

# THE BOYS IN GRAY.

## ORGANIZATION OF SURVIVING GEORGIA VETERANS.

**Large and Enthusiastic Gathering--The Boys in Gray all Right--An Organization of Veterans Formed and Officers Elected.**

Nearly three hundred army veterans of the Confederacy met in the basement of the court house last night.

They were principally Georgians, although a good sprinkling from other Southern States were present. Not a few wore the imprint of Time's ruthless hand on their gray heads, while a clutch of an empty sleeve here and there told how hard and how faithfully they had served their cause.

After a few minutes spent in pleasant converse Captain John Milledge, by a unanimous vote, was called to the chair.

In taking his seat Captain Milledge said in an impressive manner:

"FELLOW CITIZENS: We have met here to-night for a very proper object--the permanent organization of those who wore the gray. No matter what our associations, or circumstances, or experiences have been since the day when the banner we loved so much was furled, there still remains to us one tie that binds each heart to the other. Some of us do not know the others, but as we look around we see the faces of those who bore the hardships of camp and field in the day that tried men's souls.

"I have been asked to state the object of this meeting. I can only state what I think we ought to do. We, as ex-Confederates, should join hands. First, to know each other better; second, for purposes of social re-union. We are daily becoming fewer in numbers, and as we pass along the railroad of life we are nearing the grave station by station.

"We should seek to know each other better because we owe it to those who were lost in the great struggle not to let them be forgotten. Not to let their memory be perpetuated nor their history written by those of the other side. We should be organized to help those who have failed in the fight for daily bread since the war and who now suffer the pangs of hunger. We should hold up the hands of the few brave women (and how very few there are now remaining) who are still striving to keep green the graves of the fallen. There lie in the cemetery thousands of Confederate dead. True, a fine monument has been erected to their memory; the City Council has made an appropriation for the past two years to keep their graves in order, and the Ladies Memorial Association has had a map prepared by the City Engineer to locate the graves so that they may be found, but we should back these noble women in their efforts. We should all take our places in line on Memorial Day, and go to the cemetery to do honor to the dead, and this should be kept up until only one is left to go. We should all assemble in a body to do honor to the grand old man who will be in our city on Memorial Day. He stands like some grand old tree, with head erect towards Heaven and ashamed of nothing in the past." [Loud and enthusiastic applause.]

"There are 3,000 ex-Confederate soldiers in this county. Suppose each one of them should give twenty-five cents apiece a year. It would make up a fund large enough to give them an annual meeting in some banquet hall, or on the greensward somewhere in the county.

"We should appoint an executive committee to hold the funds with which to supply the needy among these old soldiers.

"These, my friends, seem to be some of the objects which present themselves to my mind to-night, and I would state that before proceeding further we should have a secretary to keep the minutes of this meeting."

Captain J. A. Anderson, the city recorder, was then duly elected secretary and took his seat.

A motion was made by Colonel George T. Fry that a committee of nine on permanent organization be appointed. This motion was seconded after an amendment had been made by Mr. H. H. Colquitt, to the effect that this committee be empowered to arrange the order of business, etc., for the present meeting, and the following gentlemen were nominated and elected to serve: Messrs. Benjamin J. Davis, George T. Fry, H. H. Colquitt, W. F. Newman, J. A. Stephens, L. P. Thomas, W. L. Calhoun, J. S. Todd and Amos Fox.

Captain Milledge then suggested that the names and commands of all those who were present be taken, and, with reference to this, Mr. W. I. Heyward asked that the sons of ex-Confederate soldiers be admitted to membership, no matter in what capacity; and Mr. T. P. Harrison made a motion to that effect, which was seconded by Mr. J. Gadsden King, which was opposed by Captain W. D. Ellis in a brief address, the Captain thinking the organization should be strictly a survivors' association. This was responded to by Mr. J. G. King, who said he wished his son to become a member, and thought the young men should be admitted to membership.

Some arguments on both sides of the question were then heard, until Captain Milledge brought the discussion to a close by reminding the debaters that they were pressed for time, and that the list of members had yet to be made up.

Col. W. I. Heyward then rose to make a few remarks. He said he understood that this was a meeting of old Confederates, but he wished that the young men, sons of old soldiers, should have some participation in the exercises and celebra-

of nothing in the past." [Loud and enthusiastic applause.]

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Major A. J. McBride, seconded by Mr. George A. Wallace, then moved that the question be referred to the committee of nine, Major A. J. McBride and Mr. J. G. King were sent to place the motion before them, they having previously retired to arrange methods for a permanent organization of the meeting.

The question of eligibility was raised and Capt. Milledge announced that every Confederate soldier who resides in Fulton county was eligible for membership, no matter what State flag he fought under. He then proposed that the meeting hear from Mayor George Billyer while the names were being taken down by a sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. T. P. Harrison, L. Rodgers, W. C. Dodson and Frank Myers.

Mr. H. H. Colquitt read the report of the committee as follows:

"It is recommended that the organization be known as the Fulton County Confederate Veterans' Association, and the permanent officers be a president and commander, a vice-president, a treasurer and a secretary.

"It is further recommended that the following gentlemen be declared elected: Colonel W. A. Wright, president; Captain John Milledge, vice-president; Captain W. T. Newman, treasurer; Colonel B. J. Davis, secretary.

"For an executive committee it is recommended that the following gentlemen be declared elected, the officers of the association to be members ex-officio: Messrs. W. W. Hurlburt, J. Gadsden King, W. L. Calhoun, A. J. McBride and L. P. Thomas.

"It is recommended that the constitution and by-laws be prepared by the executive committee, and that the by-laws shall determine the eligibility to membership.

"Regarding the approaching events of the present month and May, it is recommended that all Confederate survivors be requested to meet at the court house at 1 o'clock p m Monday, April 26, to march in a body to the cemetery. Suitable badges are to be provided by the executive committee. Also all survivors be requested to meet at the court house with badges on the day of Mr. Davis's arrival in Atlanta, at an hour hereafter to be designated, to escort him to the residence of Mrs. H. Hill. Also, that they be requested to join in the procession the next day to attend the ceremonies of the unveiling of the Hill statue."

Captain W. T. Newman declined to serve as treasurer, and suggested the name of Paul Romare for that position, which was agreed to.

The report was adopted, and Col. G. T. Fry, J. J. Griffin, Mr. H. H. Penney, Captain E. F. Couch, and Mr. W. A. Bonnell were then appointed a committee of five to escort President W. A. Wright to the chair, which they did with loud applause. Col. W. A. Wright then made one or two brief remarks before taking his seat. He said he would have preferred their electing a younger man for their own good, but he made it a rule through life never to shirk a responsibility, and accepted the honor conferred on him with profound gratitude.

Captain Davis said he never made a speech in his life, but was all ready for the work assigned him.

Both of these brief speeches elicited plenty of cheering.

Colonel G. T. Fry then raised the question as to the propriety of the same badges being used by the association on Memorial Day and on the day Mr. Davis arrives.

Captain Milledge replied that the matter should be referred to the Ladies Memorial Association, that body having already appointed Mrs. Harry Jackson and Mrs. W. T. Newman to purchase ribbon for the badges to be worn by the veterans on Memorial Day.

Judge George Billyer then proposed that a committee of twelve be appointed to meet the Hon. Jeff Davis at West Point, on his entering the State, and escort him thence from the State line to Mrs. Benj. H. Hill's residence, on Peachtree street, where he will probably be a guest while in the city. This resolution was adopted.

On motion, the president was requested to appoint at his leisure a committee of twelve to meet Mr. Davis and conduct him to Atlanta.

The following resolution offered by Colonel J. F. Jones, was unanimously adopted:

"We extend our invitation to all Confederate soldiers in Georgia and our sister Southern States to come to Atlanta on the occasion of the visit of Mr. Davis, and join with us in giving him a more than Southern welcome, and to see our friends whose record for us will emblazon the pages of American history for all time. We love him, and will teach our children's children to venerate his name."

On motion of Captain John Milledge, the association adjourned until the third Monday in May, when the executive committee will report the constitution and by-laws.

Two hundred and fifty names were enrolled, and the meeting adjourned.

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