

William H. Lee

(- 22 Jan 1906)

Lee. On January 22, 1906, William H. Lee, son of the late Abel H. and Maria L. Lee. Funeral Thursday, January 25 at 3 p.m. from Lee's undertaking establishment. Interment in Congressional Cemetery.

The Evening Star, January 26, 1906, p. 16

Death of "Bill" Lee

Noted Washington Character, Who Boasted of Military Achievements

The passing of another Washington character is noted. William H. Lee, more familiarly known as "Bill" Lee, was buried late yesterday afternoon at Congressional cemetery, the services being held at Lee's undertaking establishment. For thirty-five years past "Bill" Lee has been a familiar figure on the streets of this city, and he was known by nearly all the old residents because of his quaint ways and his vivid imaginings. During recent years he propelled a hand-cart about town and peddled brooms.

Lee imagined he was the commander of a battery of artillery which consisted of fifty guns, and in consequence of this belief he always wore a sort of uniform decorated with what he termed medals of honor. These medals consisted of tobacco tags and other articles that had a bright surface. Bill never tired of telling of the important part his big battery played in "the battle of Cumberland, Md.," and the "siege of Alexandria, Va." He related the details of each affair minutely and described with pride the part he had taken in them. At the "siege of Alexandria," he said, he wielded his big and terrible sword and cut off the heads of nearly 200 of the enemy. When asked who were the enemies he encountered there he always replied:

"They were a mixture of foreigners, anarchists and Indians, and they were tough fighters."

At the "battle of Cumberland," Lee said his battery mowed down two thousand of the enemy who attempted to take the place and to capture Washington. Several years ago Lee hired himself to building contractors in this city to guard houses in course of construction at night. He dignified his position as watchman by having made a big white metal badge inscribed "watchman," which he wore on his blue uniform, which he had made especially for him to give him "extinction," as he expressed it.

Withal Bill Lee was a good-natured, harmless man and had many good friends who liked to hear him tell of his experiences with his battery. He was also charitable and never hesitated to divide his small earnings with any one who he thought needed the money more than he did. He had no bad traits and was generally well thought of by all who knew him. He was about fifty-three years of age and was born and reared in Washington.