

MESSENGER

Volume 8 Issue 10

November 10, 1997

EVENT REPORT: Tales of the Civil War

A contingent of Company A answered a call for volunteers to portray occupying federal soldiers on the Henry County courthouse square October 4. Our only mistake was in accepting the invitation to camp Friday night.

While expecting the possibility of a noisy night, nothing prepared us for the unearthly din we experienced. The rowdy behaviour began after dusk, and continued unabated until dawn. We had been told of a midnight curfew, but the hour passed with no letup in the loud mufflers, screaming drunks, and incessant thumping music. The curfew (if one exists) was of little consequence as the all-night partiers were apparently over 18. The Clinton constables showed no inclination to enforce any noise or peace disturbance ordinances, either. Those who caught more than an hour's sleep during the night would count themselves fortunate, indeed.

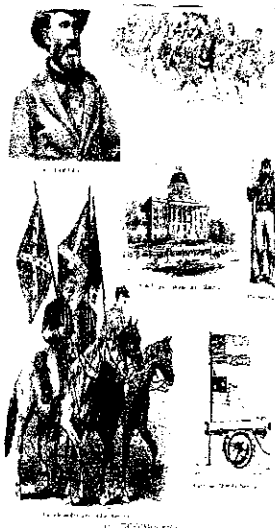
A PBS camera crew arrived in the evening, in hopes of obtaining some first-person footage around the campfire. We tried to oblige them, but the loud music, artificial light and car horns must have rendered the effort useless.

Otherwise, the event was rather enjoyable. About a dozen soldiers turned out in blue with three 5th Mo. civilians. The hosting 6th Mo. had a similar number. First person portrayals are foreign to most of our number, so there was unfortunately little of this around camp, but the arrest and execution scenerio seemed to be well-received by the townsfolk. Those of us in blue got a taste of the sort of treatment occupying soldiers must have received in southern towns. While there's no defending the shooting of innocent women and children, one can see how young soldiers might lose their tempers and lash out at an unruly, uncooperative citizenry. It was somewhat frustrating attempting to maintain order with people throwing things at you.

As at any event it seems, the crowd was hungry for powder burning. There were two

small skirmishes on the courthouse lawn. Farby, yes, but well handled. We also got the opportunity to get in some limited skirmish drill ("rally by fours!!") and even some of McClellan's bayonet drill - a real traffic-stopper.

"Tales of the Civil War" was organized by associate member John Sherrer, and members of the Fifth were well-treated with prepared meals and even a generous powder ration. The event holds promise for a possible an-



nual return -- provided, of course, that more suitable camping arrangements are made.

-Report submitted by 1st Sergeant Dennis Faught

EVENT REPORT: Osage Valley Heritage Days.

For this annual event at Truman Dam near Warsaw, we were greeted by picture-perfect weather and record crowds. It seemed unfortunate that 5th Missouri members appeared to be staying away in droves. We have probably been spoiled by the large company turnouts at the past few Heritage Days events. After fielding 20-man companies each of the past two years, this year's showing of only a dozen was something of a disappointment to all, but probably a more realistic expectation for a living history such as this.

While we were unable to provide the crowds of onlookers with a small skirmish this year, we still busied ourselves with firing demos and flushing the occasional yank sharpshooter from the woods. We also staged some bayonet drill, which seemed to be well-received, and congratulations are in order for Corporal Dietzel, the new loading and firing champion of the Company.

As has become custom, delicious meals were prepared by the Gilgers, with John and Jeannie going all out with a Thanksgiving dinner on Saturday which included turkey, ham, pumpkin pie, and of course Mrs. Lee's fried apples. We always eat far too well at this event, but no one is complaining.

Given our recent attendance struggles, recruiting was a high priority this weekend, and at first blush appears to have borne fruit. Two anxious new re-

cruits were outfitted and drilled on Sunday, and several others were provided information materials over the weekend. While there is new hope for the future, attendance by veterans remains a concern, as evidenced by the cancellation of another Company A meeting due to lack of a quorum. This issue was discussed at the scheduled board meeting (See minutes).

Submitted by 1st-Sergt. Dennis Faught

PRAIRIE GROVE LIVING HISTORY

The 4th Missouri, NW15th Arkansas, TMR and the 9th Texas plan to conduct a living history weekend at Prairie Grove, AR December 6 & 8, 1997. We traditionally do this every off year between the battle reenactments, to celebrate the anniversary of the battle and to support the parks open house weekend and Xmas celebration. We would like to extend an invitation to the rest of you, the 4th (Extra) Battalion, to join us this year.

The park superintendent, Ed Smith, has requested the scenario be a winter encampment of Confederate troops. We will not be building shebangs, instead we will set tents in the regular Battalion/company configuration, so bring your canvas and the more the merrier. We will conduct company drills and firing demonstrations through out the day for

he public, both on Saturday and Sunday, and if we have the numbers,

Battalion size demonstrations.

Other events such as pay call, mail

call, etc. are welcomed and encouraged. The park plans to advertize our

presence in the local and Fayetteville newspapers, and have requested we

be available to the public from 9 a.m. on Saturday the 6th through 3

p.m. on the Sunday the 7th. In the past we have experienced good crowds

both days. If the weather is as good this year as it usually is, we should be able to expect good attendance again this year. Four out of

five times at Prairie Grove we experience 50s during the day and 30s at night.

The park will furnish firewood, bathroom facilities and water.

Anything

else you might need like food, hay or straw, you will need to provide on

your own. There is a little garden center a few miles away that normally has straw for sale. The military camp will be on the common

between the period school house and the church. The civilian camp will

be where it was at at the last battle reenactment in '96, just a short distance from the Latta Barn.

NIFONG EVENT

The Christmas Past Candlelight Tour of the Maplewood Home will be held on

December 6. We need reenactors to participate. If you send out a newsletter

or some other correspondence to the 5th between now and then please include

a request for volunteers.

Thanks!

Karen Ramey

January Meeting

The 5th Mo membership meeting will be held on Sunday, Jan 18, 1998 in Sedalia, MO. at 2:30pm. The meeting will be held in the chambers of Judge Koffman. Members are asked to please bring a chair as there will not be enough to go around. For those of you who are new to the company, we will be voting on company officers and setting the event schedule the the 5th will be supporting next year. I hope to see you all there! I will print directions in the December issue.

New MCWRA and 5th MO Dues Structure

MCWRA executive committee, at it's November 1 meeting, voted to set MCWRA dues at \$10, eliminating the "individual" and "family" levels, and recinding previous policy allowing two votes per family membership. Each \$10 membership now gets one vote. (e.g. in the case of Capt. & Mrs. Lee, MCWRA dues are reduced from \$12 to \$10. Mrs. Lee is listed as a "dependent" for insurance coverage purposes, and the couple gets only one vote on MCWRA matters. Should Mrs. Lee desire a separate vote, she would need to purchase her own \$10 membership). Conversely, single membership dues were increased from \$8 to the flat \$10 rate.

The committee expects these changes to compensate for a dwindling treasury and to cover insurance and newsletter costs for 1998. This means a new 5th Mo. dues structure, \$20 for Single, \$26 for Family

PRAIRIE GROVE

The Prairie Grove Park has always been a favorite of many units and it seems we always have a good time there. If your unit, or individuals from your unit, would like to join us or if you have questions, let me know via e-mail or any other way that works for you. I plan to arrive at the park Friday afternoon the 5th, to set up the company streets and take care of any last minute details. Join us if you can.

Ted Prater, Adjutant
4th (Extra) Battalion

EVENT REPORT: High Point

Several members gathered for a small living history at the annual High Point Homecoming on Saturday, August 31.

Present were Capt. & Mrs. Lee, Corpl. & Mrs. Fink, Corpl. White and his daughter, Pvt. & Mrs. Gilger, Lieut. Bowling, Sergt. Faught, and Pvts. Bears, Ford, and Wassmann.

The crowd appeared to be kept small by the threat of rain, which, although light and short-lived, drove most of the entertainment indoors. The day was spent with a brief drill, conversing with a few spectators, and a scheduled drill and firing demonstration at 2 p.m, which unfortunately went largely unnoticed.

SUPPORT NEEDED FOR FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

As mentioned in the July issue of The Messenger, the site of the Carter cotton gin in Franklin, Tennessee has been purchased from its private owner for \$160,000. The house on the property will be rented as office space until the \$130,000 mortgage is retired. Donations are being sought to speed this process. Send your donations to: The Heritage Foundation, PO Box 2345, Franklin, TN 37065, and mark them "Carter Gin Site".

Wreck of the Confederate steamer SS Kentucky Sunk on the Red River below Shreveport, La., in June 1865. The Kentucky sank one night in June 1865, about two months after Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox and a few days after Lt. Gen. Edmund Kirby Smith surrendered the Confederate Department of the Trans-Mississippi to Gen. E.R.S. Canby.

The bulk of the 1,000 or so soldiers who were aboard the Kentucky on her fateful final voyage were Missouri Confederates sailing to Union-occupied New Orleans under parole, and thus under Federal protection and safe-passage. Estimates vary widely, but it is possible that anywhere from 200 to 900 of the soldiers and their civilian companions who were unable to escape the vessel as it sank still lie entombed within its wreckage.

The vessel has been located and positively identified, but is in danger of being destroyed by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers revetment work on the river. For more information on this, contact

GaryD.Joiner. <garyj@prysm.net> or Neil Block of the 5th Mo.