



MAY 2024

“Major’s Orders”

Major Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310

Military Order of the Stars and Bars



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 5

Special Dates of Interest:

May 16-19, 2024—87th Annual National General Convention, Springfield, Missouri.

May 27, 2024—Memorial Day.

June 15, 2024—Maj. Ben Ficklin Chapter 310 meeting at Ft. Concho LHSC, 10:00 am.

June 21-22, 2024 - Texas Society Convention at the Hilton College Station Conference Center, College Station, Texas.

Lt. Commander’s Lowdown

Greetings Compatriots, I hope everyone is doing well. We made it through the busy month of April and now we have the stirring of Conventions in the air.

The 87th Annual National Convention will be held in Springfield, Missouri in just a few weeks, May 16-19, 2024.

Then, June 21-22, 2024 we will have our Texas Society Convention in College Station. I hope you have plans to attend one or both of these events.

We will have our Chapter meeting the Saturday before the State Convention on June 15, 2024 at Ft. Concho LHSC at

10:00 am. Coffee will be on at 9:30 am. Make plans to attend.

We had a number of our members participating in the Parnell Memorial in March and several showing up for the San Jacinto Day/Confederate Memorial Day ceremony at Fairmount Cemetery on Saturday, April 27th.

See you at the June 15th meeting.



Maj. Ben Ficklin Chapter 310 on Confederate Memorial/San Jacinto

Maj. Ben Ficklin Chapter 310 members were on hand for the 2024 Confederate Memorial/San Jacinto Day event at Fairmount Cemetery on Saturday, April

27th. The Chapter joined with the Tom Green County Historical Commission in presenting a program to remember our ancestors that served our State in both of Its fights for independence.

Member Charles Westbrook presided over the Confederate Memorial service while TGCHC President Golda McMahon presented

a historical program on the two Texas Independence veterans and the Battle of San Jacinto.



(L-R) Charles Westbrook, Howard Horton (guest), David Johnson, Steve Melton, Rod Smith, Cmdr. David McMahon and TGCHC President Golda McMahon.

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The "Gordonsville Grays" Company C, Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment

by The Confederate Shop

The Gordonsville Greys were originally organized in Orange County, Virginia in 1859 when the Governor of Virginia, John Letcher, called for 50 State Militia units to be mustered into temporary service as a consequence of John Brown's raid at Harper's Ferry. This terrifying experience showed the lack of military preparedness in Virginia. As a result, new militia companies started springing up all over Virginia.

A Military Convention convened in January of 1860 to advise Virginia's General Assembly on how to improve the 1858 Militia Law. Legislation was passed on March 30, 1860 that incorporated many of the Military Council's suggestions, particularly those in regards to supply and logistics. Less than three months later, the Gordonsville Grays were organized and received the above flag from the ladies of the community.

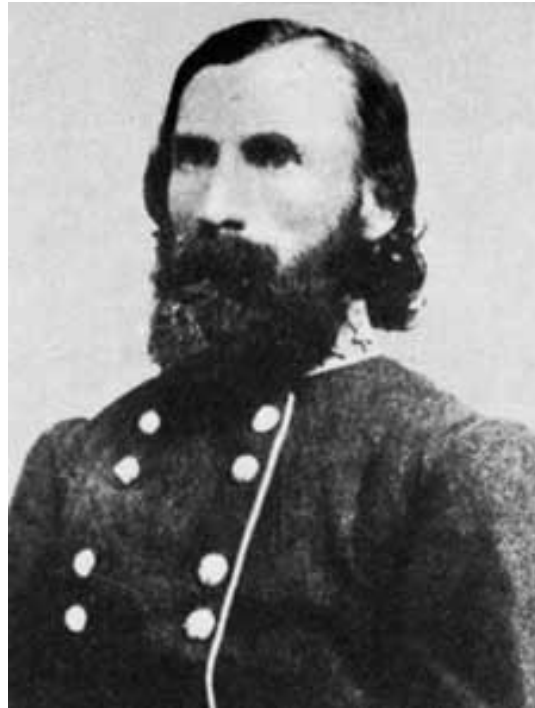
The Gordonsville Greys, along with two other organized militia companies comprised of Orange County men, the Montpelier Guard and Barboursville Guards, proceeded to Harper's Ferry and were enrolled into the service of the State of Virginia on May 9, 1861.

Pressure from the previous month's cannonade at Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina caused the citizens of Virginia to move rapidly with a vote on seceding from the Union. On May 23, 1861, the Ordinance of Secession was approved by the Orange County electorate with a vote of 853 to 0.

A Regiment was soon authorized to be organized from the Companies coming from the North Central and Northwestern region of Virginia. This Regiment was first designated the 4th Virginia Infantry Regiment, but quickly changed to 13th Virginia Infantry Regiment when it was discovered another Regiment had already been assigned the 4th's designation. The Montpelier Guard, senior by virtue of having been organized earlier, became Company A, while the Gordonsville Grays were assigned as Company C. and the Barboursville Guards as Company F.

The Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment completed its organization during the summer of 1861 with men from Winchester and Culpeper, Orange, Louisa, and Hampshire counties. Ambrose Powell Hill was appointed as the unit's Colonel. An unidentified soldier from the Virginia 13th had the following to say about A. P. Hill:

"Our colonel was A.P. Hill, who had won a fine reputation in the old army, and was one of the most accomplished soldiers with whom I ever came in contact, who was the idol of his men, and who, by his gallantry and skill, steadily rose to the rank of Lieutenant General, and fell, mourned by the whole South, on that ill fated day, at Petersburg, which witnessed the breaking of his lines and the virtual fall of the Confederacy."



A. P. Hill

The Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment is one of the few Regiments from the Civil War that produced Three Generals from their ranks. Along with A.P. Hill, other notable commanders of the Virginia 13th who were promoted to the rank of General include, James A. Walker and James Barbour Terrill.

Colonel A.P. Hill was promoted to Brigadier General on February 26, 1862 and given command of a Brigade in the Army of Northern Virginia. The command

of the 13th Virginia now fell to James A. Walker, who was promoted from Lieutenant Colonel to the rank of Full Colonel. James B. Terrill was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Colonel Walker commanded the Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment through the Battle of Chancellorsville. In May of 1863, he was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General and transferred to the Stonewall Brigade, where he commanded Stonewall Jackson's former troops. Following Walker's departure the command of the 13th Virginia was passed to James B. Terrill, who was promoted to Full Colonel.

Terrill was killed in action at the Battle of Totopotomoy Creek or Battle Bethesda Church in Hanover County, Virginia on May 30, 1864, a few days before the bloody Battle of Cold Harbor. James B. Terrill's brother, William R. Terrill was a Brigadier General in the Union Army. William R. Terrill was killed in action at the Battle of Perryville Kentucky. James B. Terrill had already been nominated for the rank of Brigadier General. The Confederate Senate confirmed his appointment the next day, May 31, 1864.

Chaplain of the Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment, Reverend J. William Jones, had the following to say about the regiment:

"The Thirteenth Virginia infantry gave to the Confederacy three generals, who were its original field officers: A. P. Hill, who rose to the rank of lieutenant-general, one of the most accomplished, skillful and successful soldiers the war

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ON CHATTANOOGA AND CHICKAMAUGA BATTLEFIELDS WITH A CONFEDERATE VETERAN

By Nancy Lewis Greene

A glorious sunset was painted upon the back of Lookout Mountain. The highest peak, sharply etched against a background of crimson and gold, seemed strangely elevated and remote to one standing in the city below. Above shadings of softest rose color a cloud curtain of indigo hung darkly, and falling gradually veiled, as it de-scended, the mountaintop.

Very beautiful are these sunsets at Chattanooga, shedding peaceful light upon scenes of bloody warfare. History recounts the battle of Lookout Mountain, but there are facts yet to be learned, and I glanced furtively up into the face of the man who had fought in the War Between the States, wondering just what word of mine would best serve to set him talking. He had worn the gray, and his features were stamped with that undefinable blending of nobility and sadness which is so often depicted in marble on Confederate monuments. It was the expression that made me feel as if I had known him always, but such men are reticent and it was with some misgivings I asked, "Won't you tell me something about the battles?"

His eyes were piercing as he responded, with a trace of sarcasm, "Are not your histories satisfactory?" "Not entirely," and his lips curved in a smile. "Just beyond is Chickamauga Creek," he said, "where the Confederates drove every Federal general but one from the field with a small force, the opposing army believing us to be very strong. Thomas was the only one who stood his ground in the confused retreat which followed. Over to the right is Missionary Ridge, where Cheatham's Division, in which I fought, lay entrenched during another battle; and he seated himself comfortably. Preceding the retreat of our division toward Dalton, the Confederate line was broken, and every fellow looked out for himself in the scramble for shelter.

"Between our position and the woods lay a road which was under heavy fire, and on the other side a thick briar patch. I was barefooted, but went through those thorns without a scratch. How I did it is still a mystery to me."

After a pause he continued, "I never stood in Yankee shoes but once and came to grief that time. After the battle of Nashville, when we were marching towards Pulaski, Tenn., without shoes or hose, the

sand cut my feet until they were blistered and bleeding. Pulaski had been vacated by the Federals, and on their camp ground I found and appropriated a pair of discarded and dilapidated old shoes. Several hours later we were lined up for inspection to ascertain which soldiers stood most in need of foot covering and I was ruled out on account of my newly acquired possession, failing to receive new shoes until we reached Corinth, Mississippi. "We were very hungry on the march, and ate corn from the horse's troughs."

"Did you do much foraging?" I asked mischievously. "Not a great deal," he responded, with a merry twinkle in his eye. "Once we saw some vicious sheep in a pasture and stopped to kill them. Again we staked off claims in a farmer's sweet potato patch, each fellow standing guard over his plot. In the night a squad of soldiers marched into the field and called 'Halt!' We believed them to be Federals and rejoined our regiments, leaving the potatoes in possession of



some of our own comrades who had planned the coup."

"These memories are dim and distant but very real," he added, reflectively. "Like old Lookout at the present moment. See the glow is all gone and nothing but black, hard outlines remain where the gilded mountain stood an hour ago." His head drooped and sadness was uppermost now in the face of the Confederate veteran.



The “Gordonsville Grays” (con’t)

(Continued from page 2)

produced; James A. Walker, who commanded the Stonewall brigade until he was severely wounded at the "bloody angle" at Spottsylvania Court House, May 12, 1864, and afterward led Early's old division to Appomattox Court House; and J. B. Terrill, who was promoted only a short time before he was killed at Bethesda church in June, 1864, and would have won higher distinction had his noble young life been longer spared."

The Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment served with Elzey's Brigade prior to his injury and with Jubal Early in the Shenandoah Valley.

On July 25, 1861, the Army of the Shenandoah was reorganized and the Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the Fourth Brigade, General Richard S.



Flag of the Gordonsville Grays

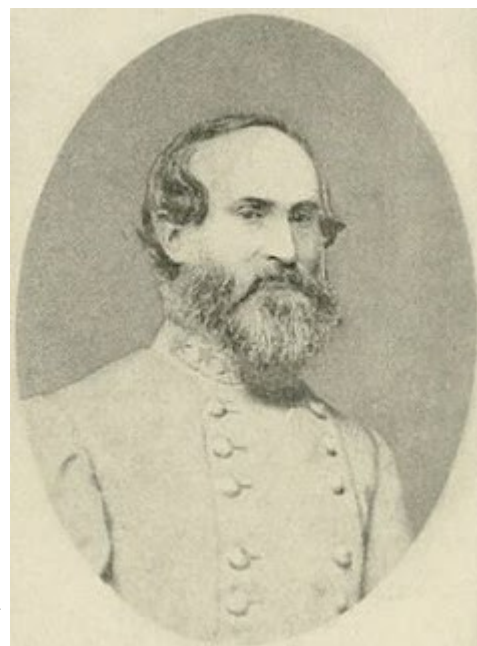
Ewell's Second Corps, Army of the Shenandoah, under the command of Brigadier General Arnold Elzey.

The Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment, while attached to Elzey's Fourth Brigade, participated in Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign that took place in the Spring of 1862.

General Elzey was shot through the head and seriously wounded at the Battle of Gaines's Mill on June 27, 1862. His wound kept him from active field command for the rest of the

war. Following Elzey's injury, the Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment was attached to the Army of Northern Virginia. While attached to the Army of Northern Virginia, the 13th Virginia participated in every engagement from the Seven Days Battles, which took place in mid 1862 through the bloody Battle of Cold Harbor, which took place in mid 1864.

After the Confederate victory at Cold Harbor, the Virginia 13th Infantry Regiment was attached to Lieutenant General Jubal Anderson Early's Corps, where they participated in the Early's Valley Campaign that took place in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia from May to October 1864.



Lieutenant General Jubal Anderson Early



Sarah Caroline Bell Watie

Sarah Watie (1820 - 1882), the wife of Confederate Brigadier General Stand Watie (1806-1871), experienced a life forever altered by the ravages of war. Tragically, she would bury not only her husband but also all three of her sons within just five years after the Civil War concluded.

During and after the Civil War, Sarah (also known as Sallie) emerged as the de facto leader of Southern Cherokee women. Other women turned to her for guidance during these tumultuous times. At one point, circumstances forced her to join other Southern refugees as they fled to the Red River area and later sought refuge in Texas.

In poignant letters to her husband, who was fighting in the field, Sarah urged him to remind



Sarah Caroline (Bell) Watie

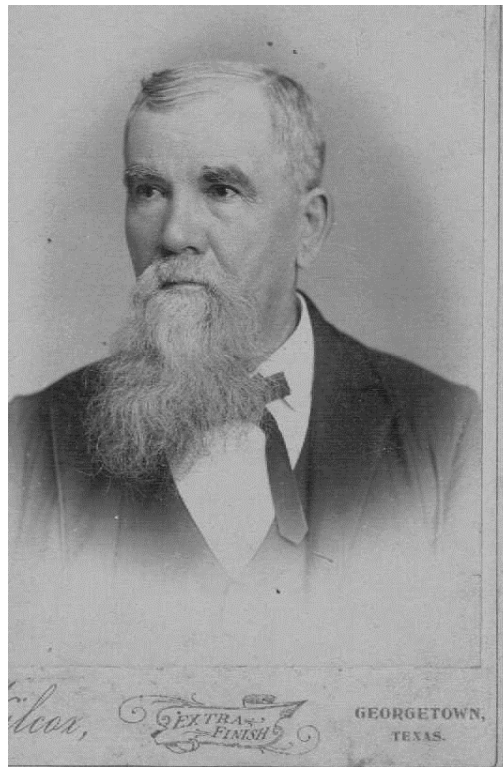
their son Saladin to show mercy to all Union prisoners. Saladin served under his father in several battles during the war, including two at Cabin Creek, Cherokee Nation. He rose to the rank of captain during the war.

After the war's end, Sarah collaborated with her husband in various business ventures. Upon Stand Watie's death in 1871, she assumed responsibility for the family's business affairs.

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George Washington Foster

George Washington Foster was 25 years old when he and his wife Lena moved from his native Illinois to San Felipe Texas and began teaching. He was described as a large man with iron like stature so when the war broke out George enlisted with the Navarro Rifles which would become Company I or the 4th Texas Infantry in the famous Hood’s Texas Brigade. During his first winter of 1861 in Virginia, George like many of the other recruits fell ill and spent time in the hospital in Richmond. He recovered and fought at the 2nd battle of Manassas where he was wounded and captured on August the 30th 1862 but was paroled a month later, causing him to miss the battle of Sharpsburg, which likely saved his life. Foster was wounded two more times during the course of the war, once at the battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse on May the 15th 1864



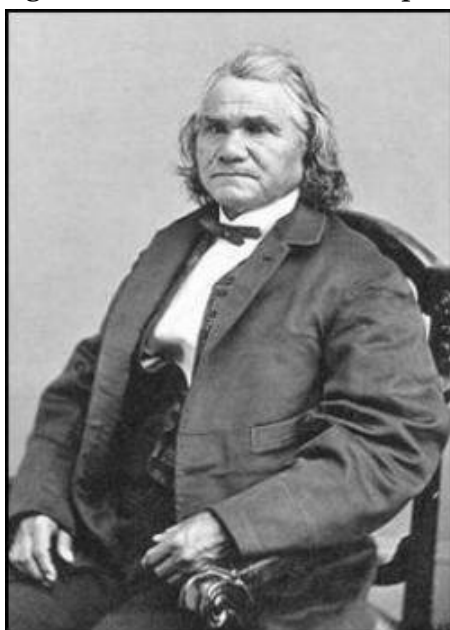
and again at the battles along Darbytown and New Market Roads on October the 7th 1864. This time his wound was severe enough to send him back to Texas where he served the rest of the war in the Invalid Corps in Waco. When the war ended, he resumed teaching, read medicine and attended Tulane University in New Orleans. After Foster graduated in 1869 he returned to Texas and practiced medicine in Austin County until 1887 when he moved to Georgetown and continued to practice medicine until his retirement. George Washington Foster died in 1922 and is buried in the Odd Fellows cemetery in Georgetown.



Sarah Caroline Bell Watie (con’t)

(Continued from page 4)

Her life was marked by complexity due to her two significant relationships with influential men. The first, of course, was her husband Stand, widely recognized as one of the most important figures in



Brigadier General Stand Watie

Cherokee affairs during the nineteenth century—perhaps second only to John Ross. The second influential figure was James Madison Bell, Sallie’s brother. Colonel Bell had been closely associated with Stand Watie before, during, and after the war. Following Watie’s passing, Bell continued to play a crucial role in

Sallie Watie’s life. He served as both a business partner and legal advisor, maintaining close ties with the Watie family. Additionally, he was connected to the mercurial nephew of the Waties, Elias Cornelius Boudinot.

Sarah Caroline Bell, born on March 11, 1820, became the fourth wife of Stand Watie after their marriage on September 18, 1842. Throughout their union, Sarah bore five children. Among her offspring were three sons—Saladin, Cumisky, and Solon (also known as Watch)—and two daughters, Ninnie and Charlotte Jackeline. Tragically, all of her children met untimely ends and had passed away by 1875. As a result, there are no direct descendants of either Stand Watie or Sarah Watie. Although Sarah’s correspondence provides little insight into her feelings about her children’s deaths, it is evident that their loss added to the challenges of her already difficult life. Sarah passed away in Vinita, Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) eleven years after her husband, on February 3, 1882. She rests beside General Watie in the Polson Cemetery in Delaware County, Oklahoma.





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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.



Parnell Memorial

Confederate Compatriots from across Texas gathered at Ft. Chadbourne, Texas to honor fellow Confederate Steve Parnell. Steve was an avid WBTS reenactor, historian and was a Past-Commander of Dunn-Holt-Midkiff Camp 1441. Chapter members who knew him well participated in his “Last Roll Call.”



(Right) Member Lee Hise conducts the Eulogy for long time friend and Compatriot Parnell.

(Below-left-right) 2nd Brigade Cmdr. Bob Hazlewood, Chapter member Darrell Rhea, Calvin Oglesby (scv), Chapter member Lee Hise and Commander David McMahon.



Lt. Commander Steve Melton (kneeling) performs part of the “Canteen Ceremony.”

