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THE WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY, 1807-1861.

"The primal duties shine aloft, like stars;
The charities that soothe and heal and bless."

A PERMANENT CONFEDERATE BENEFACTION.

"And we can only dimly guess
What worlds of all this world's distress,
What utter woe, despair and death,
Their fate has brought to many a hearth."

THIS TOO BRIEF NARRATIVE

IS DEDICATED TO

THE WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY,

of Charleston S.C., now nearing the close of a century of company life; with the fervent hope that the young men who now fill its ranks may emulate its past honorable and dutiful achievements, and maintain and transmit its name and fame to the generations yet to succeed them.

Wm. A. COURTENAY,
Captain W. L. I. 1872-'74; 1877-'79.

Innisfallen, 22d February, 1903.

[This chaste memorial, of a historical corps, at the hand of an honored ex-commander, can but be inspirative to exalted patriotism.

The exemplification of Captain Courtenay, as soldier and citizen, commends itself to the emulation of all.

His career of comprehensive usefulness, has been most admirably progressive and providential, in the interest alike of general enlightenment and material prosperity.—EDITOR.]

THE WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY, 1807-1861.

The ante-bellum history of old “Charleston's loyal sons” was so continuously prominent in the annals of Charleston, for more than half a century, that it is only in order to refer very briefly to it here.

Founded by William Lownes in 1807, upon receiving the news of the “Leopard and Chesapeake” affair, its roll of thirteen commanders down to 1861, reveals the character of its membership—Lowndes, Cross, Crafts, Simons, Miller, Gilchrist, Ravenel, Lee, Jervey, Porter, Walker, Hatch, Simonton.

The public observance of Washington's birthday, by an oration and social functions, on 22d February, was an annual feature of W. L. I. life, and the annual response from the community indicated the highest public favor. This observance was continued up to and in the war period, the last celebration taking place in Fort Sumter while the command was part of the garrison of the gateway of Charleston, on the 22d of February, 1862.

Referring to earlier annals, the W. L. I. was designated, with the “Fusileer Francaise,” as the special guard of honor to Lafayette, upon his entrance in the city in 1825. Captain W. H. Miller, commanding the Escort Battalion, announced all his orders in French!

On the 19th April, 1827, the venerable widow of Colonel William Washington, of the Revolution, delivered to Captain R. B. Gilchrist in front of her residence, at South Bay and Church streets, her husband's crimson battle-flag, which had been identified with the battles of Cowpens, Guilford Court House, Hobkirk's Hill and Eutaw Springs, in 1781. This great distinction has ever since had a marked influence on the life of the corps.

In the ante-bellum career of the corps there was maintained an *esprit de corps*, watchful and virile. “Success” was the rallying cry, and without a single failure, uniformly crowned all company efforts. Witness the great parade of 4th July, 1846, under Captain W. D. Porter, with one hundred and forty-six members in line; and, fourteen years later, on 4th July, 1860, under Captain C. H. Simonton, with one hundred and forty-four members in line; both parades decisive tests of

company pride and strength. Further mention of notable events is not possible in this necessarily brief narrative.

The recognized eminence, military and social, of the W. L. I., was shown at the opening of the great struggle of 1860–65. The first military order issued in all the Southland, in anticipation of that

momentous struggle, was to the W. L. I. to take possession and guard the United States arsenal, in Cannonsboro, a few days after the Presidential election, 6th November, 1860, and the service was continuous thereafter, first under authority of the State, and then, “for the war,” in the Confederate army; “one company in peace, three full companies in war; one hundred and fourteen dead,” and so the W. L. I., of Charleston, has the longest war-service record of any company in the South.

THE WASHINGTON LIGHT INFANTRY CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION, 1866.

The affair of the 'Leopard and Chesapeake' involved no desecrated homes, no abandoned altars, no social insults, no unspeakable injuries-what wrongs perpetrated by England, can compare in results, with the storm of fiery desolation, that swept over our country, and left us, in 1865, from the seaboard to the mountains, in fettered destitution, without a home, without a country, and almost without a hope. The question of duty in 1860 repeated the demand of 1807; that of 1865 combined them both! What do my people need? Arms and a life! Let them be given! This was the question of 1807 and 1860 — what do my people need? Bread and hope! This was the great question of 1865. Bread and hope were given, and something more was added. The bivouac of the dead was marked with a shaft of honor, that the stranger might know that the men who slept there (lied for their country! What heart and hand could do for the widow and orphan, was done; and in the charter of the 'Charitable Association,' was laid the cornerstone of this 'Reorganization of the old corps of 1807.' " *

The war ended in the spring of 1865, and Generals Lee and Johnston, in final orders, so announced to their respective armies, and advised the soldiers to return to their homes and resume their citizenship.

Charleston had kept a protracted and successful defense, had “been kept virgin to the last,” but at untold cost and sacrifice. With most of the city for many months within reach of hostile guns, and shot and shell, a large part of the population had become refugees in the interior of the State. From Appomattox to Greensboro, from prison camps and hospitals, the Confederate soldiers from Charleston slowly made their way homeward during the

*General F. W. Capers' address before W. L. I., 1874.

summer and fall of 1865, Many found their families elsewhere, and did not return to the city. Those who finally did so, saw it desolate and uninviting, grass growing in its deserted streets; conflagrations had destroyed large sections of the city; shot and shell had done much damage to property. To many it seemed that—

“On the tomb of Hope interred,
Stood the spectre of Despair.”

These were the conditions which the W. L. I. survivors had to face in their former happy and well-appointed homes; poverty was on every hand; the currency of the country had dropped out of sight and use. Of course no military organization was permissible. The first thought was an organization of W. L. I. survivors to help the destitute families of the “unreturning brave.”

With the coming in of the new year, on January 11, 1866, a meeting of W. L. I. survivors was held in the parlors of the Charleston Hotel. Captain James M. Carson presided, and Sergeant W. M. Muckinfuss acted as secretary. The object of the meeting was announced by Captain Carson to be the organization of the “W. L. I. Charitable Association,” to assist the families of those W. L. I.'s who had fallen or were disabled in the late struggle. This was voted unanimously, and the following committee elected to prepare the necessary papers, draft of constitution, &c.: Captain J. M. Carson, Colonel C. H. Simonton, Lieutenant H. B. Olney, William E. Holmes and William E. Proctor.

This committee reported to a meeting held at the Masonic Hall on 22d February, 1866, and proceeded to organize "The W. L. I. Charitable Association," and elected the, following officers:

OFFICERS.

1866—J. M. Carson, President; C. H. Simonton, Senior Warden, H. B. Olney, junior Warden; J. L. Honour, Secretary and Treasurer.

In the subsequent years the following officers were annually elected:

1867—J. M. Carson, President; H. B. Olney, Senior Warden; Samuel J. Burger, junior Warden; J. L., Honour, Secretary and Treasurer.

1868—J. M. Carson, President; H. B. Olney, Senior Warden; H. I. Greer, Junior Warden; J. L. Honour, Secretary and Treasurer.

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1869—C. H. Simonton, President; H. B. Olney, Senior Warden; T. G. Barker, Junior Warden; J. L. Honour, Secretary and Treasurer.

1870—C. H. Simonton, President; H. B. Olney, Senior Warden; T. G. Barker, Junior Warden; J. L. Honour, Secretary and Treasurer.

1871—H. B. Olney, President; J. L. Honour, Senior Warden; F. L. Parker, M. D., Junior Warden; D. B. Gilliland, Secretary and Treasurer.

1872—J. L. Honour, President; F. L. Parker, M. D., Senior Warden; A. W. Taft, Junior Warden; D. B. Gilliland, Secretary and Treasurer.

1873—J. L. Honour, President; F. L. Parker, M. D., Senior Warden; A. W. Taft, Junior Warden; D. B. Gilliland, Secretary and Treasurer.

There are now few who can recall those nine years—1866-'74—with the privations, humiliations and poverty, incident to those deplorable times of carpet-bag and ignorant rule, and, in stating what was done in those years, those conditions must be kept in view.

The money help disbursed to those who needed assistance was as follows: 1866-'67, \$152.00; 1868, \$201.50; 1869, \$118.70; 1870, \$187.00; 1871, \$224.50;

1872, \$190.50; 1873, \$229.00; 1874, \$169.00—a total Of \$1,472.20, or an average annually of \$163.58!

Considering all the circumstances—the universal impoverishment of the community, and, of course, the very limited means of survivors—it is a unique, a marvelous exhibit, and is entitled to this permanent record; all being the contributions of members, except a gift of \$150.00 from the late James T. Welsman, which, with some other surplus funds, was invested, to start a permanent Charity Fund. This amounted, in certain securities at par, to \$744.00, and was transferred, at the consolidation of the "Charitable Association" and "W. L. I. Rifle Club" in 1875; this, then, is really the cornerstone of the present "Annuitants' Fund" of the Washington Light Infantry of \$17,000, now held by the trustees of that fund, of which reference will be made hereafter.

The political condition of South. Carolina, then called "The Prostrate State," was so deplorable, the inability to have regular military commands, and the need of an organization of armed men, led to the forming of "Rifle Clubs," mostly on the basis of old military commands. The W. L. I. took part in this movement, and the first large turn-out of armed men seen in Charleston since

the war, was in the celebration of Washington's Birthday in 1873, when, upon the invitation of the W. L. I., all the "Rifle Clubs" paraded together, and about one thousand men, with arms in their hands, marched through the streets of Charleston.

The writer had been called to the command of the Rifle Club in May, 1872, with the promise of a short two-year service, to secure a permanent life to the organization. Withdrawing from the command on 22d May, 1874, this extract is made from his letter of resignation: "While attention to military studies and exactness in drill should mark your future, be ever mindful of those in whose homes are the vacant chairs; whose young lives have been darkened by broad shadows from recent battlefields—the widow and the fatherless! Let us illustrate our times with deeds of charity and of kindness, and if incentive is wanting for renewed exertion in this direction, refer to the records of our own "Charitable Association " for reminder of what earnest men can do. * * * Under their auspices, they also erected the first memorial shaft raised in South Carolina in honor of the dead of the war."

Within one year the "Easter Fair" was held, the most brilliant public entertainment ever seen in Charleston, made so largely by the taste, talent and

energy of the late Major R. C. Gilchrist, and the effective work of the members of the Rifle Club. The net proceeds were over \$8,000. In dealing with this handsome result, the Rifle Club created a trust (of five members), separate from the general Treasury of the command. The trustees have, in twenty-eight years, by judicious investments, doubled the original amount of 1875, and as far as is known, this is to-day the only Permanent Confederate Benefaction in the South. The management of this fund has been conducted throughout, without one cent of cost for administration a labor of love by the trustees

COMPLETE ROSTER OF TRUSTEES, 1875–1903.

The five original trustees were elected 22d May, 1875—General James Conner, Captain Wm. A. Courtenay, Lieutenant Oct. Wilkie, Lieutenant Henry I. Greer, F. L. Parker, M. D. General Conner was elected Chairman; Lieutenant Wilkie, Treasurer; Lieutenant Greer, Secretary. On 20th March, 1883, General Conner resigned on account of ill health; died in Richmond, Va., 27th June, 1883—Major R. C. Gilchrist was elected by the company a trustee in his place.

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Captain Courtenay was elected Chairman of the Trustees 20th March, 1883. Lieutenant Wilkie died 27th September, 1889. Mr. John L. Sheppard was elected a trustee November 12th, 1889.

Major Gilchrist resigned on account of ill health March 2d, 1900, and Major W. M. Muckenfuss was elected a trustee in his place March 2d, 1900.

Major Muckenfuss died in November, 1901, and Lieutenant H. B. Olney was elected a trustee in his place January 4th, 1902.

There are two trustees *ex-officio*—the President, W. L. I. Veteran Association, of date 1883, Colonel C. H. Simonton, and the commanding officer of the Corps—of the latter, in succession, there have been Major A. W. Marshall, 1883; Captain Julius E. Cogswell, 1890; Captain Frank Robson, 1902.

Details of these annual benefactions during nearly three decades are not needed, but the aggregate result will show how large a work has been quietly done. Every New Year's Day the permanent annuity of \$30 is issued, with four coupons,

payable quarterly. These sums, and the current calls for temporary assistance—sickness, funeral expenses, &c., &c.—foot up, since 1875, including this fiscal year of 1903, \$26,521.00. The principal of the fund is now \$17,000, in 5 per cent substantial securities, yielding \$850, annually for twenty years to come. The previous investments had yielded 6 per cent and 7 per cent, interest on less capital.

I append a full roll of membership in the Charitable Association, 1866-'74:

ROSTER OF MEMBERS FROM THE THREE COMPANIES OF THE
WAR, 1860-1865.

Adger, J. E.	Atkinson, J. A.
Burger, S. J.	Burnham, E. S.
Blackwood, G	G.Bomar, R. H.
Bornar, G. W.	Barbot, Julian.
Brown, S. N.	Carson, J. M.
Cowperthwait, W. B.	Caldwell, J. S.
Cantwell, P. H.	Cross, E. F.
Colirs, C. H.	Calder, E. E.
Carter, J. W.	Cudworth, A.
Douglas, Campbell.	Devoe, J. H.
Edgerton, E. C.	E'nslow, J. A., Jr.
Greer, H. I.	Greer, W. R.

Gilliland, D. B.	Graham, S. G.
Grice, G. D.	Honour, J. L.
Honour, F. H.	Honour, T. A.
Honour, G. McD.	Holmes, Wm. E.
Hanahan, J. S.	Houston, J. H.
Jamison, W. H.	Jones, D. H.
Johnson, C. H.	Lloyd, E. W.
Lovegreen, L. B.	Lanneau, W. S.
Lanneau, J. B.	Lebby, T. D.
Locke, P. P.	Muckenfuss, W. G.
Muckenfuss, W. M.	Marsh, D. C.
Martin, J. C.	Mulkai, T. D.

Malloy, L. E.
McDowell, R. H-
O'Sullivan, T. F.
Parker, Dr. F. L.
Pennal, R. E.
Phelps, J. B.
Robb, James' !.,
Reneker,, F.,W.
Roy, Robert.
Simonton, C. H.
Simons, W. Lucas,
Seyle, S. H.
Stocker, J. D.
Schulte, J. H.
Taylor, F. E.
Trumbo, A. S.
Warren, B. W.
Welch, S. E.

Moffett, G. H.
Olney, H. B.
Porter, Rev. A. T.
Prevost, Clarence.
Parry,R. E.
Proctor, W. E.
Reneker, J. H., Jr.
Riecke, Gerhard.
Robertson, D. P.
Simons, T. G., Jr.
Sheppard, J. L.
Stewart, R.
Steinmyer, W. H.
Schreiner, J. H., Jr.
Taft, A. W.
Woodbury, S. B.
Williams, H. H.

ROSTER OF MEMBERS

who served with other commands in "the war between the States, 1860-65," who united with the W. L. I. Charitable Association, it being the only post-bellum Confederate organization then existing—

Aimar, G. W.	Allison, T.
Averill, J. H.	Breeze, W. E.
Beckman, C. J.	Bird, C. H.
Barker, T. G.	Bryan, G. D.
Burns, John,	Bilton, J. J.

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Campbell, W. L.	Calder, Alex'r.
Dukes, T. C. H.	Deweese, J.
Dunsby, G. W.	Fisher, S. W.
Foster, H. P.	Francis, G. M.

Ford, B.	Frost, H. W.
Fisher, W. E.	Gilliland, A.
Gile, R. W.	Howell, S. S.
Hughes, E. T.	Hughes, T. S.
Hyde, J. B.	Honour, W. E.
Hammett, A. C.	Harper, F. M.
Klinck, G. W.	Kingman, J. W.
Lanneau, C. B.	Logan, S., M. D.
LeBleaux, L. F.	Lea, A. C.
Lawton, P. T.	Lee, J. Moultrie
Lynah, E., Jr.	Marion, John
Alartin, H. O.	Morris, W. R.
Mintzing, J. F.	Mikell, W. E.
Matthews, Chris'r	McQueen, D.
McCabe, B. F.	Olney, C. C.
O'Brien, A. F.	Porter, W. H.
Porter, J. H.	Pringle, W. A., Jr.
Pemberton, G. W.	Prince, A.
Ravenel, Dr. W. C.	Robertson, J. L.
Richards, F., Jr.,	Robertson, D. C.
Simons, T. G., Sr.	Smythe, A. T.
Salas, F. P.	Sanders, L. N.
Sanders, J. O'H.	Small, Jno. J.
Snowden, W. E.	Snowden, W. H.
Smythe, E. A.	Seigling, R.
Stocker, J. B.	Tennant, Wm.
Torley, J. E.	Trim, W. J.
Walker, Joseph	Wilkie, Oct.
Walker, C. I.	Willis, Ed.
Willis, J. L. E.	Walpole, J. L.
Webb, W. T. L.	Yates, C. H.

NEWRY, S. C. July 1st, 1902.

To the Trustees of the W. L. I. Annuitants' Fund:

DEAR FRIENDS,—As duly advised, from time to time, during the negotiation, I now report officially that the settlement authorized

by you, with the city of Anderson, for the exchange of our 7 percent bonds, not yet due, for a new issue of 5 per cent, twenty-year bonds, has been fully completed.

The difference of interest, to the maturities of the bonds, amounted to \$1,420, and the total sum of principal and interest was \$16,420.

Sixteen bonds, numbered from 1 to 16, of \$1,000 each, and four hundred and twenty dollars in cash, were duly received and turned over to the Treasurer.

This cash, and the surplus cash on hand, authorized a deposit of \$1,000, with the Chicora Bank, at Pelzer, S. C., interest at 5 per cent, semi-annually.

The total fund now stands at \$17,000, and the annual income, \$850. It is the only permanent Confederate benefaction in all the Southland!

As in all human probability this is the last service of moment I can expect to render to the corps, I enclose the letters and papers in my hands, to be in the hands of the Secretary; and with every good wish for the future of the W. L. I., and the expression of my high regards for each of you personally, I remain,

Your very obedient servant,

Wm. A. COURTENAY, *Chairman.*

THE GREY GRANITE OBELISK,

In honor of the dead of the W. L. I., stands in Washington Square, is 45 feet high, and bears, in a bronze panel, this pathetic inscription—

“At every board a vacant chair,
Fills with quick tears some tender eye,
And at our maddest sports appears
A well loved form that will not die.
We lift the glass, our hand is stayed;
We jest, a spectre rises up;
And, weeping, though no word is said,
We kiss and pass the silent cup.”

This shaft commemorates
The patience, fortitude, heroism,
unswerving fidelity to South Carolina,
and the sacrifices of

The Washington Light Infantry
In the war between the States, 1860–65.
One company in peace; three full companies
For the War.
Besides the maimed, wounded and captured,
one hundred and fourteen died in battle,
in hospital or on the weary wayside,
In obedience
To a sentiment of honour and the call of duty
and in pledge of their sincerity they made
The last sacrifice, they laid down their lives
Officers and men,
They were of the very flower of this
ancient city, her young hope and fair renown.
“Fortuna non mutat genus.”

Erected 1891.