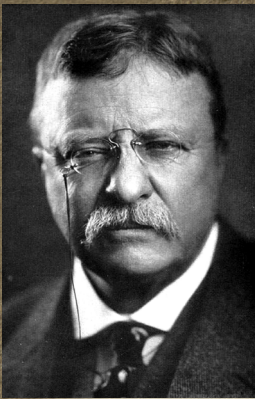


General Robert E. Lee



President Theodore Roosevelt described General Robert E. Lee as *"the very greatest of all the great captains that the English-speaking peoples have brought forth."*

It is not important what I have to say about Robert E. Lee, great people already have.

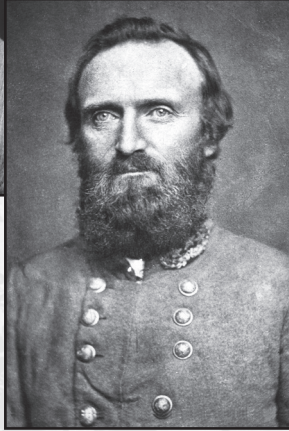
Kenneth Daniel
Pensacola, Florida





Booker T. Washington

Booker T. Washington, America's great African-American Educator, wrote in 1910: *"The first white people in America, certainly the first in the South to exhibit their interest in the reaching of the Negro and saving his soul through the medium of the Sunday-school were Robert E. Lee and 'Stonewall Jackson.' ... Where Robert E. Lee and 'Stonewall' Jackson have led in the redemption of the Negro through the Sunday-school, the rest of us can afford to follow."*

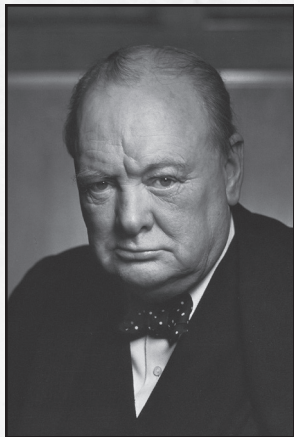


Stonewall Jackson



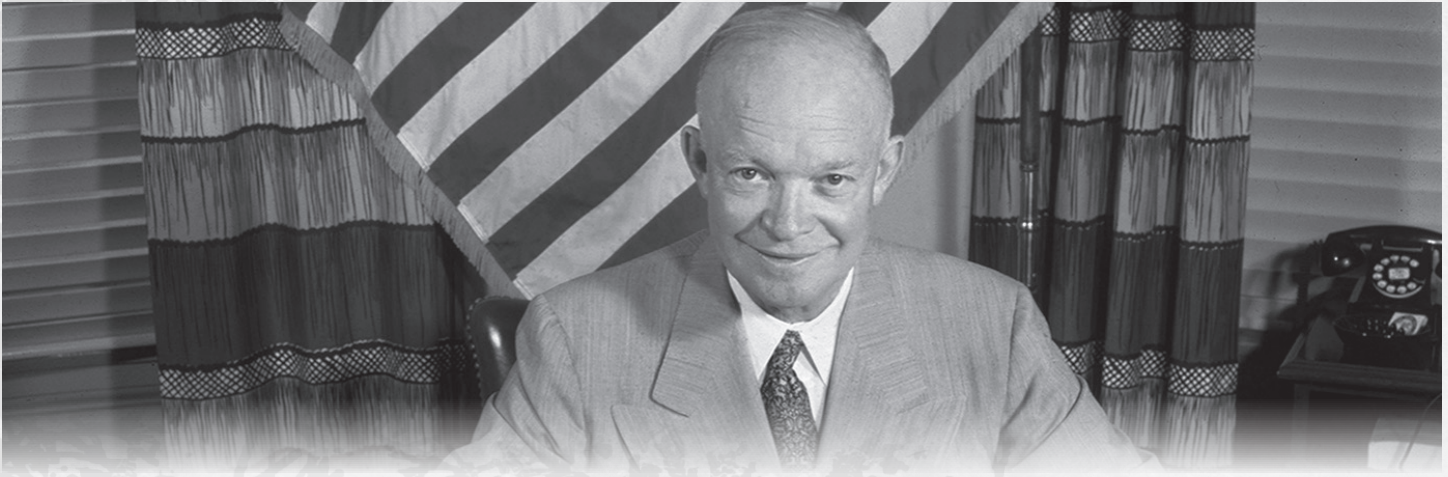
Georgia Senator Ben Hill

War-era **Georgia Senator Ben Hill** eloquently expressed a lasting Lee tribute: *"He possessed every virtue of other great commanders without their vices. He was a foe without hate; a friend without treachery; a victor without oppression, and a victim without murmuring. He was a public officer without vices; a private citizen without reproach; a Christian without hypocrisy and a man without guile. He was a Caesar without his ambition; Frederick without his tyranny; Napoleon without his selfishness, and Washington without his reward. He was obedient to authority as a servant, and loyal in authority as a true king. He was gentle as a woman in life; modest and pure as a virgin in thought; watchful as a Roman vital in duty; submissive to law as Socrates, and grand in battle as Achilles!"*



Winston Churchill

Prime Minister Winston Churchill wrote of Lee: *"His noble presence and gentle, kindly manner were sustained by religious faith and an exalted character." Of his army, Churchill observed: "It was even said that their line of march could be traced by the bloodstained footprints of unshod men. But the Army of Northern Virginia 'carried the Confederacy on its bayonets' and made a struggle unsurpassed in history."*



Below is a letter written by **President Dwight D. Eisenhower** to Leon W. Scott, dated August 9, 1960:

Dear Dr. Scott:

Respecting your August 1 inquiry calling attention to my often expressed admiration for General Robert E. Lee, I would say, first, that we need to understand that at the time of the War Between the States the issue of Secession had remained unresolved for more than 70 years. Men of probity, character, public standing and unquestioned loyalty, both North and South, had disagreed over this issue as a matter of principle from the day our Constitution was adopted.

General Robert E. Lee was, in my estimation, one of the supremely gifted men produced by our Nation. He believed unswervingly in the Constitutional validity of his cause which until 1865 was still an arguable question in America; he was thoughtful yet demanding of his officers and men, forbearing with captured enemies but ingenious, unrelenting and personally courageous in battle, and never disheartened by a reverse or obstacle. Through all his many trials, he remained selfless almost to a fault and unfailing in his belief in God. Taken altogether, he was noble as a leader and as a man, and unsullied as I read the pages of our history.

From deep conviction I simply say this: a nation of men of Lee's caliber would be unconquerable in spirit and soul. Indeed, to the degree that present-day American youth will strive to emulate his rare qualities, including his devotion to this land as revealed in his painstaking efforts to help heal the nation's wounds once the bitter struggle was over, we, in our own time of danger in a divided world, will be strengthened and our love of freedom sustained.

Such are the reasons that I proudly display the picture of this great American on my office wall.

Sincerely,
Dwight D. Eisenhower



Lee County Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass listens to public comment during a session in Ft. Myers. The Lee County chapter of the NAACP wants to hold demonstrations because the county refuses to take down a portrait of Gen. Robert E. Lee that hangs in the commissioners' meeting chambers. A member of the local Sons of Confederate Veterans told commissioners the group strongly objects to attempts to remove the portrait.



Banyan tree in front of the Old Lee County Courthouse in Fort Myers, Florida.



Directly in front of the entrance to the Lee County Courthouse is this oak tree, which in it's heyday was so big that it took five adults holding hands to reach all the way around it. Despite efforts to save this 220 year old tree, breaking limbs finally started to bring it down. In an effort to preserve its history, local officials worked with Florida artist Marlin Miller to turn it into this carved eagle, soaring above those who enter the building.

The Old Lee County Courthouse (constructed in 1915) is a historic site in Fort Myers, Florida, located at 2120 Main Street. It was designed by Francis J. Kennard. On March 16, 1989, the building was added to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places.

Lee County, created in 1887 from Monroe County, was named for Robert E. Lee, Confederate general in the American Civil War.

Jon Larsen Shudlick, Veteran, Biographer, Historian and Author is the publisher of this article.

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