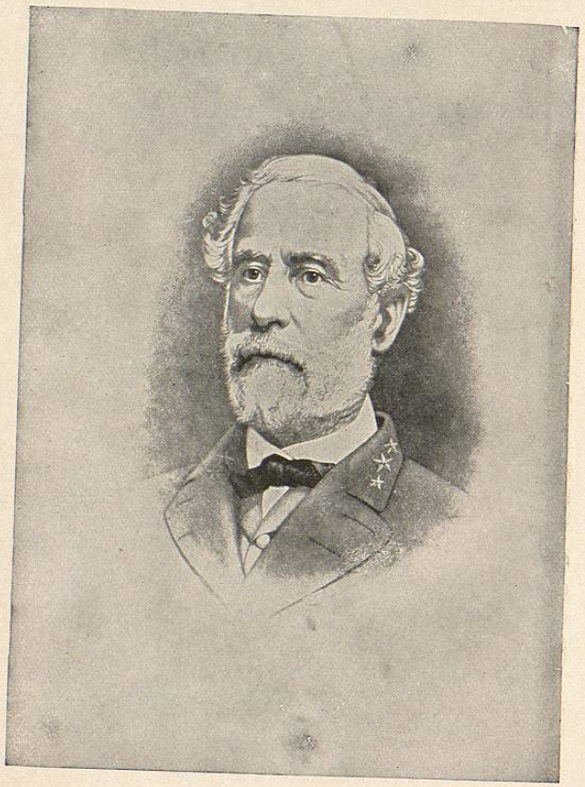


Most truly & affy yours
R E Lee

ROBERT EDWARD LEE.

1807-1870.

ROBERT EDWARD LEE was born at Stratford, Westmoreland County, Virginia, descended from a long line of illustrious ancestors. He was educated as a soldier at West Point, served with great distinction under General Scott in the Mexican War, and commanded the troops which suppressed the John Brown Raid in 1859. When his State seceded in 1861, he resigned his commission of Colonel in the United States Army, and returned to Virginia. He was appointed commander-in-chief of the Virginia forces, and later of the Confederate Army. His course during the war has elicited the praise and admiration of all military critics. After the war he quietly turned to the duties of a citizen. He became president of Washington College, which is now called in his honor Washington and Lee University. He stands with Washington a model for young men, and many monuments in marble and bronze attest the love and devotion of the South to her great Chief.

WORKS.

Edited his father's Memoirs of the Revolution.

Letters and Addresses.

General Lee was a soldier and a man who acted rather than spoke or wrote. When, however, it was his duty to speak or write, he did it, as he did everything else, excellently, striving to express in simplest language the right and proper thing rather than draw attention and admiration to himself by any effort at grace or beauty of style. Its simplicity reminds us of Washington.

His life has been written by John Esten Cooke, John William Jones, J. D. McCabe, Jr., and Fitz Hugh Lee, his nephew.

TO HIS SON.

Duty is the sublimest word in the English language.

AT THE SURRENDER.

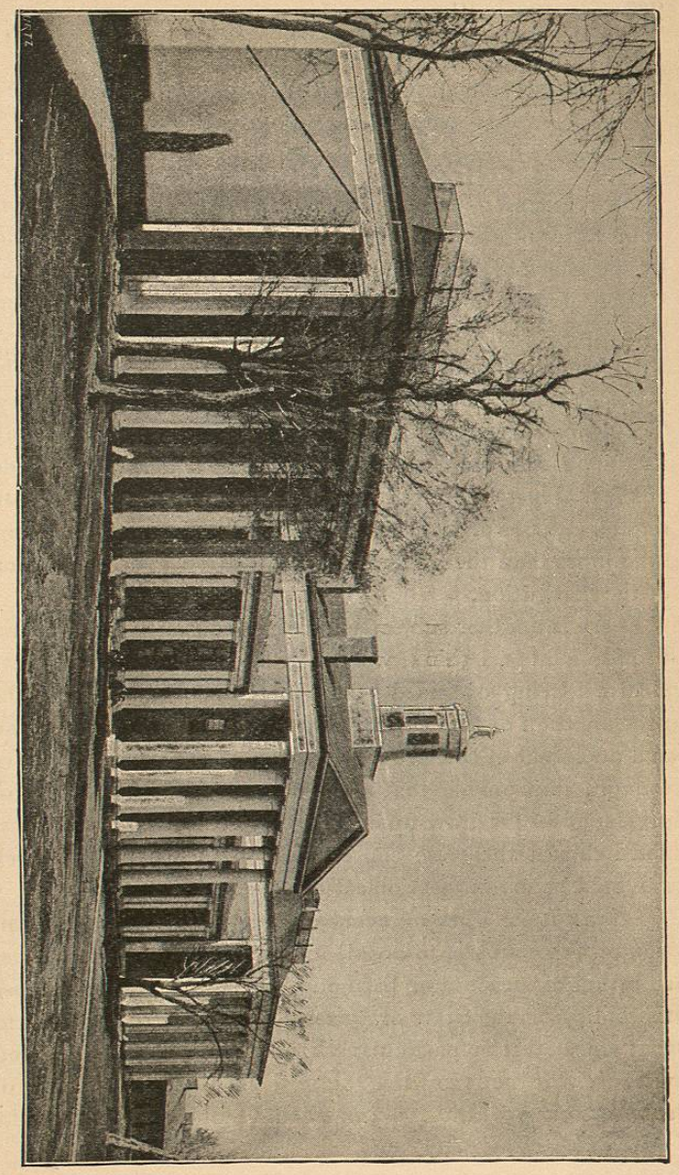
Human virtue should be equal to human calamity.

GENERAL LEE'S LAST ORDER.

(*Appomattox Court-House, April 10, 1865.*)

After four years of arduous service, marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources. I need not tell the survivors of so many hard-fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but, feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that would compensate for the loss that would have attended the continuation of the contest, I have determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen. By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes, and remain there until exchanged.

You will take with you *the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed;* and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you his blessing and protection. With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you an affectionate farewell.



Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Va.

LETTER ACCEPTING THE PRESIDENCY OF WASHINGTON COLLEGE.

POWHATAN COUNTY, *August 24, 1865.*

GENTLEMEN:—I have delayed for some days replying to your letter of the 5th instant informing me of my election, by the board of Trustees, to the Presidency of Washington College, from a desire to give the subject due consideration. Fully impressed with the responsibilities of the office, I have feared that I should be unable to discharge its duties to the satisfaction of the Trustees, or to the benefit of the country. The proper education of youth requires not only great ability, but, I fear, more strength than I now possess; for I do not feel able to undergo the labor of conducting classes in regular courses of instruction. I could not, therefore, undertake more than the general administration and supervision of the institution.

There is another subject which has caused me serious reflection, and is, I think, worthy of the consideration of the Board. Being excluded from the terms of amnesty in the proclamation of the United States of the 29th of May last, and an object of censure to a portion of the country, I have thought it probable that my occupation of the position of president might draw upon the college a feeling of hostility, and I should therefore cause injury to an institution which it would be my highest object to advance.

I think it the duty of every citizen, in the present condition of the country, to do all in his power to aid in the restoration of peace and harmony, and in no way to oppose the policy of the State or general Government directed to that object. It is particularly incumbent on those charged with the instruction of the young to set them an example of submission to authority, and I could not consent to be the

cause of animadversion upon the college. Should you, however, take a different view, and think that my services, in the position tendered me by the Board, will be advantageous to the college and the country, I will yield to your judgment and accept it; otherwise I must most respectfully decline the offer.

Begging you to express to the Trustees of the college my heartfelt gratitude for the honor conferred upon me, and requesting you to accept my cordial thanks for the kind manner in which you have communicated its decision, I am, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

R. E. LEE.

JEFFERSON DAVIS.

1808—1889.

JEFFERSON DAVIS, President of the Confederate States, was born in Todd County, Kentucky, but his father removed to Mississippi soon afterwards, and he was reared and partly educated in that state. Later he attended Transylvania University in Kentucky, and in 1824 entered West Point. He was graduated in 1828 and served seven years in the army, being stationed in Missouri and Minnesota. On account of ill-health he resigned in 1835 and travelled, and then settled on his Mississippi plantation, "Brierfield."

He was elected to Congress in 1845; served in the Mexican War with great distinction and was injured in eye and limb at the battle of Buena Vista. He was Secretary of War in President Pierce's cabinet, and was a Senator when Mississippi seceded from the Union.

He made his farewell to the Senate in January, 1861, and returned home where he was at once appointed commander

of the State troops. But he had been elected president of the new Confederacy by the Convention at Montgomery, and he was inaugurated, February 18, 1861. On the change of the capital from Montgomery to Richmond, he removed to the latter city and remained there until the war was ended.

He was imprisoned for two years at Fort Monroe, to be tried as a traitor to the United States. Being finally released on bail, he went for his health to England and Canada; and then he resided in Memphis and at "Beauvoir," Mississippi, which latter place was his home when he died. This home, "Beauvoir," he had arranged to purchase from Mrs. Dorsey, who was a kind and devoted friend to his family and had assisted him in his writing; but on her death in 1879, it was found that she had left a will bequeathing it to him and to his daughter Varina Anne. He, like Lee, had always declined the many offers of homes and incomes made by their devoted and admiring friends.

On him, as President of the Confederacy, seems to have fallen in some sense the whole odium of the failure of that cause; and this passage from Winnie Davis' "An Irish Knight" has a touching application to his case: "Thus died Ireland's true knight, sinking into the grave clothed in all the bright promise of his youth; never to put on the sad livery of age; never to feel the hopelessness of those who live to see the principles for which they suffered trampled and forgotten by the onward march of new interests and new men. Perhaps Freedom like some deity of ancient Greece, loved him too well to let the slurs and contumely of outrageous fortune dim the bright lustre of his virgin fame." He is enshrined in the hearts of thousands.

His daughter, Varina Anne, or Winnie, "the Child of the Confederacy," as she is lovingly called, is a writer of

some ability. She was educated in Europe, and has written "An Irish Knight" [story of Robert Emmet], and articles for magazines. Mrs. Jefferson Davis' Life of Mr. Davis is a work of rare excellence and interest. See also *Davis Memorial Volume*, by J. Wm. Jones.

WORKS.

Rise and Fall of the Confederacy. Autobiography, [unfinished; it is included in Mrs. Davis' book.]

Mr. Davis' writings have a force and dignity of style that accord well with his character. "His orations and addresses are marked by classical purity, chaste elegance of expression, a certain nobleness of diction, and a just proportion of sentence to idea."—John P. McGuire.

TRIP TO KENTUCKY AT SEVEN YEARS OF AGE, AND VISIT TO GENERAL JACKSON.

(*From Autobiography in Mrs. Davis' Life of Davis.**)

My first tuition was in the usual log-cabin school-house; though in the summer when I was seven years old, I was sent on horseback through what was then called "The Wilderness"—by the country of the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations—to Kentucky, and was placed in a Catholic institution then known as St. Thomas, in Washington county, near the town of Springfield.

. . . When we reached Nashville we went to the Hermitage. Major Hinds wished to visit his friend and companion-in-arms, General Jackson. The whole party was so kindly received that we remained there for several weeks. During that period I had the opportunity a boy has to observe a great man—a stand-point of no small advantage—and I have always remembered with warm

*By Permission of Mrs. Davis.

affection the kind and tender wife who then presided over his house.

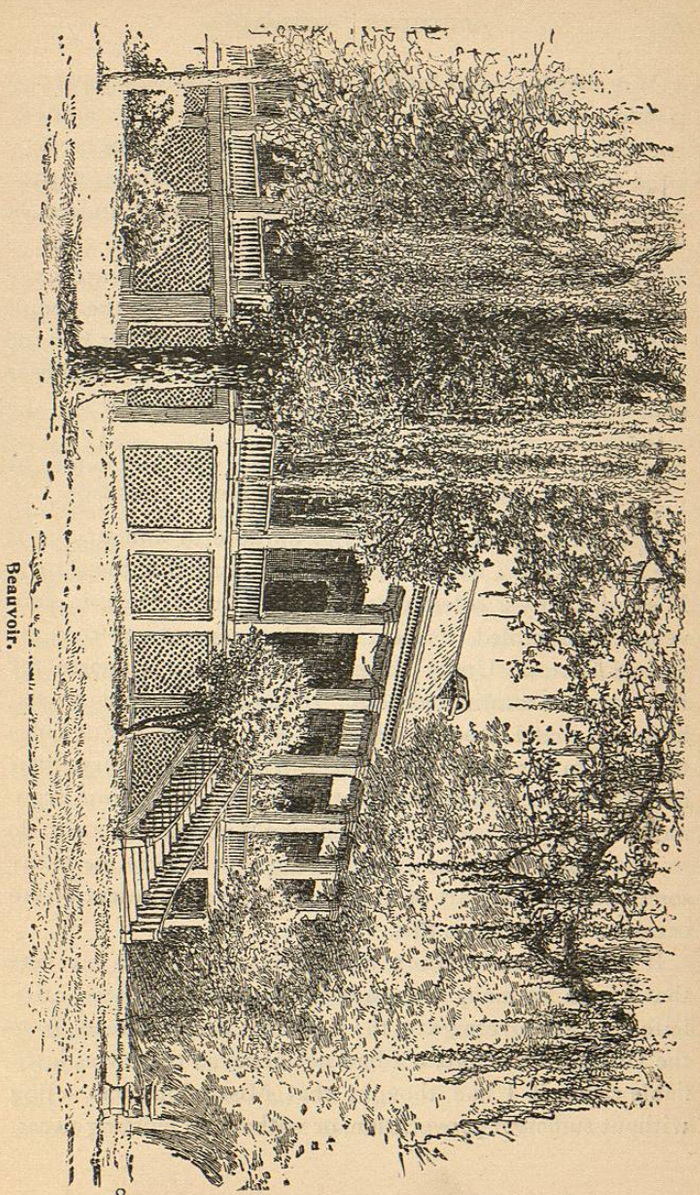
General Jackson's house at that time was a roomy log-house. In front of it was a grove of fine forest trees, and behind it were his cotton and grain fields. I have never forgotten the unaffected and well-bred courtesy which caused him to be remarked by court-trained diplomats, when President of the United States, by reason of his very impressive bearing and manner.

Notwithstanding the many reports that have been made of his profanity, I remember that he always said grace at his table, and I never heard him utter an oath. In the same connection, although he encouraged his adopted son, A. Jackson, Jr., Howell Hinds, and myself in all contests of activity, pony-riding included, he would not allow us to wrestle; for, he said, to allow hands to be put on one another might lead to a fight. He was always very gentle and considerate. . . .

Our stay with General Jackson was enlivened by the visits of his neighbors, and we left the Hermitage with great regret and pursued our journey. In me he inspired reverence and affection that has remained with me through my whole life.

LIFE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Those who have intimately known the official and personal life of our Presidents cannot fail to remember how few have left the office as happy men as when they entered it, how darkly the shadows gathered around the setting sun, and how eagerly the multitude would turn to gaze upon another orb just rising to take its place in the political firmament.



Beauvoir.

18

Worn by incessant fatigue, broken in fortune, debarred by public opinion, prejudice, or tradition, from future employment, the wisest and best who have filled that office have retired to private life, to remember rather the failure of their hopes than the success of their efforts. He must, indeed, be a self-confident man who could hope to fill the chair of Washington with satisfaction to himself, with assurance of receiving on his retirement the meed awarded by the people to that great man, that he had "done enough for life and for glory," or even feeling that the sacrifice of self had been compensated by the service rendered to his country.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE, 1861, ON THE OCCASION OF THE SECESSION OF MISSISSIPPI FROM THE UNION.

I rise, Mr. President, for the purpose of announcing to the Senate that I have satisfactory evidence that the state of Mississippi, by a solemn ordinance of her people, in convention assembled, has declared her separation from the United States. Under these circumstances, of course, my functions are terminated here. It has seemed to me proper, however, that I should appear in the Senate to announce that fact to my associates, and I will say but very little more. The occasion does not invite me to go into argument, and my physical condition would not permit me to do so, if it were otherwise; and yet it seems to become me to say something on the part of the State I here represent on an occasion so solemn as this.

It is known to Senators who have served with me here that I have for many years advocated, as an essential attribute of State sovereignty, the right of a State to secede from the Union. Therefore, if I had not believed there was justifiable cause, if I had thought that Mississippi was acting without sufficient provocation, or without an existing necessity, I should still, under my theory of the government, because of my allegiance to the State of which I am a citizen, have been bound by her action. I, however, may be permitted to say that I do think she has justifiable cause, and I approve of her act. I conferred with her people before that act was taken, counselled them then that, if the state of things which they apprehended should exist when their convention met, they should take the action which they have now adopted.

I hope none who hear me will confound this expression of mine with the advocacy of the right of a State to remain in the Union, and to disregard its constitutional obligations by the nullification of the law. Such is not my theory. Nullification and Secession, so often confounded, are, indeed, antagonistic principles. Nullification is a remedy which it is sought to apply within the Union, and against the agent of the States. It is only to be justified when the agent has violated his constitutional obligations, and a State, assuming to judge for itself, denies the right of the agent thus to act, and appeals to the other States of the Union for a decision; but when the States themselves, and the people of the States have so acted as to convince us that they will not regard our constitutional rights, then, and then for the first time, arises the doctrine of secession in its practical application.

A great man, who now reposes with his fathers, and who has often been arraigned for a want of fealty to the Union, advocated the doctrine of nullification because it preserved the Union. It was because of his deep-seated attachment to the Union—his determination to find some remedy for existing ills short of a severance of the ties which bound South Carolina to the other States—that Mr. Calhoun advocated the doctrine of nullification, which he proclaimed to be peaceful, to be within the limits of State power, not to

disturb the Union, but only to be the means of bringing the agent before the tribunal of the States for their judgment.

Secession belongs to a different class of remedies. It is to be justified upon the basis that the States are sovereign. There was a time when none denied it. I hope the time may come again when a better comprehension of the theory of our Government, and the inalienable rights of the people of the States, will prevent any one from denying that each State is a sovereign, and thus may reclaim the grants which it has made to any agent whomsoever. . .

In the course of my service here, associated at different times with a great variety of Senators, I see now around me some with whom I have served long; there have been points of collision, but, whatever of offence there has been to me, I leave here. I carry with me no hostile remembrance. Whatever offence I have given which has not been redressed, or for which satisfaction has not been demanded, I have, Senators, in this hour of our parting, to offer you my apology for any pain which, in the heat of the discussion, I have inflicted. I go hence unencumbered by the remembrance of any injury received, and having discharged the duty of making the only reparation in my power for any injury offered.

Mr. President and Senators, having made the announcement which the occasion seemed to me to require, it only remains for me to bid you a final adieu.

EDGAR ALLAN POE.

1809-1849.

EDGAR ALLAN POE was born in Boston while his parents were filling a theatrical engagement there. His father's family was of Baltimore, his grandfather being Gen. David

Poe of the Revolutionary War, and his father, also named David Poe, having been born and reared in that city. His mother, whose maiden name was Elizabeth Arnold, was an English actress of fascinating beauty and manners.

Left an orphan in 1811, Edgar was adopted by Mr. John Allan, a wealthy merchant of Richmond, and was educated at private schools and the University of Virginia, and in 1830 he entered West Point. But he got himself dismissed the next year and devoted himself thereafter to a literary life. Mr. Allan declining to aid him further, he had a wretched struggle for existence.

He seems to have gone to Baltimore and made acquaintance with some of his relatives; and there he won a prize of $100 by a story, "MS. Found in a Bottle," and was kindly helped by John Pendleton Kennedy. He became editor of the "Southern Literary Messenger," in Richmond, and was afterward engaged on various other magazines, writing stories, poems, book-reviews, and paragraphs, in untiring abundance.

He married his cousin, Virginia Clemm, in 1836, and their life together was in itself ideally happy, like the life in the Valley of the Many-Coloured Grass; and Mrs. Clemm, his aunt and mother-in-law, was the good genius who watched over "her two strange children" with an unwearying devotion, deserving the tribute of the love and gratitude embalmed in his sonnet called "Mother."

His engagement with any one magazine rarely lasted long, and there is much diversity of opinion as to the cause; some ascribing it to Poe's dissipated, irregular habits and irritable temper, others to the meagre support of the magazines, still others to Poe's restless disposition and desire to establish a periodical of his own. His uncontrolled and high-strung nature, so sensitive that a single glass of wine