

Before the Civil War erupted, Thomas Jonathon Jackson was a professor at VMI (Virginia Military Institute). He and Anna (his second wife) lived in Lexington, and Thomas considered Virginia to be "my country."

When war began, between "North" and "South," Jackson viewed the conflict as the South's "second war of independence."

There never was any question which side had his loyalties. When he was summoned to active duty, Jackson fought for the Confederacy.

In this clip, from *Gods and Generals*—a movie which revolves around Jackson—Thomas (who did not yet have his famous nickname) leaves the classroom (where he never excelled) for the battlefield (where he had few equals).

General Robert E. Lee would come to value Jackson as one of the best military men with whom he had ever served.

A man of deep religious faith, Jackson was unafraid of dying. In an 1862 letter, quoted in *Let Us Die Like Brave Men*, he reportedly wrote:

"God has fixed the time for my death. I do not concern myself about that, but to be always ready, no matter when it may overtake me." He added, after a pause, looking me full in the face: "That is the way all men should live, and then all would be equally brave." (See *Let Us Die Like Brave Men*, by Daniel W. Barefoot, at [page 85](#).)

Fearless in battle, Jackson expected others to be the same. In *The Civil War*—by Geoffrey C. Ward, Ken Burns and Ric Burns—we find this Jacksonian quote:

Once you get them running, you stay right on top of them, and that way a small force can defeat a large one every time. (See *The Civil War*, at [page 234](#).)

Jackson was undaunted by the size (and wealth) of the North compared to the size (and wealth) of the South. At the beginning of 1863, he stressed that the current campaign had to be an active one:

We must make this campaign an exceedingly active one. Only thus can a weaker country cope with a stronger; it must make up in activity what it lacks in strength...Napoleon never waited for his adversary to become fully prepared, but struck him the first blow. (Quoted by George Francis Robert Henderson, in *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*, Volume 1, at [page 418](#).)

He was involved with "an exceedingly active" campaign when the famous Confederate general was felled by friendly fire.

Credits:

Clip from *Gods and Generals* (2003). Copyright, Warner Bros., all rights reserved. Clip provided here as fair use for educational purposes and to acquaint new viewers with the film.

Directed by: Ronald F. Maxwell

Book by: Jeff Shaara

Screenplay by: Ronald F. Maxwell

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Stephen Lang as Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson

Robert Duvall as Gen. Robert E. Lee

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Thomas-J.-Stonewall-Jackson>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Thomas-J.-Stonewall-Jackson>