



James City Cavalry Picket Lines



January 2024 Dispatch – Williamsburg, Virginia

Camp #2095  10th Brigade  Virginia Division  Army of Northern Virginia

A patriotic honor society dedicated to community service and the preservation of the true history of the War Between The States.

Next Muster

Wednesday, January 24th, 2024, 6:30 pm
Colonial Heritage Club House
www.colonialheritageclub.com/find-us
6500 Arthur Hills Drive
Williamsburg, VA 23188



Meal Cost: \$20.00 Per Person
Payment by Check is Preferred

Non-camp members please contact Jeff Toalson (757) 220-0131 or troon24@cox.net to make a dinner reservation. Camp members will be contacted by the 'Call Team' for your reservation. Attendees without a reservation are welcome to attend the meeting but may not receive a dinner.

JCC Web Site: <http://www.jamescitycavalry.org>

To add or remove an email address for the Picket Lines distribution list, or for questions or comments regarding the newsletter, email to: jccpicketlinesdistribution@gmail.com. To email one of the camp officers directly, see **Camp Officers** on page 3.

January Guest Speaker

Carson Hudson
Williamsburg
Historian

***"Confederate
Photography"***



Carson will provide a presentation of a wide range of Confederate photographs before and after the War. Some of these Confederates are famous and some are unknown. A great many things can be interpreted from the photos and even the setting in the various shots. This should prove to be a very interesting and educational evening.

Carson Hudson is an author, a folk musician, and Emmy Award winning screenwriter and once upon a time . . . a circus fire-eater. He and his banjo entertained us at our 2016 Christmas celebration. With an M.A. in Military History and an M. Ed. in Social Studies and Educational Technology Carson is a social and military historian and a Williamsburg treasure.

Camp Officers

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Commander | Jeff Toalson troon24@cox.net |
| 1st Lt. Commander | Ron Perry perryra@gmail.com |
| 2nd Lt. Commander | Steve White garrettsgrocery@gmail.com |
| Adjutant | Dave Watson djwatson61@cox.net |
| Chief of Staff | Ken Parsons kparsons320@gmail.com |
| Treasurer | Denny Griggs dennisgriggs414@gmail.com |
| Chaplain | George Corbett georgecorbett@cox.net |
| Aide de Camp | Jon Holland jonholland79@gmail.com |
| Quartermaster | George Bridewell gbridewell@aol.com |
| Historian | Fred Boelt fwb@widomaker.com |
| Webmaster | Don Woolridge dsw1229@gmail.com |
| Archivist/Editor | Paul Huelskamp jccpicketlinesdistribution@gmail.com |

Recumbent Lee Memorial



Lee Chapel on the campus of Washington and Lee University
Photo by Denny Griggs - April, 2023

Commander's Comments

Happy New Year.

This year we all need to make an effort to find a good individual to join our Camp. 60 new members would be outrageous but if we added 10 new members in 2024 it would be an excellent year. Please consider which of your friends and neighbors would be a good candidate for the James City Cavalry. Also, do not forget Friends of the Camp. There are many people with a love and respect for history who appreciate and support our many projects. We need to have them involved in our Camp also.

We need each of you to try to join us for a few more meetings in 2024. Especially those of you whom we only see a couple of times per year. We averaged 30 at our ten meetings in 2023 and that is only about 23 members and the rest are guests, wives, prospects, and members of other Camps and UDC Chapters. We need 25 persons dining to meet the Colonial Heritage contract. If you do not care to join us for supper then please, buy a Pepsi or a glass of wine in the lounge, and join us to visit and hear the speaker.

2nd Lt. Commander Steve White will be scheduling our cemetery work in the upcoming cold months. Because our cemeteries are in good shape the amount of actual work is minimal. Join us to clean up litter, remove a few fallen branches and perhaps spread some mulch or install a Cross of Honor. It is a great chance to visit and get to know some of your fellow members. 1st Lt. Commander Ron Perry has booked a very interesting and diverse group of speakers for the first half of 2024. Some of those would be very interesting topics for your wife or perhaps a neighbor. Bring a guest.

Looking forward to an exciting and rewarding 2024. Remember, we serve in their memory.

- Jeff

Confederate Gravesites

(Contributed by Compatriot Fred Boelt)

The Cowles family has been present in James City County for several centuries. Edmund Cowles patented land in the county in 1666, and was the signer of a petition in the county in 1676. Thomas Cowles (Sr.) was listed on the 1704 Quit Rent Rolls as the owner of 675 acres and he was a Burgess from the county in 1698 and 1710, was sheriff in 1700, and was a justice from 1699 to 1702. His son, Thomas Cowles (Jr.) was messenger for the House of Burgesses in 1710 and 1711.

The tract of land known as Cowlesville had a late 18th century, story and a half frame house located there. The house was built on a center hall plan with exterior chimneys on each end, and had undergone numerous additions before it burned to the ground in 1975. Land tax records indicate that John Cowles purchased 176 acres in 1787 in this general location. By 1813, he owned 450 acres, land largely still owned by his descendants today. The Gilmer map of 1863 clearly shows the location of Cowlesville on the west side of Diascund Road marked "Mrs. Cole." Additionally, there was another house located across the road, also marked "Mrs. Cole." This was "Grove Hill." There is a development of the same name in that location today.

John Cowles, the son of John and Drucilla Tribble Cowles, was born on July 22, 1841. When war began, he enlisted first in Company I, 3rd Virginia Cavalry, in Williamsburg on June 24, 1861. He was present on all rolls through March 1862, and he reenlisted in Company H, 5th Virginia Cavalry after that and served as 5th Sergeant. He was paid at Amissville in June 1863, and was present on rolls from November 1863, through April 1864. No further service records have been found, so it is not known how he spent the final year of the war.

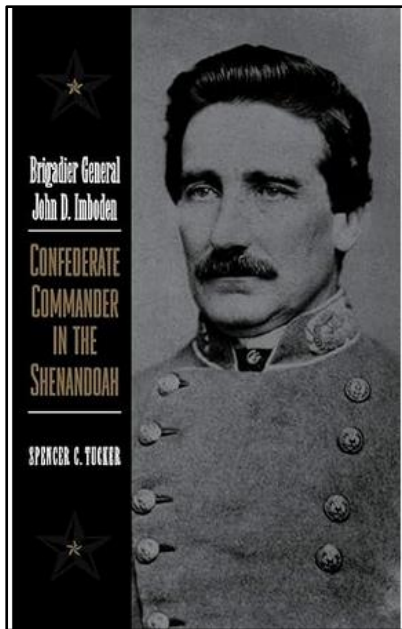
After the war, John Cowles married Harriet Virginia Spencer on December 27, 1866. She was the daughter of William L. Spencer and his wife, Martha E. Richardson. John and Harriet lived at Cowlesville and had a large family. John died on February 22, 1890, and was buried in the family cemetery located on the Cowlesville farm. Many generations of his family are buried there also.

While this column attempts to stick to fact, the following may contain a little fiction. Edmund Spencer Cowles, born in 1878, was a son of John and Harriett Cowles. Apparently, the Cowles family had a longtime reputation for distilling ATOP, an unusual liquid elixir that had remarkable powers as a nerve tonic. The following is an excerpt from a lecture given by Edmund Cowles to the Toano Philosophical Society on April 4, 1939:

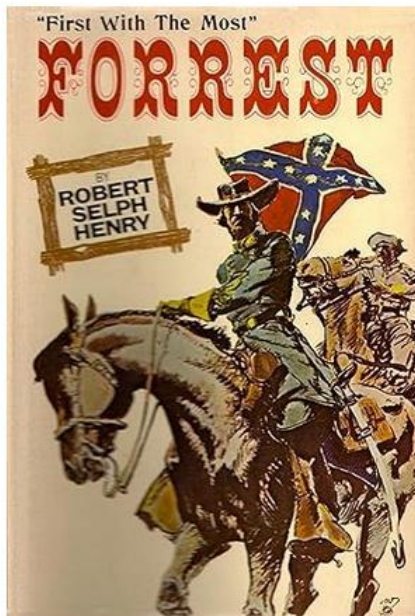
"... it is perhaps just as well that most Virginians do not realize that the Cowles family was indirectly responsible for the loss of the War Between the States. It is known that General Grant and his staff after the battle at Cold Harbor established temporary headquarters at Cowlesville in the evening of June 4, 1864. General Grant, discouraged by his disastrous repulse, had resolved to advise President Lincoln the next morning to call off the war. Unfortunately, the worthy General followed his usual custom of partially drowning his sorrows before retiring for the night, and with his usual propensity for drinking anything out of a bottle, included by mistake a pint of ATOP which happened to be in the building. This marvelous medicine so quieted his nerves, that he woke up in the morning with bulldog determination to see the war through."

The Cowles family was an honorable supporter of the Southern cause, sending at least three sons to serve in the James City Cavalry. Was ATOP simply a "code" name for the jug of whiskey sitting "atop" the cupboard? Edmund Cowles was born only thirteen years after the war ended and undoubtedly heard some version of this story from childhood. We may never know the true version of this story, but we do know that General Grant was not a teetotaler!

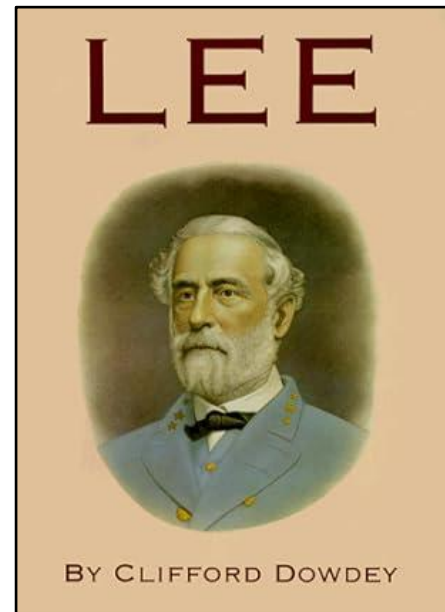
Will Carson Include These Confederates?



"Brigadier General John D. Imboden: Confederate Commander in the Shenandoah"
by Spencer C. Tucker

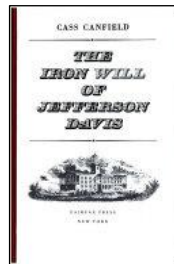


"First With The Most: Forrest"
by Robert Selph Henry



"Lee"
by Clifford Dowdey

Bonus Book:
"The Iron Will of Jefferson Davis"
By Cass Canfield



Williamsburg Civil War Round Table

<http://www.wcwrt.org>

On January 23rd, 2024 - Bruce Littell will present:

"The Submarine *H. L. Hunley*: Concept, Development, Deployment, Recovery & Conservation"

