



“Major’s Orders”

Major Benjamin F. Ficklin
Chapter 310

Military Order of the
Stars and Bars



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2024

Special Dates of Interest:

February 14, 2024 - Valentine’s Day.

February 17, 2024 - Maj. Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310 meeting at Ft. Concho LHSC. Coffee @ 9:30 am.

March 14-17, 2024 - GEC meeting at ‘The Lodge’ Pickwick State Park, Counce, Tenn.

March 22-23, 2024 - Texas Society SEC meeting at College Station.

June 6-9, 2024 - Texas Society Convention at the Hilton College Station Conference Center, College Station, Texas.

Lt. Commander’s Lowdown

It is February and Cupid is in the air so do not forget to plan that special occasion for Valentine’s Day. Our quarterly meeting is the 17th of this month at Ft. Concho LHSC. Coffee will be on at 9:30 and the meeting will start at 10:00 am. We will be having elections at our February meeting for officers for the next two years. Mark your calendar and make plans to attend and let us start the new year in a great way. Remember, we have Zoom available for our ‘long distance’ Compatriots. Be sure you have the latest Zoom version as I have heard they upgraded their program recently.

The 2024 Spring Muster to be held at the Confederate Reunion Grounds in Mexia, Texas has been cancelled. The planned April event encountered a schedule conflict. April and October seem to be favorite month for everyone

to have an event hoping to have pleasant weather, not too hot, not too cold. Hopefully we will get an update at the SEC meeting in March about rescheduling the event.

There will be a “School of the Piece” at Ft. Concho, February 23-25, 2024. If you are interested in attending, contact Ray Johnson 325-642-8853. Seating is limited.



Inside this issue:

2024 Candidates for National Office 2

What Happen the Day Before 2

The Anatomy of a Confederate Colonel’s Frock Coat 3

Memorial for Steve Parnell 5

Quantrill’s Reunions 5

Conventions 2024

If you have not started planning your convention trips, now is the time.

The Missouri Society is proud to host the 2024, 87th Annual National General Convention that will be held on May 16 - 19, 2024 in Springfield, Missouri at the Double Tree by Hilton, 2431 N. Glenstone Avenue Springfield, MO 65803 (417) 831-3131.

The 2024 Texas Society Annual Convention for the Military Order of the Stars and Bars will be held at the Hilton College Station and Conference Center on June 21st and 22nd, 2024. 2024 is not an elec-

tion year, however this is the year when we vote on any Constitution or Bylaws amendments that are proposed.

The Texas Society website provides you the opportunity to register for both conventions. Go to: <http://txmosb.org/reunion.php> and here you will see links for registration, schedules, hotels, activities and for the Texas Society, a form for Constitution and Bylaws amendments. If you have amendment consideration you wish to submit, the deadline is March 1, 2024.



2024 Candidates for National Office

The Military Order of the Stars and Bars 87th Annual General Convention will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, in Springfield, Missouri, May 16-19, 2024. Make your plans to attend and register early. You can register online on the MOS&B website: <https://main.mosbihq.org/convention/>. Here you will find links for registration, the schedule and other events. May 5, 2024 is the cutoff deadline for registration. Hotel accommodations are going fast, if you are thinking of going, get your hotel reservations, now.

At this year's National Convention, we will be electing new officers for the next two years. The following have announced their candidacy for their respective office.

Thomas B. Rhodes III Announces Candidacy for MOS&B Commander General.

Terry R. Phillips Announces Candidacy for MOS&B Lt. Commander General.

David P. McMahan Announces Candidacy for ATM Commander General.

Larry 'Joe' Reynolds Announces Candidacy for ATM Councilor.

Taylor Conner Announces Candidacy for ATM Councilor.

David Edwards Announces Candidacy for ANV Commander General.

W. Becket Soule Announces Candidacy for ANV Councilor.

Thomas B. Bello Announces Candidacy for ANV Councilor.

Christopher Heuer Announces Candidacy for AOT Commander General.

Stephen Barbaree Announces Candidacy for AOT Councilor.

James Stanley 'Stan' Howell Announces Candidacy for AOT Councilor.

Each candidate's profile has been emailed through the MOS&B's Constant Contact system. If you have not received an email on the candidates, contact Lt. Commander David McMahan at: dmctx.mosbtx@gmail.com.



What Happened the Day Before the Merrimac and Monitor Met?

By Gene Smith

Forty-one-year-old Welsh Virginian, Catesby ap Roger Jones, sat at the desk in his cramped cabin aboard the CSS Virginia (formerly the USS Merrimac and usually known by that name) shortly before midnight on March 8, 1862. He hastily drafted a brief account of the day's events to be forwarded to Captain French Forrest, commander of the Confederate Gosport Navy Yard at Norfolk, Virginia. First Lt. Jones, now serving as flag officer owing to his captain (Franklin Buchanan) having been wounded, nonchalantly claimed that his steam-powered ironclad vessel had left port at 11 a.m. that morning and proceeded down the Elizabeth River to engage Union warships off Hampton Roads, Virginia.



Catesby ap Roger Jones

During the afternoon, his ironclad had sunk the frigates *Cumberland* and *Congress*, driven the steam frigates *Minnesota* and *Roanoke* into shoal waters, and exchanged fire with several small armed steamers and shore batteries. He boasted that

only shallow waters and nightfall had prevented the deep-draft Merrimac from attacking and destroying other Union warships. At 6:30 p.m., the ironclad had fired her last gun, and 90 minutes later had anchored under the Confederate cannon at nearby Sewell's Point. The destruction that lay behind amazed all who had witnessed the day's events. Jones wrote: "Amid the smoke, and flame, and blood of the last few hours, the centuries-long era of the wooden warship had passed forever." Aboard the Merrimac, Lt. Robert Minor noted that "the IRON and the HEAVY GUNS did the work." A new era had been born.

Lieutenant Jones concluded his brief account by reporting the Merrimac had suffered but two men killed and eight wounded during the engagements. After inspecting the condition of his "half submerged crocodile," he described its

(Continued on page 3)

The Anatomy of a Confederate Colonel’s Frock Coat

By Shannon Pritchard



The double-breasted frock coat shown here, made of cadet gray wool broadcloth, is adorned with the rank insignia of a Confederate colonel. Consider that there was approximately one full Confederate colonel per one thousand men, and you will readily see why there are so few colonel's uniforms found in collections today. In fact, my experience of 40 years has shown that there are more surviving Confederate States general uniforms than there are colonel uniforms.

The frock's breast is padded with raw cotton bat-

Continued on page 4)

What Happened the Day Before the Merrimac and Monitor Met? (con't)

(Continued from page 2)

damage as light. But more importantly, Jones proudly maintained that "the bearing of officers and men was all that could be wished."

Months earlier, after Virginia left the Union, Catesby ap Roger Jones had placed loyalty to Virginia above loyalty to the Union, and on April 17, 1861, he resigned his commission in the U.S. Navy. Not surprisingly, three of his six younger brothers did likewise and took positions in the Confederate Army and Navy. Of his three brothers who remained loyal to the Union, only one fought in the conflict, attaining the rank of brigadier general in the army. On the day following Jones's resignation, Virginia governor John Letcher appointed him a captain in the Virginia Navy. Less than two months later, he participated in an unauthorized attack on the Gosport Navy Yard at Norfolk that captured 300,000 pounds of powder and many shells. After the daring attack, Jones was commissioned a lieutenant in the Confederate States Navy on June 10, 1861; he took command of the defenses at Jamestown Island on the James River. For the next five months, Jones oversaw the construction of fortifications and batteries on the island before being instructed to proceed to the Confederate Gosport Na-



Chromolithograph depicting the Battle of Hampton Roads | Library of Congress

vy Yard at Norfolk, Virginia.

On November 11, 1861, Confederate Secretary of the Navy Stephen Russell Mallory appointed Jones executive and ordnance officer aboard the CSS Merrimac, then being outfitted as an ironclad warship. The lieutenant had come full circle. He would spend the next four months preparing the former Union ship Merrimac—the vessel on which he had previously served in 1856.

(Continued on page 6)

The Anatomy of a Confederate Colonel’s Frock Coat (con’t)

(Continued from page 3)

ting and lined with the same cadet gray broadcloth



used for the frock's outer construction.

The collar carries the three stars of a Confederate colonel on each side, but the central star on each side is larger than the flanking stars with the exception of the right rear star, which is larger than either. The large central star and the three rows of sleeve braid suggest the coat originally was made for a Confederate major, and the additional stars were added as he rose in rank from a major to a full colonel. The collar facing is made of fine wool in a buff color with a pinkish tint.

The sleeves carry the three rows of braid rank insignia of a Confederate field officer, which is correct for a major, a lieutenant colonel, and a colonel. The

braid was applied at the time of manufacture, which indicates that its owner was a major or above when the coat was made.

Regarding the buttons, the coat's breast is adorned with 14 Federal staff officer's buttons with extra quality backmarks (marks on the back of buttons that include the manufacturer's name and often address). The tails have one MVC (Mobile Volunteer Corp) button and three of the identical Federal staff buttons with the extra quality backmarks. Each sleeve carries three Federal staff cuff buttons; all six have the same extra quality backmarks.

The sides and back are lined with a cotton/silk fabric that has what appears to be ivy inside a wreath wo-



(Continued on page 6)

Memorial for Steve Parnell

For those who wish to pay their respects to Steve Parnell, the date for his Memorial has been set for March 30, 2024 at Ft. Chadbourne. Please come and show your support and love to Tre and the Parnell family. The ceremony will begin at noon and be presented by Good’s Light Artillery and Company H, 7th Texas Infantry. Participants may be military or civilian in period dress.

Those who would like to participate should be onsite by 11:00 am. Soldiers should have a Black ribbon tied to their upper left arm. Infantry will need at least three (3) rounds and their bayonets. There are plans to have lunch catered for participants. If you plan to attend or want more information contact

either Ray Johnson for Good’s Light Artillery (325-642-8853) rayb.johnson49@yahoo.com or Harold Johnston for Co. H, 7th Texas Infantry (210-559-1588) hwjohnston52@gmail.com.



Quantrill’s Reunions

Some of Quantrill’s Reunions were attended by Harry Truman. This one is from Independence, Mo. Harry’s home town.

The first reunion of the men who rode with William

Clarke Quantrill was held in September 1898 at Blue Springs, Missouri. They continued to hold annual reunions for thirty-two years, until 1929. The reunions were held in various locations, including Wallace Grove (the home of Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Wallace) in Independence, Mo. This 1906 reunion photo was taken in Independence.

Among the attendees was John Noland, first from right on the third row. Born a slave in 1844, he served as Quantrill’s hostler during the war and was used by the guerrilla commander as a scout and spy. Noland died in 1908.

Hiram J. George, second from right on the third row, was born in 1834. He fought as both a guerrilla and a regular Confederate soldier, serving at the battles of Independence and Lone Jack, in the raid on Lawrence, and at Baxter Springs. He died in 1911.

William W. “Buck” Fields, sixth from left on the first row, was born in 1844. He served with with the Mis-

souri State Guard and with Quantrill. Fields participated in the siege of Lexington, the battles of Independence, Lone Jack, Cane Hill, Prairie Grove, and Westport, and in the raid on Lawrence. He died in

1937.

William H. Gregg, fifth from right on the first row, was born in 1838. He served as a lieutenant in Quantrill’s command, and fought at Independence, Prairie Grove, and Springfield. He also participated in the raid on Lawrence and in the destruction of General James Blunt’s command at Baxter Springs. Later in the war, Gregg left Quantrill and joined the regular Confederate army. He died

in 1916.

John Hicks George, fourth from right on the first row, was born in 1838. He fought with Quantrill at Independence, Lone Jack, Prairie Grove, Lawrence and Baxter Springs. Later in the war he joined the regular Confederate forces and was captured by the Federals in 1864. He died in 1926.





MAJOR BENJAMIN F. FICKLIN
CHAPTER #310, TEXAS SOCIETY
COMMANDER DAVID P. MCMAHON
ADJUTANT JAMES G. PUTMAN
EDITOR STEVE MELTON

“MAJOR’S ORDERS” is a publication of the Major Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter #310, Military Order of the Stars and Bars, PO Box 3311, San Angelo, TX 76902-3311. All content is produced by the Editor and authorized by the Chapter Commander. All material is copyright by Chapter 310-MOSB ©2024. If you have a news article or photos (high quality jpg) for consideration, email them to the Editor. Photos must not be embedded in articles. Send all as attachments to the Editor at: maj.ben.ficklin310@gmail.com.

Maj. Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310 website: www.txmosb.org/310/index.html

MOS&B National website: www.militaryorderofthestarsandbars.org

Texas Society website: www.txmosb.org

Military Order of the Stars and Bars Pledge

We, the posterity of the Officer Corps and civil officials of the Confederacy, do pledge ourselves to commemorate and honor the service of leadership these men rendered in the cause of the fundamental American principles of self-determination and states' rights and to perpetuate the true history of their deeds for the edification of ourselves, our society and for generations yet unborn.



What Happened the Day...

(Continued from page 3)

On that March 8, 1862, evening, dead tired, Jones signed and dispatched his report, ate dinner, spoke briefly with ex-Virginia governor Henry Wise and a group of civilians who had gathered on shore, and then tried to catch a few valuable moments of sleep. Little did Jones or anyone else realize that the following day, March 9, 1862, naval warfare would be forever revolutionized as the Merrimac confronted the Union iron-clad Monitor in the world's first modern naval engagement.



Colonel's Frock (con't)

(Continued from page 4)

ven into the material. An inner pocket is set into each breast. The frock's skirt is lined with the same cotton/silk material as the back and sides. Inner pockets are set into the tails. Unbleached cotton twill line the sleeves, breast, and tail pockets.

