

THE HEADSTONE

Vol. IV

May 2026

Issue V

Greetings and happy springtime. Most of the folks I have talked to or emailed since the last newsletter went out have one thing in common with each other and with me, the pleasure of getting outside and enjoying the warm days, whether it be a must do project or just working in the flower bed or getting the garden planting under way. Oh I know, some of us will be complaining about the heat and the drought in another sixty days, but this year, every time I get ready to moan and groan about the heat, I am going to think back to this past winter and try to smile instead of grimace. I'll let you know how that works out.

Hitt-Greene Cemetery

I knew very little about Hitt-Greene Cemetery until about six months ago. Translated, that means I had heard of it a while back and six months ago I figured out where it was located. I have grown much more familiar with it since the last week of March, pleasantly so I might add.

One of our newest members, Martha Earhart, and I had gotten together on another project the first of March or so and had gone by Hitt-Greene

Cemetery and we both had discussed the possibility of cleaning it up a little. It is situated in a crop field near Lofton, Virginia. Lofton has never been much more than a whistle stop, first for the Shenandoah Valley Railroad and later

the Norfolk & Western Railroad. The whistle stop (and passenger service on the line) is gone and now Lofton is just a quiet and peaceful place in Augusta County to live, farm, and raise a family.



We knew that landowner or tenant permission was necessary, and we both knew who that was, so we made a rough plan with no firm start date in mind. And then I got a call from Courtney Earhart who informed me that he was traveling back from his home in Oklahoma to Augusta County to attend funeral. In case you don't recall, Courtney was featured in the February 2026 issue of *The Headstone* when I shared the research he and I had done on the Buffalo Gap Cemetery. Courtney is Martha Earhart's stepson, and Martha's ancestors are buried at Hitt-Greene Cemetery, so that is how all of that fits together. We got in touch with Mike Shull, who rents the farm where the cemetery is located. He not only gave us the thumbs up to proceed, but allowed us to drive through his alfalfa field to get to it and also told us if we just piled the brush that he would use his equipment to move it to a pile site in the woods. Mike serves on the Augusta County Board of Supervisors for the Riverheads District and has an appreciation for History.

As it turned out, Martha, Courtney, and I all attended the same funeral and it was during the fellowship time afterwards that we firmed up our plan, which has a little twist. I had previously talked with Bob Jolley, State Archaeologist with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources about doing several cemetery surveys. We had actually scheduled Bell Cemetery in Mount Sidney on two previous occasions but had gotten snowed out both times. So, with Bell Cemetery having been scheduled for March 24th, I asked Bob if we could add Hitt-Greene and Shultz Cemetery near Spottswood to the day and he agreed.

Below is a photo taken on that March 24 day and as you can see, Hitt-Greene was quite the overgrown mess even before this year's growing season had gotten underway.



Bob Jolley attempting to photograph one of the broken stones at Hitt-Greene Cemetery March 24, 2026

The rocks seen piled were never part of the grave marking process. They were once columns that had been constructed at each corner of the cemetery and in between each corner all the way around the perimeter to support what originally were probably wooden rails. The rails had rotted and the columns had long since collapsed, probably due to tree limbs falling, and after closer inspection, the collapsing columns appeared to be the cause of several stones being broken. Folks had since that collapse put in tee-posts and old well pipe to keep the livestock out.

The following day, March 25th, Martha, her husband Kenneth (Courtney's Dad), Courney, I, and Doug Fravel, another distant relative of those buried there, arrived at 0900 and went to work with bladed weed eaters, chainsaws, pitchforks, and rakes and in about three hours we had made a good dent in those briars.

We decided to return on March 30th and do a little more. So close to completion at the end of that work session, we returned on the 31st and finished about all we felt could be done. The photos below document the progression.



Here Courtney is working on raising the footstones to the original height



Several of the headstones needed a lot of repair



The headstone for the grave of Aldridge Ashton Greene repaired and back in place



Headstone for Dr. Nimrod Milton Hitt - Does the motif symbolize his widow grieving at his monument?



Finished, except for a final cleaning with D2 Biological Solution once the epoxy completely sets up in a few days

The Hitt-Greene Cemetery is in the Find A Grave database so feel free to explore this cemetery further there, but I did want to share a little on one of the men buried in this cemetery. Nimrod Milton Greene. Not to be confused with his mother's brother, Nimrod Milton Hitt. The following is from research that Martha Earhart, Nimrod's great, great granddaughter, has compiled during her years of research.

NMG
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More about Nimrod Milton Green

Nimrod was eight years old when he went to live with his uncle, Dr. Hitt, in Augusta Co, in 1835. Dr. Hitt had moved from Raphine to a farm a little farther north about three miles from Greenville less than ten miles from the Rockbridge County line. In the 1850 census there was a twenty-two year old N.M. Green living with the John Weir family in that county listed as a laborer.

Evidently Nimrod decided to see some of the world soon after that and the proof is in the old autograph book found in that drawer. Besides the quaint verses and good wishes the dates and places all attest to a traveling man with no strings attached. Kingston and Cassville, Georgia in 1852, Post Oak Spring, Tennessee in '53, Aberdeen, Texas in '53, Rogersville, Hankins Co., Tennessee in '54 and Rutledge, Georgia in February of '54. Wonder what he was doing? He evidently stayed long enough to make friends, both male and female.

His daughter, Callie, recalled that she heard he was a great hunter, especially night hunting, loved to ride, and also was a great dancer. She remembered his dancing slippers in the attic of the old brick house that became his home. All of those things disappeared with the fire that hit a cold winter night in 1900.

By 1858 N.M. Green was established in Warrenton, Fauquier Co. Virginia where he was a constable. A number of court orders and summons were among the old papers. He paid taxes for 1858 on one slave, three horses, 29 head of cattle and some furniture.

Nim Green was one of the original members of the Black Horse Troop organized in 1859. All of the men were to ride black horses and wear black plumes in their hats. History tells us the name "Black Horse" went with the troop through out the war, long after the black horses and plumed hats were available.

As part of the Virginia Militia, the Black Horse Troop, was called upon to guard the Harpers Ferry prison where John Brown was confined in the fall of 1859. Even John Brown admired the young men from Fauquier and remarked on their gentlemanly conduct in their relations with him. When the young men returned to Warrenton, the young ladies gave such a fine party in their honor it was spoken of in after years as the famous Black Horse Ball.

While Nimrod was in Harpers Ferry he had his picture taken in full uniform with black plume, two pistols and sword showing. This is the uniform of the United States Army not the Confederate as that did not exist yet. (An enlargement made from that daguerrotype is the one over the TV at Lillian Norman's for many years. You might have noticed that it was reversed when enlarged. The original daguerrotype still exists and an enlargement was made from it recently. The original enlargement was done for five dollars, order taken by a door-to-door salesman.

NMB
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Another picture of interest is a painting done by a Don Prechtel in 1984 for the American Military Collection in 1983. Using original pictures of seven members of the Black Horse Troop, Prechtel named the picture "Native Sons--The Black Horse Calvary". Nimrod Green is the tall man, second from the left. Many members of the family helped deplete the limited edition.

When the Civil War started in April, 1861 the troop joined the South and soon found themselves Co. H, of the 4th Virginia Calvary. At Manassas in July of '61, they were held in reserve the first day and were reported "almost crazy" lest they not get in the fight. The next day, they took part in a calvary charge at Stone Bridge and pursued the fleeing Federal troops. "The Terrible Black Horse" as the newspapers called them, soon was feared by soldier and civilian alike. The troop served as scouts, guides and bodyguards for Generals Lee, Jackson and Johnson.

According to the Confederate Archive records, N.M. Green enlisted April 25, 1861. He was taken prisoner near Warrenton in November, 1862 but was soon exchanged for a Yankee prisoner. He was reported absent for Muster Roll following that because he had no horse! From November 22-29 in 1862, he was hospitalized in Petersburg for a bronchial cough. The years dragged on and the "extremities of war had molded the raw young volunteers into soldiers of tough fibre. They had lost all their fine appearance--their young bodies as lean as grayhounds from meager rations." As the inevitable occurred and the Black Horse shared the final defeat, Nimrod was captured at Petersburg on April 2, 1865. He was taken to City Point, VA. and then to Point Lookout, MD where he was released June 13, 1865. Lillian Norman remembers a ring that he made from uniform buttons during his imprisonment. He sold them to guards in exchange for a little extra food.

Many years later, a fellow soldier wrote to Nimrod's daughter, "...they would join me in my testimonial that your father, N.M. Green or Nim Green, as we loved to call him, was one of the best soldiers in the command." Nim fought through the entire war without receiving a flesh wound although his clothes were often full of holes from shot.

As you remember, Nimrod evidently had a leave of absence in February of '65 because he and Amanda Wheatley were married on the 7th. His homecoming in June after his release from prison was surely welcome. We only know that he apparently joined Sarah, his mother-in-law in farming Laurel Hill. When she died in 1868, and Laurel Hill was divided among the heirs, he probably welcomed the invitation from Elizabeth Hitt to come to Augusta Co. and farm Mountain View Farm for her.

We don't know just when they moved to Augusta Co. but there are dated papers and bills in mid-summer of 1869. Two daughters were born by that time. Mary Ashton on October 10, 1866 and Sallie Lee on April 19, 1868. Two more daughters followed. Caledonia Rush

NMG
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arrived April 19, 1871 and Elizabeth Leachman on April 8, 1873. It wasn't until October 28, 1876 that Milton Erastus became their only son.

Times were harsh in those years after the war. The Valley had been picked clean by both armies as they marched back and forth and lived off the land. There were no slaves, of course, and the blacks who stayed with a former master had to be paid something. Lillian Norman remembers "Aunt Nancy", child of a former slave, who had belonged to Dr. Hitt. The general store bills give a picture of their needs and self-sufficiency. They bought sugar, coffee, soda, shot and powder (for hunting squirrels, rabbits, etc. (and tobacco!)).

They brought in eggs and butter sometime for credit but the most credit was from dried cherries and other fruit. Think what a lot of work 70 pounds of seeded and dried cherries would take!

Nim quickly established himself in the community. By September, 1871 he was appointed to a Committee of Patrons by the Superintendent of Schools. One of their duties was to procure a "comfortable, well furnished School House and procure a satisfactory teacher". Among the old papers are receipts for materials to build Sunnyside School where his grandchildren would go. His own children were educated by a governess, Miss Georgia Garrett, Amanda saw to that!

Nimrod Green was elected Overseer of the Roads for Riverheads District and had the responsibility of enforcing the two days of labor each man owed the district roads. He kept many records of supplies and days spent hauling or working on the roads.

Just what he was involved in we're not sure, but in July 1881 Nimrod M. Green obtained a \$3.78 license from the Commissioner of Riversheads District for "the privilege of keeping a house of Private Entertainment at his residence until the first day of May 1882." (No, they didn't have a license for them then either). It has been suggested it may have been to play cards or perhaps like a "bread and breakfast" for travelers. It may have been an attempt to make a few dollars by a man who wasn't able to farm. Nim's health had not been good since the war. In November he wrote his will (leaving everything "to my dearly beloved wife, Amanda Virginia"). On February 21, 1882, he died of dropsy. Dropsy is an "accumulation of diluted lymph in body tissues and cavities" according to the dictionary. He was 54. His daughter Mary was 16, Sallie was 14, Callie only 11, Bettie, 9, and son Milton just 6 years old. Amanda Virginia Wheatley Green was left with a job on her hands!

What made me choose to share more about Nimrod Milton Greene is the fact that not very often do you get to go to a neglected and all but abandoned cemetery and work with the descendants of those buried there, but I got to do that at Hitt-Greene Cemetery. And not very often do those same descendants have research that makes an otherwise silent story of the grave sort of come to life, but I got to do that at Hitt-Greene Cemetery. And not very often do photos exist that put a face with a name and an object with a story but I got to do that too. Here's how that went.

As it turns out, Doug Fravel, Nimrod Greene's great, great grandson, said that he had the cap and ball pistol and holster that Nimrod carried during the war which I could look at and photograph. Then he said he had a painting of Nimrod wearing the holstered pistol during the Civil War which I could look at and photograph. And seeing that this was one of those "not very often" moments, I took Doug up on his offer. If a picture is worth a thousand words, there is no need for me to keep typing.



Some members of the Black Horse Brigade. Nimrod Milton Greene is mounted with the holstered pistol on his side



Thanks to Martha and her husband for allowing me to be a small part of this project, thanks to Doug who shared with me what some would not have, and thanks to Courtney for his help and friendship. And about Courtney's help. The photo below and left is Nimrod Milton Greene's headstone as it was found. Courtney managed to locate and dig up the two pieces stacked in front. And the next several photos are of the tall skinny parts in Courtney's dad's shop where Courtney had to take the three pieces to put it back together.



And the next-to-last photo below is Nimrod's headstone after it was reinstalled once again right where it belongs. As you can see, Courtney did a great job.



Nimrod M. Greene Died Feb. 21, 1882 Aged 54 yrs. 6 mo. 20 days (b. 1 August 1827)

Middlebrook Cemetery Update

The Augusta County School Board came through just as they told me they would. The Middlebrook Cemetery, retained by the Riverheads School Board in 1912 when they sold the lot that was attached to the cemetery where the church once stood, designated the cemetery as surplus property by virtue of passing a resolution on March 5, 2026. I have already talked to my Board of Supervisor member and the County Administrator and they plan to vote to take legal title to the property probably in their board meeting at the end of the month. The resolution is below and I will keep you posted.

RESOLUTION OF
THE SCHOOL BOARD OF THE COUNTY OF AUGUSTA, VIRGINIA
DECLARING PROPERTY SURPLUS
AND AUTHORIZING ITS CONVEYANCE
TO THE COUNTY OF AUGUSTA

WHEREAS, the School Board of the County of Augusta, Virginia ("School Board"), currently owns certain real estate ("Property") designated as tax map number 72-59 and located in Middlebrook, Virginia, which graveyard was reserved to the members of the Riverheads School Board from the conveyance of the lot to N.F. Cross in a deed dated January 25, 1912;

WHEREAS, the School Board no longer has a need for the Property for the specific educational and programmatic needs identified and anticipated by the School Board;

WHEREAS, after careful and due consideration of the future educational needs of the students of the Augusta County Public Schools and after careful evaluation of the best and most economically sound use of school facilities, the School Board finds that as of March 5, 2026, it no longer has use for the Property; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the School Board determines, for the reasons identified in this resolution, that as of March 5, 2026, it no longer has use for the Property and declares it and all of its rights, title and interest in the Property surplus as of that date pursuant to Virginia Code § 22.1-129;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the School Board is authorized and directed to execute this resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chair of the School Board and the Division

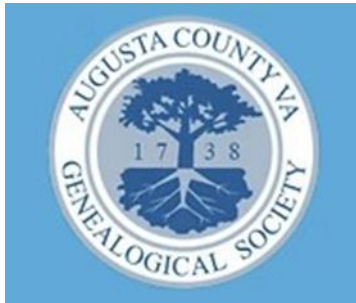
Superintendent of Schools are hereby authorized and directed to execute such further documents, including without limitation, deeds, affidavits, certificates and other instruments, and take such other actions, as are necessary or convenient to convey title to the Property to the County of Augusta, Virginia; and

Passed this 5th day of March 2026, by the School Board of Augusta County,
Virginia.

_____, Chair

Attest:

ACGS Planned Programs



Date: May 20, 2026 Time: 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Location: Augusta County Library-Lower Level Room,
1759 Jefferson Hwy, Fishersville, VA 22939, USA

May Membership Meeting

**About the event "ANCESTRY DNA-UNDERSTANDING
YOUR MATCHES"**



Date: June 17, 2026 Time: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Location: Augusta County Library-Lower Level Room,
1759 Jefferson Hwy, Fishersville, VA 22939, USA

May Membership Meeting

Topic: *"What's a Glebe?"*

Speaker: Nancy Sorrells, Local Historian & Author



**Dates: August 28, 2026 to August 29, 2026 Time: 08:00 AM to
05:00 PM**

**Location: Middlebrook Village Road & Cherry Grove Road,
Middlebrook, Virginia 24459**

2nd Annual Middlebrook Horse Drawn Heritage Days

**About the Event: "Chuckwagon Dinner, Horse Drawn
Vehicles and Farm Implement Display, Chuckwagon,
Historical Presentations and more."**

Website Updates: Members Section

LIFE MEMBERS

Al Wilkerson, In Memoriam 2025 Glenn Hanger 2025 Crim Lotts 2025

Michael Clinebell 2025 Ted Harrison 2026

In The Library / Archives Section

Ship Passenger Lists 1732-1754 - 15 Total

Unpublished Documents - 9 Total

Published Documents - 11 Total

Life in Dutch Hollow - 212 Total

Obituaries & Death Notices - 1200 Total (Still several hundred, thousand to go)

Lucas-Fix Private Collection 109 Total

Department of Historical Resources Augusta County Archaeological Site Surveys - 16

Deed Histories - Dutch Hollow - 5

DHH Cemetery Forensics, Etc. - Preliminary Findings of Ground Penetrating Radar for lower 35 feet of Cemetery and GPS of entire cemetery - 2

Frederich Hanger Descendants Over 200 pages of his descendants' names with city, county, and state of residence when known. Roughly 8,000 names.

Cook-Teaford Cemetery - 2 Files

Schoolhouses-Augusta Co. - 1800s - 39

Marriages - 146

Coming Soon:

Elijah Jacob Hanger Private Collection (Approximately 450 files to be uploaded as time permits)

In The Focused Research Section

18 Files (40+ more to be researched, formatted, and uploaded as time permits)

The **Miscellaneous Research Files** module now contains 52 folders. There are over 350 files contained within those 52 folders. Please use them. All of that work is for your benefit and was done with you in mind. Take advantage of it! By the same token, let me know what you would like to see changed or added and I will do my best to accommodate.

Until next month, Blessings, Have a Blessed Memorial Day, and Happy Trails,

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery