



THE REGIMENTAL DISPATCH

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Muster Days, What are they and what does it mean?
- Where to go to get uniforms and accouterments
- History of the Second Missouri – Battle of Stone’s River
- Expect to Drill
- Lincoln’s Speech on Liberty

INAUGURAL ISSUE

The Second Missouri is starting off 2008 with this newsletter to keep the membership informed of activities. I anticipate issuing four newsletters a year. Look for the next issue in early April.

Articles are most welcome provided they are focused on the SVR, its activities, its history, our unit’s history or civil war history. I do not intend to focus on SUCW

information. That information should be available through your camp and any reference to the information would be duplicative.

The Regimental Dispatch will be the main method of communication to the members of the unit. I intend to make it available by mail and I am hopeful that the U. S. Grant Camp will allow me to place it on

their website in PDF format. You may then download the entire dispatch and keep it on your computer at home.

This is the first newsletter I have published, so feel free to provide me with your thoughts about the newsletter. I am interested in all comments so I can improve it and make it more valuable to our membership.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Inaugural Issue	1
Muster Days	1
Lincoln & Liberty	2
The Battle of Stone’s River	3
Regiment Uniform & Accouterments	5
Drill	7
Regimental Contact Information	8

MUSTER DAYS – WHAT ARE THEY?

The unit is inaugurating “Muster Days.” This will be activities that all members of the unit are expected to attend. There is a bare minimum that I believe we should expect from our membership in order to meet one of the goals to remind others of the Civil War. Attendance at Muster Days is what every member should try to achieve.

The Muster Days will be Sherman’s Death Day,

Lincoln’s Death Day, Memorial Day at Jefferson Barracks, and possibly Veterans Day in Saint Louis City.

The General Wm. T. Sherman Billy Yank Camp has not invited our unit to the Sherman Ceremony but I am anticipating that the camp will invite us. If so, I anticipate the celebration will be on 16 February 2008. More will be available when I have the

information.

The second event is Lincoln’s Death Day at Lincoln’s Tomb in Springfield, Illinois, which will occur on 12 April 2008. We will arrange to meet and car pool to the event. Once I know the time for the ceremony I will provide further details.

The third event is the annual Memorial Day event at Jefferson Barracks. This

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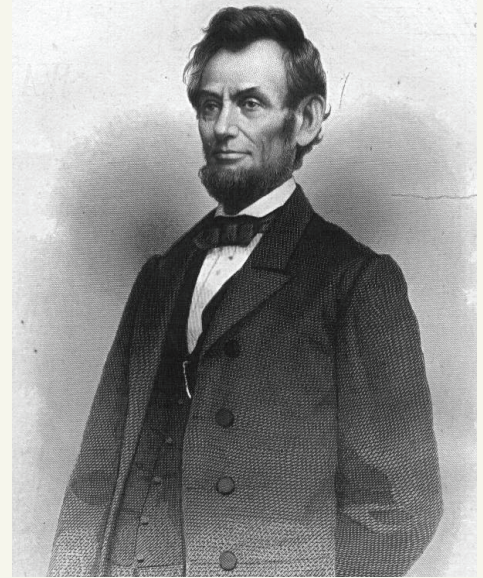
year the ceremonies will take place on 26 May 2008. Assuming the time is the same, we will all meet at 8:30 a.m. in the area by the VA hospital.

Another event I would like to participate at is the annual Veterans' Day Parade in Downtown Saint Louis. In the past these were rather small because the city always held the parade on 11 November, which was usually a work day for most people. These were always poorly attended in the past. I remember looking out of my office window at the parade as it went by and noted there were usually far more people marching in the parade than in attendance. Well that has now changed for the better. The parade is now on a Saturday. I believe this year the parade is on 8 November 2008. The parade on 10 November 2007 drew thousands. This really is an event to attend now to commemorate the memory of our ancestors.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON THE PROMISE OF LIBERTY

"How long ago is it – eighty odd years – since on the Fourth of July for the first time in the history of the world a nation by its representatives, assembled and declared as a self-evident truth that "all men are created equal." That was the birthday of the United States of America. Since then the Fourth of July has had several peculiar recognitions. The two most distinguished men in the framing and support of the Declaration were Thomas Jefferson and John Adams – the one having penned it and the other sustained it the most forcibly in debate – the only two of the fifty-five who sustained it being elected President of the United States. Precisely fifty years after they put their hands to the paper it pleased Almighty God to take both from the stage of action. This was indeed an extraordinary and remarkable event in our history. Another President, five years after, was called from this stage of existence on the same day and month of the year; and now, on this last Fourth of July just passed, when we have a gigantic Rebellion, at the bottom of which is an effort to overthrow the principle that all men are created equal, we have the surrender of a most powerful position and army on that very day, and not only so, but in a succession of battles in Pennsylvania, near to us, through three days, so rapidly fought that they might be called one great battle on the 1st, 2d, and 3d of the month of July; and on the 4th the cohorts of those who opposed the declaration that all men are created equal, "turned tail" and ran. Gentlemen, this is a glorious



theme, and the occasion for a speech, but I am not prepared to make one worthy of the occasion. I would like to speak in terms of praise due to the many brave officers and soldiers who have fought in the cause of the war."

This passage was spoken extemporaneously by Abraham Lincoln on 7 July 1863 when a group came to serenade him at the Executive Mansion after the recent victory at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Please note in the quote the kernel of what will become the Gettysburg Address in that he talks about the birth of a nation 80 years prior. When reading the words of the President, one can see how he views the United States and that these themes and truths reappear in his speeches throughout his life.

THE 2ND REGIMENT MO. VOL. INF. U.S. IN HISTORY

THE BATTLE OF STONE'S RIVER 30 DECEMBER 1862 TO 2 JANUARY 1863

The Army of the Cumberland was near Murfreesboro. Major General William Rosecrans was in command of the Army of the Cumberland and the right wing was commanded by Major General Alexander McCook. Brigadier General Philip Sheridan was in command of the Third Division which made up part of the right wing of the Army of the Cumberland.

General Sheridan's Third Division was made up of three infantry brigades and one artillery unit. The Second Brigade was commanded by Colonel Frederick Schaefer and within the Brigade were 44th Illinois, 73rd Illinois, 2nd Missouri, and 15th Missouri. Lieutenant Colonel Bernard Laiboldt and Major Francis Ehrler were commanding the 2nd Missouri.

Under pressure from President Lincoln for military action, General Halleck telegraphed Major General Rosecrans and told him to attack or else he would be relieved of his command. On 26 December 1862 General Rosecrans sent his army out of its camp at Nashville, Tennessee with the intent of attacking the Army of Tennessee under the command of General Braxton Bragg, which

was encamped near Murphysboro in order to thwart a thrust toward Chattanooga, Tennessee and to protect the farms that were supplying his army with food and forage.

Hampered by attacks by Confederate cavalry, General Rosecrans' advance was slow. By the end of the day on 30 December 1862 the two armies were facing each other in the fields and forest outside of the town. The Union Army was across the road from Nashville and had the Stone's River to its left and a forest anchored the line on the right. The idea of the Confederate general was to drive the Union forces back on their right, cut off their retreat and the line of supply, and corner the federal troops with the river to their backs. The Union commander had an identical plan; his forces would attack on his left and turn to the right and roll up the Confederate right. That evening, as the generals planned the next day's battle, the bands of the two armies began their own battle. Finally, one of the bands struck up *Home Sweet Home* and the other band joined.

About 2:00 a.m. in the morning of 31 December 1862 General

Joshua W. Sill awoke General Sheridan and reported the sound of troop movement to his front and he believed the Confederates were preparing for an attack that morning. After listening closely to his friend from their days at West Point, Gen. Sheridan mounted his horse and accompanied General Sill to the front lines. When they arrived, Gen. Sheridan dismounted and walked to the picket line. According to Gen. Sheridan's after action report, he distinctly heard the sounds of artillery on the move and the sound of hundreds of feet marching in the distance. Alarmed, Gen. Sheridan immediately left with Gen. Sill to inform their superior, Major General Alexander McCook. After listening to the report, General McCook dismissed the report by stating the Union left would attack the Confederate right and this would halt any attack on Sheridan's forces because the Confederates would order the attackers to reinforce what would be the Southern beleaguered right. General Sheridan was not comforted by McCook's

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

comments. When he returned to his post, General Sheridan ordered the 15th Missouri and the 44th Illinois to move forward and reinforce Gen. Sill. Then he awoke all of his officers and ordered his men under arms and his artillery fully manned and prepared for a battle. When the battle started, Sheridan's men would be ready.

Early in the morning on 31 December 1862 the succession troops began an attack with the objective of turning the right flank of the Union army. Most of the Union troops were cooking breakfast when the crack of gunfire from the pickets began to echo across the fields.

When the Southern troops came out of the forest to attack Sheridan's men, the artillery opened on them and walked the shells back into the oncoming confederates. The artillery raked them from the front and the side. General Sheridan's troops, which included the 2nd Missouri, held the line when other units faltered. In fact, General Sheridan's troops only fell back after their right flank was exposed because the federal troops on the flank broke. When the men of Sheridan's Division fell back they did so in a stubborn and deliberate manner forcing the oncoming rebels to pay steeply for the ground. Sheridan's men erected three different lines of defense while under direct fire. Each time the infantry with close support from Sheridan's artillery inflicted grievous wounds on the Southern regiments and brigades that continually assaulted them. These brave men held the line even though all of Sheridan's brigade

commanders were dead and their ammunition was dangerously low. Reluctantly, Gen. Sheridan ordered his troops out of the pocket and in retreat. The dead lay on the ground and nearly covered all of it. The last position of Sheridan's men became known as "The Slaughter Pen." This valiant defense bought precious time for the Union to organize after having been caught unprepared. When Sheridan ordered the remnants of

communication and by the same token required the confederates to extend their line. The soldiers had a full supply of ammunition and understood the necessity of holding this line.

The secessionist on the other hand had difficult terrain including the dense forest, rock outcroppings, and cedars. This caused the confederates the ability to mass their forces for a unified attack and



his 3rd Division to the rear, they had fought for four hours, engaged nine Confederate brigades, and claimed 2,000 to 3,000 casualties while suffering 990 casualties out of 5,000 troopers engaged.

With his army arrayed in a horseshoe configuration, General Rosecrans and General George H. Thomas, later to be known as the "Rock of Chickamauga", rallied the union troops with the help of massed artillery. The troops were drawn into the horseshoe configuration which provided superior lines of

instead rebel units were fed piece meal into the guns of the defending federal soldiers. The rebels were unable to bring their cannon into the battle because of the dense forest and so their soldiers attacked without artillery support. And so they marched forward into the face of the federal cannons in an eerie foreshadowing of Pickett's Charge. At the end of the day, the road back to Nashville was still under Union control and the Union army, though bloodied, was still a cohesive unit.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

On the left flank, at Hell's Half-Acre, wave after wave of southern men died attacking the Union forces. In their charges, the rebel line had to break to pass a house. This allowed enfilade fire from Union muskets and artillery raked the ranks. The 32nd Alabama entered the fight with two hundred eighty men and came out with only fifty-eight. Deadly volleys of Union artillery supported the Union troops on this the left anchor. This was the only part of the Union line not to retreat on this day.

The armies licked their wounds on the 1st of January, 1863 before

committing to another day of battle. On the afternoon of 2 January 1863, General Bragg ordered General Breckenridge to attack Union forces on a hill overlooking McFadden's Ford. This he did and his soldiers took the hill and kept advancing. Unfortunately for them, they advanced into the teeth of 57 union cannon which decimated them. In forty-five minutes, over 1,800 rebels lay dead or wounded and not one of the men in the charge made it to McFadden's Ford.

After a Union counterattack at the ford, General Bragg decided to retreat. At the end of the battle,

81,000 men were committed to the battle. Three thousand of them were now dead and nearly sixteen thousand more were wounded. President Lincoln got a victory he sorely needed considering he was putting the Emancipation Proclamation into effect on 1 January 1863. Lincoln sent a telegram to General Rosecrans which said "*I can never forget, if I remember anything, that at the end of last year and the beginning of this, you gave us a hard earned victory, which had there been a defeat instead, the country scarcely could have lived over.*"

WHAT DO I NEED AND WHERE DO I GET MY UNIFORM AND ACCOUTERMENTS?

In order for the members of the Second Missouri to accurately represent men who fought in the Civil War, we need to make sure that we get accurate clothing and accouterments. So the first question that needs to be addressed is what items are needed. However, before we can answer the question we must understand the goal and purpose of the unit.

First, we are not re-enactors when we are assembled as the Second Missouri. We will mostly be needed for parades, grave dedications, and at camp activities when requested. Therefore, there is a lower priority for items to show the public about camp life or drill. There may be an occasion when we are called to do

this in conjunction with a membership drive or for a school assembly or other activity. But these events, in my experience, are rare. More commonly we will appear to march and fire volleys.

Keeping in mind this purpose, we need to have a dress uniform. The civil war soldier would wear brogans, wool socks, light blue pants, a dark blue frock coat with shoulder scales, and a Hardee hat. Underneath the frock coat the soldier would wear a dress shirt and cravat. With regard to accouterments, we should have our leather traps, which consist of a waist belt, cap pouch, cartridge box, cartridge box sling, bayonet, bayonet scabbard, bayonet frog, and appropriate brass plates for the leather.

It is also important that the equipment be authentic. In my years of re-enacting I learned that some sutlers offered material that was a good compromise between cost and authenticity. For instance, most sutlers to meet demand use machines for sewing some items. Others, more concerned with exactly reproducing an item will hand sew the parts. Of course the price on the hand sewn items is higher and may take longer to obtain. So what should we as a unit do?

I believe that we should set some minimum standards and provide the names and contact information on sutlers who offer uniforms, rifles, and accouterments and let the

(Continued on page 6)

individual choose what he wants based on the person's own desire and balance between cost and authenticity.

Another important standard will be for the unit to have appropriate uniforms and equipment based on what was issued west of the Mississippi and for it all to match. For instance, it is extremely unlikely that a unit would have different muskets. More likely than not, based on numbers known, a Missouri unit would have British Enfield rifles. Moreover, the rifles would be stripped of the bluing because the officers believed there was an intimidation effect on the enemy if they saw hundreds of rifles with the sun glinting off the barrels as the unit moved over the hills.

Those sutlers who offer a good product at a reasonable price are Fall Creek Suttler and C&D Jarnagin. Fall Creek can be reached at fcsuttler.com and C&D Jarnagin is at jarnaginco.com. The Quartermaster Shop provides good items too and it can be found at quartermastershop.com. In fact, Fall Creek gets their uniforms from the Quartermaster Shop. You should be able to find everything you need at these sutlers.

Very authentic hats are produced by Dirty Billy, which is at dirtybillyshats.com. He also offers brogans. I have a Dirty Billy enlisted Hardee Hat and I can attest to its good quality and the authentic nature of the reproduction. I am buying my officer's hat and new brogans from him based solely on my experience with his hat.

We will need ammunition and percussion caps. Mike Watson makes great ammunition. His cartridge cases are wrapped in paper and have a Saint Louis Armory Stamp. I use his stuff and I like it. He can be contacted at Cartridges Unlimited, Mike Watson 4320 Hartford St. #A, St. Louis, MO 63116 (314)664-4332.

I will list some additional sutlers I learn of who offer items of better quality (and most likely higher price) when I am acquainted with others. If you can recommend someone, send me the information.

I have listed what is required and few items that are optional. The canteen is not required but you may want to move it into the required column. You can put water in it and use it during the day. I know I appreciate the water in my canteen during our annual Memorial Day Services. If you do get a canteen, do not skimp on this item. Make sure you get the stainless steel canteen to avoid health issues with truly authentic ones.

Everyone in the unit will need:

Uniform

- ◆ Brogans (1 pair, shoes)
- ◆ Wool Socks
- ◆ Light Blue pants (Appropriate infantry piping for non-commissioned offers)
- ◆ Dark Blue Frock Coat
- ◆ Brass Shoulder Scales (Enlisted and NCO) & Attachments
- ◆ Shirt
- ◆ Galluses (Suspenders)
- ◆ Cravat
- ◆ Hardee Hat with Hardee Eagle and Bugle in brass, blue infantry cord, and a feather

- ◆ NCO's will need the appropriate chevrons and a NCO crimson sash for sergeants.

Accouterments

- ◆ M1855 Leather waist belt with keeper
- ◆ Leather Percussion Cap Pouch Fleece Lined with Nipple Pick
- ◆ M1855 58 Caliber Black Cartridge Box
- ◆ Leather Cartridge Box Sling
- ◆ NCO Baldric for the Sword (Sergeants)
- ◆ Brass U.S. plate for the belt for privates and corporals
- ◆ Brass Non-Commissioned Officers buckle for sergeants
- ◆ Brass U.S. plate for the Cartridge Box
- ◆ Brass Eagle Breast Plate for the leather Cartridge Box Sling
- ◆ British Enfield Bayonet
- ◆ Enfield Bayonet Scabbard
- ◆ Enfield Bayonet Frog
- ◆ 1853 British Enfield 3 band Rifled Musket .577 caliber (also known as .58 caliber)
- ◆ Rounds of Ammunition
- ◆ Percussion Caps



Optional

- ◆ Stainless Steel Canteen covered in Jean Cloth or Light Blue
- ◆ A tarred haversack (Probably not going to get used too much. But it can carry a good snack on a long day.)

REGIMENTAL DRILL

In order to appropriately portray the soldier of the civil war and how the regiment would function at a formal event, we will need to drill.

We will drill at Jefferson Barracks and in the cold or inclement weather we will drill in the visitors area above the old park office.

In order to drill, each person will need a copy of Hardee's Drill. I have these in PDF format and I can e-mail

this to anyone upon request. My e-mail address is on the back of this newsletter.

In reviewing the book, please take note to learn the following drill commands in anticipation of our first drill. I do not expect that everyone will do it right; I do expect some familiarity with the drill based on having read the handout. By this, I mean I would expect people to know

the different commands and what would be expected in general.

The membership should know: Fall In, Attention, Rest, In Place Rest, Shoulder Arms, and Right Shoulder Shift. We will also learn to march as they did in the Civil War. So do not expect to hear 1, 2, 3, 4.

I will contact everyone with a date for our next drill in a week or so from the date of this newsletter.

DOWN WITH THE TRAITOR,
UP WITH THE STAR



**SECOND REGIMENT
MISSOURI VOLUNTEER
INFANTRY, U.S.**

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**Preserving the Memory of Those Who
Served Liberty!**

"Without
slavery, the
rebellion could
never have
existed. Without
slavery, it could
not continue."

Abraham Lincoln

1 December 1862,

Message to Congress

The next issue will hopefully hit the mail on 1 April 2008. It should have a full schedule and detailed information for the Lincoln Death Day and Memorial Day, both of which are Muster Days.

I am always looking for material of a historical nature for the newsletter. Please send your submissions to me at the contact information above. I would appreciate receiving the submission in a Word document or in the body of an e-mail.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please submit them to me. I may publish any questions I believe will help others in the unit as they will most likely have the same or similar question. You question



The Second Regiment, Missouri Volunteer Infantry, U.S., S.V.R. is a unit of the Sons of Veterans Reserve, the military arm of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Our purpose is to represent the guardians of Liberty who preserved the Union and by force of arms abolished slavery. These brave men, as Abraham Lincoln said, made possible the promise of Liberty as enshrined in the Declaration of Independence but not made part of the Constitution until placed there by their sacrifice.



S P R I N G I S S U E

could even be the nucleus of an article for the newsletter if an explanation is needed.

I look forward to meeting you all at our next drill and I will keep you advised of any information as I become aware of it. You may want to check out the U. S. Grant website because I will try to post information in a timely manner on the website. It can be found at: grantcamp.org.

Until the next issue, have a great time working to achieve the purposes of our unit and our Order.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,
1st Lt. Robert J. Amsler, Jr.