

# Grey Matter

Newsletter of The Rankin Greys  
SCV Camp 2278

May 2017

Volume 1 Issue 2



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by Commander Billy Bryant

Compatriots,

I cannot believe that it has been a year since we chartered our camp. In the past year our numbers have grown by leaps and bounds. Our success and growth could not have been one without your help, hard work, and dedication to answering the call and living the charge. I believe our positive actions and growth have been an influence to other camps in the Mississippi Division.

We have a lot of great events and speakers in the upcoming months. This month we have a special guest speaker, Ms. Cheryl Bruce

from the Wounded Warriors of Mississippi. We will also talk about the Highway 49 Fest in Richland on September 30th. In closing, I want to thank you all for a wonderful year and I cannot wait to see what we will accomplish this next year. Live the Charge,

Billy Bryant  
Commander

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# Adjutant's Report

by Camp Adjutant Chris Bryant

We are still celebrating our 1 year anniversary. Officially we were chartered on April 18, 2016. Our charter ceremony was at our May 14 meeting. We've seen tremendous growth. That growth continues with the addition of 4 new members in the last month or so, with 3 more in the works, 2 of which will be new members to the SCV. I would love to see the Greys be the largest camp in the 4th Brigade over the next 12 months, and with your help, not only is it possible, it is likely. Each of you has someone lingering in your circle that is looking at our heritage being chipped away and wishing they could do something about it. The Sons of Confederate Veterans provides that very avenue for them to take action. It provides that avenue for YOU to take action. Remember, you're not just a Grey, you're a Son. You were born to this fight and you carry the honor of your forefathers with you. Spread the word. This organization needs numbers. It can and should be a voice to be reckoned with when our Commander in Chief speaks with the voice of thousands of men. If you feel like you can or want to do more, ask a camp officer. There are many, many ways to serve and we would be honored to help you find the job that suits your talents and your schedule. From the heritage fight to community service, we want to be there to serve, teach, and protect. I look forward to seeing each of you at our next meeting.

Your humble servant,

Chris Bryant

Adjutant, Rankin Greys Camp 2278

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*This publication is dedicated to the honor  
and the memory of the brave men of  
Company I 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi Infantry*

*Lest We Forget.*

## A Look Back at Confederate Heritage Month

by George Conor Bond (Editorial)

In 1993, Mississippi's Governor Kirk Fordice declared April as Confederate Heritage month in Mississippi. Governor Fordyce was not a member of our organization, he didn't have the genealogy to join, but that did not stop him from recognizing the sacrifice and devotion to duty of our ancestors. I don't know if he realized it then, but he started a tradition. Every year Mississippi's governors have issued a proclamation stating that April is Confederate Heritage Month. This April was no different.

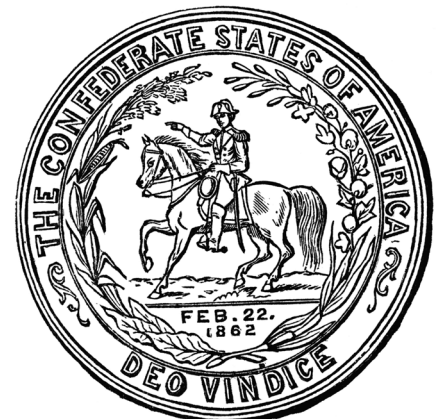
I am proud that Mississippi has Confederate Heritage Month. While many ordinary citizens of Mississippi may not pay any mind to it, our enemies certainly do. To them they see this as a backwards people holding onto an antiquated way of life. Those people see Mississippi and her sister states who declare April as Confederate Heritage month continuing the struggle for their rights granted to them by God and confirmed in the Constitution. By keeping this tradition, we are keeping the memory of our ancestors alive. They do not understand our devotion to our ancestors because of their devotion to us. Those people do not understand that in the course of human history, 150 years is not that long ago. Those people do not know nor understand the agony and humiliation that our ancestors faced under the hands of the conquering federal hoards. Their

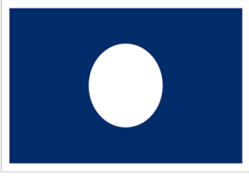
history and heritage is not under a constant barrage. They do not have a heritage as noble as ours.

General Patrick Cleburne said in January of 1864 "Every man should endeavor to understand the meaning of subjugation before it is too late... It means the history of this heroic struggle will be written by the enemy; that our youth will be trained by Northern schoolteachers; will learn from Northern school books their version of the war; will be impressed by the influences of history and education to regard our gallant dead as traitors, and our maimed veterans as fit objects for derision..."

There is an ancient Chinese curse that says "may you live in interesting times." This April has certainly been interesting to say the least. In the media, our heritage has been under attack. First the Governor was attacked for signing the proclamation, then his membership in the SCV. Then the mayor of Biloxi removed our State flag. Finally, the mayor of New Orleans decided to remove the monuments of Generals Lee and Beauregard and President Davis.

Despite these setbacks, many of us have gathered together with our brethren across the Division to honor our ancestors. We have shown our devotion to our duty, we have answered the call, we have lived the Charge. However, now that April has gone, let us recommit ourselves to the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name. Let us recommit ourselves to vindication of the cause for which he fought. **This is OUR BIRTHRIGHT AND OUR HERITAGE. Those people cannot take it away from us unless we let them.**





# Forefathers in Grey



For much of the late 1850's and early 1860, the United States was in turmoil. Decade old arguments over States Rights and States Sovereignty were coming to a head. In November of 1860, a man from the newly formed Republican party was elected president of the United States. Despite the fact that he was not being on the ballot of many Southern States. Some Southerners viewed this as an insult. As a result, South Carolina left the Union in December of 1860. As the South Carolinians celebrated their new independence, the rest of the nation wondered "who is next?" Mississippians were split on the issue of secession. However, a secession convention was held in January of 1861. Like the other counties in Mississippi, Rankin County was split on the issue of secession. As a result, she sent two delegates to the convention; one pro-secession and one anti-secession. The anti-secession delegate was Dr. John Jones Thornton. Secession did pass, and Mississippi joined South Carolina in declaring her independence. When it came time to sign the Ordinance of Secession, Thornton refused. Other

delegates tried to persuade him to sign the document in order to make it unanimous, but Thornton held fast and informed them that he "was elected to vote against the ordinance, and that the fame of all the Caesars and of Alexander combined could not tempt me to violate the trust reposed in me by my fellow citizens."

Secession fever began to strike the other states in the South and they seceded. In February, the Confederate States of America was formed. War began to seem inevitable. The fever soon turned into a raging inferno as men began to form militias and home guard units to answer their new country's call. One such unit was a company (formerly known as the Rankin Guards) known as the Rankin Greys. They were under the command of Captain John Jones Thornton. They would enter Confederate Service in Grenada, Mississippi as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi Infantry. There Captain Thornton would be elected Colonel of the Regiment. From Grenada, Thornton lead the 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi to become part of the Army of central Kentucky. On October 28, 1861, the 6<sup>th</sup> was

placed in the first division, second brigade led by Colonel Patrick R. Cleburne. While serving in Kentucky, the 6<sup>th</sup> was stricken with typhoid fever and measles. Of the original 601 soldiers that entered the regiment, only 150 were effective to serve. Because of the depletion of men, Col Thornton and the 6<sup>th</sup> were transferred to Corinth to replenish men.

By the end of March 1862 40,000 Confederate troops were massed at Corinth under the Command of General Albert Sydney Johnston. Within a few days, the 6<sup>th</sup> would go to "see the elephant" at the battle of Shiloh. The 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi where at the far left of the Confederate line on the morning of April 6, 1861. Col Thornton and his men stepped off at 6:30 and were engaging the Federals by 8:00 am. The 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi and the 23<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee were split off from the rest of the brigade. While they were spit off, the 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi charged valiantly again and again against a Union fortified position. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Tennessee eventual broke and the officers were unable to reform the. This left the 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi to face a Federal force twice their numbers.



During one charge, the color bearer was wounded. Colonel Thornton picked up the colors and lead the advance until he was wounded. Out of the 425 men who took the field, 300 were casualties.

The Sixth had indeed gone into the battle of Shiloh as raw recruits, but they had left it as soldiers; they had "seen the elephant." General Cleburne remarked on the men of the Sixth's performance at Shiloh saying, "It would be useless to enlarge upon the courage and devotion of the Sixth Mississippi. The Facts as recorded speak louder than any words of mine." And so, a tradition of courage and devotion in the Sixth began that would continue throughout the war.

After Shiloh, the 6<sup>th</sup> reported only 165 men effective or duty. The 6<sup>th</sup> was transferred to the reserve corps of the Army of the Mississippi. While under this command, the 6<sup>th</sup> Mississippi held new elections for its officers. Thornton won reelection to Colonel on May 8<sup>th</sup>, but resigned his commission on May 25<sup>th</sup> as a

result of his wounds, but remained an Army contract doctor.

1863 would bring invasion to Mississippi. After the fall of Vicksburg, that invasion brought wanton destruction. In 1864, Brandon and every city, town village, hamlet and rural community between Vicksburg and Meridian was attacked and put to the torch. According to A.J. Frantz, editor of the Brandon Republic, in early February, 1864 the Federal Army reached Brandon's town square before sundown. There they camped for the night. Private Citizens' barns, pantries, spoke houses, dairies, chicken coops and estates were entered, ransacked and looted. Private business contents were hauled off or were destroyed. Finally, around 9:00 pm, Federal troops began setting fire to buildings on the south side of the town. At some point the Federals made it to the home of Colonel Thornton. Upon hearing that he was the only delegate that did not sign the Secession Ordinance, they offered to spare his home. Thornton though, again showing courage

and loyalty to his community demanded that if the federals were going to burn out his neighbors, they would have to burn him out as well. When the dawn's first light broke over Brandon, ten of the towns business and private homes were destroyed, the Post Quartermasters' Department was ruined, and the entire southern side of the public square was nonexistent. Fences were torn down so live stock could run amuck, crops were purposely trampled and destroyed, and farming tools were broken.

The War for Southern Independence would come to an end. The South had given her best and brightest at the altar of freedom. All across the nation, the South's scattered and defeated sons made their way back home or at least what was left of it. Col Thornton, still ailing from his wounds suffered as Shiloh would eventually move from Rankin County to Pass Christian. He would become a druggist, and die On September 12, 1886.

# Upcoming Speakers

May: Cheryl Bruce

June: Convention NO REGULAR MEETING

July: Lieutenant Commander-in-Chief Paul  
Grambling

August: Army of Tennessee Larry McCluney

September: Commander-in-Chief Tom Strain &  
Al Arnold, Brenda

October: Open

November: Open

December: 2nd Annual Grey's Christmas In  
Dixie



# Road Trip!

In the late 1820's, a group of devout Methodists were traveling from Orangeburg District of South Carolina. They stopped to rest by the cooling waters of a clear spring next to a stand of oak trees. While they were encamped there, a little girl suffered an accident while swinging from a vine. She fell and was killed. The next day, burial services were held for her. When it came time for the group to continue their journey, the girl's parents refused to leave. As a result, a greater part of the group decided to remain and settle there.

In the 1860's, as the south was gearing up to go to war, members of the Rankin Greys met at meeting grounds of Shiloh. There they would begin to make the transition for private citizens, to citizen soldiers.

Earlier this year, several members of the Rankin Greys, SCV Camp 2278 took a trip to Shiloh United Methodist Church in rural Rankin County. While we were there we walked through the cemetery, the museum, and the camp grounds. Standing there it was easy to imagine members of our Camps' name sake drilling on those grounds. One could easily see the men huddling together, to elect their officers, and noncommissioned officers. One could also see why this place was chosen. It is on a high, elevated hill with a great water source. If you have not been to Shiloh UMC, please try to visit.



# Minutes from April 8, 2017

04/08/2017 (location Los Cazadores, 2855 Hwy 49 S. Florence, MS 39073)

7:08 pm start

Prayer – M. Boteler

Pledges – Ian McKay

Billy:

- State reunion, Oxford, June 9
- Shiloh Cemetery – no progress at this time
- Soldier's Rest – need Mech Cav escort
- Easter Bunny Breakfast, Apr 15, see Kathy Vanek
- Ride for Wounded Warriors, June 24, 10am, Berry's, see Kathy Vanek
- Sunday 4/9 Ryan Atkinson patch in in Vicksburg
- Acknowledge candidates present at meeting, Conor Bond, Chris Bryant, John Evans
- Tom Strain and Al Arnold coming in September
- Looking at getting the Dixie Hummingbirds from Jackson to come
- Website stats: 172 unique visitors, 217 page views
- Newsletter editor – Conor Bond interim, first issue released this month (Apr '17)
- Request that Boteler's prayer from the beginning of the meeting be in the next newsletter
- Welcome to the Hisaw family with 3 new members
- "Charles" Anthony Seling new member certificate presented.

Kathy:

- Need ride sponsors, need breakfast and ride volunteers

Chris:

- Motion made to bind camp delegates to Conor Bond for Division 1st Lt Commander and Carl Ford for Division 2nd Lt Commander, Donovan Vanek second, motion carried with no objection
- Motion made to restrict private camp member info from current Brigade Commander, Michael Boteler second, motion carried with no objection

Conor:

- Need pics of the past year sent in to Conor for 1st anniversary newsletter
- Wants permission to solicit for ads in newsletter
- Chuck Bond made motion for said permission, Donovan Vanek second, motion carried with no objection

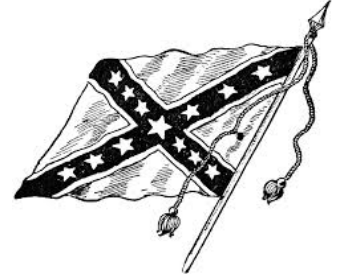
Candlelight Service (19:40-19:50)

Marty McAlilly gave a short history on his ancestor

Easter Bunny (Ian) came and brought candy to the children in attendance

Closing Prayer – Boteler

Meeting ended – 7:58 pm





## Agenda for May 13, 2017

- Opening prayer
- Pledges and Salutes
- Welcome
- Introduction of guests
- Speaker Cheryl Bruce of the MS Wounded Warriors

### Old/Unfinished Business

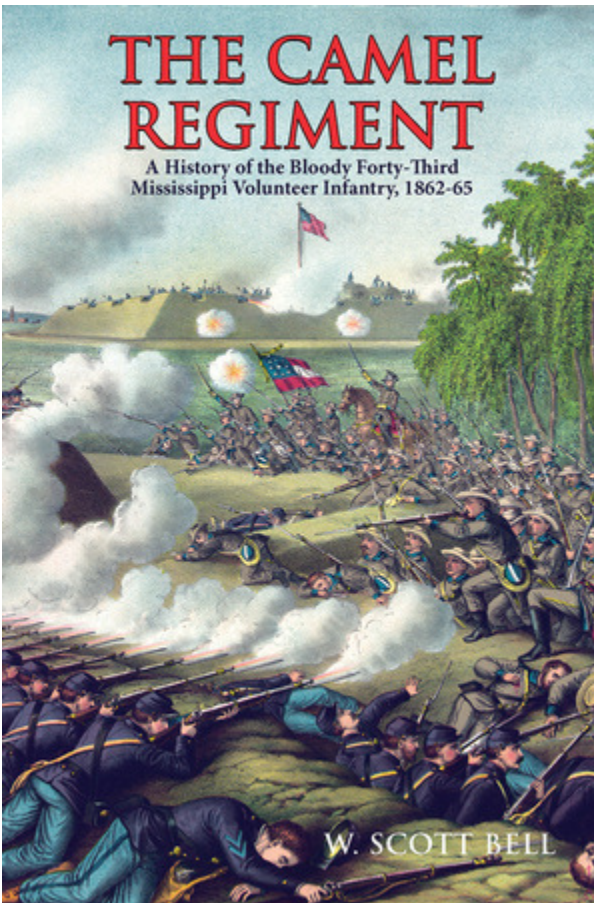
- New member certificates
- Mega Flag Update
- Beauvoir news
- Division Convention in Oxford June 9, sign up soon if going
- Shiloh Cemetery updates
- Kathy for any OCR news and WW ride update
- Continuing 1 year anniversary, May was charter ceremony

### New Business

- May events
  - TBD Ben Edwards MC patch-in at Philadelphia
  - May 13 EC meeting at War Memorial Building
  - May 20 Trail of Honor
  - May 29 Memorial Day
  - Jun 3 1G McWilliams MC patch-in at Antioch Church
- Website stats:
- Requests for speakers, suggestions to Donovan
- See Camp Quarter Master Phillip Griffin for Shirts (\$20) and Hats (\$15), see [cafepress.com/rankingreyscamp2278](http://cafepress.com/rankingreyscamp2278) for other items
- See Chris for applications
- Open discussion
- Closing prayer



## HOT OFF THE PRESS!



The 43rd Mississippi Infantry of the Confederate States of America is the only regiment to have used a camel militarily east of the Mississippi. Referred to as the Camel Regiment, it was organized in 1862 and surrendered in 1865. Using a variety of resources, the author provides a roster of the regiment along with detailed information on the formation, battles, and controversies surrounding the men. From the acquisition of the African dromedary Old Douglas to carry baggage and musical instruments through his death at Vicksburg and the fate of his fellow soldiers, Bell provides an entertaining historical narrative of this little-known chapter in American history

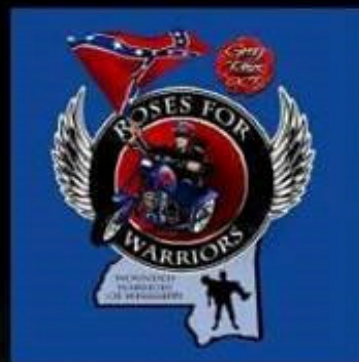
Cadets’ Corner

N E C A G F O M I S S I S S I P P I G J  
U N A T H A N T Z S A Y L Y A N K E E J  
V F O R T Y I P L J A C K S O N K L D F  
D J X E F D T S F R W N B E D F O R D G  
T E Y B L M R D M A Y E C A V A L R Y F  
P F P E N L A A Z N Y R D B Y X H S T D  
G F E L N Y V V D K V R C Q U I W N E V  
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T G T T N Y T V H D N B S B R I K M W W  
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C F U Q A K O W S A S O I D V I Q N B E  
I M T I L Y Z Z I C R V J R I F L E Y L  
Z H A N L E F U Z Y N G E N E R A L K Z

JEFFERSON DAVIS  
CANNONS  
STONEWALL JACKSON  
INFANTRY  
NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST  
REBELS  
ROBERT E LEE  
FORT SUMTER  
TRAVELER  
YANKEE

BEAUVOIR  
RANKIN GREYS  
DEO VINDICE  
MISSISSIPPI  
SECEDE  
CAVALRY  
CONFEDERACY  
RIFLE  
BAYONET  
GENERAL

# *Roses for Warriors Run*



**June 24th, 2017**

**Registration begins @ 8:30 a.m.**

**Berry's in Florence to Hattiesburg Cycles**

**\$25 rider, \$40 couple**

**Includes shirt and lunch**

**Proceeds will help benefit Wounded Warriors of MS**

**For tickets visit: [www.greyrosesocr.com](http://www.greyrosesocr.com)**





# YEAR IN REVIEW

2016

# Camp 2278's Officer Corps

Commander- Billy Bryant

1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Commander- Owen McDowell

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander- Donovan Vanek

Adjutant- Chris Bryant

Chaplain Michael Boteler

Sergeant at Arms- David Deffenbaugh

Quartermaster- Phillip Griffin

Color Sergeant- Ian McCay

Aide De Camp- Chuck Bond





# Chartering





## We Meet, We Eat, but We Never Retreat





## We Answer the Call





# We Live the Charge and Preserve Our Heritage



## For Future Generations



*"Remember it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations."*





Compatriots,

I hope that you have enjoyed this issue of *Grey Matter*. Next month we will not have our normal meeting at Los Cazadores because of the Division Convention. If you have suggestion for an article, or would like to write one please let me know. Next month's issue will have several interesting articles. Here is a sneak-peek for what we have in store:

The Hunley Award  
The Cadet's Corner  
National Convention  
And so much more!

Forward the Colors,

George Conor Bond  
Editor  
Dixiedude011@gmail.com

