



# “Major’s Orders”

Major Benjamin F. Ficklin  
Chapter 310

Military Order of the  
Stars and Bars



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2024

## Special Dates of Interest:

### December 6-8, 2024

- Christmas at Old Ft. Concho

### December 14, 2024

- Wreaths Across America, Belvedere Cemetery, 1 pm

### December 14, 2024

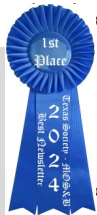
- Santa at Santa Fe Depot, 10 am-4 pm

### December 25, 2024

- Christmas Day

### January 1, 2025 -

*New Years Day*



## 2024 Texas Society Best Newsletter



## Lt. Commander’s Lowdown

It is December and that means Christmas is getting nearer. But that is not the only thing going on in December. Christmas at Old Fort Concho is this weekend, December 6-8, 2024. Commander McMahon will hold a Chapter meeting at the 7th Texas Infantry, Co. "H", tent. The tent will be located on the south side of the parade ground near the artillery pieces, look for the sign on the tent. This is a great time to visit with like minded people and shop the many vendors that come to the fort in December. Participants in period correct attire can gain free entry. So dress up Southern, cowboy or WW II and come on out.

Saturday, December 14th will be the annual Wreaths Across America at Belvedere Cemetery where we will place wreaths on Veteran's graves. The ceremony there begins at 1:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to come and help place wreaths.

That same Saturday, Santa will be arriving at the Santa Fe Depot by train. This event is from 10 am to 4 pm.

Our organization is in its annual 'dues renewal' period. All members should have received their dues invoice with a stamped envelope in the mail by now. If by chance you have not received your invoice, please contact Commander McMahon, dmctx.mosbtx@gmail.com and let him know. Please get your renewal in by December 15th. Prompt

payment of dues is the first step in the process of paperwork required to complete our reports.

During this holiday season I ask that you be aware of your surroundings, be careful, show some kindness and compassion to those you encounter. Have a very "Merry Christmas" and a wonderful New Year.



## Inside this issue:

Gruesome Events at One of My Favorite Battlefields 2

Literary Awards Notice 3

A Powerful Reconciliation at Gettysburg 4

## Service Anniversaries

This month we have three members celebrating a Service Anniversary.

They are:

James Russell Foster - 12/23 - 1 year.

Robert Stevens Melton - 12/18 - 6 years.

Ward William Slack - 12/28 - 20 years.



## Gruesome Events at One of My Favorite Battlefields

One of my favorite gruesome events of the Civil War happened at the battle of Gaines’ Mill on June 27, 1862. Just a day earlier, Robert E. Lee had come out of Richmond, Virginia, with all systems on go and hit Union General McClellan’s isolated right flank at Beaver Dam Creek (some call it the Battle of Mechanicsville), marking the start of the Seven Days Battles. The following day, Lee pushed eastward, probing for McClellan’s position, and found him dug in along the steep slopes of Boatswain’s Creek. Lee attacked in waves—first one brigade, then a division, then another, then a setback, then an additional attack or two. By the end of the day, Lee had attacked with almost 60,000 men. Compare that, for example, with the 12,500 who advanced in

Pickett’s Charge a year later. Some historians claim that Lee had this successful attack at Gaines’ Mill in mind when he ordered Pickett’s, Trimble’s, and Pettigrew’s Divisions forward at Gettysburg.

The final breakthrough at Gaines’ Mill came from John Bell Hood’s Texas Brigade, when and where their reputation was



John Cheves Haskell

first made. And that is when and where one of my favorite events happened. You can read all about it in *The Haskell Memoirs* of South Carolinian John Cheves Haskell. As the battle intensified, young staff officers like Haskell wanted to get into the fight. Spotting General Hood as the Union position was nearing collapse, Haskell expressed his desire to fight. Hood told him that “*he was about to charge the battery which was sweeping the level beyond the ravine, where we had just broken the enemy’s first line,*” and invited Haskell to join in.

So, Haskell joined the charge, and I’ll let him tell his story. “*We charged across the plateau about four or five hundred feet. When I got within a few feet of the guns, I marked a gunner fixing his lanyard into the friction primer. I made a run to cut him down before*



Confederates advancing to the capture of disabled guns at Gaines’ Mills.

*he could fire, but he was too quick. When I was not over ten feet from the muzzle the gun went off. The shot struck my right arm, crushing it and tearing it off at my shoulder. When it hit me, it seemed to knock me up in the air and spin me around two or three times. ... When I came to, I found my arm wrapped around my sword in a most remarkable manner. ... I unwound the fragments of my arm from my sword blade, which I got back into the scabbard. I succeeded in stuffing my arm into the breast of my coat, got to my feet and started to the rear.”*

As he made his way across the battlefield, near the ravine leading down to Boatswain’s Creek, Haskell encountered his friend, Bradfute Warwick, a Richmond native commanding the 4th Texas that day. Warwick was mortally wounded, and, despite his injury, Haskell stopped to seek help for him, his severed arm still stuffed into his uniform.

Okay, come on, it doesn’t get any better than this. Stuffing your severed arm into your coat and calmly walking to the rear?? That’s a story that gets pretty close to the top of all of them that I have ever read. So, if you have the chance, make a special trip to Gaines’ Mill, park by the Watt House, walk onto that plateau that Haskell described, and think about that incident.

John Haskell survived his wound, returned to service, rose to the rank of colonel, and served as Lee’s artillery commander at the surrender at Appomattox, partly because he still had a clean uniform. He later married a daughter of Wade Hampton and lived until 1906. The American Civil War Museum collection in Richmond, Virginia, even includes Warwick’s uniform and the camp chair that Haskell used, designed with a special rest for the stump of his arm!!

By S. Waite Rawls III , [blueandgrayeducation.org](http://blueandgrayeducation.org)





## Military Order of the Stars and Bars

### General Headquarters

Post Office Box 697 Nixa, MO 65714

[jtrent1@cougars.ccis.edu](mailto:jtrent1@cougars.ccis.edu) or  
[mosbdirector1938@gmail.com](mailto:mosbdirector1938@gmail.com)  
(417) 353-5908

Publishers and Authors,

The Military Order of the Stars and Bars invites you to nominate published works for the following three Literary Awards.

The General Basil W. Duke Award -was established to ensure that classic works of Southern history are reissued and made available to students of the war. The annual award is a cash grant of \$1,000 and an engraved trophy given directly to the publisher who reissues the best out-of-print book in the field of Confederate history.

The Douglas Southall Freeman History Award-named in honor of the premier historian of General Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia, is a cash grant of \$1,000 given directly to the author writing the most scholarly work in the field of Southern history.

The John Esten Cooke Fiction Award-was established to encourage writers of fiction to portray characters and events dealing with the War Between the States, Confederate heritage or Southern history in a historically accurate fashion. The annual award is a cash grant of \$1,000 and an engraved trophy given directly to the author.

Pamphlets with information on the submission of nominations, the award process, and dates are enclosed for all three awards. If you have any questions please let me know.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jon E. Trent, Executive Director  
General Headquarters  
Military Order of the Stars and Bars  
P.O. Box 697 Nixa, MO 65714-0697  
[Jtrent1@cougars.ccis.edu](mailto:Jtrent1@cougars.ccis.edu) or [mosbdirector1938@gmail.com](mailto:mosbdirector1938@gmail.com)  
417-353-5908

Anyone interested in the Literary Awards process can find brochures on the MOS&B website that contain information on each award or you can email the Editor requesting one or more brochures at: [maj.ben.ficklin310@gmail.com](mailto:maj.ben.ficklin310@gmail.com) and they will be sent to you in .pdf format.  
The Editor

# A Powerful Reconciliation at Gettysburg by Chris Kolakowski

In July 1913, a large crowd gathered at Gettysburg National Military Park to mark the 50th anniversary of the Civil War’s bloodiest battle. The United States Army oversaw the program and logistics for the major gathering of veterans, spectators, and dignitaries over several days of events and ceremonies.



Veterans at the Pickett’s Charge monument during the 50th anniversary.

One of the officers detailed to support the anniversary was Lt. Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., who was just shy of his 27th birthday. His namesake father was a Confederate lieutenant general, friend to U.S. Grant, former governor of Kentucky, and vice-presidential candidate on the Gold Democrat ticket in 1896.

What Buckner Jr. saw at Gettysburg made a deep impression. “At the ‘Bloody Angle’ the survivors of Pickett’s Charge shook hands with those who fifty years ago had met them in a bloody struggle. Each was proud to be in a country which had produced the other. Each was glad to call the other his friend,” he wrote to his mother. “The Gettysburg semi-centennial has not been the celebration of a victory of war. It has been the celebration of a victory of peace.”

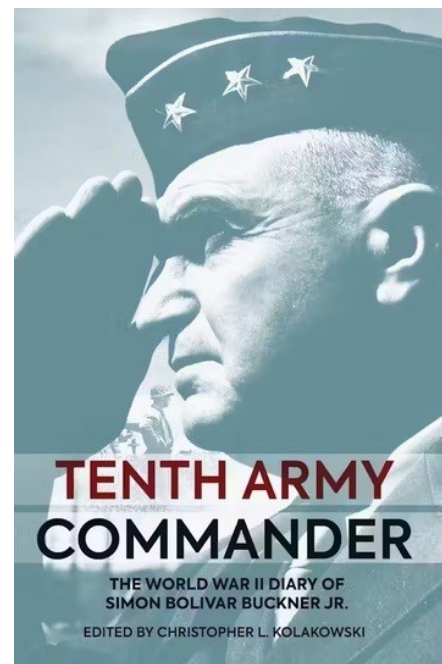
Buckner Jr.’s excitement about this assignment raised an eyebrow with his mother Delia, who was from the Confederacy’s former capital, had Confederate ancestors, and was married to the

highest-ranking Confederate still living. Bolivar explained in a letter that he relished the professional challenges of supporting a camp of 55,000 veterans. He also recognized that “being associated with officers who will in a very few years be at the top in the Army, and having an opportunity to meet many of those who are now prominent in National politics, is always of advantage professionally.” He reassured Delia that “I love the South, and all that it stands for. I love its people, its traditions, its gentility, but I do not feel that loyalty to the South compels me to hate the North.”

Buckner Jr. also happened to be present for the battle’s 75th anniversary in 1938, leading tanks of the 66th Regiment in a parade through town.

A few years later, he took command of the defenses of Alaska, which he led until being assigned to command of Tenth Army in June 1944. He directed Tenth Army in the invasion of Okinawa in 1945, and was killed in action on June 18, 1945. Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., is the seniormost American killed by enemy fire in World War II and the 20th century, and lies next to his parents in Frankfort, Kentucky.

You can read more in the author’s *Tenth Army Commander*, recently released by Casemate and available at this link: [www.casematepublishers.com/9781636241999/tenth-army-commander](http://www.casematepublishers.com/9781636241999/tenth-army-commander).



# A Gentleman Rescued from Obscurity

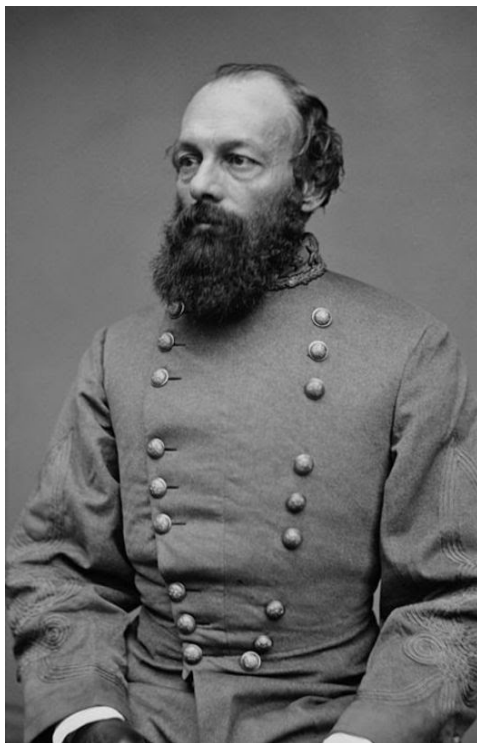
by Hal K. Litchford

One of my earliest reference books, *A Photographic Supplement of American Swords*, features a sword that has always intrigued me. Manufactured by the College Hill Arsenal in Nashville, this particular cavalry officer’s saber is inscribed with the name “A. A. Dysart.” He is identified in the book as Capt. Alfred A. Dysart of Co. D, 4th Tennessee Cavalry, who was killed in action at Thompson’s Station in March 1863.

The sword also appears in *Confederate Presentation and Inscribed Swords and Revolvers*. Little else is known about this Confederate officer.

Growing up in Middle Tennessee with a keen interest in Nashville swords, and knowing that the Battle of Thompson’s Station was a notable victory for Forrest, I made it my personal mission to learn more about Captain Dysart and rescue him from historical obscurity.

Alfred Allen Dysart was born on October 9, 1832, in Marshall County, Tennessee. When the war began, he was a 28-year-old bachelor living alone in the northern part of the county along the Duck River. In the 1860 census, his occupation is listed as “gentleman.” Like many young men in the area, he was an accomplished horseman. In November 1861, Dysart and a group of cavalry volunteers from the region rode to Camp Cheatham, a major recruiting and training base near Nashville, where they enlisted in Company D of what would become McLemore’s 4th Tennessee Cavalry, Confederate States Army. Dysart was elected lieutenant.



Edmund Kirby Smith, ca 1862

At the same time, College Hill Arsenal offered several varieties of finely etched officers’ swords for private purchase. These swords featured a blank panel in the etching, allowing the buyer to have his name engraved. Surviving examples of these swords are almost exclusively traced back to officers at Camp Cheatham. Dysart was one of the new officers who purchased a College Hill sword and had his name etched into the panel.

The early history of Dysart’s regiment is somewhat convoluted in 1862. The regiment took part in the Kentucky Campaign under Gen. Kirby Smith, and Dysart was promoted to captain in June of that year. By November, the regiment was serving under Gen. Nathan B. Forrest and participated in his West Tennessee expedition, which culminated in the Battle of Parker’s Crossroads.

Dysart’s next major engagement came on March 5, 1863, at the Battle of Thompson’s Station, Tennessee. The Confederates, commanded by Gen. Earl Van Dorn, left their base in Spring Hill to confront a federal reconnaissance force advancing from Franklin. The two sides clashed at Thompson’s Station, with Forrest holding the Confederate right. Dismounted, the 4th Tennessee Cavalry assaulted the Union line east of the Franklin Pike. Before the attack, Dysart had a premonition of his death. He told one of the company’s horse holders, Sgt. D. M. Stegall, that he would be killed and entrusted him with his watch and pocketbook for delivery to his family. Tragically, Dysart’s premonition proved accurate. He was mortally wounded in the front yard of the Elijah Thompson house, near a cedar tree.

Dysart died three days later and was buried in Round Hill Cemetery in Belfast, Marshall County, just 35 miles from Thompson’s Station. Today, his name is inscribed on the Confederate Memorial in the court square of Lewisburg, Tennessee, among the county’s native sons who perished during the Civil War. His inscribed sword now resides in the collection of the Virginia Museum of History & Culture, formerly Battle Abbey, in Richmond, Virginia.



Confederate Memorial in Lewisburg, Kentucky, including Captain Dysart’s name.





MAJOR BENJAMIN F. FICKLIN  
 CHAPTER #310, TEXAS SOCIETY  
 COMMANDER      DAVID P. MCMAHON  
 LT. CMDR.        STEVE MELTON  
 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](mailto:maj.ben.ficklin310@gmail.com).

Maj. Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310 website: [www.txmosb.org/310/index.html](http://www.txmosb.org/310/index.html)

MOS&B National website: [www.mosbhq.org](http://www.mosbhq.org)

Texas Society website: [www.txmosb.org](http://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.



## Battles & Skirmishes

1861  
 December 26 – December 28 1861 – North Missouri Operations, MO

December 31 1862 – January 25 1863 – Marmaduke's First Missouri Raid, MO

1862  
 December 3 – December 8 1862 – Prairie Grove Campaign, AR  
 December 11 – December 13 1862 – Hampton's Dumfries Raid, VA  
 December 11 – December 31 1862 – Forrest's First West Tennessee Raid, TN  
 December 14 – December 28 1862 – Foster's Goldsboro Raid, NC  
 December 18 – December 28 1862 – Van Dorn's Raid to Holly Springs, MS  
 December 20 1862 – January 2 1863 – Sherman's Yazoo River Expedition, MS  
 December 21 1862 – January 5 1863 – Morgan's Second Kentucky Raid, KY  
 December 26 1862 – January 5 1863 – Carter's Upper Tennessee Valley Raid, TN  
 December 26 1862 – January 1 1863 – Stuart's Fairfax Raid, VA  
 December 26 1862 – January 4 1863 – Stones River Campaign, TN

1863  
 December 4 1863 – January 28 1864 – East Tennessee Campaign, TN  
 December 8 – December 21 1863 – Averell's First West Virginia Raid, WV

1864  
 December 1 – December 16 1864 – Nashville and Murfreesboro, TN  
 December 8 – December 10 1864 – Petersburg Campaign – Hicksford and Hatcher's Run, VA  
 December 8 – December 27 1864 – Butler's Fort Fisher Expedition, NC  
 December 10 – December 21 1864 – Siege of Savannah, GA  
 December 10 1864 – January 1 1865 – Stoneman's Raid in Southwest Virginia, VA  
 December 17 1864 – January 10 1865 – Hood's Retreat from Tennessee, TN

