



# THE TEXAS DUTY ROSTER

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2020 Winter \* Wayne Courreges Editor



## PRESIDENT'S DISPATCH

Wayne Courreges – State of Texas President

Greetings Texas Warhawks!

I hope this newsletter finds you high and dry. Winter is quickly coming to an end and has been thankfully mild in Texas this year. Good weather has allowed us to be very busy with so many of you sharing the 1812 story at ancestor gravesite ceremonies, schools and community events. Thank you so much for keeping our proud 1812 story alive with your cheerful service!

We are so very proud of so many of you volunteering to present our GSW 1812 ROTC medals to worthy ROTC Cadets at several of our Texas colleges this past year. For those of you that were willing and able to step forward to answer the call of service, THANK YOU! During this time of change in our country, it is even more important to recognize our young patriots for their patriotic sense of duty! Vice President General Bill Sekel has done an outstanding job of coordinating with you and college ROTC officers to bring everyone together for the good of the cadets. It could not be done without you. We are so very grateful! We are once again receiving calls from college ROTC officers asking for us to present ROTC medals in their upcoming ROTC ceremonies.

I want to recognize the efforts of our chapter presidents for their strong leadership in keeping our local chapters strong and vibrant. A big cheer for Warhawk Frank Rohrbough for accepting the challenge of reviving the David Crockett Chapter in south Texas. He just held a meeting recently with fellow Warhawks in the San Antonio area. Warhawk Stu Hoyt is reviving the Stephen F. Austin Chapter in central Texas. He held a meeting a few weeks ago that I attended to discuss when and where to hold future meetings and to update the chapter bylaws. Warhawk Mark Compton in west Texas is working to form a chapter in that vast area of our state. He is almost there, which is great news! Warhawk Gene Pilgrim Sr. is working hard to recruit new members in east Texas to grow the Ensign James Luna Chapter and Warhawk Walt Thomas is overseeing lots of activities in the Craig Rowley Chapter in north Texas under his steady leadership.

The health and welfare of our beloved GSW 1812 in the State of Texas is strong and moving forward because of these great leaders and by you supporting their efforts. Although our state did have a dip in members renewing their 2020 membership, we welcomed several new Warhawk recruits to our roster along with several Warhawks who returned to our ranks. We are

so very grateful for their return! I feel that with our chapters meeting regularly and actively promoting the War of 1812 story within their respective communities that our membership will grow in the future. Thank you all for your continued support and service! Your membership dues allow us to present a \$500.00 check annually to the second-place winner of the TXSSAR Oration Contest at the spring conference as our GSW 1812 in the State of Texas first-place winner. Your annual dues also support our local chapters in their effort to recognize our heroic 1812 ancestors with gravesite markers as they are identified. We cover the cost of two gravesite markers for each chapter annually.

I look forward to seeing you at our annual breakfast at the upcoming TXSSAR Convention at The Westin at the Woodlands, 2 Waterway Square Place, The Woodlands, Texas 77380 beginning at 7 AM on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. The phone number there is 281-419-4300. If you have already made your reservation to attend the TXSSAR Convention, you will have noted that you can pay for your breakfast when you registered.

I want to give a special thanks to Warhawk Paul Ridenour, of the Craig Austin Rowley Chapter, for agreeing to become our Texas Webmaster. It is so critical to have a functioning website that we can go to for current information. This is so important to our future success!

## **VICE PRESIDENT GENERAL MESSAGE**

William E. Sekel Jr. – State of Texas Vice President General

My fellow War Hawks, I trust you are all well. The other day I received the first request for a War of 1812 ROTC Award of Merit Medal presenter. So, I thought I would take the time to remind you that we have a system in place for the Universities and Colleges to follow to reap the best benefits for their selected cadet.

First, I would like to remind you what the prerequisites for the award is as set forth by the General Society:

*“Awardee personally selected by the Unit Commander. The recipient is the sophomore cadet displaying the highest level of leadership and patriotism with a demonstrated aptitude to successfully lead their peers and subordinates. Minimum academic standards are: a grade point average in the top 20% of their institutions class ranking and the top 10% of their ROTC academic studies.”*

Second, how the system works. The Unit must contact the Vice President General of Military Awards at [1812milawards@gmail.com](mailto:1812milawards@gmail.com). He keeps track of all the requests across the country and will send back to the Unit a downloadable certificate for them to give to their cadet and a ribbon for their uniform. He will also notify the Unit with the appropriate State Presidents email address so that they may contact him to invite a presenter at their awards ceremony. The State President is copied on that email. If any Texas ROTC Unit then contacts us we will provide a full length medal and endeavor to find a presenter.

If a ROTC Unit personally contacts you please advise them to use this system so we can properly prepare and keep historical records.

First requests for presentation of the War of 1812 ROTC Award of Merit Medal are:

April 11, 2020 – 10:00 AM to 1100 AM. Rice Memorial Chapel, Laboratory Rd, Houston TX 77005.

May 7, 2020 – 2:30 PM. UT@A University Center/Rosebud Theater, 300 W First St, Arlington TX 76019.

If you are available to present our ROTC Medals to these deserving Midshipman and Cadets please let me know and I will put you in touch with the points of contact for these schools. I will also get the medals to you.

*Did you know? The War of 1812 produced a new generation of great American generals, including Andrew Jackson, Jacob Brown and Winfield Scott, and helped propel no fewer than four men to the presidency: Jackson, John Quincy Adams, James Monroe and William Henry Harrison*

## **Welcome New Recruits**

Charles William Carlson	Mansfield, TX
Eilert Richard Weitzel II	San Antonio, TX
Frank Kegelmann	San Antonio, TX
James R. Clements	Wimberly, TX
Ronald Joe Turner	Euless, TX
Gary Moore Chapel	Austin, TX
Ted Eugene Wilson	Sherman, TX
Robert Charles Vickers	Rowlett, TX
Robert Paul Duckworth	Canyon Lake, TX
Mark Williams Parsons	El Paso, TX
David Michael Welling	Austin, TX
Perry Baker Hall	Tyler, TX

## **Last Roll Call**

Thankfully no losses reported

## **NOW HEAR THIS**

The annual membership renewal for our General Society of the War of 1812 in the State of Texas has been completed, but if you did not renew; you can still do so by sending your \$45.00 check payable to the “**Society War 1812 Texas**” and mail to:

**Henry Shoenfelt, Secretary/Treasurer**  
**1523 Weyford Drive**  
**Austin, TX 78757**

Or you can pay \$47.00 online with AffiniPay  
<https://secure.affinipay.com/pages/texasocietythewarof1812/payments>

**Perpetual Life Membership is only \$500.00**

## **Chapter Reports**

**Ensign James Luna Chapter:** The Ensign James Luna Chapter is located in east Texas. Everyone is invited to come join us. For meeting information please contact Chapter President Gene Pilgrim, Sr. by sending him an email: [7pilgrim7@gmail.Com](mailto:7pilgrim7@gmail.com)

**Stephen Fuller Austin Chapter:** This central Texas chapter is being revitalized by Chapter President Stu Hoyt. The Stephen F. Austin Chapter will meet quarterly at the Saltgrass Restaurant located at the Hill Country Galleria, 12613 Galleria Circle, Bee Cave, TX 78738 before the Patrick Henry Chapter meetings begin. Contact President Stu Hoyt for meeting information: [stu\\_hoyt@yahoo.com](mailto:stu_hoyt@yahoo.com)



**David Crockett Chapter:** This south Texas chapter is being revitalized by Warhawk Frank Rohrbough. This chapter became inactive when past President Jim Heath passed away. His passing was a shock to us all. There are many members in the San Antonio area. Please contact him for meeting information: [frankr@gvtc.com](mailto:frankr@gvtc.com)

**Craig Austin Rowley Chapter:** The Craig Austin Rowley Chapter has a website: <http://sites.rootsweb.com/~txsw1812/car1812/chapter-car.htm>



*The Craig Austin Rowley Chapter honoring 1812 hero Private Thomas Jefferson Priddy with an 1812 Gravemarker Ceremony*

The Craig Austin Rowley Chapter is a very strong and vibrant chapter that meets at Outback Steakhouse, 1509 N Central Expressway, Plano, TX 75075 on 15th and 75 in Plano, once a quarter. If you would like to attend one of our quarterly chapter meetings or learn more about our chapter, please contact President Walt Thomas at [w3thomas@gmail.com](mailto:w3thomas@gmail.com).



*15 Star Flag - 1795-1818*



**Zachary Taylor Chapter:** This is the Texas Gulf Coast area chapter that meets quarterly.



Chapter President John K. Thompson's "War of 1812 and Benjamin Franklin's Secret Contribution" presentation to the United States Daughters of 1812 Chapter of Conroe, Texas

The Zachary Taylor Chapter is a very active chapter under President John K. Thompson's leadership. Contact him at [johnkthompson@rocketmail.com](mailto:johnkthompson@rocketmail.com) for more information on meeting dates to join his merry band of Warhawks!

**1812 Articles**

I have asked for articles for our "Texas Duty Roster" and Warhawk John A. Wade from Jarrell, Texas shared his ancestor's interesting story for your reading pleasure:



Dr. James Overton

**Dr. James Overton**  
**And the Second War of Independence**

By Descendant: John Aaron Wade



Grave of Dr. Overton, Mount Olivet Cemetery, Nashville, Tenn.

Born August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1785 in Louisa County, Virginia, James Overton grew up in the home of his parents Waller Overton & Ms. Ragland. Prior to Kentucky gaining Statehood, Waller moved the family to what would eventually become Fayette County, Kentucky. Waller raised a total of ten children who reached adulthood (six boys and four girls). All of the male children studied and read the law, and when the United States declared war on Great Britain the following Overton boys took up arms for the cause of freedom: Dr. James Overton served as aide-de-camp to General James Winchester, John Waller Overton served in the Creek Campaign with General Jackson, Thomas Jefferson Overton served as a Lieutenant in the 17<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry and was killed at the Battle of Frenchtown, and Samuel Ragland Overton served under Colonel Richard Mentor Johnson in Johnson's Kentucky Mounted Rifles Regiment. Waller was a veteran of the American Revolution, and had witnessed his country's birth. One can glean that the patriotic spirit must have run high within the Overton family.

Through the help of his Uncle, Judge John Overton of Nashville, Dr. Overton was able to secure a commission within the 17<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry, along with his brother Thomas. Furthermore, his Uncle's connections opened up other opportunities. Judge Overton was able to secure for his nephew an appointment as aide-de-camp to newly appointed General James Winchester of Sumner County, Tennessee.

The pivotal moment of General James Winchester's career was undoubtedly the Battle of Frenchtown in Michigan Territory which occurred through January 18<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>, 1813 and culminated in the River Raisin Massacre. This does not need to be recounted here, but what is known is that the largely Kentucky force under General Winchester was shocked to see a white flag of surrender soar aloft the field before their strained eyes. Much to their dismay, the Kentuckians realized that it was Major James Overton who had the task of bearing the signal of surrender. Overton approached his fellow soldiers with British Colonel Henry Procter marching by his forlorn side. Major Overton, General Winchester, and others had become prisoners of war, and were marched to Canada to be held.

Upon release, James Overton resigned his commission from the U.S. Army and began teaching within the Medical Department of Transylvania University in Kentucky. He later relocated to Nashville, Tennessee, where he became a regular visitor at the Hermitage, home of General Andrew Jackson. Dr. Overton had a mastery of the French language, and on several occasions, he served as a translator for various visitors at the Jackson residence. He passed away on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1865, and is buried in Mount Olivet Cemetery.

**Sources:** Findagrave.com, *James Winchester Tennessee Pioneer*, by Walter Durham, Sumner County Library Board, Gallatin, Tennessee, 1979. *Portraits of Eminent Americans Now Living: With Biographical and Historical Memoirs of their Lives and Action*, by John Livingston, New York Cornish, Lamport & Park Co., 1853.

## 2019-2020 GSW 1812 in the State of Texas Officers

President – Wayne A. Courreges Jr.

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