
The UNION STANDARD

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The Newsletter of the 1st United States Infantry, The Regulars

From the field:

Port Hudson Louisiana

Gentlemen,

Port Hudson is fallen and as the President observed, "The father of waters again goes unvexed to the sea". Often the phrase is credited to Lincoln as referring to the fall of Vicksburg, but Port Hudson fell after Vicksburg did, and would still have 'vexed' any ship attempting the passage of the river, as it did Farragut's flagship Hartford when it passed up river past Port Hudson and was heavily damaged. Certainly no commercial vessels would have made that passage until the guns of Port Hudson were silenced.

We had a grand time last weekend, falling in as the 4th of 5 companies of Federal infantry engaged in the re-enactment. The 9th was there in grand style, their zouave uniforms conspicuous in both the woods and the open field. No sneaking in that outfit! With our companions from the 13th US and Kal Kinzer and Jim Trent we formed a company of about 16 men, 2 sgts, 2 officers, and 1 laundress!

From appearances we actually outnumbered the rebs, at least in infantry, and took good advantage of that during the 3 'tactical' fights we participated in, 2 on Saturday, and on one Sunday. The morning fight on Saturday through the gullies and ridges down below Fort Desperate was fairly typical blind combat, where the limited visibility of the vegetation and terrain made all actions appear to be little more than small company actions. In reality of course the action was more wide spread, but it was difficult to actually 'see' the scope of the battles, and, from the way we moved hither and yon through the trees, as difficult for our officers to sort out as it was to see. After feeling the 4th company was fairly chewed up in what appeared to be a pocket surrounded on 3 sides, and nearly losing Lt. Doughtie as a prisoner, we fell back on the battalion to be told we'd 'won'. Well, perhaps from the perspective of the right wing, but from our view we were given easily as good as we gave by reb companies appearing and vanishing at will on our exposed flanks.

In the second half of the morning action we hoped to catch the rebs in a pincer, and proceeded with the right and left wings up different trails. I have no idea what the 9th as right wing experienced for battle, but the left

wing used street clearing techniques to keep the rebs to our front moving back up the trail. Affording them little to no time to form a new line of resistance, we shoved them along quite recklessly all the while fearing we'd encounter double their size round the next bend in the trail. It never happened that way though, and eventually we wore them out and they began to fall by the side of the trail in 2's and 3's as the dead. All that precipitous shoving was provident however, as it turned out as fast as we were moving forward we were being pursued by Robbie Sander's grey clads coming up the trail behind us. As Lt Doughtie observed, it was rather like two snakes, each eating the others tail. I was unaware how close Robbie's boys were until we thought to give our 5th company an opportunity to take the lead and we drop back to 'rest'. My thought of taking a break was short lived when not 40 yards on the trail behind us a reb company formed and started firing. It was with relief that we 'suggested' that we'd lead the assault again. The rebs to our front seemed to have much less fight in them than those we found to our rear!

Who won? Well, I'll leave that up to the academics to determine in future years, I can tell you what my gut feel was not an overwhelming victory, but not a loss either. We certainly learned that keeping your enemy off balance with constant rushes is an effective means of advance in closed terrain.

We had a bit of rain Saturday morning, which courteously held off until we were back in camp after the tactical and then before the afternoon battle the weather cleared off again for a lovely blue skied day. We couldn't have scheduled it better than that.

For the afternoon battle the left wing marched the long way round to the left in a much more successful attempt to again catch the reb right in the flank, and this time we did. Driving a couple of small companies out of the woods on the left of our line out into the open on the field, we caught them flat between the right and left wings and chewed them up. A reb counter thrust on our left, according to the judge anyway, killed almost all of 4th company, leaving 3 men standing. But the battle was nearly over, and with the bulk of 5th company we charged across the field and slaughtered a reb gun crew and took their piece before the battle was 'ended'. The survivors of

4th company were, I think, quite pleased with themselves, some of them so pleased that they rose from the dead to help take the gun!

Sunday found us again on the field in nearly the same spot with 5th company hidden on our left in the woods. We advanced up the left edge of the field, the woods to our immediate left, and the 5th company like blue ghosts sometimes barely visible in the trees not 40 yards away. The rebs were playing the same game however, and most of their infantry was in the woods. We caught a couple of companies out and shoved them back towards their own center and into the open field, but I have to compliment the company commander of one of their companies who had the patience to stay hidden in the trees to our left until we passed out onto the cleared field with the 5th company and reformed our left wing to coincide with an attack by the 9th in the right/center. Timing it perfectly, the rebs came out of the woods to our rear as we were hotly engaged in an advance with the reb infantry and guns to our front. I won't swear to it, but I think we died to a man. Once again the annals can tell of Major Killbrannigan helping us fulfill a seemingly natural tendency to get caught in a wringer, and Brannigan's reputation is secure.

Julie served up the usual round of great meals, Saturday night's gumbo being over and above the usual high quality we've been spoiled into expecting AND Dutch oven CORN BREAD that was absolutely perfect for flavor, texture and done-ness. Bravo again Julie!

The next event for the month of April, will be the overnight camp at Farmers Branch Historical Park as part of a living history display for the scouts. It doesn't get any closer to home than this to camp overnight, well, at least not since Samuel Farm closed up, so try and wheedle that kitchen pass outta mama if you can and join us on Friday night. Dinner and breakfast will be 'catered' for those who stay over. Saturday will be a morning Drill, and afternoon will be the usual living history interaction with the public, firing the rifles if possible. As far as I know the scouts will be camping with us, around us, in the park.

Forts Muster in Fort Worth and Port Hudson will be next month (May) and Fort Chadbourne days will be at the beginning of the month, so you have some opportunity to wear your wool the first three weekends of May if you can manage to get the time.

Further mailed information will follow on all events mentioned above.

Till then, I remain

Most respectfully, your most obedient servant

Cpt. A J Prendergast, 1st US Infantry Commanding

1st U.S. Calendar

2008

April

19th Living History Event/Drill, Farmers Branch Historical Park (Friday evening (18th) overnight stay)

May

3rd and 4th Fort Chadbourne Days (Living History)

10th – 11th Texas Frontier Fort Days, Fort Worth Stockyards, Recruiting Event

17th - 18th Battle of Westport (Stands of Colors) K.C. Missouri. Battalion Event

June

14th Flag Day at Fort Worth Civil War Museum (Living History/Recruiting Event)

July

Nothing planned (stay cool)

August

9th Bingham House, McKinney, Texas

September

27th and 28th Battle of Honey Springs, Oklahoma. Battalion Event

October

(Tentative) Drill or Camp Ford, Tyler Texas

November

8th Veterans Day, Dallas Heritage Village (OCP) Living History, Recruiting & Battle

December

6th and 7th Battle of Prairie Grove, Arkansas. Battalion Event

*Note: **Bold** are scheduled maximum effort events. **Italicized** dates are available events or recruiting activities. ****See website for full event calendar*****

Westport "Stand of Colors" Registration Information

Pards,
In this interest of time I am going to jump the line and make sure all of you see this. Our next reenactment is the big one for the 1st US. The **Stand of Colors** is on May 17 & 18 In Kansas City. As I recall we voted by a wide majority to attend this national event as Gettysburg was to far away.

I am hearing more and more that this will be **the** event of the year for us Western boys. In order to make a good showing I suggest we do the following:

- If you have not already done so I suggest each of us should register now as the \$10/each fee increases 50% to \$15 on April 15 and closes May 1.



Mark your calendar for August 9th!!!!

August 9th will be our annual Social. We are trying something a little different this year that we hope will generate some excitement. We will be enjoying dinner with our significant others at the historic Bingham House in McKinney. We be feasting on Civil War style menu and many of us think (and we have ran this past a few of the wives already) since we are at a historical place that those who want too, can wear their best dress uniform and if your wife/significant other wants to dress in a period style dress she can too.

(WEARING YOUR UNIFORM OR HAVING YOUR WIFE DRESS IN A PERIOD DRESS IS STRICTLY VOLUNTARY.)

The advantage to this is, the Innkeeper is going to have a photographer there (free) to take out pictures for advertisement of her place and this is good PR for us as well.

<http://www.binghamhouse.com/>

Additional information will be sent out in the next few months. We hope you can make it!

<http://www.standofcolors.com/reinfo.asp>

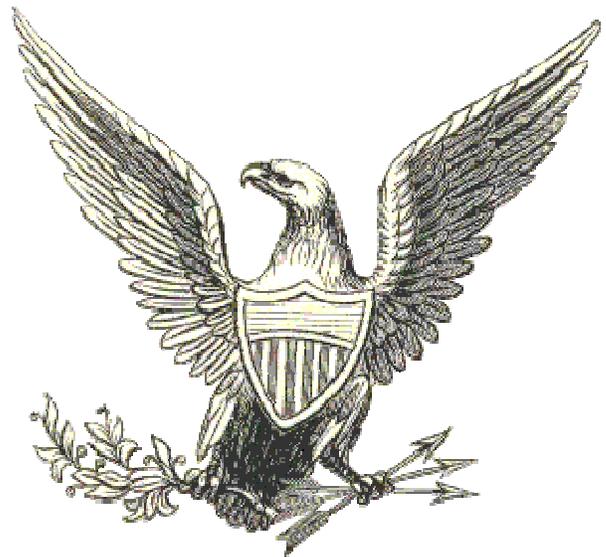
- Once you have registered please reply to 1st Sgt Paul Mattoon so he can begin a head count.
paulmattoon@verizon.net
- Make calls and plan to ride share as it seems fuel costs are not going down.

We will gather next in Farmers Branch for a day of drill and public interaction on Saturday, April 19. Alan was going to look into our possibly setting up camp on the Friday night. More info on that soon.

See you in the ranks.

Henry Rochford, Sgt Co A

Cacullus non facit monachum



**Westport Missouri, (Stand of Colors)
Information: (May 17th – 18th, 2008)**

Men of the 1st Battalion,

Westport is shaping up to be the event for us out here in the west. Below is an initial report from Terry Crowder, commanding the division Cavalry Brigade. He has been involved in the planning for Westport from the start.

If you had a good time at the Shiloh event, you men will love this one more. Those who wish to camp campaign will be about 400 yards behind the main camp and completely out of site with NO modern intrusions. You will be about a 20 minute or less march from the main static camp. The hills are about 1/2 the degree as the ones at Shiloh but are completely hidden and out of site of everything but more wilderness. I have had three roads cut through the entire area and they are all period correct - even more so than Shiloh. The creek crossings are stone and the water running through them is actually city water so it is very clear and clean. I am attaching a map for you and your men that I hope will help. You will fight in a circle again ending up at the scripted fields. You will be able to deploy your men by unit/company/battalion or any manner you see fit.

The Static Camp is on top of the hill surrounding the abandoned civil war era house and a stone wall which surrounds the entire camp. The campaign camps are on the back side down the hill thru good terrain and along a open cut which is perfect for defense in case we are attacked.

Jack King will be in command of the non scripted as well as the scripted battles. Mike Moore will be present but has agreed to turn command to Jack. All is well.

If this event goes well, we have an open invite to do the same next year with whatever improvements you and the men wish. This is ALL about the groups of the West (West of the Miss) and our men. I am sick and tired of going east as well.



Our history is just as valuable out here. There may not have been as big battles as back east but we only have a few thousand men anyway. Never could figure out why people wanted to do reenactments that had 60 thousand men at them when we are lucky to put 1500 on the field. How accurate are they?

Colonel Terry Crowder, Commanding
Division Cavalry Brigade
First Federal Division

I'm excited about this event. From what I understand the site is anachronistic free (only one tower visible) and the terrain ideal for tactical movement. We'll obviously have good input into the scenarios and there should be something for everyone. Lets start planning on this one now!

Don Gross
1st Battalion
Frontier Brigade



MISSOURI.



Battle of Westport



Battle across Brush Creek as depicted in Missouri State Capitol mural

Date	<u>October 23, 1864</u>
Location	Present-day <u>Kansas City, Missouri</u>
Result	<u>Union</u> victory

Belligerents

United States (Union) CSA (Confederacy)

Commanders

Samuel R. Curtis Sterling Price

Strength

Army of the Border (22,000) Army of Missouri (8,500)

Casualties and losses

1,500 1,500

The **Battle of Westport**, sometimes referred to as the "**Gettysburg of Missouri**," was fought on October 23, 1864, in present-day Kansas City, Missouri, during the American Civil War. U.S. Army forces under Major General Samuel R. Curtis decisively defeated an outnumbered Confederate Army force under Major General Sterling Price. The conflict was the turning point of Price's Missouri Expedition and helped force his army to retreat.

Westport

Westport (which is now within the boundaries of present-day Kansas City) was already an historic city by the time Union and Confederate forces clashed there in 1864. Pioneers traveling along the Oregon, California and Santa Fe Trails had all passed through this town on their way West via Wakarusa watershed ridgelines.

Price's Missouri Expedition

In September of 1864, Sterling Price led his Army of Missouri into Missouri. Major General William S. Rosecrans, commanding the Federal Department of the Missouri, began assembling troops to repel the invasion. Rosecrans's cavalry, under Major General Alfred Pleasonton, was in pursuit of Price with a large detachment of infantry from the Army of the Tennessee under Andrew J. Smith. Finding St. Louis too heavily fortified, Price moved further west to threaten Jefferson City. After light skirmishing, Price again decided his target was too heavily fortified and moved west once again towards Fort Leavenworth.

Major General Samuel R. Curtis, commander of the Federal Department of Kansas, now faced the threat of Price's army moving into his department, after learning of the Confederate movements from spies including Wild Bill Hickock. Curtis assembled the troops of his department into the Army of the Border. James G. Blunt was recalled from Indian campaigns to lead the 1st Division composed mostly of volunteers regiments and some Kansas militia. Curtis was only able to muster about 4,000 volunteers and asked Kansas governor, Thomas Carney, to call out the state militia to bolster the volunteer forces. Governor Carney immediately suspected Curtis of attempting to draw the militia away from their voting districts as it was nearing time for reelections. Carney was unconcerned with Price's force far away in Missouri and felt it posed no threat to Kansas. When Price turned west toward Jefferson City, Carney relented and Maj. Gen. George Dietzler took command of the division of Kansas Militia joining the Army of the Border.

The Battle

General Curtis sent the bulk of his 1st Division, under Gen. James Blunt to confront the Confederates at Lexington. Blunt was unable to stop Price but did slow him down and gather information on the size of the Confederate forces. Again along the Little Blue River on October 21, Blunt was forced to retire but not without slowing Price enough for a pursuing Federal cavalry division under Alfred Pleasonton to close the gap between himself and the Rebels. Curtis was nearly 60 years old and age had now taken a toll on his desire for combat. However thanks to his aggressive subordinate, Gen. Blunt, the decision was made to make another stand south of Westport. Blunt personally oversaw the construction of a defensive line established south of the town along Brush Creek perpendicular to the Kansas state line.

Price who was almost as old as his adversary, Curtis, left direction of the battle lines to his subordinate, General Jo Shelby. Two divisions under Shelby and James Fagan were poised to assault Blunt along Brush Creek. A third division under John S. Marmaduke was posted at Byram's Ford along the Big Blue River to hold off Pleasonton's Cavalry.

Fighting along Brush Creek

Blunt had three brigades along Brush Creek and a fourth under Col. Charles Blair was coming up from Kansas City. From right to left were the brigades under Colonels Thomas Moonlight, Charles "Doc" Jennison, and J. Hobart Ford. At daybreak Ford and Jennison crossed Brush Creek with skirmishers and met Shelby's troopers in an open field beyond. The Confederates attacked and drove the outflanked Federals back across the creek. Thomas Moonlight's brigade was hit so hard that it was forced to retreat across the Kansas state line and Jennison's brigade retreated almost into the streets of Westport. At this crucial point Curtis could hear Pleasonton's guns at Byram's Ford and Col. Blair's fresh brigade just arrived. His spirits lifted Curtis rode to the front lines to personally direct Blair's troops into battle. The reinforced Federals charged across the river but were once again repulsed and retreated back to the north side of the creek. Curtis needed another option besides frontal assaults and while looking for a weak point in the Rebel lines he came across a farmer searching for his lost horse. The farmer directed Curtis to a gulch running up to a rise along Shelby's left flank. Thomas Moonlight's brigade across the border was now in prime position to exploit this opportunity. Moonlight's 11th Kansas Cavalry Regiment escorted a Wisconsin Battery through the gulch and hit Shelby's left brigade, under M. Jeff Thompson, in the flank.

At the same time Moonlight was hitting the Rebel flank, Blunt renewed the attack along the front with Jennison's and Ford's brigades. The weight of Blunt's attack and the surprise of Moonlight's flanking maneuver was too much and the Rebels were forced back across the prairie to higher ground. Here they made a stand and several unsuccessful counterattacks. As disaster was befalling Shelby and Fagan, a similar fate was happening to Price's rearguard under, Marmaduke at Byram's Ford.

Fight for Byram's Ford

Byram's Ford

Marmaduke's division had the benefit of fortifications on the west bank of Byram's Ford was able to put up a fight against three of Pleasonton's four brigades since 8:00. One of Pleasonton's brigade

commanders, Brig. Gen. Egbert B. Brown stalled his attack and was placed under arrest by Pleasonton for disobeying orders. Another of Pleasonton's brigade commanders, Col. Edward F. Winslow was wounded and succeeded by Lt. Col. Frederick Benteen (who would later ride to fame at Little Bighorn). Despite these setbacks the Federal troopers gained the west bank of the river and Marmaduke retired. As Brown's brigade (now lead by Col. John F. Phillips) forded the river they came under heavy fire from Marmaduke's artillery. Once they had crossed they charged Marmaduke across an open field. In this charge Union troops from Missouri and Arkansas battled Confederates from Missouri and Arkansas. As Marmaduke rejoined Shelby and Fagan, Blunt pounded the consolidated Confederate forces with his artillery.

While the main Confederate army was being hit hard on two sides, Pleasonton's fourth brigade under Brig. Gen. John McNeil moved against a Rebel brigade under William Lewis Cabell guarding a ford near Hickman Mills. Likewise McNeil's brigade was able to drive the Confederates from the ford.

Confederate Retreat

Federal columns were now converging on Price from three different angles. The Confederates pulled back to a last line of defense along the road to the town of Little Santa Fe and set up a line on Forest Hill. The Confederates set the prairie grass on fire as a smoke screen and the road was strewn with debris from the fleeing Rebel army. The fighting at Westport was over but the following day, Blunt and Pleasonton took up the chase once more.

Results

The Battle of Westport was one of the largest battles west of the Mississippi River, with over 30,000 troops involved and roughly 1,500 casualties on each side. The Union victory put an end to Price's threat to Missouri. The greatly contested border state of Missouri was now firmly in Union control. Price continued to fight mostly rear guard actions on his retreat to Arkansas, where his expedition officially ended November 1, 1864. This was the last campaign in the Trans-Mississippi Theater and the last major Confederate threat to any northern state.

Our next event!!! Farmers Branch Historic Park, April 18th(overnight)/April 19th:

Gentlemen,

The next local scheduled event is the living history gathering (Boy Scouts) at Farmers Branch Historical Park, evening of Friday April 18th and Saturday April 19th.

The purpose of the evening gathering is to set up a 'civil war' camp site to give the scouts an idea (very loosely interpreted) of what a Federal camp looked like.

As such, the impression I'm looking for will be Feb – April, 1861 .

We're not required to do 1st person, but it would be nice if others trying to do First Person are not interrupted or engaged by 'modern' soldiers when they're in character.

Feel free to discuss the election.....of 1860.

The premise will be that Texas has requested our departure in February, and that we're moving out of the state. Subsequently, while I want to have, say, 2 dog tents there for examples of later war, I'm looking for the bulk of the camp to consist of A-tents.

Non canvas tarp floors are right out, and even the canvas ones are probably reaching.

Let's avoid having the kitchen sink with us as we're trying to reflect a unit on the move (with wagons available to haul our impedimenta). Air mattresses are fine, but I don't want to see any cots (my own included) and make sure the air mattresses are kept covered.

Minimize the use of – stools, chairs & benches as I doubt those would have made the march.

Ammo, bread, food, wooden junk, boxes are the preferred 'sitting' devices.

Bear in mind the Texas units were ordered to head to the Gulf port to ship out.

Please keep the visibility of booze to an absolute minimum for this operation.

Packs if you have one, though you will not be required to drill in it, or wear it (and it wouldn't have been your choice unless you want to pretend you're on punishment detail).

Uniform - Frock, Hardee, forages or sack - all will be acceptable uniform.

NO SCALES unless you want to put them in a big box with all the other scales that also won't be worn.

Brass polished, rifles clean and armory bright (as much as possible), leathers blackened (not the brogans, these should reflect movement of the company).

This is an opportunity to do an overnight camp here in town, so please do your utmost to come out.

Let me know if you plan on attending Friday night, as I'll plan meals accordingly for Friday night and Saturday morning.

Unit will pick this one up.

The plan for Saturday is to do a morning Drill (where we'll discuss the finer points of the difference between advancing at the double quick and Charging....)

and I expect we'll be allowed to let the kids fire the muskets.

Anyone who has safety/shooting glasses and wants to volunteer to allow kids to fire the rifles, please bring the glasses along.

Aaron, we'll need both the National and Regimental colors so if you can't go we need to make arrangements to get them from you.

Julie, you are of course welcome as the laundress would have moved with the unit (as we know). If Brook can't make it, you can be married to George (won't that be fun...)

This is an opportunity to get some new blood, I know for myself, Sean and I joined directly as a result of seeing the 1st at a scouting event.

I'll send out another document with directions to the park, for those unfamiliar with it it's within a half mile of the intersection of 35 and 635 in Farmers Branch/Dallas. Fires will be allowed.

I remain
YMOS
Alan P.



The Union Standard

Newsletter of the 1st U.S. Infantry

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