



JUNE 1995

VOL. 3 NO. 6

# THE BORDER STAR

A Publication of the CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE of  
WESTERN MISSOURI 1209 Skyline Dr. Liberty, MO 64068

## THE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE OF WESTERN MISSOURI, INC.

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### ANNUAL DUES

Individual 15.00  
Family 22.50  
Student (Under 21) 5.00

### MEETINGS

Meetings held the second Wednesday at 7 pm in the Library, at Truman High School, 3301 So. Noland Rd. except July, August and December.

## FROM THE PRES.....

The clock went to the McCorkendale's, Claudia McCorkendale to be more exact. The \$54.00 in donations went to the Coffee Fund. A big **THANK YOU** to the donor of the clock and the donators.

*The show and tell part of the May meeting was very unique. Gail Fulghum had a display of shot and cone bullets uncovered on his farm near the Little Blue Battlefield plus a complete, unexploded shell from a Hotchkiss Gun. Bob Werline had an original cartridge box, complete with some paper cartridges, a saber engraved with C.S.A. and other items. Troy Chrisman had an old shotgun, Sue Valentine told the story of the lone casualty of the Battle of Fort McCallister, Dr. Anderson told of an unusual encounter at a salad bar and Margaret Bardgett told some of the history of the Blackwater Cemetery, just to mention a few of the speakers.*

*A very enjoyable, informative meeting even if the cookies were not as good as they had been the two previous times. My thanks to all who contributed.*

At least 55 people participated in the Blackwater Tour. Thanks again to Margaret Bardgett and Chris for helping make the tour such a great time.

Special thanks to Ron Zimmerman of Sunset Bus for making special arrangements with us for the use of the coach bus, (with facilities) and..... to Roger, Tim, Howard and the others, for serving as *the stage coaches to (and from) the crossing*, after it was decided the bus would not chance it.

The special collection taken up on the bus to cover the added cost of the coach bus came up with \$1 extra. So I guess it is fair to say the yellow bus (which turned out to be red and white) ended up in the black.

## CIVIL WAR PICNIC

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 6-9 pm

### PITCHER CEMETERY, Blue Ridge & Blue Ridge Ext.

### Y'ALL COME NOW, HEAR!

The June 14 program will feature Mary Ellen McVicar, an instructor at the Kemper Military Academy, speaking on The Civil War in Boonville and the Boonville Cemeterys. Tim Cox will chair this meeting.

Ottumwa CWRT's "Kiss of Death Tour" re-scheduled for July 22-23.

**A PERSONAL NOTE...**As Karen and I were driving back from Rock Springs, Wyoming, on Tuesday, I observed a total lack of flags flying in the cemeteries along I-80. This was May 30th, Memorial Day, the actual day, not the legal day set aside as just another three day weekend off with pay. Somehow, it just didn't seem right.



## "KISS OF DEATH TOUR" RE-SCHEDULED

The Kiss of Death Tour, as it has become known around the Ottumwa Civil War Round Table, has been re-scheduled for July 22nd and 23rd.

Meet at the McDonald's on 291 Hwy in Liberty at 10:00 on Saturday.

Plan A calls for visits to the ruins of the Liberty Arsenal, the Battle of Albany site, Bloody Bill's gravesite, Lexington and Higginsville.

Overnight in Independence, with visits to the Little Blue Battlefield, the Battle of Independence markers, the bluffs above Byram's Ford & Big Blue Battlefield and the Loose Park Battlefield on Sunday.

Plan B calls for the Arsenal, Independence, Byram's Ford, Big Blue and Loose Park on Saturday with an optional twilight trip to Fort Leavenworth to see the new Buffalo Soldiers Memorial.

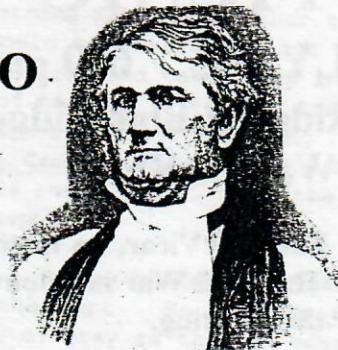
Overnight in Independence, with visits to Higginsville, Lexington, the Albany Battlefield, Anderson's grave and *The Man Who Shot Jesse James* tombstone on Sunday

The tour is free. Travel is by car pool. A ten page hand out will be available at a cost of \$2.

Westport '89 books will be available for \$5.

Join with me as we share our mutual interest with the Civil War Round Table of Ottumwa Iowa.

WHO  
AM  
I?



from North Carolina  
Graduated-West Point 1827  
Bishop in Episcopal Church  
Close friend of Jefferson Davis  
Killed, Pine Mtn, Ga., 1864

## More about Francie Park

Just before she left to live with her daughter in Arizona, Francie gave me a packet of papers.

I finally opened the packet and was I ever surprised!

Among the items therein.....

A copy of an August 9, 1942, Kansas City Star article about the big white home on Old Salem Church Road.

A copy of a January 19, 1930 KC Star article about the Abner Staples cabin, more commonly known as the "Mason Place", and the modernizing currently (1930) underway.

A nice copy of a map called "The Strangers Guide to the Buildings of Kansas City" circa 1880's.

Copies of these items will be available at the next meeting.

Thank You Francie!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### June 1995

- Sat-Sun 10-11 RE-ENACTMENT  
Columbia, Mo.
- Wed 14 CWRTWMO MEETS  
The Civil War in Boonville
- Sun 18 FATHER'S DAY
- Wed 21 BOARD MEETING

### JULY 1995

- Sun 2 CW Medal of Honor  
Hebron, Nebraska
- Wed 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY
- Fri 14 FLAG DAY
- 14 RE-ENACTMENT  
Fulton, Missouri
- Wed 19 CIVIL WAR PICNIC  
Pitcher Cemetery

Sat-Sun, 22-23 Little Blue & Albany  
with CWRT of Ottumwa, Ia.

### AUGUST 1995

- Sat-Sun 5-6 RE-ENACTMENT  
Glasgow, Missouri
- Wed 9 CWRTWMO MEETS  
Tour Lee's Summit Ceme.
- Wed 16 BOARD MEETING
- Sat-Sun 19-20 RE-ENACTMENT  
Lone Jack, Missouri

## GETTYSBURG TRIVIA

from *Gettysburg*, by CWTI editors

1. The Governor of Pennsylvania called for 50,000 new recruits.  
How many actually responded?  
*ANS-Only a handful, less than 100*
2. Who was Governor at the time?  
*ANS-Andrew G. Curtin*
3. Which newspaper covered the battle most extensively?  
*ANS-Frank Leslie's Illustrated*
4. Who predeceased George Meade...  
...The Army of the Potomoc?  
*ANS-Gen. Joseph Hooker*
5. Date Meade took command?  
*ANS-June 28, 1863*
6. Date first Confederate troops entered Gettysburg.  
*ANS-June 26, Early's Div. on way to seize bridge at York.*
7. "Hero" of skirmish, Hanover?  
*ANS-Capt. George A. Custer*
8. The "hero's" objective?  
*ANS-Burn bridge at York (see #6)*
9. Confederate Cavalry at Hanover.  
*ANS-Stuart's*
10. Date first Confederate Cavalry crossed into Maryland enroute to Gettysburg.  
*ANS-June 15, at Williamsport*

## Arlington National Cemetery, Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers Trivia

1. How many steps do the guards take before they stop to check the Tomb?
2. How long does the guard face the Tomb before resuming the duty march?
3. What is the significance of the answers to questions 1 and 2?



# CIVIL WAR PICNIC

Wednesday, July 19, 1995, 6-9 pm

Start with a display of pre-Civil War and Civil War era coins, throw in some Civil War era fancy day bonnets, then add a tent or two to add to the atmosphere, oh, and a cannon or two just to add a little authenticity.

Now add a table full of culinary delights from the kitchens of some of our masterful cooks.

Served up with a little Raspberry Sasparilla, old fashioned Creme Soda or iced tea and top it off with a period music contest and what do you have?

Why a Civil War Picnic, of course, and it is all free!

Then set the time so as not to conflict with chores, lets say around 6 in the evening, and pick a site with some actual Civil War history connected to it, lets say Pitcher Cemetery, and you've got the makings for a whooping good time.

By the time it is over, you will know what a *trime* is, will have listened to at least three versions of the favorite song of the era and will have had a chance to participate in a game of knickers.

Bring you own plates and silverware and a dish or two for the buffet. Napkins, drinks and ice will be furnished.

Table space will be limited so bring a card table if you have one and folding chairs unless you want to stand all evening.

Bring a friend or two and there will be so many people present the gally nippers will not know which one to feast on. Might help to bring a can of bug spray too.

Parking may be a problem. I am asking that you do not park on the west side of Blue Ridge in front of the park or cemetery entrance..

The open parking area across from the laundromat is close and easily accessible. Handicapped only in the Cemetery parking lot, please.

## *Tentative Schedule*

**5:00 Start setting up tents & Displays**

**6:00 Set up Buffet & Start food line,**

**6:30 Displays & Camp Open**

**7:00 Living History Camp Guided Tour**

**7:30 Knickers game...if you are up to it!**

**8:00 Music Contest** *name the tune & composer*

**8:30 Cemetery Tour**

*Present Arms at Mass Grave of Civil War dead*

**9:00 Clean up & head for home or**

*Set around, sip sasparilla and swat skeeters*

## REPORT ON THE BLACKWATER TOUR-

Nearly sixty people participated in the tour to the old Blackwater Cemetery and nearby crossing.

The "Yellow School Bus" turned out to be a big Red and White coach bus from Sunset Tours.

First stop was the area known as "Stonestreit's Orchard", a heavily overgrown, very rugged area where the Confederate Partisans occasionally hid out. now part of the George A. Reed Wildlife Area.

From there, back on Hwy 50 and head East to the Old Blackwater Cemetery, arriving about 9:30.

The scenic view from the chapel hill was beautiful.

The weather could not have been better. It was sunny with a slight breeze and temperature around 65.

A quick check of the crossing determined the bus would not be going into the recently flooded area.

At 10:15, in the little church on the cemetery grounds, there was a brief talk on the history of the area, in particular the Blackwater River.

A brief tour of the cemetery grounds followed. Of special note were the swails of the old Warrensburg to Pleasant Hill Military Road which ran along the South edge of the cemetery, and the numerous unmarked graves, many of which are bunched together.

Using cars, trucks and vans the group then went to the crossing area.

Although the area had been under water as recently as two days prior, the swails leading into the crossing were still visible as were the rocky ledges which could have been used as crossing sites.

From there we traced the trail which led over the hill and to the West. The trail grade was visible along the north side of the road for a short distance and then swung to the right through a deep cut in the hill.

For those who did not chance the old barbed wire fence and poison ivy, I am told the trail became much more visible toward the crest of the hill.

One person observed it looked more like a stagecoach trail than a railroad cut. A comment which tends to tie in with the Military Road.

Another commented on the steepness of the grade.

The group returned to the little chapel for lunch after which Margaret Bardgett told of some of the people in the cemetery she had researched.

Time for one last trek through the cemetery and then it was time to load up and head for home.

A brief swing into Powell Gardens, to pick up some information about the site, and then on the road again.

We were back at the gathering place by 2:30.

Through it all, one thought held true...another historic site, just off the beaten path, headed for oblivion.



## Tom: Cat in Gray

Tom lay on top of the earth mound wall of Fort McAllister, soaking in the bright afternoon sun. An hour away by water, nine Union warships were being prepared for an attack on the small fort.

But Tom did not know the North and South were in a brother-against brother bloodbath over the issues such as slavery. He did not spend his time analyzing democracy or unalienable rights. In fact, as far as human rights were concerned, Tom had no political ideology at all. Tom was a cat.

He did, however, have his own opinions about some things. Although he lived in a fort, and every man on post gave him orders as though he were the lowest in command, Tom was not totally regimented like the other soldiers. He did not wake up before daybreak to the sound of the bugle, nor did he go to bed early with the men. Instead he awoke after 8 AM and got up after 10 PM. Then he stretched, played and lounged around the fort all day and prowled the fort's grounds most of the night.

Although Tom was not militarily minded, he had taken on some of the characteristics of his military surroundings. Few places could be more raw and manly than an isolated fort in the Confederate South, and Tom had taken on some of this crude roughness. At times a soldier would walk up to him, rub his fur the wrong way and challenge him to a slapping match. At other times he would be whisked up out of a sound sleep and taken deep inside one of the fort's earthen tunnels to face a nearly 2-foot-long river rat. Tom was, because he had to be, as rough and tough as the men who kept him.

He was the perfect mascot for the fort. He was the same color of gray as the Confederate uniforms, and one of the men had jokingly said if Tom had been born blue, they would have had to shoot

him. Through comic relief, Tom helped the men release some of their tension, but he was even more valuable as a reminder that the war was only a short period in their lives that one day would pass. He was a pet, which reminded the men of homes, wives and children, and the life they had left behind. He was the ever-present symbol of home, life and peace.

It was peace that the men wanted most. The fort was under constant threat of attack. It was only an hour upriver from the Ossabaw Sound in the Atlantic Ocean, which made it vulnerable to Union attacks. Since the fort was built at the beginning of the war in the summer of 1861, it had been attacked by ships eight times.

It was now March 2, 1863, and the warm sun Tom was napping in seemed to promise an early spring. But another sign had come to the fort that day. The men had received word that three new Union ironclad warships had been towed down the East Coast into the Ossabaw Sound at the mouth of the Ogeechee River. Along with the three ironclads--the Patapsco, the Passaic and the Nahant--were six other ships: the U.S.S. Ericson, the C.P. Williams, the Para, the Norfolk Packet, the Serbago and the Flambeau. The nine ships comprised the biggest armada ever assembled to attack Fort McAllister. The Union officers were confident that with this amount of fire power, they would easily capture the small fort.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, March 3, 1863, the fleet of Union ships came into firing range, and the fort opened fire. Shortly, the ships pulled themselves around into battle positions and returned fire.

The ship nearest the fort was the ironclad Passaic, another ironclad, the Nahant, held the rear position. The ships bombed the fort from 8:45 AM until 3:30 PM. The ironclads then pulled back down river, leaving the other ships to continue blasting the fort throughout the day and night.

The next morning blue smoke hung like heavy fog over the fort. During the battle the day before, the Passaic had been hit 31 times and the Patapsco had been hit once, but neither suffered serious damage. Inside the fort, however, the men's quarters had been almost totally destroyed, and behind and to the left of the fort, exploding bombs from the ships had dug huge craters, plowing up the landscape for a half mile.

When the wind finally carried the smoke out to sea, the Union officers learned that to their surprise, the Confederates had been repairing the fort throughout the night during the bombing. As a result, the fort appeared the same as it had before the bombing had started. Discouraged and believing more bombing would avail nothing, the ships pulled around and pushed down river toward the Atlantic Ocean. The South had won a great battle.

But there was one casualty. The only casualty was a soldier who had not understood the war and had never fired a gun. No one would have condemned him for leaving the fort, but when the bombing started, he had not run away. Tom was dead.

A cat is an unlikely war hero, but in the minds of the men of Fort McAllister, because Tom had not run away during the massive bombing by the Union ships, he was as close to a war hero as a cat could get. Later, when the Confederate commanding officer wrote his report of the attack to Army headquarters, he wrote that Tom had been killed in the battle. Tom may be the only cat listed as a casualty of the Civil War.

Today a bronze plaque stands in Fort McAllister, dedicated to the memory of Tom, the cat in gray.

--Daniel Vickery

Submitted by:

Connie McQuain and  
Sue Valentine