

Confederate Memorial Service

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The Sixteenth Regiment, Sons of Confederate Veterans held a Confederate Memorial Service at Springwood Cemetery in Greenville Sunday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. The event was planned and directed by the Regimental Chaplain, Rev. Mark Evans.

The Memorial Address was delivered by Mark A. Simpson, Commander, South Carolina Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Music for the service was provided by the Kendall sisters: Christiana, Prentiss and Lisë.

“Today, we honor and remember the men of the Confederacy,” said Commander Simpson. “We celebrate their courage and the determined spirit that led them during the darkest days of our country’s history to paths of valor that only a few can speak of. These were our Grandfathers, whose blood we carry in our veins today. We are, forever, their descendants and proud to call ourselves sons and daughters of the men who wore the gray.

“Remember, our Confederate grandfathers were the sons of men who seceded from the grasp of England. Their passion for true liberty and honest government won our independence and established a new Constitutional government, “of the people, for the people and by the people.

“They learned the principles of freedom from men like Patrick Henry who said:

‘Sir, we are not weak. If we make a proper use of the means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Three millions of people, armed in the Holy cause of Liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battle alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battle for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave ... Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!’

“In 1861, Southerners knew exactly what the cost of freedom was. They understood the great risk in defending the principles of Liberty passed to them by the founding fathers, and like them, they too, preferred death to the chains of tyranny.

“Today, I will reflect and consider that no man today is truly free to pursue his own economic course – that federal mandates, city, county, state and federal taxes weigh upon his shoulders until he stoops beneath their burden. I will remember the freedoms so lightly surrendered by those who prefer to wear the chains of welfare than to boldly walk in the free air of liberty. I will remember that Southern God-fearing men like Washington, Jefferson, Madison and South Carolina’s own Charles Pinckney and Andrew Pickens established this Republic and that godless Northern men presided over its demise.

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“Today I will remember the men of the 16th South Carolina, recruited from around the Greenville area in late 1861. I will recall the hardships they endured at Vicksburg, the siege of Jackson Mississippi, Chattanooga, Tennessee and Atlanta, Georgia. And the heroism shown at Franklin, Tennessee. I will remember that they sought only the liberty, secured by their grandfathers in 1776 and like them, pledged their sacred honor, fortune and very lives for that principle.”

This was only a brief sample of the address delivered by Commander Simpson during the 2010 Confederate Memorial service in Greenville. We intend to publish the entire address in a future issue.