

By: Hamilton

H.R. No. 966

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Robert E. Lee, who achieved fame as the commander of
2 the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia during the Civil War, was
3 born 200 years ago, on January 19, 1807, at Stratford Hall,
4 Westmoreland County, Virginia; and

5 WHEREAS, After graduating second in his class at West Point
6 in 1829, General Lee made his career in the military and served in
7 Texas on several occasions; his first introduction to the Lone Star
8 State came during the Mexican War, when he accompanied the forces
9 under General John E. Wool as they advanced from San Antonio to
10 Buena Vista in 1846-1847; as a captain of engineers, he oversaw the
11 construction at Eagle Pass of a pontoon bridge, over which General
12 Wool's troops crossed into Coahuila; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1855, the congress authorized the creation of
14 four new regiments, two of infantry and two of cavalry, to help
15 protect the western frontier; Robert E. Lee, then superintendent of
16 the U.S. Military Academy, was appointed second in command of one of
17 those units, the 2nd Cavalry; he arrived in Texas in March 1856, and
18 the following month he assumed command of two squadrons at Camp
19 Cooper, on the Comanche Indian reservation in present-day
20 Shackelford County; and

21 WHEREAS, Soon afterward, in June 1856, Lieutenant Colonel Lee
22 set out with four squadrons of the 2nd Cavalry in pursuit of a group
23 of Indians, believed to be led by the Comanche chief Sanaco, who had
24 been raiding along the edge of the Staked Plains; the expedition

1 covered 1,600 miles over a 40-day period and scouted the headwaters
2 of the Colorado, Brazos, and Wichita Rivers; and

3 WHEREAS, After Colonel Albert Sidney Johnston, commander of
4 the 2nd Cavalry, was called to Washington, Lieutenant Colonel Lee
5 was assigned to take his place in July 1857, and from then until the
6 following October he directed the regiment from his base in San
7 Antonio; and

8 WHEREAS, Lieutenant Colonel Lee left Texas in October 1857,
9 but he returned to assume temporary command of the Department of
10 Texas on February 20, 1860; with fewer than 3,000 soldiers to guard
11 a frontier more than 1,200 miles long, he used the 2nd Cavalry as an
12 instrument of an aggressive security policy, successfully
13 defending the state from Kiowa and Comanche Indian raids in the
14 north and from Mexican bandits in the south; and

15 WHEREAS, In the spring of 1860, Lieutenant Colonel Lee
16 personally led troops of the 2nd Cavalry against Juan Cortina,
17 scion of a long-established Tejano ranching family, who had taken
18 up arms in protest against Anglo authorities and who was plundering
19 the lower Rio Grande Valley; eventually, the American officer
20 secured assurances from the Mexican government that it would arrest
21 the bandit, who was subsequently kept in check until the outbreak of
22 the Civil War; and

23 WHEREAS, While stationed in San Antonio, Robert E. Lee became
24 a lay leader at St. Mark's Episcopal Church and helped to sponsor
25 the construction of its building; and

26 WHEREAS, Command of the Department of Texas passed to David
27 Twiggs on December 13, 1860, and Lieutenant Colonel Lee then

1 departed for his regimental headquarters at Fort Mason; a short
2 time later, he was ordered to report to Washington, and he
3 relinquished command of the 2nd Cavalry on February 13, 1861; and

4 WHEREAS, In the ensuing war between the North and South,
5 General Lee expressed his high regard for soldiers from the Lone
6 Star State, saying: "I rely upon Texas regiments in all tight
7 places, and fear that I call upon them too often[;] they have fought
8 grandly, nobly"; indeed, Hood's Texas Brigade was considered the
9 "shock troops" of the Army of Northern Virginia; and

10 WHEREAS, A number of Texas locations and schools bear Robert
11 E. Lee's name, in recognition of his service to Texas and the
12 Confederacy; they include Lee County, the city of Robert Lee, Lee
13 College in Baytown, and high schools in Baytown, Midland, Tyler,
14 and San Antonio; the State of Texas chose his birthday as the date
15 for its Confederate Heroes Day; and

16 WHEREAS, Two centuries after his birth, Robert E. Lee remains
17 a legendary figure in the history of this nation; now, therefore, be
18 it

19 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 80th Texas
20 Legislature hereby recognize 2007 as the bicentennial of the birth
21 of Robert E. Lee and pay tribute to the life of this esteemed
22 American.