

REMEMBERING  
LIEUTENANT JOHN E. JAMES, JR.

*June 15, 1920 - April 18, 2024*



## HOMEGOING SERVICE

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Viewing: 8:00 AM | Service: 10:00 AM

Salem Baptist Church of Abington  
2741 Woodland Road, Abington, PA 19001

# ORDER OF SERVICE

Musical Prelude..... Sheila Hawes  
*Director of the Philadelphia Alumnae Choir Delta Sigma Theta Sorority*

Procession

Sealing of the Bier

Opening Sentences..... Reverend Nathaniel Jones  
*Assistant Pastor of Congregational Care, Salem Baptist Church*

Hymn of Praise: "It Is Well with My Soul"..... Paulette P. Lessene

Reading of the Scriptures

Old Testament: Ezekiel 37: 12-14 ..... Jacqueline Hunter

New Testament: 1 Thessalonians 4: 15-17..... Constance Cole

Prayer of Comfort..... Reverend Liat Owens Richardson

Reflections & Remembrances (2 minutes please)..... Robert A. Burrell III

Dr. Carrissia Wynder-Nandial, DNP, MS, RN, CCM,

William Mellix

Musical Selection: "Jesus Promised Me A Home Over There"..... Paulette P. Lessene

Words of Comfort..... Reverend Marshall Paul Hughes Mitchell, Pastor  
*Salem Baptist Church*

Hymn of Triumph: "Waymaker"..... Paulette P. Lessene

Recessional

### INTERMENT

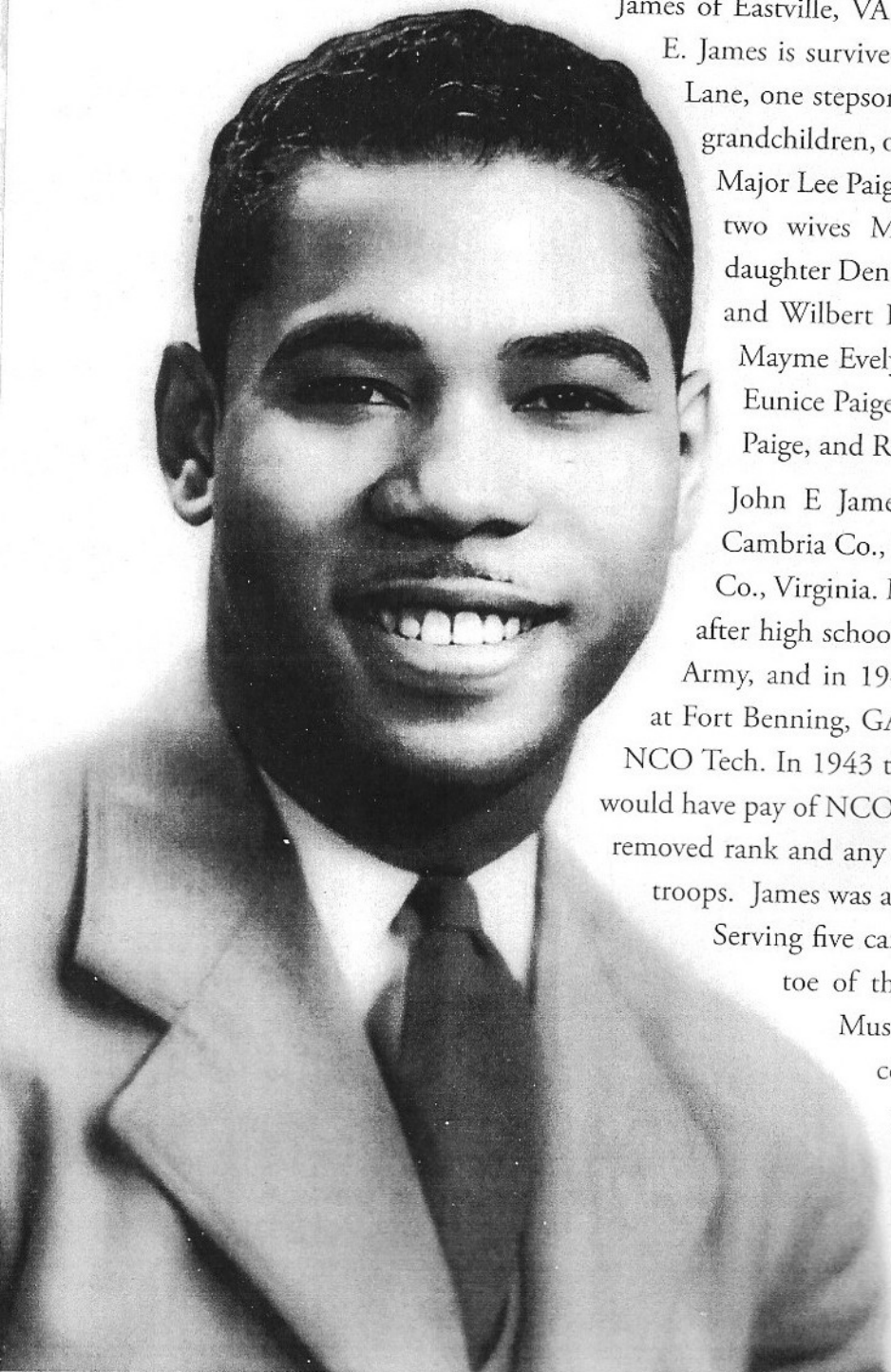
Mount Lawn Cemetery  
84<sup>th</sup> Street and Hook Road  
Sharon Hill, PA 19079

### REPAST

Springfield Country Club  
400 West Sproul Road  
Springfield, PA 19064







## **“JOHN E” JAMES** 1920-2024 son of John E. James of Eastville, VA and Agnes Brown of Charles City, VA. John E. James is survived by his daughters, Brenda Watts and Marion Lane, one stepson Melvin Reavis, four grandchildren, five great grandchildren, one great-great grandchild and one half-brother, Major Lee Paige. He was predeceased by parents, stepparents, two wives Mary Elizabeth Ficklin and Doris Reavis, a daughter Denise James Pearson, two stepsons Tommie Reavis and Wilbert Reavis, and his Paige siblings, William Paige, Mayme Evelyn Paige, Irene Alberta Paige Williams, Estelle Eunice Paige Burrell, Geraldine Paige Williams, Clifton C. Paige, and Ruth Paige.

John E James was born June 15, 1920 in Johnstown, Cambria Co., PA. He grew up in Charles City, Charles City Co., Virginia. Moving to Philadelphia with his father's family after high school. In 1941, at age 21, he was drafted into the Army, and in 1942, James graduated Officer Training School at Fort Benning, GA, one of 21 men of color. James graduated a NCO Tech. In 1943 the US Army changed the rules, and the Tech would have pay of NCO but have only the authority of a Private. This removed rank and any authority the NCO's would have over white troops. James was assigned to the 242<sup>nd</sup> Quartermaster Battalion. Serving five campaigns, in North Africa and Italy, from the toe of the boot up to the Apennines. In 2008, the Museum of the American Revolution hosted a ceremony, shortly after his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday, 75 years later where the US Army commissioned him as Second Lieutenant John E. James. James descended from a long line of men who served in the military, dating back to the American Revolution during which his great-great-great-grandfather served as a

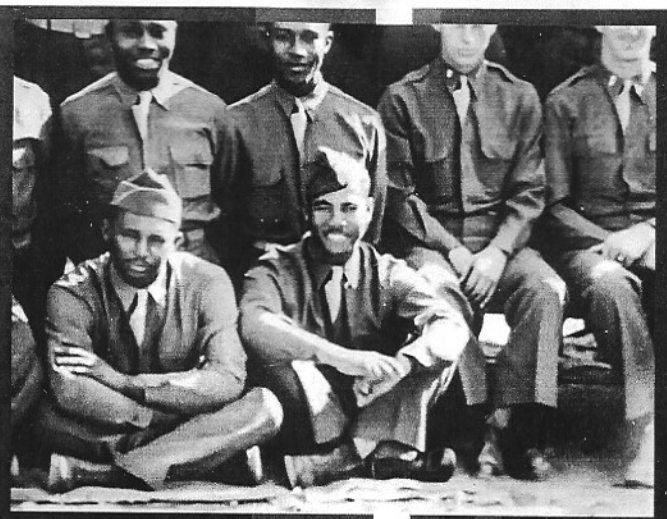
sergeant and was at the Valley Forge encampment in 1777-78. In addition to the Sons of the American Revolution and the Sons of the Revolution, James is a member of the Society of Descendants of Washington's Army at Valley Forge."

After the Army, James returned to Philadelphia and met and married Mary Elizabeth Ficklin, daughter of a prominent Baptist minister. (The Ficklin family has its own long history of working in the White House, from 1939 to 2016, serving as butlers or as maitres d'. The last one, John Wroxy Ficklin, retired in 2016 as a special assistant to the president and senior director for records and access management at the National Security Council.)

James attended mortuary college after his Army service but was put on a waiting list to become an apprentice with a funeral director. Mary Elizabeth was expecting their first child and out of necessity, he went to work for the U.S. Postal Service retiring in 1976. John E. and Mary E. Ficklin James raised three daughters at 51<sup>st</sup> and Race streets in West Philadelphia: Brenda Watts, Marion Lane, and Denise Pearson, who predeceased him in 2009. Mary Elizabeth Ficklin died in 1969, and John E. James in 1971, married Doris Reavis, his first girlfriend in high school. They were married until her death in 2001.

John E. James had many words of wisdom and colloquial expressions he used every day. His words of wisdom from his 100th birthday celebration were; "Don't let a 'NO' stop you. If you go down this road and run into a 'NO,' don't give up your hopes. Take another road, and you can achieve your goals."

*Sorrowfully Submitted, The Family*





WHAT IS THE MEASURE OF A MAN?

Is it strength? Intelligence? Or fearlessness?

The ability to lead others down the right path?

The ability to inspire the seed of greatness in those who need encouragement?

If the aforementioned are measuring tools,

Then many live life as men.

Do you wear your love for God like shining armor?

Is the love of God resting upon and guiding you?

No one can question your strength, intelligence or leadership.

There are plaques, and championships to prove the ability to lead.

Measuring sticks the world uses to define a man.

What can't be measured is the soul of a man.

A man's soul is the inward interpretation of his outer shell.

May your soul catch fire.

The flames of decency, honor and integrity burning bright.

Bright enough to light the way

For hundreds of young men in the dark.

Bright enough to bring honor

To a world forever changed by your presence.

Bright enough to heat the souls of younger men you leave behind.

The true measure of a man is the legacy he leaves.

Be you husband, father, brother or friend,

Leave your torch burning brightly,

And we will never allow the flame to die.

As we are all warmed by the fire of a true Man.

*by Grady Poulard*



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