

**History of
Stonewall UDC No. 1388 Division 124
Chartered: February 7, 1912
Portsmouth, Virginia**

Stonewall UDC Chapter 1388 was organized by Mrs. J. Griff Edwards and chartered February 7, 1912 with 205 members and Mrs. Yates McAlpine Wilson as President. The chapter started working and per the 1912 Minutes 17 crosses were issued during the first nine months they had been together. They continued to gain members and by October 1, 1913 there were 241 on roll. During this time chapter meetings were held in Stonewall Confederate Veterans Camp Hall the second Tuesday in each month alternating one month in the afternoon and the next month in the evening. This gave all an opportunity to attend. The Confederate Memorial Literary Society of Richmond presented Stonewall with a certificate of Life Membership in the Confederate Museum. Unfortunately, the certificate seems to have been lost over the years. By 1915 the membership roll was 260. During the early years many receptions and social events were held and attended by many Confederate organizations from Portsmouth, Norfolk and Berkely. Each year money was donated to the "Confederate Veteran," various monuments were supported with cash donations, and a business scholarship was awarded annually. Crosses of Honor were often bestowed throughout the years and Liberty Bonds were purchased. Money was given to support Grimes Battery and fifty comfort bags were made and given to the enlisted men at the navy yard. A reception and dance were held, and Confederate organizations of the city, as well as officers and their wives stationed locally, were invited. In addition, 400 sailors and marines were also present. Stonewall also sent between 700 and 800 bound books by standard authors to American soldiers in France. In 1919 two French orphans were supported by a chapter member and the chapter donated money for the support of the R. E. Lee bed in France. There was a committee of members that visited the Portsmouth Naval Hospital twice each week and distributed delicacies of all kinds to the hundreds of wounded soldiers, and during Christmas forty boxes packed full of decorations were taken to decorate their rooms. The chapter continued to show every consideration and give aid to veterans and needy confederate women. The chapter even paid for one needy veteran to make the trip to Atlanta to attend a reunion of his comrades. Reading over various minutes submitted over the years we realized through the efforts of our chapter a fund was started by the citizens of Portsmouth to aid in sending the veterans involved in the war to reunions.



The chapter was steadily growing and the meetings were well attended. To be able to continue the war effort and give aid, meetings were continued all through the summer months and did so for many years to follow, and by 1922 there were 274 members. Giving to local charities was always some of the chapter's greatest work. A home was purchased for life for a destitute Confederate widow in the Home for the Aged. The chapter adopted and supported a Veteran each month at the Soldiers' Home in Richmond. Each year sixty-five Christmas bags were put together. Each bag contained a pound of the best Christmas candies and these were delivered to the Richmond Soldiers Home as well. Christmas stockings were also filled and sent to the Home for the Aged and Kings Daughters Hospital. The city had a list of those in need and throughout the year boxes were filled with wood, fruit and milk and sent to each family monthly. Confederate widows were also continuously aided for many years. Aid was also given in applying for pensions they were eligible for and obtained. Funeral and burial expenses of an aged

Confederate widow were also paid for. Christmas parties were held for the old veterans of Stonewall Camp and each received a box of candy and a gift they needed. The Portsmouth Confederate Choir No. 1, that had been organized years earlier by chapter member Mrs. J. Griff Edwards, also rendered a musical program and each veteran gave an inspiring talk. The chapter sold 540 Stone Mountain memorial coins. For fourteen months, clothing was sent and aid was given to a young lad that was a victim of the Great White Plague while he was at Catawba Sanitarium until he was well enough to return home.

In the 1930's the chapter started responding to all calls for help from the poor and joined with different organizations of the city in helping to relieve the situation brought about by the Depression. For many years Christmas boxes were sent to each veteran in the infirmary at the Soldiers' Home in Richmond. Christmas boxes were also sent to each lady residing in the Home for the Aged. In December 1934 Little Rebels Chapter #392 was chartered as a CofC chapter. In 1937 the last surviving veteran of Stonewall Camp Confederate Veterans, Major Giles B. Cooke, passed. The UDC chapter had honored and remembered him for many years. He served on the staff of General Robert E. Lee. At the time of his death, he was living in Matthews County. In March of 1938 on the anniversary of the Battle of the *Monitor* and *CSS Virginia* a meeting was held at the home of John P. Keville, the son of the last surviving member of the battle.

In 1942 when it was suggested that the Portsmouth Confederate monument be moved from the location at the intersection of Court and High Street to City Park, the chapter cooperated with the Confederated Southern Memorial Association and the Portsmouth Chapter to voice opposition. At that time the beautiful monument was allowed to stand undisturbed. The chapter assisted the Confederate Southern Memorial Association each Memorial Day in placing flags on the graves of the Confederate dead. In 1944 there were six members serving as Air Raid Wardens, one as a Nurses' Aide, six as Gray Ladies, two assisting the Travelers Aid and several made garments for the Red Cross. One Hundred educational volumes were collected and 13,581 magazines were given to the Red Cross. Members gave 1,215 hours of service that year. One hundred percent of the chapter membership were buying War Savings Stamps and Bonds. In addition, the chapter sold \$4,500 in Bonds to others outside the chapter. In 1947 the publicity chairman reported fifty inches of advertising appearing in local newspapers.

In 1950 the chapter presented a picture of Confederate flags, four historical books and a UDC Magazine subscription to Woodrow Wilson High School. The chapter continued to make donations of books and magazines for many years to come. Each of the donated books had a UDC Bookplate. One hundred inches of publicity were also placed in the local newspaper that year. Three thousand magazines were delivered for the use of service personnel to the Portsmouth Naval Hospital. The very active children's chapter furnished a very attractive float in the Portsmouth Memorial Day parade. On June 3, 1952 the chapter held its Jefferson-Davis Celebration and presented two Crosses of Military Service. Also that year, with the cooperation of the Portsmouth Memorial Association, markers were placed on two Confederate graves. The chapter reported it had put together both a historical scrapbook and yearbook. By 1953 the membership had dropped to 75. Real Daughter and Chapter Organizer, Mrs. J. Griff Edwards (Martha Nelson Boswell Edwards) passed away January 5, 1953. A contribution was made to Washington Cathedral in memory of Mrs. J. Griff Edwards, the chapter's organizer and past president. This donation was sent for the construction of a niche of Robert E. Lee. The chapter also continued to distribute over 2,000 magazines annually to service personnel as they did for many years. In 1957 a Southern Romance in Song luncheon meeting was sponsored with a large attendance from other chapters. Copies of "Why Say War Between the States" were distributed.

During these years books, flags and pictures were presented to Woodrow Wilson High School; a subscription of the U.D.C. Magazine and a copy of *The History of The U.D.C.* was given to the public library. In 1959 a prize was offered to the chapter in the Division registering the most "Real Daughters" as members.

A special dinner party was held in 1962 and attended by local civic officials and other UDC chapters to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the chapter. Four Jefferson Davis medals were awarded to local high school students for achievement in American history. For many years essay contests were sponsored by the chapter in local schools and winners were presented their award by the chapter historian on television programs. The chapter had several Real Daughters as members through the years. The chapter continued to apply and secure pensions for them and others as they became aware of needs. In 1975 a Charter member and Real Daughter Mary D. J. Langhorne passed away. By 1978 there were 51 members and one Real Daughter left and she, Miss Katherine Cook, the daughter of Major Giles B. Cooke, was honored at a luncheon.

In 1980-1983 Mrs. Nancy Clark Leonard served as VA Division Recording Secretary while also serving as Chapter President. In 1980 over 200 Confederate flags were placed on the graves of Confederate Veterans. When they went to retrieve the flags, they were able to recover less than 50 and all but six were torn from the staffs and the staffs were all broken. From 1981-1983 Miss Jacqueline F. Rudd served as VA Division Magazine Chairman and Chapter 3rd Vice President. From 1983-1985 Miss Rudd also served as VA Division Recording Secretary. In 1987-1989 the chapter president, Miss Jacqueline F. Rudd, also served as VA Division Custodian. From 1989-1991 Mrs. Nancy Clark Leonard served as VA Division Registrar while also serving as chapter president. An article and picture were contributed to the March 1989 Virginia Issue of the U.D.C. Magazine. Miss Harriett E. Brown, a Stonewall Chapter member, received the Community Builders Award for her outstanding contribution of thirty-five years of dedicated service to the American Red Cross and Portsmouth Naval Hospital. Miss Brown donated over 1,050 hours annually for many years to that ongoing patriotic activity. She was 90 years old when she received the award and for many years walked from her home to the Naval Hospital and back home and was still doing so at the time of her award. The Grand Lodge of Virginia AF & AM was presented to Miss Brown by Worshipful Master Allen Cutchin, Churchland Lodge #276, AF & AM. The first memorial service the chapter had held in many years honored the ancestor of Miss Brown as well that year.

From 1991-1993 Mrs. Nancy Clark Leonard served as VA Division Sixth District Chairman as well as chapter president. In August of 1992, the chapter donated to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum a block of wood that came off the *USS Merrimac* during her conversion to the *CSS Virginia*. The chapter lost its last Real Daughter, Miss Katherine Grosh Cooke, through death. Pvt. Elvington Knott, Randolph Dragoons, Troop C, 13th VA Cavalry, grandfather of our member Mrs. Phoebe Elizabeth Thomas Skipwith, was honored on May 24th at Oak Grove Cemetery. On June 19, 1993, the chapter, along with the Stonewall SCV Camp and Portsmouth Civil War Round Table, hosted the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the Portsmouth Confederate Monument, with a luncheon and ceremony at the monument. The Little Rebel CofC Chapter #392 disbanded in 1993. In 1994 a grave dedication was held for a Confederate ancestor of a member, Mrs. Marian Goodrich Williams, followed by a dinner and program in Smithfield. In 1996 Mrs. John G. (Mary) Williams awarded three members Winnie Davis Medals at a Stonewall SCV Camp meeting. The chapter also worked extensively with Stonewall SCV Camp on fundraising for refurbishing Cedar Grove Cemetery that is on the National Historic Register. The funds were used on a ceremony held at Cedar Grove Cemetery to unveil a new granite

marker honoring the crew of the *CSS Virginia* which the chapter helped to purchase as well. John Luke Porter was the designer of the *CSS Virginia*. Using the remains of the *USS Merrimac*, he was in charge of the construction of the *CSS Virginia*. John Luke Porter is the great-great uncle of member and historian Margaret Windley. In 1997 the chapter donated \$1,600 to refurbish and re-engrave 40 Confederate headstones in historic Cedar Grove Cemetery in Portsmouth. In July members traveled to Lexington, visiting Lee Chapel, attending the grave marker ceremony for Mary Anna Morrison Jackson, and then attending the impressive ceremony for burying the remains of Stonewall Jackson's horse, Little Sorrel, at VMI. For many years the chapter struggled to hold on.

By 2012 the chapter membership had dropped, and taxes needed to be paid to bring the chapter up to date. Seven meetings were held and through the work of members the necessary paperwork was filed and the membership increased to keep the chapter going. Since then, membership has continued to grow but because of the political climate we are dealing with in the city and the advanced ages of many of the existing members, it is very difficult to do so. In 2013 chapter members walked with a chapter banner in the Memorial Day Parade in downtown Portsmouth, the oldest Memorial Day Parade in the Country. Many members that walked were dressed in period attire. In 2014 Chapter Vice President and Registrar Denise Harrell was an extra in the new Appomattox Court House Visitor's Center film and her name is even in the credits. In April 2015 Appomattox Court House held the 150th Anniversary of the Confederate surrender. Denise Harrell volunteered to help the Appomattox Historical Society with The Long Road Home 150th Appomattox Reenactment. She volunteered long hours stuffing goodie bags, helped with registration, organized merchandise and helped to sell those items. At a ball on Saturday evening, she dressed in period attire and helped serve refreshments. The day of the surrender at the Appomattox Court House in the National Park she dressed in period attire and was in attendance as a town civilian. In 2016 the President's Award from Langley AFSA Raptor Chapter was given to chapter member Marquita Latta for being a major supporter to them for historic Oakland Cemetery 1861. A chapter pin was designed and approved in 2018 depicting the Portsmouth Confederate Monument which chapter members now proudly wear on their ribbon. The chapter presented JROTC medals for two years before the local high schools stopped allowing the UDC to bestow them.



In May 2020 the chapter placed wreaths as had been done each year at the Portsmouth Confederate Monument for Memorial Day and Christmas. By June 2020 the beautiful Monument had been destroyed by demonstrators. Through the Veterans Affairs the chapter ordered and paid for the installation of two headstones. On May 15, 2021 a marker dedication was held in Hollywood Cemetery to place the headstones and mark the graves of brothers Alfred Russel Theus and Septimus F. Theus. They are the great-great-great-grand uncle of member and Chapter Recording Secretary Elizabeth Collier Scott. The chapter was able to replace lost Korean and Vietnam Crosses of Military Service for a gentleman that had them previously awarded. On August 20, 2023 a UDC marker dedication service was held for Martha Nelson Boswell Edwards, the organizing member of the chapter. Her grave is located in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Portsmouth, VA. As of August 2023 the chapter has 15 members with 2 prospective members whose paperwork should be complete in the near future. The chapter is small but continues to support sister chapters and the cause. Chapter members will not give up the fight to survive in this city and political climate.



Bobby Beal of the Children of the Confederacy Little Rebels Chapter cleaning the Portsmouth Confederate Monument



Judy Bradley, President of the Little Rebels CofC Chapter, places a wreath on the Portsmouth Confederate Monument at Court and High Streets. Tommy Revere (left) and Bobby Beal (right) presented the



Tommy Revere (right) Bobby Beal (left) dancing



Young woman placing wreath on Navy graves in Portsmouth



Members of the Little Rebels CofC Chapter in Portsmouth, VA



Members of the Little Rebels CofC Chapter in Portsmouth, VA



Little Rebels CofC Chapter addressing Christmas cards to shut-ins at the home of Stonewall Chapter President, Joyce Beal.

Pictured left to right Ellen Wider, Bobby Beal and Carol Revere.



Members of the Little Rebels CofC Chapter in Portsmouth, VA



Members of the Little Rebels CofC Chapter in Portsmouth, VA in a Memorial Day parade

STONEWALL 1388
CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

1912-1917	Mrs. Yates McAlpine Wilson
1917-1918	Mrs. Helen Foote Owen
1918-1919	Mrs. William H. Hartt
1919-1921	Mrs. Yates McAlpine Wilson
1921-1922	Miss Loretto Toomer
1922-1923	Mrs. R. L. McMurrin
1923-1924	Mrs. Hampden Osborne
1924-1926	Mrs. Martha Nelson Osborne
1926-1934	Mrs. J. Griff Edwards
1934-1936	Mrs. Martha B. Porter
1936-1937	Mrs. Stuart R. Moore
1937-1941	Mrs. Beverly Moore
1941-1950	Mrs. E. Oakley Wood
1950-1953	Mrs. J. Leo Brennan
1953-1955	Miss Harriett Brown
1955-1957	Mrs. E. L. Bradley
1957-1959	Miss Harriett Brown
1959-1961	Mrs. Lucille H. Carhart
1961-1963	Mrs. Joyce T. Beale
1963-1972	Mrs. Dallas R. Overman
1972-1975	Mrs. Lucille H. Carhart
1975-1979	Mrs. Mary Josephine King
1979-1984	Mrs. Nancy Clark Leonard
1984-1987	Mrs. Jean S. Spencer
1987-1989	Miss Jacqueline F. Rudd
1989-1994	Mrs. Nancy Clark Leonard
1994-2011	Mrs. Carol Kemp Vincent
2011-2018	Mrs. Nancy Clark Leonard
2018-2024	Mrs. Denise Harrell
2024- present	Mrs. Elizabeth Collier Scott