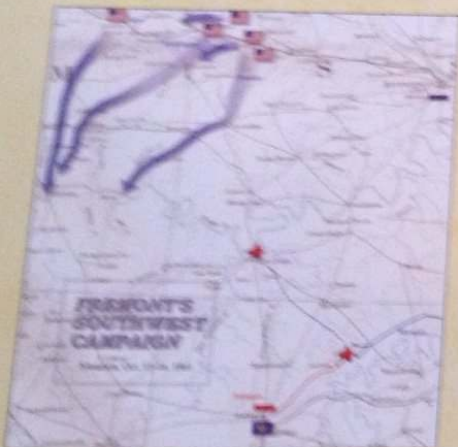


The Civil War in Camden County

Combat in Camden County

The North at Versailles (Ver-Sales), MO, where he was to join Hunter's left division for its march southwest in pursuit of Price's Missourians. Wyman set out from Rolla with his regiment of infantry and a force of cavalry known as the Fremont Battalion. Wyman took the Northern Road - roughly the route of the present-day BNSF railroad through northern Polk County - to its junction with the Linn Creek Road at the town of Hillhouse in southwest Camden County (just west of Richland, MO).



It was the Fall of 1861. Southern forces under the command of General Sterling Price, Missouri State Guard, held all of Southwest Missouri. This was the state of affairs that followed Price's defeat at Union General Nathaniel Lyon at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, southwest of Springfield, on August 31, 1861. Emboldened by the Wilson's Creek victory, Price moved north to the Missouri River, and laid siege to the town of Lexington in Lafayette County. His capture of Lexington, on September 20, 1861, sent shock waves through the North.

The Union Army of the West was headquartered in St. Louis, and was commanded by the famous Pathfinder of the West, Maj. Gen. John Charles Frémont. Prompted to action by the Lincoln administration, Frémont assembled a large force at Jefferson City in the last week of September, 1861, then placed them in camp along the Pacific Railroad. Frémont's army, with an effective strength of 38,000, was divided into five divisions, the left wing being stationed at Tipton under the command of Gen. David Hunter. Assembling the wagons and teams needed to move this force overland took two weeks, and by the time Frémont was ready to move, on October 14, 1861, he had lost the opportunity most coveted by federal authorities - to trap Price's force at Lexington.

Missouri's CIVIL WAR

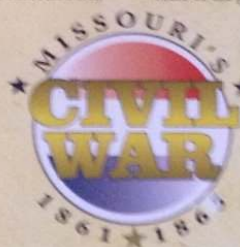
These events set the stage for Camden County's largest battle in the Civil War, which occurred on October 13, 1861 approximately 20 miles southeast of here. Frémont's need for supplies and transportation prompted him to call on Col. John B. Wyman, 11th Illinois Infantry, to assemble a

train of wagons and escort it from the railhead at Rolla to Versailles (Ver-Sales), MO, where he was to join Hunter's left division for its march southwest in pursuit of Price's Missourians. Wyman set out from Rolla with his regiment of infantry and a force of cavalry known as the Fremont Battalion. Wyman took the Northern Road - roughly the route of the present-day BNSF railroad through northern Polk County - to its junction with the Linn Creek Road at the town of Hillhouse in southwest Camden County (just west of Richland, MO).

You are standing in Linn Creek, built as the original town of Linn Creek was to be submerged when the Lake of the Ozarks was created in 1925. Old Linn Creek was the Camden County seat during the Civil War, and drew importance as the head of navigation on the Osage River, and the place where the Linn Creek Road crossed the Osage. The historic road generally followed Highway 7 and Y Highway west, and passed this point.

Linn Creek's strategic location prompted the construction of Union Camp McClurg in early 1861. Wyman's immediate objective on October 13, 1861, was to reach the safety of Camp McClurg. However, south of Hillhouse his cavalry collided with Southern cavalry approaching from the south. The result was the Battle of Mosely's Hollow, or as it is sometimes called, the Battle of Horseshoe.

The action in Camden County prevented Wyman from reaching Hunter at Versailles, and in turn kept the Frémont Battalion out of the greatest cavalry charge so far in the War, when Frémont's cavalry attacked Springfield, MO on October 25, 1861.



Joseph Washington McClurg

THE OSAGE REGIMENT

The Osage Regiment, Missouri Home Guards, was formed in June, 1861, from companies raised in Camden and surrounding counties. The regiment was equipped and commanded by Joseph Washington McClurg, who was then a successful merchant whose far-flung operations were centered at Linn Creek.

McClurg was born in St. Louis County in 1818, but he spent most of his childhood in the East. He became a lawyer in Texas, then established himself at Linn Creek in 1840. He was elected a U.S. Congressman at the end of the Civil War, and though he was once a slave owner, he was also a Radical Republican Governor of Missouri (1869-1871). He died in 1880 and is buried in Lebanon, Missouri.

The Osage Regiment served during the Fremont Campaign of 1861, but its term of service expired in December, 1861. Many of its men, like Benjamin O. Jeffries (right), served in Missouri militia units throughout the course of the War. Jeffries, a soldier in Company C of the Osage Regiment, served in the 47th Regiment, 1st Missouri Militia, and was discharged for disability in December, 1864. Nevertheless, he was a captain of cavalry on April 21, 1865 - two weeks after Lee surrendered at Appomattox - when the last combat veteran visited Camden County. Jeffries and 2 of his men died that day near Osage Beach when Jeffries led a charge against a force of Confederate cavalry trying to get north at War's end.



We use the term "Southwest" to describe the conditions here, because they were not Confederates. Men of this state-sponsored militia organization began to enroll in the Confederate service in December, 1861. The battle flag of the Missouri State Guard is pictured at left.

Source: Official Records, Series L, Volume A, Chap. V, pp. 280-281; Reports of Osage, Wyman, Wright and Brown; Description, William "Fremont's Headed Hens in Missouri"; *Arkansas Monthly*, Vol. 8, Issue 31 (January 1862); *Arkansas Civil War*; *Arkansas Monthly*; *Arkansas Monthly* (December 1861); *Arkansas Monthly* (January 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (February 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (March 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (April 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (May 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (June 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (July 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (August 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (September 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (October 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (November 1862); *Arkansas Monthly* (December 1862).

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