



James City Cavalry Picket Lines



December 2025 Dispatch – Williamsburg, Virginia

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

Camp 2095 - Our 20th Anniversary Year!

Next Muster Camp Christmas Supper

Wednesday, December 10th, 2025, 5:30 pm
W.C. Martin Store
7882 Richmond Road, Toano



Cemetery Work Schedule

(Contributed by 2nd Lt. Cmdr. Steve White)

Below is the winter work schedule for 2026 for clean-up at our various cemeteries. Please mark your calendars. Additional details will follow.

Fort Magruder: January 3

Fort Magruder: January 10

Peach Park: February 14

Cowles-Spencer: February 21

Hunt's Farm: February 28
(This date could be used for a make-up date)

Hockaday: TBD



Ft. Magruder

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.

Camp Journal for Last Muster

Meeting:

Held November 19th at 6:30 PM at Colonial Heritage Club House,
James City County, Va., **26 Attendees**

Welcome given by Adjutant Dave Watson

Pledge & Salute to the Flags led by Treasurer Jon Holland

Blessing:

Given by Sr. Chaplain George Corbett

Break for Supper

The SCV Charge read by Compatriot George Bridewell

Program:

1st Lt. Cmdr. Perry introduced the evening's guest speaker:

Mr. Carson Hudson

Mr. Hudson presented "*The President is Dead!*", a wonderfully illustrated look at the era of Lincoln's death through the photographs of the day.



Carson Hudson

Committee Reports and Announcements:

- Cemetery Report – 2nd Lt. Cmdr. Steve White
 - The leaves were raked at Sunnyside Cemetery on November 18 and 19.
 - Thanks to Mark Griggs for the gift of several Virginia state flags.
 - The winter work schedule was announced, see page 1 for details.
- Sally Thompkins Report – Marilyn Iglasias
- Christmas Party Report – Historian Fred Boelt
- Silent Auction Details – S.P.O. Derick Hayman
- WCWRT Update – Compatriot Bill Miller

Book Raffle

Proceeds of \$57 were donated to the camp treasury from the raffle of the four donations.

Benediction

Given by Sr. Chaplain George Corbett



Commander's Year-End Comments

As our 20th Anniversary year nears an end, I would like to thank every member of the Cavalry for your good work in 2025.

First and foremost, we responded to disasters in Western North Carolina (Hurricane Helene) and Texas (flash floods in Kerr County) to provide almost \$25,000 in hot meals through Mercy Chefs to the disaster victims and the first responders. Our email campaign received donations from citizens in Connecticut, New York, Indiana, Tennessee and North Dakota in addition to folks in the middle Atlantic states. We thank everyone for their support of this project to bring needed aid to our neighbors in North Carolina and Texas.

Private William Moore, Co I - 32nd Virginia Infantry died of pneumonia at Richmond's Chimborazo Hospital in 1862. He was born in James City County and farmed near Half-Way House in York County. His grave at Oakwood Cemetery had a little square marker that noted "B A 110." He now has a regulation headstone that notes the information above and his date of death. The Cavalry purchased his long overdue headstone.

We work closely with the ladies of the Williamsburg U.D.C. Chapter to maintain Fort Magruder. Our winter 2026 clean-ups at Fort Magruder, and the abandoned family cemeteries that the Camp maintains, are listed in this issue. For 20 years local cemetery work has been an important part of our Camp mission.

In our editor's ongoing tradition, Paul has dedicated a page thanking the marvelous collection of speakers who visited our Camp in 2025 and shared their knowledge on a wide variety of historical subjects.

You have followed the story of the four sets of Confederate remains that were discovered near the Colonial Williamsburg Magazine, their D.N.A. testing, their burial at Cedar Grove, and the continuing work to confirm their identities. The Cavalry is the stakeholder representing the S.C.V. and the *Picket Lines* is the vehicle keeping everyone up to date on this project.

In closing, the Cavalry would like to thank Compatriots Fred Boelt, Robert Glaser, Ken Parsons, Richard Mountcastle, Scott Summerfield and Steve White. These gentlemen were among our 15 charter members and are still valuable assets to our Camp.

WE ARE THE SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS AND THIS IS WHAT WE DO.

Jeff

Confederate Christmases

(Contributed by Historian Fred Boelt)

As the Christmas season approaches, have you ever thought about how our troops spent their holidays during the War Between the States? In general, the holidays were altogether different compared to our over commercialized extravaganzas today. But in the nineteenth century, families did gather for church services and festive dining. This came to an abrupt halt as will be witnessed from the written word entered below.

In his 1861 Greenmount Farm Journal, Thomas G. Wynne wrote, "Wednesday [Dec.] 25th ; We spent the day with Bake and Bet (his brother and sister-in-law who lived at Locust Grove, present day site of James River Elementary School). It is difficult to realize that this is Christmas day but I rejoice to know that our affairs are not so gloomy as were those of the United States colonies when Gen. Washington crossed the Delaware river and by the glorious victory he then achieved over the British, turned the tide of the American Revolution." The Confederacy had not yet been subjected to the deprivations of 1776.

In winter quarters on the Peninsula, on Christmas Day, 1861, Sergeant Thomas Humphrey Wynne of the Nelson Guard, 32nd Virginia Infantry, wrote to his wife, Henrietta:

"...This has been a beautiful day. How have you spent it? I hope pleasantly. I've spent it as any other day in camp save a short time that I took a walk for exercise. The dull monotony of camp life has not been varied any of consequence, the only difference being in the glass of Eggnog I drank this morning. Little did I think last year this time that I would be soldiering and you many miles distant..."ⁱ

Times gradually worsened as witnessed from a letter, in a private collection, from John William Wynne to his sister, Mary Elizabeth Wynne, living at her family's farm on York Point, Chisman's Creek, York County, Virginia:

Camp 1st Va Inf Dec 29th/63

"My dear sister, what do you think I had good for my Christmas dinner, you could not guess in a year. It was a cake of dry bread, flour and water, nothing else, we drew no rations for two days, that's one item on camp life, what think you of my Christmas cake, I have nothing more to say about camp, I leave you to imagine...."

And another account from the diary of John F. Charlton, 5th Louisiana Infantry, continued the gloom. Charlton was captured by the 5th Maine and a Wisconsin regiment of General Sedgewick's corps on November 7, 1863, on the south side of the Rappahannock River. He was eventually sent to Point Lookout prison where he spent a bleak Christmas.

"Thursday Dec 24 Cold weather...Beast Butler & staff come for the purpose to inspect the camp & prisoners with a strong guard to protect him. For the wrongs of 1862 in NO [New Orleans]. Promises to increase rations (never done it) ...without money or provisions a poor prospect for a merry Christmas. Friday Dec 25 Christmas Pleasant weather. 5 crackers & one cup of coffee for breakfast. A poor day I must confess. Hungry & cold. No money to get tobacco. Would give the world to be in Dixie. At either Lynchburg, Richmond or Staunton. A miserable dinner. Cannot spend a Christmas more miserable."

These are but three testimonies to the agonies of death, destruction and deprivation particularly poignant during the Christmas season. As we celebrate a joyous Christmastide, let us not forget our ancestors, both military and civilian, that endured hunger and hardships for the Confederacy!

ⁱ Jensen, Les. *32nd Virginia Infantry*. Lynchburg, H. E. Howard, Inc. 1990. Pp 50-51.



Thank You to Our 2025 Speakers!



(Contributed by 1st Lt. Cmdr. Ron Perry)



Mr. Andrew Morehead



Ms. Melody Bage



Dr. John Coulter II



SCV Commander-in-Chief Donnie Kennedy



Mrs. Billie Earnest



Mr. Jay Gaidmore



Ms. Shelly Liebler



Capt. Bob Kennedy, U.S.N. Ret.



Mr. Carson Hudson

The Passing of a Friend

(Contributed by Cmdr. Jeff Toalson)

This fall the noted WBTS historian Eric Wittenberg passed away. He authored and co-authored more than 20 books on cavalry campaigns, cavalry officers, and diaries and journals of selected cavalrymen. He was a marvelous speaker, spoke off-the-cuff without notes, and could stop exactly in the time allotment required. His knowledge of cavalry during the WBTS was encyclopedic to say the least.

Jan and I heard him speak at the Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable in Arizona. He has spoken with the Williamsburg Roundtable on several occasions and in 2018 he spoke on consecutive nights in Williamsburg to the Roundtable and then the Cavalry. The topics were *General John Buford at Gettysburg* and *The Battle of Brandy Station*. He helped me with *Send Me a Pair of Old Boots & Kiss My Little Girls* by catching a dating error on some of Captain Richard Watkins letters. Exhaustion caused Richard to write the wrong month on his letters during the Trevillian Station campaign. Jan and I also had the pleasure of dining with Bill and Gidget Miller along with Eric and Susan Wittenberg during their time here for the back-to-back talks.

He has published 3 books of letters by men who served under George A. Custer. He never wrote a book on Custer. Which brings up the Fantasy Cavalry Officer Draft that Eric and I were discussing several years ago. We both wrote out our list of top draft choices. Both lists included: J.E.B. Stuart, N. B. Forrest, Wade Hampton, and John Buford. His list also had William Gamble and Joe Wheeler and I had Wesley Merritt and Williams Wickham. There is a reason why a certain reckless, vainglorious fool of a cavalry officer was not on our lists and why Eric never wrote a book about him.

Our heartfelt sympathy is extended to Susan and the entire Wittenberg family.



Susan, Eric and Fred

2026 Speaker Schedule

(Contributed by 1st Lt. Cmdr. Ron Perry)

Jan 28	Ms. Jenni Cutchin - <i>"Mercy Chefs – Our Story & Our Mission w/ Focus on our 2025 work in W. N. Carolina & Kerr Cty., Texas"</i>
Feb 25	Mr. Andrew Morehead - <i>"The Rest of the Story – General A. P. Hill Finally at Rest!"</i>
Mar 25	Mr. Sam Winkler - <i>"Snake-Oil Salesman - Story of the Traveling Patent Medicine Salesman of Miracle Cures"</i>
Apr 22	Mr. Art Wingo - <i>"The Chimborazo Hospital System"</i>
May	CAMP MEMORIAL SERVICE AND PICNIC
Jun 24	T.B.D.
Jul 22	Mr. Bob Kennedy – <i>"Blockade Runners during the WBTS"</i>
Aug – Nov	T.B.D.
Dec	Camp Christmas Party

Williamsburg Civil War Round Table

<http://www.wcwrt.org>

At 6:30 PM on December 16th at the
Williamsburg Library Theatre - Peggy Vogtsberger
will present:

"The Army of the Cumberland"

