



Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society

William G. Barron, President
 Wayne B. Anderson, Secretary
 Dawn Taylor, Vice Pres.
 N. Gay Blalock, Treasurer
 Oma J. Gordon, Council-at-large
 Wayne B. Anderson — Newsletter Editor

March 2012

Vol. 8, No. 3

Without a past, there is no future

Next meeting: The next meeting will be a regular business meeting at 10:00 am, March 10, 2012, in the meeting room of the Liberty Library. No program is planned for March due to Mrs. Phares being unable to attend.

AMITE COUNTY HISTORICAL AND GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Minutes of February 11 meeting

DRAFT

President Greg Barron called the meeting to order at 10:05 am in the meeting room of the Liberty library. There were 11 attendees. Norman Stevenson gave the invocation.

President Greg Barron welcomed everyone then moved directly into the executive reports.

President Report: Pres. Barron reported: The cost for the field trip to New Orleans on Tuesday, April 17th to see the "tall ships" is \$60 per person. Please give Pres. Barron your money as soon as possible if you're on the list to participate. Participants will meet at a site to be determined in McComb for a 7:00 am departure on the tour bus.

Heritage Day will be on May 5, 2012. Planning for the society's activities will begin soon.

Vice President Report: VP Dawn Taylor distributed a flyer announcing a meeting of the Federation of Genealogical Societies.

Secretary Report: Secy. Wayne Anderson had no report.

Having inadvertently skipped the consideration of the previous meeting's minutes, Pres. Barron paused the executive reports to take up the minutes. The draft minutes from the January 14, 2012 meeting were presented for approval. The

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Future Meeting Schedule

March 10, 2012, 10:00 am — Quarterly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS. No program is planned.

April 14, 2012, 10:00 am — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

May 5, 2012, 10:00 am — Meeting and activities to coordinate with the Heritage Days activities.

June 9, 2012, 10:00 am — Annual meeting with election of officers in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

July 14, 2012, 10:00 am — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

August 11, 2012, 10:00 am — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

September 8, 2012, 10:00 am — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

October 13, 2012, 10:00 am — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

November 10, 2012, 10:00 am — Regular monthly meeting in the conference room of the library in Liberty, MS.

You may contact this editor at:
Wayne B. Anderson, Sr.
1737 Bridgers Drive
Raymond, MS 39154
Or by e-mail at sitemanager@achgs.org

No Program for March Meeting

Mrs. Frances Phares will be unable to attend the society meeting in March so no program will be held following the business meeting. A program for April is being planned.

persons moving for approval and seconding were not recorded. The minutes were approved as written by vote of the members present.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Gay Blalock presented reported that the society currently has a bank balance of \$6420.96. Vera Prestridge made a motion to approved the Treasurer's report; Norman Stevenson seconded. The report was approved unanimously.

LRSH COMMITTEE REPORT: Mrs. Vera Prestridge reported that there was no activity at the Little Red Schoolhouse in the last month. For Heritage Day, she's planning to have the LRSH open from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm. She is putting out a call for volunteers to work at least a 3-hour shift hosting visitors. She needs at least two people on each floor at all times.

Old Business: None

New Business: None.

Other Business:

Jim Freeman stated that he had discovered a new genealogical line to investigate. This line connects him to both Vera Prestridge and Oma Gordon.

Frances Phares discussed the cemeteries that are on the planned tour following the meeting. She distributed an information sheet on the Robert William Brown Cemetery that is central to the tour.

President Barron adjourned the business meeting at about 10:45 am. Members participating in the cemetery tour gathered to depart.

Siege/Battle of the Alamo

February 23 – March 6, 1836

by Wayne Anderson

Though I'm not a trained historian, I do a lot of reading about historical events and frequently find that what I thought were facts are just folk tales not verifiable in any way. Since we're in the midst of the 176th anniversary of the siege and battle of the Alamo, I thought I'd offer a few things I learned.

Mississippians at the Alamo

The web site <http://www.alamodescendants.org/> lists the following men from Mississippi among the defenders present in the Alamo on February 24, 1836, the second day of the siege:

Clark, M.B.
Millsaps, Isaac
Moore, William A.
Pagan, George
Parker, Christopher Adams

Since accurate records of the entire siege period and final battle are not available, it is not known if all these men died there or were among those who chose to leave prior to the battle. No details on any of these men could be found on this web site so it's not clear what historical evidence shows these men to have been in the Alamo.

Other Details: Facts or Legends?

Most of the "facts" of the Alamo's defense cannot be verified but only classified into categories as being reasonable or unreasonable possibilities. Verified facts include:

The Mexican army was led by President General Antonio López de Santa Anna. Although titled "President," Santa Anna could be better described as a dictator. He

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BITS AND PIECES OF AMITE COUNTY HISTORY

AMITE COUNTY AND LIBERTY, MISSISSIPPI

by

William G. Barron for History 443

Dr. John Ray Skates, teacher

University of Southern Mississippi

May 10, 1978

In 1822 the tavern rates were:

claret wine (per bottle) - \$1.00; other wines \$1.00;

One quart of Madeira wine - \$1.50; one quart of sherry - \$1.25

brandy and cognac - \$1.25; peach - .75; one quart apple brandy - .50

on half pint brandy cognac - .37 1/2; brandy common - .25;

one quart of whiskey - .37 1/2; Jamaican rum - .37

lodging per night - .25; breakfast .37 1/2; dinner - .50; supper - .37

12 hours stabling, corn, and fodder for one horse - .75

feed for one horse (corn or oats per gallon) - .25; fodder of hay - .12 1/2

Liquor was legal in Amite county up until prohibition. After this, bootlegging soon developed and one major stop began on highway 24 west on the left bank of the east fork of the Amite river. It became a stop for servicemen on their way to Camp Van Dorn in the southwestern portion of the county. Payoffs had to be made to the sheriff in order to keep this business running and both bonded and homemade whiskey were sold. The bonded whiskey was brought in from Louisiana and was taken across the state-line into the county. The homemade whiskey came from Bay Saint Louis and was hauled in cars and trucks to East Fork. This whiskey was known as "white lightening". The clear liquid was prepared for sale by placing scorched sugar in the bottles to give the beverage a brownish-red color. Once treated with scorched sugar, the "white lightening" was sold as whiskey. The proprietor of this establishment says that she and her husband had sold as much as \$2,000.00 worth of alcohol in one night. They also had a cafe and slot machines in the bank room. When a person from the community came in and ordered a pint of whiskey, he was sometimes told to look beside a fence post or in a hollow tree for his purchase. In the course of burning a field off many farmers would often hear popping noises by the fence posts caused by hidden liquor bottles bursting. Eventually businesses such as this passed off the scene, but the county is still dry. [March 2012] From an interview with Maggie Elizabeth Erwin Barron and Dollie Mae Erwin Mullin Bordelon. by William Gregory Barron

The Civil War hit Amite county, with its plantation economy, hard. In 1840 there were 5,741 slaves in Amite compared to 3,741 whites. The leaders of the county, in an attempt to watch out for the interests of the whites, nominated D. S. Hurst to the Secession Convention of 1861 in Jackson. Hurst voted against secession until he saw that Mississippi was going to secede. At this point he changed his vote and the motion was carried through by the convention.

During the war Amite County provided men for the protection of the Confederacy. Among those regiments were: Company A, 16th Mississippi Regiment, Company E., 22nd Mississippi Regiment, Company B, 33rd Mississippi Regiment, Company C, 7th Mississippi Regiment, Company K, 44th Mississippi Regiment. In 1871 the first Confederate monument [in Mississippi] was erected in Liberty. There are 279 names of men from the Amite regiments who gave their lives in the war carved on this monument. Included in these names are some men from these Louisiana regiments: Company A, the 3rd Louisiana Regiment, Company K, and the 4th Louisiana Regiment.

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Soldiers returning from the war had many stories to tell. An example of this would be the account of James Jefferson Anderson's capture: "James Jefferson Anderson (listed as a planter in the 1860 census) and John L [awrence] Anderson served in the 33rd Mississippi regiment under Joseph Eggleston Johnson.

In the battle at Franklin, Tennessee, John was wounded in both arms and was sent back, with the others who had been wounded, out of the range of small arms. While sitting at the foot of a tree, he was struck in the head by a fragment of shell, and thus ended his life in the service of his country.

James Jefferson Anderson was overtaken one day by Union cavalrymen and was commanded to surrender. Seeing that he was outnumbered, he gave up, yet they did not stop firing at him. He tried to screen himself behind a small chestnut tree, but seeing one of the soldiers aiming to shoot him in the side as he backed too far from his shelter and realizing they were trying to kill him, he too, fired. The Yankee's bullet grazed Anderson's back, and Anderson's bullet plugged the Yankee in the chest killing him instantly. At this juncture the commander came to his rescue, commanding his men to stop firing, and his life was saved. He was taken prisoner and was exchanged for a Union soldier; he was captured the second time and put in prison at Camp Chase, Ohio, six months before the surrender. Through the courtesy of a young Yankee guard, with whom a close friendship had been formed, he sold his wedding ring, which he had kept hidden, and with the money bought food, as he could scarcely live on hardtack and coffee. The guard bought food, bartered it to other soldiers, made a little (money) on it, and in this was able to buy more food. Through this same man he was smuggled through the gate before his time expired. He stated that as he traveled southward, that above the Mason and Dixon line he was well treated; that he could spend the night in almost any home.

Contributed by William Gregory Barron

James Jefferson Anderson and John L. Anderson were the sons of Benjamin "Ben" Anderson and Jane C Ne-smith. Benjamin Franklin Anderson, middle brother, enlisted in 1862 with 4th Miss Cavalry with Co C C Wel-born and T B Stogdal? He was discharged from Gamswell, Ala with C Hoover as commander. per Mary A Anderson's Civil War Pension Application dated 1916. Benjamin has a Civil War marker in the Hazlewood Cemetery near Kahnville Road, Amite County, Mississippi.

Share your genealogy and Amite County stories by sending to Frances Phares, PO Box 1639, Clinton, LA or phrances@att.net Your corrections and additional information solicited.

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chose to lead his army because he was an admirer of Napoleon and fancied himself a commander of similar ability. One of the Napoleonic tactics was to offer to accept the surrender of his enemy at the outset of a clash and to give good surrender terms but with the caveat that failure to take the offer would mean the French would give no quarter once the fighting commenced. Santa Anna took this one step further and demanded his officers give no quarter if the defenders were still in the Alamo when the Mexican army reached the site. Of course that made the battle a short one (probably about half an hour) with no defenders being allowed to live. Any who surrendered were summarily executed.

The commander of the volunteers in the Alamo was Colonel William B. Travis, at least from February 24 until the end. The initial withdrawal into the Alamo was led by Jim Bowie, who also held the rank of colonel but Bowie collapsed from illness on February 24 and relinquished active command. Both Bowie and Travis held the rank of colonel in the volunteer Texian army commanded by Sam Houston. (NOTE: In that era, settlers from the US and its territories were called "Texians" or "Texicans," not "Texans." Mex-

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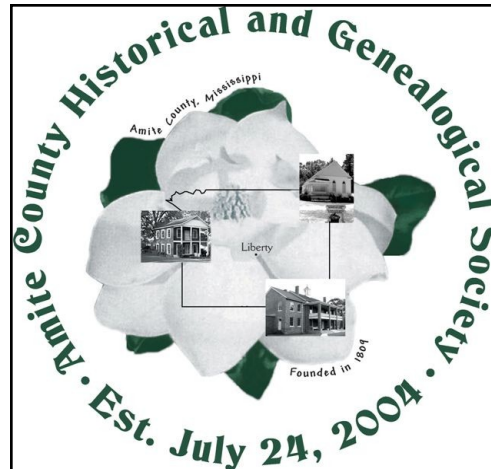
ico-born immigrants were called “Tejanos.”)

Both Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie, who already enjoyed folk hero status, were at the Alamo (along with others who accompanied them). Bowie had previously settled in Texas and married a Mexican woman. Crockett and some of his friends from Tennessee had gone to Texas after hearing about the struggle against Mexican rule.

Most modern depictions of the final battle show it being fought in broad daylight. It actually began between 5:00 and 5:30 am, lasted about half an hour, and was over by the time the sun rose high enough to light the area.

The exact number of Alamo defenders is not known. A frequently quoted number is 182, the total of 179 volunteers plus Travis, Bowie and Bowie’s body servant. The story/legend that Travis drew a line in the dirt and asked those who would die for “freedom and glory” to cross the line cannot be verified. When the story of the Alamo made it into song, as all such dramatic events do, the story had 179 of 180 crossing the line. The 180th man, who lived for a few months after being wounded escaping the Alamo, said all 180 crossed but he was designated to take a message back to Houston and went out after dark on that mission. Following the victory over the Mexicans later, the man’s claims were apparently dismissed as cover for cowardice.

Santa Anna claimed there were 600 Alamo defenders (which made his army’s loss of 600 to 800 soldiers more of an even match in the fight); most historians reject this estimate since even the word-of-mouth stories number the defenders at no more than about 250.



ACHGS Standing Committees and Chairpersons

Linda Honea Lea— Nominating Committee
Vera Prestridge — Little Red Schoolhouse
Dan Morgan — Amite County History
Nelson Dawson — Amite County Family History
Mary Pallon, Jennie Livingston, Bobby Haygood — Amite County Cemeteries
Linda Honea Lea — Hospitality
Gay Blalock — Special Events and Food
Greg Barron — Programs and Publicity
James Allen Causey — Tours and Amite County Landmarks

Annual Membership Contribution
Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society
PO Box 2
Liberty, MS 39645

Check or circle choice

\$15.00 – Individual \$25.00 – Family \$50.00 – Sponsor or Ancestor Memorial
 \$200.00 – Lifetime \$10.00 – Student (under 18) \$10.00 – Senior (over 65)

All contributions are tax-deductible.

Please make checks or money orders payable to **Amite Co. Historical and Genealogical Society**.

(Please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____ Zip+4: _____

Telephone(s): _____

E-mail address: _____

Thank you for joining the Amite County Historical and Genealogical Society. Your contribution helps us continue to collect and preserve historic treasures from Amite County's past, as well as to promote family history. Membership also provides an opportunity to attend programs and participate in special events.

I am interested in helping with:

Archives Membership Programs Newsletter Other (specify):

Amite County Historical and
Genealogical Society
PO Box 2
Liberty, MS 39645