



# “Major’s Orders”

Major Benjamin F. Ficklin  
Chapter 310

Military Order of the  
Stars and Bars



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## Special Dates of Interest:

Ft. Concho Speakers Series—Every Wednesday during September: 12:00 noon.

September 2, 2024 - Labor Day & VJ Day.

September 11, 2024—Patriot Day.

September 21, 2024—Edwards Plateau Historical Association meeting.

November 1-2, 2024—Texas Society SEC meeting, Bryan, Texas.

September 28, 2024—Old Yeller Days, Mason, Texas.



**2024 Texas Society Best Newsletter**



## Lt. Commander’s Lowdown

As I begin the Lt. Commander's Lowdown, it is still August and I have noticed the leaves of my pecan tree have started turning yellowish and falling to the ground. Maybe it was the cold front that hit taking our daily temperatures from over a hundred to the nineties that triggered the fall like symptoms. Maybe the 'tree' knows something we do not and is preparing itself. So shall we prepare for what is coming.

Locally, the Ft. Concho Speakers series starts up again this month. You will find an article about this event in this issue.

When you go to the Chapter's website,

<https://www.txmosb.org/310/index.html>, you will find a 'Tab' on the Menu Bar that will take you to the "Calendar", where you will find all the events scheduled. Meetings, Living History Days and reenactments are some of the events there. In October and November you will find several Living History events around the area. So get out and enjoy the cooler temperatures.

The Texas Society SEC meeting will be November 2, 2024 in Bryan, Texas. All Society members in good standing are welcome to attend. You will find

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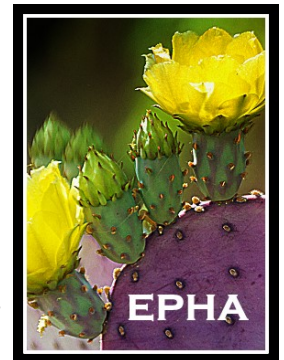
## Edwards Plateau Historical Association

The Edwards Plateau Historical Association will be having their annual meeting September 21, 2024 at the Runnels County Activity Center located at 608 S. Sealy, Ballinger, Texas. The program will start at 10:00 am, with coffee on at 9:30. There are six scheduled speakers to present 'papers' at the meeting. One of the "featured speakers" is our very own Compatriot Will Scott.

A luncheon will be provide, \$20.00 per plate. Please RSVP if you plan to attend: [epha.texas@gmail.com](mailto:epha.texas@gmail.com).

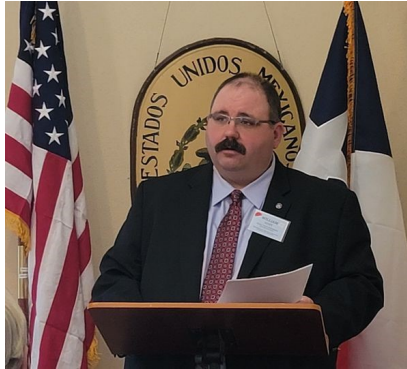
If you would like to become a member of the EPHA, there is an early-bird

membership fee available till September 6th. An application can be found on our Chapter calendar (September 21st) or on the Edwards Plateau Historical Association's Facebook page ( <https://www.facebook.com/groups/527770953102348>).



# Gibbon’s Own by Will Scott

Compatriot Will Scott has written a four part article on the US 4th Artillery, Company 'B' for the magazine *FA Journal*. This is a very well written piece on the history of this unit. Compatriot Scott participates with the Good's Light Artillery group which portrays Company 'B.' Good's Light Artillery has several members of both the MOS&B and SCV. The first article was printed in the magazine. Here are links to the other articles about Company 'B' on the blog for *FA Journal*.



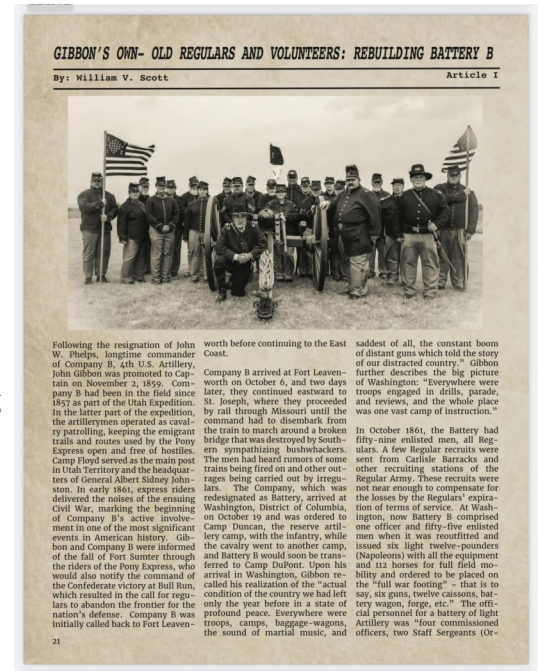
Will Scott

[Article II: Becoming the iron brigade battery: Battery B goes into Combat - United States Field Artillery Association](#)

[Article III: Patrolling on Both Sides of the Rio Grande - United States Field Artillery Association](#)

[Article IV: Recalling of Battery B: From the Utah Frontier to National Defense - United States Field Artillery Association](#)

Compatriot Will Scott will also be a 'Featured Speaker' at the upcoming Edwards Plateau Historical Association's annual meeting in Ballinger, Saturday, September 21, 2024.



Following the resignation of John W. Phelps, longtime commander of Company B, 4th U.S. Artillery, John Gibbon was promoted to Captain on November 2, 1859. Company B had been in the field since 1857 as part of the Utah Expedition. In the latter part of the expedition, the artillerymen operated as cavalry patrolling, keeping the emigrant trails and routes used by the Pony Express open and free of hostiles. Camp Floyd served as the main post in Utah Territory and the headquarters of General Albert Sidney Johnston. In early 1861, express riders delivered the news of the beginning of the Civil War, marking the beginning of Company B's active involvement in one of the most significant events in American history. Gibbon and Company B were informed of the fall of Fort Sumter through the riders of the Pony Express, who would also notify the command of the Confederate victory at Bull Run, which resulted in the call for regulars to abandon the frontier for the nation's defense. Company B was initially called back to Fort Leavenworth before continuing to the East Coast.

Company B arrived at Fort Leavenworth on October 6, and two days later, they continued eastward to St. Joseph, where they proceeded by rail through Missouri until the command had to disembark from the train to march around a broken bridge that was destroyed by Southern sympathizing bushwhackers. The men had heard rumors of some trains being fired on and other outrages being carried out by irregulars. The Company, which was redesignated as Battery, arrived at Washington, District of Columbia, on October 19 and was ordered to Camp Duncan, the reserve artillery camp, with the infantry while the cavalry went to another camp. Battery B would soon be transferred to Camp DuPont. Upon his arrival in Washington, Gibbon recalled his realization of the "actual condition of the country we had left only the year before in a state of profound peace. Everywhere were troops, camps, baggage-wagons, the sound of martial music, and

of distant guns which told the story of our distracted country." Gibbon further describes the big picture of Washington: "Everywhere were troops engaged in drills, parade, and reviews, and the whole place was one vast camp of instruction."

In October 1861, the Battery had fifty-nine enlisted men, all Regulars. A few Regular recruits were sent from Carlisle Barracks and other recruiting stations of the Regular Army. These recruits were not near enough to compensate for the losses by the Regulars' expiration of terms of service. At Washington, now Battery B comprised one officer and fifty-five enlisted men when it was reequipped and issued six light twelve-pounders (Napoleons) with all the equipment and 112 horses for full field mobility and ordered to be placed on the "full war footing" - that is to say, six guns, twelve caissons, battery wagon, forge, etc." The official personnel for a battery of light artillery was "four commissioned officers, two Staff Sergeants (C-

## Fort Concho Speakers Series

### Fort Concho Speakers Series Fall 2024



Fort Concho Commissary  
702 Burgess at Avenue C  
12:00pm to 1:00pm

Call 325-657-4441

or visit

[www.fortconcho.com](http://www.fortconcho.com)  
for more information!

Bring your lunch and join us  
for an enjoyable and  
educational lunchtime  
program!

**Free Admission!**  
**Bring a friend!**

Wednesday, September 4  
"Old Homes of San Angelo,  
Part 2"  
Lisa Mahler  
Local Historian

Wednesday, September 11  
"Frontier Army Chaplains"  
Christopher Roque  
Retired Captain of Texas Lutheran  
University Police Department, Vicar  
Calvary Episcopal Church, Menard

Wednesday, September 18  
"150th Anniversary of  
the Red River Wars"  
Sarah Thieme (Ross)  
Education Coordinator, Fort Concho

Wednesday, September 25  
"The Lost War for Texas: The  
True Story  
of Texas' First Revolution of  
1811"  
James Aalan Bernsen  
Author



The Fort Concho Speakers Series will begin again in September and be held on each Wednesday at the Commissary Building. Admission is free.

Starting time for each series is 12:00 noon, so bring your lunch and enjoy some history.

Contact Fort Concho for more information.

Our Chapter's Chaplain, Chris Roque, will be presenting the September 11th series on "Frontier Army Chaplains."

# Museum of Military Models by Darrell Rhea



9 August 2024 - Brad and I visited the Museum of Military Models. The museum was awesome! State of the art, I highly recommend a visit. 600 models of various sizes, ships from the Elizabethan and Napoleon wars to modern day, Revolutionary war to recent War on Terror. The museum also has large rooms of huge airplanes, and another one of tanks "and things". The visit is free, but must be made by appointment!



Brad Bennett with the U.S.S. Constitution

There is more information on the website concerning this museum, so go check it out and have some fun.



Warren D. Harkins, Owner & Curator

Location is in Clyde, Texas near Abilene. It is worth every moment for military historians and model hobbyists! Warren D. Harkins is the owner, curator, and tour guide of the museum. Mr. Harkins is excellent for visits and "note swapping" and makes the trip highly worthwhile!

The museum is open 10:00 am to 5:00 pm, Tuesday – Friday and appointments can be made online at mommtx.org. Go to the "Plan Your Visit" link.



Darrell Rhea with the U.S.S. Chicago, a WWII Cruiser



# A Lesser-known Confederate in the Atlanta Campaign

by Dave Powell

Brig. Gen. James Cantey, a Mexican War veteran and the colonel of the 15th Alabama Infantry, demonstrated considerable promise as a regimental commander at the Battle of Cross Keys, Virginia, in 1862, earning him a promotion. Elevated to brigadier general in January 1863, he spent the next year on garrison duty around Mobile. Frequently ill with an unspecified ailment, he was on medical furlough when his men left Pollard, Alabama, on April 20, 1864, for Rome, Georgia, to join Johnston’s army. His brigade arrived in Resaca, Georgia, on May 6, and he arrived the next day.

At 45 and ailing, Cantey did not impress Col. James C. Nisbet, the current post commander at Resaca. Nisbet recalled that Cantey said, “I know nothing of the situation and wish you would ride out on the road with me and explain matters.” When the Union threat to Resaca materialized on May 9, Nisbet accused Cantey and another general of “sitting in a bomb-proof pit.” Nonetheless, Cantey kept Johnston informed of developments, allowing for timely reinforcements. By the end of the day, Cantey defended the town with 6,000 men in five brigades, enough to discourage Union Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson’s attack.

Once Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk’s Army of Mississippi fully arrived, Cantey took on divisional command, leading his own brigade and Brig. Gen. Daniel H. Reynolds’s Brigade of Arkansans. However, his status remained unclear. At Cassville, Polk temporarily dissolved Cantey’s division without explanation. This might have been due to a lackluster performance on May 15 during the second day’s fight at Resaca, or it could have been due to Cantey’s poor health.

Cantey led his small division of about 3,000 men through the fighting along the New Hope Church Line from May 25 until the first week of June, holding various parts of the Confederate earth-

works. His division was not directly tested at New Hope Church on May 25 or at Pickett’s Mill on May 27. On May 28, Cantey gained a third brigade of Tennesseans and Louisianans under Brig. Gen. William A. Quarles, 1,400 men strong, and 400 officers and men of the 26th Alabama, increasing his total force to about 5,000 men.

However, Cantey’s time with the army was short-lived. On June 1, Leonidas Polk requested a new division commander for the brigades of Cantey, Reynolds, and Quarles. Polk did not explain his reasoning, but health was likely a factor.

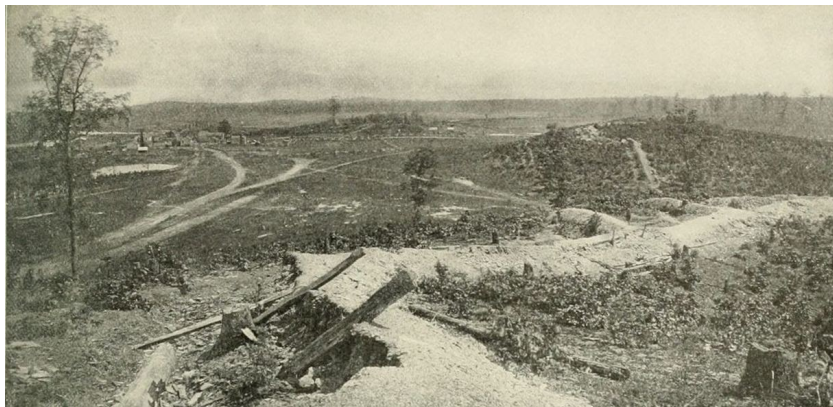
Around this time, Cantey took a serious fall from his horse, suffering considerable injuries to his face. “We were riding along a corduroy road,” wrote Lt. John I. Kendall. “The logs were fresh, the road was unsteady, and it was dark, and the weather was bad. ... Suddenly Cantey’s horse stumbled and fell. The general shot over his head ... and slid for some distance on his face.”

It soon became apparent Cantey “suffered considerable injuries to his face.” Despite his attempt to soldier on, it was clear he was in great pain.

President Jefferson Davis approved Polk’s suggestion. On June 10, Edward C. Walthall was promoted to major general, effective June 6, and took command of the division. Cantey went home on an extended sick leave and never returned to field service. Some sources incorrectly list him as being in the field toward the end of the war, even surrendering with Johnston in North Carolina, but there is no record of his parole nor a signed loyalty oath. He returned to his plantation in Fort Mitchell, Alabama, where he died in 1874.



Brig. Gen. James Cantey, CSA



Confederate earthworks overlooking the battlefield at Resaca.



# Civil War Treasure: What Happened to the Mysterious Lost Gold of Richmond's Banks?

By Robert S. Davis

The Confederate States of America did not surrender but, in the last days of the fighting in the Civil War, faded into history. The most famous of that conflict's many lost gold stories come from those final days.

By 1865, the southern government was bankrupt,



Artist's imaginary rendering of the robbery of the gold train, in Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper.

relying solely on donations and a controversial loan. Virginia borrowed \$300,000 in gold and silver coins from the banks of Richmond. Despite denials by some, the money was indeed borrowed for the Confederate government. Confederate officials repeatedly directed payments be made in gold from Richmond's banks as evidence. This gold, kept separate from the Confederate government's gold, was loaned to the Confederate government in exchange for cotton securities. In other words, Confederate cotton served as security for the loan.

On April 2, 1865, Jefferson Davis and his government escaped Richmond, leading to his capture by federal cavalry at Irwinville, Georgia, on May 10. The last of the Confederate treasury was paid out along Da-

vis' escape, but what remained of the Richmond banks' funds was left behind at the Bank of the State of Georgia in Washington, Georgia.

Union Captain Lot Abraham arrived in Washington on May 5, with 50 men from the Fourth Iowa Cavalry. Representatives of the Richmond banks arrived on May 8. They decided to ship the coins overland by wagon to the railhead at Abbeville, South Carolina, and eventually back to Virginia. Abraham provided seven federal soldiers to escort the five wagons.

The treasure train set out from Washington on May 24, 1865. Fourteen Tennessee cavalymen and one Alabama soldier set out to rob the wagons. The wagons and their escort traveled 18 miles and camped on the Moss farm near the Savannah River. Around midnight, the pursuers raided the wagons. The seven guards offered no resistance, and the bandits filled whatever they had with coins. Some of the Federal soldiers also looted.

Bank agents totaled the money lost at \$251,029.90. What remained in the wagons, \$159,929.90, eventually went to the United States Treasury. Stories swirled that much of the gold remained hidden, but almost all of the money was, extraordinarily, eventually recovered.

After a lengthy federal investigation, the Richmond bankers obtained government permission to receive the assets. However, a Congressional resolution in late March 1867 ordered that the Treasury retain the funds.

Throughout the 1870s and 1880s, attorneys for various claimants and successors tried to obtain the money. On June 22, 1893, the U.S. Court of Claims decreed that the claimants receive only \$16,987.88. Critics argue that the greatest thief became the United States government!



An illustration of treasure hunting on a southern farm, Harper's Weekly.





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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.*



## Lt. Commander’s Lowdown (con’t)

*(Continued from page 1)*

information on the new location on the calendar, just 'click' on the title heading 'SEC Meeting,' select 'more details' and when the dialog box appears, click on the .pdf icon. You will find a 'Group Code' there for special rates for a room. Y'all have a wonderful month.

