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## THE BORDER STAR

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

# TRENCHES MARKED AT WILLIAM JEWELL

by Fred George

After our meeting last year with the officials of William Jewell College, it seemed as if the CWRTWM had accomplished all we could preserving the Civil War sites on the campus. The college had made promises that were not kept and it looked as if the best efforts of our group had been for naught. Imagine my surprise when Sonny Wells called me in April to say that William Jewell had asked for our suggestions on wording for memorial plaques to be placed at the sites of the trenches, the redoubt, and the mass grave. Chaplain Jerry Cain asked Sonny if he would participate in the Commemoration Ceremony during Alumni Day in May. It seems that after the change in administration, wiser heads had prevailed in correcting the mistakes of Mr. Kingsley. Chaplain Cain felt that our group should be consulted again and he wanted to do what he could to preserve what was left of the sites.

A week later Sonny Wells, Ed Harris, and I met with Mr. Cain and discussed wording on the plaques, their locations, and what had been promised by the previous administration. Mr. Cain made it very clear that the present administration did not condone the actions of Mr. Kingsley and profusely apologized for our treatment by the college. Further, he sought our cooperation for the commemoration on May 14. Sonny had a prior commitment for that weekend so it was agreed that I would deliver the commemoration notes. It is certainly a shame that Sonny wasn't there since this has been his project even before our group was organized.

Those of you who travelled to William Jewell last year should make the trip again to see the changes made to the sites. Unfortunately, the trench line and the cannon redoubt have been virtually destroyed by the renovations, and the mound of earth near the mass grave has been levelled. The trench marker dedicated by the class of 1931 has been destroyed. The old plaque has been placed on a small stone monument about two feet high and three feet wide. The monument is located about a foot north of the old trench line and about thirty feet east of its' previous position. Two similar markers will be placed at the mass grave site and at the cannon redoubt. If you were at our meeting last year you may recall that the redoubt was supposed to be outlined in contrasting stone on the new patio. Unfortunately this was not done by the contractor. The new marker will be on the patio near the south bench. It will tell the history of the trenches. The mass grave marker will be on the actual site and tells of the burial of the seventeen soldiers. The original plan was to include the names of the men on the plaque but lack of room necessitated listing the men inside the nearby chapel.

May 14 was Alumni Day at William Jewell so it was appropriate that we held the plaque commemoration on that day. A heavy morning rain forced the services inside the Grand River Chapel. After dedication of the Chapel and garden, George Weinholt, dressed in his Union officer uniform, unveiled the plaques as I gave the following commemorative notes:

*continued on page 4.*



## ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S TRIVIA

- 1) The Marais De Cygne massacre.
- 2) Lincoln and McClellan
- 3) 12%.
- 4) 9.8%.
- 5) 4.6.
- 6) Corn and Hogs.

## THIS MONTH'S TRIVIA

- 1) What was the only railroad that spanned Missouri east to west at the start of the Civil War?
- 2) Who was the only man to be a senator from three states and was also a Civil War general? (hint: he is buried in Carrollton, MO.)
- 3) What was the name of Sterling Price's house near Keytesville?
- 4) What battle in Missouri involved the Cannonball house?

On Saturday, June 25, 1994, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, the Friends of the Missouri State Archives will hold their Annual Meeting and Luncheon and Genealogy Jamboree. The luncheon will feature Missouri State Archivist Dr. Kenneth H. Winn speaking on "Arsenic as a Nineteenth Century Beauty Aid".

Following the annual meeting and luncheon The Friends will offer two hours of concurrent genealogy workshops. Four workshops will be offered: How to Save Your Family Papers, Oral Family Histories, Researching Military Records, and Settlement Patterns and Land Records. Participants may attend two of the four workshops, as two workshops will be held concurrently during each hour. You will be provided, as well, with a folder of research aids to help you with your own family history.

Registration fee is \$20, payable by June 18.

Make check payable to:

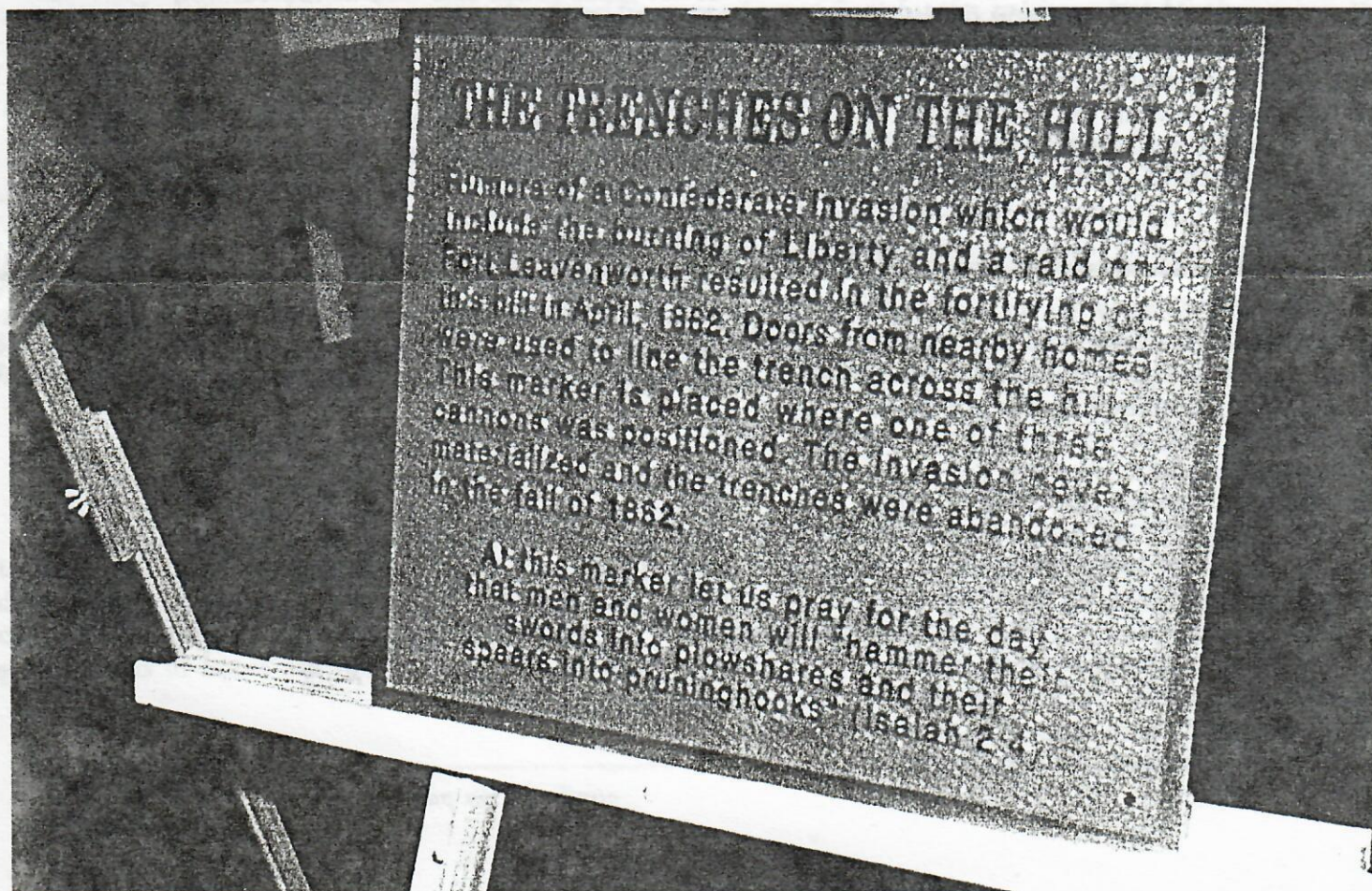
Friends of the Missouri State Archives

P.O. Box 242

Jefferson City, MO 65102.

No money will be taken at the door.

The meeting and workshops will be held at the Capital Plaza Hotel - Carnegie Room, 415 W. McCarty, Jefferson City, MO.





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## THE PRESIDENTS CORNER

by Sonny Wells

Through the efforts of Don and Becky Carver, contact has been made with the Pettis County Historical Society and the process has started which will result in the placing of a Medal of Honor memorial marker on the grave of Daniel I. Holcomb in Sedalia's Crown Hill cemetery.

Holcomb was awarded the Medal on February 22, 1865 for capturing the enemy colors at Brentwood Hills, Tennessee, on December 16, 1864, during the Nashville campaign. He was a private in company D of the 41st Ohio Volunteers Infantry. His present marker makes no mention of the Medal of Honor.

Others in Western Missouri yet to be marked:

John A. Falconer at Sunset Cemetery in Warrensburg  
M.R.W. Grebe at Mount St. Mary's Cemetery in K.C.  
William T. Holmes at Old Beau Cemetery, St. Clair County  
John Ricksecker at Forestill Cemetery in Kansas City

Only 13 of the 34 Civil War Medal of Honor winners buried in Missouri have the special M.O.H. memorial markers. Four grave sites are yet to be located.

Looking for a project? May I suggest....?

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Our group has been invited to tour the State Archives by Patricia Luebbert, Senior Archivist. If the members would be interested in a tour, let us know at the next meeting or two and if there is any interest we will work on scheduling a time to visit the archives. This would be a great opportunity to see things you might not ever have another chance to see. I have toured the archives and personally, I can't wait to go back for another tour! Ed

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The June regular meeting will be Wednesday, June 8, 7:00 pm at the Truman High School Library, 3301 S. Noland Road. Our meeting will feature Bob Voelker who will give a program on "Custer and Little Big Horn".

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Next month we will announce the winner of the crossword puzzle contest. Anyone who can't make the June meeting, you can mail your puzzle to me by June 22. Ed

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*My name is Fred George and I am the vice president of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri. One of our groups' objectives is to encourage the preservation of local historical sites. Today we meet at such a location.*

*On September 17, 1861, the Battle of Liberty, also known as the Battle of Blue Mill, was fought south of here. The next day, September 18, a burial party from the 3rd Iowa, collected the bodies of 17 men and buried them in a mass grave just a few feet from where we are now gathered. One of the men from 3rd Iowa mentions in a diary, that as they were digging the grave, the envelope of trees surrounding them parted and it was as if Heaven cast down its' eyes upon the grave. In 1912 the large bones of the bodies were reburied in old section B of the Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery. Unfortunately those graves are marked as unknown. Through extensive research by our president, Sonny Wells, we determined the names of sixteen of those men and feel it is only fitting that their memory be honored.*

*Seven months after the Battle of Liberty, rumors of an impending attack led Federal troops to fortify this hill side with trench lines that extended for over 1800 feet. The trench line ran from just outside the side door of the president's house to the knoll on the far south edge of the campus. The troops used Jewell Hall, also called Old Main, as a headquarters, a hospital, a jail, and even a stable.*

*Where we are now standing was one of the four artillery redoubts which commanded a view of the city of Liberty. Local diaries mention that the soldiers used tombstones in the cemetery behind us for target practice. If you look close you may still find signs of the impact of bullets. Those same diaries recall that due to heavy rains the trenches became so muddy that doors were confiscated from nearby houses to line the bottom of the trenches. Last summer, before construction began at this site, our members conducted a short search for artifacts and the first item found was a door hinge and square nails, which confirmed the diary accounts. I was fortunate to be present during that search. As I held that rusty door hinge and several square nails it brought home to me the sacrifices made not just by the soldiers but by the citizens of the area. Many had their homes destroyed and their property taken from them. Untold numbers of family members wee killed. They suffered not just from rebel raiders but the federal troops who comprised an army of occupation.*

*I have been asked why we should erect markers here. Some have questioned the significance of these sites, after all it isn't as if this was the magnitude of Gettysburg or Shiloh. The sacrifice made by the 17 men buried on this hillside shouldn't be ignored. For the last 133 years thousands of people have passed by here, unaware of the history beneath their feet. From this day forward all who stop and read these markers will know of the sacrifice made by these 17 men and honor their memory. On behalf of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri, thank you William Jewell College for recognizing the need to preserve history and honor those who gave so much for all of our freedoms.*

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*Although all of our goals were not achieved the CWRTWM can take pride in the markers as tangible proof of our efforts. Hopefully, these accomplishments will give the group new determination to persevere on for future projects. Our efforts caused people at William Jewell to change their minds. It is too late to save more, but at least there is something for future generations to learn and without us, the markers and sites would be neglected or non-existent.*

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