

THE MESSENGER

Vol. 6, No. 11

November 1995

The Newsletter of the Fifth Missouri Infantry, Co. A, CSA, Inc.

A REPORT FROM THE TENNESSE CAMPAIGN

The weekend began like so many others this year, wrapped in a grey shroud of clouds and a torrent of rain. Those of our unit who arrived on Thursday received a rude awakening, an early morning of thunder, lightening and wind. By late afternoon on Friday the rain had evolved into a light nuisance. The camp sites were again a sea of mud and relative confusion. The Friday engagement, the Battle of Spring Hill, was washed out, but this did not stop a brisk free wheeling firefight from breaking out. A short and loud engagement. Dusk came quickly with a glimmer of sunlight promising a brighter day on Saturday.

During the night your lieutenant was awakened on more than one occasion by the shouts and grumbling of a private from the wilds of the Ozarks. Together with his brother, from the equally wild section of Central Florida, had consumed a quart of whiskey. For future reference if these two drink like that again and begin shouting in their sleep just whack them up aside the head.

Saturday morning was filled with battalion drill in preparation for the Battle of Franklin scheduled later that day. As we marched out for the battle there was a special spirit to the battalion. A period correct band marched out with us playing the Missouri Brigade's battle song 'Listen to the Mocking Bird'. Hearts swelled with pride as company after company marched out to take the field against the Yankees. The Confederate army filled a huge area below the brow of a hill as we waited for the most opportune time to launch the assault. Suddenly orders were shouted and our battalion led the assault. Ordered over the ridge top with the smoke of guns blowing in a stiff wind the brigade beheld the magnificent spectacle the battlefield presented. Bands were playing, general and staff officers were riding in front of and between the battle lines. Battle flags were waving in the smoke of battle as we marched towards the first line of Union works.

With a battalion front and rapid volley the union forces melted before us, retreating to the solid fortifications of works and trenches. Looking over our shoulders we saw battalion after battalion of grey and butternut men marching across the field to our left flank. With flags snapping in the wind the Confederate line attacked the solid works of Franklin in oblique waves. The band struck up 'Dixie' as we broke from the woods. To our front the earthen works dissolved in a blue grey cloud of smoke. As if of iron, our men marched steadily forward, ranks filling as individuals toppled calling to their comrades to continue the fight. The band abruptly stopped playing, its members scattered upon the ground, a direct hit from the Union artillery laid them low.

Ahead lay the flaming Yankee earthworks. Into the smoke we ran, proud to be Missourians. Bullets seemed everywhere. With a roaring cry we ran. Men fell every step until only a few of us tumbled into the ditch. Captain Lee fell near the ditch calling to the Fifth to carry on. The flame and thunder of northern guns kept most of us pinned to the earthen walls. A second wave again roared upon the works and again met little success as the field became littered with the bodies of the battalion. The air was red with flames. A third wave crashed into the works and together we climbed over the wall, but found ourselves prisoners under the deadly guns of the enemy. As we watched we saw the attack swell and pour through around the Gin. Our Divisional flag waved valiantly in the smoky air, but soon fell into the hands of the Yankees along with our battle flag. Missouri bravery spoke with a loud voice at the battlements of Franklin and the Cotton Gin.



Report from the Tennessee Campaign Continued.....

Following the Battle of Franklin we who had been taken captive were exchanged for an equal number of Union prisoners obviously taken during earlier engagements. On this day the men in blue did not lose many to the prison camps of the South.

Saturday evening both sides gathered around a local plantation house for the inevitable ball, common to national events. As usual there were numerous clusters of men gawking at the lovely ladies bedecked in their ball gowns. Not all of the Fifth went to the ball however. Many stayed in the camp or again trudged to the Sutler's area, which do to the huge number of sutler franchises (near 60) was more of a muddy galleria. A few of our more hearty souls marched off at dusk to man the works at Nashville and to await the army's arrival in the morning. Saturday evening quickly drew to a close as Sunday's action was scheduled to begin early, reveille around 4:45 a.m. and assembly upon the color line at 5:30 a.m.

Sunday dawned dark and cold. Still believing that we were to assemble upon the color at 5:30 a.m. there was little time to eat breakfast let alone cook it. We had run out of water except for what we had in our canteens, so there wasn't any coffee as well. Our early morning assembly was pushed back to 6:30 a.m. as the Col. and his staff were not ready to leave as regularly scheduled.

As the sun crept above the tree line the Army of Tennessee marched out to take our places in the works outside of Nashville. The works were about a mile and a half away. In marching to the site we had to pass through the Franklin site from the day before. Halting between the two Yankee forces, we were insulted on our right by two gentlemen who dropped their drawers and mooned us. An officer from Rambo's Battalion raced across the field and fired a pistol into the bright white targets. A few minutes later a small knot of Yankees taunted us still further by waving a Confederate battle flag at us, a trophy from an earlier engagement? With a roar of approval, Rambo lead a string of officers off to recover it. As it turned out these boys in blue were a galvanized reb battalion from Georgia.

Marching on to the works we were treated with a site from times past. As the army moved along a tree shrouded country lane, looking forwards and back along the line of march all one could see was a mass of grey uniforms and flags. Coming out of the woods we marched over a pair of rolling hills and beheld the works of Nashville and our pickets awaiting our arrival. Falling out behind the works, the Battalion, by company began the task of strengthening the low earthen wall. Nobody strengthens a works like the Fifth as small trees and locust branches were dragged into place. A pair of thoughtful privates brought in a stump so that Captain Lee could see over the improved fortifications.

The action began that morning with a Yankee battalion pushing on the far left. They hammered the left flank off and on for over two hours. Around ten a second attack began as more Yanks rushed the left front. Ordered over the wall our Battalion raced across the valley and swinging like a gate to the left we forced the Union forces to run for their lines. I don't think I've ever seen blue uniforms move in such a blur.

The action fell off around eleven, but our attention became focused upon the most unsettling image of an execution for desertion. The entire army was drawn up into a three sided square, through which the accused was marched, accompanied by the firing squad, the provosts and the band playing the hymn, "Fanning the Flames of War". The charges were read and the condemned man given his right to speak. The rank and file were restless as they felt that General Hood's orders for execution was excessive. The firing squad bungled the first volley leaving the condemned man grievously wounded. The second squad finished the job. Following the execution we returned to the works and waited for the battle to begin.

The battle began around 1 p.m. with an artillery duel. Our guns, grouped in batteries the length of our line to our rear, kept up a spirited exchange. As the guns roared a company who had earlier been deployed as skirmishers began to be forced back, their flanks being turned by dismounted Union cavalry. The Fifth was order to support them so over the works we went and engaged in one of the most spirited exchanges as skirmishers I have ever witnessed. After keeping up a steady rate of fire we were slowly forced back to works, losing only a few men to the cavalry carbines.

The battle roared for almost two hours and the 28 men of the Fifth fired approximately 1,500 rounds. The smoke was so thick that targets could not be seen and we fired at flashes and shadows. The noise was deafening. The right flank began to crumble as the front ranks were devastated by a huge Yank assault. Driven into an 'L' shape the 1st platoon refusing the right flank while the front stood to refuse a Yankee charge. Suddenly a wave of navy blue swept over us like a remorseless ocean. Missourians went down in the steel tipped assault, overwhelmed and out of ammunition our ranks crumbled. A few men survived to counter charge and fall, but the day belong to the North.

I remain your humble servant, Lt. Nick "Butcher" Davis



Have You Ever Had One of Those Months?

Sgt. Sam Hafley has really had one of those months. First his house was broken into and much of his gear was spirited away by thieves, likely Kansas Jayhawkers or Redlegs. He informed me that he is in the process of replacing his gear, but what really made him mad was the theft of his haversack. Those who attended the event witnessed Sam's new rifle. It appears he has developed quite a strong attachment for it and sleeps with it cuddled up next to him.

At our Tennessee event on the last day, Sam was bravely shooting at the blue hoard until our position began to collapse. As our ranks began to fill with more blue than grey uniforms command broke down and each man tried to decide whether to fight on or to fall back and regroup. Apparently in the middle of this confusion Sam was accidentally struck with a rifle barrel in the forehead.

Following the action Mark White and a Yankee physician administered first aid to Sam. Refusing an ambulance, Sam began to leave the field supported by Mark and myself. We didn't get far as Sam grew weak in the knees and we quickly placed him in a Tennessee Defense Force (their name for the National Guard) ambulance. Sam checked himself out of the hospital almost as quickly as he arrived with the resulting loss of Sam's hat in the ambulance. Our good sergeant must have a hard head because he beat many of us back to Missouri.

Nick "Butcher" Davis

Minutes of Quarterly Board Meeting Saturday, October 28, 1995 Spring Hill, Tennessee

A majority of the Board being present, the meeting was called to order by President Jerry Lee immediately following the Company A meeting under the Lieutenant's fly in the military camp. The minutes of the August 5th meeting were approved as printed in the August Messenger.

Treasurer Dennis Faught reported a balance of \$2,324.28 in the Corporate checking account, and presented an Income/expense report of all activity through October 24. The report was approved without discussion.

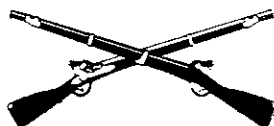
Faught noted that expenses for publishing the company newsletter were on a trend to exceed the funds available for that purpose. Article 9 of the corporate bylaws provide that the budget for newsletters, recruiting, postage & director reimbursements are to come from "dues collected." He projected that newsletter expenses alone would exceed dues collected by the end of the year. (\$664 dues collected, \$743.74 projected Messenger expenses, and this didn't take into account corporate reimbursements & recruiting expenses). The matter was discussed with newsletter editor Nick Davis, who indicated that paper costs had increased substantially in the past year, but was unsure whether that accounted for all of the higher costs. Faught pointed out that newsletter costs were running about \$15/mo higher now than in January of 1994.

The discussion turned to how the costs might be covered. Faught noted that there are only two alternatives when costs exceed income — cut costs or increase income. While acknowledging that organizational dues had been reduced some time back, he said it might be a tough sell to increase dues when the treasury was so large. Davis mentioned printing costs would be less in 1996, as he now had access to facilities at Kemper Military Academy, where reimbursement costs should be more reasonable. The board suggested several other ways costs might be reduced, including using less clip art, smaller point type, less double-spacing — and generally conserving space to keep the size of the publication to eight pages.

In the meantime, Lee moved/Faught 2nd that funds be appropriated from non-dues monies to cover the imbalance until the issue can be taken to the full membership. Passed with the necessary 2/3rds majority in accordance with Article IX, Section A, Paragraph 3 of the Bylaws.

There being no other business to conduct, the next board meeting was set to immediately follow the Corporate Election meeting in January (date/time to be announced in the Messenger), and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:
Corporate Secretary Dennis Faught



Event Report: Warsaw Heritage Days

This year's living history at Truman Dam will be remembered as one of the best events of its kind. This one had everything: Glorious weather, fun & memorable skirmishing scenarios, enjoyable campfire camaraderie, copious amounts of delicious food, a tremendous turnout, several promising recruit prospects, and even a \$150 donation to the treasury. In fact, everything that seemed to have been missing from so many events this year returned — all wrapped up in one *larruppin'* good weekend.

A total of 26 members dressed out for all or some of the weekend's activities, with more men filling the ranks for this event than we've seen at some full-scale battle reenactments this year.

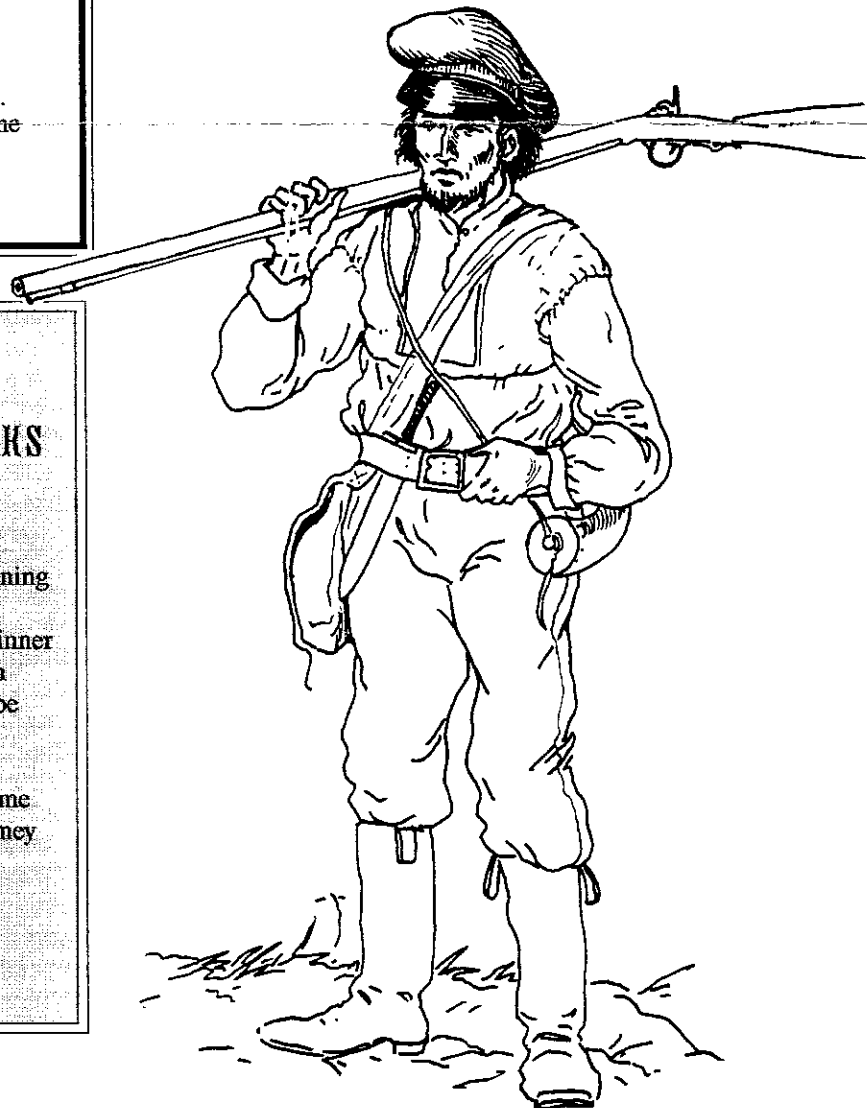
Since there were no stainless steel cups left lying about camp to "age" as in years past, the mens' mischievous streak had to be satisfied in other ways. Much to the consternation of Capt. Lee, who found himself tied in the outhouse again. He admonished those responsible with the promise to take his revolver with him on future visits to the facilities.

The sniping scenarios that have become traditional at this event seemed to be enjoyed by all. Saturday's ended with the federals captured & executed (but not before briefly occupying the confederate camp). Sunday's ended with the feds capturing Captain Lee & a squad of his men. Since these scenarios generally take place in the woods, away from spectator view, we decided to take advantage of the bountiful turnout to stage a brief skirmish demonstration for the crowd. After exchanging volleys, the federals under the command of Sgt Faught and the southrons commanded by Capt. Lee traded skirmish fire (& casualties) until a bayonet advance drove the rebs back into their camp. Seeing the folly of assaulting the entrenched survivors, Sgt Faught agreed to a truce to care for wounded & both sides retired to lick their wounds & fight another day. 'Can't wait 'til next year!

Annual Regimental Meeting Scheduled for January 6, 1996

The Annual Fifth Missouri Regimental meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 6, 1996 at Kemper Military School and College in Boonville Missouri. The Meeting will begin at 1 pm in Kemper's Trustee meeting room, the 'blue room'. Please plan to attend. A detailed map, with directions will be included in the December Messenger.

Missouri State Guard Infantry Confederate with Common Rifle



COLUMBIA'S NIFONG HOUSE SEEKS RE-ENACTORS

The Columbia Parks Department is again planning on opening the historic Nifong House for period Christmas tours on December 9, 1995. They plan on feeding the volunteers dinner around 4:30 pm. Candle light tours are scheduled to begin around 6 p.m. and last until 10:30 p.m. New groups will be scheduled to begin every 10 minutes.

There are limited numbers requested and it will be first come first served to portray the needed personalities. Karen Ramey of the Columbia Parks Dept. is in charge and she can be reached at (314) 874-7637.

Minutes of Company A Meeting Saturday, October 28, 1995

The meeting, originally scheduled for 9:30 am 10/29, was moved to Saturday evening following the Franklin scenario at Spring Hill, TN, due to orders for the Battalion to form and leave for the Nashville works at dawn Sunday.

Corporate President Jerry Lee called the meeting to order, in the absence of Company A Vice President Bob Koffman. A quorum was determined, and the minutes of the July 15th meeting were approved as printed in the August Messenger.

The first order of business was a report by Corporate Secretary Dennis Faught on the questionnaire sent to the membership in August. He reported that less than 1/3 of those mailed were returned. A detailed summary will appear in the Messenger, but highlights that prompted discussion included concerns about the division between "military" and "civilian" camps, a lack of military structure, and poor communication/planning. There seems to be a good deal of concern about the conflicting demands of being in a quasi-military organization but spending the bulk of time in the "civilian" camp. This was discussed at length, with no consensus as to a solution.

When speculating about declining attendance, the most oft-cited survey response was family demands. The number of events per year did not seem to be a factor, although the most popular number of max-effort events preferred was three — at both company and battalion level. There was near-unanimous support for more camp activity. Card games & other period diversions were the most popular, followed by more drill.

Davis moved/Plowman 2nd that Faught present the results of the survey — particularly those concerns relating to company/battalion-level coordination — to the 4th Battalion Staff. Passed unanimously.

An overview of potential 1996 events followed. Highlights included the national event at The Wilderness May 17-19. Fee is \$7/ person. Deadline is March 1. 1st Division (of which 4th Battalion is part) has agreed to attend as Federals. Faught asked whether the Cole Camp committee would be putting out a pre-registration packet, and what rules we might want to impose — such as camping arrangements, vehicles in camp, arranging a tactical, etc. Lee moved/Yoakum 2nd that Faught begin to put together an event packet. Faught urged members to think seriously about supporting the planned Western Tactical in Kentucky next October.

Four members were presented for Veteran voting status. Sam Hafley recommended his son Joe. Yoakum 2nd. Passed without dissent. Dennis Faught recommended Jerry Wassmann. Yoakum 2nd. Passed without dissent. Jerry Lee recommended Richard Brown. Davis 2nd. Passed without dissent. Faught moved/Plowman 2nd that the 120-day provision be waived in the case of Ken McKee, who's already a veteran of several years with other units. Passed without dissent and McKee was granted Veteran voting status.

In other business, Hafley announced that the company leathers stolen from his home would be replaced by Spring. Alan Bowling offered to clean and refurbish the four company muskets over the winter. Faught moved/Joe Hafley 2nd that he be allowed to do this, with any expenses to be presented to the Board for reimbursement. Passed without dissent. Cindy Lee announced that all members of the 5th MO are welcome to relic hunt on the Lone Jack battlefield on November 4th. The land is to be turned into a shopping center, and the owner has granted this one-time privilege exclusively to the 5th MO. Members are to call the Lees for details. Faught noted that there exists a problem of abuse in the borrowing of Company gear. He pointed out that the intended purpose of loaning gear is to get new reenactors started at their first event or two, but it has become practice for some members to maintain possession of certain gear for the bulk of the season, making it unavailable to new recruits. There was some discussion of the problem but no action taken. There being no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by DENNIS FAUGHT



CONFEDERATE ATTEMPT TO REGAIN THE WELDON RAILROAD.—During the operations around Petersburg, Warren took possession of the Weldon Railroad, where he strongly entrenched his line. Several attempts were made by the Confederates to recapture this position, but without success. The upper picture represents the Federal forces falling back through Charlestown, August 2, 1864.—Sketched by John Becker.



SO WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME: THE RESULTS



The first, and most painfully obvious revelation of our unit-wide survey of members' attitudes was that — for the most part — those who don't attend events don't return surveys, either. Since the motivation behind the questionnaire was to understand why so many Veteran reenactors have made themselves scarce this year, this comes as something of a disappointment. The following information was compiled from the nineteen surveys that were returned.

We began our survey by asking what you liked, disliked, and found missing from your reenacting experience. The most oft-mentioned attraction was the camaraderie of the camp, followed closely by the battles. Other responses included the benefit of "experiencing" what had only been read about, camping out, learning & sharing knowledge, escaping from modern intrusions, and first-person role-playing.

The most oft-mentioned detraction was a lack of communication. This came up in complaints about members being split between military & civilian camps, and about the interaction between the Battalion and the Company. Other responses — in order of frequency — included cars & other anachronisms in camp, travel distances, boredom in camp, unsafe battles, unit politics, women & children in military camps, galvanizing, lax authenticity, bad weather, uncooperative Yanks, noisy camps at night, and profanity.

When asked what was missing from the experience, nearly half mentioned — in one way or another — Military Structure. These included things like poor planning/organization at the Battalion level, failure of chain-of-command, missing officers & NCO's in the military camp, lack of military activities, and a shift of focus in the 5th from the military to the civilian camp. Other things members found lacking were amenities, appreciation by event sponsors, food arrangements, company equipment availability, community involvement by the group, and any sense of "belonging".

When asked to speculate on the causes for declining attendance at max-effort events (the core purpose of the survey), over a third of the respondents cited family/career demands. Smaller numbers suggested (again, in order of frequency) that it was the boredom/lack of structure in camp, that there may be too many similar events placed too closely together, poor participation by Yanks, and that we were being taken advantage of by event sponsors. Other factors mentioned included the Battalion leadership, inaccurate/unsafe scenarios, bad weather, and that the occasional reenactors are not made to feel welcome when they do show up.

In a further effort to find ways to attract more attendance, another question sought to determine why some members come only for the battles, and don't participate in any of the other activities. Five respondents answered this question. One blamed a lack of organization & fun. The others cited other demands on their time.

There has been much speculation that the number of events is the reason for declining attendance. The survey results suggest this may not be the major factor, although it's tough to tell since the majority of the respondents attend fairly regularly. By a two-to-one margin, respondents said No - there are not too many events scheduled each year. And less than half of those who answered Yes said scheduling fewer events would make them more likely to attend. All of the respondents said they would like to reenact at least every other month. Most (7) said monthly was about right. A large number (6) preferred more often than that. The most popular number of Company Max-Effort events was three per year. Most also preferred three Battalion Max-Efforts, although the trend was to suggest fewer Battalion than Company max-efforts.

So what could we do to make the reenacting experience more enjoyable? More camp life scenarios? Unanimously Yes. More military activity? Nearly unanimous (all but 2). Card games and other period diversions were the most popular camp scenario suggestions, followed in order by Pay Call, Mail Call, Punishments & executions, provost/prisoner activities, temperance rallies, first-person discussion, civilian camp gossip, and fights & practical jokes. More Drill was the most popular military request, followed in order by Roll Call & other formations, inspections, picket duty, passes, military courtesy/chain of command, and skirmishing. Respondents were evenly split on whether these activities should take place only when spectators are present.

Most of the surveys returned included some pointed criticisms and/or constructive suggestions. Following is a representative sample:

"Everyone seems to be getting more lax on historical authenticity. Details seem unimportant to many."

"The camp no longer has officers and a feeling of being a CW camp. We have lost the fellowship of camp life. I really believe we need to get back our camp activities so that we feel that we belong to something."

"Those camping with families seem to have abandoned the military unit. We still have two separate 'units' — Military & Family campers."

"Reenacting may have become too 'routine' and too 'common' to excite and entice some to come out and play."

"It's just a hobby, not a way of life. People shouldn't get power-hungry & bossy. Just lighten up & go to enjoy the day."

"I do not appreciate those who think they want to reenact military, yet don't expect to act military, as in marching, drilling, pickets, helping as a KP, give orders, take orders."

"When a scenario is published it should be kept, nobody ever knows just what they will be doing. I know that this problem lies in the fact that we never know for sure just how many total numbers will show up at an event."

"These sponsors are using us. They kiss your ass to get you there, and then worry about how much money they can put in their pocket. We need to start thinking about having our own events."

"The numbers have declined on both sides, especially the Yanks. What do they want? I show up expecting very little. They show up expecting special treatment."

"Maybe more people are choosing to use the civilian camp because it always has a choice location with shade & close facilities. If this is the case they are defeating the purpose and effect of portraying a CW Confederate infantry soldier. It was not a comfortable life."

"Perhaps we should not support events that don't provide food/powder, etc." "Battalion commanders need to keep vehicles and women and children out of military camp!"

"While realistic & authentic, [I don't enjoy] sitting around a disorganized camp waiting for self-appointed pompous asses in command to make up their minds about what battalion is going to do so we can plan our activities."

"The battle scenarios are neither safe nor rewarding. We are brought into extremely close contact early in the battle - a situation that would have resulted in massive casualties. We don't take casualties because no one wants to drive several hundred miles & take a hit before the battle gets going."

"There seems to be no room or encouragement for local activity & get togethers, nor any desire for higher uses for the flowing treasury we worked so extremely hard to build over our early years. Where are our contributions to historic preservation, APCWS, etc?"

"I see no reason to participate in a unit which makes no effort to make me feel wanted or welcome."

These comments — as one respondent suggested — might help us open a dialog and find ways to restore attendance. Hopefully no one will be personally offended by any of the observations made by your fellow members. They are printed here to point out some serious perceived problems. Identifying those problems is the first step toward solving them. What conclusions — if any — do you think can be drawn from them? Feel free to respond with any ideas you may have.



👉 DUES NOTICE 👈

Annual Dues are due by JANUARY 1, 1996. Please complete and return to:

5th Missouri Infantry (CSA) Inc.
PO Box 1265
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1265



Check one:

Individual: \$18 (\$10 Regimental + \$8 MCWRA) _____
Family: \$28 (\$16 Regimental + \$12 MCWRA) _____
Associate: \$8 (non-voting) _____

Make Check Payable to: "5th Missouri Infantry"

If you paid your MCWRA dues through another unit, please indicate the unit:

From the Editor

What an event The Tennessee Campaign turned out to be. Estimations of reenactors as large as 10,000 were involved. Personally I never saw so many Yanks nor can I remember going through so many rounds and still running out of ammunition. Dan Holmes, a recruit, saw the elephant in Tennessee and I think he enjoyed what he saw. My thanks to the Heiderken brothers for supplying their officers with a throat soothing fluid, it was a very throat strenuous event.

Prvts. White and Dietzel will long remember the roar of the 69 cal. "pumpkin slingers" of the Yanks. Of course the Yanks will long remember Larry Dietzel as he knocked down a platoon as he scrambled over the wall. I haven't heard a word about the funeral for brother Jesse, but if you'll send in word I'll print it in the next issue.

In the next issue you'll see again the ongoing diary of a true member of the Fifth, Reviews of new works and anything Sgt. Faught or the rest of you sends my way.

I remain your Obedient servant,

Lt. Nick "Butcher" Davis



DATES TO REMEMBER

Annual Regimental Meeting at Kemper Military School and College, 1/6/96 at 1 p.m.

THE MESSENGER

511 N. Main Street, Columbia, GA 31906

