



James City Cavalry Picket Lines



June 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, June 26th, 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.

June Guest Speaker

Melody Bage
First Lady of the
Virginia Division, CSA



***“President
Davis’s
Generals’
Wives”***

Mel Bage will share with us a presentation on “President Davis’s Generals’ Wives” which includes the stories of Mary Randolph Custis Lee, Mary Anna Morrison Jackson, Flora Cooke Stuart, and Mary Louise Garland Longstreet. Why does learning about the wives of the famous Confederate generals even matter? Come to our meeting to hear the answers.

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. We are pleased to have the 'First Lady' of the Virginia Division as our speaker in June.

Cavalry Memorial Service and Picnic

Our Olive Branch Memorial Day service did not get rained out. By the time our service ended the threat of rain had moved on to other areas of Virginia. We thank Historian Fred Boelt for assembling our service. 1st Lt. Commander Ron Perry, 2nd Lt. Commander Steve White, Sr. Chaplain George Corbett, Treasurer Jon Holland, Quartermaster George Bridewell and Compatriot Dennis Manning executed all the details of the service. As was mentioned in the May issue, there are 27 Confederate soldiers resting under the shade of the trees at Olive Branch. Thanks to everyone for this moving tribute at our Memorial Day remembrance.

Compatriot Dennis Manning in his full Scottish regalia at the Memorial Service. He opened the ceremony with *Come Thou Font of Every Blessing* and closed the ceremony with *Amazing Grace*.



1st Lt. Commander Ron Perry (R) welcomes compatriots and friends to the Memorial Service at Olive Branch Christian Church Cemetery. Treasurer Jon Holland stands ready to lead the group in the pledges to the flags.


Senior Chaplain George Corbett (R), with 1st Lt. Commander Ron Perry in the background, leads the Camp in prayers honoring the service of the soldiers buried at Olive Branch.



Camp Officers

Commander	Jeff Toalson troon24@cox.net
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Quote on General Lee



"The world has never seen better soldiers than those who followed Lee, and their leader will undoubtedly rank, without exception, as the very greatest of all the great captains that the English-speaking peoples have brought forth."

**Theodore Roosevelt
on Robert E. Lee**

Commander's Comments

Summer has arrived and our June meeting will be here in a couple of weeks. Mrs. Melody Bage, wife of the Commander of the Virginia Division of the SCV, will be regaling us with stories of the wives of 4 key generals in the Army of Northern Virginia. This will be an excellent meeting to bring your lady as a guest.

In July we will be joined by President Jefferson Davis and his wife Varina. He was the keynote speaker at the SCV Convention in Bristol in April. We are fortunate that his travel brings him to James City County in July. You will want to mark our July meeting on your calendar.

We don't slow down. In August, the Confederate submarine *Hunley* is the topic and Mr. Bob Kennedy will tell us stories of her construction near Mobile, her journey to Charleston, her sea trials, sinkings, and her successful destruction of the *Housatonic*. Finally, he will discuss her recovery and salvage in August of 2000. It is a remarkable story.

In September we are on the James River across from Mulberry Island discussing the river defenses in Isle of Wight County including stories about Forts Boykin and Huger. Ms. Jennifer England and Mr. Albert Burckard will be joining us from the Isle of Wight County Museum.

Finally, in October, our good friend Larry Floyd will be returning with a talk on 'pocket guns.' His talk will be the *Hillsville Courthouse Shootout & Tragedy*. It seems a whole bunch of folks, armed with pocket guns inside the Courthouse, decided to disagree and open fire. Well, Larry has the details and samples of all the guns involved. It will be great fun.

Thank 1st Lt. Commander Ron Perry for this varied lineup. He is working on November and already thinking about 2025.

Jeff

Confederate Gravesites

(Contributed by Compatriot Fred Boelt)

Many historians consider the Battle of Big Bethel, fought on June 10, 1861, to have been the first land battle of the Civil War. Based at Fort Monroe, Union Major General Benjamin Butler sent converging forces from Hampton and Newport News Point against Confederate outposts at Little Bethel and Big Bethel churches. Even though the Union troops numbered 3,500, the 1,200 Confederate troops gained the upper hand, and the Union troops retreated having lost eighteen men. The first Confederate casualty of the war was Private Henry Lawson Wyatt of the 1st North Carolina Infantry, who was killed in this battle. Winning this victory was a great morale booster for the Confederate states.

Chidley Wade and his wife, Anne Cary Curtis Wade, lived in York County just to the east of Harwood's Mill. They had twelve children, three of whom left written records of their views of the war years in York County. Parts of a diary kept by Lucy Elizabeth Wade have survived. The extant pages cover parts of 1864 and 1865. Sarah Eliza Wade wrote her memories of the war at a later (undetermined) date. The third source comes from a letter written by Lula Wade Renforth in 1961. She was the daughter of John Christopher Wade, a son of Chidley and Anne Cary Wade.

Sarah Eliza Wade was born in 1857, so she was quite young when the war began. However, it made a lasting impression on her. "Then I remember the day of the battle of 'Bethel.' My mother and sisters (and they took me with them) went to a neighbor's house on the Hampton Road to see our Southern soldiers pass on their way to the battle. For some reason I don't just know, one Co. wanted a white band on their arms, and I remember seeing the ladies cutting the white clothe in strips and handing it over the fence to the soldiers as they came up for it."

The white bands were apparently used for identification of friendly troops during the battle. As the day wore on, a Union column crossed the creek near the church wearing white bands around their caps like the Confederates. As they approached, they called out, "Don't fire," in an attempt to get closer to do battle. Their deception was detected, volleys were fired, and the Union forces soon withdrew back across the creek.

John C. Wade, born in 1849, was a bit older than his sister Sarah, and had stories to tell his daughter, who recorded several in her 1961 letter cited above. "In the early part of the year 1861, the Confederate troops were on the lower Peninsula. They camped at Grafton near my home, at Big Bethel, and surrounding area. The 3rd Virginia Cavalry was camped at Grafton; we often went to see them drill. They would scout the lower peninsula down to Hampton, on one occasion one came back bringing three Yankee drummer boys, one of the boys said 'if he had known he was going to Richmond he would have dressed up some.' The first North Carolina Regiment was camped near our farm; they moved on to Bethel, I carried a load of baggage for them. On the tenth of June Butler's force came up, that was quite a battle which lasted from ten A. M. to two o'clock. The first casualty happened there, a young man, his last name was Wyatt of North Carolina. The Northern army was repulsed; the Second Louisiana Cavalry [Infantry] from Grafton was ordered to Big Bethel to reinforce the First North Carolina but was held back for a while because of some ships in the river, they started later. We saw them pass about twelve o'clock. It was a very warm day, they were on a forced march, [and] they drank every well dry they found on the road side. The battle was over when they arrived, it was a very hard march, running and walking. My father [Chidley Wade] joined with them as they went on, he was not in the army but he gathered a gun and joined them. The Fifteenth Virginia regiment camped on our farm."

War had been declared and Virginia had seceded in April, barely two months before Big Bethel. The drastic changes witnessed by the Wades and all of the peninsula residents must have been alarming. Though perhaps not understanding the ramifications of the conflict yet to come, enduring impressions were made on the Wade children. We are fortunate to have these memoirs and will follow them as the war years progress.

Confederate Dead Honored at the Yorktown National Cemetery

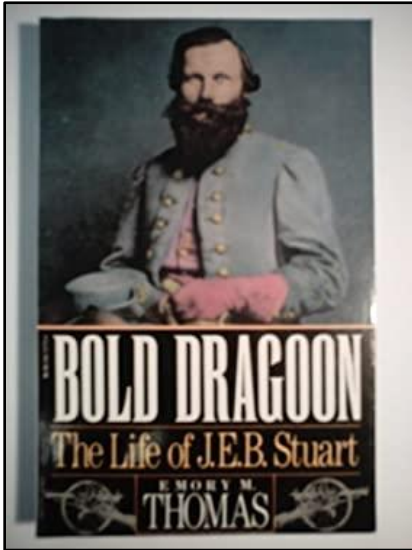
For the last 3 years Compatriot Joe Wert and his sons, Joshua and Christopher, have honored our identified confederate dead at the Yorktown National Cemetery. They have found and identified 11 North Carolina soldiers. Ten of them died from wounds received at the battle of Hanover Court House (Slash Church) on May 27, 1862. There is also a marker in the cemetery for the unknown Confederate dead located on the Yorktown battlefield. To see a complete listing of these North Carolina Confederate soldiers including name, rank, unit, wounds, hospital info, date of death, and Yorktown National Cemetery burial site marker number go to our website at: jamescitycavalry.org/cemetery-projects-and-gra.

Joshua Wert (L) and Christopher Wert with 2nd National Flag at the Cemetery.

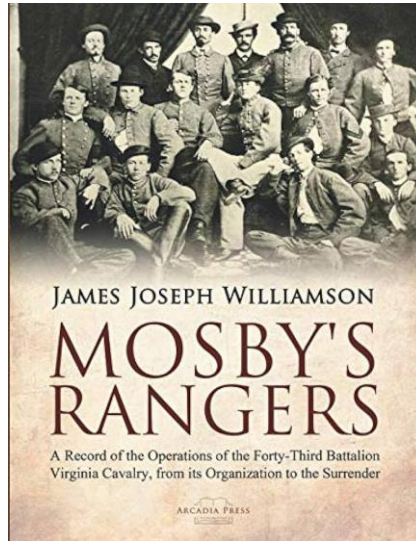


Marker 1st Lt. George Johnson

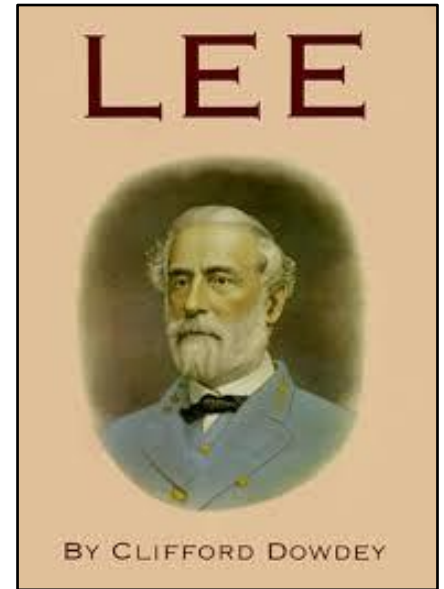
June Book Raffle



"Bold Dragon - The Life of JEB Stuart"
by Emory M. Thomas

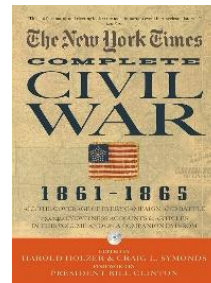


"Mosby's Rangers"
by James J. Williamson



"Lee"
by Clifford Dowdey

Bonus Book:
"The New York Times Complete Civil War"
by Harold Holzer & Craig L. Symonds



Williamsburg Civil War Round Table



<http://www.wcwrt.org>

The Round Table will be on leave until September.