

The Civil War in Montgomery County, Kentucky

Ken Darnell
2011

By: Ken Darnell

THE WAR BEGINS “UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL”

Kentucky was admitted into the Union in 1792, as the 15th state, with the General Assembly approving the state seal displaying the famous and prophetic motto of “United We Stand, Divided We Fall.” During the American Civil War that was fought from 1861-1865, Kentucky was a divided “border” state that wanted to keep her slaves as did the Southern states, but also wanted to remain in the Union, as did the Northern states. Approximately 100,000 Kentuckians would fight for the Union and up to 40,000 would fight for the Confederacy. More than 22,000 would die, and many more came home with mental or physical wounds.

Fort Sumter, South Carolina, was fired upon by Confederate forces in April 1861, 150 years ago. Kentucky officially declared itself neutral in May 1861. Pro Southern Governor Beriah Magoffin replied to Lincoln’s call for troops with the words, “I say emphatically, Kentucky will furnish no troops for the wicked purpose of subduing her sister Southern states.” In state elections held in June 1861, however, 9 of 10 of Kentucky’s Congressional seats went to pro Union candidates. So as state after state seceded from the Union, Kentucky remained----dividing along lines to preserve the Union or to split away to form a new Confederacy.

Kentucky did remain officially neutral for a short time, as both sides lobbied for her support. In September 1861, the legislature reacted to Confederate General Leonidas Polk’s occupation of Columbus, Kentucky, a strategic Western Kentucky city on the Mississippi River and officially declared Kentucky on the Union side. General Ulysses S. Grant countered with a move into Paducah, Kentucky on the Ohio River.

Two months later, Southern sympathizers set up a separate pro Confederate government in Bowling Green, and elected their own governor, George A. Johnson. A Confederate line was established across Southern Kentucky from Bowling Green to Cumberland Gap. Families divided. Men went off to war. Brother against brother.

A union victory in January 1862 at Mill Springs, Kentucky, in which well known Confederate General Felix Zollicoffer was killed, resulted in his Confederate army retreating back across the Cumberland River into Tennessee. U.S. Grant followed with victories just across the border in Tennessee at Forts Henry and Donelson on the Cumberland River that forced most Confederate troops out of Kentucky.

Three Confederate armies led by General Edmund Kirby Smith from Knoxville, General Braxton Bragg from Chattanooga, Tennessee, and General Humphrey Marshall from Abingdon, Virginia invaded Kentucky in late summer 1862. Kirby Smith's army traveled North over Big Hill to Richmond where they routed Union General Bull Nelson's forces August 29-30, 1862 followed by the surrender of Lexington and Frankfort where they established a short lived Confederate government. Confederate General Humphrey Marshall entered Kentucky through Pound Gap, Virginia, captured and held Mt Sterling with a force of 5000 infantry to block Union forces at the Cumberland Gap from attacking from that direction. Strong Union forces under General Don Carlos Buell marched from Louisville and fought the largest battle in Kentucky against Braxton Bragg's army at Perryville October 8, 1862. Although the Confederates won militarily, they did not attract the large number of Confederate recruits that they had hoped for. Both Kirby Smith and Braxton Bragg were forced to withdraw back to Tennessee.

The stage was now set for various raids into central Kentucky by Confederate cavalry usually under General John Hunt Morgan, originally from Lexington.

Montgomery and Bath counties divided their loyalties and sent sons to both sides. John Alexander Joyce from Owingsville reports in his book A Checkered Life, that in the summer of 1861 John Stuart "Cerro Gordo" Williams, from Mt Sterling, a Mexican War hero of 1846, and who later became a General in the Confederate army, was attending summer barbeques urging citizens to stand up for the South. The home of Cy Boyd near the mouth of Slate Creek was a rendezvous for Southern recruits. Joyce states "Ewing, Connor, Stoner, Cluke, Everett and a

number of other local men concluded in September” to join Confederate General Humphrey Marshall’s newly formed army in Prestonsburg.

Eliza Jane Magowan, wife of James P. Magowan, whose farm was just East of Mt Sterling on the Owingsville Pike, wrote on New Year’s day 1861 common sentiments of a desire to preserve the Union, and also to continue slavery: “The New Year is ushered in with gloom and fearful forebodings, clouds lowering over our beloved country threatening to break up this glorious Union (in which we have grown and prospered as people never did before) and menacing with Civil War and all its untold and unspeakable horrors—Our wisest and best statesmen almost despair of a satisfactory compromise of the difficulties between the North and South. South Carolina seceded on the 20th Dec.; other Southern States will follow.” January 4th entry: “Let each resolve firmly, faithfully to do his duty and leave the rest to God—hear our prayers for peace. My owning slaves is providential and geographical. I have tried to discharge my duty in the fear of the Lord—and I do think if ministry of the Gospel had have preached Christ and let politics alone, we never would have had come to this emergency. I include aspiring politicians and thick headed editors.” Later in her diary, Mrs. Magowan referred to the Union Soldiers who camped on and near her farm as “Lincolnites.”

Southern leaning sentiments are captured in the diary of Matilda Moore, from Mt Sterling, on March 5, 1861 where she recorded “Yesterday was the appointed day for Lincoln to take his seat as the President of the United States. Should he occupy that seat or not? Well some think he should; then again some think quite different. If I could have my way, Lincoln never would have been elected! But Breckenridge would have been there. I hope it will be right some day; for not only myself, but no one can always have their way. And I presume it is perfectly right they should not. Lincoln may be a very honorable worthy man; and may prove to be a good President; but I cannot possibly like his sentiments.”

Union supporter John Alexander Joyce decided conversely “While I believed the states to be supreme in their powers regarding local laws, I knew and felt that this must be a Union inseparable from the dictation of any of its members; and as the whole of a thing is greater than any of its parts, I was sure that the nation had the right and power to force its rebellious children into submission.”

He later wrote “The [Union] Army was inspired with the lofty idea of human liberty and the salvation of the Republic, while the enemy could only boast of fighting for their local rights and the liberty to hold four million human beings in

abject slavery. God and nature denied them success; for he who attempts to enslave his fellow man is forging shackles for himself.”

Joyce, along with 500 other regional recruits countered the Confederate recruits in Prestonsburg by going to Olympian Springs to form the nucleus of what would become the 24th Regiment Kentucky Volunteer Infantry, U.S. They were soon joined by the 2nd Ohio Infantry in early October. In December, these troops moved to Lexington, where they were joined by more Union forces, including a company of 100 men from Montgomery County, led by Captain Smith. Here the 24th Kentucky filled their ranks to 1000 men, making the regiment complete with 10 companies. The 24th Kentucky fought in the famous battles of Shiloh, Tennessee and Corinth, Mississippi, returning to Mt Sterling in March 1863 to battle Colonel Cluke of Morgan’s Cavalry in the 2nd Battle of Mt Sterling.

THE 1ST BATTLE OF MT. STERLING

The 1st battle of Mt Sterling, a town of 754 citizens per the 1860 census, was a small affair fought on July 29, 1862 on Maysville Pike near the Courthouse. 215 Confederate recruits had marched from North Middletown with “plans to plunder Mt Sterling”, according to Thomas Parsons of Mt Sterling, who was a member of the Montgomery County Home Guard (Union). The Confederate officers shouted demands for surrender of the town and the pro Union Home Guards and the 18th KY US Infantry opened fire. The Confederate troops scattered and were chased by the Federal forces. 13 Confederates were killed, 13 wounded, and 103 captured. 3 Union troops were killed.

As mentioned earlier, during the late summer of 1862 Confederate invasion by Generals Kirby Smith and Braxton Bragg, General Humphrey Marshall occupied Mt Sterling with 5000 Confederate Infantry who camped on Slate Creek above Jeffersonville to intercept 8000 Union troops at Cumberland Gap, led by General George W. Morgan, if they moved along the Pound Gap-Mt Sterling road. Morgan instead retreated due North through Grayson, Kentucky through Geenup County and across the Ohio River to safety.

THE 2ND BATTLE OF MT. STERLING

The 2nd battle of Mt Sterling was an exciting campaign, fought over several days in early 1863, with the town changing hands three times. The brigade of the 8th Kentucky cavalry with 750 mounted troopers assembled at McMinnville, Tennessee, on February 14, 1863 led by Colonel Roy S. Cluke, of Clark County. The 9th Kentucky Cavalry under Robert G. Stoner, added two companies of approximately 100 men each. This formed the 1st Battalion. Three companies from other commands formed the 2nd Battalion. Colonel Cluke was allowed to take two brass cavalry howitzers, affectionately named “the bull pups”. Their assignment was to move into bountiful Central Kentucky to forage, camp, rest and recruit through the rest of the winter. Instead, Cluke saw that he could harass the Union force led by General Quincy Gillmore in Lexington, by capturing the Union outpost at Mt Sterling.

Cluke captured a large Union supply depot at Somerset, as he moved North. His men and horses were in much need of food and equipment, which was gained in this windfall thanks to a hurried retreat by the Federal forces there. He moved next through Mount Vernon to Richmond, Kentucky. His scouts, dressed in captured Union Overcoats and uniforms, spread rumors that Breckinridge was behind them with 10,000 Confederate Infantry. This put “the scare” into the Union troops in Lexington. Federal forces therefore did not pursue Cluke as he rode toward Mt Sterling.

On February 22nd, Cluke captured a small Union force in Winchester. Thomas Parson and other members of the Union Home Guards were on the Winchester road when they were warned by Mr. John A. Thompson that Cluke was coming toward Mt. Sterling with at least 2000 men. Parsons wrote a manuscript after the war that was edited into the book Incidents & Experiences in the Life of Thomas W. Parsons. He recorded: “I was ordered to take five men and proceed to camp [South of town] in haste and have all the wagons loaded we could, and if any could not be gotten out to cut them down. Just at dark we had the task accomplished, the wagons were moving out [North thru town enroute to Paris].” “We were expecting Cluke to follow us in force, but only sixty men under Lieut. Col. Bob Stoner came

after us, and they followed on and captured all our wagons but two and burned them.” The Federal guard went on to Paris. Cluke’s forces moved into Mt. Sterling.

Feeling very safe, Cluke allowed the men from Mount Sterling, Winchester, Richmond, etc., temporary furloughs to go home, renew their wardrobes, replace their mounts and to visit their loved ones whom they had not seen in nearly 5 months. The remaining Confederates on duty were busy keeping on the move and holding back Union forces in Paris.

By February 24th the Federal command realized that the 10,000 CS Infantry were really not coming from the Cumberland Gap. The Confederate Cavalry was not supported, and were vulnerable. Colonel Runkle of the 45th Ohio Regiment reported: “I was confident of cutting the enemy to pieces between Richmond and the Kentucky River.” Bennett Young of Cluke’s Cavalry states, “A Federal Cavalry Brigade made a dash at Mt Sterling, Cluke’s headquarters. Only 200 men of the command were on hand at that particular moment. Furloughs had decimated Cluke’s forces and the 200 were glad to get out of town. They were gladder still that the Federals did not pursue them.” A Federal officer wrote: “The rebels had a heavy guard out here and made a show of fighting, but when we fired on them they rang the bells in town and all went out in a huddle. The rebels burned their wagons and threw everything away they had stolen.”

Cluke returned and captured Mt Sterling without firing a shot. He had sent a scout, Clark Lyle, disguised in Federal uniform to the Union Headquarters in Mt Sterling. This scout picked up some blank command forms. One was filled out as an order purporting to be from the commander at Lexington directing the command at Mt Sterling to march immediately to Paris.

Lyle, dressed in full Federal uniform, rode a ways out of town, then turned back, lashing his horse into a lather. He rushed to the commander, Colonel Runkle, to deliver the orders. Bugles sounded and the entire Federal cavalry brigade moved out to Paris. Cluke and his command rode right back into town and captured the remaining guards and their supplies. When the Federals discovered the ruse, they returned to Mt Sterling and drove Cluke out of town, forcing him to retreat to Salyersville.

With Federal reinforcements trying to surround Cluke there, he returned to Mt Sterling in an overnight march through freezing rain and mud, traveling 60 miles in 24 hours. On the morning of March 22nd Cluke demanded surrender of the small

Federal garrison remaining in the town, which was refused. Cluke and his men charged through the town driving the Federal garrison into the courthouse and surrounding buildings.

Without artillery to dislodge the Union defenders, Cluke began to burn the town. Thomas Parsons wrote, "First building fired was Drake and Bosworth's Woolen Mill on the corner of Main and Sycamore streets, some distance from where any troops were stationed. I have learned since that this was done by one Captain Gentry who owed some personal ill will to Drake. The next house East from the corner on main, occupied by Confederate sympathizers was passed, and a block further East was fired, and then the Christian church [at Main and Bank] by pouring the oil out of the lamp on the Bible for a starter. The fire communicated to our hospital on the corner of Main and Broadway, but our sick were all gotten out."

"It then burned on up North along Broadway till stopped at an open space. I was in that row near the corner and was the last man to leave the room where I was posted." "I hastened to the courthouse. I had not been there long when an order came to come down and stack arms, the citizens mainly prevailing on the officers to do so to save the town." Parsons and his fellow Union soldiers were then marched to Owingsville as captured prisoners.

John Alexander Joyce, with the 24th Kentucky Infantry U.S., who had returned from duty in Tennessee via Louisville, Frankfort, and Lexington, arrived in Mt Sterling to assist the Union forces. "We got into Mt Sterling on Sunday March 22nd, but Col. Cluke, the Confederate commander had scampered away towards the mountains. We followed the daring raider as far as Owingsville, killing and wounding a few of his men, and taking a number of prisoners."

"When the [24th KY US Infantry] regiment marched through the streets of Owingsville and stacked arms in front of the old courthouse, the measure of my ambition was full. A little more than a year before, I had left the town a private soldier, and now returned to the haunts and scenes of my boyhood as an Adjutant. And what gave poetic zest to my heart and soul, was the fact that the beautiful girl I loved most stood at her father's gate as the regiment marched by."

"Loyal citizens entertained the regiment in fine style, feasting the boys in blue with all the good things at command. The day before our arrival in Owingsville, Cluke, Stoner, Ewing, Everett and their men, who wore the gray, were entertained with as much love and patriotism as the most gallant defender of the old flag."

Cluke reported that he took 301 prisoners, 75 wagon loads of arms and supplies, around 500 mules and destroyed \$500,000 of property. Cluke lost three soldiers killed and a few wounded.

After maneuvering for several days, Cluke received orders to reunite with Morgan in Tennessee. He marched South via Irvine, McKee, Manchester and Somerset toward Tennessee, increasing his command by 18 more men than when he began his raid, and, more importantly, with better mounts.

THE COURTHOUSE IS BURNED

During the early morning hours of December 2, 1863, Confederate cavalry captain Peter Everett of Mt Sterling, burned the courthouse. The 6th Indiana cavalry and the 40th Kentucky cavalry, U.S., were camped on the Jeffersonville (Ticktown) Pike South of town. The Spencer road coming into town from the East was not picketed. About 11:00 p.m. Everett and his men dashed in and set fire to the courthouse, the jail, and carried all that he could from the Federal quartermaster's supplies. The jail was saved by local citizens. The Federal forces pursued Everett beyond Olympia Springs, but could not capture him.

TICKTOWN (JEFFERSONVILLE) IS BURNED

The October 9, 1863 edition of *Louisville Daily Journal* reporting the burning of Ticktown [Jeffersonville] by Union forces after continuous pro Confederate guerilla robberies and murders, the most notorious of whom were Tom Greenwade, Isaac Ingram and Frank Ferguson. Frank Ferguson had captured six mountain men near Jeffersonville who were on the way to join the Union army. Thomas Parsons writes that “when he had disarmed them he ordered them to stand up in line and be paroled, and when in line his band shot them all down.” Parsons writes that one of the men survived, though seriously wounded, and reported the atrocity. The Federal garrison at Mt. Sterling burned the town, in turn.

5000 UNION CAVALRY

In February 1864, Union General Sturgis came to Mt Sterling with about 5000 Union cavalry to rest up and recruit. It was the largest force of cavalry ever to visit at one time, and being winter, all forage and timber was consumed. In March, this force was ordered South and things were quiet in Mt Sterling until Morgan's next raid in June 1864.

THE 3RD BATTLE OF MT. STERLING

THE BANK IS ROBBED

The 3rd Battle of Mt Sterling, June 8th and 9th, 1864, was fought between cavalry forces led by Confederate General John Hunt Morgan and Federal General Stephen Gano Burbridge. George Dallas Mosgrove who rode with Morgan, writes in his book Kentucky Cavaliers In Dixie, "While encamped near Abingdon, Virginia during sunny days of May 1864, General Morgan and his men were in good spirits. Like Napoleon on the morn of Waterloo the general joked with his cavaliers, who hailed with delight and loud acclaim the dawn of the first day of the march to Kentucky—the Promised Land, a Canaan flowing with milk and honey."

Morgan's force was organized into three brigades: First Brigade led by Colonel Henry L. Giltner, about 975 men; Second Brigade led by Colonel D. Howard Smith around 500 men; Third Brigade led by Colonel Robert Martin numbering close to 1000 men.

Federal General Burbridge had pulled most Union troops from the Mt Sterling area, to move toward Virginia, at the same time that Morgan was moving through South Eastern Kentucky towards Mt Sterling. Mosgrove writes "When within about twelve miles of Mt Sterling, about midnight (the morning of June 8th), we left the State Road (Jeffersonville or Ticktown Pike), turning to the right, and followed a by path through a woodland dark as Erebus."

At daylight General Morgan led the column forward across the Spencer Road farm of Mack Everett, a brother of the noted Confederate free lance Captain Peter Everett. Mack Everett pointed out the location of the two main Union camps near town. The Federals were charged and driven into the town, where Morgan's Fourth Kentucky, dismounted and charged them. Mosgrove writes "This was the third time the town of Mt Sterling had been converted into a fortress and Confederates shot down from the houses. It was probably the meanest town to the Confederate soldier in the State." The June 8th capture of the town was completed in short time with 10 U.S. soldiers killed and about 275 captured.

The voracious appetites of the Confederates were satisfied by the captured liberal stores of coffee, sugar, flour, crackers, and meat. They also helped themselves to the captured tents and trunks full of fresh clothing.

Men of the 2nd Brigade ransacked many stores and robbed civilians, strewing dry goods, broken furniture, clothing and other items into the streets, to the dismay of Morgan's Adjutant Edward O. Guerrant of Sharpsburg. The downtown Farmer's bank was robbed on June 8th, by forcing cashier William Mitchell at gunpoint to open the bank vault, taking \$59,057 in gold and silver coins and banknotes, along with several thousand dollars held in the vault for local individuals.

A delegation of Mt Sterling citizens called upon General Morgan to ask for the return of the money, as it belonged to the people of the county, and not to the government. They showed Morgan a written order signed by his adjutant, Captain Charles Withers, demanding the bank's money, or they would burn every house in town. When Morgan asked Withers about the order, he swore that it was not his signature. The description given by the citizens, included a German accent which fit instead, Surgeon R.R. Goode of Morgan's Staff. A search went out for Goode, but he could not be found.

The next day, Morgan's men robbed the bank of Simpson and Winn in Winchester and a day later robbed the Lexington Branch of the Bank of Kentucky in Lexington, as well. In the same campaign, Captain Peter Everett robbed the Maysville Branch of the Northern Bank of Kentucky, but all cash and securities had been hurried across the Ohio River for safe keeping.

Capturing government money from banks and courthouses with transfer to the Confederate States government was considered legal during the war, but not private funds. Shortly after the battle, three of Morgan's officers asked him to complete an investigation of the robbery. When Morgan procrastinated, they wrote letters in July 1864 to Morgan's Inspector General Captain B.H. Allen. Morgan responded with 30 days disability leave for Allen and did not appoint a replacement. The officers then wrote to provisional Confederate Governor Hawes and to Confederate Secretary of War Seddon in Richmond, Virginia, demanding an inquiry.

A Court of Inquiry was appointed to convene on September 10, 1864 in Abingdon, Virginia. Confederate Judge Advocate Milton P. Jarnagin, Dept. of East Tennessee at Abingdon, charged "that on or about the 8th of June 1864, at or near Mt Sterling, Ky., after capture of said town,...Brig. John H. Morgan, commanding,

ordered the said Surgeon R.R. Goode, then serving on his staff, to enter the Farmer's Bank of Kentucky....and seize the public funds....for the use of the Confederate States, whereupon said Goode took from said bank about \$72,000, and failing to account for the same, applied said money to his own use.”

On that same day, June 8th, instead of moving on with his full force, General Morgan left his First and Third Brigades at Mt Sterling, while he took his Second Brigade toward Lexington, determined to capture fresh horses for his men. Morgan also sent various size units to Paris, Cynthiana, Maysville and Frankfort.

Mosgrove, with the First Brigade, says “When night came we lay quietly down to sleep in the tents captured in the morning, the dismounted men being in bivouac some distance in our rear. It was the calm before the storm. We slept soundly through the night, indifferent to danger and oblivious of the fact that General Burbridge, making a forced march, was even then thundering along in our rear, eager to surprise and attack our sleeping troopers, the same as we had surprised the unsuspecting Federals on the previous morning.” General Burbridge had ridden 90 miles from Prestonsburg in 24 hours with 1600 mounted men and two 12 pound shot howitzer artillery pieces.

Lt. Colonel Brent was in charge of the picket guard. Rather than placing them at least a mile away from the main camps, he decided that since his men were weary, and believing the Federals were many miles away, posted his guards only 100 to 200 yards from the main camp.

Edward Guerrant kept a diary that has been edited into the book Bluegrass Confederate. He recorded “the slow heavy sounds of occasional muskets roused us to the dreadful realization that we in turn were surprised by our Enemy.” “The firing grew heavier & in a few moments its roar was appalling, mingled with the occasional howl of a cannon” as Burbridge’s troops charged through the camps.

Guerrant moved with the First Brigade across the Maysville Pike to the Lexington Pike West of town to join up with Col. Martin who had also retreated from their Apperson heights camp just South of town through Mt Sterling. Martin had lost around 500 men killed, wounded, captured or missing. The remains of the two brigades only totaled around 1000 men.

The two Colonels, Giltner and Martin, decided to fight back. Colonel Martin was to take his dismounted men, move South of town and attack while Colonel Giltner was to fight in from the Lexington Pike. When attacked, the Union forces once

more made forts of the houses, though they could not use the courthouse this time, as it had been burnt by Peter Everett 6 months prior. The Confederates took heavy losses as they were in the open fields and roads. They withdrew 8 or 10 miles toward Winchester when they met up with General Morgan and his 2nd Brigade returning from Winchester when they heard the battle.

Morgan decided against renewing the attack and to continue his march to Lexington, part of which he captured, and burned the Union stables and supply depots. Morgan then moved to Georgetown, then on to Cynthiana where he was defeated, forcing Morgan to retreat through Flemingsburg and West Liberty back to Abingdon, Virginia from where his June campaign had begun.

June 9th losses were 8 Union soldiers killed, 20 wounded and 50 missing in addition to 54 Confederates killed, 120 wounded in addition to around 150 Confederate prisoners taken.

FEDERAL FORT IS BUILT TO STOP CONFEDERATE RAIDS

Afterwards on July 10, 1864, U.S. Engineers staked off earthen Fort Hutchinson on the high ground just across from Machpelah Cemetery, along the Spencer Pike. Openings and platforms for eight guns were built. Ranges to various points all around Mt Sterling were measured and plotted. No more Confederate raids occurred.

24TH KENTUCKY U.S. INFANTRY FIGHTS NATIVE SON JOHN BELL HOOD AT ATLANTA, GEORGIA

On July 22, 1864, the 24th Kentucky Infantry U.S., and its many men from the Mt Sterling area, fought against its highest ranking Civil War son, General John Bell Hood, whose boyhood home is in Montgomery County, a few miles West of Mt Sterling, on the Lexington Pike (modern day highway 60). General Hood had taken over Joe Johnston's Confederate army that was trying to keep Sherman from capturing Atlanta. Hood attacked the Union army's left flank at Peach Tree Creek, Georgia with seven successive, violent charges. John Alexander Joyce wrote "Dead and wounded lay in piles in the fields and woods, and thousands of prisoners were taken on each side." Hood was defeated and the 24th continued its attacks toward Atlanta, as a part of the 23rd Corps of Sherman's army.

After the capture of Atlanta, the 24th Kentucky returned from Atlanta, as their three year enlistment was about to expire. The regiment spent a few days in Mt Sterling, then moved on to Covington, Kentucky where they went into camp preparing for their muster out of the Union army. Joyce wrote "The old regiment had been greatly depleted, and many of the boys who enlisted with me in the early days of war were sleeping their last sleep on the sunny slopes of Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia, or limping their weary way to the tomb amid the hills and vales of their mountain homes."

CONFEDERATES SURRENDER

On May 10, 1865, Colonel Henry L. Giltner, who led Morgan's First Brigade nearly one year earlier in the June 8-9th battle of Mt Sterling, returned from Virginia to surrender, with most of his men following him. George Dallas Mosgrove, 4th Kentucky Cavalry was among those troopers "At Hazel Green, Ky., probably forty miles from Mt Sterling, we halted and sent forward a flag of truce to ascertain from General Hobson, in command at Mt. Sterling, the terms upon which we would be permitted to surrender, When our flag returned it was accompanied by a gentlemanly young artillery officer and a small escort, who bore a courteous communication from General Hobson, in which he suggested that we should immediately march to Mt. Sterling, where we should be permitted to surrender upon the same terms, substantially, as had been granted to General Lee at Appomattox [on April 9, 1865]. General Hobson treated us with delicate consideration, and did all that was in his power, under the circumstances, for our comfort and pleasure."

FAMOUS SONS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

We cannot close without listing three sons of Montgomery County who achieved high rank during the Civil War. Confederate **Major General John Bell Hood**, whose boyhood home still stands a few miles outside of Mt Sterling along Highway 60 West, was famous for his courage in combat. He led troops through the famous battles of Gaines Mill, Virginia, Chickamauga, Georgia, Second Manassas, Virginia, Antietam, Maryland, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the Atlanta, Georgia campaign and Nashville, Tennessee. General Hood was wounded at

Gettysburg and lost the use of his left arm. At Chickamauga, a leg wound was so severe that his right leg was amputated.

Confederate General John Stuart “Cerro Gordo” Williams was born in Montgomery County and earned fame in the Mexican War of 1846-48 as a Captain leading a victorious charge. Williams defeated Federal General Stephen Gano Burbridge at Saltville, Virginia in 1864. He was famed as an orator and was elected to the United States Senate after the war in 1879.

Confederate Colonel Thomas Johnson, was well known as a farmer and stock dealer. He was a captain in the State Militia rising to the rank in that organization of Major General. Johnson was elected to represent Kentucky in the Confederate Provisional Congress at Richmond, Virginia. He later formed the 2nd Kentucky Mounted Rifles. His house still stands on Johnson Avenue off of Maysville Street in Mt Sterling.

Other local notable participants in the War Between the States:

Henry Lane Stone, Bath County, 9th Kentucky Cavalry, Morgan’s Brigades, who was captured twice, escaping once to Canada via Detroit for 4 months. Stone delivered a well documented speech on April 8, 1919 entitled “Morgan’s Men”, A Narrative of Personal Experiences. His original personal letters are in the possession of a member of the Montgomery County Historical Society.

Leeland Hathaway, Mt. Sterling joined the 14th KY Cavalry in 1862 and served with Morgan. He was captured in Morgan’s Ohio raid of 1863 and was held until early 1865. Hathaway was a member of the guard who escorted Mrs. Jefferson Davis through South Carolina toward Florida after Lee surrendered Richmond, Va. They joined up with CSA President Jefferson Davis, with the party being captured at Irwinville, Georgia on May 10, 1865. Hathaway filled 9 writing tablets for his family summarizing personal history.

Captain George Barber, Flemingsburg, Company D, 24th Kentucky Infantry U.S. that fought at Shiloh, Tennessee, Corinth, Mississippi, Perryville, Kentucky, Mt. Sterling, Knoxville and Chattanooga, Tennessee and the Atlanta campaign with General Sherman.

Soldiers from Montgomery County

Union and Confederate

From Hazel Boyd's book, A HISTORY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, the Census of 1860 listed 754 citizens in the town of Mt. Sterling, of which 236 were slaves.

Montgomery County's total population was 4,970.

She states that the County provided 333 Union soldiers and an unknown number of Confederate soldiers. In late summer of 1862, 700 plus recruits from Montgomery County and surrounding counties were organized into the 14th KY Cavalry, U.S.

As of March 1864, former Montgomery County slaves began joining the Union Army, which increased the proportion of Union soldiers supplied by Montgomery County. It appears that the County was split close to 50% pro Union and 50% pro Confederate.....while as a state, Kentucky's volunteers were split around 70% Union and 30% Confederate.