

# The Great History Heist

## Stealing Our Statues Won't Eradicate Our Affection for Southern Heroes

**THERE ARE MANY GOOD PEOPLE OUT THERE** resisting the Cultural Bolsheviks working day and night to erase not just Southern history but rewrite Western history in general to match their politically correct narrative—no matter how far it actually is from the truth. One of those is Dr. Edward DeVries, editor of the *Dixie Heritage* newsletter and website. TBR Editorial Board member John Friend caught up with DeVries to help us get a handle on this full-frontal assault on true Southern history.



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By John Friend

**H**istory is written by the victors, as the old saying goes. When a nation is conquered, the victorious forces often alter or outright erase the history of the conquered people, and demonize their symbols, heroes and leaders in an effort to discredit and delegitimize the conquered people's identity. A conquered people cannot be allowed to maintain their own particular historical recording and understanding of their past, as well as their own unique symbols and identity—at least not for long. The collective understanding of history is a primary factor in shaping a unique identity, which is key to maintaining a strong, healthy sense of peoplehood. Conquering armies often seek to undermine and attack their conquered foes' understanding of history, transforming heroes into villains, an honorable cause into an illegitimate and immoral endeavor that must be viewed with scorn and derision.

While the Confederate States of America, which com-

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**ROBERT E. LEE** risked everything for the cause of Southern freedom. He jeopardized his life and lost his estate in Arlington, Virginia. Some even called for his execution. Today this patriotic American is being vilified by radical leftists.



**THE SAGA OF THE "SURRENDER HOUSE."** Shown is a photo of the home of Wilmer McLean in Appomattox, Virginia, acquired by McLean in 1863, and in whose parlor Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant on Palm Sunday, 1865. McLean made a sizeable profit in Confederate dollars by running sugar through the Union blockade. After the war ended, his Confederate money was worthless. Financially ruined, McLean couldn't pay his debts and the house was purchased at public auction in 1869 by John L. Pascoe. The house was later sold to renter Nathaniel Ragland in 1872. Ragland's widow then sold the house to Capt. Myron Dunlap of New York, who wanted to take the house apart and reconstruct it as an exhibition at Chicago's 1893 World Columbian Exposition. When that venture failed, another was concocted to move the house to Washington and charge admission as a Civil War museum. Luckily, architects were hired to measure and draw every detail of the home before it was disassembled. The investors, however, ran out of money and the home was by now nothing but a pile of bricks and rotting wood, much of it removed by curiosity seekers and vandals. Finally, in 1940, the U.S. government became involved and arranged for the house to be meticulously rebuilt to its original specifications. In 1950 the Appomattox Battlefield Park and the McLean house were opened in restored condition to the public. Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant III and Robert E. Lee IV were at the opening ceremony.

prised the 11 slaveholding states that declared independence from the United States federal government in 1861, were defeated in the Civil War when Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered his Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox, Virginia on April 9, 1865, the Southern people maintained a unique identity and sense of purpose. Although defeated, the Southern *volk* were able to articulate their own historical understanding of the conflict and the causes of it. They were able to maintain their unique symbols and banners, including the many incarnations of the Confederate flag, and proudly established memorials for Confederate officers, soldiers and other political leaders in an effort to commemorate and honor their struggle and legacy.

After the war, Confederate flags and other symbols were still openly and proudly displayed across the South, oftentimes on public land or in public places. Memorials, statues and other symbols of reverence for the Confederacy and the honorable men and women who comprised it peppered the South. Southerners were proud of their history and identity.

All of that is changing in rapid fashion, particularly in the wake of the shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, a largely black church in Charleston, South Carolina, which took place on June 17, 2015. The shootings, carried out by Dylann Storm Roof, a young, alienated white man, resulted in the deaths of nine

African-American churchgoers, including senior pastor Clementa C. Pinckney, who was also a state senator in South Carolina. Roof is alleged to have had “white supremacist” leanings, and photos soon emerged of him posing with a hand gun and a Confederate battle flag. Roof was found guilty on both federal and state charges relating to the mass shooting earlier this year, and remains in federal custody.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, leftist and anti-white agitators—led by groups such as the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)—argued that “white supremacists” posed the worst threat to the United States, and must be viewed as the next target in the “Global War on Terror.” Morris Dees and J. Richard Cohen, the founder and current president of the SPLC respectively, argued in a widely read opinion piece published by *The New York Times* shortly after the shooting that “white supremacists” are using the Internet to network, spread ideas and organize on a global scale, threatening “democracy” and “human rights” both in the United States of America and across the world.

“Americans tend to view attacks like the mass murder in Charleston as isolated hate crimes, the work of a deranged racist or group of zealots lashing out in anger, unconnected to a broader movement,” Dees and Cohen argue. “This view we can no longer afford to indulge.”

In addition to hysterically hyping the supposed threat of “white supremacists,” all of which was based on the “official” narrative promoted by the government and

mainstream mass media explaining the massacre in Charleston, a coordinated campaign—led primarily by the SPLC—to remove all Confederate flags and other symbols of the Confederacy from public places across the South was launched.

Pressure was put on public figures at all levels of government to act, and the Confederate flag in all forms was the first target.

## FLAG REMOVED FROM S.C. STATEHOUSE

Former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, who currently serves as the ambassador to the United Nations for the United States, almost immediately called for the Confederate flag to be removed from Statehouse grounds in Columbia, where the flag had flown since 1962. In a speech less than one week after the shootings in Charleston, then-Gov. Haley argued that many South Carolinians view the flag as “a deeply offensive symbol of a brutally oppressive past,” before urging her fellow lawmakers to enact

legislation to remove the flag posthaste from the Capitol grounds.

“My hope is that by removing a symbol that divides us, we can move forward as a state in harmony and we can honor the nine blessed souls who are now in heaven,” Haley stated in the emotionally charged speech, referring to the victims of the Charleston church shooting.

South Carolina lawmakers soon thereafter approved a bill to officially remove the flag from the state Capitol,

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Groups like the SPLC claim that whites are the most dangerous terrorists in the U.S.

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**Bumper stickers, decals, t-shirts, full-sized flags, even desk flags** depicting the Confederate battle flag—or any of the flags of the Confederacy—are now taboo for sale through Amazon and other big-dollar online vendors.

after rowdy protests took place demanding the flag come down.

“In South Carolina, we honor tradition, we honor history, we honor heritage, but there’s a place for that flag, and that flag needs to be in a museum, where we will continue to make sure people will honor it appropriately,” Haley stated following the passage of the legislation and the removal of the flag. “But the statehouse—that’s an area that belongs to everyone. And no one should drive by the statehouse and feel pain. No one should drive by the statehouse and feel like they don’t belong.”

Following South Carolina’s decision to remove the Confederate flag, other states, municipalities and institutions began to take measures to remove not only the flag, but other symbols of the Confederacy as well.

## MAJOR RETAILERS BAN CONFEDERATE FLAGS

Soon after the Confederate battle flag was officially removed from the state Capitol in South Carolina, major retailers began banning items relating to the Confederacy from being sold on their online platforms as well as in their stores. Walmart, Sears and eBay all announced Confederate flags and other memorabilia would be dropped from their inventory. Target, Amazon and Etsy.com, an online e-commerce marketplace specializing in handmade and vintage items, followed suit. Even some flag manufacturers, such as Valley Forge, announced they would no longer produce and sell Confederate flags in the wake of the shootings in Charleston.

“We hope that this decision will show our support for

those affected by the recent events in Charleston and, in some small way, help to foster racial unity and tolerance in our country,” the company declared in a statement following its decision.

Other states, including Alabama, followed South Carolina’s example and removed the Confederate flag from their respective state Capitol grounds. Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley ordered workers to remove not only the Confederate flag from the state Capitol building, but also a number of other Civil War-era flags. The Confederate flag had flown at the foot of a Confederate memorial on the state Capitol grounds for years before it was summarily removed by Gov. Bentley, who did not consult the Alabama legislature before taking unilateral action and ordering workers to remove the flag.

When questioned about his decision, Gov. Bentley indicated it was “partially” in response to the Charleston massacre and the controversy surrounding the Confederate flag it generated.

“This is the right thing to do,” Gov. Bentley told reporters at the time. “We are facing some major issues in this state regarding the budget and other matters that we need to deal with. This had the potential to become a major distraction as we go forward.”

The Alabama governor went on to admit that it was his decision and his decision alone “that the flag needed to come down.” No doubt his decision was influenced by the media hysteria and leftist agitation launched after the Charleston shootings.

Other efforts have been made to remove the Confederate flag and other Confederate monuments from public