



January 2009

Last Meeting: Our last meeting had 19 in attendance. Our program was presented by Compatriot Gerald White co-author of **The Rebel and the Rose** www.rebelandtherose.com. Compatriot White presented an excellent program on the mysteries of the lost Confederate gold and silver removed during Richmond's evacuation in 1865. The book is an excellent account of the last days of the Confederacy as well as the accounts of our President, Jefferson Davis and his imprisonment at Fort Monroe.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be at Hog Wild Barbeque in Toano on January 28th at 7pm. Our speaker will be Compatriot Harrison Taylor. He has been a member of the Armistead-Hill-Goode SCV Camp #749 of Chase City, VA since 2000. He resides in Richmond and visits numerous camp meetings there. His SCV ancestor was a Waller grandson as was a paternal Taylor ancestor. Harrison grew up in South Hill which around 200 years ago was considered the Promised Land. A little later it was cleared out by the Cotton Kingdom. Harrison is a graduate of Ole Miss with a degree in social studies and is a marketing rep in industrial services. Come and bring a guest.

From the Commander: What is patriotism? Patriotism, for our ancestors, meant a fight against tyranny, oppression and taxation and for liberty. Today, most people think of patriotism as undying support of all government, the very thing that the constitution was to protect us from. Think about it. Who were our ancestors thinking would take our natural rights away? After all, the British government had done it first. They wanted to make sure that ours didn't in the future. Our ancestors in the Confederacy fought to keep this country from turning out the way it has, where money is forcibly extracted from citizens to buy everything from condoms for the unmarried and needles for drug addicts to a hoard of bureaucrats to permit, regulate, tax, license, lecture to, document, educate, spy on, photograph, force into compliance, start wars, bus, plan, zone and generally make havoc over our lives. Really, then, it was the Confederate soldier who was the Last Great Patriot of this nation. As one of my New Year's resolutions, I am going to try to refer to these gallant people as "patriots."

As our camp continues to grow, we need to keep in the forefront a good, strong cadre of leadership. The structure of SCV Camps is such that there are many leadership positions. We are looking for willing volunteers to assume leadership roles in the camp. It is through the infusion of new blood that organizations remain energetic, viable and alive. If you are interested, call me at 757-718-5829.

From the 1st Lt. Commander: I am in the process of building a web-site for our camp. I have registered our domain name as www.jamescitycavalry.org with a domain registration company. I am also in the process of building the web-site and would appreciate any suggestions that you have for the content you would like to see displayed. The web-site is not published on the internet as yet as it is still under construction. If there is content or pictures that you would like included, please email them to me at dsw317@earthlink.net. The camp will have full control over the content, edit and updating can be done at anytime.

New Members: James City Cavalry welcomed Compatriots Will Alford, Bill Blizzard and Gerald White into the Camp membership. We look forward to these new Compatriots joining the cause for preserving the history for our Confederate ancestors.

Book Auctions: Compatriot Jeff Toalson will be conducting his book auction monthly and donating the proceeds to the Camp's general fund. Jeff will conduct in the future a larger auction for the painting of Stonewall Jackson which was kindly donated to the camp by Associate Peter Jelinek. Peter is a local artist. His studio is located in The Village Shops at Kingsmill. Peter has graciously offered to have the painting framed at no cost to the highest bidder when the auction is held. This painting is of the finest artistic quality and would be a treasure to anyone that holds our Confederate General Stonewall Jackson in the highest esteem.

Fort Magruder and Cemetery Project Updates: Compatriot Steve White reports on the cleanup projects. I have contacted Mr. Michael Moore of the Lee Hall Mansion and key holder of the Fort Magruder site. He would like to schedule a meeting to discuss clean-up plans but as of this date he has not responded with an available date. The work to be done is; removal of saplings from the earthworks, trimming some of the lower tree limbs, trash removal, possible leaf clean-up and the possibility of moving the flag pole. Our group could complete the maintenance work on a couple of Saturdays with enough help.

Fred Boelt and I have reviewed the Cowles-Spencer Cemetery and legal access is off of Longhill Road. There is no direct access due to a large ditch and lack of a road entrance to the site. Directly adjacent to the site is the Junius H. Moody Park which has an access road adjacent to the cemetery but is blocked off with a chain. James City County or the Forest Glen Homeowners Association are the possible owners of the site but no determination has been made at the present time. The ownership issue is being researched in order to gain access to the property. The cemetery work will include; removal of a large tree that has fallen, litter clean-up (a lot of bottles) and cutting away brush. In addition to the clean-up probing for grave markers will be necessary to determine their location due to extensive periwinkle growth. The fence is damaged but I would like to save the repairs for a later time. This project could be completed with enough help on one or two Saturdays.

We will start on which ever site permission is obtained. We would like to start these projects in January or February.

JAMES CITY COUNTY CONFEDERATE GRAVESITES

There is a completely unmarked family cemetery in a field near the intersection of Centerville Road and Thompson Lane. Two years ago, the only identifying features were two rotting brush piles, but family descendants said that the cemetery is located between these two piles. Although the actual number of burials there is unknown, it is known that one Confederate veteran is buried there.

Marias Franklin Thompson, the son of James A. and Mary Thompson, was born in Prince George County on February 1, 1842. Little is known of his life before the war. He enlisted in the James City Artillery in Richmond on July 3, 1863. During the spring of 1863, the artillery had been stationed back and forth between Fort Powhatan on the James River and Camp French near Petersburg. By late June, it was stationed at Drewry's Bluff, but moved to Camp Ransom near Richmond later in July. Thompson was present on all rolls through December 1864. He was wounded in his right hip and taken prisoner at Sailor's Creek and was sent on board the USA Hospital Steamer *State of Maine* to Lincoln General Hospital. He was released on June 15, 1865.

After the war, he was living in James City County when he married his first wife, Alice Jones, on September 21, 1869. She was the daughter of John W. Jones and his wife, Martha Relia Jones. Marias and Alice had one son before her untimely death in 1871. Marias then married her sister, Virginia E. Jones, the Widow Hodges, in 1873, and they had three children; two of whom died in childhood and are buried in this cemetery. The Jones sisters inherited two tracts of land from their grandfather, William M. Jones, in right of their mother (John Jones and Martha Jones were cousins before marriage). Thompson ended up owning both tracts after his wives succumbed to early deaths.

The cemetery is located on the tract known as "Scotland." This had been an early quarter for Green Spring and was later purchased by William M. Jones. The exact date of Marias Thompson's death is uncertain. Family data says that he died on May 1, 18??, the year being undetermined so far. Both of his wives, Alice (died 1871) and Virginia (died 1880) are buried here along with the two children and a grandchild, all in unmarked graves. It is possible that there are other graves here. Later members of the family were buried at James River Baptist Church on Centerville Road.

We continue our journey through time with Fred Boelt's Great-great uncle and the Green Mount Journal in future editions of the Picket Lines.

Honoring our Confederate Soldier in December was 1st Sgt. Benjamin Franklin Porter Company E "Yancey Rifles" – 11th Alabama Infantry

Enlisted June 22, 1861 at St. Stephens Village, Washington Cty., Alabama
Appointed 4th Sergeant. He is 19 years of age and weighs 145 pounds.

Arrived at the Manassas battlefield two days after the battle and wrote home on the 27th of July, "*there is a greate many killed &c, the fi . . . est half was not buried and what was buried was*

done by our men. . . . They are lying on the field to be destroyed by the fowls of the are(air) and the beasts of the field.”

The 11th was baptized in battle at Seven Pines. They took heavy losses at both Gaines’ Mill and Frayser’s Farm. 1st. Sergeant Benjamin Porter was captured at Sharpsburg on Sept 17, 1862 and sent to Ft. Delaware. He was exchanged at Aikens Landing, Va on the James River 11-10-62.

Benjamin was shot in the shoulder at Salem Church (Chancellorsville campaign) on May 3. He spent time at Chimborazo # 1 and Danville General till returned to duty July 29th. Although near Bristoe Station in late 1863 his next action was at the Wilderness and on the 12th of May he was part of Perrin’s Brigade when it counterattacked at the Mule Shoe Salient at Spotsylvania. Company E continued in action at North Anna and Cold Harbor. The 11th Alabama was on the same ground where their men had died in 1862.

June 10 *“Sister . . . I feel very well rested being relieved from the front two days. I have gotten my clothes a cold water rensh and picked off a few confederates. . . . I have been round to Lt. Faiths grave and to the place where Mr. Shultz and Simpson lay before they died. . . . Capt. James (killed at Cold Harbor) was very decently buried near the Gaines House on the same field. . . .”*

Shifting south to Petersburg the 11th Alabama was now part of Gen. Wm. Mahone’s Division and saw constant action at Petersburg, Reams Station, Weldon Railroad, & the Crater through the summer and fall of 1864. On October 27th, near Rocky Run, Benjamin was shot through the right lung exiting in his right upper back. He was in the General Hospital in Petersburg till December 9 when he departed for home on a 60 day furlough to recover. His journal says he wasn’t able to depart until late February, 1865 *“able to face the hardships of a long trip home, weak as I was . . . I set out . . . made out well until I reached “Sherman’s Burn” . . . this desolate strip of country.”* Sgt. Benjamin Porter was paroled May 14, 1865 in Washington Cty., Alabama. He had served almost four years with only one 20 day furlough home in March of 1864.

He maintained a sense of humor in his writing. From Orange Cty, Va. in September of 1863 when Co. E was camped beside a cornfield they were given orders not to steal the corn Benjamin wrote, *“there is men in this Company who can take the sweetening out of a cake and not be discovered.”* We can rest assured the Yancey Rifles had corn to eat.

(From *Prey For Us All*, Ellen Williams – editor, Mobile, 2006, & CSA Service Records – Alabama – MicroCopy 311, Roll 206 in the files of the United Daughters of the Confederacy – Richmond, Va.)

"In an effort to help save on the cost of the newsletter, you can now have it e-mailed to you in an adobe format. E-mail 1st Lt. Commander Don Woolridge at dsw317@earthlink.net to be added to this list."

Thought for the Month

“I worked night and day for twelve years to prevent the war, but I could not. The North was mad and blind, would not let us govern ourselves, and so the war came.” President Jefferson Davis

