

# MESSENGER

News Letter of the 5th Missouri inf. VOL 8 NO. 9

## EVENT REPORT: MOORE'S MILL

Wives and Mothers of Company A, 5th Missouri Infantry Volunteers, CSA:

The War Department regrets to inform you that your husbands and sons have all been reported killed in action near Moore's Mill, Callaway County, Missouri, on or about 14 September.

We were having one heck of a good time at this event -- right up until the time when we were all killed because we forgot how to rally a skirmish line against cavalry. I'll bet you can guess what the First Sergeant will be drilling you on at the next few events... But, I'm getting ahead of myself.

The Fifth Missouri had a very nice turnout for this MCWRA sanctioned event, fielding, at one point, eighteen muskets. While that may sound small by some measures, the overall turnout at this event was so small that as such our one company constituted nearly half of the infantry present. The host Sixth Missouri, and a consolidation of the 2nd, 9th & 10th Mo. and 9th Tx made up the balance of the infantry. There was no shortage of cavalry -- mounted and dismounted, and a number of artillery batteries. The battalion, such that it was, was commanded by Maj. Ted Prater. Capt. Lee was elevated to battalion staff, and Lt. Bowling commanded the 5th.

For the historic recreation of the 1862 Battle of Moore's Mill, our infantry formed one wing of a rag-tag battleline, with the other being formed by cavalry, fighting afoot. We ambushed a federal column, and after a see-saw battle, retired from the field. The battle did not go exactly to scenerio (we never were able to capture the federal artillery piece as scripted) but made for a very sharp and lively fight. Cavalry should fight dismounted more often. They do it well enough, and it's historically accurate. Those "Dancing with Sabres" mounted clashes are not. The Sunday morning non-spectator tactical was the stuff from which "magic moments" are made. This one ranks right up there with some of the best fights I've ever been in. All of the Confederate infantry galvanized for this scenerio, and were joined by about a dozen members of Holmes' Brigade, a horse-drawn mountain howitzer, and some mounted cavalry. This force, under the command of Gen. Ed Pettit, took on a roughly equal-sized force of mounted and dismounted Confederate cavalry, commanded by Col. Scott Hughes. Pettit, for those of you who don't remember, was the federal commander who chewed us up at Jefferson Barracks. He's also commander of the 1st Federal Division, and an able tactician. He promised to "bring the enemy to us", and did just that. He placed our infantry in a tree line along one side of a large, hilly prairie. Holmes' Brigade lured their dismounted troopers toward the trap, which was prematurely sprung by southern cavalry dashing in from behind our right flank and striking the federal horsemen in the rear. Our infantry advanced from the trees in skirmish order, and pushed the secesh back across the field. At one point their mounted cavalry blundered up the road upon our right flank, and were stopped rudely by a volley from the Sixth Mo. After capturing a company of dismounted troopers, the line pressed on, brilliantly executing a double wheel through chest-high goldenrod for a nearly-complete envelopment of their survivors. After they had surrendered, Todd Conner's company of cavalry struck us from

and as the smoke and fog grew thick, and the dull red sun struggled to shine through the haze, it became increasingly difficult to see beyond a few yards. Distinguishing friend from foe was tricky, at best. The engagement took on the apparent scope of a much larger event (not unlike the Wilderness tactical), and left us trading stories of the action for hours afterward. Sunday afternoon for the spectator battle we were in gray. Maj. Prater ordered Capt. Lee to place our company as skirmishers, and in chest-high weeds we awaited the "opening of the ball." The subsequent battle was of little note. There was very little federal infantry, and we spent most of the time skirmishing at a distance with mounted cavalry, which eventually skirted our left flank and shot up our artillery. Then, apparently emboldened by the successful wheeling tactics of the morning, Maj. Prater ordered a left wheel of our entire brigade -- in skirmish order. As we occupied the extreme right of the formation, we were literally exhausted by the effort, traveling most of the distance through thick, chest-high weeds, in humid heat. Capt. Lee left the field with a bee sting to the nose (he's ok) and Lt. Bowling took command. About this time, the federal cavalry, which had been dualing our troopers on our right, came galloping over the hill behind us. It was here that -- despite impassioned orders to "rally by fours!", most of our number merely stood there -- seemingly frozen in time with mouths agape. As the federals rode by, shooting us down mercilessly, their officer (Gen. Pettit himself) shouted "Your men need to learn how to guard against cavalry!" And we will, I assure you. But until then, "...the War Department regrets to inform you..."

Report submitted by 1st Sergt. Dennis Faught

## NEW MEMBERS/RENEWALS

I want to extend a welcome to the 5th MO to our new members.

Nick and Carla Sackreiter (# 167)

532 W. Hickham Dr.

Columbia, MO 65203

573-874-3984

2nd Platoon Sponsor: Alan Bowling

Some of you have already met Nick as he attended Leasburg and Clinton.

Two associate members have also renewed their memberships.

David R. Gooden (#A98)

5036 Norris Dr.

Swartz Creek, MI 48473

810-733-6611

E-Mail michrebel@aol.com

John Sherrer (#A20)

479 NW 391

Clinton, MO 64735

816-885-6355

## EVENT REPORT: Leasburg

This was a classic FarbFest. All of the elements that conspire to make reenacting a laughingstock to some were present: Blue jeans, cowboy boots & six-shooters .. a campsite in a developed city park (with softball field) ... and a battlefield adjacent to nearby backyards. Abe Lincoln was there (although the "great emancipator" had never set foot in the state) and proceeded to inform the crowd that the Gettysburg Address he was about to regale them with was originally delivered in March of 1863. (?) This took place next to the carnival of colorful goo-gaws, clowns and games. There were no sutlers present.

I had been greeted with an apparent lack of planning and organization upon arrival. There were no signs, and registration was found only by stumbling upon it in the dark. For some unexplained reason Jerry and Cindy Lee had been directed to camp off-site, about a half-mile away in the shadow of a billboard. I know this only from hearsay, as the Lees had departed the site in disgust prior to my arrival. Meanwhile, the families of the lone artillery battery present camped with their men.

I had expected a small turnout, but had not anticipated what I found: Clark's Battery and five troopers of the 7th Mo. Cavalry made up the southern forces. Federals present Friday evening were two farby dismounted cav yahoos (complete with six shooters and lots of yellow trim) and three galvanized federal infantry (Alan Bowling, myself, and new recruit Nick Sackreiter.) One of the cav boys told us this would be a small, laid back, fun event where you could kick back and drink beer. Oh boy. We picked a spot, built a fire, and settled down for the night.

Our slumber was interrupted after midnight by the ear-splitting wail of a civil defense siren on a pole next to the park, and a flurry of activity as volunteer firemen sped to and fro for the next hour.

Our forces swelled considerably Saturday morning to include six mounted troopers from the 10th Mo. Cavalry (US). Mark Moeller and Joe Hafley also arrived, and we picked up one more yank from the 13th Mo. Infantry just before marching to the battle, and another dismounted trooper just before the action started.

We made the most of what we had for the battle. The field was spacious and well-suited for a larger action (although it bordered a residential area). As you would expect, very little went according to scenario, but the demonstration seemed to be well-received by the crowd of about 250 onlookers.

On the plus side, we were treated and fed well. We talked to a number of spectators who were inquisitive and appreciative of our presence. The weather was perfect. This was not, however, enough to encourage us to stay, so we packed our gear and headed home that afternoon.

-Submitted by 1st Sergt. Dennis Faught

## CAMP GRUBER CANCELLED...AGAIN!

The campaign event at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma, which had been scheduled as an MCWRA and 4th Battalion Max Effort March 19-22, 1998, has been cancelled.

The Oklahoma National Guard has scheduled exercises on the site for those dates, and the military officer who had been in charge of organizing the event has been transferred to Saudi Arabia.

## THANKSGIVING AT WARSAW !

Mrs. Gilger informs me she is planning an early Thanksgiving dinner Saturday at Warsaw. This will consist of turkey and all the trimmings. The main meal Sunday will be vegetable soup. We will be fed our dinner Saturday night by the event sponsors. Those who wish to bring something might contact Mrs Gilger, if not be prepared to contribute when I pass the hat.

## DETAILS OF 5TH MO UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct. 18-19 **Warsaw, MO.** Osage Valley Heritage Days. Annual Living History at Truman Dam. Company & Board Business Meetings Saturday evening. Bring Confederate and Federal impressions.  
**18 Military/6 Civilians Committed**
- Oct. 25-26 **Spring Hill, TN.** The Fight for Nashville. (National Event)  
Same site as 1996 Franklin/Nashville event, with larger area and more extensive fortifications (including 5 redoubts constructed to scale). Scenerios include Spring Hill tactical on Saturday, and Federal assaults on the Nashville works Sunday. (There will also be an optional tactical for those who can arrive by mid-afternoon Friday, Oct. 24.) 4th Battalion will galvanize on Sunday for the Federal Assaults. Those attending will fall in as privates in one of the consolidated 4th Battalion companies (unless we see an extraordinary spurt of last-minute 5th Mo commitments)  
**\$8 per person due by October 18 (extended deadline) \$10 on site after that.**  
**(4 Military have pre-registered)**
- May 8-10, 1998 **135th Anniv. Vicksburg Campaign MS.** Battles of Raymond, Jackson, and Champion Hill. Site is 10-15 miles from Jackson, MS and on part of original Raymond battlefield. Is being geared for a campaign event with the armies fighting on a different site for each battle and moving a total of 6-7 miles over the 3-day weekend ending at the Champion Hill site. (For those who were at Shiloh, the distance to be covered each day is roughly equal to our march to and from the Saturday morning tactical). 4th Battalion will portray the Missouri Brigade for the Champion Hill battle on Sunday. Our namesake unit distinguished themselves at this battle. We should be there in force to honor them. (Note this is Mother's Day weekend). There will be an early registration incentive for registrations received by **Nov. 30, 1997.** (Amount of Fee unavailable at this time)

### A SHORT MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR (TEMPORARY)

Some of you have probably wondered what happened to your Messenger last month. Larry has had major problems with his computer the result being he has lost his publishing program besides having some hardware problems. I have volunteered to do the Messenger until Larry can get back up and running and it may be a while. Please excuse this months Messenger I know it isnt up to the standards you are used to. I have just bought a new publishing program and am learning it as I do this,also I want to get something out ASAP. I promise if I do the next newsletter it will be much better as I will have had time to learn the ins and outs of this program and the use of my scanner.

Thanks for your understanding,  
Alan Bowling

## "GETTYSBURG" DIRECTOR TO FILM PREQUEL

Filmmaker Ron Maxwell has announced plans to bring to the big screen Jeff Shaara's "Gods and Generals", which is a prequel to "The Killer Angels", written by Shaara's father Michael. Maxwell directed "Gettysburg", the movie adaptation of Killer Angels in 1992.

The project will be the first for Maxwell's new movie company, Antietam Film Works, based in Washington County, Maryland. It is on a permanent 200-acre movie set there where filming for "Gods and Generals" will begin "as early as the spring of 1998" according to Maxwell. Like "Gettysburg", the new film will rely heavily on reenactors as extras for the massive battle scenes (Antietam and Fredricksburg, primarily). APCWS will handle reenactor coordination for the film, which could use as many as 10,000 reenactors -- twice as many as "Gettysburg".

The producers expect to have most, if not all, of the principal actors from "Gettysburg" back. Maxwell mentioned actor Mel Gibson as a possible Stonewall Jackson. Shaara's prequel to The Killer Angels covers the early years of the war, through Jackson's mortal wounding at Chancellorsville.

A Hagerstown bank has come up with \$500,000 for Maxwell's movie company to proceed with production tasks. The funds, sort of "seed money," will be backed by pledges from the business and political community -- which already have a little more than half of it gathered. This means that work will be continued, to perfect the movie script to be used in the filming. Once that is ready, the producers will prepare an operating budget, to raise from Hollywood and/or other sources the real financing for the film, expected to be in the \$30 to \$40 million range.

Additionally, Jeff Shaara expects a May 1998 publication of his just-completed sequel to "The Killer Angels", which follows Joshua Chamberlain to the end of the war. It, too, will be made into a movie by Antietam Film Works, completing the trilogy.

## U.S. INFANTRY AND RIFLE TACTICS INSTRUCTION FOR SKIRMISHERS

129. If the line, marching or at a halt, be merely disturbed by scattered horsemen, it will not be necessary to fall back on the reserve, but the captain will cause bayonets to be fixed.<sup>1</sup> If the horsemen should, however, advance to charge the skirmishers, the captain will command, *rally by fours*. The line will halt if marching, and the four men of each group will execute this rally in the following manner: the front rank man of the even numbered file will take the position of *guard against cavalry*;<sup>2</sup> the rear rank man of the odd numbered file will also take the position of *guard against cavalry*, turning his back to him, his right foot thirteen inches from the right foot of the former, and parallel to it; the front rank man of the odd file, and the rear rank man of the even file, will also place themselves back to back, taking a like position, and between the two men already established, facing to the right and left; the right feet of the four men will be brought together, forming a square, and serving for mutual support. The four men in

each group will come to a ready, fire as occasion may offer,<sup>3</sup> and load without moving their feet.

Notes: 1. Of course we do not fix bayonets during a reenactment,

2. The position of *guard against cavalry* is with the feet about 20 inches apart and perpendicular, the knees slightly bent, the right hand holding the throat of the stock and resting against the hip, the left hand grasping the stock near the lower barrel band, and the bayonet (muzzle) elevated to eye level. (SOS308). With the exception of the foot position, this is the same as "Charge Bayonet" (SOS 193/194)

3. Observing, of course, safety restrictions of never firing directly at any horseman or within 25 feet of them. Never fire at a horse's legs.

## ***Attention -- COMPANY*** **A Drill Column By The 1st Sergeant** **Forming the Company in a Single Rank**

We have had occasion to do something that approximates this at a couple of recent events. While we've managed to accomplish it fairly well by being talked through it on the spot, it might help us all to take a look at the proper way to perform the maneuver, and thus be prepared when the need arises.

It is assumed the company is already formed in two ranks, with no other companies on its flanks. The command is 1. *In one rank, form company.* 2. MARCH.

At the Preparatory, (in one rank, form company..), the 1st Sergeant faces to his right. At the command of Execution (March), he steps off in that direction. (SOC361)

Also on the command "March", the corporal on the right end of the front rank will turn to his right and follow the sergeant. The man behind him steps into the spot previously occupied by the corporal, turns to his right, and follows in the footsteps of the sergeant and corporal. The rest of the company follows in like manner, with the front rank man of each file successively following the rear rank man of the preceding file. (SOC 362) It is important to keep closed up behind the man you follow. Allowing a space to intervene will require excessive "dressing" once fronted.

The captain halts the company and commands "FRONT" when the last man (the one behind the left-hand corporal) steps forward. The company is now in one rank, alternating front & rear rank men, with the file closers occupying their normal positions two paces behind the line. (SOC363)

You will note you are now in the same general order you would be in had you deployed a skirmish line by the right flank. However, do not confuse the two. In this movement you do not have a five-pace interval between men (you maintain elbow contact after fronting), and the method of getting there differs in that you do not deploy in groups of four, but rather extend the line in single file.

The confusing element here is the reforming of the company into two ranks. You do not simply reverse the previous procedure. Instead, you reform to the right, on the First Sergeant. The command is 1. *In two ranks, form company.* 2. *Company right--FACE.* 3. MARCH.

All the men in the company face to the right (without doubling) at the second command -- except the First Sergeant and the corporal next to him, who remain facing to the front. (SOC365)

At the command "MARCH", all those who have faced to the right begin reforming their files. The man next to the corporal steps into his space behind him and faces to the front. The next man in line steps forward next to the corporal and faces to the front. The next man following takes his place in the second rank, and so on, until all files are reformed. (SOC366)

The tactics manual prescribes that this maneuver habitually be conducted to the right, so in order to extend the company in a single rank to the left, the company must first be faced to the rear.

the second sergeant then acts as the first sergeant did before, turning to his right, with the files following and reforming on him. (SOC367/368)

Once the line is extended in this manner and fronted, the captain would order the company to "About--FACE." The manual says to face the company to it's "proper" front. (SOC369) Remember, it's an inverted maneuver. The end result is a single rank, facing to the front, in exactly the same front/rear/front/rear order as when done by the right flank. To reform two ranks, the company would again be about-faced, and reform (to their right) on the second sergeant. This, like all inverted movements, is difficult to explain without illustrations, but becomes clear as mud in actual practice.

See you on the drill field.