

The June Meeting The Thomas E. McMillan Museum Tuesday, June 26, 2012, 3:00 p. m.

The Program

Jim Parker, Site Director of Ft. Toulouse/Ft. Jackson Historic Site, will discuss an archeological dig at locations associated with the Tensaw area, as well as the history of this area as related to the War of 1812 and the Creek Indian War.

Background for the Program

The following article from ECHOES in 1980 announced the award of a grant for archeological projects in Escambia and Baldwin Counties/. The project was carried out by our speaker Jim Parker and John Powell, Curator of the Thomas E. McMillan Museum.

The results of the research and study have been published by Jim Parker and artifacts from the sites are on display in the Thomas E. McMillan Museum. A report on the results is printed in the Journal section of this issue of ECHOES.

The article announcing the grant and the purpose of the research:

From Escambia Echoes (February 15, 1980) Page 5

\$38,000. 00 Grant Awarded

The Alabama Historical Commission has awarded a \$38,000. grant to the Jefferson Davis State Junior College for research and archaeological study of two important early military sites in Escambia County--the Battle of Burnt Corn Creek and Fort Crawford.

The grant from the state preservation agency will help fund the survey of American frontier military sites in a 200 square mile area of Escambia and Baldwin Counties known as the Tensaw Country Military Complex.

Other sites in the survey include Forts Mims, Pierce, and Montgomery, Cantonment/Montpelier and Camp Hope at Blakeley.

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The July Meeting, July 24, 2012

Guest Speaker

Tom Butts
Program TBA

Workday in the Alabama Room

Tuesday, July 3, 2012

9:30



Attack on Fort Mims from
Bronze Map of Alabama

Volume 39, Number 06

June 2012

Background for the Program *(continued)*

(Continued from page 1)

A highly significant period of military activity from the time of the War of 1812 through statehood is represented in the complex. **Fort Crawford** was a chief Alabama post for **General Andrew Jackson** during the **First Seminole War** which began in **1817**. The fort was abandoned after the war and its site has tentatively been identified within the city limits of East Brewton.

The **Battle of Burnt Corn Creek** on **July 27, 1813**, was the initial battle of the Creek Indian War. There has been no intensive archaeological investigation of either site and the grant from the Alabama Historical Commission will help save the areas from destruction by relic collectors.

The large project will be under the direction of John T. Powell, Director of the Thomas E. McMillan Museum on the junior college campus in Brewton. He will be assisted by a professional archaeologist and field assistants. Artifacts recovered in the survey will be housed, preserved and exhibited at the McMillan Museum. The public museum is dedicated to the study and exhibition of Alabama's historic and archaeological resources”

_ The following brief descriptions of the various sites mentioned in the letter awarding the grant are from the website [American Forts East: Alabama](http://www.northamericanforts.com/East/al.html) <<http://www.northamericanforts.com/East/al.html>>: and “Investigations Relative to the 19th Century Tensaw Military Frontier in Southwest Alabama” By James W. Parker.

Fort Blakeley (1864 - 1865), State Park, near Spanish Fort. A major Confederate site, it had 35 guns mounted in nine numbered lunettes, and with over five miles of breastworks. Located at the old town of Blakeley. Between 6000 and 9000 black Union troops fought here in April 1865, making this battle the third largest fought with black troops during the Civil War. Last battle of the Civil War fought here. The War had actually ended when the battle was fought here.

Fort Crawford

(1817 - 1819), East Brewton

A Federal square stockade with two blockhouses built to protect the area settlers. Thought to be located on a bluff above Murder Creek, the exact location of the fort is not known. The fort was mainly used as a staging fort for supplies for Jackson's excursions into Florida during the first Seminole War.

Fort Mims (1813), Tensaw

Red Stick Creek Indians massacred over 400 people here and burned down the blockhouse in August 1813. The fort was a one-acre stockade around Samuel Mims' garrison house and several cabins, manned by 265 militiamen and their families. There were only 36 survivors (including 13 soldiers), and no women or children were among them. The survivors were relocated to Fort Madison. A granite monument marks the approximate location.

Fort Montgomery (1814 - 1818), near Tensaw

A Federal fort located two miles from Fort Mims, opposite the Alabama River "cutoff." Rebuilt in 1817, including a new hospital." This fort is located between Fort Mims and Fort Montpelier both in position and in time" (Parker,)

Cantonment Montpelier (1817 - 1820), near Little River.

A Federal camp located seven miles northeast of Fort Montgomery, ten miles from the Alabama River, at the old town site of Montpelier. Also known as Camp Montpelier and Fort Montpelier. The fort was the last frontier military establishment of significant size in the area ("Investigations Relative to the 19th Century Tensaw Military Frontier in Southwest Alabama,").

Fort Pierce (1813), Clarke County

A settlers' fort on the Alabama River two miles southeast of Fort Mims, built by John and William Pierce. Abandoned for Fort Stoddert after the massacre at Fort Mims. Regarrisoned with Federal troops in December 1813. €

News and Announcements

Scenes and Stories of Monroeville: A "To Kill a Mockingbird" Workshop

On Wednesday, July 11, 2012, the Monroe County Heritage Museum will again host its annual program, Scenes and Stories of Monroeville: A "To Kill a Mockingbird" Workshop in the Old Courthouse Museum from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon.

For more information or to register, please contact Wanda Green at the Monroe County Heritage Museum at mchm@frontiernet.net or (251) 575-7433.

Monroe County History Tour – July 18, 2012

Monroeville, AL - Free admission. SARIC credit to teachers. 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 18, 2012. Bring a sack lunch & beverage.

To learn more about Monroe County history, plan to join our annual bus tour of historic sites in the county that's older than the state of Alabama.

Seating is limited and pre-registration, no later than July 12, is required. Meet at the Old Courthouse Museum, 31 N. Alabama Avenue in Monroeville, at 7:30 a.m. Contact Wanda Green at (251) 575-7433 or mchm@frontiernet.net to pre-register.

A Query

Howard and Ciney Leonard need help in finding burial records for the early 1900's. In their email to ECHS, they explain that they are looking for records for their Jernigan Grandparents who died in 1906 just days apart and are interested in knowing why. Also, they are interested in the two unmarked graves that are next to the graves of these grandparents enquiring if there is a way to find whose graves these are. Any one with information can email ECHS at escohis@escohis.org.

Dedication of Cistern Marker in Burnt Corn Creek Park

The Ceremony will take place on **July 12, 2012 at 9:00 a. m.** Mayor Jennings has invited a representative from ECHS to participate in the dedication. President Tom McMillan has accepted the invitation and will speak at the ceremony.

ECHS Archivist David Allen did the research on and prepared the material for the marker.

2012 Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference to Be held in Birmingham By Ann Biggs-Williams

At the end of August, there is an opportunity for those of us who love history and genealogy to attend a national conference right here in Alabama. The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) will have its national conference in Birmingham, Alabama with the theme entitled "Indians, Squatters, Settlers and Soldiers in The Old Southwest".

What is FGS you ask? The Federation of Genealogical Societies is an umbrella organization whose members are genealogical and historical societies, not individuals. The Escambia County (Al) Historical Society is a member of FGS. FGS links our community by helping societies to strengthen and grow.

FGS sponsors a conference every year with four days of lectures and workshops. You do not have to be a member of a local historical or genealogical society to attend. The exhibits alone are awesome! Exhibit hall is open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Easiest way to register is <https://www.fgs.org/acs/index.php>

There is a special track on Wednesday for librarians, archivists, and other information professionals who serve family history researchers called Librarian's Day. Registration for librarian's day is only \$10. This event is sponsored by ProQuest and lunch is provided. To register for librarian's day, go to <http://www.fgs.org/2012> conference. Click on librarian's day and then select Register for Librarian's Day. Any questions can be sent to librarians2012@fgs.org

The opening social on Wed. night is at the Alabama Theatre in Birmingham. The theatre was built in 1927 and contains the "Mighty Wurlitzer" organ in the orchestra pit. Bobby Horton, Birmingham native will provide the music. Horton is well-known in historic music circles for his 35 year career perform-

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News and Announcements *(continued)*

(Continued from page 3)

ing with the musical-comedy tri Three on a String. However, he is best known for producing thirty-one music scores for PBS, A & E Network, and the National Park Service --most notably, two PBS hit film series by Ken burns, "The Civil War" and "Baseball." Horton specializes in recording authentic period music.

Other conference workshops, too numerous to mention, continue on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Workshop titles and costs may be accessed online or brochures are still available in the Alabama Room at the Thomas E. McMillan Museum as of this printing. You may register for a single day or the entire conference. However, the most economical price must be postmarked before July 1, 2012 as thereafter, there is a price increase. A single day before July 1 is \$79. Entire conference before July 1 is \$195.

I attended FGS in 1997, the day after I retired as librarian at Jefferson Davis Community College. My husband and I got in the car and drove to Dallas,

Texas for the 1997 conference which I would rate as one of the most professional conferences I ever attended. Although I have not attended FGS since then, I am really looking forward to this conference being held a drivable distance from home.

The Conference will be at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex which will house all of the speaker sessions and the exhibits. Meal functions will be in the recently renovated Sheraton Birmingham Hotel (www.sheraton.com/Birmingham) which is also the conference hotel that is connected by an enclosed-air-conditioned over-the-street walkway. The costs for luncheons are extra.

The Alabama Genealogical Society, who is the local host, is also looking for volunteers to help with the conference. You can get a reduced rate on the conference fee by volunteering. at <http://www.algensoc.org/fgs>. €

Wilellen Elliott Retires as Trustee



ECHS President Tom McMillan Presenting Wilellen with a Certificate of Appreciation from ECHS Pictured in the restored Weaver home, Tom and Wilellen are standing in front of a wall of family pictures and mementos.

Wilellen Elliott, a past president and a trustee of ECHS, has retired as a trustee. Wilellen has been a major contributor to the society through her leadership as President in 2000-2001 and as a trustee. She and her husband Dave have made generous donations of monetary gifts as well as documents, books, and pictures to the society and its Alabama Room.

She has shared her knowledge of Brewton history by giving help for research to members, providing articles for ECHOES and in giving programs at

ECHS meetings. She is especially noted for her knowledge of the Downing/Shofner School.

After retiring and returning to Brewton, Wilellen and Dave embarked on the task of restoring her childhood home. ECHS members have enjoyed both a meeting in the restored Weaver home as well as one in the beautiful new home which Wilellen and Dave built near the Weaver home. €

Snapshots of the May 2012 ECHS Meeting



Darryl with Guests
From the Left, Darryl with Jan Wilson, RN
(ret.) and William Smith who works with Darryl
on lawn and garden maintenance at D. W.
McMillan Hospital



Above
A Gift from Bolivia
From the Left: William Smith showing off a
sweater from Bolivia, with Darryl in Back, o
On the Right
Jan Wilson, RN (ret.)



Above: In the Back Row,
Friends/Guests of Darryl,
Mike and Claire Carter of Pensacola
In the front, ECHS Members Barbara
Commander and Barbara Page



To the Right
Members and Guests Enjoying
Refreshments after the Meeting
In the Back Left Byron Findley and
Right Barbara Commander

Snapshots of the May 2012 ECHS Meeting *(continued)*



**Above
At the Podium
Tom McMillan
Conducting the
Meeting**

**Pictured Below
Enjoying Refreshments
Left to Right: Barbara Page, Beverly Stark,
and Beth Bain**



**To the Left
Before the Meeting
Darryl Checks Out Equipment and
Tom Conducts the Business Session**



**To the Right
Questions and Answers
after the Meeting
Left to Right: Robin Brewton,
Jo Brewton, Tom McMillan,
Darryl Searcy, and
Mike Carter**



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The ECHS *Journal* Section

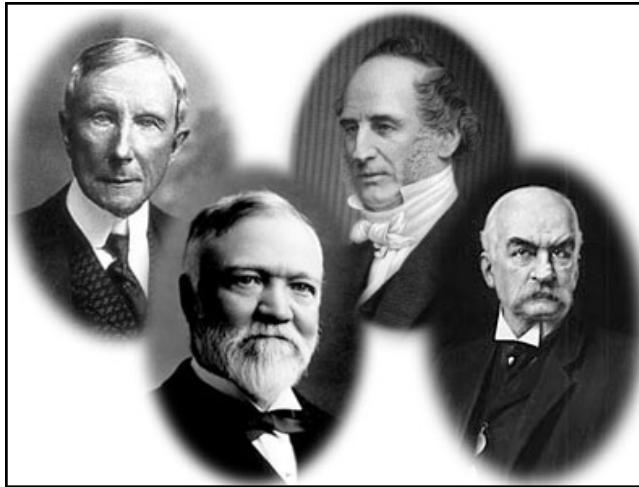
The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons

The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons

The year nineteen hundred saw the organization of a company that eventually impacted the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of Escambia, Alabama lives, along with those across the state line in Florida. Civil War soldiers all, General Russell A. Alger, brothers Daniel and Martin Sullivan and Colonel William D. Mann, among others, agreed to pool money and resources to form the Alger-Sullivan Syndicate, which was to foster The Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company of Century, Florida.

Although disparate in their upbringing, morals and conduct, these four men had one thing in common: the intelligence of business men who were truly self-made. Each of them were born to humble beginnings and made themselves into multimillionaires by the hard work and perhaps shrewd machinations of business. William D. Mann, a man probably unknown to our readers, was possibly one of the most ruthless and corrupt of them all.

W. D. Mann was the Rupert Murdock of his age, though he didn't start out that way. Like all of the other players in this story, he thrived on his ingenuity and resourcefulness. When the War Between the States began, according to one source, he was ready to join the war effort but unimpressed with his chances in Sandusky, Ohio, where he was born, he moved into Michigan. He had found he would be given an officer's commission if he could round up 1000 soldiers to fight under him. With charm, guile and exemplary salesmanship that would serve him well the rest of his life, he rounded up the quota in no time at all. However, his high hopes were squashed as he found that the Michigan commanders



Composite Picture of "Robber Barons"

felt his recruits were needed elsewhere and gave them to another commander.

The Michigan Governor, however was impressed with his industriousness, and challenged him to do it all over again in Saginaw, where the supply of available men was much smaller, with the promise to give him the command if he succeeded. He did, and on February 9, 1963 was named commanding Colonel

of the 7th Michigan Cavalry, serving beside the commander of the 6th Cavalry, Russell Alger.

In popular American culture, robber barons were usually depicted as men in suits with black top hats and walking sticks as typified by Rich Uncle Pennybags, the icon for the board game Monopoly.

Writer Mark Twain coined the phrase "the Gilded Age" to describe that period of rapid growth, a time when the dazzling exterior of American life actually concealed mass unemployment, poverty and a society ripped in two. Economists and political scientists believe the US has entered a new Gilded Age, a period of systematic inequality dominated by a new class of super-rich. The only difference is that, this time around, the super-rich are hedge fund managers and financial magnates instead of oil and rail barons.

Robber baron is a term used for a powerful 19th century American businessman. By the 1890s, the term was typically applied to businessmen who were viewed as having used questionable practices to amass their wealth. Allegedly, their "questionable practices" usually included setting the product at extremely low prices (and paying their workers very

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The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons *(continued)*

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poorly in order to do so), buying out the competitors that couldn't keep up, and once there was no competition, they would hike prices far above the original level. It combines the sense of criminal ("robber") and illegitimate aristocracy ("baron").

The term derives from the medieval German lords who legally charged tolls on ships traversing the Rhine without adding anything of value. There is dispute over the term's origin and use. U.S. political and economic commentator Matthew Josephson popularized the term during the Great Depression in a 1934 book by the same title. He attributed the phrase to an 1880 anti-monopoly pamphlet about railroad magnates. Like the German antecedents, Josephson alleged that American big businessmen

amassed huge fortunes immorally, unethically, and unjustly. The theme was popular during the Great Depression amid public scorn for big business.

After the Depression, business historians, led by Allan Nevins, began revising this view of American big businessmen by advocating the "Industrial Statesman" thesis. Nevins, in his "John D. Rockefeller: The Heroic Age of American Enterprise," took on Josephson. He argued that while Rockefeller may have engaged in some unethical and illegal business practices, this should not overshadow his bringing order to industrial chaos of the day. Gilded Age capitalists, according to Nevins, sought to impose order and stability on competitive business. Their work made the United States the foremost economy

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Men Typically Thought of as "Robber Barons:"

- *John Jacob Astor (real estate, fur) – New York*
- *Andrew Carnegie (steel) – Pittsburgh and New York*
- *Jay Cooke (finance) – Philadelphia*
- *Charles Crocker (railroads) – California*
- *Daniel Drew (finance) – New York*
- *James Buchanan Duke (tobacco) – Durham, North Carolina*
- *James Fisk (finance) – New York*
- *Henry Morrison Flagler (railroads, oil) – New York and Florida[6]*
- *Henry Clay Frick (steel) – Pittsburgh and New York*
- *John Warne Gates (barbed wire, oil) – Texas*
- *Jay Gould (railroads) – New York[7]*
- *Edward Henry Harriman (railroads) – New York[8]*
- *James J. Hill (railroads) – Minnesota*
- *Mark Hopkins (railroads) – California*
- *Andrew W. Mellon (finance, oil) – Pittsburgh*
- *J. P. Morgan (finance, industrial consolidation) – New York*
- *John Cleveland Osgood (coal mining, iron) - Colorado [9]*
- *Henry B. Plant (railroads) – Florida*
- *John D. Rockefeller (oil) – Cleveland, New York*
- *Charles M. Schwab (steel) – Pittsburgh and New York*
- *Joseph Seligman (banking) – New York*
- *John D. Spreckels (sugar) – California*
- *Leland Stanford (railroads) – California*
- *Cornelius Vanderbilt (water transport, railroads) – New York[10]*
- ♦ *Charles Tyson Yerkes (street railroads) – Chicago[11]*

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The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons *(continued)*

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by the 20th century.

This debate about the morality of big businessmen was seen as useless by Alfred Chandler in "The Visible Hand." Chandler contended that industrializing America was a historical process and not a play of good versus evil. As he later expressed, "What could be less likely to produce useful generalizations than a debate over vaguely defined moral issues based on unexamined ideological assumptions and presuppositions?"

"This brisk, rollicking biography of a black-guard," Thus does the New York Times Book Review recount the notorious career of Colonel William d Alton Mann, a larger-than-life, protean scoundrel whose Town Topics was a weekly New York magazine through which the Colonel and his henchmen blackmailed the swells and plutocrats such as the Morgans, the Goulds, the Vanderbilts, among them of the city's early-20th-century high society.

Mann's initiative and ingenuity came to light when he invented a novel ammunition pouch for Union soldiers to use in the field. It became very popular because it was configured to hang in the front, thus counterbalancing the weight of the backpacks and making it easier to endure long marches. He sold thousands of his pouches, which is most likely where he got his seed money, and he had collected quite a bit of it by 1865, when he was named an Internal Revenue Assessor by Washington and sent to Mobile.

Mann then settled in Mobile, arriving with a fortune of about \$225,000. Mann quickly began investing in local industry, and especially in local timberlands and sawmills. By the 1870 census he was listed as owning \$150,000 worth of land and having a personal net worth of \$75,000 to boot. That is an enormous amount for someone so young (he was only 25 at the time of his arrival in Mobile) in such difficult times.

By 1870, he purchased a controlling interest in a small Mobile newspaper, and shortly thereafter, when approached by the foundering Mobile Register to invest enough money to keep it afloat, he took control of that paper as well.

He ran for Congress as a Democrat and received a majority of votes, but was denied the victory by carpetbaggers in the state government, even though he was considered to be a carpetbagger himself. He was not a gracious loser, which did not endear him to the local citizenry. Mann eventually sold the newspaper to focus his energies on a new invention, this time a luxury sleeping car for railroads. Although not well-built, the Mann sleepers were important innovations that included hallways to pass from car to car. Mann obtained a patent for his invention and went head-to-head with the Pullman Company. Like his other business ventures, the railroad car venture also failed, and the Mann Boudoir Car Company went out of business after its assets were sold.

In all, he remained in Mobile for about ten years before moving back north. His departure was no doubt occasioned by his involvement in a corruption scheme whereby the newspaper promoted a referendum to agree to the city purchasing a new paving system made basically of treated wooden railroad ties laid like bricks on the ground. It turned out that the timber to be treated for this use was to come from his own lumber interests in the city, and once this was exposed, he felt the time was right to move to New York, where his brother Eugene, who, with similar enterprise, had purchased a failing New York gossip sheet, renamed it Town Topics, and made it the talk of the town. Once he arrived, W. D. took over as editor of the rag while his brother ran the financial end of the company. That arrangement lasted until 1901, when his brother's failing health caused him to move to Arizona and leave the operation of the paper entirely in the hands of his brother.

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The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons *(continued)*

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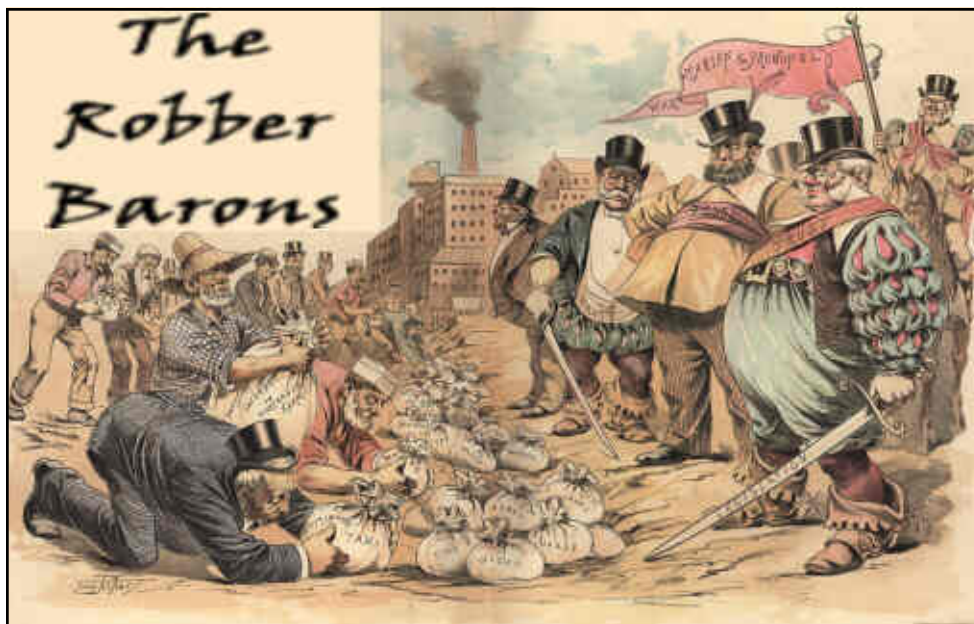
In 1891, Mann also invented the “Mann Boudoir Car,” a railroad sleeping car, giving us yet another connection between Mann and the Alger-Sullivan incorporators. They just keep piling one on top of the other, until it all just seems to have been inevitable.

Perhaps Mann’s biggest claim to fame came in the late 1800s when he famously worked out a deal with the “Robber Barons” – Rockefellers, Carnegies and the like – NOT to print juicy gossip about them if they would only pay him a tidy fee for the discretion. Once word of this arrangement got out, Collier’s Magazine ran a big expose, tarnished the image of Town Topics to such a degree that the paper never really regained its former footing.

It is hard to know exactly when, or how, the connections all fell into place between the Sullivans, Mann, Alger and Hecker, but there were so many overlaps and joint interests in all of their lives, that it would have been more surprising if they had not happened.

On March 1, 1864, Mann resigned his commission and received his discharge from the army. He did, however, ride with the 7th Michigan Cavalry during the Grand Review of the Army of the Potomac in May 1865.

Mann resigned his commission because he had invented and patented a gizmo that was intended to help balance out the weapons carried by cavalrymen



in the field, and had some success. He sold 20,000 of them to the army and started the Mann Patent Accoutrement Company. This venture soon failed, but not for lack of effort on Mann’s behalf. He spent most of the summer and fall of

1864 visiting Union camps, trying to peddle his wares and visiting with his old comrades from the Cavalry Corps. When the company failed, he turned his attention to a new industry—oil, which had recently been discovered near Titusville, Pennsylvania.

He solicited investors (including five former brigadier generals and Col. Russell Alger, the former commander of the 5th Michigan Cavalry) to start an oil company and raised a large sum of money to do so. He purchased some useless land near Titusville, but the company never launched, and he was eventually charged with theft by deception and tried for the felony. Mann was acquitted of the felony charges after a trial of nearly two months’ duration. He was called a swindler for years after this, even though he was never convicted of a crime.

Mann then moved to London for a decade, where he came upon the idea of founding and publishing a gossip-based periodical based on some of the British tabloids. He returned to New York and with his brother, established Town Topics, which was “dedicated to art, music, literature, and society.” It soon became a scandal sheet, faithfully reporting high-society peccadilloes and often identifying perpe-

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The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons *(continued)*

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trators by name. Mann himself wrote the real gossip column, called “Saunterings,” using the pseudonym “The Saunterer.” The Saunterer’s identity was not very well hidden.

Mann declared war on the moneyed class. “I believe that the possession of great wealth, the presence of continual luxury and an existence of a sybaritic case are sufficient to lead voluptuous natures into a system of sensual gratification more intensely and ingeniously base than is found in the humbler walks of life,” he proclaimed in 1891. “The Four Hundred [the wealthiest and most influential members of New York society] is an element so shallow and unhealthy that it deserves to be derided almost incessantly.” And Mann did just that with his weekly publication.

Mann’s wealthy targets could buy their way out of his crosshairs—an ample donation could get a story spiked and put the donor on Mann’s “immune” list. The main method used by the Saunterer was to print an innocuous article with the name of the individual on which it had a piece of hot gossip. The other side of the page included a blind piece going into the scandal without the name of the person involved. By separating the identification and the scandal, Mann managed to avoid liability for extortion and libel for this.

However, in 1906, at a trial in which Mann was exposed, although he was neither the plaintiff nor defendant, but a witness for the prosecution! It was revealed, for example, that a series of *Town Topics* attacks on then Senator Russell Alger in the latter part of the 1890s, when Alger had been Secretary of War in President McKinley’s cabinet, had ceased when Alger turned over to Colonel Mann \$100,000 of Alger-Sullivan Lumber Company stock. In response to a question as to how he could obtain such large sums from men who were relative strangers (although Alger was no stranger since he and Mann served together under General Armstrong Custer in the Union Army), Mann replied that he went to men of promi-

nence “... because I felt they were of such standing that if they accommodated me there would be no occasion for me to criticize them.”

In 1904, Mann had taken aim at Alice Roosevelt, the daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt, who was just beginning her career as a socialite. “From wearing costly lingerie to indulging in fancy dances for the edification of men was only a step. And then came—second step—indulging freely in stimulants. Flying all around Newport without a chaperon was another thing that greatly concerned Mother Grundy. There may have been no reason for the old lady making such a fuss about it, but if the young woman knew some of the tales that are told at the clubs at Newport she would be more careful in the future about what she does and how she does it,” wrote Mann. “They are given to saying almost anything at the Reading Room, but I was really surprised to hear her name mentioned openly there in connection with that of a certain multi-millionaire of the colony and with certain doings that gentle people are not supposed to discuss. They also said that she should not have listened to the risqué jokes told her by the son of one of her Newport hostesses.” Mann’s bullying of Alice Roosevelt infuriated a lot of wealthy and powerful people, who vowed revenge.

The Alice Roosevelt episode was just one of many instances where Mann’s Saunterings wreaked havoc on the lives of the rich and famous of the Gilded Age. This was a time when the wealthiest members of society did all they could to remain out of the unblinking view of the public eye. Mann was hated by most and feared by all, and they held their noses and paid his extortions to keep their names out of Saunterings.

In 1905, Mann badly miscalculated by blackmailing Emily Post’s husband, Edwin. Post was a struggling Wall Street stockbroker mired in an unhappy marriage. Mann learned that Edwin Post was supporting a Broadway dancer in a Connecticut love nest. Mann demanded that Post pay \$500 to kill the story, but Post did not have the funds to do so. Instead, he

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The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons *(continued)*

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confessed to Emily. Instead of paying the requested hush money, Emily Post instead advised her husband to contact the district attorney and set up a sting operation. Mann's agent, Charles P. Ahle, was arrested in Post's Wall Street office on July 11, 1905, and he was prosecuted and convicted of extortion.

Reacting to the prosecution of Ahle, Collier's magazine published a series of harshly worded articles disclosing that Mann had been paying a city juvenile court judge, Joseph Deuel, to vet Town Topics. Norman Hapgood, the editor of Collier's, tried to bait Mann into suing the magazine, but the Colonel would not take the bait. Instead, Deuel filed a libel suit against Hapgood that went to trial, providing entertaining headlines for weeks. The testimony adduced demonstrated that Deuel was, indeed, on Mann's payroll, and the jury took just seven minutes to find Deuel not liable. Mann testified at the trial, and was crucified. His extortion schemes were exposed, as was his employment of a sitting judge to vet the content of his publication. During his testimony, Mann also denied signing a document that placed someone on his exempt list, in spite of ample evidence to the contrary. After the trial, the district attorney then preferred perjury charges against Mann. He was tried and acquitted of the felony charges, once more dodging a prison sentence, but the trial pretty much wrecked Town Topics as a profitable business. However, Town Topics continued on, with the Colonel still penning Saunterings, and did not cease publication until more than a decade after Mann's death.

Mann also founded a literary magazine called The Smart Set in 1900. The Smart Set was founded to publish fiction by The Four Hundred as a means of entree into society by Mann, and he ran the publication profitably for 11 years. He sold it in 1911, and the publication

continued in print until it finally failed in July 1930. Authors such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Eugene O'Neill, O. Henry, and many other literary lights all graced its pages. Mann was rightly proud of The Smart Set.

The Helping Hands.
By Campbell Cory.



To his credit, Mann offered to publish Asa B. Isham's history of the 7th Michigan Cavalry at his own expense for free distribution to the alumni of the regiment. The book was published by the Town Topics Publishing Company in 1893. The book included a register of the regiment's officers and an identification of the members of the unit who did not survive the war. He was also an active member of the Loyal Legion of Military Order of the United States and the Army and Navy Club, and was justifiably proud of his service in the Civil War.

William d'Alton Mann died of complications of pneumonia at the age of 81 at his home in Morristown, New Jersey, in

May 1920. His funeral was held at the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest in Manhattan. An American flag draped his coffin, which was adorned with the Colonel's Gettysburg saber. Three colonels and a major general attended the service, and a bugler from the 7th Michigan Cavalry played Taps. Mann was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx. He was described as "a rousing, bouncing, noisy, vigorous, open-hearted, choleric, old man." Possessed of a keen intellect and a swindler's soul, William d'Alton Mann is remembered as the man who robbed the robber barons.

Here's to the scoundrel, Col. William d'Alton Mann, forgotten cavalryman and extortionist.

Sources:

The Man Who Robbed the Robber Barons, Logan, Andy – 1965

Various Internet sources

www.civilwarcavalry.com/?p=2492 €

The ECHS *Journal* Section

Investigations Relative to the 19th Century Tensaw Military Frontier in Southwest Alabama

Thanks to the Jefferson Davis Community College's Library staff who located the copy and obtained the report for us.

Tensaw Military Frontier

By James W. Parker

Historical Archaeology has been a growing field of research in Alabama during the past decade half. The Southwestern portion of the state has been the location of a large number of investigations centered on the colonial, territorial, and early statehood periods.

The city of Mobile and the surrounding baysides have been investigated at various times and at numerous locations. The bay region was the heart of the Euro-American influence for more than a century while the remainder of the state was still in the possession of native groups. Out settlements were begun in the hinterland but it was not until the end of the War of 1812 (Creek War) that the majority of the area was opened to settlement.

The conflict with the Creek Indians and the British from 1812 to 1815 and subsequent warfare in Florida preceding the transfer of that province to the United States was instrumental in the making of historic sites in the Tensaw River Basin and Florida border regions of Southwestern Alabama. The open warfare began in earnest after the slaughter of hundreds of settlers and their allies at Fort Mims in northern Baldwin County. The last frontier military establishment of significant size was at Cantonment Montpelier. Fort Montgomery (Figure 1) was built between Fort Mims and Fort Montpelier both geographically and chronologically.

A line of fortifications and camps were erected during the conflicts by the civilian population, regular army, and military forces from 1813 until 1821 for the protection of people, property, and supply lines as well as bases for attacks. The civilian defenses were clustered near the juncture of the Alabama and Tombigbee Rivers and the delta region above Mobile. Those posts manned by militia and

army units stretched from Mobile to the Tennessee and Georgia frontiers.

The end of the declared war with Britain in 1815 brought the abandonment of many forts. The exceptions were along the borders of the Indian lands and near the boundary with Spanish West Florida. In the years from 1816 to 1821 a buildup of regular army units north of Pensacola was effected which brought approximately one fourth of the standing regular army to the southwestern area of Alabama.

In 1817 the focus of Indian warfare began to move toward the Apalachicola and Chattahoochee Rivers Basins. The major change came in 1821 when Florida was transferred from Spain to the United States. The posts in the hinter land of Alabama were no longer needed and were abandoned. The sites became community centers. The villages and two towns did not prosper and soon passed to fields and woodlands.

Four of the military sites have undergone archival and archaeological research within the recent past. Fort Mims, a property of the Alabama Historical Commission, has had several seasons of fieldwork and laboratory analysis performed by the University of South Alabama. Noel R. Stowe and others from the institution have supervised the endeavors.

Fort Montgomery (1Ba266) Cantonment Montpelier (1Ba265), and other military sites were investigated in 1980-1981 by a team affiliated with Jefferson Davis college of Brewton. The concept of in-depth research about the military presence in the Tensaw drainage was championed by John P. Powell of that college. The Alabama Historical Commission helped fund the project through a matching grant program.

Fieldwork began in late winter of 1981 with a small professional crew and volunteers. Three sites were the focus of the study. Fort Pierce, a contemporary of Fort Mims, was not dug. Following a visit

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to the Fort Pierce locale it was decided that extensive work there would attract attention to the little known site which could later be preserved.

The other two sites had undergone some agricultural disturbance and more was scheduled for the spring of 1981. The Cantonment of Montpelier site was also the target of oil and gas exploration activities and an idea of the extent and nature of the site was needed. Additional disturbances had been visited upon the site by relic hunters with Fort Montgomery having suffered the most damage.

Cantonment Montpelier was in a near pristine state except for some marginal areas where farming had taken place. An area had been partially excavated by members of the staff of Jefferson Davis College. The spot worked by Powell was a large trash pit. The deposit was chosen as an excavation locale so the material recovered by Powell could be placed in a better contextual frame. More than 4,500 objects were recovered from the pit which had been dug and filled in a short period of time suggesting a refuse pit. Most of the material was found by the first efforts that touched upon nearly all of the 4 meter diameter hole. Excavation units were dug across the backfills of the Powell excavations and an additional 15 to 30 centimeters of undisturbed deposits.

Thousands of pieces of glass and ceramics were recovered as would be expected from a trash repository. Oyster shell was present but little evidence of bone was found. Military uniform buttons, insignia, parts of firearms and edged weapons were part of the assemblage. Other items found were tin buckets and plates, shovels, and printing type.

The pit was located near the center of the one kilometer long site. The occupation zone was not as broad as long for the settlement remains were oriented linearly along a ridge. South of the pit was a series of stone rubble remains. These were interpreted as remnants of foundations or chimneys from enlisted men's or non-commissioned officer's quar-

ters. The most intact of the stone groupings was chosen for limited investigation. The leaf and root mat overburden was removed along with recently deposited topsoil the activity exposed a stone fireplace base and small number of artifacts.

The structures associated with the stone rubble were probably those of soldiers but may have been civilian buildings occupied during the short life of the town of Montpelier after the removal of troops. The village did not flourish and some of the camp area was used to house plantation workers.

The other locale at Cantonment Montpelier was called the "Hump Site" because of a meter high, three meter round mound that was present. The area was excavated in the "Hump" proper and at peripheral points where structural remains were expected to be found. Remnants of foundations were not located but building materials were present. At the center of the earthen mound was a series of bricks without mortar. There was a light ash deposit associated with the bricks suggesting fireplace activity but not enough evidence to conclusively ascertain that the "Hump" was a hearth remains.

The continued use of the structure or later activity in the area was indicated by the presence of a bottle. The glass flask was of a commemorative type made to celebrate the introduction of railroads in the United States and was not produced until circa 1830.

Site 1KBa266, the Fort Montgomery site, underwent the most extensive excavations during the project. A large portion of the site lay in a field which was scheduled for deep plowing following the fieldwork. It was believed that remains of the defensive wall of the post as well as evidence of structures dating from both the fortification and camp could be found in the field.

A systematic surface collection was made in the plowed area in hopes that diagnostic artifacts could be recovered indicating the most promising locales in which to search for palisades. The strategy did

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not prove successful. The nails and spikes used in the wall construction were probably not present because they were reused in the construction of other edifices when the character of the post changed from a fort to a cantonment in 1817.

The search for defensive walls did not cease when diagnostic artifacts were not found. A series of infrared aerial photographs had shown anomalies in the field which might have been the barrier trenches. A series of one meter test units were excavated to subsoil in the questionable region but no trenches were located.

During the surface collection one are produced a large number of brick fragments. Positive results came when units were dug at the center of the concentration.

A brick chimney base and a post hole were found following the removal of topsoil. Excavation of the posthole and a part of the seating trench of the fireplace produced no artifacts dating to the military occupation of the site. The material may have been excluded by happenstance when a post-military chimney dating to the period at the beginning of the post when little material was available for inclusion with fill. The answer to the chronological questions can only be obtained after extensive excavations provide a spatial plan of site remains with chronological indicators.

Trash deposits were excavated at two locations at Ba266. One locale, designated Excavation Area 3 had been recently disturbed by relic hunters and a one meter deep disturbance had been cut into the feature. The second deposit had undergone magnetic based recovery activity by John Powell about no deep intrusions had been effected.

Investigation of Area 3 exposed and removed the fill of a pit which had been dug with shovels. The absence of silt and the presence of non-lensed homogeneous fill suggested that the pit had been dug to

receive trash and debris. Present in fill were ceramics, glass military buttons, firearms fragments and carbonized wood. The initial deposit date has been set as the early months of 1817 when the conversion of the post was being carried on. The extensive modification of the site and subsequent policing of the area would have required the use of trash repositories of some type.

Excavation Area 4 was located by Powell before the grant proposal was written. Investigations were conducted using a series of one meter squares for confirmation of the existence of the fill and then a block excavation was conducted. Unlike the pit in Area 3 the deposit at Area 4 was a midden that had been laid on a hillside slope. The formal investigation produced 8,496 artifacts and Powell's search more than 900 items.

The assemblage contained a mixture of material. Ceramics and glass were the predominate classes of remains with kitchen and military hardware intermixed. In addition to the circa 900 buttons found before excavations 427 more were recovered by the archaeological team. The occurrence of so many buttons in one restricted locale is unusual of any site except button factories which 1Ba266 is not. Even the tailors shop excavated by Stanley South at Brunswicktown, North Carolina, which had a much longer period of occupation that 1Ba266 did not possess buttons in such an array or number.

The preliminary interpretation of the presence of the large button assemblage at 1Ba266 is associated with uniform changes applicable to the reorganization of the United States Army. The army was regrouped in May of 1815 with a reduction of force and renumbering of units. An example of the change was the formation of the Seventh Infantry which primarily took place in the Alabama country. The Seventh was made up of the old 39th and 24th Infantries. At the same time that units were combined the supply system that had been strapped during the war years began to furnish new uniforms to

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the troops in concert with new regulations.

During the Nineteenth Century it took an army time to implement changes and there was a gap between authorization and actual issuance. The field implementation of the uniform changes with the new button style was the probable cause of the button deposit at Fort Montgomery. None of the new style buttons were found in the midden. The updating of the uniforms would have probably taken place at one time with the arrival of new stock and the old items discarded en masse. It is not known when the new style fasteners would have arrived but a date of at least early 1816 is assumed.

The buttons were found in the upper strata topsoil at the midden. The superposition of the fasteners suggest a date pre-1816 for the items recovered in the bulk of the midden. Archival research is under way to ascertain the arrival date of the new fasteners.

The excavations at 1Ba265 and 1Ba266 were limited in scope and area but provided a large assemblage of material culture related to the soldiers and their families who were instrumental in the opening of the southwestern portion of present-day Alabama. Many of the military men resigned from the service or took discharges and became settlers in the newly opened territory. The names Shomo and Butler are but two examples of families that were planted in the area by former officers.

The material culture studies begun from this project will provide much data when other sites from the period can be investigated. The information is invaluable as a starting point and the two temporal spans represented by the sites helps in the preparation of chronologies for the region but it is not enough.

Only the extensive investigation of archival and archaeological resources will answer the many questions that have been raised by the work at the sites of the Tensaw military frontier. The 1981 excavations

and subsequent studies have provided the first look at the locales and remains present. From this look research designs and research propositions can be formulated. The testing of the questions will lead to an improved knowledge of the 19th century culture of not only the southwestern region but the state as a whole,

This paper is intended as an overview of the work done during 1981. A complete report of the excavations is in the final stages of preparation. Rather than continually cite the report which is in preparation, a bibliography is not included here.

For additional information on the general history of the military in the area refer to Frank L. Owsley Jr.'s, *The Struggle for the Borderlands*. University of Florida Presses, 1981; or Robert V. Remini's , *Andrew Jackson and the Course of American Empire; 1767-1821*, Alfred A. Knopf, 1977. €

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