

The

News

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A BLAZE AT THE CITADEL.

THE MAIN BUILDING GUTTED BY FIRE.

An Unexplained Conflagration and Its Consequences—Scenes on Marion Square—The Brave Work of our Boys in Grey—Not so Bad as it Might have Been—There will be no Interruption in the Work of the Academy.

The fire alarm, which rung out from police headquarters yesterday morning will awaken a responsive echo of deep sympathy and regret in the heart of every South Carolinian. The grand old Citadel Academy, around whose walls closely cling a thousand glorious traditions and proud memories, hallowed in the hearts of the citizens of Charleston, whose pride the noble old Academy is, was in flames.

At 9.45 o'clock in the morning a dark line of smoke was seen curling up from the tower above the sallyport, and then the deep toned bells began to chime their ominous message over the city. The smoke grew denser, rolling up above the battlements and towers of the building, the great bells rang louder and the people began to realize the magnitude of the impending catastrophe. In ten minutes the Citadel Green, plaza and surrounding streets were filled with a dense mass of anxious watchers, who only gave place to the dashing engines, truck and hose carriages which were getting into position. The extent of the fire was not known for some time, only that black billowy cloud of smoke floating up from the central tower and hovering over the whole structure presaged the worst. Even the inmates of the building were for some time ignorant of the headway which the flames had made. They supposed the flames would be gotten under control in a few moments, and consequently made no effort to remove their effects until it was almost too late to do so.

RAPID HEADWAY.

In half an hour the flames were bursting out from the roof in several places, and were mounting far up into the sky. In the meantime the fire department was working hard to get in reach of the flames. Engines 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 were on the ground, one stationed at the foot of the plaza, two in Meeting street, another immediately behind the Academy and one directly in front of the police headquarters. The fire had first been discovered between the room and ceiling of the third story just above the sallyport and when first discovered appeared to be of small importance, but subsequent events indicate that a large section of the roof at that point must have been burning before the alarm was given.

TRYING TO GET AT THE FIRE.

The firemen attempted to reach the fire from the inside of the building. The hose was dragged in through the sallyport and attempts were made to carry it up through the building. It was soon found impossible to reach the flames in this way, and the hose were again carried outside and the engines began playing upon the outer wall. The height of the walls and the parapets which rise above the room rendered it impossible to play upon the flames with precision.

THE FIRE WAS RAPIDLY SPREADING.

Starting in the centre of the main building it spread along the whole structure very rapidly, then down the side, the flanking side corridors, and through the back section of the Academy until the entire upper story of the quadrangle was burning.—The windows were broken and through them on all sides the engines threw floods of water, until the entire block appeared thoroughly drenched, and rills and rivulets gushed out from the windows and doors and ran like mountain torrents down the green and plaza. The flames, however, seemed to defy the watery deluge, spreading into every room and gallery, licking out at the windows and port holes, rushing up pillar and wall and wreathing the inner space of the building in

A SHEET OF FIRE.

At the rear of the Academy splendid work was being done. One of the city engines was stationed there and battled nobly against the fiery blast which roared and cracked along the inner walls. It was here that splendid assistance was rendered the fire department by the employees of the Charleston Bagging Factory, just across the street. They clambered up on the roof of the factory, and from that point of vantage turned three streams of water on the flames. From the elevation thus attained, they were enabled to throw the water well over the high walls of the Citadel directly into the advancing fire, and the assistance they rendered was most valuable. But neither theirs nor the Herculean efforts of the city firemen were of any avail. The fire had gotten too much headway and was not gotten under control before nearly 2 o'clock, after the entire inner portion of the main building had been gutted, and the upper floor and part of the second destroyed by the flames.

THE BOYS IN GREY.

When the alarm was first sounded the cadets were in their respective lecture rooms. The last morning drum call had been sounded about three-quarters of an hour before the alarm, and the drummer was not present to collect the cadets. They were, however, marched out of the class rooms and an attempt made to line them up in rank in the corridors. This was, however, impossible. The smoke from the burning portion of the Academy was blown directly down into the rooms and halls, and was so dense that there was great danger of suffocation to the inmates. Under this circumstance it was thought best not to march the companies out in order, so the order was given for ranks to be broken and each to do what work he could. Thinking the fire of small consequence no effort was at first made to save the students' effects, and when it became evident that the fire was uncontrollable it was found impossible for many of the rooms to be reached. Very few of the cadets saved any of their property at all, and the majority of them escaped with the bare clothes which they wore.

HELPING THE SUPERINTENDENT.

Though unable to save their effects, however, the boys rushed to the assistance of Col Coward and his family and worked with a will removing their furniture. Their efforts were here rewarded with success, nearly everything in Col Coward's quarters being removed in safety. From the main building of the Academy little was saved. Chief Martin had detailed a force of men not only to patrol the grounds, but to render any assistance in their power in the building.

EXCELLENT WORK.

They did excellent work, removing among other things all the ammunition from the arsenal. In this connection the conduct of Cadet Gwynn, of Spartanburg, cannot be too highly commended. Immediately upon the giving of the order for the cadets to break ranks and save themselves Cadet Gwynn rushed through the dense smoke which filled the halls of the building to the arsenal. Grasping in his arms a keg of powder and covering it with his coat and cap he bore it in safety through the falling sparks and bewildering smoke out through the sallyport on to the plaza in safety. Another of the cadets got his hand badly mashed and cut while ascending a ladder. He was struck by furniture which was being thrown from the upper windows.

THE LIBRARY SAVED.

From the part of the Academy burned nearly the entire library was saved, consisting of a number of very valuable works. This was the

work of the cadets. Two parties of them were formed, one going into the library and throwing the books from the windows, when they were collected and placed in safety by the second party. These books, together with much valuable apparatus from the scientific department, were the principal things saved. A portion of the guns and accoutrements of the cadets were brought out, but most of them were lost. All the text books, furniture, beds and bed clothing and private effects of the cadets in the upper galleries were destroyed. The articles in the second and third stories, which were slightly damaged by the fire, were nearly entirely ruined by the deluges of water which were poured upon them. The squad of police detailed to protect the goods as they were brought from the building, and likewise to keep an eye on the crowd of people who swarmed over the surrounding grounds, did their work well; but only one arrest was made of a negro boy who was detected while attempting to steal some articles in the building. He was at once taken in charge and marched off to the Station House. In the main the large crowd which witnessed the fire were orderly and willingly lent any assistance in their power.

PHOTOGRAPHING THE FLAMES.

While the fire was in progress a representative of Clarke's photograph gallery took a splendid picture of the burning building, surrounded by the crowd and with the streams of water playing on it. The view represents the scene as it appeared from the foot of Marion square, and Mr Clarke had excellent proofs ready for exhibition by 2 o'clock, while the ruins were yet smoking.

THE COLORS WENT DOWN.

A striking incident of the fire was the burning of the flagstaff. When the building was about half burned the flames began to creep up the staff. The rope caught and then the flag. Just as the flag caught the staff fell, carrying the blazing colors of Carolina down with it.

The Damages.

The loss by the fire and water is very heavy and is variously estimated at from \$20,000 to \$50,000. It is believed, however, that it will be fully covered by insurance. The entire property is insured for \$52,000. The main building, including the library, is insured for \$35,000, the largest part of which is with Pelzer & Robertson, that firm, it is understood, having \$13,000 of the \$35,000 insurance. The remainder is distributed around in smaller amounts with a number of local agencies.

Notes and Incidents of the Fire.

The Sumter Guards' armory, which is conveniently situated, was thrown open to the cadets yesterday, as was indeed almost every house in the city.

The laboratory at the Citadel was saved, although slightly damaged.

There was no interruption to the dinner at the Citadel yesterday. The cadets rallied to the call of the drum, and met as usual in the mess hall.

The only part of the walls which fell were portions of the parapet.

Most of the cadets who occupied rooms on the top gallery lost their kits and contents.

During the progress of the fire yesterday Mrs Knobeloch and Mrs Ostendorff, who live on the corner of Vanderhorst and King streets, showed the cadets much kindness, inviting them to their bakery and furnishing them with an abundance of hot cakes and coffee.

THE MAN FOR THE EMERGENCY.

A Talk with Col Coward—The Academic Exercises will go on at the Same Old Stand.

The most energetic, hardest worked man at the fire yesterday was Col Coward, the superintendent of the Academy. He was here, there and everywhere, and by his coolness and foresight did much to assist Chief O'Neill to fight the flames intelligently.

During the entire day he knew not an idle moment, and not until late in the afternoon could a few minutes' conversation be had with him. His erect, military figure showed not the faintest signs of the great strain that he had undergone; his bronzed face was begrimed with smoke and dust, his collar was wilted and discolored looking, but otherwise he showed no traces of the trying ordeal through which he had just passed.

All those qualities which in the dark days of the civil war had made him a gallant soldier and a successful commander had been called into play, and sinking all thoughts of self he had devoted his energies and powers to the work before him. Like a soldier he showed a brave front to the foe, and exhibited no symptoms of discouragement over the disaster which had overtaken the Academy.

When asked if he contemplated closing the Academy temporarily on account of the fire he replied: "No, sir; under no circumstances will that be done. Many of the class rooms in the east wing are entirely uninjured, others are only injured by water and by day after tomorrow (Wednesday) I hope to be able to resume the academic course."

Col Coward said that he wished to express his appreciation of the many kindnesses shown him upon this occasion by the people of Charleston. He said that he had received invitations from people all over the city to make their homes the resting place for his boys, and that if it had been necessary the entire corps could have found accommodations with private families who would have been only too glad to receive them.

It is very probable that the cadets will make their headquarters for the remainder of the session at the Roper Hospital, but otherwise the routine of cadet life will go on as though nothing out of the common had occurred. They will be marched to the Citadel every day for the meals and will have their recitations in the old familiar class rooms, the drills will take place as usual, and in a few days the machinery of the Academy will be working as smoothly as of yore.

It is very likely that the board of visitors will hold a meeting on Friday, when some definite arrangements will be made for the immediate future.

Yesterday afternoon Col Coward received from Col C. S. Gadsden the following telegram:

SEWANE, TENN.—Accept my profound sympathy in your great calamity.

C. S. Gadsden.

He also received a number of letters from Charlestonians, expressing sympathy and offering aid in various forms.

OUR HEARTS AND HOMES.

All Charleston Anxious to Provide Temporary Homes for the Officers and Cadets.

The feeling displayed by the people of Charleston towards the cadets and the officers of the Academy was only what was to be expected. The sympathy which was displayed for those who were losers by the fire was heartfelt and freely given.

As Col Coward stood before the still burning ruins of the proud old Academy Monday afternoon many propped his hand and tendered him every assistance in their power. The Rev A. Toomer Porter, of the Porter Academy, was one of the first to offer assistance. He tendered the Academy to Col Coward as a place of refuge for the cadets. At one time Col Coward had accepted this offer, but subsequently it was determined to accept the offer of the trustees of the Roper Hospital, who came to tender that institution to the Citadel boys and their instructors. The Hospital, in Queen street, will consequently be the future place of abode for the cadets, probably for the remainder of the present session. The Hospital will offer ample accommodation to the students and good facilities for their instruction.

In addition to these two hospitable offers Col Coward was the recipient of several letters and many personal offers of assistance from private individuals, who desire to aid in providing for himself, the other officers and the boys. Mr J. M. Connelley and Mr A. F. C. Crizer wrote offering to take ten or twelve boys each at their private residences, until some final disposition was made of them. There were numerous other offers equally as kind, and the boys would all have been provided with homes had these hospitable invitations been accepted. The boys themselves had a host of friends among the citizens, and each of them received one or more invitations to remain in a private home so long as it suited their convenience.

Most of the professors lived in the west wing of the Academy, which was not injured. They will remain there for the present.

Col Coward and family received invitations from Mr Richard White, Dr J. L. Ancrum and others, to make their home in their houses. Dr Ancrum's invitation was accepted.

Yesterday afternoon telegrams were sent to Gen Johnson Hagood, chairman of the board of trustees, and to Major C. S. Gadsden, who is the local member of the board, notifying them of the fire and stating its extent. Gen Hagood replied at once that he would come to the city and would arrive on the midday train to-day. Major Gadsden was at Sewanee, Tenn., and replied that he would start for Charleston last night, but would be detained on the road and would not reach the city until tomorrow. The officers of the Citadel request The News

and Courier to express their thanks and those of the cadets for the many warm and cordial offers of assistance that were showered upon them.

IN THEIR NEW QUARTERS.

The Occupation of the Roper Hospital by the Boys in Grey.

Numerous and conflicting rumors gained currency yesterday afternoon as to how and where the cadets were to be housed for the night. One rumor was that they were to camp out on the Citadel Green; another was to the effect that the corps were to be marched to the Ferry wharf, and that they would embark to Fort Sumter, which would be made the temporary headquarters; and still another was that the boys in grey were to be marched to the Porter Academy grounds, where lodgings could be obtained.

In this connection it may be stated that Col Coward was kindly tendered to use of the Porter Academy grounds and buildings by Dr A. Toomer Porter, who, as soon as he was in receipt of the news of the burning of the Citadel, at once hurried to the scene of the conflagration and made the magnanimous tender, which was highly appreciated by Col Coward and the cadets. However, the speculations were put an end to when at about dusk the entire corps were assembled in parade formation and under the command of Lieut Towers was marched down to the Roper Hospital building in Queen street.

This building, so long deserted, presented a strange, lively and interesting scene last night when a Reporter of The News and Courier called to see the cadets in their new quarters. The cadets quickly took possession of the building, and the four companies were assigned to certain designated quarters under the supervision of Col Coward and Lieut Towers. Then the work of putting the rooms in preparation for occupancy was begun. The mattresses and coverings that were saved had been hauled to the building under the direction of Quartermaster White and, together with a number of new ones that were purchased, ample bedding was secured.

The willing hands of the four cadet captains and the members of the respective companies soon had the bedding arranged in order throughout the empty rooms, which, after a little, seemed almost to look like the old sleeping apartments except that there were no cots, the mattresses being spread upon the floors. Even at this juncture military discipline was observed. Upon the arrival at the building a guard was posted at the door, and the boys inside worked with as implicit obedience to orders as if they were on the asphalt drill ground.

It was late in the night when the weary boys in grey were in readiness to retire from the labors of the exciting day.

To-day the cadets will be engaged in getting their effects into better shape in the Hospital building. They will not, however, be called to revelle by the long roll of Sergt Condon's favorite drum—it was consumed in the flames, or swallowed up in the deluge, it is not certain which.

Col Coward stated last night that the academic exercises will be resumed at as early a day as possible. The cadets will be marched to the Citadel building, where the recitations will be resumed in the section rooms, which in the main were uninjured.

In all probability this order of things will go into effect to-morrow or the day after.

The Roper Hospital, it will be remembered, was badly wrecked in the earthquake in 1836, when it was vacated as a hospital, and never again occupied, the city patients having been housed in Agricultural Hall till the completion of the new City Hospital. In the meantime the trustees of the fund reconstructed the building on modern lines, and it has been vacant ever since. It is a spacious and comfortable building, and in it the cadets will soon be at home until they can get back to the Citadel. It may be that this will be possible at an earlier date than appears possible now. It is thought that as soon as the water with which the building had to be deluged has subsided, and the debris cleared away, room may be made on the two first floors for the accommodation of the cadets. These matters, however, will be left in abeyance until the board of trustees can meet and take a look at the situation.

HALF A CENTURY OLD.

Some Interesting History of the Citadel Academy.

The history of the South Carolina Military Academy is closely interwoven with the history of the State, and hundreds of men throughout the State will learn with sorrow of yesterday's fire.

To Governor John P. Richardson belongs the credit of the establishment of the South Carolina Military Academy. As early as 1841 Governor Richardson had a bill introduced into the Legislature by one of his lieutenants, its purpose being to convert the Arsenal at Columbia into a military school. That bill was defeated, and with it ended the first attempt to establish a State military school.

Governor Richardson, however, was not discouraged, but remained true to his convictions of the expediency and propriety of his scheme. When the Legislature convened in 1842 Governor Richardson, in his first message, formally and distinctly proposed that the Arsenal at Columbia and the Citadel at Charleston be converted into military schools. Soon after the commencement of the Legislative session of 1842 Gen David F. Jamison, of Orangeburg, then chairman of the military committee in the House of Representatives, brought forward "A bill to convert the Arsenal at Columbia and the Citadel and magazines in and near Charleston into military schools," which bill, with little or no opposition, passed both bodies of the Legislature and became an Act.

Governor Hammond, the successor of Governor Richardson, was the first to discharge the duties provided for by that Act. On December 21, 1842, he appointed the first board of visitors. The members were: James Jones, D. F. Jamison, W. J. Hanna, Daniel Wallace and J. H. Means.

By an Act of the Legislature, passed in 1843 the Governor was made chairman ex-officio of the board.

By the 20th of March, 1843, both the schools were in operation and continued to gain rapidly in popularity and importance.

The first superintendent of the Citadel was Capt W. F. Graham and his assistants on the academic board were: Lieut F. W. Capers, first professor; Lieut J. E. B. Finley, second professor; Dr Henry Boylston, surgeon, and J. Ladon Grogg, purser.

On the 20th of May, 1844, the board of visitors met in consequence of the resignation and subsequent death of Capt W. F. Graham, the superintendent, and elected as his successor Mr Richard W. Colcock.

On the recommendation of the board in its annual report to Governor Johnson, made December 4, 1848, an appropriation of \$15,000 was recommended for an additional story to the Citadel building. The appropriation was made and the addition built soon afterward.

In 1849, owing to the prevalence of yellow fever in Charleston, the cadets were disbanded for the summer, and again in 1852 yellow fever interrupted the academic exercises at the Academy.

At the close of this year (1852) Major R. W. Colcock was succeeded as superintendent of the Citadel by Major T. W. Capers.

In 1859 Major Capers resigned and Major P. F. Stevens was elected superintendent.

In 1860 South Carolina passed the famous Ordinance of Secession, and it was the fortune of the Citadel Academy to be intimately associated with the opening scenes of the Confederate war. In the Citadel was organized the first laboratory established in the Confederacy for the manufacture of ordnance stores. It was soon put in effective operation and made large and timely contributions to the military necessities of the South in the beginning of her struggle. Major Stevens, superintendent of the Academy, with a detachment of cadets from the Citadel, was in charge of the Star of the West battery, famous in the history of the war as having fired the first hostile shot, and two other officers of the Citadel took part in the bombardment of Fort Sumter as commanders of batteries.

In August, 1861, Major Stevens resigned and Major J. B. White was elected to fill the position thus vacated. Major White was the last superintendent the Citadel Academy had before the disbandment of the Academy in 1864, when the corps entered the Confederate service in a body. Of the bravery and intrepidity of the youthful soldiers history tells, and many of the cadets died fighting the battles of the South.

Of the reorganization of the Academy and its history since then everyone in South Carolina is familiar.

SONS OF THE GRADUATES.

The official register of the South Carolina Military Academy, published in July, 1891, contains the names of 397 graduates of the institution since its first commencement in 1846. The first graduating class, 1846, was composed as follows: C. C. Tew; C. O. La Motte and John H. Swift, Charleston; R. G. White and W. J. Magill, Georgetown; and Jno L. Branch, Abbeville.

Class of 1847: Johnson Hagood, Barnwell; E. L. Heriot, Georgetown; S. B. Jones, Charleston, and J. P. Southern, Greenville.

Among other distinguished names that appear on the list of graduates are:

G. B. Stevens, Pendleton, 1849.

G. B. Lartigue, Barnwell, 1849.

J. P. Thomas, Fairfield, 1851.

G. W. Lucas, Kershaw, 1851.

J. W. Earle, Greenville, 1852.

W. H. Dial, Richland, 1852.

M. Jenkins, Colleton, 1854.

A. Coward, Charleston, 1854.

F. L. Parker, Abbeville, 1855.

E. M. Law, Darlington, 1856.

H. S. Thompson, Greenville, 1856.

S. B. Nance, Newberry, 1856.