



James City Cavalry Picket Lines



March 2025 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, March 26th, 2025, 6:30 pm
Colonial Heritage Club House
www.colonialheritageclub.com/find-us
6500 Arthur Hills Drive
Williamsburg, VA 23188



Meal Cost: \$23.00 Per Person

Payment by check or exact cash only please.

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.

March Guest Speaker

Melody Bage
First Lady of the
Virginia Division,
SCV



***"Antebellum
Mourning
Rules"***

Melody's presentation will examine antebellum mourning rules especially as they applied to the widows of the South. Emphasis will be placed on how the Civil War altered these rituals, with widows being created in higher numbers than during any other time in history. Famous Confederate widows will also be discussed, as well as the development of Widows' Pensions in the Southern States.

Melody "Mel" Bage, was born at Ft. Lee into a military family. She has a B.S. in education and graduate studies in psychology from James Madison University. After 20 years, she ended her career as the Director of Human Services for the Hopewell City Public Schools. An active member of the UDC and other heritage organizations, Melody has been married for 42 years to our Virginian Division SCV Commander, Kenny Bage.

Camp Journal for Last Muster

Meeting:

Held February 26th at 6:30 PM at Colonial Heritage Club House,
James City County, Va., **43** Attendees

Welcome given by Cmdr. Jeff Toalson

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. Andrew Morehead

Mr. Morehead presented *"The Exhumation and Transfer of Gen. A. P. Hill's Remains to Culpeper & The Rest of the Story."* This talk could have lasted three hours, and the crowd would have wanted more. The process of the removal of the monument, which was his grave marker, and the removal of the General's remains for transfer to Culpeper for reburial was a fascinating story.



1st Lt. Cmdr. Perry, Mr. Morehead and Cmdr. Toalson

Committee Reports and Announcements:

Cemetery Report

2nd Lt. Commander Steve White reported on the work on Ft. Magruder: We were able to bush-hog the battlements and Bob White had a magic machine that ate the brush and tree-fall in the moat. I was joined by Bob White, Derick Hayman, Ron Perry, Mason Ware, Perry Turner, Lang Shelton and Mark Griggs. We have now removed over 6 trailers of debris and 3 large trash bags of litter from Fort Magruder. I thank our Cavalrymen for showing up on several weekends for our 2-hour work details. Sunnyside has been cleaned and the trees at Peach Park have been pruned.

Old & New Business

- Adjutant's Report – Adjutant Dave Watson
- Treasurer's Report – Treasurer Jon Holland
- Comments - Cmdr. Jeff Toalson
- WCWRT Update – Compatriot Bill Miller
- Brigade Comments – Brig. Cmdr. Ed Whitley

Book Raffle:

Proceeds of \$95 were donated to the Camp Treasury for the raffle of the four donations.

Benediction:

Given by Chaplain David Stover

Special Guests:



Mr. Curt Fields and Mr. Morgan Gates were in character as Generals Grant and Pemberton at the WCWRT on Tuesday. They, and their wives, were guests of the Cavalry at our Wednesday meeting. LtoR going clockwise: Curt Fields, Lena Fields, Jim O'Donnell, Gwen Gates & Morgan Gates hiding behind Bill Miller. See next page for a photo of them in character.

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	Jon Holland jonholland79@gmail.com
Senior Chaplain	George Corbett georgecorbett@cox.net
Chaplain	David Stover gor_cabot1@msn.com
Quartermaster	Tom Campbell tgcampbell1781@gmail.com
Historian	Fred Boelt fwb@widomaker.com
Webmaster	Don Woolridge dsw1229@gmail.com
Archivist/Editor	Paul Huelskamp jccpicketlinesdistribution@gmail.com

Generals Meet at WCWRT



At the end of the February WCWRT (Williamsburg Civil War Roundtable) meeting Bill Miller invited the James City Cavalry members who were present to have a picture taken with General Grant and General Pemberton.

Commander's Comments

Wait till you read the letter from Sara in Swannanoa, North Carolina. It says everything . . . why these people need our help and why we are raising money to support Mercy Chefs. Sara, thank you.

Mark April 5 on your calendar for the Williamsburg Battlefield Association PARK DAY! It will be a morning clean-up at 3 sections of the Williamsburg Battlefield. Southern soldiers from South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas were engaged with Union troops on this battlefield. Several of us are members of the WBA and more of us should join. THE CAVALRY NEEDS TO TURN OUT ON THE MORNING OF APRIL 5 TO HONOR OUR ANCESTORS. See the attached flyer and announcement.

We are honored to have Melody Bage back again as our speaker. Her talk will be on rituals of death and mourning during the WBTS. This promises to be very educational. In our twenty years, as a camp, we have never had a discussion of this subject. Consider bringing your wife to this meeting.

Our 2024-2025 Outstanding Camp Application will be forwarded to the Virginia Division in the next 10 days. Derick Hayman will be joining me as our representatives at the convention in Winchester.

We were sold out for the February meeting and expect a full house in March. Contact me or your call captain for reservations. Sliced Beef Brisket will be the main course for our supper.

Yours,

Jeff



Confederate Gravesites

(Contributed by Compatriot Fred Boelt)

Several times over the years, we have written about the three Cowles brothers, John, Carter and Peter, who served in Company H, 5th Virginia Cavalry. To date, our information about the brothers' service has been limited to sometimes sketchy war records. However, the youngest brother, Peter Tribble Cowles, shared vivid memories with his grandson, John Elmo Cowles in 1927, two years before his death. John transcribed all of this and a copy has recently been made available to us.

“My older brothers John and Carter enlisted in Co. H at the beginning of the war. I was the only son left at home and my mother would not consent to let me go. I was sixteen in August 1860. However early in the war during McClellans Peninsula campaign Co. H. was detailed to raid an encampment of yankee cavalry near Magruder. My brothers with Lieut. Charles Hubbard and one or two others from the neighborhood stopped by home for supper before the night raid. I begged to join them and was allowed to do so. As a result of the melee, I came home with a yankee horse, saddle and sidearms intact. Fully equipped I now begged to join the Company. My mother finally consented but said ‘go out to the stables and get yourself a decent mount and turn that yankee plow horse in the pasture.’ My mother made it a business to keep some very fine horses and subsequently furnished several remounts to the Company. Company H was made up of James City boys. John became a sergeant, Carter a corporal and I became and remained a private. My brother Carter Washington [Cowles], was surrounded by yankee cavalymen and taken prisoner in a bitter action late in the war. He died a prisoner of war at Elmira, N.Y. Sept. 1864, and is buried there. Postmaster there wrote me his grave could be identified from chart. John came through the war unscathed, claimed strong ‘toddlies’ kept him out of yankee hands. I was taken prisoner later in the war than Carter. I had come home on a horse detail to get another mount my horse having been killed.

“I was sleeping out in the office with uncle Washington [Cowles]. (Out in the front yard at Grove Hill an office was off to the right from the corner of the main house and a laundry off from the left corner. This position is significant in the first night escape.) Lieut. Chas. Hubbard and my brother John, home on a furlough, and a scout named Treadwell from South Carolina were sleeping upstairs in the main house. I was awakened by a clatter and turmoil and looked out to see the yard full of yankee cavalry and the main house being surrounded. I slipped out a window, ran to the nearby woods and escaped. I was told that Captain Cronin entered the house and told my mother ‘madam you have rebel soldiers here, where are they.’ Her reply – ‘they are upstairs Captain.’ And then as he started up the stairs – ‘Captain you had better not go up there, Treadwell is with them and he will not surrender.’ As he hesitated Lieut. Hubbard and John ran down the stairs by him and jumped out the back door and escaped. Capt. Cronin shot at them as they went through the door, the bullet lodged in the door jam was visible until the house burned over sixty years later. Treadwell having a price on his head took a desperate chance, climbed out of a gable end window onto a lower roof, slid down a far corner next to the office, let out a rebel yell, ran into the woods and escaped. The yankees no doubt thought he had escaped from the office. At his yell, the yankees all ran to the front yard. This gave John and Charles Hubbard a clear way to the woods.”

to be continued next month

A Letter From Swannanoa, N.C.

(Contributed by Sara Boelt, Fred's daughter, who lives in Swannanoa)

This may not seem monumental unless you are from the Swannanoa Valley, but Wednesday, February 26, the Whitson Avenue Bridge, also known as the Beacon Bridge, was finally reopened almost five months after Helene tore through the valley. The bridge connects Highway 70 and Old Highway 70 for many families. They no longer have to go out of the way to get to where they need to go. However, this is just a bridge. The river and trees are still full of debris. There is river sand that now covers the land. Many off the beaten track roads/bridges are still washed out from landslides and the creeks/streams jumping their banks, making it difficult to get supplies to people. The trains are no longer able to run as many parts of the railroad system have been destroyed from gravel washing out from under the tracks to the tracks themselves being mangled.

As you cross over the bridge, the houses and mobile homes that were once there are gone. They have been replaced with tents and campers. And some people are living in their cars. Things will never be the same and it will take years to get everything cleaned up.

Thankfully, lots of help has come to the mountains, but as the months go on and the hurricane gets farther away from our memories, will we be forgotten? There are several supply distribution hubs with volunteers who have been working tirelessly to get the supplies to where they are needed. The mule packers have been instrumental in getting supplies out, as well as people bringing four wheelers and side by sides to assist. A friend of mine, who has been collecting supplies for all the animals, showed a picture of a pulley system to get hay across a creek for some horses as the bridge was washed out.

There is still a place open that folks can take clean showers and wash their clothes. There are places still offering meals. Everyone is so very grateful for all the support from the James City Cavalry and Mercy Chefs. It will take the continued support from many groups and organizations to help get us back to some sort of normalcy.

Sara Boelt



Whitson Avenue Bridge Reopening

Camp Bulletins

Hurricane Helene – Mercy Chefs in N. Carolina

Jon Holland just sent in an end of February check to Mercy Chefs. Our donations have now topped \$4,000 in support of their efforts out of their Black Mountain HQ. Donations are coming in from Tennessee, North Dakota, New York, Connecticut as our campaign gathers steam. Many local UDC and SCV members as well as Chapters and Camps have sent support. A special thank you to the Tom Smith SCV Camp of Suffolk who just sent us a check for several hundred dollars. Thanks to everyone.

Unknown CSA Remains from Williamsburg Magazine - Update

The 4 sets of remains are ready to be interred in Cedar Grove Cemetery in Williamsburg. The 'Unknown CSA Soldier' stones must be flat stones and not upright markers. The V.A. is working on delivery and hopefully the U. S. Army will accomplish the burial in the next couple of months.

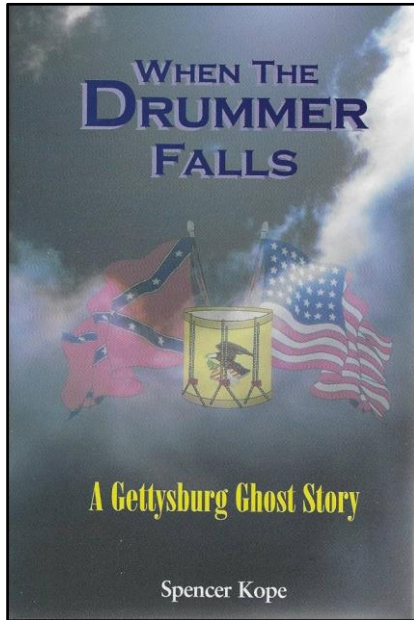
Williamsburg Battlefield Association Clean-Up on April 5

See the attached flyer at the end of this month's *Picket Lines*. Rally point for all volunteers is the Grriffin-Yeates Center at 8:30 a.m. on April 5. Work parties will go to the 'Ravine', the 'Triangle' by the rally point formed by the Yorktown Road and the Warwick Courthouse Roads, and 'Redoubt 11.'

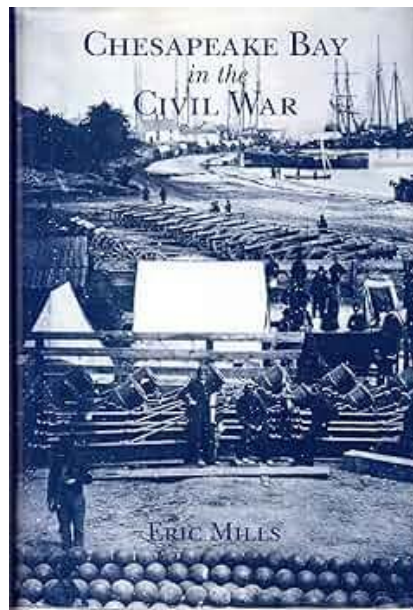
Don Kline needs 2 experienced chain saw workers with saws to join his team. This team will be dropping some selected trees. **Only cutters will be in this work detail.** If you have a chainsaw and tree dropping skills, contact Don at darkline@yahoo.com or mobile # 757-715-3133 for this specific task. The rest of us will be trimming, lopping and bagging trash at the other two sites. **WE NEED A GOOD CAVALRY TURNOUT TO SUPPORT THE WBA.**



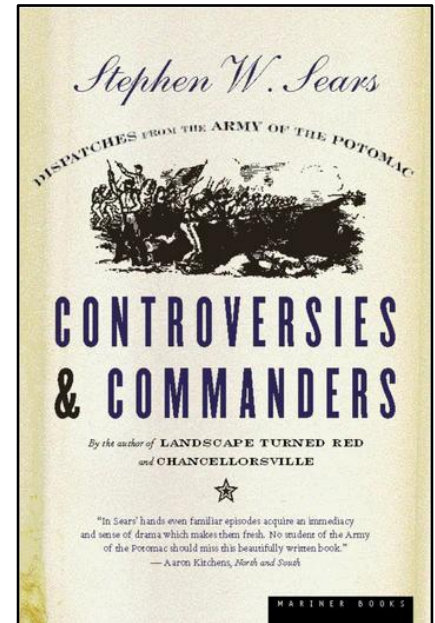
March Book Raffle



"When the Drummer Falls (A Gettysburg Ghost Story)"
by Spencer Kope

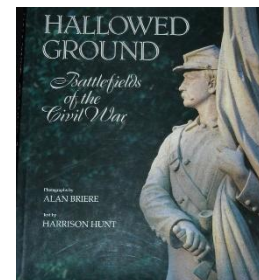


"Chesapeake Bay in the Civil War"
by Eric Mills



"Controversies & Commanders"
by Stephen W. Sears

Bonus Book:
"Hallowed Ground (Battlefields of the Civil War)"
by Alan Briere & Harrison Hunt



Williamsburg Civil War Round Table

<http://www.wcwrt.org>

**On March 25th, 2025 - Dr. Eric B. Schweickart
will present:**

**"Discovery & Identification of WBTS Remains near the
Magazine in Colonial Williamsburg"**



★ VOLUNTEERS NEEDED ★

Park Day @Williamsburg Battlefield

Hosted by the Williamsburg Battlefield Association

Saturday, April 5, 2025 from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM



Meeting Place: Griffin Yeates Center 1490 Government Rd. Williamsburg, VA
Gather starting at 8:30 to check in and enjoy free refreshments.

Activities: Litter clean up at three sites. Clearing brush and small saplings.
Clearing fallen trees at the Redoubt 11 site.

History Talk: A brief overview of the Battle of Williamsburg will be presented.
Upcoming spring and summer events will also be announced.

What should I bring: Sturdy footwear such as hiking boots. Work gloves and landscaping tools such as loppers and hand trimmers. A chainsaw to cut downed trees. Heavy trash bags will be provided.

For more information: <https://www.battlefields.org/events/park-day/volunteer-opportunities/williamsburg-battlefield>

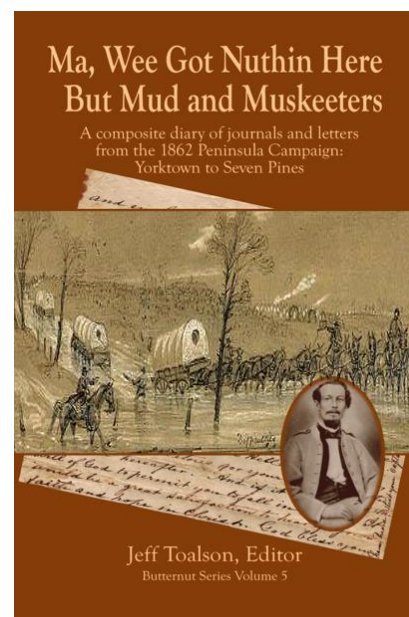
Hot Meals Needed in W. North Carolina

Our neighbors in Western North Carolina need more help. In the river valleys the waters from Hurricane Helene wiped out homes, jobs, vehicles and even their land. People have lost literally everything except what they were wearing. The continuing stories on The Weather Channel and Fox Weather keep us updated. Families are living in tents, in pop-up campers, in camper trailers and in community centers with 40 other people in one room.

They can park small camper trailers on their property without building permits. They of course do not have water, sewerage and electricity. **THESE FOLKS REALLY NEED HOT MEALS AND THAT IS WHY WE RAISE MONEY FOR MERCY CHEFS.** They prepare and deliver up to 3,000 hot meals each day in Bat Cave, Swannanoa, Black Mountain, Chimney Rock, Old Fort, Burnsville, Marshall, Hendersonville and other communities around Asheville who have been devastated.

THIS IS OUR THIRD DRIVE. Each meal costs Mercy Chefs a little over \$3. **Your dollars can have a big impact. Our neighbors truly need our help.** We have obtained a special price on Jeff Toalson's *Ma, Wee Got Nuthin Here But Mud and Muskeeters* and as a 'thank you' a free copy will be shipped to each person who donates a minimum of \$65 to the James City Cavalry to support our campaign to help our neighbors in North Carolina.

Last fall we sent Mercy Chefs \$3,000 in donations from our first two campaigns. With winter arriving this campaign is even more important. We need your help. They need our help. Articles in our newsletter will provide updates and can be viewed at www.jamescitycavalry.org



Please send donations (checks) to:

Mr. Jon Holland, Treasurer
James City Cavalry
6273 Centerville Road
Williamsburg, Virginia 23188

Make checks payable to: James City Cavalry
Contact Commander Jeff Toalson with any questions at troon24@cox.net

Donation: \$1,000 ____ \$500 ____ \$250 ____ \$100 ____ \$65 ____ \$50 ____ Other ____

If making a donation that includes a free book(s) the check must be payable to the James City Cavalry.

All other donations can be made out to 'James City Cavalry' or 'Mercy Chefs.' Jon will send in the donations in batches. Please note 'Mercy Chefs N. Carolina Relief' on your check memo line.