



September 2002

The Border Star

Monthly publication of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri, Inc.

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"Sonny"

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Meetings

Second Wednesday
of the month at 7 pm
at Little Blue
Community College,
3 miles East of Hwy 291
on 23rd Street. (Hwy 78)
in the Law Enforcement
Training Building

**Visitors
Always
Welcome,**

for more information

Sonny Wells 628-9910
Tim Cox 478-8833
Beverly Shaw 478-7648

from the Pres...

Don't ask me how I messed up Bud Green's name in the August newsletter---but I sure did. My apologies to bud...and also to Bud Samuels, whoever he is and wherever he is.

Karen and I spent Labor Day weekend set up at the Mayhew Underground Railroad Cabin in Nebraska City, Nebraska. We watched several shootout skits and even took part in a couple of them.

Another one of the Jesse stories surfaced again while we were there. There is a man in that area who says he has a copy of a picture of Jesse James, supposedly taken a Nebraska City, Nebraska, in the spring of 1865. This could be a second photo of Jesse., if it can be verified.

Milt Perry, then curator of Historic Sites for Clay County, looked into this story many years ago and determined the picture was not of Jesse, but of another outlaw who bore a resemblance to Jesse.

I knew Milt very well. He and I fussed kind of on a regular basis. Milt was very thorough. Milt did not speak unless he knew of what he was speaking. If Milt said the picture was not of Jesse, I beleive that is the fact. Case closed. Milt is also the person who discovered the misgivings about the Strawberry Hill, Iowa, photograph.

Over two dozen turned out for the walking tour of old Union Cemetery. Our thanks to Rusty Corwin, for coming down and unlocking the gate for us, and to Bea Cornish, for setting up the books for us to look through.

HOT NEWS...Arkansas Historic Preservation Programs is distributing newly upgraded maps of Civil War Battlefields in Arkansas.....FREE!
SASE to A.H.P.P., 1500 Tower Bldg., 323 Center St., Little Rock, Ark. 72201, M: 9-16-02 PEZ

The ailing statue of the Confederate soldier atop the tall shaft in the Confederate Cemetery at Fayetteville, Ark., has been taken down, restored and placed back atop the 30 foot tall shaft.

The cemetery has been cleaned up and the statue was recently re-dedicated. The statue had over 50 bullet holes in it and the ice storm of 2001 had caused part of the face to fall off.

It cost over \$9,600 to repair the statue. Donations from the Southern Memorial Association and private contributors paid for the renovations.

Over 6000 Confederates from Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana and Missouri are buried here. Our group visited this cemetery on our 1996 bus tour.

Less than 100 attended the Re-Dedication Program.

At our September 11th meeting I will ask for 21 seconds of silence in remembrance. Why 21 seconds? You figure it out, or be there and find out.

See you on September 11th at 7 pm.

Update on the Book

Final editing of the text of the Civil War Monuments and Memorials in the Greater Kansas City Area book is over half finished.

Several decisions have had to be made regarding the book. The main pictures being in color really adds a lot to the overall look of the book, but it also adds a bunch to the cost.

The prototype of the book should be on display at our September meeting.

The "I need this list" gets shorter every day.

I am lacking only a few pictures. The Bonner Springs G.A.R. Memorial, the Morgan Walker Farm site, and the new Platte County Court House Plaque are I still needed.

The maps were never returned and new ones will have to be made.

Please take the time to look the book over. This may be your last chance before it goes to into print. Suggestions, corrections or new ideas for the text will be gratefully accepted and all will be carefully considered.

A new need....The List

The first 135 of the books will be donated to Public Libraries, school libraries (where the Civil war is in the study plan) and members of the CWRTWMo of 2001-2003.

This means about 85 will be for our group and 50 to the schools and libraries.

A team needs to get together and draw up the lists. This will probably take a little time and some careful consideration.

For example--How many should go to Mid-Continent Library? One in Reference and one in History, Civil War? or give them 5 and let them place them as they see fit.

How about the Kansas City Library system. I am sure they could use at least that many. Then there is the Jackson County Historical Society Library and the Clay County Archives. and the college libraries. Get the picture?

Any volunteers? Or should the President, or incoming President, simply appoint a committee?

Annual Fall Tour October 19th

Our annual fall tour will be different this year. We will be visiting the Big Blue Battlefield, site of two engagements within 12 hours, for the first time.

The tour will start with an overview of what will be visited starting at 9:00 by the parking lot of the Bingham-Waggoner House on Pacific Street, just across the street from the National Trails Center, in Independence.

As some of the sites we will be visiting are not accessible to busses, we will have use cars and vans on this one. Possibly even limit the number of tourists.

A map will be handed out to the drivers to aid in keeping everyone together.

At the trail head above Byram's Ford you will be able to walk on the very trail hundreds of wagons and most of the soldiers involved in the two engagements used going from Independence to Westport.

The vehicles will pick the hikers up at the bottom of the trail and proceed to the Byram's Ford Crossing.

Here again, we will walk on the very trail the westward bound wagons used and get the feeling of what it was like to be caught in the middle of a Civil War engagement.

Next stop is the hillside from which the Confederates fought hand-to-hand with Pleasanton's Kansas Cavalry for over two hours before falling back to the area just south of Brush Creek.

Final stop will be the Civil War trenches on the north part of the battlefield, where the Iowa Cavalry made their daring charge and the Reb sharpshooters hid in a cabin and picked them off one by one.

Time permitting, we will also visit the small cemetery along I-435 where some of Shelby's men are said to have been buried.

Final stop on the way back to the starting point will be the Missouri Department of Tourism Center by Royals Stadium.

An optional tour of the Bingham-Waggoner House is an added feature of this year's tour.

Cost of the tour will be \$5 per person. Drivers with passengers will be free and will be given a gas allowance.

Those planning on walking the trail should wear heavy shoes and long pants. Also, a little Deet Spray might not be a bad idea and a hat of some kind. A cooler with bottled water will be in my van. CAMERA!

Why is it important to visit this site at this time? Because the Corps of Engineers Big Blue River Flood Plan will wipe out Byram's Ford in the very near future.

from the **Medal of Honor** files...

The case of Nicholas Fanning

Pvt. Co. B, 4th Iowa Cavalry

Captured a silk Confederate States flag and two staff officers at the Battle of Selma, April 2, 1865

Medal presented 17 June 1865

Basic Data

Born in Germany, date unknown, possibly 1837

Came to US--date unknown

Enlisted--Dubuque, Iowa, April 1861, for 1 year

Re-upped--June 1862, for 3 years

Discharged--May 18, 1865

Post War--used papers to enter into 160 acres,

4 miles south of Independence, Iowa

Married--Yes, name unknown

Children--Yes, number unknown

Died--date unknown, possibly 1912

Buried--site unknown

Fanning is the last Iowa Civil War Medal of Honor recipient whose burial site remains unknown.

An article in the *Independence Newspaper* about him came out in late August. Several leads came in but none proved to be too helpful.

T.J., the editor, called last week. A farmer had come in with a story about an old soldier buried out in his field that he has been plowing around for over 30 years. Could this be our man?

Other facts which are worth considering---After Fanning's wife died in 1912 he became a recluse.

The wife and one child are buried in the old Catholic Church Cemetery 2 miles east of the Fanning farm.

The bridge which crosses the creek between the church and the farm is called Fanning Bridge.

Supposedly the Church would not let Fanning be buried with his wife because he had committed suicide.

One older woman said she remembers the story about someone finding a body in an old barn about 4 miles west of the church. The body was buried in a shallow grave out behind the barn, but she did not know if they ever put a name with the body.

If there was a barn on the property where the farmer has been plowing around that old soldier's grave the pieces would fit together fairly nicely. But there is no hard proof such is our man Nicholas.

The search goes on. The goal is to erect a Medal of Honor Memorial Marker in or near Independence, Iowa, on the Saturday following Memorial Day 2003.

Medal of Honor researchers and historians, including our own Tim Cox, have been looking for this guy's grave since 1973, and we don't have a clue as to where it is. Can you help? If so, call Sonny or Tim.

At the Board Meeting....

The Board of Directors regular monthly meeting was on Wednesday, August 22, 2002, at 7 pm in the Board Room at the Regional Law Enforcement Training Building at Little Blue Community College.

As only five members were present no official business was conducted.

Sonny reported some have asked about a day trip to Mount Mora Cemetery in St. Joseph with a stop at Oakland Cemetery, where so many Union veterans are buried.

Reports...

The **Newsletter**....80 printed, 72 mailed.

Cost 50.10. Bill submitted and paid

Treasurer's Report....was given.

Coffee Fund Report...Beg. Bal. \$ 1.68,

Purchases \$8.00, In Jar \$ 8.00.

New Bal. \$ 1.70.

Officer's Reports

Secretary passed out minutes

2nd V. P.....Not present

1st V. P.....Not present.

President.....I felt we had a good time at the Walking Tour of Union Cemetery. There were several with us who had not been on one of our cemetery tours. It turned out to be a really nice evening.

Those present were all in agreement to do the Big Blue, Byram's Ford Battlefield Tour this year. More information in article.

The tour will depart from the Bingham-Waggoner home at 9:30 am on Saturday, October 19th. Pre-tour talk at 9:00.

The tour will take about 3 hours and will include a stop at the Department of Tourism Information Center.

We will have to travel in vans and cars as some of what we will tour is not accessible to busses.

A tour of the Bingham-Waggoner home will be an added option this year.



FRED BLOCHER/The Kansas City Star

Historical plaque

Members of the Platte County Commission recently dedicated a plaque to commemorate the county's original courthouse, which was built in 1840 in Platte City. Union soldiers burned down the building on Dec. 16, 1861. County officials planned the ceremony to show appreciation to local historians for keeping alive the history of Platte City and the Civil War. The ceremony also honored local historian Shirley Kimsey, who was involved in creating the plaque. Kimsey (left) and Presiding Commissioner Betty Knight installed the plaque, which includes a sketch of the original courthouse, on the south wall of the courthouse lobby. Because the plaque is an official historical marker, Platte City will be included in a book published by the Civil War Roundtable of Western Missouri. The book will explore Civil War sites across northwest Missouri. For information, call (816) 858-1906.

Some months ago **Bob Werline**, of Platte City, asked me if the Platte County Court House was mentioned in the Civil War Monuments and Memorials book. I replied the book did not mention the Court House because there was no marker or plaque to indicate there was a Civil War Happening there.

Bob called **Ms. Kimsey** and the rest, to use an very much overused term, is history.