

**CEREMONIES CONNECTED WITH THE
INAUGURATION OF THE MAUSOLEUM
AND THE UNVEILING OF THE RECUMBENT
FIGURE OF GENERAL ROBERT EDWARD LEE,
AT WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY,
LEXINGTON, VA., JUNE 28, 1883**

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JOHN W. DANIEL

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ORATION OF JOHN W. DANIEL, LL. D.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

LEE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION.

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HISTORICAL SKETCH
OF THE
LEE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION,
BY
W. ALLAN,
A Member of the Executive Committee.

GENERAL ROBERT EDWARD LEE was prostrated by his last illness on September 28, 1870. He died two weeks later, on the morning of October 12. On October 15 he was buried beneath the chapel of Washington College, now Washington and Lee University, Lexington, Virginia. This place was selected by Mrs. Lee after the authorities of the College had placed at her disposal any part of the grounds she might prefer. The day, though full of the glory of autumn, was the most mournful in the annals of Lexington. A vast concourse, comprising the entire population of the town and the vicinity, with delegations from other places, followed, with sadness and tears, the remains of General Lee to the tomb. The funeral services were conducted by the Rev. W. N. Pendleton, D. D., (late Brigadier General and Chief of Artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia,) the rector of Grace Episcopal Church, of which General Lee was a member. The body was deposited in a vault prepared for the purpose.

On the day of the funeral a large number of ex-Confederate soldiers assembled in the court-house at Lexington, and after giving expression to the love and veneration of the South for General Lee, and to the sorrow at his death, resolved to take steps to erect a monument in honor of their great leader. They felt that even in the midst of poverty and disaster, no labor could be more grateful, no duty more sacred, than that of making manifest to the future, in some enduring way, the love and admiration of his countrymen for the character and genius of Robert E. Lee.

At this meeting was formed the LEE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, and the following were appointed an Executive Committee to carry into effect the objects of the Association :

- Gen. W. N. Pendleton, Chief Artillery, A. N. V.
- Capt. J. J. White, Liberty Hall Vols., 4th Va. Reg't.
- Col. J. K. Edmondson, 27th Va. Reg't.
- Col. W. Preston Johnston, Staff of President Davis.
- Capt. A. Graham, Rockbridge Artillery.
- Maj. Jas. B. Dorman, C. S. A.
- Lt.-Col. W. Allan, Chief Ord. Officer, 2nd Corps, A. N. V.
- Capt. J. C. Boude, 27th Va. Reg't.
- Capt. C. A. Davidson, 1st Va. Battalion.
- Lt.-Col. Wm. M. McLaughlin, Artillery, C. S. A.
- Lt.-Col. J. W. Massie, 51st Va. Reg't.
- W. A. Anderson, Liberty Hall Vols., 4th Va. Reg't.

This Committee met October 24, 1870, at the office of Capt. C. A. Davidson, and organized by electing Gen. W. N. Pendleton as chairman, and Capt. Charles A. Davidson as secretary. The Committee, in accordance with the duties entrusted to it, then elected the following officers of the Lee Memorial Association :

- President—Gen. Jno. C. Breckinridge, of Kentucky.
- Vice-Pres't-at-Large—Gen. Jos. E. Johnston, of Virginia.
- Vice-Pres'ts from Virginia, { Gen. Jubal A. Early,
 { Col. Walter H. Taylor.
- Vice-Pres't from Louisiana, Gen. P. G. T. Beauregard.
- “ “ “ N. Carolina, Gen. D. H. Hill.
- “ “ “ S. Carolina, Gen. Wade Hampton.
- “ “ “ Georgia, Gen. John B. Gordon.
- “ “ “ Alabama, Gen. W. J. Hardee.
- “ “ “ Mississippi, Gen. S. D. Lee.
- “ “ “ Tennessee, R. S. Ewell.
- “ “ “ Texas, Gen. Jno. B. Hood.
- “ “ “ Maryland, Gen. I. R. Trimble.
- “ “ “ Missouri, Gen. J. S. Marmaduke.
- “ “ “ Arkansas, Gen. J. C. Tappan.
- Treasurer, C. M. Figgat, Esq., Cashier Bank of Lexington, Va.

A committee was appointed to prepare an address for publication, setting forth the purposes of the Association, and another committee was instructed to draw up a charter, and to submit it to the Legislature of Virginia for enactment.

Mrs. Mary Custis Lee was requested by the Executive Committee to indicate her preference in regard to the monument to be erected by the Association, and at her suggestion, Mr. Ed. V. Valentine, the distinguished Virginian sculptor, was sent for. Mr. Valentine had, the preceding summer, modeled a bust of General Lee from life, which was considered an admirable work of art. Mrs. Lee, after examining a number of drawings and photographs of celebrated works of art, suggested, as a suitable design for the monument, a recumbent figure of General Lee lying asleep upon the field of battle. The design was suggested to her by Rauch's figure of Louise of Prussia in the mausoleum at Charlottenburg. This figure of Lee, somewhat above life size, was to be placed upon a sarcophagus suitably inscribed and decorated. The whole was to be of white marble and was designed to be placed over the remains of General Lee.

The suggestions of Mrs. Lee, both as to the monument and as to the artist, having been cordially adopted by the Association, Mr. Valentine was, on November 24, 1870, requested to "prepare a design for the tomb of Gen. R. E. Lee, proposed to be erected, and an estimate of the probable cost of the same." Measures were also taken for collecting from the admirers of General Lee, the funds needed for erecting the monument. Liberal responses were received from a number of sources, among which was a donation of \$1000 from W. W. Corcoran, Esq., of Washington, and the Executive Committee became satisfied that the means needed for the work could be obtained.

On June 23, 1871, Mr. Valentine, having completed a model of the proposed figure and sarcophagus, appeared before the Executive Committee and submitted it together with an estimate of cost. This latter amounted to \$15,000. The model was approved and accepted, and Mr. Valentine was commissioned to go on with the work. -

By the fall of 1872 Mr. Valentine had completed the cast of the monument in plaster and was ready to put it into marble. Some \$5,000 had up to this time been contributed to the Association, and active steps were now taken to collect the remainder of the sum needed to secure the completion of the figure. The Association of the Army of Northern Virginia, at its meeting in Richmond, October 31, 1872, resolved:

"That the sarcophagus now in course of preparation by our Virginian artist, Valentine, to be placed over the tomb of Lee, at Lexington, commends itself to especial favor as promising, from the beauty of the design, and the skill of the sculptor, to be a worthy memorial of our departed chief.

"That for the purpose of assuring and expediting the completion of this noble work of art, to be placed, as a fitting token of a whole people's love and homage, above the ashes of their dead hero, we recommend to the ladies of the South to hold memorial meetings on the next anniversary of the birth of Gen. R. E. Lee, and to take such measures as shall to them seem best for collecting money on that day to be specially appropriated to the decoration of his tomb by the erection of the sarcophagus."

The Memorial Association in an address united their voice with that of the Association of the A. N. V.

The ladies of Lexington promptly responded by having a fair and a cantata in the winter of 1872-'3, the proceeds of which, amounting to over \$800, were turned over to the Association. This sum was still further increased by private subscriptions. The example thus set was followed in many other places. On the 20th January, 1873, contributions were made in a number of Southern cities and towns to the object of the Association. In Savannah, Gen. Hampton, by invitation, delivered a lecture upon Gen. Lee, which added over \$500 to the funds of the Association. The ladies of Leesburg, Va., of Alexandria, Va., and of Palmyra, Missouri, sent handsome contributions. Similar responses came from many other places. During the spring and summer contributions continued to come in. Among these was a liberal donation of \$500 from W. H.

McLellan, Esq., of New Orleans. Admirers of Gen. Lee abroad also contributed liberally. Mr. W. T. McCauslane, of Glasgow, Scotland, took particular interest in the matter, and through his efforts nearly \$700 were added to the funds of the Association. A considerable sum was realized from a steel engraving of Gen. Lee published by Bostwick & Co., of Cincinnati, and sold under the authority of the Association; also, from the sale of "Personal Reminiscences of Gen. Lee" by Rev. J. W. Jones, D. D., a part of the proceeds of which book were turned over to the Executive Committee.

An act incorporating the Association had been passed by the Virginia Legislature and approved January 14, 1871. By this it was enacted, "That Wm. N. Pendleton, F. W. M. Holliday, C. S. Venable, J. W. Massie, Charles A. Davidson, Wm. McLaughlin, J. B. Dorman, Wm. Allan, Wm. P. Johnston, J. C. Bonde, J. J. White, A. Graham, Jr., Wm. Terry, Wm. A. Anderson, John S. Mosby, John Echols, Thos. S. Flournoy, Robert Stiles, James K. Edmondson, and such other persons as they shall associate with them, be and they are hereby incorporated by the name and style of The Lee Memorial Association." The usual corporate powers were conferred upon them, and the officers of the corporation were to be "a president, fifteen vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, and an executive committee of nineteen members." The persons named above were declared the Executive Committee, with full powers to appoint officers and fill vacancies.

The Association organized under the charter May 31, 1873. At this meeting Gen. Jos. E. Johnston was elected President of the Association to succeed Gen. John C. Breckenridge, who had died. Col. Bolivar Christian and Capt. Walter Bowie were elected members of the Executive Committee in place of Col. J. W. Massie (deceased) and of Col. John S. Mosby (unable to serve). Gen. Pendleton was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee, C. M. Figgat, Esq., Treasurer, and Capt. C. A. Davidson, Secretary. Subsequently the Rev. J. W. Jones, D. D., was made a member of the Executive Committee in place of Major Robt. Stiles.