

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION  
**SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR**  
 CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

**PLEASE:**

- Type or print, using a ball-point pen, when filling out this form. Legibility is critical.
- Do not guess at the information. An answer of, "Unknown," is more helpful.
- Include a photograph of each viewable side and label it with name & direction of view.

- Thank You.

**Type of Memorial**

Monument *with* Sculpture                       Monument with *Cannon*  
 Monument *without* Sculpture                       Historical Marker                       Plaque

**Affiliation**

G.A.R. (Post Name & No. \_\_\_\_\_)                       M.O.L.L.U.S.  
 W.R.C. (Corps Name & No. \_\_\_\_\_)                       Other Allied Order  
 SUVCW (Camp Name & No. \_\_\_\_\_)                      (Please describe below)  
 DUVCW (Tent Name & No. \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Other: Missouri Dept of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks

**Original Dedication Date** 2005-2009 Please consult any/all newspaper archives for a local paper's article that would have information on the *first* dedication ceremony and/or other facts on the memorial. Please submit a copy of your findings with full identification of the paper & date of publication. Thank you.

**Location**

The Memorial is *currently* located at:

Street/Road address or site location NW Corner of Lafayette at Dickerson N39°47.92' W91°31.471'  
 City/Village Palmyra Township \_\_\_\_\_ County Marion

The front of the Memorial faces:  North     South     East     West

**Government Body, Agency, or Individual Owner** (of private cemetery that Memorial is located in)...

Name DNR Dept./Div. Division of State Parks  
 Street Address PO Box 176  
 City Jefferson City State MO Zip Code 65102  
 Contact Person Jim Denny Telephone ( 573 ) 751-8566

If the Memorial has been moved, please list former location(s)...

No- On grounds of the old Marion Co. Jailhouse

**Physical Details**

Material of Monument or base under a Sculpture or Cannon =  Stone     Concrete     Metal     Undetermined  
 If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_



**General Vicinity**

Rural (low population, open land)       Suburban (residential, near city)  
 Town     Urban / Metropolitan

**Immediate Locale** (check as many as may apply)

Industrial     Commercial  
 Street/Roadside within 20 feet     Tree Covered (overhanging branches)  
 Protected from the elements (canopy or enclosure, indoors)  
 Protected from the public (fence or other barrier)  
 Any other significant environmental factor \_\_\_\_\_

**Condition Information**

**Structural Condition** (check as many as may apply)

The following section applies to Monuments *with* Sculpture, and Monuments without \_\_\_\_\_ Sculpture - including the base for Monuments with *Cannon*. Instability in the sculpture and its base can be detected by a number of factors. Indicators may be obvious or subtle. Visually examine the sculpture and its base.

<b>Sculpture</b>	_____	<b>Base</b>
If hollow, is the internal support unstable/exposed? (look for signs of exterior rust)	_____	_____
Any evidence of structural instability? (look for cracked joints, missing mortar or caulking or plant growth)	_____	_____
Any broken or missing parts? (look for elements (i.e., sword, musket, hands, arms, etc. - missing due to vandalism, fluctuating weather conditions, etc.)	_____	_____
Any cracks, splits, breaks or holes? (also look for signs of uneven stress & weakness in the material)	_____	_____

**Surface Appearance** (check as many as may apply)

	<b>Sculpture</b>	<b>Base</b>
Black crusting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
White crusting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Etched, pitted, or otherwise corroded (on metal)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Metallic staining (run-off from copper, iron, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Organic growth (moss, algae, lichen or vines)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chalky or powdery stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Granular eroding of stone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spalling of stone (surface splitting off)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Droppings (bird, animal, insect remains)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (e.g., spray paint graffiti) - Please describe...	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good shape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Does water collect in recessed areas of the Memorial?     Yes     No     Unable to tell

**Surface Coating**

Does there appear to be a coating?  Yes  No  Unable to determine  
If known, identify type of coating.

Gilded  Painted  Varnished  Waxed  Unable to determine

Is the coating in good condition?  Yes  No  Unable to determine

**Basic Surface Condition Assessment** (check one)

In your opinion, what is the general appearance or condition of the Memorial?

Well maintained  Would benefit from treatment  In urgent need of treatment  Unable to determine

**Overall Description**

Briefly describe the Memorial (affiliation / overall condition & any concern not already touched on) .

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

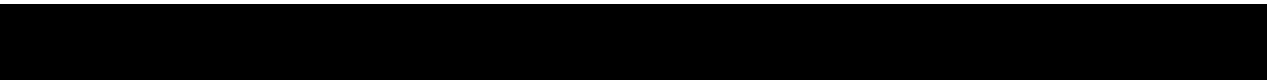
**Supplemental Background Information**

In addition to your on-site survey, any additional information you can provide on the described Memorial will be welcomed. Please label each account with its source (author, title, publisher, date, pages). Topics include any reference to the points listed on this questionnaire, plus any previous conservation treatments - or efforts to raise money for treatment. Thank you.

**Inspector Identification**

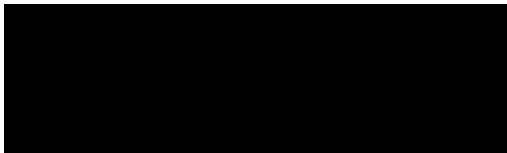
Date of On-site Survey 04/27/2009

Your Name Walt Busch US Grant Camp #68



Please send this completed form to:

Kevin P. Tucker, PDC, Chair



Thank you for your help, and attention to detail.

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR  
National Civil War Memorials Committee

## Palmyra Massacre

A State Divided: The Civil War in Missouri

[Insert: Union Shield]

### The Palmyra Massacre

The Palmyra Massacre was a grim ending to Confederate Col. Joseph Porter's 1862 recruiting campaign in northeast Missouri. Besides recruiting local men for the Confederate army, Porter attacked Union outposts and patrols all summer long. In mid-September, Porter led his men to Palmyra, where they captured -- and later apparently killed-- a pro-Union citizen. The next month, on Oct. 18, 1862, 10 Confederate prisoners were executed at Palmyra's fairgrounds in retaliation for the murder.

Col. John McNeil commanded the Union's 2nd Missouri State Militia in Palmyra. Also stationed in Palmyra was the Provost Marshal General for Northeast Missouri, Col. William Strachan, who required known and suspected Southern sympathizers to swear oaths and post bonds to ensure their good behavior. One of Strachan's local informants was 60-year-old Andrew Allsman.

### Porter Takes Palmyra, Captures an Informer

After a series of mostly successful raids, Porter suffered a major defeat at the Battle of Kirksville on Aug. 6 and disbanded his regiment. He kept about 300-400 recruits with him, not far from his Lewis County home. On Sept. 12, while Col. McNeil was away from headquarters, Porter and his men marched almost unopposed into Palmyra. They freed 45-50 prisoners and destroyed Strachan's provost marshal records of oaths and bonds. Taking three prisoners of their own, including Andrew Allsman, they returned north to Lewis County. With McNeil in hot pursuit, Porter ordered his men to scatter. He also decided to release Allsman, ordering a detachment of six men to accompany Allsman to a nearby public road leading to Palmyra. What exactly happened to Allsman has never been clearly established, but he was undoubtedly shot and killed by someone.

By mid-October Porter moved the last of his recruits over the Missouri River on the way to Arkansas. About a week earlier Col. McNeil published a notice in the Palmyra Courier demanding Porter return Allsman unharmed to his family within 10 days. If he failed to do so, 10 of Porter's men jailed at Hannibal and Palmyra would be shot. When the 10 days passed with no word from Porter, McNeil directed Provost Marshal Strachan to compile a list of 10 prisoners to face a firing squad. The execution was scheduled for Oct. 18.

[Insert: Were The Executions Justified?

Great controversy followed the execution of the 10 prisoners at Palmyra. Gen. McNeil claimed the murder of Andrew Allsman, a non-combatant, while a prisoner of Col. Porter demanded the harshest retaliation and that the 10 men selected "had already forfeited their lives by violation of parole." This justification was reinforced by Provost Marshal William Strachan's "Vindication of General McNeil," written in response to a New York Times editorial and a letter from Maj. Gen. Samuel Curtis.

The main critic of the executions was the New York Times. An editorial on Dec. 1, 1862, argued that though the 10 executed men may have been "guerrillas, land pirates and outlaws of the basest sort," and may have even deserved death for their crimes, "neither their character nor their infamous deeds had anything to do with their execution" and that further, if the demand for Allsman's release had been met, "{they would have lived - in spite of their crimes; and so far as appears they would have died for his non-appearance, if their characters had been perfectly spotless."

[Picture of Col. John McNeil with caption: " Col John McNeil ordered and then justified the execution."]

Another key element in the controversy was whether men recruited by Col. Porter in Missouri (all but one of the 10 executed was a Porter recruit) could be considered legitimate Confederate soldiers - of if they were only guerrillas with no formal allegiance to the Confederate army. The men were recruited by the Confederates, but at the time of their capture none had been officially sworn into service. Legally at least, they were subject to execution under the announced General Orders of the Federal army in Missouri.]

[Insert: 1869 bird's eye view of Palmyra by Albert Ruger from the Library of Congress showing Old Jail, Courthouse and Approximate location of Old Fairgrounds/execution site]

### Col. Strachan Selects Prisoners for Execution

Among the 10 Confederate prisoners chosen were Capt. Thomas Sidenor, one of Porter's recruiting agents and who commanded a company at Kirksville; Willis Baker, an outspoken 54-year-old Confederate sympathizer suspected of murdering a Union man' Thomas Humston, at 19 the youngest of the 10, and the only one held as an oath-breaker; and William Humphrey, captured at Kirksville. Fortunately for Humphreys, his wife made a successful plea to Col. McNeil to spare her husband. He was replaced by Hiram Smith. The remaining six men -- Herbert Hudson, John Wade, Francis Marion Lear, John McPheeters, Morgan Bixler and Eleazer Lake -- had served in Porter's campaign before their capture.

[Insert: Illustration of the execution of the 10 prisoners at the Palmyra fairgrounds from the *Missouri State Sentinel*, January 1, 1868. labeled "Palmyra Massacre, October 18, 1862. Effect of the War for Coercion." ]

[Insert Confederate Shield and DNR Logo "Missouri Department of Natural Resources"]

Shortly past noon on Saturday, Oct. 18, three government wagons arrived at the Palmyra jail. One carried four rough wooden coffins and the other two carried three each. The prisoners were led out of the jail and each man was seated on a coffin. The wagons were taken to the amphitheater of the fairgrounds, where the coffins were unloaded and placed in a row with the lids removed. About a hundred spectators gathered. After a hundred spectators gathered. After a prayer by a local Baptist minister, the 10 men sat on the foot of their coffins about 30 feet from the firing squad. All the prisoners were plainly dressed except for Sidenor, who wore a suit and white vest - the suit he was to be married in.

Sidenor shouted to the firing squad to "aim here" and pointed to his heart. Shortly after 1 p.m. the Baptist minister gave each man a final handshake, followed by Strachan. Willis Baker refused to shake Strachan's hand, telling him contemptuously, "Every dog shake his own paw." Maj. Isham Dodson, in charge of the firing squad, called them to attention and gave the orders: "ready, aim - thus perish all traitors to their country's flag-- Fire!"

Only Sidenor and two others were killed outright. Six were wounded, and one man wasn't hit at all. Strachan directed a backup quad armed with pistols to finish the gruesome task. The bodies were placed in the coffins and the lids hauled shut. The wagons took the coffins back to the town square to be claimed by relatives.

Col. McNeil left Palmyra before the executions and went to St. Louis to give a newspaper interview explaining his actions. The interview was published in several newspapers, and the executions were condemned in the New York Times and a number of international newspapers. To stop the criticism and show his support for McNeil, Col. Lewis Merrill, commander of the Union District of Northeast Missouri, relieved Strachan as Provost Marshal General, claiming the position was no longer necessary. Col. McNeil was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers.

Strachan took it upon himself to answer the New York Times criticism of the executions, sending a long letter to the editor titled "The Vindication of General McNeil." Another letter (also probably written by Strachan) was sent to President Abraham Lincoln defending McNeil's actions. Despite these efforts, neither McNeil nor Strachan ever outlived the bitter feelings against them for their part in the Palmyra Massacre.

[Insert: Capt. Thomas Sidenor's Letter from Palmyra Jail

Dear Brother, Sisters and Friends: -- I seat myself for the last time to write you a few lines. I am in good health, but alas, tomorrow os the day set apart for me to be carried to another world. Oh, I hope I will be received in Heaven where justice is done. I have not had a trial and they won't give me any chance for my life. Oh, I hope that God will forgive these unmerciful creatures that will commit the unpardonable act. To take innocent men and shoot them for crimes that they never have done. We are to be shot for one man that J.C. Porter took away form here, a man I never saw in my life. Oh, is this justice?...Oh, my mind is so frustrated that I cannot write, can't collect hardly a sentence, or spell a word correctly. But read it the best you can and think it is from your brother. Ellen, I want you to have this valise I have with me, and keep it in remembrance of me. Frank, Lena, George, good-bye, good-bye, forever on this earth...I have some little money with me, divide it to suit yourselves. I find I won't have any use for it any more. Boys, you tell them I want you to pay my debts, if you can. I don't want any blemishes on my character after I am gone. Oh, little did I think that I would have been caught and shot. If I had they never would have kept me this long. I have had several chances to get away from them, but I thought they would do justice, and consequently stayed, and now I see what they are going to do with me. Oh, if I had only known they were going to shoot me, I would have left them several days ago.]

[Insert: Picture of "Palmyra jail, form [sic] Marion County Atlas, 1875. used with permission, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia]





# PALMYRA MASSACRE

## A State Divided The Civil War in Missouri

### The Palmyra Massacre

The Palmyra Massacre was a grim ending to Confederate Col. Joseph Porter's often exciting campaign in northeast Missouri. Besides receiving local fame for the Confederate army, Porter attacked Union outposts and patrols all summer long. In mid-September, Porter led his men to Palmyra, where they captured and later apparently killed a pro-Union citizen. The next month, on Oct. 18, 1862, six Confederate prisoners were executed at Palmyra's fairgrounds in retaliation for the murder.

Col. John McNeil commanded the Union's and Missouri State Militia in Palmyra. Although stationed in Palmyra was the Provost Marshal General for Northeast Missouri, Col. William Strachan, who recruited, housed and inspected Southern sympathizers to desert outposts and provide food to ensure their good behavior. One of Strachan's local informants was 60-year-old Andrew Albanan.

### Porter Takes Palmyra, Captures an Informer

After a series of mostly successful raids, Porter suffered a major defeat at the Battle of Kirksville on Aug. 4 and disbanded his regiment. He kept about 100 men recruited with him, not far from his Lewis County home. On Sept. 22, while Col. McNeil was absent from headquarters, Porter and his men marched almost unopposed into Palmyra. They freed 40 prisoners and destroyed Strachan's provost marshal records of oaths and bonds. Taking three prisoners of their own, including Andrew Albanan, they returned north to Lewis County. With McNeil in hot pursuit, Porter ordered his men to scatter. He also decided to release Albanan, ordering a detachment of men to accompany Albanan to a nearby public road leading to Palmyra. What exactly happened to Albanan has never been clearly established, but he was undoubtedly shot and killed by someone.

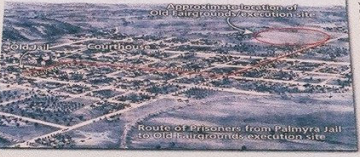
By mid-October Porter missed the fate of his recruits over the Missouri River on the way to Arkansas. About a week earlier Col. McNeil published a notice in the Palmyra Courier:

### Were The Executions Justified?

Great controversy followed the execution of the 10 prisoners at Palmyra. Gen. McNeil claimed the murder of Andrew Albanan, a non-combatant, while a prisoner of Col. Porter demanded the harshest retaliation and that the 10 men selected "had already forfeited their lives by violation of parole." This justification was reinforced by Provost Marshal William Strachan's "Vindication of General McNeil," written in response to a New York Times editorial and a letter from Maj. Gen. Samuel Curtis.

The main critic of the executions was the New York Times. An editorial on Dec. 1, 1862, argued that though the 10 executed men may have been "guerrillas, land pirates and outlaws of the basest sort," and may have even deserved death for their crimes, "neither their character nor their infamous deeds had anything to do with their execution" and that further, if the demand for Albanan's release had been met, "they would have lived in spite of their crimes, and so far as appears they would have died for his non-appearance, if their characters had been perfectly spotless."

Another key element in the controversy was whether men recruited by Col. Porter in Missouri (all but one of the 10 executed was a Porter recruit) could be considered legitimate Confederate soldiers or if they were only guerrillas with no formal allegiance to the Confederate army. The men were recruited by the Confederates, but at the time of their capture none had been officially sworn into service. Legally at least, they were subject to execution under the announced General Orders of the Federal army in Missouri.

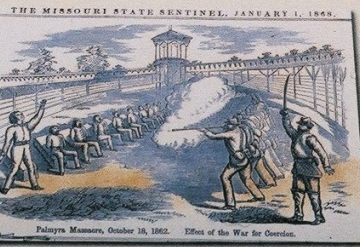


1869 bird's eye view of Palmyra by Albert Ruger from the Library of Congress

demanding Porter return Albanan unharmed to his family within 10 days. If he failed to do so, 40 of Porter's men jailed at Hannibal and Palmyra would be shot. When the 10 days passed with no word from Porter, McNeil directed Provost Marshal Strachan to compile a list of 10 prisoners to face a firing squad. The execution was scheduled for Oct. 18.

### Col. Strachan Selects Prisoners for Execution

Among the 10 Confederate prisoners chosen were Capt. Thomas Siderer, one of Porter's recruiting agents and who commanded a company at Kirksville; Willis Baker, an outspoken 14-year-old Confederate sympathizer suspected of murdering a Union man, Thomas Hammon, at 19 the youngest of the 10, and the only one held on an oath-breaker; and William Humphrey, captured at Kirksville. Fortunately for Humphrey, his wife made a successful plea to Col. McNeil to spare her husband. He was replaced by Heron Smith. The remaining six men—Herbert Hudson, John Wade, Francis Martin Lear, John McFretters, Morgan Baker and Ekazer Lake—had served in Porter's campaign before their capture.



Palmyra Massacre, October 18, 1862. Effort of the War for Obedience.

Illustration of the execution of the 10 prisoners at the Palmyra fairgrounds.

Shortly past noon on Saturday, Oct. 18, 1862, Government wagons arrived at the Palmyra jail. They carried four rough wooden coffins and the other two carried three each. The prisoners were led out of the jail and each man was seated on a coffin. The wagons were taken to the amphitheater of the fairgrounds, where the coffins were unloaded and placed in a row with the lids reversed. About a hundred spectators gathered. After a prayer by a local Baptist minister, the men sat on the lids of their coffins about 1/2 mile from the firing squad. All but five men to be executed.

Siderer shouted to the firing squad to "aim here" and pointed to his heart. Shortly after 1 p.m. the Baptist minister gave each man a final handshake, followed by Strachan. Willis Baker refused to shake Strachan's hand, telling him contemptuously, "Every dog shakes his own paw." Maj. John Dodson, in charge of the firing squad, called them to attention and gave the order: "Ready, aim—fire!"

Only Siderer and two others were killed outright. Six were wounded, and one man wasn't hit at all. Strachan directed a backup squad armed with pistols to finish the gruesome task. The bodies were placed in the coffins and the lids nailed shut. The wagons took the coffins back to the town square to be claimed by relatives.

Col. McNeil left Palmyra before the executions and went to St. Louis to give a newspaper interview explaining his actions. The interview was published in several newspapers, and the executions were condemned in the New York Times and a number of international newspapers. To stop the criticism and show his support for McNeil, Col. Lewis Merrill, commander of the Union District of Northeast Missouri, relieved Strachan as Provost Marshal General, claiming the position was no longer necessary. Col. McNeil was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers.

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### Capt. Thomas Siderer's Letter from Palmyra Jail

Dear Brother, Sisters and Friends—I seat myself for the last time to write you a few lines. I am in good health, but alas, tomorrow in the day set apart for me to be carried to another world. Oh, I hope I will be received in Heaven where justice is done. I have not had a trial and they won't give me any chance for my life. Oh, I hope that God will forgive those unmerciful citizens that will commit the unpardonable act. To take innocent men and shoot them for crimes that they never have done. We are to be shot for one man that J.C. Porter took away from here, a man that I never saw in my life. Oh, is this justice?—Oh, my mind is so frustrated that I cannot write, can't collect hardly a sentence, or say a word correctly. But read it the best you can and think it is from your brother. Here, I want you to have this value I have with me, and keep it in remembrance of me. Frank, Lena, George, good-bye, good-bye, forever on this earth... I have some little money with me, divide it to suit yourselves. I find I won't have any use for it any more. Boys, you tell them I want you to pay my debts, if you can. I don't want any mementos on my character after I am gone. Oh, little did I think that I would have been caught and shot. If I had they never would have kept me this long. I have had several chances to get away from them, but I thought they would do justice, and consequently stayed, and now I see what they are going to do with me. Oh, if I had only known they were going to shoot me I would have left them several days ago.



Palmyra jail, from Marion County Atlas, 1875, used with permission, State Historical Society of Missouri, Columbia