

Coker Cemetery History #23 – March 2010

by Bob Battaglia

At the Annual Meeting in April of this year we will have a presentation and discussion about our ancestors that participated in the Civil War. We would like to develop as much history as possible on each of those that were in the Civil War. To give you an idea of the narrative that exists about our ancestors, the following is a letter written by **Amos Dickens Jones** during the Civil War. This letter has been in the **Kathy Couser** family and she has graciously given us a copy to share with all. I especially appreciate this letter because it was written by my great-great grandfather and I had not seen it before. Hopefully there are more such documents out there waiting for “discovery”.

Amos was a sergeant in this war. The letter was written to **James Harrison Coker** who was in San Antonio and had been discharged from the unit due to bad health. The heading of the letter shows Amos was in San Fernando, which is located down in the Brownsville area of South Texas. It is dated June 4th 1863. Amos states that they had a hard trip getting to this location and had no kind words for the King Ranch landscape. He says that **David W. Bennett** (husband of **Nancy Virginia Coker**, daughter of Joseph), was heading up to San Antonio and would be bringing this letter to Harrison. Amos also advises Harrison that: *“I drue your money on the Reogrande \$133 which I send by D.W. Bennett with your discharge”*.

In the letter he tells Harrison that he (Amos) hopes to be heading up to San Antonio the first part of July. He asks for Harrison’s help in the event he doesn’t get there. In the letter he says, *“in case I should fail I want you to get **granny Jones** to come to my house by the 10th of July without fail and in case that you should fail in getting her, be sure to get some good midwife to stay with Jane while she is sick.”* Amos goes on to say he hopes Harrison won’t have to bother. Amos says he has talked to the “Captain” and feels like he will get there in time.

The above indicates Amos is concerned about his wife, **Jane Coker Jones**. Looking at the dates in this letter and then looking at the birth dates of Amos’s children, it becomes apparent that the arrival of a son named **Lee Bee Jones** is in the future. Lee Bee Jones arrived July 14, 1863. There is no known correspondence to tell us who was there to help Jane. Note that **granny Jones** is probably Amos’s mother, **Catherine Jones**. She died 1873 and is buried at Coker Cemetery.

Amos continues this letter: *“This Regt has orders to march to **Aliton** on the Colorado and it will take 15 or 20 days to get there and if old Banks is not coming to Texas it is likely that the Regt will remain there some time *tho* it is hard to tell what will *hap(p)en* . I have no *nuse* of importance...the most *nuse* (*news*) that we have been getting is *Yankey nuse*. *Thair* is one thing that I hate and that is our Confederate money is worth so little. I have heard some of the men say they will not draw *eney* more of it for it is of no use to them. Give my love and respects to all of the connections and *eccept* (*accept*) the same your self.....A.D.Jones”*

Some notes on the above paragraph:

1. Lee B Jones was the 8th of ten children. He married Florence Davidson 27 Sept 1884 in Bandera County. She was the daughter of General George Davidson and Maria Knott, both born in England. **Lee B Jones was Royce Jones’s grandfather.**

2. There is nothing to indicate the name of the “Regt”. It is known that Amos was in Company C, 32nd Cavalry, but it was sometimes called the 15th Cavalry.

3. Amos refers to moving from the Texas valley up to “Aliton”. This must be Alleyton which is today about 2 miles from Columbus, Texas, just off Interstate 10.

4. The person named Banks that Amos referred to was General Banks who had occupied the New Orleans area for the North. He was badly defeated in the battle at Red River in 1864. Amos and his friends were part of that defeat.

More on this subject at the annual meeting in April. Meanwhile if anyone has more information on the Coker settlement’s participation in the Civil War bring it to the meeting or send it in. This will all go into the book we are trying to put together. My email address is: bobbatt@satx.rr.com.