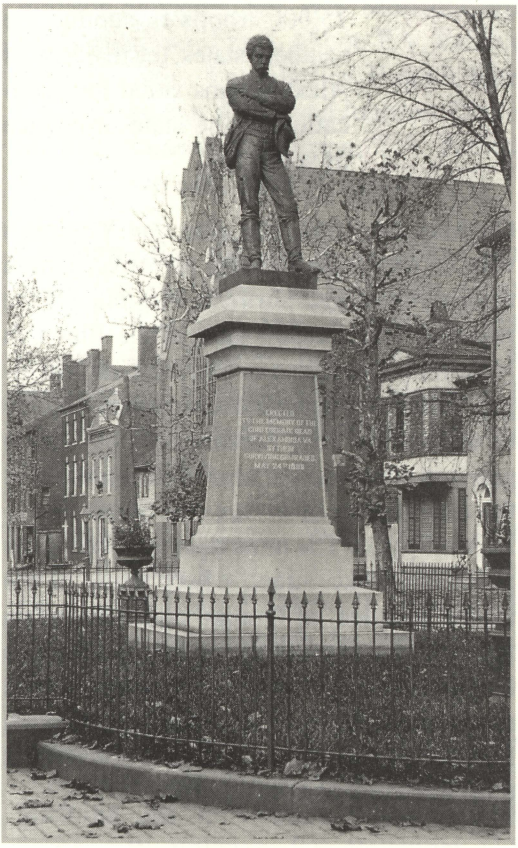
THE CONFEDERATE STATUE



"Appomattox," circa 1900.

PRINCE AND WASHINGTON STREETS
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

IN THE SPRING OF 1861, as differences between the North and South continued to move the country toward war, the residents of Alexandria were intially opposed to secession. However, when President Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to subdue the southern states, the majority of Alexandrians voted for ratification of the state ordinance of secession.

On May 24, 1861, the date that Virginia's vote of secession became effective, Union troops moved into northern Virginia. Of the invading force, 2,200 men of the Eleventh New York Fire Zouaves and the First Michigan Volunteers occupied Alexandria. Unable to defend the city, Alexandria's 800-troop garrison composed of nine units mustered at the intersection of Prince and South Washington Streets. The units then marched three miles out Duke Street, where many of the troops boarded an Orange and Alexandria Railroad train to Manassas Junction, where they joined other Confederate forces. These men formed the nucleus of the 17th Virginia Infantry and would not return to Alexandria until the war was over in 1865.

In April 1885, Edgar Warfield, a former private in Company H of the 17th Virginia, proposed to the R. E. Lee Camp of the United Confederate Veterans that a monument be erected to the Confederate dead of Alexandria. When the famous Southern artist John A. Elder of Fredericksburg, Virginia, heard of the proposed monument, he

submitted a clay model of the figure in his painting "Appomattox," which was promptly accepted. Elder's painting represented a Confederate soldier viewing the battlefields after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox, Virginia on April 9, 1865.

The bronze figure was executed by sculptor M. Casper Buberl of New York City and cast by the Henry Bennard Bronze Company. The base of Georgia granite was produced by William Leal of Richmond, Virginia.

On November 5, 1888, the R. E. Lee Camp voted to seek approval from Alexandria's City Council to place the statue at the intersection of Washington and Prince Streets, the point from which the Alexandria troops left the city. The Council quickly granted permission.

The dedication ceremony was held on May 24, 1889. Virginia Governor Fitzhugh Lee, formerly a major general of cavalry in the Army of Northern Virginia and a nephew of General Robert E. Lee, delivered the dedicatory address. The *Alexandria Gazette* recorded the event: "The population was soon doubled by the large influx of visitors and former residents from every part of the compass…In addition to the extraordinarily large number landed by boat, parties from the neighboring counties in carriages and all sorts of vehicles poured into the streets from early morning and by noon the neighborhood of the statue was packed by a huge mass of humanity."

To ensure that the statue would not be moved at some future date, the R. E. Lee Camp had

legislation introduced into the Virginia House of Delegates on January 9, 1890. The legislation read in part:

> And whereas it is the desire of the said Robert E. Lee Camp of Confederate Veterans and also the citizens and inhabitants of said City of Alexandria that such monument shall remain in its present position as a perpetual and lasting testimonial to the courage, fidelity and patriotism of the heroes in whose memory it was erected...the permission so given by the said City Council of Alexandria for its erection shall not be repealed, revoked, altered, modified, or changed by any future Council or other municipal power or authority.

The Confederate statue was considered a fine work of art, and several copies were erected throughout the South. To prevent further duplication, the R. E. Lee Camp obtained a copyright to the statue in October, 1892.

The area around the monument at one point measured 40 feet by 60 feet, and at different times was surrounded by a fence with ornamental gas lamps on each corner. As automobile traffic increased on Washington Street, the island was gradually reduced, first in 1923 and again in 1932, when the George Washington Parkway was constructed through Alexandria.

On the face of the pedestal the inscription reads:
South Side:
Erected to the memory of Confederate dead of Alexandria, Va. by their Surviving Comrades, May 24th 1889

North Side:
They died in the consciousness of duty faithfully performed.

There is a total of 100 names which are listed as they appear on the base of the statue:

West Side: **17th Virginia Infantry**
Company A – Capt. A.J. Humphreys, Sgt. Addison Saunders, Sgt. W.T. Morrill, Corp. J.H.L. Sangster, Frank Abbot, E.V. Fairfax, Robt. H. Green, Eph. Hartley, Hugh S. Hite, L.L. Hutchinson, R. Conrad Johnson, Daniel M. Lee, Samuel McMurran, T.A. Patlow, Thos. R. Sangster, John N. Swann

Company E – Sgt. Jas A. Proctor, Corp. W.M. Harper, Corp. Jas. E. Molair, Corp. Geo. T. Warfield, Jno. T. Allison, Jos. Bushby, Jos. Calmes, Jno. T. Cook, B.F. Emerson, Jno. Greenwood, H. Kidwell, W.T. Padgett, Jos. Penn, A.E. Skidmore, Jos. Williams, A. Woolls

Company G – Lieut. W.E. Gray, Lieut. Saml. B. Paul, Lieut. Jno. F. Addison, Sgt. Jas. W. Ivor, Corp. P. Doyle, D. Dohoney, P. Harrington, Jno. Horrigan, Jas. Keating, Jno. Murphy, Wm. Purcell

Company H – Lieut. Thos. V. Fitzhugh, Sgt. W.H. Boyer, Sgt. W.A. Lovelace, Corp. E.G. Barbour, Jas. E. Grimes, Corp. W.H.H. Smith, J.W. Baldwin, F.S. Ballenger, C.P. Ballenger, E.S. Beacham, R.E. Buchanan, Chas. R. Burgess, W.A. Castleman, Hayden Fewell, Wm. J. Higdon, P. Lannon, W.H. Lunt, D. McDermont, Jno. T. Mills, Jno. S. Murray, B.F. Padgett, Wm. Terrett, Monroe Whittington

Company I – Jno. S. Hart, A. Gousher, Jno. Slemmer

East Side: **Alexandria Artillery** – Ed. Calmes, E. Frank Elliott, P. Foster, Jas. Greenwood, W. Harding, Thos. A. Petty, Robt. Posey, Thos. Murphay, Richard Owens

Other Commands – Col. Wm. Orton Williams, C.S.A., Col. Lewellyn Powell, C.S. Arty; Lt. Col. S.W. Presstman, Eng. Corps; Lt. Col. W.F. Lee, 33rd Va. Infty.; Maj. Johnston de Lagnel, Arty., P.A.C.S.; Lieut. Harry White, Co. D., Scruggs Bat.; Lieut. Benj. King, 13th La. Infty.; Lieut. A.J. Arnold, Co. F. 5th Va. Infty. Sgt. W. Craig Page, Co. B., 2nd Md. Infty.; Eugene Webster, Eng. Corp; Randolph Fairfax, Rockbridge Arty., H.J. Brent, Stribling's Arty.; Wilson Turner, Horse Arty.; Thos. B. Turner, Horse Arty.; Peter Crane, Co. H. 4th Va Cav.; Robt. E. Crapen, Co. H. 4th Va. Cav.; Mont. Brent, Co. A., 6th Va. Cav.; C.L. Powell, Jr., Fedsburg Arty.; Jas. Foard, Letcher Arty.; Lloyd Powell, Co. F., 2nd Va. Infty., Stonewall Brigade; Benj. Swann, James W. Jackson.

The name of James W. Jackson, the propietor of the Marshall House who was killed on May 24, 1861, during the occupation of the city, was added to the east side of the statue in 1900.

To learn more about the Civil War in Alexandria, visit Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock Road.

OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA
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