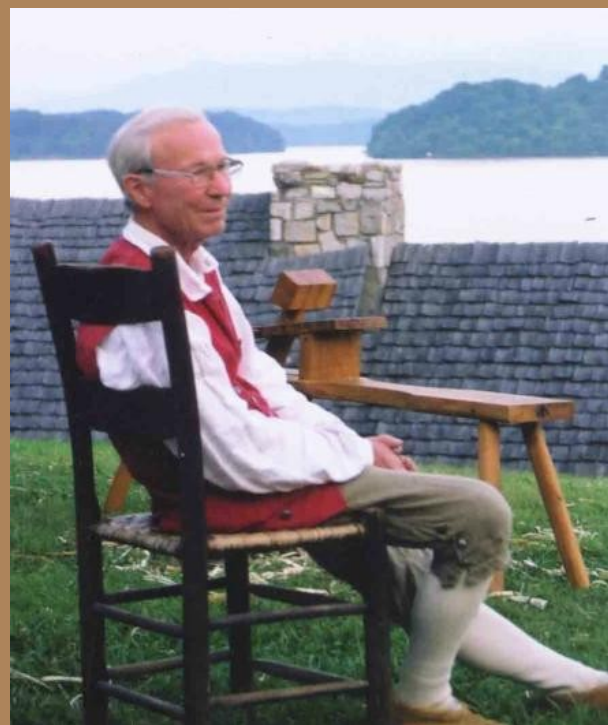


In Memoriam: James Neil Liles

April 25th, 1930 - May 10th, 2002

Jim Liles was one of the founding members of the South Carolina Independent Company in June of 1987 and a long time member of the Company of Overmountain Men. Through the years, though changes came to the Independent Company, Jim was always a dependable constant, cheerfully bringing his wit and southern charm to many garrisons. Jim's knowledge of history and his pragmatic and common sense application of it to the living history program at Fort Loudoun enriched it greatly. He set an example of excellence in his living history portrayal that the rest of us are still trying to meet. Jim passed away at his family farm in May and he will be greatly missed.

At Fort Loudoun, Jim Portrayed Private Calloway. Historically, Calloway was an old soldier, reliable and experienced, given the task of preparing powder charges for the cannon and maintaining them and the gunpowder storehouse. It is legend that of all the soldiers who were in the Independent Company, only one ever made it to retirement at Chelsea: Private Calloway. Being of slight build and wizened appearance, Jim was able to pull-off the portrayal of Calloway with great believability, which belied the fact that he himself was an avid hiker and canoeist in very good condition. Through many garrisons we enacted Calloway finally getting his pension papers and his orders to retire to Chelsea, in England, only to have those orders countermanded at the last moment due to some emergency at the fort, or, even, worse, a beaurocratic bumbling such as a missing signature on a form. Jim would look out with a most mournful expression on his face and in his soft, quivering voice say "my, my..." to the injustice of his plight. Barked back into formation by the cruel Ensign Boggs, Jim/Calloway would have to shoulder his heavy musket through the remainder of another garrison. - Jon Vogel



Dr. Liles was a professor of zoology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He taught at the Arrowmont School and other regional craft schools. Dr. Liles was a leading expert on natural dyeing techniques and wrote a book on the subject: The Art and Craft of Natural Dyeing, Recipes for Modern Use. In his book, Dr. Liles researched the various methods used in the traditional dyeing of various materials. Dr. Liles interest in this subject arose from his wife's, Dale, interest in natural textiles. Dr. Liles not only researched his techniques, but also applied them to his living history hobby, dyeing all the materials used in the construction of his reproduction uniform. The "popinjour" green was a particularly difficult color to dye and Dr. Liles provided the wool that the Independent Company used for its facings.

