



James City Cavalry PICKET LINES



JAMES CITY COUNTY CONFEDERATE GRAVESITES by Fred Boelt

In the January issue of JCC Picket Lines, we looked at the cemetery near the intersection of Longhill and Centerville Roads and the service record of David Warren Spencer. There is another Confederate veteran, David Spencer Cowles, also buried in this cemetery. His tombstone is now broken and lying on the ground, but the inscription is still legible: David Spencer, Son of Thomas & Caroline Cowles; Born April 27, 1819, Died June 2, 1894. Though not completely proven, it is thought that Caroline was the daughter of David Spencer and his wife, Sarah Taylor, and that David Spencer Cowles was named for his maternal grandfather.

Between 1843 and 1860, David S. Cowles and his wife, Maria, had at least nine children. Two of their daughters, Caroline E. G. and Betty M. Cowles died young and are buried in this cemetery. The other four sons and three daughters lived to maturity and all can be found on the 1880 census for James City County. Like many other families in the area, the war interrupted the Cowles family life as well.

David Spencer Cowles enlisted in Co. W, 3rd Virginia Cavalry in Williamsburg on June 24, 1861. It should be noted here that he was 42 years old when he enlisted, certainly older than the average age. He was later listed as a private in Co. H, 5th Virginia Cavalry, and was in a hospital in Richmond in January and February 1862 with no further record of service. He was, however, listed on the postwar roster.

The oldest son of David and Maria, William Thomas Cowles, enlisted as a private in Co. H, 5th Virginia Cavalry on May 1, 1862 when he was only 17 years old (born February 14, 1845). Did his father come home wounded, unable to continue to serve, causing his son to hasten to join his father's company to avenge his suffering? Service records, of course, do not give this kind of detail, but it is easy to speculate on how these things happened. William also served in Co. F, 25th Battalion, Virginia Infantry and surrendered at Appomattox. He was a member of the Magruder-Ewell Camp, CV, and a resident of Williamsburg for the last twenty years of his life. He died on September 6, 1918 and is buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery. His obituary stated, "There are now just six Confederate veterans residing in Williamsburg, and none [are] less than 70" (Daily Press, September 8, 1918).

Previous Meeting: Attendance at our meetings continues to be strong. Ed Harris gave a presentation on Nathan Bedford Forrest.

Upcoming Meeting: Our next meeting will be on March 26 at 7:00pm at Hog Wild Bar B Que. We will not have a speaker this month, but instead will be inducting three new members: Jamie Berryman, Don Woolridge, and Bob Tuck into our camp. Additionally, we will also induct Bill Blizzard as an Associate Member. Membership certificates will be

presented to these and other members. All of our new inductees will share a bit about their Confederate ancestor. There also will be some special presentations.

Cemetery Restoration: Our work at Peach Park Cemetery is pretty much complete. Literature and a guest book have been placed on site, a grave marker has been ordered for Col. Allen's grave and we are getting nothing but positive reaction from the community. We have gotten at least one new prospective member through this project.

Confederate Memorial Day: Our camp celebration of Confederate Memorial Day will be on Friday May 30. We will conduct our memorial service at Sunnyside Cemetery off Forge Road. The day will conclude with a Bar B Que dinner at Fred Boelt's house which is right across the road. The cost for the dinner will be \$15 per person/\$25per couple. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. We had some school children attend at our previous ceremony as they were studying Memorial Day and ours was the only service in town. Last year, we were able to raise a good amount of money for our camp as well as have a good time and fellowship. See Ken Parsons to make arrangements. Call David Ware 872-4906/718-5829 for questions.

New Projects: Before our service at Sunnyside, we need a good work day to spruce up. Everything is in pretty good shape, but there is some brush to be cleared and the grave markers could use a good cleaning. Also, it would be a worthy camp project to do work at the Spencer Cemetery to include restoration of Compatriot David Spencer Cowles's marker (see Fred Boelt's article above). Details will follow.

Newsletter Distribution: To reduce costs and speed up delivery, we are e-mailing the newsletter to those we have on our e mail list. If you have e mail and are not on our list or know of anyone who would like to receive our newsletter contact Don Woolridge dsw317@earthlink.net (804-832-4227). If you would rather get the newsletter through the mail, contact David Ware 872-4906/718-5829.

Executive Committee Meeting: Our next Executive Committee meeting will be on April 16 at 12:00 noon at Hog Wild. All camp members are welcome with voice and vote.

For the Good of the Cause: The following have graciously contributed to our newsletter/speaker/memorial fund:

Charles Bush, Don Woolridge, Jeff Toalson, Ray Adams, Dick Wilkerson, Ken Parsons, David Ware, Walter Tucker