

CROWD BRAVES RAIN TO SEE UNVEILING

Thousand People Gather on the Court House Green at Denbigh

Governor Principal Speaker

Judge Mann and Mr. Tucker Make Brief Addresses Refraining From Mention of Politics – Silent Hunts on Hotel Porch – Impressive Exercises

Heedless of a steady downpour of rain, more than a thousand people gathered at Denbigh, Warwick Court House, yesterday to witness the unveiling of a handsome monument to the Confederate dead. The scene was one never to be forgotten at Denbigh. Probably such a crowd has not gathered on the courthouse green within the recollection of this generation and the crowd was no ordinary one. In it were Hon. Claude A. Sawson (Swanson), governor of Virginia; Hon. Harry St. George Tucker and Judge William Hodges Man(n), the Democratic gubernatorial candidates, Judge Williams and Col. Catlett, aspirants for the nomination of attorney general, and other prominent individuals whose presence upon any occasion would excite vast interest.

Then there was Major James Stubbs of York, heading practically all the Confederate veterans on the Virginia Peninsula who were able to make the trip to Denbigh. Beauregard Chapter, Daughters of the Confederacy of Denbigh was out as a body, the John W. Daniel and Bethel Chapters, and the J. E. B. Stuart Camp, sons of veterans of this city were represented by their leading members, and the Confederate Choir from Lancaster “was there” to sing sweetly the ever dear old Southern songs, having come all the way from their Lancaster home on board the state police boat as the guests of chairman McDonald Lee of the Fisheries Commission.

Candidates on Silent Hunt

Although the gray-haired and gray-coated veterans in the crowd and the monument on the green in front of the court house were the centers of interest during the day, the candidates were not neglected by any means. All of them shared with the governor a goodly portion of attention and no one needed spectacles to see that, while they were barred from anything like a flourish of trumpets, Mr. Tucker and Judge Mann were engaged in masterly still hunts for support.

While the rain storm was at its height, before the exercises in the open air started, probably a hundred and fifty people gathered on the porch of Smith’s Hotel, Denbigh’s only and justly famous hostelry. Mr. Tucker was at one end of the porch and Judge Mann at the other, and there was an astounding lot of handshaking going on. Governor Swanson was there too, but, while the governor was as ever courteous and polite, he was not doing quite as much handshaking as he has been known to do on other occasions.

Exercises Started Inside

When the crowd first began to assemble, the indications were that the rain storm would last indefinitely, and Major Stubbs, the master of ceremonies, decided to have the exercises started in the court house.

Mr. J. T. Garrow called to order a crowd that included everybody who could squeeze through the doors, and introduced Major Stubbs as master of ceremonies. In places of honor were Veterans Henry F. Jones and D. C. Patrick who later unveiled the monument, the Confederate choir and fifteen young ladies of Warwick, representing the Confederacy and the Southern States, respectively, and the Huntington Rifles.

Hon. E. E. Montague, of Hampton, delivered the address of welcome, warmly welcoming the visitors on behalf of the Warwick veterans.

Didn't Mind Rain

About this time the rain ceased falling and the crowd adjourned to the open air to gather about the veiled monument and face a stand which had been built directly in front of the court house door. The gay bunting and flags draped about the stand were discolored and bedraggled, and the crowd was in nearly the same condition, but nobody seemed to mind. Everybody seemed to have come bent upon a good time, and a good time had to be forthcoming, regardless of the weather.

Major Stubbs addressed the crowd briefly, and then, directing the band to play "Dixie," ordered veterans Henry F. Jones and D. C. Patrick to unveil the monument. While the crowd cheered and applauded, the veterans pulled the cords (cords) which drew the veil and exposed to view a heroic figure in gray granite, perhaps thirty feet high. The monument was built by Lawson and Newton, of Norfolk, and is a splendid piece of work.

Governor Swanson

When Major Stubbs introduced Governor Swanson to make the unveiling address the governor was greeted with such an ovation that he could not proceed for a minute or two. The governor was in fine form, and delivered a characteristic address, peculiarly appropriate for the occasion. He eulogized the Confederate soldier, and detailed some interesting facts as to the number of men engaged on both sides during the Civil war that are not generally known even among well informed veterans. He dwelt especially upon the magnificent traits of Lee, Jackson, Stuart, Ashby and other Confederate leaders, and said that he was proud to be governor of the State that bore the title, "the Unter-rifled Commonwealth".

The governor's comparison of the Civil war with the late war with Spain, amused everybody, particularly the veterans. He said that he had an idea that when a Confederate veteran looked over Roosevelt's great book, "Alone in C(l)uba," and heard about the, "Battle of Santiago," he must feel very much like the story says Noah did when the hero of the Johnstone flood came to heaven and insisted upon bragging about his experiences.

The Roll Called

At the conclusion of the governor's address, Major Stubbs solemnly called the roll of the men who went out from Warwick to fight for the Confederacy. The crowd listened in silence as name after name was read with no response, and applauded heartily when a "here" came from a corner of the crowd. It was sadly significant to note that though two hundred or more names were called, only eight responses were heard.

The paper from which Major Stubbs read contained as far as possible accurate record of the war service of every man who enlisted from Warwick. Hundreds of those in the crowds heard the names of fathers, brothers or other relatives read out.

Dinner on the Grounds

When the exercises were over the crowd assembled around impromptu tables arranged on the green and enjoyed a delightful repast prepared and served by the ladies of the Beauregard Chapter. The ladies were assisted by Mrs. George W. Nelms of this city, and among those who made themselves useful within the "waiting" circle, were City Sergeant E. W. Milstead and Baker George A. Schmelz of this city.

Governor Swanson, Judge Mann, Mr. Tucker and the other guests of honor mingled with the crowd, making away with ham sandwiches and fried chicken with a vengeance.

Speaking but No Politics

About 3:30 o' clock in the afternoon what the crowd had been looking for all day came to pass. Judge Mann returned to the stand and was introduced by Mayor Maryus Jones, of this city. The judge said he was not ashamed of anything he did as a soldier in the Confederate army, and declared that the Confederacy stood for what was known to be right. He did not mention politics at all. Mr. Tucker was next introduced and he too made an address appropriate for the occasion, and refrained from any mention of the campaign.

It was about 5 o'clock when the speaking was finally concluded and the crowd disappeared. At 4 o'clock however, a large part of the Newport News delegation had started for the station, in order to catch the special train returning at 4:30 o'clock.

Newport News Crowd

Newport News sent up about half of the crowd that saw the unveiling. The special train that left here at 10:30 o'clock in the morning carried six coaches, with every seat taken and many people standing. On the train were the members of the Huntington Rifles, who, under command of Captain Wilkins, marched about in the rain and took a conspicuous part in the unveiling exercises. The Artillery School band headed the Rifles and furnished music for the exercises.

It is estimated that at least two long trains would have been required to take the crowd from here to Denbigh had the weather been fair.

Bouquets Presented

The John W. Daniel Chapter presented bouquets to Governor Swanson and Mr. Tucker during the day. Rolls of honor were presented to the veterans of Warwick, York and Elizabeth City counties. Governor Swanson, Judge Mann, Mr. Tucker, Judge Williams, Col. Catlett and other prominent visitors returned to Richmond on the evening train, remaining on the grounds until the last event of the day was over. Mr. Lee and the Lancaster choir returned to this city on the evening train, and boarded the Commodore Maury and started back to Lancaster. Last night the young people of Warwick gave a dance at the court house, at which a number of the veterans were guests of honor.