



LONE STAR DISPATCH



NEWSLETTER OF THE
TEXAS SOCIETY
MILITARY ORDER OF THE STARS AND BARS

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COMMANDER'S COMMENTS By Michael Smith

The beginning of the year is a good time for reflection. We think back to the year that has just passed, and we think of where we would like to be a year from now.

We in the Texas Society have just completed a year in which death took eight good men from us. Some of these men were major driving forces in our organization. All of them are missed. We lost Johnnie Holley, David McMahan, Yancey Swearingen, Dale Tidwell, Paul Allen Riley, Tom Harrison, Beckwith N. Stiener, and Donald Edwin Lee. The fact that seven of the eight were Life Members of MOS&B, and one was a Senior Life Member, speaks volumes about their dedication to the MOS&B and the Texas Society.

We can also lose members in other ways. Some transfer out of the Texas Society, some fail to renew their membership due to health or other personal problems, and some simply lose interest and decide to drop out. Some get mad and leave out of spite.

The point is that membership in our organization (as in any other organization) is not a static thing. The numbers constantly change, and even men who are pillars of our Society will someday be gone. All of us will someday be gone, too. Age has a way of creeping up on us, and I have recently noticed that, unfortunately, I now qualify for every senior discount there is. Many of you are in the same boat.

Any group that hopes to survive as an organization needs to overcome this constant attrition by recruiting and retention.

Fortunately, the Texas Society has a history of

doing well in this regard. This past year has been no exception. We added 26 new members.

It is growth like this that enables our Society to continue in existence, and to have a bright future. We must be sure that we don't lose sight of this fact. Let's let our communities know about our organization and the good that it does!

Also, we all know men who qualify for membership in the MOS&B, and who would be great to have as compatriots. Let's tell them about what we believe in and what we do.

As we have heard numerous times, the MOS&B is the only heritage organization that continues to grow. The future of the MOS&B is a bright one, if we will make the effort to keep it growing.



<i>In This Issue...</i>	
Front	— Commander's Comments
2-3	— Chapter Activities
4	— A Story About One of My Great-Great Grandfathers
5	— Chaplain's Comments
5	— Upcoming Events
6	— Was the War About Slavery? - the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution
7	— Texas Society Officers

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Chapter 5

We consistently meet the third Friday of the month quarterly. I've always believed if you have the same date and the same time and you're consistent, people have it in their minds, put it on their calendars and come to the meeting. I am personally in contact by phone and email with our members to make sure we have a good attendance. A reminder email goes out a month before the meeting with the place, address, time and speaker. Having a good program is essential. Our chapter is bringing in new members and growth shows success. Our chapter is the oldest in Texas and has always shown lots of pride because everyone dresses up in coat and tie and everyone feels welcome.

George W. Williamson, Commander
MOS&B Houston Chapter #5

In Loving Memory of Johnnie Lee Holley, Jr. *August 17, 1941 – December 22, 2025*

Johnnie Lee Holley Jr. 84, passed away at his home in Hawkins, Texas on December 22, 2025. A devoted husband, loving father, cherished grandfather and loyal friend to so many – Johnnie was a true Texas gentleman and lived a life defined by kindness, integrity, and quiet strength.

Born in Waco, Texas to Johnnie Lee Holley Sr. and Erna Emma Kretzschmar as the youngest of three children, Johnnie grew up with a deep love for the outdoors, music, sports and the value of hard work. Johnnie attended LaVega High School, graduating as Valedictorian in 1959. After high school, Johnnie attended Texas A&M University where he was a member of the Aggie Corp of Cadets, The Ross Volunteers and the Fighting Texas Aggie Band. Johnnie excelled in leadership roles throughout his college career, rising to Sgt. Major of the Aggie Band. Johnnie graduated in 1963 with a BS in Aeronautical Engineering. Johnnie's love for Texas A&M would continue throughout the rest of his life. He credited his time at Texas A&M as molding his values and creating character traits and work ethic that would serve him throughout his adult life.

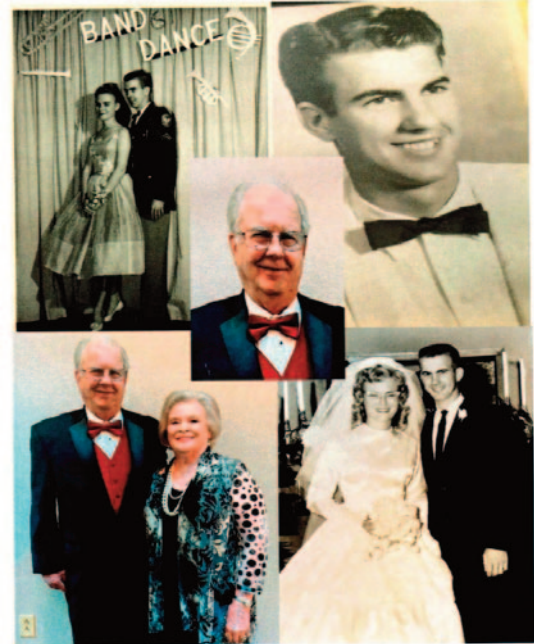
Prior to graduating from college, Johnnie married the true love of his life, Norma Jean Basham, also of Waco Texas.

After graduating from Texas A&M, he accepted his commission to the United States Air Force. Johnnie had a passion for flying, and he excelled as an Air Force pilot in C130 aircraft. While serving in the Air Force, Johnnie and Norma welcomed their two children, Darrell Wayne Holley and Tracy Lynn Holley.

In 1969, Johnnie made the decision to leave the Air Force and join Delta Airlines, a decision that he would always say was one of the toughest of his life due to his love for the military - made because he felt it was in the best interest of his family. He moved to Colleyville, Texas where he raised his kids, coached youth sports, served the causes that were important to him and pursued his passions for hunting, fishing, motorcycle racing, camping, canoeing and skiing.

Chapter 261

Chapter 261 mourned their former Commander, Past Commander General Johnnie Holley.



retirement, Johnnie decided to embark on a multi-year project to build his "log house by the lake". He and Norma moved to Hawkins and spent the next 24 years traveling, reading, attending Texas A&M football games, pursuing his passion for historical preservation and honoring those that served their country.

Johnnie was a wonderful storyteller, a patient teacher, a steady hand in times of uncertainty, and a man who believed that the best way to lead was by example. He was a brilliant man of the highest integrity who loved his family deeply and unconditionally and would do almost anything for his friends.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Norma; his son, Darrell Holley; his daughter Tracy Rueschhoff; and his five grandchildren, Tanner Holley, Logan Holley, Bennett Holley, Morgan Rueschhoff and Ian Rueschhoff. He is also survived by his sister, Patsy Emmert, and his nieces, nephews, and dear friends.

Graveside Services for Johnnie will be held on January 9, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at Aggie Field of Honor Cemetery in College Station, Texas, with Father Greg Crosthwait officiating. Arrangements are under the direction of Stewart Family Funeral Home. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Texas Prader-Willi Association [TXPWA.org].

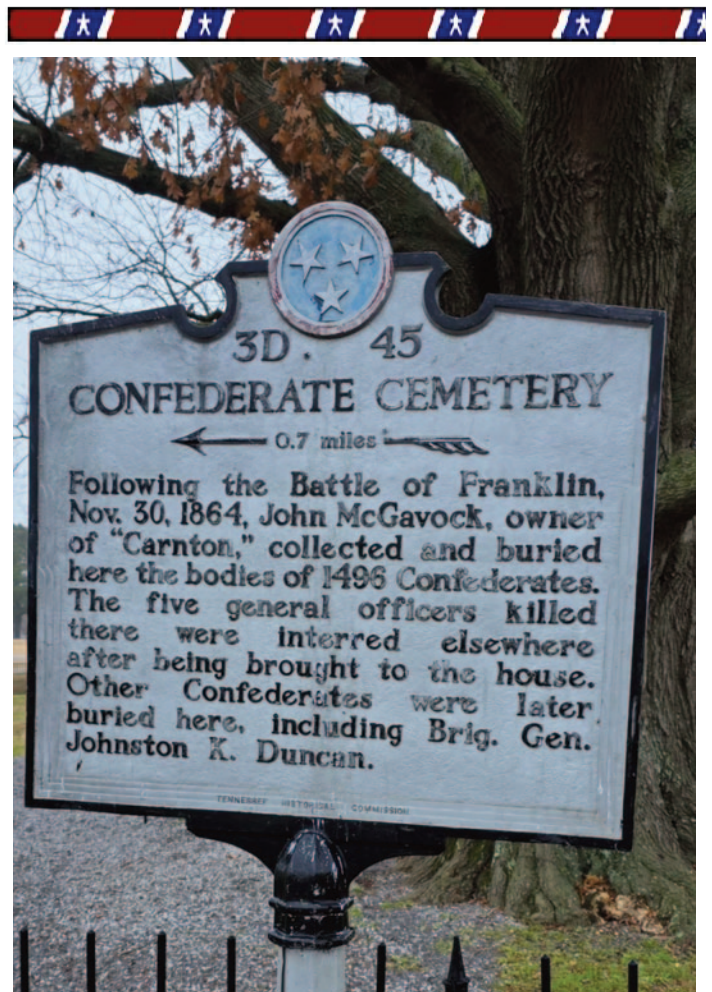
Johnnie's legacy will live on in the lives he touched, the lessons he taught, and the love he gave so freely.





CHAPTER 310

Members of the Maj. Ben Ficklin Chapter #310 combined forces with members of the Daniel Wood Chapter #22, Sons of the American Revolution to participate in "Wreaths Across America" at Belvedere Cemetery in San Angelo, Texas, December 13, 2025.



CHAPTER 318

(Right) - In December, Chapter 318 member Gary Bray traveled to Franklin, Tennessee to flag the graves of Texas' Confederate dead. **(Below)** - Chapter 318 also swore in its newest members: Corey Laird, Patrick Starley, and John Dickey.



A Story About One of My Great-Great Grandfathers

by Michael Smith

Please rest assured that I won't make a habit of regaling you with my personal family history, but in this issue I'd like to make an exception.

We have all read many stories about Confederate soldiers who died bravely in battle, but as we all know, many men died during the War due to other causes. Disease was the most common of these other causes.

But many people were also murdered. Northern Arkansas was an especially dangerous place to live during the War, largely because of the numerous marauding bands of bushwhackers who roamed the land, killing and stealing everywhere they went. Some of these were renegade Union soldiers; a smaller number were renegade Confederates, and many were just plain murderous scumbags, unaffiliated with either side.

I have two Confederate ancestors who were murdered by bushwhackers. One of them was James Tyrie Wright, who was a Captain in the Missouri State Guard, and who is the ancestor who qualified me for membership in the MOS&B. But right now I'd like to tell you about the other one.

William Carroll Whitlock lived near Yellville, in Marion County, which is in north-central Arkansas. In 1862 he enlisted as a private in Company A of the 27th Arkansas Infantry Regiment, but after several months he was discharged due to "old age." He returned to his home, which should have been a relatively safe place.

The following account of his death was written by a man named Silas Turnbo. In the last few decades of the 1800s, Turnbo traveled widely through the Ozark region of Arkansas and Missouri and gathered family histories from many of the area's residents. He published these in several small books, hoping that they would be a great commercial success. They never were. Fortunately, copies of most of them have survived, and they are a valuable source of information about families in the area and about the way folks lived in that region during those times.

At some point, Turnbo met William Whitlock's daughter, and the story she told him about her

father's death is as follows:

HORRIBLE INCIDENT OF THE WAR AND OTHER FAMILY HISTORY

By S. C. Turnbo

As told by Lizzie Whitlock Brown, daughter of William Carroll Whitlock & Sarah Travis.

Many of the awful crimes perpetrated in war times should not be lost sight of. They should be kept in memory so long as the United States exists as a nation not for the purpose of keeping up an enmity between the sections but to show future generations the great extremes the Civil War reached before it was brought to a close.

William L. Brown, formerly of Franklin township, Marion County, Arkansas, now of Holdenville Indian Territory, was born on the farm on the south bank of the river where Keesees Ferry was established in 1876.

William L. Brown married Miss Lizzie B. Whitlock, daughter of William C. Whitlock, who lived 3 miles north of Yellville, Arkansas. One day in May 1895, Mrs. Brown gave the writer a history of her father's death in war times, which is a sad story. She said that one night in 1863 a party of men on horseback came to their house near midnight and took her father out of the house.

"They also made Jass, a 12 year-old brother of mine go with them. The men claimed that they would not hurt them, but after they left the house some distance, Jass heard the men tell Father that he might prepare himself for death, for they intended to kill him. While Father was begging the men not to kill him, Jass made a dash for liberty and escaped, but he was so bad scared and had run so far without stopping, that he did not come back home till late the following day.

"My poor mother grieved and wept until the break of day when she started out into the woods to search for Father. For she had good reason to believe that the cold-hearted men who took him off had killed him and it might be that they had killed Jass, too. I was too young to be of any advantage

(Continued on p. 8)

CHAPLAIN'S COMMENTS

by Raymond Holder

Battleground

Last summer, I visited the Robert E. Lee home of Arlington, the tomb of the Unknown Soldier and most of all, Arlington cemetery. Arlington cemetery for all of the American people represents those who fought for our freedoms. The many battles these soldiers, marines, and airmen fought represent our sacred honor as Americans. Today's battles for our American freedoms are being fought on our own home ground, and the southern heritage groups, the Sons of Confederate Veterans, the Military Order of the Stars & Bars, and the Order of the Southern Cross are in the forefront of this struggle. Let you and I not forget that the real target of the attacks on our American and Southern heritage is the Christian faith.

A barometer of the strength of our Christian faith is church attendance. The Pew Research Center has indicated that there has been some slippage in the past 20 years. We can all guess some of the causes of this downward trend but a perhaps more useful use of our time might be for each of us to encourage those around us to be more faithful to our faith.

A true soldier of the Cross was that of the life of our beloved Robert E. Lee. After his surrender at Appomattox of the Army of Northern Virginia he became involved in his church where he was a living example of his Christian faith. 2nd Timothy 2:3 says "suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Jesus Christ". The apostle Paul in this piece of scripture compares himself to being a soldier of the Cross. Jesus Christ, himself, established the church as stated in the 2nd chapter of the Book of Acts as the Holy Spirit came down and filled the souls of the apostles. This is the only institution that Jesus established as the earthly institution to spread the good news of God's salvation around the world.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Texas Society Executive Council Meeting

- Saturday, March 14, 2026
- Drury Plaza Hotel
- 705 University Dr. E.-
- College Station, Texas 77840

Texas Society Annual General Convention

- Friday & Saturday, June 19-20, 2026
- Phillips Event Center
- 1929 Country Club Dr.
- Bryan, TX 77802

(There is no official hotel - Attendees may choose their own accommodations.)

A hymn that depicts the Christian soldier is "Onward Christian Soldiers".

Onward Christian soldiers
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before!

Christ the royal Master,
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle, see his banner go!

Onward Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before!

This marching hymn has been adopted by the Salvation Army as their theme. Perhaps we should do the same. The renewing of our spiritual lives is up to each of us.

Raymond Holder, B.S., M. Div., B.C.C.
Chaplain, Texas Society,
Military Order of the Stars and Bars

Was The War About Slavery?

(Part Two in a Series)

The Crittenden-Johnson Resolution

by Michael Smith



As we all know, for the last 160 years the War Between the States has been characterized as a war that was all about slavery, and really nothing else. The story goes that the noble North gave their boys' lives to end the evil practice of slavery, and the South gave their boys' lives to hang onto their slaves.

In this series of articles, we are examining this question: was the War was really about ending slavery, or was it about holding the Union together? In the first article, we discussed the so-called Corwin Amendment, a proposed amendment to the Constitution which would have granted permanent protection to the institution of slavery. This Amendment was passed by Congress by a two-thirds super-majority (which was composed almost entirely of Northern votes) and was well on its way to being ratified by the States when the War broke out and brought the ratification process to an end.

We saw how the passage of such an amendment by the Northern states is completely inconsistent with the claim that they were against slavery and wanted to end it. And we infer, as historians unanimously do, that the Corwin Amendment was an attempt by the North to coax the Southern states into remaining in the Union. The inference is very clear and inescapable. But some people argue that it is just an inference, and that it doesn't actually prove what the North's intentions were. After all, neither the Congress nor President Lincoln actually came out and said that the War was only about keeping the Union together, and that it was not about slavery. Or did they? In this article, we will take up the matter of the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution, which tells us very clearly what Congress said the War was about.

After the Union was shocked by the Confederate victory at the First Battle of Bull Run (Manas-

as) in July, 1861, Representative John J. Crittenden of Kentucky introduced a resolution that was designed to be a clear statement of why the North was going to War. Originally called the War Aims Resolution, it was actually passed in the House in two separate parts. The first one said:

“Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States, That the present deplorable civil war has been forced upon the country by the disunionists of the southern States now in revolt against the constitutional government, and in arms around the capital.”

This portion passed by a vote of 121-2. The two Congressmen who voted against it, Henry C. Burnett of Kentucky and John W. Reid of Missouri, later left Congress and joined the Confederacy. The next part of the resolution read as follows:

“That in this national emergency, Congress, banishing all feelings of mere passion or resentment, will recollect only its duty to the whole country; that this war is not waged on their part in any spirit of oppression, or for any purpose of conquest or subjugation, or purpose of overthrowing or interfering with the rights or established institutions of those (Confederate) States, but to defend and maintain the supremacy of the Constitution, and to preserve the Union with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired; and that as soon as these objects are accomplished the war ought to cease.”

This part of the resolution passed by a vote of 119-2. The two “Nay” votes came from Representative John F. Potter of Wisconsin and Representative Albert G. Riddle of Ohio. Thus, the House overwhelmingly approved this statement

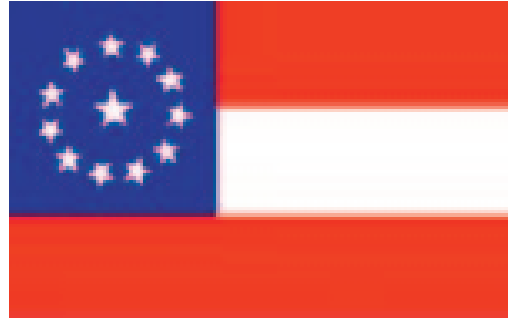
that the purpose of the War was not to interfere with the “established institutions” (read slavery) of the States, but to “preserve the Union.”

Senator Andrew Johnson of Tennessee introduced a slightly different version of the resolution in the Senate, but it was not split into two parts as the House version had been. The resolution passed in the Senate by a vote of 30-5, thus confirming that the entire Congress was in agreement. Congress said it clearly: the War was being conducted to preserve the Union, not to free the slaves.

As you no doubt remember, Andrew Johnson was elected Vice President in 1864, and he became President upon Lincoln’s assassination. In this day and time, it sounds strange that a Southern Democrat like Johnson could be elected to serve as Vice President under the Northern Republican President, Lincoln. The explanation for this strange situation is that Johnson, although a Southern Democrat, was strongly against secession. When his state, Tennessee, seceded, he remained loyal to the Union and refused to resign his seat in the Senate. When the election of 1864 was approaching, Lincoln decided that it would be a good political move to broaden the Republican electoral base to attempt to include “War Democrats” who had remained loyal to the Union. He did so by selecting one of them, Johnson, as his running mate.

So, just to recap, the Corwin Amendment sought to amend the Constitution to protect slavery from ever being interfered with by the Federal government. Then the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution declared that the United States government was fighting the War “to preserve the Union,” and not to interfere with the States’ rights or to abolish their “institutions” (meaning slavery).

After studying the Corwin Amendment, if anyone has any doubt about the reason the North went to war against the South, even a brief look at the Crittenden-Johnson Resolution should remove that doubt.



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Great-Great Grandfather

(Continued from p.4)

to mother in helping her hunt for Father. Mother tramped the wild woods till 12 o'clock without finding any trace of him. She gave up in despair. She did not know what to do, but she went out again and hunted all around and came back crying and wearied down in trying to find him. She believed that he was dead, that he was lying somewhere in the woods with no one present to care for his body. It was hard to give him up in the way he had to go and maybe her poor boy was dead, too. It seemed that her heart would break, but after a while she grew more calm and she said she would make another search for him.

"At this moment Jass came, but he was so badly frightened that he was almost crazy. But thank God he was alive. After his excitement began to subside, he told us what he heard the men tell Father and where the locality was, and how he ran away from them. My poor, distracted mother could wait no longer, and she started out alone again and following the directions that Jass gave her. She succeeded in discovering the dead body of my father lying some distance from the house. He had been shot three times. One ball took effect in the temple, one entered his mouth, and the other in the shoulder. His head was terribly mangled and his face was all covered with blood. My dear, dear mother was a large woman, and my father was a small man. Mother said that it seemed that she was not able to bear up under the terrible affliction and sorrow that had fallen her lot, and that the tears from her eyes were so free that it seemed that she could wade in them; it seemed as though she would sink into a great, dark gulf.

"Then she thought she must not give up and she prayed to God for help, and finishing her prayer, she rose up off of her knees and felt more composed, and more able to face the distress and great calamity that had visited her home. She could not bear to leave the body to seek help, and with a resolution borne of the moment, she raised the lifeless form in her arms and carried it toward the house until she was compelled to lay it down from exhaustion. But after a short rest, she raised the

body in her arms again and went on with it toward home until she was forced to stop and lay it down again and take another resting spell. This repeated until she was in sight of the house when she met Cinda Stinnette, a colored woman who belonged to Dave Stinnette, and the kind-hearted black woman assisted Mother to carry my dead father into the house and helped to prepare the remains for burial.

"It was impossible then in that neighborhood to procure a coffin, and Mother placed the body in a box, and we were all in such a stress for clothes that mother was compelled to enclose him in the box in the same suit he wore when he was shot to death. My mother and a few other women and we children buried him on Lee's Mountain, 1 1/2 miles from home."

(I have deleted some parts of Turnbo's account in order to make an already long piece a little shorter.)

My point in including this story in this issue of the Lone Star Dispatch is to remind us that the War wrought all kinds of havoc and suffering to families all across the South. It was not limited to the battlefields.



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