

Regimental Histories of Tennessee Units During the War of 1812

Prepared by Tom Kanon, Tennessee State Library and Archives

COLONEL JOHN ALCORN

- **DESIGNATION:** 2nd Regiment of Volunteer Mounted Riflemen
- **DATES:** September 1813 - December 1813
- **MEN MOSTLY FROM:** Davidson, Rutherford, Sumner, and Wilson Counties (Winston's company from Madison County, Alabama)
- **CAPTAINS:** John Baskerville, Richard Boyd, Thomas Bradley, John Byrne, Robert Jetton, William Locke, Alexander McKeen, Frederick Stump, Daniel Ross, John Winston

BRIEF HISTORY:

Colonel John Coffee commanded this regiment until the end of October 1813, when Coffee was promoted to Brigadier General. John Alcorn took over as colonel and the unit was incorporated with Colonel Newton Cannon's Mounted Riflemen to form the Second Regiment of Volunteer Mounted Riflemen. The Second Regiment, along with Colonel Robert Dyer's First Regiment of Volunteer Mounted Gunmen, formed the brigade under John Coffee. Muster rolls reveal that the regiment went by various designations besides volunteer mounted riflemen: volunteer cavalry; mounted militia; or mounted gunmen.

Many of the men from this unit were with Andrew Jackson on the expedition to Natchez (December 1812 - April 1813) and, consequently, felt their one-year's enlistment expired in December 1813. Jackson insisted that the time not spent in the field did not apply to the terms of enlistment. Hence, a dispute broke out between the troops and Jackson late in 1813. Most of the troops did leave by the end of that year, despite Jackson's strenuous efforts to keep them.

The regiment participated in the battles at Tallushatchee and Talladega (3 November and 9 November 1813) and muster rolls show that practically all of the companies sustained casualties, the most being in Captain John Byrne's company. The regiment's line of march took them from Fayetteville (where the regiment was mustered in), through Huntsville, Fort Deposit, Fort Strother, to the battles, and back the reverse way.

- **DESIGNATION:** 1st Regiment of West Tennessee Volunteer Mounted Gunmen
- **DATES:** September 1814 - March 1815
- **MEN MOSTLY FROM:** Davidson, Dickson, Williamson, Bedford, Maury, Montgomery, Rutherford, Smith, and Stewart Counties
- **CAPTAINS:** Bethel Allen, Ephraim D. Dickson, Robert Edmonston, Robert Evans, Cuthbert Hudson, Thomas Jones, James McMahon, Glen Owen, Thomas White, Joseph Williams, James Wyatt

BRIEF HISTORY:

Part of Coffee's brigade at New Orleans, most of this regiment took part in the night battle of 23 December 1814. Most of the company muster rolls show casualties from this engagement. Portions of this regiment also participated in the capture of Pensacola from the Spanish in West Florida (7 November 1814). The initial rendezvous point for this unit was Fayetteville, Tennessee. From there they passed through Fort Hampton, to Baton Rouge, and finally to New Orleans.

COLONEL WILLIAM HALL

- **DESIGNATION:** 1st Regiment Tennessee Volunteers
- **DATES:** December 1812 - April 1813
- **MEN MOSTLY FROM:** Sumner, Davidson, Giles, Lincoln, Montgomery, Overton, Rutherford, Smith, and Wilson Counties
- **CAPTAINS:** William Alexander, Abraham Bledsoe, William Carroll, Harry L. Douglass, James Hambleton (Hamilton), John Kennedy, Brice Martin, John Moore, Travis Nash, Henry M. Newlin, John Wallace

BRIEF HISTORY:

Part of Andrew Jackson's expedition to Natchez, this regiment had a complement of about 620 men (the average company having between fifty and seventy soldiers). Each company was assigned a fife and drummer. There were two rifle companies (Captains Bledsoe and Kennedy) which had buglers instead of the fife and drummer. After the abortive mission at Natchez, this unit was dismissed at Columbia, Tennessee (April 1814) but many of men later re-enlisted under Colonel Edward Bradley and joined Jackson in the first campaign of the Creek War.

COLONEL WILLIAM HIGGINS