

Preface

This project began some eleven years ago, with a relatively benign phone call from Tom Duquette to me. Tom was coaching the lacrosse team at Norfolk Academy, and I held a corresponding position at nearby Nansemond-Suffolk Academy. At that point, I had known Tom for several years. In fact, he was instrumental in encouraging and supporting my pursuing a career in education.

Over the years, we had discussed a variety of topics related to lacrosse and other sports as well as education in general. When we discussed the history of the game of lacrosse, Tom always spoke reverently of Jimmy Lewis, United States Naval Academy Class of 1966, placing him on the same rung with his childhood heroes Johnny Unitas and Brooks Robinson. Lewis had a tremendous impact on Tom as a young lacrosse player growing up in Baltimore. Though I had played lacrosse at Navy myself, I was embarrassed to realize that my knowledge of Captain Lewis's career was close to non-existent. I had, thankfully, known *of* him, but I did not fully understand his on-field brilliance or that of his team, his true place

in the history of Navy Lacrosse, or in the history of the game.

The nature of Tom's call was simple enough: Could you contact the Naval Academy and get a video tape of Jimmy Lewis? Tom had hoped to share the video with his players, one in particular who had developed a burning desire to study all the great attackmen in history. As with all things, actual video would be more valuable than a second-hand description of Lewis's play or an attempt to replicate it. I thought it a simple enough request, one upon which I might be able to exercise some sort of alumni privilege. And surely the Naval Academy had tape of their teams and players of that era, including Lewis.

It didn't take me long to realize that my search was not to be as simple as I had hoped or expected. After calling several offices at USNA, I was told that there were no such tapes, or at least none that anyone would be able to find. In disbelief, I began to call other schools Navy had played—Johns Hopkins, Army, Maryland—and other institutions, all to no avail. After several attempts (and a couple of years) to resurrect the tapes, I went straight to the source: Captain Lewis himself. No joy. More months. More years. Still nothing.

It became clear that I needed a new angle on this problem. So, in lieu of actual footage, I began to research Lewis's career, as well as the history of the game, so that I might find something useful for Tom and, at that point, *our* players (I had changed positions and was now working with Tom) at Norfolk Academy. As I dug further and further into the career of Captain James Crawford Lewis, U.S. Navy (Retired) and contacted a number of wonderful and helpful people, a remarkable story began to unfold before my eyes, leading me on a journey I never could have imagined.

Though this story's foundation is cast in the actual lives of its main characters, Major R. Bruce Turnbull, U.S. Army (Retired) and Captain Lewis granted me the necessary writer's license to connect the key elements of the story. Perhaps it is best left to the reader to decipher fact from fiction.

N.V.D.

Virginia Beach, VA

April 24, 2004