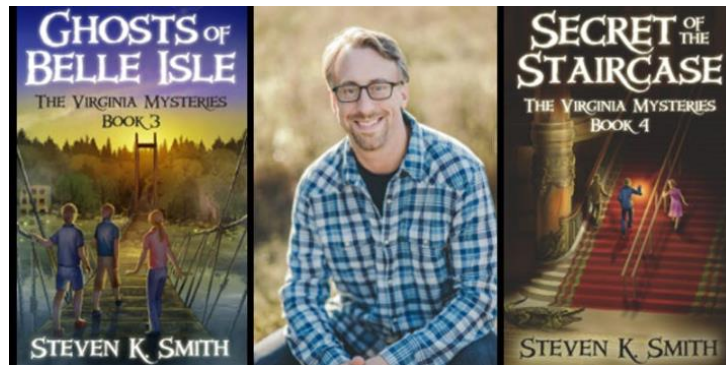


HOLLYWOOD CEMETERY SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR- THE VIRGINIA MYSTERIES EDITION



WELCOME!

Hollywood Cemetery was opened in 1849, constructed on the land known as "Harvie's Woods" that was once owned by William Byrd III, the son of the founder of Richmond. It was designed in the rural garden style, with its name, "Holly-Wood," coming from the holly trees on the property.

It began with 43 acres and grew to 135 acres with enough current ground space to sell for 20-30 more years. Don't worry. This tour only covers part of the cemetery.

This tour was created in collaboration with author Steven K. Smith and references his books *Ghosts of Belle Isle* (2014) and *Secret of the Staircase* (2015). The route focuses on the sites connected with the book. For a full map of the cemetery, visit Hollywood Cemetery's website or drop by their office.



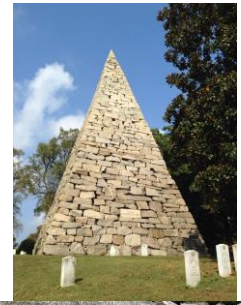
Photo Credit: Chris Beasley

BEGIN THE TOUR AT THE PYRAMID, A MONUMENT TO CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS

From the entrance of the cemetery, follow the blue line up Confederate Avenue to the Soldiers section.

There are approximately 80,000 buried in Hollywood Cemetery. There are 18,000 Confederate soldiers buried here with 3,000 from Gettysburg.

Charles Dimmock designed this 90-foot pyramid-shaped Confederate monument with granite quarried from the James River. This was dry-laid; no mortar was used. The Hollywood Ladies' Memorial Society raised \$26,000 to erect this monument in 1869. It took one year to build.



Mitchell writes that Thomas Stanley, a man who was serving a sentence at the State Penitentiary, was the volunteer who guided the capstone into place (*Hollywood Cemetery: The History of a Southern Shrine*, Mitchell, p. 67). "For years afterward on Memorial Day, young men would emulate Stanley by scaling the monument to hang a wreath from the top" (p. 74). We caution anyone from emulating this.



Photo Credit: Chris Beasley



"There's an enormous monument to the Confederate soldiers that looks like a giant pyramid. It's amazing. I won't tell you any more about it. You'll have to see it for yourself to believe it."

- Caitlin, *Ghosts of Belle Isle* p.68

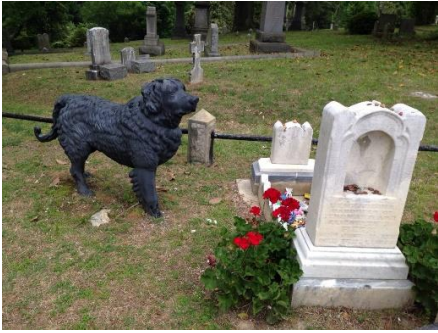
Just as Sam and Derek, be sure to read the inscription on the lower stones! - *Ghosts of Belle Isle* p. 90

One of my favorite parts of writing books is researching locations like Hollywood Cemetery. I'll often draw from my own feelings and observations and incorporate those into my characters. I'd become quite turned around at my first visit to the cemetery, so when I finally saw the giant pyramid poking through the trees, it was exciting.



Photo Credit: Chris Beasley

When you exit the Confederate Soldier section, notice the black, iron dog.



One popular grave is that of **Florence Bernardin Rees**.

You can see a French style cradle marker for a little girl who passed from a common 19th century disease. There are several items that are left on this grave. It's become a tradition to place coins, rocks and shells, although some leave toys for this little girl.



Photo Credit: Chris Beasley

The part that is intriguing to many is the cast iron Newfoundland. This dog was actually the mascot for the Haywood and Bartlett Iron Company of Baltimore. While there are several stories which surround this grave, the dog was most likely placed here during the Civil War so that it wasn't melted down for ammunition.

[Follow the blue line to Western Ave. towards the next stop, Presidents Circle.](#)

PRESIDENTS CIRCLE



As you enter Presidents Circle, you'll notice a pathway to two United States Presidents. This renovated section was completed in 2011.

As you walk on the cobblestone walkway, you may notice that the sides are slightly elevated. These are cremation niches. Each niche is covered by a granite slab in order to engrave identification information.

It's a good idea to avoid walking over these niches. This isn't because of any superstitions about walking over graves but because excessive foot traffic will wear down the granite. We want these to last for a long time.



“...this place has more presidents than Washington, D.C.”
– Derek, *Ghosts of Belle Isle* p.78

There is only one president buried in Washington, D.C., which is at the Washington National Cathedral. The state with the most presidential graves is Virginia with seven. Hollywood Cemetery is one of three cemeteries in the U.S. which has two presidents. The other two include Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA, and the United First Parish in Quincy, MA.

John Tyler (March 29, 1790 – January 18, 1862) was the 10th President of the United States (1841–1845). He was elected vice president on the 1840 Whig ticket with William Henry Harrison, and became president after his running mate's death in April 1841. Harrison's death made Tyler the first vice president to succeed to the presidency without being elected to the office.

When the American Civil War began in 1861, Tyler sided with the Confederate government, and won election to the Confederate House of Representatives shortly before his death.

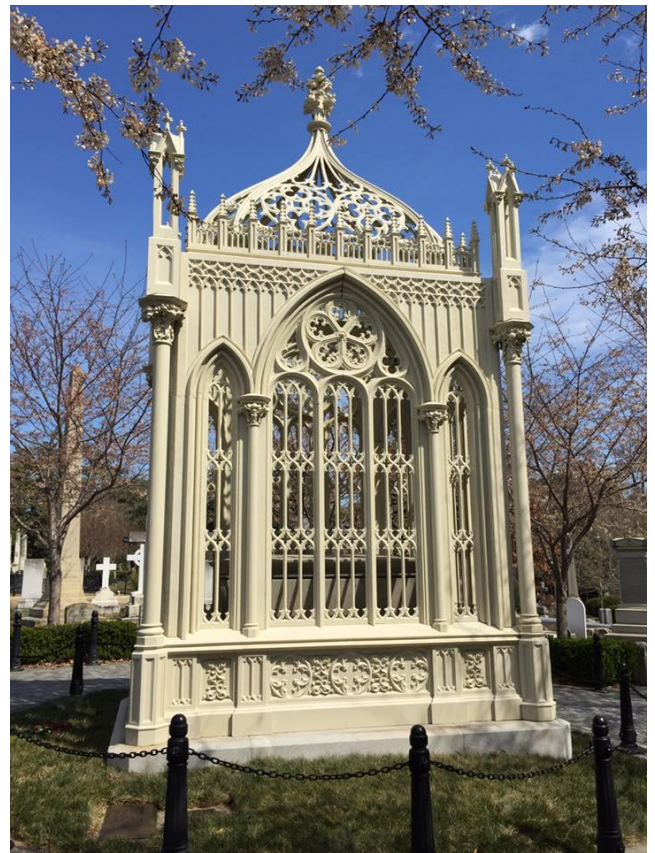
One interesting fact about John Tyler is that he fathered more children than any other US President-- 15 between two wives. As of June 2019, there were two living grandchildren making him the earliest President to have two living grandchildren.

James Monroe, Founding Father and 5th United States President (4th President from Virginia) rests in Hollywood Cemetery.

In 1830, when Monroe's wife died, Monroe went into a deep period of grief. He left Virginia for New York, and spent what turned out to be the last nine months of his life with his daughter and son-in-law. Because of the location of his death, Monroe's body was interred in New York City.

In 1858, over twenty years after his death, a movement began in Virginia to bring the remains of the native sons to a central place. Monroe's body was placed in state in New York city hall on July 3. Then placed on a boat and brought down the Atlantic Seaboard, into the Chesapeake Bay and ultimately up the James River to Richmond on July 4th. The actual re-interment took place July fifth. It was a grand ceremony a great public occasion. Monroe was buried with full military honors. It was one of Richmond's largest spectacles before the Civil War.

Alfred Lybrock was commissioned to design a suitable monument to cover Monroe's remains. In 1859, the Commonwealth of Virginia installed Lybrock's design, "a granite sarcophagus surrounded by a flamboyant Gothic Revival cast iron canopy" (National Parks Services). Monroe's tomb firmly established Hollywood as one of the foremost places of burial in Virginia.



While Derek and Sam are looking around Presidents Circle, they hear a train whistle. Be sure to look for the train tracks and to look across the river to see Belle Isle!



Sam covered his ears. "It sounds like it's right on top of us, but I don't see it!" "That's because we're on top of it!" Derek hollered, pointing down the hill. They moved a few steps closer to the crest of the hill. At the bottom of the incline, a train slipped between them and the river. A long freight train chugged slowly but steadily along." –*Ghosts of Belle Isle* p.78

The James River is the 12th longest river in the United States that remains entirely within a single state. There is a seven-mile gradual drop. Across the river you can see Belle Isle, which served as a prison for Union soldiers during the American Civil War.

I love connections between places and people from history. I picked the Fall of Richmond at the end of the Civil War because there were so many locations near each other that worked for the story. The view of Belle Isle from Hollywood Cemetery made me think about how the Union soldiers who died on the island's prison camp were so very close to the Confederate soldiers buried at Hollywood. As I walked along, the train horn sounded out of nowhere. I love how it's tucked out of sight between the hill and the river.



SPECIAL TIP: The President of the United States sends a wreath of red, white and blue flowers to the burial place of all deceased presidents on the anniversary of their birthday.

Can you find the birthdays of President Monroe and President Tyler on their epitaphs?

Follow Monroe Ave. to Jeter Ave. down the hill toward the river. Bellview Ave. will take you to Ginter Ave for the next stop.

LEWIS GINTER MAUSOLEUM



Sam read the caption under the picture.
"Lewis Ginter was laid to rest in Hollywood Cemetery, in a grand mausoleum overlooking the James River."

– *Secret of the Staircase* p. 56-57



"You have been to Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, haven't you?" Caitlin never seemed to run out of energy when talking about something she'd learned. "It's one of my favorite places."

– Caitlin, *Secret of the Staircase* p. 38



Photo Credit: Chris Beasley



Lewis Ginter was born in New York of Dutch immigrant parents. He came to Richmond in 1842 at the age of eighteen and made a fortune in the import business before losing it to the Civil War. He served in the Confederate Army, and then returned to New York, where he made a second fortune in the banking industry and lost it to a recession.

At age fifty, Ginter returned to Richmond and entered the tobacco business. He made millions marketing the pre-rolled cigarette and became a civic leader and philanthropist. He then sold his interest in the tobacco company and entered his fourth career, land development.

Lewis Ginter put in funds to build this hotel so that Richmond could have a Five Star hotel.

Ginter's niece, Grace Arents, continued his philanthropy. She too was interested in horticulture.

On my first trip to Hollywood, I didn't realize that Lewis Ginter's grave was also there. Ginter became much more meaningful to me after writing book four set at The Jefferson. If you peek into the mausoleum, you can see a beautiful Tiffany window, which reminds me of the amazing Tiffany glass of Sally Dooley at Swannanoa, which is a setting in Book 5.



Leave the Ginter Mausoleum, follow Waterview Ave. toward Davis Circle.

DAVIS CIRCLE



Derek read a plaque below the statue. "Jefferson Davis!"

That was one of the graves that Caitlin had told them about—the president of the Confederate States. Sam studied the plaque on the stone pedestal under the statue. "It says that besides being the Confederate president, Davis was also the secretary of war, and a senator from Mississippi. That's impressive!"

– *Ghosts of Belle Isle* p. 77

Jefferson Davis was the President of the Confederate States from 1861-1865. He lived and directed the war at 12th & Clay, the White House of the Confederacy. After the war, he spent two years in Federal prison, part of the time in shackles.

Against her family's permission, Davis married his first wife Sarah. They both contracted malaria and his wife died.

During his second marriage to Varina Howell Davis, he had six children but three died before adulthood including his son Joseph who died at five years old as the result of an accidental fall off the stoop of the White House of the Confederacy. His daughter, Winnie, fell in love with a Northerner in 1888 but "a daughter of the Confederacy" wasn't allowed to marry a Yankee. This broke her heart. She became ill and died ten years later at the age of 34 having never married. She is buried at Hollywood Cemetery beside her father. A weeping angel stands as her marker.



Sam peered over the crypt at the men. They'd placed themselves in a circle around the Jefferson Davis monument, standing an equal distance from each other, bikes parked behind them. Two of the men stood off to the side, like sentries on their post, ensuring that no one wandered in.

– *Ghosts of Belle Isle* p. 82-83



Photo Credit: Chris Beasley

Richmond's history is full of interesting and often complicated elements. As a transplanted Yankee, I like to throw together characters with differing perspectives and see what happens. Sam and Derek's fresh "northern" eyes discover events around the Civil War differently than someone like Mad Dog DeWitt or even Mr. Haskins. Learning from the past is one of the greatest ways to chart a better course for the future.



"There's so much history in Richmond. My mom says that's what makes it fun to learn about," said Caitlin. "You can appreciate all those things when you see them and again when you realize you saw something important you didn't even know about."

– *Secret of the Staircase* p. 57

Steven K. Smith writes the middle grade series *The Virginia Mysteries* and *Brother Wars*. For more information about Steven K. Smith, visit <https://myboys3.com/>

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If you are interested in visiting local cemeteries with a group, follow the River City Cemeterians Facebook page for events and tours: <https://www.facebook.com/RiverCityCemeterians/>
For more information about Hollywood Cemetery, visit <https://www.hollywoodcemetery.org/>



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