

Messenger

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 1

CO A 5TH MO INFTRY

JANUARY, 1999

EVENT REPORT: PRAIRIE GROVE

The bi-annual reenactment of the 1862 Battle of Prairie Grove, Ark., had elements of the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly. The Good: Weather again cooperated nicely for the 'fair weather' reenactor. Temps topped 70 on Saturday and didn't drop below 50 at night. Rain was limited to the light, intermittent variety Sunday morning.

-In an unscheduled Sunday morning tactical, at least two full battalions of Federals attacked the Confederate camps, providing the most memorable battle action of the weekend; details follow.

The Bad: In spite of a January discussion and company vote placing this event on the 5th's calendar for full unit support, only four members attended (myself, Alan Bowling, Rolf Crockett and Randy Bruegger -- T.J. served as a Federal for the weekend). Full unit support, by the way, could be defined as 18 or more muskets.

-During the Sunday dawn assault, a member of the perennially unsafe Elliott's Scouts drew a knife on a Federal, almost prompting cancellation of the event. This bunch of pubescent yahoos has proven time and time again that they are uncontrollable. They should be banned from all events.

-Authenticity has gone out the window on camping at Prairie Grove. Overflowing parking lots encroach to within feet the camps, and the 3rd Missouri set a new standard in thoughtless behavior by stringing Christmas lights down their company street and firing up a gas generator Saturday night.

The Ugly: The flags of the new Missouri Battalion, 2nd Trans Mississippi Battalion, and Trans Mississippi Brigade. Uncased for the first time at a formal ceremony Saturday afternoon, these gaudy flags were a profound disappointment. The Missouri Battalion flag is loosely based on a Missouri battle flag, but square in shape. It is emblazoned with the lettering: "1st Missouri Battalion." The white latin cross is supplanted by a device that can only be described as a hybrid between a Shriner's or Masonic emblem and a Starfleet Command insignia. It is comprised of a five-point star over an upturned crescent, surrounded by several smaller stars of varying sizes enclosed in a circle. Whether or not the emblem has any historical basis, it has no place on a battle flag to be carried in the field by a reenacting battalion portraying units of the Missouri Brigade. Same goes for the 2nd Trans Mississippi flag, which is identical except for unit designation and color (gold emblem on a red field) and the Brigade flag (a 1st National with the emblem in the blue field in lieu of stars). Why on Earth couldn't the battalion have adopted a simple, faithful re-creation of a Missouri battle flag as its colors? Nothing says "Missouri" like that flag.

The Event

Once it became clear the 5th was not going to support this event as planned I had made arrangements for those who did to fall in with the 6th Missouri. In the interim, Capt. Alan Conner was chosen to serve on Col. Prater's staff of the new Missouri Battalion, so command passed to Lt. Mark White of the 6th. His 1st Sergeant did not make the event, so I reluctantly agreed to fill that post for the weekend. Together we mustered 10 muskets -- by far the smallest company in the battalion. (Our ranks did nearly double, however, just moments before Saturday's battle when about eight members of the 11th Missouri arrived and fell in per previous agreement with Lt. White.)

I must admit a bit of concern about the 6th's willingness to allow last-minute fall-ins without any company drill. One raw recruit's musket had to be condemned due to a half-cock problem just as we formed for the battle. Another had been given absolutely no instruction in the School of the Soldier. A veteran had a musket that was so filthy as to render it useless for most of the weekend. Lt. White has promise as a leader, but lacks experience and was thrown into some demanding situations -- particularly on Sunday. I probably overstepped my bounds with corrections.

The scheduled scenerios fell short of previous years, which have included some of the best battle action I've experienced. Little of note happened beyond the usual.

On the other hand, the unscheduled 'tactical' Sunday morning was the highlight of the weekend. The 5th-6th was ordered by Gen. Beck to reconnoiter the woods in advance of an anticipated dawn assault by the Federals. We were halted on our approach by the sight of Federal pickets in the tree line, who turned out to be Confederate dismounted cavalry in blue uniforms (Elliott's Scouts). At this point, a lack of skirmish drill became painfully apparent in our ranks.

Once finally deployed in the woods, we observed the Federal column passing to our right, and dispatched a runner to report to headquarters. As the enemy formed battle lines and advanced toward our camps, we found ourselves on their

right flank and rear. We pressed them, and our harrassing fire prompted them to dispatch a company to deal with us -- a company which included that turncoat Bruegger youth, T.J.

I think in the ensuing melee we all must have been killed or captured, but had the action been real, we would have unhorsed the entire Federal command with a couple of the volleys we fired; we were that close to their rear.

Having brayed long and loud about the folly of splitting an already-understrength 4th Battalion into two battalions to form a brigade, I must eat just a little crow and admit that turnout belied my concerns. On Saturday, when all units fought together under Beck's colors for the final time, the battalion was the largest I've seen it since Shiloh. Admittedly, it included several units that don't normally serve in Beck's battalion, but numbers were impressive. Not enough, however, to allow either battalion to stand on its own at a 1st Division event like Chickamauga next year.

One final note: At a formal ceremony following the Saturday afternoon battle, I performed my last official act as 1st Sergeant of Co. A, 5th Missouri Infantry, by affixing a streamer for our unit on the new Missouri Battalion colors. The streamer, a ribbon of white silk with the designation "5th Inf." stitched in blue wool, was sewn by Ann Bowling.

Dennis Faught

To My Friends in Co. A:

Although encouraged by many to stay on as 1st Sergeant of Co. A, I have reluctantly decided not to seek another year at that rank, or another 2-year term as your Secretary-Treasurer.

I have decided, instead, to concentrate on pursuing a campaign-style impression. As in the case of Red River next spring, this will necessarily pull me away from exclusive participation with the 5th Missouri.

I will not be abandoning the 5th. Indeed, I intend to retain my membership and will likely attend more events than not, serving in the ranks as a private and anxious to aid in the sharing of knowledge and research about the Missouri Brigade. But I cannot in good conscience stand for re-election to positions of such responsibility when the 5th might take a back seat to other goals.

To paraphrase the red-headed arsonist W.T. Sherman: I shall not seek, nor will I accept your nomination to either post. This will give others who may have been reluctant to challenge the 'old guard' a chance to step forward and shine in these positions.

I want to thank everyone for the support and confidence you have placed in me over the past eight years. We have made great strides. This is not an end. It is a beginning.

Your humble & obedient servant,
Dennis Faught

ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR JANUARY 9

The annual 5th Missouri Infantry (CSA) Inc. Election and Scheduling Meeting will begin at 2 p.m. Jan. 9 at the Lodge Hall in California, Mo. This seemed to be fairly centrally located, geographically, to the membership. To get there, from Highway 50 in California, turn at the sign that says "MONITEAU COUNTY COURT HOUSE", and go three blocks. The hall is on your right. We will meet downstairs in the dining room.

This will be an important meeting for the 5th Missouri, and I hope everyone will make an extraordinary effort to attend.

We will need to elect a new Secretary and Treasurer. These are for two-year terms, and have in the past been combined into one office. I am not running for re-election, and will have all of the corporate files available to transfer to the new officer. I would highly recommend that the new Secretary have access to a computer. Otherwise, all it takes is a little organizational talent.

The other corporate officer to be elected is Vice President, Co. A, for a one-year term. Sam Hafley currently holds this post.

Field staff must be chosen, also for one-year terms. They include Captain, Lieutenant, 1st and 2nd Sergeants, and 2 to 4 Corporals, depending upon field strength. Again, I am not seeking re-election as 1st Sergeant.

All members who have *paid their dues prior to the meeting* will vote for corporate officers. Field staff will be selected only by those military members who have paid dues, achieved Veteran status, and PARTICIPATED IN A MINIMUM OF THREE EVENTS in the past year. (Check the attendance roster in this issue for your status).

Finally, the unit must set its 1999 schedule. All members have a voice in the choices. Here are the events that will be presented for possible support:

MAR 20-21, 1999: BONNER SPRINGS, KS Battalion Spring Muster. School of the Soldier, School of the Company, School of the Battalion at Wyandotte County Park.

APRIL 17-18, 1999: BUTLER, MO Reenactment of various actions around Butler, 1862-64.

APRIL 10-18: Pleasant Hill, LA Red River Campaign. Weeklong campaign march reenacting five battles during the 1864 Red River Campaign.

MAY 1-2, 1999: MANSFIELD, LA Reenactment of the 1864 Battle of Mansfield during the Red River Campaign.
MAY 22-23, 1998: ROLLA, MO Reenactment of 1861 incidents at Old Court House.
JUNE ?? (DATE TBA) SHELBY or BETHEL, MO [replaces canceled Columbia event]
JULY 3-5, 1999: HONEY SPRINGS, OK Reenactment of 1863 Battle of Honey Springs, Indian Territories. Near Checotah, OK.
AUG 7-8, 1999: ATHENS, MO Reenactment of 1861 Battle of Athens.
SEPT 10-12, 1999: ST. CHARLES, MO Annual Living History adjacent to historic Main Street.
SEPT 17-19, 1999: CHICKAMAUGA, GA National reenactment of the 1863 Battle of Chickamauga.
OCT 16-17, 1999: WARSAW, MO Osage Valley Heritage Days.

Other events may be suggested during discussion. Please consider which ones you can attend, and vote accordingly.

See you at the meeting.

Dennis Faught

Secretary/Treasurer

TRANS-MISSISSIPPI BRIGADE ACTIVATED AT PRAIRIE GROVE

For those not present at Prairie Grove on Dec. 5-6, here is a primer on the new brigade organization in the wake of the dissolution of the 4th (Extra) Battalion.

Plans for the battalion split were first broached to most company commanders at Pilot Knob. At Wyandotte, organization began for a "Missouri" battalion. The other off-shoot battalion began organization at Cabin Creek. Brigade and battalion formation was completed at Prairie Grove.

Col. Willie Huckabee took command of a new battalion comprised of Arkansas and Oklahoma companies: the NW15th Ark. and Trans-Mississippi Rifles formerly of the 4th Battalion -- plus some new companies: 4th Ark., 10th Ark., 22nd Ark., 1st Choctaw, and the Pelican Rifles. The battalion was named the "2nd Trans-Mississippi Battalion."

Maj. Ted Prater was elected at Wyandotte as Colonel of the new "1st Missouri Battalion," comprised of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 9th Missouri; plus the 3rd Mo. Cav (Dismounted) and the Nebraska-Kansas companies of the 9th Texas. Prater will serve for two years, then stand for re-election. He chose Alan Connor of the 6th Mo. as his Major. Gary Sutton remains as Bttn. Sgt. Major. No Lt. Col. was introduced to the rank-and-file.

Gen. John Beck commands the brigade formed by these two battalions -- christened the "Trans-Mississippi Brigade." There has been some talk that it may also eventually include the Louisiana Battalion as well. The brigade remains part of the 1st Confederate Division.

Since neither new battalion can yet muster the requisite 135 muskets to stand alone at a national 1st Confederate Division event, the old 'Extra' Battalion would be brought out of 'reserve' and re-activated for that event only -- presumably under Beck's command. It is assumed the two will operate independently at all non-1st Division events.

Dennis Faught

FIELD-CLEANING YOUR RIFLE-MUSKET

By Dennis Faught

Hopefully, everyone read Lt. Bowling's December article on cleaning your musket, and applied his instructions to your own weapon at your earliest convenience. [I would add one caveat: If you must use WD-40 in your at-home cleaning regimen, do not use it down the bore of your musket. This particular substance, when not rubbed off, leaves a protective coating on metal which, if allowed to accumulate inside the bore, creates a safety hazard. This hard coating makes it impossible to remove old rust or pitting, which in turn can trap burning embers. Burning embers are not our friends when loading a rifle-musket.]

In the field, a soldier's first order of business should at all times be the care of his weapon. It is on this assemblage of wood and metal that his life depends. This is something that has not changed since the beginning of warfare. Nevertheless, over the past five years as 1st Sergeant, I have seen some muskets maintained in an embarrassing state of filth.

Of course, in the field you do not have (or shouldn't have) access to things like WD-40, Bore Butter, Hoppes Gun Oil & etc. Oh my! What is a fellow to do without them?

Well, how about what the real soldiers did? Manuals of the period outlined the recommended procedure for cleaning the piece in field:

It is not essential for the musket to be dismounted every time that it is cleaned ... it can be perfectly cleaned as follows: Put a piece of rag or soft leather on the top of the cone, let the hammer down upon it; pour a gill of water into the muzzle carefully, so that it does not run down the outside; put a pug of wood into the muzzle, and shake the gun up and down, changing the water repeatedly until it runs clear. Then withdraw the leather, and stand the musket on the muzzle a few moments, then wipe out the barrel and also wipe the exterior of the lock and the outside of the barrel around the cone and

1998	1ST PLATOON	RANK	Muster	KS	VB	Col	GB	Ford	Cal	PK	Clint	War	ARK	ATTENDANCE
28	BEARS, Dave	PVT				1					1			2
133	BIGGS, Everett	PVT	1			1		1	1			1		5
186	BRUEGGER, Randy	PVT		1	1	1	1	1		1			1	7
184	BRUEGGER, T.J.	PVT	1	1	1	1	1	1						8
24	DALEEN, Keith	PVT	1											1
52	DURRILL, John	PVT								1				1
46	FAUGHT, Dennis	1SGT	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1	1	10
189	FIELDS, Tom	Recruit				1						1		2
153	FINK, Steve	CPL	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		8
153	FINK, Steven	Recruit	1	1	1	1			1	1		1		7
54	GILGER, John	PVT	1	1		1	1	1	1					6
137	HAMILTON, Mike	PVT	1			1								2
50	KERKSEK, D.E.	PVT												0
3	KOFFMAN, Bob	PVT	1				1							2
173	KUPSCH, Michael	Recruit												0
48	LEE, Jerry	CAP	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		8
59	LOESCH, Justin	PVT			1									1
155	McKEE, Ken	PVT			1					1				2
128	FLOWMAN, Dave	PVT	1			1								2
2	RIGGS, Charlie	PVT												0
30	ROUSH, Loren	PVT	1	1		1								5
57	THOMAS, Chuck	PVT									1	1		2
40	TUCKER, Jeff	PVT				1		1		1	1			4
1	WAYNE, Bill	PVT	1											1
121	WESTBROOK, Thomas	Recruit												0
144	WHITE, Mike	CPL	1			1	1		1	1				5
2ND PLATOON			Muster	KS	VB	Col	GB	Ford	Cal	PK	Clint	War	ARK	
55	BLOCK, Neil	PVT												0
164	BOWLING, Alan	1LT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
188	CASH, Rusty	Recruit												0
171	CROCKETT, Rolf	Recruit				1	1			1			1	4
138	DIETZEL, Larry	CPL	1		1	1				1				4
85	DRESSEL, Gene	PVT	1			1								2
180	GERKE, Justin	PVT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		10
58	HAFLEY, Greg	Recruit								1				
58	HAFLEY, Joe	PVT				1	1	1	1	1		1		6
58	HAFLEY, Sam	2SGT				1		1	1	1		1		5
88	HEIDGERKEN, Jerry	PVT					1							1
12	KEOWN, Jim	PVT												0
170	McKEE, Randy	Recruit				1			1	1				3
91	MEOLI, Mike	PVT				1	1							2
82	MEOLI, Nick	PVT					1							1
91	MEOLI, Mark	Recruit				1	1							2
104	MOELLER, Mark	PVT												0
140	PICKERING, David	PVT												0
147	WASSMANN, Jerry	PVT												0
13	YOAKUM, Steve	PVT												0
OTHER COMBATANTS														
7	CONNER, Todd	PVT					1							1
A128	FRANK, Doug	PVT												0
A93	HOUK, Jim	Recruit												0
A88	MASSEY, Mike	PVT				1	1							2
A23	ROBERTSON, Jim	PVT				1								1
MILITARY COMMITTED				10	11	27	16	12	12	17	9	11	4	
CIVILIANS/DEPENDANTS			Muster	KS	VB	Col	GB	Ford	Cal	PK	Clint	War	ARK	
	BIGGS, Amanda	CIV	1			1		1	1			1		
	BIGGS, Jessica	DEP				1		1	1			1		
	BOWLING, Ann	CIV				1	1			1		1		
	CASH, Jaime	CIV				1								
	CONNER, Kathy	CIV					1							
	DIETZEL, Nora	CIV			1									
	DIETZEL, Evan	DEP												
	DIETZEL, Vaughan	DEP												
	FIELDS, Dana	CIV												
	FINK, Becki	CIV				1		1	1	1				
	FINK, Braxton	DEP				1		1	1	1				
	FINK, Chelsea	DEP				1			1	1		1		
	GILGER, Jeanne	COOK	1	1		1	1	1	1					
	HAFLEY, Jason	Cadet												
	HAMILTON, Denise	CIV	1											
	KUPSCH, Debbie	CIV												
	LEE, Cindy	CIV	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1		
	McKEE, Brendan	DEP							1	1				
	McKEE, Karen	CIV												
	ROUSH, Martha	CIV	1											
TOTAL COMMITTED			23	12	13	36	19	18	20	23	10	16	4	

 **DUES NOTICE** 

ANNUAL DUES ARE DUE JANUARY 1, 1999. COMPLETE AND RETURN TO:

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

Check one:

Individual: \$22 (\$12 5th Mo. + \$10 MCWRA) _____
(plus \$10 for each additional adult family member desiring MCWRA vote)
Associate: \$9 (non-voting) _____

Make checks payable to "5th Missouri Infantry (CSA), Inc"
If you paid your MCWRA dues through another unit, please indicate the unit:

FIELD CLEANING THE RIFLE MUSKET (continued from page 3)

cone-seat, first with a damp rag, then with a dry one, and lastly with a rag that has been lightly oiled. In this way, all the dirt from firing may be removed without taking out a screw. If, however, the hammer works stiffly, or grates upon the tumbler, the lock must be immediately taken off, and the parts cleaned and touched with oil. (Rules for the Management and Cleaning of the Rifle Musket, Model 1855).

Notes: A gill is 4 ounces. The cone is correct term for the 'nipple'. Hot water is not mandatory, but aids in cleaning when available. The inside of the barrel may be wiped dry by using the head of your Enfield rammer -- or better yet an authentic period wiper (not a 'worm') screwed to the other end -- with a patch of cloth around it, changing the cloth two or three times. The oil that was used was sperm (whale) oil. That not being widely available today, an alternative (then and now) is olive oil -- also called 'sweet oil.' You want to avoid petroleum-based oils in the field because, well, they didn't use 'em.

For the outside, the never-ending battle against rust can be waged with another period in-the-field expedient: wood ash. Dob some from the camp fire on a damp or oily rag, and with a liberal application of elbow grease -- rub. Corn cobs and pine sticks also work well for this purpose. Don't forget to clean your rammer in the same way.

To keep the rust from coming back, a coating of olive oil works wonders, as does another trick mentioned in this period account:

"We soon learned to take care of our pieces in a rain by thoroughly greasing them with a piece of bacon, which would largely prevent rust from striking in." (Leander Stillwell, *The Story of a Common Soldier*). All that's necessary to keep his musket in inspection-ready shape can easily be carried by the soldier on the march. A small period vial will hold sweet oil. Your canteen has the water. There's a pouch in your cartridge box for your wiper. You should have a nipple pick in your cap box. The rammer, of course, is in the musket. Rags for cleaning can be carried in pockets, your knapsack or -- if you have a period ration of salt pork wrapped in a rag in your haversack, you have a ready-made maintenance helper that makes a dandy fire-starter when you're finished with it.

FROM THE FIRST LIEUTENANT

Well another year has gone into the books for the Fifth. There were some slow times but all in all for me it has gone by too fast. As I am about to mail out this first issue of the Messenger for 1999 it is in fact not yet Christmas 1998. I hope you all have a happy and safe Holiday season and I look forward to serving with you in the upcoming campaign year. As you can tell if you have read this issue we will have some changes in our ranks. There is nothing wrong with that, the Fifth will adapt and grow even stronger if we all pull together and **SHOW UP FOR EVENTS**.

I want to wish Dennis Faught the best of luck in his quest for authenticity as I feel much the same on that subject. I will miss his leadership and guidance as 1st Sergeant and the company will miss his contributions as a corporate officer. On behalf of the membership, Thanks for a job well done! "Sarge".

Everyone please make an effort to attend the meeting in California on January 9th. Before closing I need to thank Cpl. Mike White for finding us the meeting site. "Thanks Mike".

See you on the battle line.

A.C. Bowling, Lt Co A 5th Regt, Mo Infy