

M. Graham Clark Chapter Meeting

September 21, 2013

The meeting was called to order by Chapter President J.Y. Miller II at 8:35 A.M. There were 14 members and 9 guests for a total of 23 present.

Color Guardsmen Merrill and Lybarger Posted the Colors. The invocation was given by Chaplain James Cunningham. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by COM Jack Chance and the Pledge to the SAR was given by COM Harold Kerr.

The Charter was draped in memory of COM Roger Duffield who passed away recently.

Guests introduced were Rev. Jim Smith who is the program and Priscilla Bartlett, Robert Bartlett's new wife.

The meeting was adjourned for breakfast.

In the absence of Secretary Bryan Bradford, John Coutts read the minutes of the previous meeting. They were read and a correction was made and then approved.

Treasurer's report was read and approved. Treasurer Coutts reported a bank balance of \$1,793.86 and available endowment funds of \$347.78.

President Miller tried to recognize birthdays for the 4 summer months. There were none.

President Miller announced the open house for St. Mary's Church in Glasgow for later today and Glasgow's Pumpkin Day including a historic cemetery tour. The tour will be at 7:00 pm on 12 OCT.

There was no old business.

COM Russ Devenney, Jr. reported that the 123rd annual NSSAR Congress in Kansas City was a tremendous success. He had many compliments of how smoothly it went. He thanked COM J.Y. Miller and wife Mary, COM Jack Chance and wife Linda, COM Loren Reynolds, and COM John Coutts and wife Linda for help with registration, selling raffle tickets and assisting his wife Laura in manning the hospitality room. He especially thanked COM J. Y. Miller for coming a day early and picking up The National Commander of the American Legion at the airport and staying a day late to take him back to the airport. Russ's wife Laura DeVenney and others made small flags to display as table decorations and later sold them for over \$2000 with the proceeds going to the CAR Liaison Committee.

COM Jim Cunningham introduced Rev. Jim Smith as our program. He spoke about the Battle of Okeechobee during the Seminole Indian Wars. Jim was smitten by genealogy when looking through an old family trunk and finding the obituary of his great grandfather who had been wounded in the Battle of Okeechobee. He researched the battle to see why his ancestor was fighting Indians in Florida in 1837.

Thomas Hart Benton was a Missouri representative to Congress and complained to the Secretary of War that it was costing too much money to keep fighting the Indians in Florida. Benton said the Army needed some Missouri Indian fighters to whip the Indians. The secretary of war ordered Col. Richard Gentry of Columbia MO to raise 600 volunteer cavalry with horses to go to Florida. Gentry mortgaged his property to buy horses for the cavalry. They went to St. Louis and boarded boats to New Orleans. With an outbreak of yellow fever in New Orleans, 150 men decided to return to Columbia. On board a ship from New Orleans to Florida, they were struck by a hurricane and they lost all but 150 horses and those men without a horse returned home. In Florida the commander of troops was Zack Taylor, later to be the 12th President of the United States. Taylor had only contempt for the Missouri volunteers. He used them to cut a path through the tall sharp grass on the way to Lake Okeechobee. The 400 Seminole Indians were found on Christmas Day 1837. They were on high ground covered with trees and only open water around. Taylor ordered Gentry and his 140 cavalry men to lead a frontal assault wading through open water waist to chest deep while his regular troops followed 100 to 200 yards behind. While sustaining heavy losses Gentry rallied his men and they defeated the Indians. Gentry sustained a stomach wound and died. Forty Missouri men were dead or wounded in the largest battle east of the Mississippi river at that time. The war department did not pay Gentry's widow until Benton had an act of Congress. He then appointed Gentry's wife as the first female postmaster in the United States in Columbia. Louis Smith is buried at Parche Baptist Church.

Closing-

Chaplain James Cunningham gave the benediction and COM Russ DeVenney Jr. lead the SAR Recessional.

President J. Y. Miller II adjourned the meeting at 10:25 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted

John Coutts, Acting Secretary