



“Major’s Orders”

Major Benjamin F. Ficklin
Chapter 310

Military Order of the
Stars and Bars



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2024

Special Dates of Interest:

August 15, 2024—Gen. Tom Green Camp 1613 Family Cookout at Ft. Concho

November 1-3, 2024—Texas Society SEC meeting, College Station

2024 Texas Society Best Newsletter

Lt. Commander’s Lowdown

We had a great meeting in July, even the Zoom portion went well. Commander McMahon presented several Certificates of Recognition to members and noted the awards that our Chapter received at the National Convention and the Texas Society Convention. As I reported last month, *Major's Orders* won the Texas Society Best Newsletter award, you will see in the pictures of our meeting, *Major's Orders* placed 3rd Best newsletter in the Military Order of the Stars & Bars! Our Chapter also received the "Gold Star Chapter" award.

Our youngest member, Mack Johnson, provided us with a very informative

program on trains at our meeting. His knowledge of trains is exceptional. Great job, Mack!



New Chapter Hats Available

Chapter 310 has received a new order of Chapter hats. They have the MOS&B logo on the front and our Chapter name on the back. They are in a camouflaged pattern. The cost is \$11.00 each.

The MOS&B website is going through some changes, again. We have a new Webmaster General, or I should say a



Mack Johnson showing an original drawing by Richard Benton of the train his Grandfather worked on.

new-Old Webmaster...Larry Joe Reynolds is back as the Webmaster General for the National website. He has also

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Windemere, A Family's Antebellum Legacy

By P.J. Sessums

Standing just outside Palmetto, Georgia, Windemere was built in the 1850s by George Redding Sims and his wife, Mary Elizabeth Arnold—my great-great-grandparents.

In 1990, the National Register of Historic Places stated, "The house was built in a Z-shaped, modified Georgian plan that resulted in a front gabled wing and L-shaped portico. The house represents an unusual interpretation of the Greek Revival style ..."



G. R. Sims was one of the largest antebellum land owners in the county, and the 1864 Tax Digest indicates he owned 1,900 acres of land in Coweta County and 48 slaves valued at \$115,000.



This photo was taken in 2016, shooting over the wall, down from the gate.

During the Civil War, Sims served with Captain Hanleiter's Company of the Georgia Light Artillery (Jo Thompson Artillery) and, during Sherman's 1864 Atlanta Campaign, he was in the Savannah area with

his artillery unit. Since its owner was serving the Confederate army, pursuant to Sherman's orders, a union cavalry detachment was sent to burn Windemere.

When the detachment arrived, my great-great-grandmother and one of her children were standing on the front porch. The officer in command of the detachment approached the house and greeted the family. He stated he could not burn the house, and it would be protected. The reason: There was a Masonic emblem above the front door, and the Major would not destroy the home of a fellow Mason—and that is why it remains there today.

Windemere passed from the family sometime in the 1870-80s and has had several owners. The condition of the house declined and, during the Depression, "it was occupied by sharecroppers and it was noted that chickens lived throughout the house. ... In December 1939, Gene Brown, a senior pilot for Eastern Airlines, bought the house after spotting it from his airplane."

Since the 1962 photo was taken, the state of Georgia has relocated, raised, and paved the country road, making it much closer to the house. Much has been done to the property since 1962, including adding a swimming pool, several horse stalls, a couple of guest/caretaker houses, and a wall/fence. The property has been rented out for wedding receptions and events/gatherings and used by Walt Disney Studios. I have been told the original well is still in place in back of the house.



The author standing by the house's gate, with his forebear's house in the distance.

The Wife of the Wizard of the Saddle

By Norman Dasinger, Jr.

Mary Ann (Montgomery) Forrest was born October 2, 1826, to William H. and Elizabeth (Cowan) Montgomery. Her father died in 1829 and is buried in the Cowan Cemetery, Franklin County, Tennessee. Sometime following his death, Mary Ann’s widowed mother moved to Desoto County, Mississippi. Mary Ann’s uncle was the Rev. Samuel Cowan, a well-known clergyman in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, living in Desoto County. So, his widowed sister, Elizabeth (Cowan) Montgomery, eventually followed him in order to be near familiar faces.



Nathan Bedford Forrest and Mary Ann Montgomery in Hernando, Mississippi, August 1845 | painting by John Paul Strain

Elizabeth’s father, Mary Ann’s grandfather, was James Cowan. He was a War of 1812 veteran and fought with Andrew Jackson at the battle of New Orleans. Afterward, he remained in the Army and was given command of an area of frontier Tennessee from what is now Chattanooga to a point north of present-day Huntsville, Alabama. At that time, it was land under control of the United States government. It was stated in a letter in 1895 that “Captain James Cowan moved from Blount County, Tennessee to this country (the Cowan area) in 1806 and was the second man to settle here.”

In 1845 near Hernando, in Desoto County, Mississippi, Mary Ann Montgomery and Nathan Bedford Forrest would meet. On an August Sunday, Mary Ann and her mother were in their buggy on their way

to church to hear her uncle preach. As Forrest encountered the two women, he noticed they were broken down in the middle of a creek. Some local young men were on the bank laughing and teasing the ladies. Twenty-three-year-old Bedford rode up on his horse and immediately waded across and carried Mary Ann and her mother to safety. After properly introducing himself, he asked permission to call on Mary Ann. Mrs. Montgomery agreed. Bedford proposed on his second visit. She hesitated, but accepted on the third. They were married September 24, 1845. Her uncle, the Reverend Cowan, performed the ceremony. They had two children: William (Willie) and Frances (Fanny), who died when she was five years old.

On July 3, 1863, Nathan Bedford Forrest was traveling through his wife’s hometown of Cowan, Tennessee. His command was screening and defending Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg’s Army as they made their retreat from middle Tennessee into northeastern Alabama. On that day, as the last units passed through Cowan, an elderly woman stepped from the Franklin Hotel and shouted to a passing cavalryman: “You big cowardly rascal, why don’t you turn and fight? I wish old Forrest was here. He’d make you fight.” The cavalryman was, in fact, Forrest. He just lowered his head, smiled, and kept

moving.

Mary Ann (Montgomery) Forrest died in 1882. Dr. Samuel Mitchem, in a 2020 article about her, wrote, “She was the love of Bedford’s life and in many ways, exerted a profound influence on him.”



Mrs. Mary Ann Forrest in her late 40s, with her grandson, Nathan Bedford Forrest II

Major Ben Ficklin July 2024 Meeting

The July meeting was a time for Recognition. Members present were presented Certificates of Recognition for years of service by Commander David McMahon. Top right is Charles Westbrook—5 years. Center left is David Johnson—5 years. Bottom right is Rod Smith—5 years. The Chapter has mailed certificates to those members who were not able to attend the meeting. For a complete list of service recognitions, see the March issue of *Major’s Orders*.

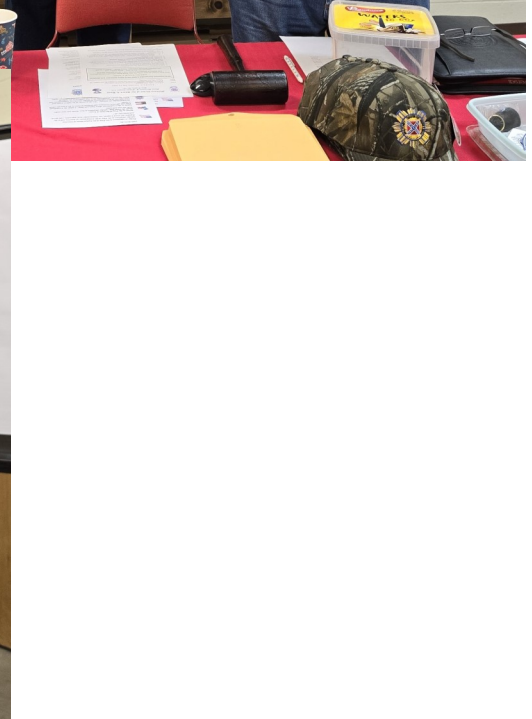


Major Ben Ficklin July 2024 Meeting

The National Streamer for Major Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310's 3rd Place Best MOS&B Newsletter for *Major's Orders*. Holding the Streamer (l-r) Commander David McMahon, Lt. Commander/Editor Steve Melton & Adjutant James Putman.



Below: Commander McMahon (r) holding the Texas Society "Gold Star Chapter" Award and the Texas Society Best Newsletter Award certificate with the newsletter Editor, Steve Melton (l).



Mack Johnson and his presentation on trains and the train stations of San Angelo, Texas.





MAJOR BENJAMIN F. FICKLIN
 CHAPTER #310, TEXAS SOCIETY
 COMMANDER DAVID P. MCMAHON
 LT. CMDR. STEVE MELTON
 ADJUTANT JAMES G. PUTMAN
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Maj. Benjamin F. Ficklin Chapter 310 website: www.txmosb.org/310/index.html

MOS&B National website: www.mosbhq.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.



Lt. Commander's Lowdown (con't)

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placed the calendar on our Chapter website, one click and you can find out what is going on and when.

This is a reminder to our Chapter members who are also members of the Gen. Tom Green Camp 1613, SCV, about the August 15, 2024 Family Cook-out. The event will be at the Ft. Concho Living History Stables Classroom, 236 Henry O. Flipper, San Angelo, serving starts 6:00 - 6:15 pm. **PLEASE RSVP** so we have a headcount. Call Steve Melton: 432- 638-1199 or email gentomgreen1613@gmail.com. The Camp will be providing the burgers and hotdogs, those coming will be bring the 'fixins.' There is a list of who is bringing what, call me and I can tell you what we need.

The next meeting of the Texas Society SEC will be November 1-3, 2024 in Bryant. The venue will be in a new location, the Hilton Garden Inn located at 3081 E. University Dr. Texas Society members are welcome to attend.

Our Chapter member, Darrell Rhea, participated

in the 4th of July parade in Odessa, Texas. Darrell's latest reenacting interest is WW II.



Darrel Rhea, on the right, with Compatriot Brad Bennett at the Odessa, Texas 4th of July parade.