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FEBRUARY 2002

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Menu for Feb. 26, 2002

Spinach Salad w/Strawberry Vinaigrette, Chicken Picatta w/Lemon Butter Sauce, White Rice and Wild Rice Blend, Chef's Medley of Vegetables, and Chocolate Mousse Parfait. Delicious!!! 354th Regular Meeting Tuesday, Feb. 26, 2002 Social: 6:00pm Dinner: 6:30pm

Homestead Country Club 65th and Mission Rd. Prairie Village, KS

Cash bar – dinner \$20.00

Featured February Speaker Dr. Thomas P. Sweeney M.D.

"All For The Union, General Sweeny in Missouri in 1861"

In January of 1861 then Captain Thomas William Sweeny arrived in St. Louis and found a city full of intrigue involving both secessionists and unionists. Added to this was the tension caused by prejudice between the major ethnic groups, the Germans and the Irish. The Irish for a large part were secessionists and the Germans Unionists. At the center of this tension and intrigue was the prize coveted by both sides, the St. Louis Arsenal. Sweeny was in command of the under-manned Federal troops at the arsenal. The arrival of Captain Nathaniel Lyon is the catalyst that causes the events to heat up and boil over.

Sweeny's part during this very important time in Missouri's Civil War history and the subsequent events that would culminate in the battle of Wilson's Creek and the retreat of the Federals has been poorly told or not at all. When he is mentioned it is couched in prejudice and half-truths. The speaker will bring these events into perspective and tell the true role that Sweeny played during these momentous times in 1861.

General Thomas W. Sweeny was born in County Cork, Ireland on December 25, 1820. He immigrated to the United States in 1832.

At the outbreak of the Mexican war in 1846, Sweeny was elected 2nd Lieutenant of Company A, First New York Volunteers. He participated from the Siege of Vera Cruz to Churabusco where he was wounded by a musket ball in the right arm necessitating amputation above the elbow.

During the 1850's Sweeny fought Indians and bandits in California and Arizona and on the Great Plains. He was appointed 1st Lieutenant in the Second Infantry. In 1857 he was present at the Great Treaty of The Sioux Nations.

Continued on page 3

Coat and Tie Suggested, "Business" Casual Accepted

2002.. Change of Location and Dinner Charge.

Don't forget and go hungry, we've changed locations. We're back at Homestead Country Club at 65th and Mission Road in Prairie Village. The dinner charge is now \$20.00. Get your reservations in early! And please remember, **Attendance Requires Dinner Reservation**. Thank You.



RESERVATIONS

Reservations must be received by FRIDAY, March 22, 2002

Mail to: Paul Gault 7118 N. Congress Ave. Kansas City, MO 64152-2948

The price of the dinner is \$20.00. Make checks payable to: *The Civil War Round Table of Kansas City (CWRTKC)*. Please note any special dietary needs with your reservation.

EMERGENCY ONLY

Call: Paul Gault at 816-741-2962 or as an alternative number ONLY, call Steve Harris, 816-444-1747. DO NOT leave duplicate reservations at both numbers. The Round Table is billed for all meals prepared. Members will be charged for reservations not cancelled by the Friday before the meeting.

Upcoming Speakers for 2002

Mar. 26: David C. Hinze: Phillip Sheridan; From Clerk to Colonel: A Look at the Trans-Mississippi career of the soldier and

beyond.

April. 23: Daniel R. Weinberg: Lincoln Assassins; Their Trial and Execution

May: Dr. William G. Piston

September 24: James I. Robertson Jr.

October 22: Wiley Sword November 26: Terry Winschel

Upcoming Events 2002 and beyond...

March 9-10, 2002: Pea Ridge Preservation March: No battle, no date set as yet, more info to follow

March 30-31, 2002: Morehouse, MO. (near Sikeston): Living history. Skirmish around historical house, two battles, and Saturday dance.

April 4-7, 2002: Confederate Historical Institute Conference, "Jackson's Last Hours". Contact Jerry Russell for more info at, ilrussell@civilwarbuff.com.

April 23, 2002: Book Fair, Civil War Round Table of Kansas City and The Monnett Battle of Westport Fund, a benefit. Please bring you

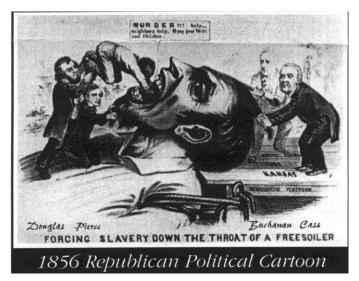
donations of either book or Civil War artifacts for a silent auction to be held at the meeting. Any Questions, Call Don Bates Sr. 913-648-5348

April 27-28, 2002: Missouri Town, Near Kansas City: CROWS Sponsored civilian event; no military. Promoting the 1850's era, first person civilian life.

May 18-19, 2002: Shoal Creek, near Kansas City: Historical structures, amenities, sponsored by Crowley's 3rd MO Infantry. Jim Beckner 322-3100.

Bleeding Kansas

A SERIES OF TALKS AND DRAMATIC INTERPRETATIONS ON THE VIOLENT CONFLICT OVER SLAVERY ISSUE IN Kansas Territory 1854-1861.



Constitution Hall State Historic Site in Historic Lecompton,

February–April 2002, Free Admission, Sundays 2:00 p.m.

Programs

Mar. 24 – Clarina Nichols: Frontier Freedom Fighter by Diane Eickhoff, editor, author and historian.

Apr. 7 – Ely Moore's Story of Lecompton by J. Howard Duncan, P.E., playwright and director, Lecompton Reenactors

Sweeny became captain in 1861 and was sent to command the troops at the St. Louis Arsenal in Missouri. He commanded troops at Camp Jackson and at the battle of Forsyth Missouri and Wilson's Creek. At the latter battle Sweeny received a musket ball in the thigh that he would carry for the rest of his

He was offered the colonelcy of the 52nd Illinois Volunteer Infantry in December of 1861. He earned honors and admiration from his men and superiors at Shiloh, Iuka and Corinth. Shiloh was the 52nd Illinois' first battle. He was in command of a brigade at the "Hornets Nest" where he was wounded several times. On the evening of April 6th, he was forced from the loss of blood to leave the field, receiving several wounds including one in his remaining arm.

Sweeny was promoted to the command of General Hackelman's brigade upon the death of that officer at Corinth in October of 1862. On October 27th, 1862 the officers of the 52nd Illinois gave Sweeny a Tiffany presentation sword and field glass, "as a token of respect and confidence." These items, along with a captured Confederate flag and C.S. belt buckle from Shiloh may be seen at General Sweeny's Museum in Republic, Missouri. Sweeny became a brigadier general of Volunteers on March 16, 1863 from the date of November 29, 1862.

He distinguished himself in the Atlanta Campaign leading a division under General Grenville M. Dodge. After the battle of Atlanta, Sweeny brought to a climax a longstanding feud with General Dodge and another politically appointed commander whom he also resented, General John Fuller, an Englishman by birth. With good cause Sweeny questioned Fullers actions during the battle. Dodge, coming to the aid of his friend Fuller, called Sweeny a liar. Sweeny called Dodge a "God-Damned Liar," and blows were exchanged. Sweeny knocked Dodge to the ground whereupon he had Sweeny arrested and at the court martial, was honorably acquitted in December of 1864.

He was placed in command of a post in Nashville, Tennessee to October of 1865. In 1866 Sweeny was in command of the ill-fated Fenian Invasion of Canada. He was arrested but soon released. After his retirement as a Brigadier General of Regulars, Sweeny lived in Astoria, Long Island New York until his death at age 72 on April 10, 1892. He was buried with honors befitting his rank at Greenwood Cemetery.



life.



























The January 2002 meeting was very special. The first of The Steve Treaster Preservation Awards was presented to Steve, by past president Jim Beckner, who for those who missed the meeting, did an outstanding job of telling about the man, Steve Treaster. Those of us that are fortunate in knowing Steve over a number of years, are well aware that he is a man of action rather than just words. He quietly goes about getting things accomplished and there are too many to list as far as what he has accomplished for not only our round table but for Civil War preservation purposes. He appeared before the Kansas Legislature to get the funding for *Mine Creek*. Without Steve's efforts, I don't think there would be a site center at *Mine Creek*. He has been behind the scenes, working on matters for the **Monnett Battle of Westport Fund** for years, and responsible for helping in the acquisition and efforts in funding for the land acquired to date at the *Byram's Ford*, *Big Blue Battle* site. Steve also is a past president of the CWRTKC. It was extra special as Steve, his wife Toni and their three sons were in attendance.

Thanks Steve, for all of your good efforts in our behalf.

Thanks go out to **John Coleton** for performing the duty of Chaplin for many years. John has not only prepared and given the blessing at our meetings but has visited members in hospitals and performed at funerals. We appreciate your efforts John!

Don Bates, Sr.























HISTORY OF MONNETT BATTLE OF WESTPORT FUND, INC.



By Daniel L. Smith

At the beginning of the twentieth century, public interest in Kansas City was sparked to commemorate the events of the Battle of Westport. In 1906, Paul D. Jenkins published the book Battle of Westport that stimulated the public preservation effort. In the summer of 1912, a reenactment of the battle at Byram's Ford was staged in Swope Park. (Kansas City Star, September 6,1912)

During the decade following the First World War, Kansas City's civic leaders under the direction of H. H. Crittenden, president of the Missouri Valley Historical Society, presented a concerted effort to preserve the Battle of Westport sites near present-day Loose Park and at Byram's Ford. Crittenden's father, Col. Thomas Crittenden, had led one of the Union cavalry brigades at Byram's Ford on October 23, 1864 and later served as governor of Missouri.

In the 1920s, Kansas City passed ordinances recognizing the sites associated with the Battle of Westport, and Congress was petitioned to create a national military park to commemorate the Battle of Westport.

When these efforts failed, preservation of the Battle of Westport went into a hiatus for nearly forty years. The battle site south of Brush Creek was lost to extensive modern residential development.

During the passage of the years, even the knowledge of the precise location of the Byram's Ford crossing on the Big Blue River became lost and uncertain. In the 1950s the Big Blue battlefield became home to an office and industrial park.

Then, in 1958 on the eve of the Civil War centennial, the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City was founded with former President Harry S. Truman as one of its charter members.

Dr. Howard N. Monnett, another charter member of the Round Table and an educational leader in Kansas City, researched and wrote extensively about the Action Before Westport. Dr. Monnett's book by that title was published in 1964 at the time of centennial of the Battle of Westport.

Dr. Monnett's enthusiasm for the subject within the Kansas City Round Table led to discussions of creating an automobile tour of the widely dispersed sites associated with the three-day conflict. The events of the battle stretched for miles from the Little Blue River east of Independence to the historic village of New Santa Fe near State Line Road and present day 122nd Street.

As a memorial to his vision, the leaders of the Kansas City Round Table joined together in creating an organization for the purpose of educating, commemorating and interpreting the sites and battlefields associated with the Battle of Westport. On December 5, 1975 the Monnett Battle of Westport Fund, Inc. was chartered as a Missouri not for profit corporation.

The members of the Monnett Fund were drawn from the membership of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City. Because the Round Table was not then a corporation and because the Fund represented a departure from the prior activities of the Round Table, the Monnett Fund stated that it was under the aegis of the Round Table rather than being an explicit instrument of the Round Table. In 1978 the Monnett Fund was granted tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(3) charitable corporation.

In 1976, Monnett Fund members began making plans for a self-guided automobile tour of the Battle of Westport. The tour commenced at Pennsylvania and Westport Road in the historic Westport district of Kansas City at the site of the Harris House Hotel, headquarters of Union General S. R. Curtis. The planned route incorporated existing markers and provided for the erection of twenty additional markers.

As part of its educational mission, the Monnett Fund in October 1977 jointly sponsored with the Westport Historical Society the first annual guided public tours on the anniversary of the battle. These first tours were conducted by Monnett Fund members Lumir Buresh, Laurence Phister, Ted Foote and Dan Smith.

By 1979, the members of the Monnett Fund led by chairman of the board Lumir Buresh and president Laurence Phister, had successfully raised funds from throughout the community to purchase and erect permanent signage and monument markers at 25 sites. The markers including site maps and text were designed, researched and edited by the Fund members. The members went to the sites and installed the pedestals for the new markers. Brochures describing the



sites on the self-guided automobile tour were published and distributed. A trust fund was established to provide for the repair and replacement of the markers.

In 1980, the leaders of the Monnett Fund began the initial efforts to place portions of the Byram's Ford site on the National Register of Historic Places. This initial effort was retarded by the confused legal title of ownership of many of the tracts surrounding the ford and by the unwillingness of some owners to agree to the site's nomination to the Register.

The Monnett Fund in 1983 began its role as an owner and steward of a portion of the Big Blue Battlefield. The Monnett Fund, through the efforts of its chairman of the board. Judge James F. Davis obtained the donation from Commerce Bank of fifty acres of the battlefield including the site of the Byram's Ford crossing.

With the acquisition of these tracts, Monnett Fund members, under the leadership of Kenny Hicklin, Orvis Fitts, Lumir Buresh, Laurence Phister, mowed grass, cleared brush and removed debris from the tracts under the Fund's ownership. Initial efforts were begun to provide improved access, additional markers and interpretation of the Byram's Ford site. Additional sites in Independence and at the Little Blue River were added and incorporated into the self-guided auto tour.

In 1986 the Fund, under the leadership of Chairman Orvis Fitts and President Jack Brooks, faced the challenge of the threatened destruction of the Byram's Ford site by a flood control project on the Big Blue River. Following lengthy negotiations with the Corps of Engineers, Orvis Fiats successfully crafted a plan, which preserved the Ford and provided for the preservation of additional tracts of the battlefield.

Through the active efforts of Monnett Fund member Robert Ziegler and others, the Byram's Ford Historic District was nominated and entered upon the National Register in 1989. The District is comprised of two sites: Byram's Ford Road Site, which is east of the river, and the Byram's Ford Site on the river.

In the 1990s the Monnett Fund undertook another fund raising campaign for the acquisition of additional portions of the Big Blue battlefield. The Fund became an active participant in the National Park Service's battlefield preservation programs.

Orvis Fitts and Jack Brooks led the Fund in obtaining national publicity for the project and the financial support of the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites. Jointly the Fund and APCWS raised over \$42,000 in 1995 for the acquisition of the Byram's Ford Road Site of the Historic District. Fund President Jack Brooks conducted the ceremony at the Wornall House in April 1995 transferring the Fund's battle site properties to the Kansas City Parks Department for the purpose of development and interpretation as the Byram's Ford Big Blue Battlefield Park. The transfer to the City specified that the Fund's continuing role was to actively advise the Parks Department in matters involving the site's development as a public historic property.

At this same time, the Fund and the Historic Preservation Division of the City of Kansas City Missouri jointly sponsored the preparation by Grey & Pape, a cultural resources consultant, of a preservation plan and archeological survey of the Byram's Ford site. In 1996 the Fund assisted with an intensive archaeological survey conducted on behalf of the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The latter survey provided artifact documentation of the fighting that took place in the area between Byram's Ford and the rock out cropping west of the ford.

These surveys recommended that the boundaries of the National Register historic district be increased. Since 1998, Fund President Dan Smith has pursued obtaining and submitting the necessary documentation for the formal boundary increase amendment. The amendment when approved by the state historic preservation officer will add other publicly owned properties to the Byram's Ford Historic District.

In August 1998 the Fund's representatives met with the Parks Department to assess the status of the City's development of the site as a public historic site. The City identified the need for detailed topographic maps of the site in order to prepare development plans. Fund Chairman Steven Treaster and Treasurer Betty Ergovich in May 1999 obtained a community action grant from the City of nearly \$30,000.00 for the mapping study.

Beginning in 1999, the Fund's board discussed further development and interpretative goals for the Byram's Ford site. The Fund has prepared and adopted a proposed specific interpretive and development plan for the Byram's Ford site. The proposed plan provides for short term and intermediate, and long term goals for the enhanced interpretation for the public of the historic events that occurred during the Battle of Westport. The Fund is preparing to conduct an intensive effort to obtain community, state and, national support for its proposed development plan.

Welcome New Members: Ken Ford, 13019 Windsor Circle, Leawood, KS 66209,

Carolyn Bartels, 1108 Appleton Ave., Independence, MO 64053, Gary Mills, 529 ½ Olive St., Leavenworth, KS 66048, Georgette Page, 1222 W. 69th St., Kansas City, MO 64113, Raymond Borden, 5916 W. 89th Terr., Overland Park, KS 66207,





The Civil War Round Table of Kansas City has a new web site and it's up and running, so those of you with internet connections, please visit and tell us what you think about the site. You can visit us at: www.geocities.com/kcroundtable.

Civil War Round Table of Kansas City Book Fair at the meeting April 23rd when **Dan Weinberg**, owner of the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop in Chicago will be our featured speaker. Any person wishing to donate on or more books or Civil War artifacts for the benefit of the **CWRT of KC** and **The Monnett Battle of Westport Fund** is encouraged to do so by the March meeting so the books can be displayed for a silent auction at the meeting on April 23rd. Any questions, please call Don Bates, Sr. at 913-648-5348. Thank you.

While you're making those reservations-Why not consider inviting a friend to the next Round Table meeting? Each guest is a potential new member and another person who can learn about and help us to promote and preserve the history of the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi. New members also assure the continued health of the organization, and the best way to attract them is your encouraging words.

Last Note from the editor: If you have something to put in the Border Bugle, the best way to get it to me is in a Word document through my e-mail which is: cwrtkc@kc.rr.com. Also I must apologize for not getting the other parts of Arnold Schofield's stories in again this issue but promise to do so next month if we have to go to 8 pages! Thanks.

The Border Bugle

The Civil War Round Table of Kansas City P.O. Box 6206 Leawood, Kansas 66206



