

Lt. Colonel James Harvey Allen Company H – 5th Virginia Cavalry

James H. Allen was born on January 19, 1829. He was the son of Benjamin and Frances M. B. Coke Allen of James City County. Frances will die on June 11, 1830 giving birth to their final child, Frances Rebeckah (Fannie) Allen.

The 1860 census shows James as age 30 and a 'classical' school teacher.

James enlisted in the James City Cavalry, in Williamsburg, on June 14, 1861. He was elected Captain of the Company and they were initially assigned as Company I of the 3rd Virginia Cavalry. In May of 1862 the C.S.A. armies were reorganized and they were transferred to the 5th Virginia Cavalry as Company H. James was re-elected Captain of the Company.

At Williamsport, Maryland, on July 9, 1863, as they retreated from Gettysburg, he signed for one ton of hay and 2 barrels of corn for the company horses. After 30 days of living off the land this must have seemed pretty meager rations but it was still welcomed.

The February 14, 1864 muster roll shows Company H with 1 Captain, 2 Lieutenants, and 34 enlisted men. They were a smallish Company by Confederate standards with their normal complement around 60 and the normal Confederate Company around 75. They are barely above half strength. James was slightly wounded near Cold Harbor on June 1, 1864. He was promoted to Major on June 16th and to Lt. Colonel on July 20, 1864.

He was in command of the 5th Virginia Cavalry at New Bridge on February 28, 1865. James took the Oath of Allegiance following his return to Williamsburg on April 29, 1865.

He returned to teaching and was immediately installed as the Superintendent of Schools in James City County and held that position till his death, 33 years later, in 1898.

The 1870 and 1880 census reports show him living in Burnt Ordinary with his sister Fannie. James was a charter member of the Magruder-Ewell Camp of the U.C.V. On March 10, 1882, he purchased the 204 acre Peach Park property. He married Ada Hankins (the widow Tuttle) on December 12, 1883. He was 53 and she was 41. Prior to his death they divorced. The will of James H. Allen directed that all of his property go to his sister Fannie.

James is buried in Peach Park Cemetery where we will hold our 2017 Memorial Day Service. He is honored on a daily basis with a monument marking his grave which was installed by the James City Cavalry Camp 2095 in 2008. Directly across the road from his grave his home is still standing.

(Driver, Robert – *The 5th Virginia Cavalry*, Lynchburg, 1997, p. 179; Boelt, Higgs, Hull & Kaufmann editors – *James City County, Virginia Cemeteries*, Yorktown, 2011, p 1-3; Toalson, Jeff – editor, *Send Me a Pair of Old Boots & Kiss My Little Girls*, Bloomington, 2006, p.2)