander General of the United Confederate Veterans Reunion in New Orleans, Louisiana, April 25, 1906: “*To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we will commit the vindication of the cause for which we fought. To your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles which he loved and which you love also, and those ideals which made him glorious and which you also cherish.*”² Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations.”



Every member seeks to give their ancestor, the Confederate soldier, a good name. Point is, racism or bigotry or any kind of hate directed toward any group of people, is not and will not be tolerated. Those are groups for dismissal from the Sons of Confederate Veterans membership. To ban the flag and/or logo of this organization, founded in Richmond, Virginia in 1896, is like seeking to wipe out or obliterate this legitimate historical organization.

Well, anyway, I am very disappointed in the move that the Southern Baptist Convention has taken. If the Confederate Battle Flag is guilty of racism and is to be banned, we can only give the same remedy to the United States Flag. Again, I don't want either one to be banned because they are not the culprits who need to be punished, reprimanded or whatever. History has to be studied honestly. Many interpret history to say that the Battle Flag was about slavery and/or racism, which leads us to the controversy today. Wrong on both accounts. But then, that is the reason the Southern Baptist Convention of today basis' its decision on. History must be studied honestly and with integrity.

Here is a little synopsis of the history of the Southern Baptist Convention, when truly seeking to understand what was happening in 1860/61. The following report was adopted May 13th, 1861. “*In 1860, by a minority both of the electoral and popular votes, Abraham Lincoln, the Republican candidate, was elected President—a ‘sectional President,’ as he was called; and this was deemed the signal for action by those in the South who recognized the right of secession. The union of the States they believed to be merely a voluntary bond, that could be dissolved at will by those States which might choose such a dissolution, whenever a sufficient inciting cause should occur to justify it. The election of Mr. Lincoln, the Abolition candidate was, by the Southern leaders who favored secession and*

² S. A. Cunningham [Editor & Proprietor] *Confederate Veterans, Volume 14* (Nashville, 1906), 255.

believed it constitutional, considered a sufficient reason for severing the Federal compact. This was regarded as one of the reserved rights of the States, a fair and logical consequence of the doctrine of State sovereignty, then maintained at the South. This doctrine was advocated by nearly all the most prominent politicians in Georgia, even by the Hon. A. H. Stephens himself, who nevertheless opposed secession as an impolitic and unwise measure that would prove disastrous. South Carolina took the lead in secession from the Union, and, in a called State Convention, passed an ordinance of secession, on the 24th of December, 1860. In rapid succession her example was followed by six other States—Mississippi on the 9th of January, Florida and Alabama on the 11th of January, Georgia on the 19th, Louisiana on the 26th, and Texas on the 1st of February. The Secession Convention of Georgia met at Milledgeville, the Capital, and the secession ordinance, written by Hon. Eugenius A. Nisbet, of Macon, was adopted, overwhelmingly. Delegates from the seceded States met at Montgomery, Alabama, on the 4th of February, and on the 8th Jefferson Davis was elected Provisional President, and Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President.

A new government was thus formed, under the name of THE Confederate States of America. It is but right and proper to say that the Southern States firmly believed that they had a right to secede from the Union, and it was a prevalent opinion, and one expressed by President Buchanan himself, that no coercive measures would be employed to keep such States in the Union as, in their sovereign capacity, might decide to go out of it. Of course Southern Baptists held generally to these views, and sustained the political action of their States and section.

In May, 1861, the Southern Baptist Convention met in Savannah, and Dr. Fuller, of Baltimore, was elected President. On motion of William H. McIntosh, of Alabama, a committee, composed of R. Fuller, of Maryland, B. Manly, Sr., of Alabama; P. H. Mell, of Georgia; R. B. C. Howell, of Tennessee; J. B Taylor, of Virginia; E. T. Winkler, of South Carolina; L. W. Allen, of Kentucky; Wm. C. Crane, of Louisiana; G. H. Martin, of Mississippi; J. E. Broome, of Florida; J. L. Prichard, of North Carolina, was instructed to report on the 'State of the Country.' The following is the report, which was unanimously adopted, and it should be remembered that about one-half of the delegates were Georgians.

Dr. Richard Fuller, of Maryland, made the report:

'We hold this truth to be self-evident, that governments are established for the security, prosperity and happiness of the people. When, therefore, any government is perverted from its proper design, becomes oppressive and abuses its power, the people have a right to change it.'

'As to the States once combined upon this continent, it is now manifest that they can no longer live together as one confederacy.'

'The Union, constituted by our forefathers, was one of co-equal sovereign States. The fanatical spirit of the North has long been seeking to deprive us of rights and franchises guaranteed by the Constitution;" and, after years of persistent aggression, they have, at last, accomplished their purpose.

'In vindication of their sacred rights and honor, in self-defence, and for the protection of all which is dear to man, the Southern States have, practically, asserted a right of seceding from a Union so degenerated from that established by the Constitution" and they have framed for themselves a government based upon the principles of the original compact ? adopting a character which secures to each State its sovereign rights and privileges.'

'This new government, in thus dissolving former political connections, seeks to cultivate relations of

amity and good will with its late confederates, and with all the world; and they have thrice sent special commissioners to Washington, with overtures for peace, and for a fair, amicable adjustment of all difficulties. The government at Washington has insultingly repelled these reasonable proposals, and now insists upon devastating our land with fire and sword; upon letting loose hordes of armed soldiers to pillage and desolate the entire South, for the purpose of forcing the seceded States back into unnatural union, or of subjugating them, and holding them as conquered provinces.'

'While the two sections of the land are thus arrayed against each other, it might naturally have been hoped that, at least, the churches of the North would interpose and protest against this appeal to the sword—this invoking of civil war—this deluging the country in fratricidal blood; but, with astonishment and grief, we find churches and pastors of the North breathing out slaughter, and clamoring for sanguinary hostilities with a fierceness which we would have supposed impossible among the disciples of the Prince of Peace. In view of such premises, this Convention cannot keep silence. Recognizing the necessity that the whole moral influence of the people, in whatever capacity or organization, should be enlisted in aid of the rulers, who, by their suffrages, have been called to defend the endangered interests of person and property, of honor and liberty, it is bound to utter its voice distinctly, decidedly, emphatically, and your committee recommend, therefore, the subjoined resolutions:

'Resolved, 1. That impartial history cannot charge upon the South the dissolution of the Union. She was foremost in advocating and cementing that Union. To that Union she clung, through long years of calumny, injury and insult. She has never ceased to raise her warning appeals against the fanaticism which has obstinately and incessantly warred against that Union.'

'Resolved, 2. That we most cordially approve of the formation of the government of the Confederate States of America, and admire and applaud the noble course of that government up to the present time.'

'Resolved, 3. That we will assiduously invoke the divine direction and favor in behalf of those who bear rule among us, that they may still exercise the same wise, prompt, elevated statesmanship, which has hitherto characterized their measures; that their enterprises may be attended with success; and that they may attain great reward, not only in seeing these Confederate States prosper under their administration, but in contributing to the progress of the transcended kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"Resolved, 4. That we most cordially tender to the President of the Confederate States, to his Cabinet, and to the members of the Congress now convened at Montgomery, the assurances of our sympathy and entire confidence. With them are our hearts and our hearty co-operation.

'Resolved, 5. That the lawless reign of terror at the North, the violence committed upon unoffending citizens, above all, the threats to wage upon the South a warfare of savage barbarity, to devastate our homes and hearths with hosts of ruffians and felons, burning with lust and rapine, ought to excite the horror of all civilized people. God forbid that we should so far forget the spirit of Jesus as to suffer malice and vindictiveness to insinuate themselves into our hearts; but, every principle of religion, of patriotism and of humanity, calls upon us to pledge our fortunes and lives in the good work of repelling an invasion designed to destroy whatever is dear in our heroic traditions—whatever is sweet in domestic hopes and enjoyments—whatever is essential to our institutions and our very manhood—whatever is worth living or dying for.'

‘Resolved, 6. That we do now engage in prayer for our friends, brothers, fathers, sons and citizen-soldiers, who have left their homes to go forth for the defence of their families and friends, and all which is dearest to the human heart; and we commend to the churches represented in this body, that they constantly invoke a holy and merciful God to cover their heads in the day of battle, and give victory to their arms.’

‘Resolved, 7. That we will pray for our enemies in the spirit of the Divine Master, who, ‘when he was reviled reviled not again,’ trusting that their pitiless purposes may be frustrated; that God will grant to them a more politic, a more considerate, and a more Christian mind, that the fratricidal strife which they have decided upon, notwithstanding all our commissions and pleas for peace, may be arrested by that Supreme Power who maketh the wrath of man to praise Him; and that thus, through the divine blessing, the prosperity of these sovereign and once allied States may be restored under the two governments to which they now and henceforth, respectively belong.’

‘Resolved, 8. We do recommend the churches of the Baptist denomination in the Southern States, to observe the first and second days of June, as days of humiliation, fasting, and prayer to Almighty God, that He may avert any calamities due to our sins as a people, and may look with mercy and favor upon us.’

‘Resolved, 9. That, whatever calamities may come upon us, our firm trust and hope are in God, through the atonement of His Son, and we earnestly beseech the churches represented in this body (a constituency of six or seven hundred thousand Christians), that they be prompt and importunate in prayer, not only for the country, but for the enterprises of the gospel which have been committed to our care. In the war of 1812, the Baptists bated not a jot of heart or hope for the Redeemer’s cause. Their zeal and liberality abounded in their deep afflictions. We beseech the churches to cherish the spirit, and imitate the example of this noble army of saints and heroes; to be followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises; to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as they know that their labor is not in vain in the Lord.’

‘Resolved, 10. That these resolutions be communicated to the Congress of the ‘Confederate States,’ at Montgomery, with the signatures of the President and Secretaries of the Convention.’

*P. H. Mell,
James E. Broome,
G. H. Martin,
W. Carey Crane,
R. Fuller,
James B. Taylor,
R. B. C. Howell,
L. W. Allen,
J. L. Prichard,
E. T. Winkler,
B. Manly, Sr.³*

I hope you noticed that the topics of slavery and racism were not the motives for seceding from the

³ *History of the Baptist Denomination in Georgia: With Biographical Compendium and Portrait Gallery of Baptist Ministers and Other Georgia Baptists* (Atlanta: James P. Harrison & Company, Printers & Publishers, 1881), 225-227.

United States. They were not the motives why the Southern Baptist Convention supported the Confederate States of America. I believe that is important. Also, who were these men on this committee giving this report on the *State of the Country*? Here are just a few.

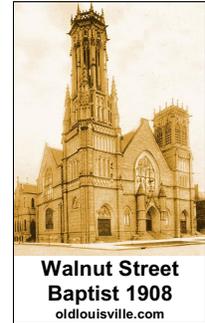


Patrick Hues Mell
1895, *Life of Patrick Hues Mell*, cover.

Patrick Hues Mell served as “Moderator of the first body and President of the Georgia Convention for twenty-six years, and for seventeen years he was President of the Southern Baptist Convention.”⁴ In fact Dr. Mell became the fourth President of the Southern Baptist Convention during the War Between the States in 1863. During the war, Mell organized a company known as the Mell's Riflemen or Mell's Volunteers and it was the Governor of Georgia, Joseph E. Brown who appointed Mell as the unit's *captain*.⁵ However, with the *death of his first wife Lurene*⁶ in that same year Mell was left with eight young children, and was unable to leave Athens. However, he did reported back to active duty in 1863, as a *Colonel*⁷ in the Ninth Georgia State Guards, that was a part of General Bragg's army. He and this unit served for six months, stationed near both Rome and Savannah during the latter half

of the year. During the invasion of Sherman's march of Georgia in 1864, Mell served as commandant of Athens with a cavalry company, an artillery company, and two infantry companies under his command.

Then there was **Littlebury Woodson Allen** who resigned as the pastor of the Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky and returned home to Virginia. He would become the pastor of the Old County Line Baptist Church, Caroline County. When the War For Southern Independence broke out, Allen tendered his services to the Confederacy and served almost four years as an officer (Chaplain, Captain, Colonel and Volunteer Aide-de-Camp to the General) in the Twenty-Fourth Virginia Calvary under General John Magruder.



Walnut Street Baptist 1908
oldlouisville.com

Here is one report that Allen gave concerning his regiment, “*There is a pleasant state of religious feeling in the Twenty-fourth Regiment, Virginia Cavalry. We have occasional preaching and frequent prayer-meetings among the young men. They conduct them almost exclusively. We have several who exercise a public gift in speaking. When our chapel is completed we hope to have a protracted meeting.*”⁸

Also, with profundity, Allen stated “*My speech to my men, in the presence of the enemy, is, ‘There are the Yankees, boys—our cause is just—trust in God, and charge them.’ This has been my motto, and I expect it to be so long as I find the Yankees the avowed enemies of my country's freedom.*”⁹

⁴ P. H. Mell Jr., *Life of Patrick Hues Mell* (Louisville: Baptist Book Concern, 1895), 150.

⁵ Ibid, 136.

⁶ Ibid, 137.

⁷ Ibid, 143.

⁸ J. William Jones, *Christ In the Camp or Religion In Lee's Army* (Richmond: B. F. Johnson, 1887), 388.

⁹ Ibid, 388.



Edwin Theodore Winkler
1916, Annual Southern Baptist Convention, cover.

Another is **Edwin Theodore Winkler**, while serving as Chaplain of the Moultrie Guards, Winkler preached a sermon at the First Baptist Church of Charleston, South Carolina and stated this encouraging word to the Confederate soldiers, *“Within the life-time of a single man, the government of the United States has been perverted into a tyranny—the asylum for the oppressed into the prison house of oppressors: within a few weeks we have heard the ominous threatening, that the power of a foreign government shall be applied to coerce a long-enduring, and yet a sovereign State: and we behold the imposing spectacle of Valor arming in defence of Liberty, and now appearing in the sanctuary to invoke upon its righteous cause the blessing of the Lord of Hosts.”*¹⁰

When viewing the Southern Baptist Convention resolutions of 1861 and then comparing them to the resolutions of the 2016 Convention, it can clearly be observed that Southern Baptist then and now are on two different pages. Certainly just comparing the theological differences of then and now, is major enough, but certainly it can be concluded that both historical eras of Southern Baptist hold two very different outlooks of the Confederate States of America.

¹⁰ Edwin Theodore Winkler, *Duties of Citizen Soldier: A Sermon Delivered At the First Baptist Church of Charleston, S. C.* (Charleston: A. J. Burke, 1861), 5-6.