



MARION COUNTY'S



COMMEMORATION

of the

WAR BETWEEN

the

STATES

1861 – 1865

Researched and compiled by the
Marion County Historical Commission

CONFEDERATE MONUMENT HISTORY



On Nov. 23, 1900, the John J. Dickison chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy issued a circular letter detailing plans to erect a monument in honor of the Confederate dead “as a continual reminder of the valor, patriotism and sacrifices of our brave men. . . Lest we forget.”

The monument would stand on the public square of Ocala where a new courthouse was to be built.

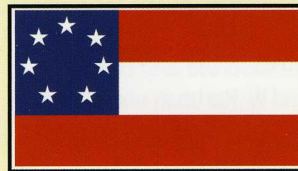
The chapter appointed a committee to solicit funds.

Members of the UDC, the general public and school children contributed money over several years. The school children gave pennies and were duly recognized for their contribution. It would take a total of \$1,500. A \$500 contribution from the county commission completed the fund.

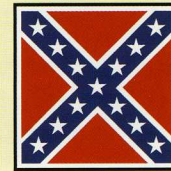
“Never has Ocala seen a better, more inspiring crowd to offer their grateful prayers for a deed that shall stand till time is no more,” the Star reported in late April 1908 — which was an interesting observation as the editor of the Star was a Union Army veteran. The monument would stand as a silent sentinel on the southwest corner of the square for decades, until a new courthouse was built in the 1960s on Northwest 2nd Street (Old Adams Street). It was removed when demolition began on the old courthouse in mid-1965.

A rededication was held in 1991 when the monument found what appeared to be a permanent place on the east side of the enlarged courthouse, which had been renamed the Marion County Judicial Center.

Later, when the county decided to enlarge the Judicial Center, the monument was moved once again. With the latest expansion complete in early 2010, efforts to relocate the monument to the Marion County Veterans Park have been successful. Money from concerned citizens has been raised to pay the cost.



1861



1861

The War Effort

Companies of fighting men were formed before Florida actually seceded from the union. Most of the young men from Marion County went to war, including all of the cadets and faculty of the East Florida Seminary which was established in Ocala in 1853, the forerunner of today's University of Florida. Marion County contributed, not only on most battlefield campaigns, but also to the cabinet of the Confederate States of America. Led by former South Carolinians, a flag — a single blue star on a white background — was placed on Ocala's courthouse square, with the words under it, “Let Us Alone.”

- ❖ Nov. 26, 1860, three weeks before South Carolina became the first state to leave the Union, Marion County sent an urgent appeal to Florida's governor to summon a convention to consider secession.
- ❖ Numerous meetings in private homes preceded the convention.
- ❖ In Tallahassee, by ballot, on Jan. 10, 1861, Florida became a sovereign and independent nation. With no doubt that war was imminent, some wealthy residents purchased military equipment to supply companies to be raised in Marion County.



Light artillery enlisted men's Kepi.



Col. John Marshall Martin
Reproduced by permission of Richard J. Ferry

- ❖ Marion County raised 12 companies for service to the Confederate States of America.

OCKLAWAHA RANGERS: John W. Pearson, Orange Springs, commander.

THE MARION RIFLE GUARDS: W. L. Fletcher, county treasurer, commander.

THE HAMMOCK GUARDS: Capt. J.D. Hopkins, commander.

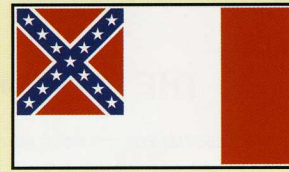
THE MARION DRAGOONS: a cavalry company, divided into two companies with Capt. William A. Owens and Capt. William E. Chambers as commanders.

THE MARION LIGHT ARTILLERY: Capt. John Marshall Martin, commander. This company saw action as part of the Army of Tennessee. Capt. Martin became a member of the Confederate Congress.

CO. G, 7th FLORIDA INFANTRY: Robert Bullock, who attained the rank of Brigadier General and S. Darwin McConnell.



1863



1865

MARION HORNETS: Wade Eichelberger, commander.

CO. H, 2nd FLORIDA CAVALRY: commanded by Capt. J.J. Dickison.

CO. K, 9th FLORIDA INFANTRY: Capt. Jacob C. Eichelberger, commander.

CONFEDERATE RANGERS: Capt. Samuel F. Rou, commander.

MARION COUNTY HOME GUARD: Capt. Hawes company.

MARION COUNTY HOME GUARD: Capt. E.D. Howes company.

- ❖ Some sons of Marion County joined Confederate units in other Florida counties; a few joined units of the Federals.



- ❖ The Confederate Army under General Robert E. Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865, at Appomattox Court House in Virginia.

- ❖ "Enlistments from Marion County had been large in proportion to the population, so also were the casualties." (Ocali Country, Kingdom of the Sun, Eloise Robinson Ott and Louis Hickman Chazel, Marion Publishers, Inc., 1966.)



THE HOME FRONT

Marion countians — both black and white — willingly suffered severe privations while working hard to support the Confederate cause during the War Between the States. Some gave their lives on the major battlefields while others kept the home fires burning, serving in the Home Guard. The women learned to manage plantations and operate businesses in the absence of men. The 1860 Marion County census listed 8,609 residents, and of these, 5,314 were slaves. A long-feared slave rebellion or mass exodus to join federal forces never took place. For the most part, slaves in Marion County remained with their families and worked feverishly for the Confederate war effort.

- ❖ Leading up to the secession crisis, newspapers in Marion County argued, forcefully, on both sides of the issue.
- ❖ With war on the horizon, Marion County planters switched from growing the more profitable Sea Island cotton to the more prolific short staple variety.



Home of General Robert Bullock, S.W. 10th Street, Ocala where General John A. Breckenridge, the Confederate general and Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State of the Confederacy spent the night during their escape to Cuba at the end of the war.

- ❖ In preparation, the Ladies Military Aid Societies set up additional weaving looms and produced an abundance of homespun fabric to supply the Confederacy with uniforms, tents, knapsacks and other supplies. They took special pride in making the flags for military companies raised in the county.
- ❖ In 1861, as the men went off to war, lives changed dramatically. For the next four years, the women and servants left at home cleared land, grew crops and tended live stock. Two-thirds of what they produced went to the war effort, making Marion County part of the bread basket for the Confederacy.



Courtesy of Silver River Museum, Silver Springs

- ❖ Children matured early, taking on many chores formerly completed by older family members. All schools were closed and school money statewide was used to buy arms and ammunition.
- ❖ With most of the doctors complying with the call to arms, the women rendered the only medical attention on the plantations and farms. When nurturing failed, they buried the dead.
- ❖ War brought great sacrifice and financial ruin to the people of Marion County and it would take years before growth and prosperity would return.

TO LEARN MORE

Biographical Rosters of Florida's Confederate and Union

Soldiers, 1861-1865, 6 Vols. David W. Hartman and associate compiler David Coles, Wilmington, N. C.: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1995.

Confederate Military History, Florida, Vol. XI, J. J. Dickison, Atlanta, GA, 1899.

Ocala Country, Kingdom of the Sun, Eloise Robinson Ott and Louis Hickman Chazal, Marion Publishers, Inc. 1966.

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion, 26 Vols., U.S. War Department, Washington, D. C., 1901.

War of the Rebellion, A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 128 Vols., Washington, D. C., 1880-1901.

Bicentennial, 1776-1976, and ***Marion County History***, Oct. 26, 1997, publications by the Ocala Star Banner.

Compiled Service Records, Soldier's and Widow's Pensions, Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, FL.

Marion County newspapers, 1847-1865, (Marion County Public Library) and (P. K. Young Library, University of Florida), on microfilm.

Marion County Black History Museum, Howard Academy, 306 N. W. 7th Ave., Ocala, FL (352)629-7082.

Marion County Clerk of the Court, www.marioncountyclerk.org, links to historical documents, photos and videos.

Marion County Historical Commission, P.O. Box 4383, Ocala FL 34478.

Marion County Museum of History, 306 S.E. 26th Terr., Ocala FL, (352) ~~629-2773~~ **236-5245**

Marion County Public Library, 2720 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala FL, (352) 671-8551.

Museum of Southern History, 4304 Herschel St., Jacksonville, FL, (904) 388-3574.



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Tom Branan