

Honors To The Dead

**Remembering the
1842 Parade and Ceremony in St. Augustine
That Closed the Second Seminole War and
Honored Those Who Perished In It.**



**Saturday, August 14th, 2021
The National Cemetery, St. Augustine, Florida**





WELCOME to the 14th annual remembrance of the 1842, “Honors to the Dead” parade and ceremony during which the remains of Brevet Major Francis L. Dade’s command and others who were killed or died of wounds during the war, and had been gathered from scattered gravesites in Florida, were reinterred within three vaults in the small military cemetery next to the Army’s St. Francis Barracks. (See facing page.)

This year we highlight the service of Brevet Major David Moniac, a member of the Creek Tribe of Indians, who graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1822. Lt. Moniac resigned his commission shortly thereafter, but returned to duty as brevet Major in 1836 at the start of the Second Seminole War, and served with the Creek Regiment of 700 volunteers, part of Brig. Gen. Richard K. Call’s force of 2,500. In November, 1836, they pursued Florida’s Seminoles into the Wahoo Swamp near the site where Maj. Dade’s ill-fated column was ambushed. Maj. Moniac was killed in the ensuing battle, leading his troops across a branch of the Withlacoochee River. (Depicted in Jackson Walker’s painting, “Tribal Dual,” on the cover.)

In January, 1837, Maj. Moniac’s remains were buried in the field with full military honors near those from Dade’s column, his classmates and associates serving as pall bearers. They were probably disinterred from this battlefield grave in 1842, along with those of Dade’s men, and included in the burial vaults here in St. Augustine.

Dr. Amy L. Giroux, Associate Director of the U. of Central Florida’s Center for Humanities and Digital Research, offers a special tribute to Maj. Moniac in these pages, and continues research on Moniac and others buried in the St. Augustine National Cemetery.

I am happy to welcome the return of marchers, cannoneers, mounted Soldiers and musicians as we take up a more traditional commemoration this year. Our sincere thanks to everyone in attendance, and to the organizations and individuals who have made this event possible.

Alison Simpson, Command Historian, Florida National Guard.

THE 1842 PARADE AND CEREMONY



The Second Seminole War began with the disastrous ambush of Maj. Francis L. Dade and his command on 28 December, 1835. The last hours of the battle are depicted here in Jackson Walker's painting, "Do Your Best." When Gen. Gaines'

column arrived on the scene six weeks later, the remains of Dade's men lay exactly where they had fallen. They were buried on the spot. (Contemporary sketch below.)



In contrast to its dramatic beginning, the war ended without a climactic battle or treaty. In his July, 1842 order, Col. W. J. Worth, 4th Commandant of Cadets and commander of troops in Florida, simply announced that, "hostilities within this territory have ceased." He ordered that a "ceremony of interment" be held in St. Augustine on August 15th for those who fell in Major Dade's command and selected others. The remains were to be "gathered and transferred to the town where suitable vaults are constructed for final reception."

The *St. Augustine News* vividly reported the event with the headline, "Honor to the Dead." The parade was "melancholy," the ceremony "poignant." Details from every regiment in Florida, honor guards, and four music contingents escorted seven wagons bearing the remains through the city. Clergy, civic officials, and the public followed the marchers to the cemetery, where Catholic and Episcopal church leaders concluded the ceremony with a prayer.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS, AUGUST 14TH, 2021

10:00 LIVING HISTORIANS MUSTER

(St. Francis Barracks)

10:45 MARCH TO THE NATIONAL CEMETERY PYRAMIDS

11:15 CEREMONY OF REMEMBRANCE

Remarks by

Alison Simpson, Command Historian, FLNG

Laying of the Commemorative Wreath

Mr. Alphaeus Richburg, Dir., Jacksonville Nat. Cemetery
Honorable Howard O. McGillin, COL, USA (ret), USMA '81

Cadet Prayer led by

Honorable Howard O. McGillin, COL, USA (ret), USMA '81

Musket Volley, Cannon Salute, Taps, Adjournment

11:45 to 14:30 LUNCH+PROGRAM

(St. Francis Barracks)

Award of re-enactor commemorative coins

Steve Rinck, President Seminole Wars Foundation

Commentary, "From Battlefield Burials to Second Seminole War Memorial: Who Lies under the Pyramids?"

Dr. Amy Giroux, University of Central Florida

THE 2021 COMMEMORATIVE COIN.



In 2014, LTC Greg Moore, then FLNG Command Historian, designed a commemorative coin as a token of appreciation for the living historians and others who participate in the event. Struck each year since,

the reverse of the coins stylizes a pyramid in the cemetery and the monument honoring Dade and his men. The obverse has highlighted differing individuals. The 2021 coin honors Brevet Maj. David Moniac, a Native American of Creek lineage and West Point graduate (1822) who was killed in battle at the Wahoo Swamp on 26 November, 1836. A comprehensive biography is: ["From West Point To Wahoo Swamp: The Career Of Cadet David Moniac, Class Of 1822:" American Indian Magazine, Spring, 2016, at: www.americanindianmagazine.org.](http://www.americanindianmagazine.org)

TODAY'S PARTICIPANTS

Commander of Troops:

Command Sergeant Major David Lanham, FLNG

Flag Bearer

Steve Rinck

Wreath Bearer

Tom Jessee

Marchers

**Lee Bledsoe Brian Butler James Clark
Hewitt Dupont Bill Gruber Mike Heitman
Hal Merritt Billy Pascucci
Daniel Sampson Bryan Thaggard**

Mounted Officers

George Scott

Bud Thayer

Musicians

Arthur Tenney, piper

John Poe, bugler

Cannon salutes fired by the Peace River Artillery

**Mark Akers, Doug Killian, Sue Killian,
Toney Hodges, Gerald Walker**

X

The hand built, **Seminole War-era caisson and limber and the "elegant" mules** are courtesy of **Tom and Denise Fitzgerald**, who make them available at military funerals in Florida. See www.heyamule.com

PORTRAYING YESTERDAY TODAY



We are indebted to the living historians above for volunteering their time, talent, and effort to make today's event a successful reflection of the drama that played out on this ground 179 years ago. More than reenactors, they are truly "living historians," dedicated to stimulating our appreciation of the history underpinning the formative Seminole Wars era. They take pains and bear considerable expense to ensure accurate dress and equipment, and have unique stories to tell of the various figures they represent. Such first person portrayal is especially important to the history of the Seminole Wars, as the era preceded photography and sound recording.

A TRIBUTE TO MAJ. DAVID MONIAC

by DR. AMY LARNER GIROUX

The story of David Moniac (1802–1836) is known to many. His West Point education, acceptance and resignation of his commission, his service as a Major of the Creek volunteers during the Second Seminole War, and his death in the Wahoo Swamp, has been told and retold. Therefore, this short tribute focuses on the perhaps not so well-known geographical aspect of his legacy.

In 1838, Capt. Thompson Morris of the 2nd Infantry, classmate and friend of Moniac's, received orders from Major Dearborn to construct a post for protection of settlements near the Florida – Georgia border. Morris and his company arrived in the area on 24 July 1838 and began construction. In a letter to the Adjutant General, Morris said: "Since my arrival I have erected a Block house, and nearly completed a store house – I call the post Fort Moniac after the late Major David Moniac, a Creek & an officer of the Regt of Creek Volunteers, who fell in the action with the Seminoles at the Wahoo Swamp in the [fall] of 1836. He was a friend and classmate of mine at West Point & as a small tribute of respect to his memory, I call the Fort by his name."

"The Fort is about three miles from a point called Elliott's mound, that being the extreme point he made while surveying the line between Georgia & Florida (then in possession of Spain), 28 miles from Fort Gilmer and the same distance from Traders Hill, the head of navigation of the St. Mary's – and about three miles from the Great O-ke-fe-no-kee Swamp in which the Indians are concealed."



Fort Moniac was garrisoned by Florida Volunteers after the 2nd Infantry left at the end of 1839, and in 1840 it was burned by the Seminoles. After being rebuilt, it was abandoned after the close of the war in 1842. A small town across the St. Mary's in Southern Georgia still bears the name of Moniac, as does the Maj. David Moniac U.S. Army Reserve Center in Montgomery, Alabama.

[Editor's note. Maj. Moniac's remains are likely interred with those of Dade's men under the pyramids in the St. Augustine National Cemetery. He is also commemorated by a regulation military headstone in the Florida National Cemetery at Bushnell.]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Founding Partners

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Seminole Wars Foundation, Inc.

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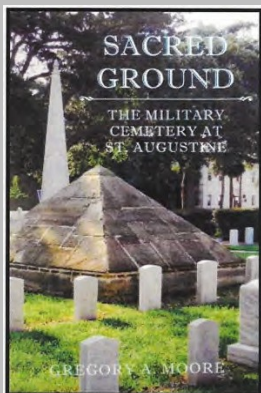
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Our special thanks to Phil and Vicky Topcik for their generous contribution to help off-set the cost of this year's coin. Phil is the current president of the St. Augustine Officers' Club and Vicky is a descendent of the Moniac family.

Commemorative wreath: Flowers by Shirley, (904) 824-8163
Program printed by: PIP Marketing Signs: print@sapip.com
Joe Naftzinger, editor

THAT "SACRED ABIDING PLACE" - 179 YEARS ON



The "garden of Saint Francis Barracks" the final resting place for the Seminole War's "honored dead," is now a National Cemetery (1881). While contemporary research indicates about 200 remains lie under the "Dade" pyramids, vice the 1,400 on the facing metal plaque, they are believed to be the oldest such memorials in any U.S. national cemetery." Truly a gem of historic tranquility, the scene is often overlooked by the daily St. Augustine tourist. A comprehensive work on its history and grave sites is LTC (ret.)

Gregory A. Moore's, *Sacred Ground: The Military Cemetery At St. Augustine*; Florida National Guard Association, 2013.

THE CADET PRAYER

O God, our Father, Thou searcher of human hearts, help us to draw near to Thee in sincerity and truth. May our religion be filled with gladness and may our worship of Thee be natural.

Strengthen and increase our admiration for honest dealing and clean thinking, and suffer not our hatred of hypocrisy and pretense ever to diminish.

Encourage us in our endeavor to live above the common level of life. Make us choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong, and never to be content with a half-truth when the whole can be won.

Endow us with courage that is born of loyalty to all that is noble and worthy, that scorns to compromise with vice and injustice, and knows no fear when truth and right are in jeopardy.

Guard us against flippancy and irreverence in the sacred things of life. Grant us new ties of friendship and new opportunities of service.

Kindle our hearts in fellowship with those of a cheerful countenance, soften our hearts with sympathy for those who sorrow and suffer.

Help us to maintain the honor of the Corps, untarnished and unsullied, and to show forth in our lives the ideals of West Point in doing our duty to Thee and to our Country.

All of which we ask in the name of the Great Friend and Master of all.
Amen.