



The Border Star

Official Monthly Publication of the Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri

• **Founded 1992**

• **Incorporated 1994**

"Studying the Border War and Beyond"

November~December 2007

The Civil War Round Table of Western Missouri

2007 Officers

President ----- Mike Calvert
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2nd V.P. ----- Art Kelley
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Terry McConnell

The Border Star Editor

Dennis Myers
410 N. Cogan Lane
Independence, MO 64050-2006
(816) 769-6490

Meetings

2nd Wednesday of each month - 7:00 p.m.
Old Blake Museum - 106 E. Walnut
Independence, Missouri

Visitors Always Welcome!

Annual Dues

Individual ----- 15.00
Family ----- 25.00
Student (under 21) ----- 5.00
Newsletter Only (no meetings) ----- 10.00

For Information

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www.orgsites.com/mo/cwrt



The bombardment of Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861 was the opening engagement of the American Civil War. The countdown to the 150th Anniversary on April 12, 2011 is just 1245 days away, as of the date of our next Round Table meeting on Wednesday, November 14, 2007.

I don't know why but, lately, I have seemed to be more aware of the sounds that surround me. This made me think about the sounds that would have been heard during the Civil War. Obviously, Thomas Edison had not yet been able to record his now famous rendition of Mary Had A Little Lamb. So, any sounds we might attribute to the Civil War we have had to either hear them as part of a movie or some other sort of recording. I have listed my sounds below.

Sounds I have heard.

- The cocking of the Union muskets, at the stonewall, during Pickett's charge in the movie Gettysburg. Listen to the movie again and maybe a chill will go down your spine like it does mine.
- The pistols firing in the distance, while Quantrill's men wait to attack Lawrence, in the movie Ride with the Devil. When the sound is heard every horse reacts.
- Civil War music played on period instruments. Modern instruments just don't seem to get the sound correctly.
- In the movie "Gettysburg" when Joshua Chamberlain yells, "Fix bayonets!" Another spine chiller.
- The sound of battery of cannon firing at a reenactment. It can make your ears hurt and you can feel the sound waves on and in your body.
- The sound of Taps being played by a lone bugle. I defy you to hear that and not get misty eyed.

Sounds I would like to hear.

- What 200 or more horses sound like under full cavalry charge. The rumble, the creaking of leather and the hard breathing.
- What a camp of 100,000 soldiers sounds like when waking up in the morning. The groaning, the moaning, the coughing and shouting.
- What an army of 100,000 soldiers sound like on the march. The clothing sounds, the sound of equipment clanking and the conversations.
- What a paddle wheel steamboat on the river sounds like. The splash of water, the hiss of steam and the paddle slapping the water.
- What a civil war army sounds like as it advances on an enemy position. The tramp of feet, the swish of grass and the sound of fear.

Sounds I don't care if I ever hear.

- The sounds of wounded or dying men.
- The sounds of wounded or dying horses.
- The sound of a minie ball going past my head.
- The sound of a cannon ball passing close by.

That's my list. Think about yours, listen to them and maybe we can trade sounds. See you in November.

Mike Calvert, President
The Civil War Roundtable of Western Missouri

CWRTWMO Calendar

November Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, November 14, 2007 – 7:00 p.m.
Old Blake Museum, 106 E. Walnut, Independence.
Program: Bruce Hughes – “Platte County History”
Annual Business Meeting and Election of Officers

November Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 28, 2007 – 7:00 p.m.
17313 E. 51st Terr. Court S., Independence, MO.
Any member is welcome to attend. Call Beverly Shaw for directions at (816) 478-7648. This board meeting is a week later than usual because of Thanksgiving and will be our planning meeting for 2008. No board meeting in December.

December Christmas Luncheon

Saturday, Dec. 1, 2007 – Noon
Loose Park Garden Center, 51st and Wornall, Kansas City, MO (small building west of the Pavilion). Gathering at 11:30 a.m.. The Round Table provides a deli tray, buns, and drinks. Please bring a dish to share and an inexpensive gift to exchange – wrapped or unwrapped. Program: Jim Beckner-“Christmas During the Civil War.” In cooperation with the Union Cemetery Historical Society. No regular Wednesday night meeting in December.

Other Events

Bingham-Waggoner Estate Holiday Décor

313 W. Pacific, Independence, MO
November 23 - December 30, 2007
(Closed December 23 - 25). Also see the Vaile Mansion and the Jail Museum.

Westport Historical Society Quarterly Dinner

Thursday, November 8, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.
Homestead Country Club, 6510 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS. (Note that Mission Road is closed from Shawnee Mission Parkway to 63rd so avoid that route.) Dinner is \$25. Speaker is noted broadcaster Bill Kurtis speaking on “Bringing the Civil War to the Screen” and “The Battle of Westport.” Call (816) 561-1821 or (913) 648-0952 for reservations.

9th Annual Blue and Grey Banquet

Friday, November 9, 2007 at 6:30 p.m.
Liberty Theater in Ft. Scott, KS. \$25.

Speaker is Bill Kurtis on the making of the DVD “Lost Battle of the Civil War” which focused on the Battle of Mine Creek and Ft. Scott. For reservations call the Mine Creek Battlefield State Historic Site at (913) 352-8890.

Westerners Meeting

Tuesday, November 13, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.
Homestead Country Club, 6510 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS - Dinner is \$20.
Program: Dan Smith on “Battlefield Preservation.”
For reservations please call David Hockett at (913) 217-7768.

Holiday Candlelight Tour - Harris-Kearney House

November 14, 16, and 17, 2007. 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.
4000 Baltimore, Kansas City, MO. Celebrate the 1856 Christmas Season with the Harris Family in period attire. \$5 adults, \$3 students, 5 and under free. Tickets available at the door.

Civil War West of the Mississippi Conference

November 16 - 17, 2008 in Springfield, MO

Civil War Round Table of Kansas City

Tuesday, November 27, 2007. 6:30 p.m. - Dinner.
Homestead Country Club, 6510 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS. Cost is \$20. Program is Fred Chiaventone on “Military Lessons from the Civil War.” Call Paul Gault for reservations at (816) 741-2962.

Westerners Meeting

Tuesday, December 11, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.
Homestead Country Club, 6510 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS - Dinner is \$20.
Program: Alisha Cole from the Shawnee Indian Mission talking on “Christmas Through the Ages.”
For reservations please call David Hockett at (913) 217-7768.

Civil War Round Table of Kansas City

Tuesday, December 18, 2007. 6:30 p.m. - Dinner
Homestead Country Club, 6510 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS. Cost is \$20. Annual Silent Book Auction to raise money for the Round Table and the Monnett Battle of Westport Fund. Please call Paul Gault for reservations at (816) 741-2962.

Annual Business Meeting And Election of Officers

Plan to stay after the program on November 14 to elect officers and board members for 2008. The present board is willing to serve another year, but we are always open for nominations from the floor. Those standing for election are Mike Calvert-President, Pat Gradwohl-1st Vice President, Art Kelley-2nd Vice President, Karen Wells-Secretary, Beverly Shaw-Treasurer, Paul Tate-Historian, and board members Karen and Delbert Coin, Terry McConnell, Don and Kathy Moorehead, and Chris and Faye Cooper.

Dues Are Payable For 2008

You can pay dues at the November meeting or December Christmas party or by mail to CWRTWMO, 17313 E. 51 Terr. Court S., Independence, MO 64055. Family dues are \$25 and single dues are \$15. For those who cannot attend meetings and just want to receive the newsletter, the subscription rate is \$10. When you pay dues, please give us your up-to-date e-mail address and your birthdate (just the month and day).

A Story From Platte County “Old Kickapoo”

Judy Tharp, a member of the Round Table who is a descendant of the Miller family in Platte County, has written some historical articles which were published in Leavenworth in 1995. One of the more colorful of these involved “Old Kickapoo,” a smoothbore, six-pound cannon brought back by the famous Col. Alexander Doniphan, a national hero of the Mexican war who was a lawyer in Liberty, Missouri, and guided one of the longest military marches in history to Mexico.

Judy says that it ended up in Weston, Missouri, in 1848 and was used to fire salvos to welcome steamboats and on patriotic occasions. She continues as follows:

“It was stolen from Weston in 1856 by the Kickapoo Rangers, fiercely Pro Slavery men. On May 21, 1856 it was used in a raid on Lawrence, a strongly Free State town. The Pro Slavery mob threw the town’s printing presses into the Kaw River and tried to destroy the Eldridge Hotel with cannon balls. However, one shot missed, another lobbed through a window and a third bounced off the wall. They ended up torching the hotel when the cannon failed to do the job.

Nevertheless, “Old Kickapoo” is considered to have fired the first (quasi) military shots in the preliminaries of the Civil War. In the dead of night, some Free State Leavenworth men, led by attorney H. Miles Moore, “liberated” the cannon from the Kickapoo Rangers from where they had it stationed in a peach orchard near the settlement of Kickapoo—about four miles north of Leavenworth on the Missouri River.

For safekeeping, the Free Staters buried and reburied the cannon in various fields in Leavenworth and Lawrence, to keep the Kickapoo Rangers from recapturing it. When the border troubles of the mid-1850’s had subsided somewhat, the old cannon was disinterred for the last time, and given to the Turnverein of Leavenworth.

Sometime during that long caper, it got the name “Old Kickapoo.” During the Civil War, “Old Kickapoo” was enough to persuade the captain of the steamer “Sam Gaty” to lower the Confederate Stars and Bars and run up Old Glory. On the Fourth of July after the Civil War, the Turners and their rifle company would parade with “Old Kickapoo.”

But gradually, the old cannon fell into disuse. Nobody cared anymore.

Then in 1881, it occurred to someone that the cannon might be useful in opening the mine shaft of the old Leavenworth Coal Co., which was clogged with debris. It was taken down the air shaft, loaded with solid shot, and fired upward into the debris. The debris didn’t budge, but the gun burst tearing a huge chunk from the underside.

Happily, someone had the foresight to salvage the torn-off fragment. Nobody paid attention to the mutilated old cannon until in 1884, when it was spotted in an alley in downtown Leavenworth by H. Miles Moore, head of the original “liberation party.” He discovered that it was about to be sent to Chicago to be melted down as old brass.

With the help of the Kansas Historical Society, the old veteran cannon was saved from the foundry. The blown-off fragment was made into little “charms” that were exact replicas of “Old Kickapoo,” and sold for \$1 each along with a souvenir historical pamphlet.

One of my brothers inherited my mother’s charm bracelet, and one of these perfect little brass cannons hangs from it.

The rest of “Old Kickapoo” is on display at the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.”