



The Irish Volunteer

Official Newsletter of the 116th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Co. B



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July 2003

Joe and Holly Sullivan Editors

ADMINISTRATION

IN THE FIELD

Capt. Steve Stowell

BEHIND THE DESK

Chairman, Kevin Burton

ON THE HOME FRONT

Civilian Advocate, Lynette Stowell

Official Web Site of 116 PVI

<http://www.116pvi.org>

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Willamette Mission Reenactment and Living History July 4th through the 6th of 2003. For more details visit <http://nwcwc.org/willmiss.htm>

Fort Stevens Reenactment August 30th through September 1st 2003.

Fresno, Kearney Park Living History October 4th and 5th, 2003.

For a full calendar of events visit our events web page at <http://www.116pvi.org/UpcomingEvents.htm>

Company Commanders Report

6/12/2003

Hope all is well with everyone and that you all have been enjoying the spring weather. Our next big event is coming up soon at Willamette Mission State Park on July 4th through the 6th. Note this will only be a three day event this year so there will be fewer battles. All soldiers please make sure you have enough cartridges made up to provide you with enough for each battle. Each soldier should have around 40 to 60 cartridges available for each battle. Please do not rely on your comrades to provide you with your main supply of cartridges. Because of the recent events pertaining to re-enactment in Gettysburg, we will still have some of our soldiers in the ranks that would have been in Gettysburg. This means we should still have a pretty good turnout of soldiers to fill the ranks at Willamette Mission. There's still a great need on our part to recruit more soldiers into ranks, and the Willamette Mission event has always been one of our strongest events for recruiting. So roll those cartridges, brushoff your uniform, polish your brass, clean your musket, grease your brogues and I will see you at Willamette Mission.

Company Commander 116th PVI
Capt. Steven L. Stowell

Willamette Mission Modern Camping Registration

All Willamette Mission modern campers (modern tent, camper or RV) must pre-register with Hollie Porter in order to secure a camping spot. Hollie can be reached via email hp1920@aol.com or by phone (503) 364-8152 after 6:30 PM.

From the Civilian Advocate:

Are we getting excited about Willamette Mission??? Just a reminder to those of you who need tent space I need to know about 2 weeks before the event, so don't forget. Also we will be having a tea party on Sat. at 4pm at my tent or next to it, if you do not have a teacup come anyway, if you have an extra one please bring it to share, thanks. Not only is it in the rules that all take the safety test but I believe it is important for all to know this for your own safety as well as those around you, so if you have not taken it ,you need to. See you all(some of you) at Willamette Mission.

Lynette Stowell, Civilian Advocate

Trivia

In 1839, the first fuel cell was conceived by Sir William Robert Grove, a Welsh judge, inventor and physicist. He mixed hydrogen and oxygen in the presence of an electrolyte, and produced electricity and water. The invention, which later became known as a fuel cell, didn't produce enough electricity to be useful.

Fort Hoskins Rescheduled

The living history event with the 20th Maine will be the weekend of Sept. 27-28 at Ft. Hoskins. This will coincide with archeology month and a public turn-out for Sat. the 27th. There will be no event with the 20th Maine on August 2/3.

140th Gettysburg Anniversary Rescheduled

June 10, 2003
TO: News Media
FROM: Gettysburg Anniversary Committee
RE: High Priority - 140th Gettysburg Anniversary Battle Reenactment Rescheduled

Due to the record-breaking wet weather in the Northeast from last fall through this spring and concern for the safety and health of the reenactors, spectators, farmers, and the community, and in consultation with Federal Commander, General Dr. David L. Valuska, and Confederate Commander, General James W. Maupin, the Gettysburg Anniversary Committee has made the decision to reschedule the 140th Gettysburg Anniversary Battle Reenactment, originally scheduled for July 4th, 5th, and 6th, 2003.

This decision was reached after extensive consultation with state and local emergency management officials, and after reviewing the extremely wet turf conditions. These conditions make it impossible to access the site, or to finalize preparations for the site and infrastructure necessary for the event. Additionally, the

National Weather Service 15-day forecast does not show significant relief from the current conditions. There are few, if any, sites on the east coast that would be capable of handling an event of this scope and size under the current weather conditions. It was determined that the only reasonable, responsible and prudent course of action was to reschedule the event to August 8th, 9th, and 10th, 2003. This decision to reschedule the event was made with serious regard to planning, public safety and protecting the integrity of this much-anticipated and significant national event.

Ed. For more information go to
<http://www.gettysburgreenactment.com/>

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

This is your newsletter and all are encouraged to submit articles to it. All announcements, advertisements, letters to the editor, and articles must be received by the 19th of the month to make the next newsletter.

Make submissions to:

Editor
24465 Gellatly Way
Philomath, Oregon, 97370

Or email:

<mailto:editor@116pvi.org>

CLASSIFIEDS

Place your classified ads here, free to members

SI KLEGG: HIS TRANSFORMATION FROM A RAW RECRUIT TO A VETERAN by John McElroy

Editors note: This book was published by THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE, a publishing house originally created by the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.). The NATIONAL TRIBUNE was later known as STARS AND STRIPES and then was sold to the U.S. department of Defense in May of 2002 for \$85,000. As far as can be ascertained, the 1910 copyright for Si

Klegg has expired and is now in the public domain. My family and I have enjoyed reading Si Klegg aloud in the evenings and hope that you to may come to enjoy this look into the life of a Civil War soldier.

PREFACE (1910)

“Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., and Shorty, his Partner,” were born more than 25 years ago in the brain of John McElroy, editor of **THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE**, who invented the names and characters, outlined the general plan, and wrote a number of the chapters. Subsequently, the editor, having many other important things pressing upon his attention, called in an assistant to help on the work, and this assistant, under the direction and guidance of the editor, wrote some of these chapters. Subsequently, without the editor’s knowledge or consent, the assistant adopted all the material as his own, and expanded it into a book which had a limited sale and then passed into the usual oblivion of short-lived subscription books.

The sketches in this first number are the original ones published in **THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE** in 1885-6, revised and enlarged somewhat by the editor.

Those in the second and all following numbers appeared in **THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE** when the editor, John McElroy, resumed the story in 1897, 12 years after the first publication, and continued it for the unprecedented period of seven years, with constantly growing interest and popularity. They gave “Si Klegg” a nation-wide and enduring celebrity. Gen. Lew Wallace, the foremost literary man of his day, pronounced “Si Klegg” the “great idyl of the war.”

How true they are to nature every veteran can abundantly testify from his own service. Really, only the name of the regiment was invented. There is no doubt that there were several men of the name of Josiah Klegg in the Union Army, and who did valiant service for the Government. They had experiences akin to, if not identical with, those narrated here, and substantially every man who faithfully and bravely carried a musket in defense of the best Government on earth had sometimes, if not often, experiences of which those of

Si Klegg, Shorty and the boys are strong reminders.

Many of the illustrations in this first number are by the late Geo. Y. Coffin, deceased, a talented artist, whose work embellished **THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE** for many years. He was the artist of **THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE** until his lamented and premature death, and all his military work was done by daily consultation, instruction and direction of the editor of **THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE**.

CHAPTER I

GOING TO WAR — SI KLEGG'S COMPLETE EQUIPMENT AND WHAT BECAME OF IT.

After Si Klegg had finally yielded to his cumulative patriotic impulses and enlisted in the 200th Ind. for three years or until the rebellion was put down, he began with great earnestness and solemnity to equip himself for his new career.

He was thrifty and provident, and believed in being ready for any emergency. His friends and family coincided with him. The Quartermaster provided him with a wardrobe that was serviceable, if not stylish, but there were many things that he felt he would need in addition.

"You must certainly have a few pairs of home-knit socks and some changes of underclothes," said his tearfully-solicitous mother. "They won't weigh much, and they'll in all likelihood save you a spell of sickness."

"Certainly," responded Josiah, "I wouldn't think of going away without 'em."

Into the capacious knapsack went several pounds of substantial knit woolen goods.

"You can't get along without a couple of towels and a piece of soap," said his oldest sister, Maria, as she stowed those things alongside the socks and underclothes.

"Si" said Ellen, his second sister, "I got this pocket album for my gift to you. It contains all our pictures, and there is a place for another's picture, whose name I suppose I needn't mention," she added archly.

Si got a little red in the face, but said: "Nothing could be nicer, Nell. It'll be the greatest comfort in the world to have all your 'pictures to look at when I'm down in Dixie."

"Here's a 'housewife' I've made for you with my own hands," added Annabel, who was some other fellow's sister. She handed him a neatly-stitched little cloth affair. "You see, it has needles, thread, buttons, scissors, a fine-tooth comb, and several other things that you'll need very badly after you've been in camp awhile. And" (she got so near Si that she could whisper the rest) "you'll find in a little secret pocket a lock of my hair, which I cut off this morning."

"I suppose I'll have a good deal of leisure time while we're in camp," said Si to himself and the others; "I believe I'll just put this Ray's Arithmetic and Greene's Grammar in."

"Yes, my young friend," added the Rev. Boanarges, who had just entered the house, "and as you will be exposed to new and unusual temptations. I thought it would be judicious to put this volume of 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted' in your knapsack, for it may give you good counsel when you need it sorely."

"Thankee," said Si, stowing away the book.

Of course, Si had to have a hair-brush, blackingbrush, a shaving kit, and some other toilet appliances.

Then it occurred to his thoughtful sister Maria that he ought to have a good supply of stationery, including pens, a bottle of ink, and a portfolio on which to write when he was far away from tables and desks. These went in, accompanied by a half-pint bottle of "No. 6," which was Si's mother's specific for all the ills that flesh is heir to. Then, the blanket which the Quartermaster had issued seemed very light and insufficient to be all the bed-clothes a man would have when sleeping on the bare ground, and Si rolled up one of the warm counterpanes that had helped make the Indiana Winter nights so comfortable for him.

"Seems rather heavy," said Si as he put his knapsack on; "but I guess I'll get used to it in a little while. They say that soldiers learn to carry surprising loads on their backs. It'll help cure me of being round-shouldered; it'll be better 'n shoulder-braces for holding me up straight."

Of course, his father couldn't let him go away without giving him something that would contribute to his health and comfort, and at last the old gentleman had a happy thought—he would get the village shoemaker to make Si a pair of his best stout boots. They would be ever so much better than the shoes the Quartermaster furnished for tramping over the muddy roads and swamps of the South. Si fastened these on top of his knapsack until he should need them worse than at present.

His old uncle contributed an immense bowie knife, which he thought would be of great use in the sanguinary hand-to-hand conflicts Si would have to wage.

On the way to the depot Si found some of his comrades gathered around an enterprising retail dealer in hardware, who was convincing them that they could serve their country much better, besides adding to their comfort, by buying from him a light hatchet and a small frying-pan, which he offered, in consideration of their being soldiers, to sell them at remarkable low rates. Si saw at once the great convenience a hatchet and a frying-pan would be, and added them to his kit. An energetic dealer in tinware succeeded in selling him, before he reached the depot, a cunning little coffee-pot and an ingenious combination of knife, fork and spoon which did not weigh more than a pound.



AS SI LOOKED WHEN HE LANDED AT LOUISVILLE.

When he got in the cars he was chagrined to find that several of his comrades had provided themselves with convenient articles that he had not thought of. He consoled himself that the regiment would stop some time in Louisville, when he would have an opportunity of making up his deficiencies.

But when the 200th reached Louisville there was no leisure for anything. Bragg was then running his celebrated foot-race with Buell for the Kentucky metropolis, and the 200th Ind. was trotted as rapidly as unused legs could carry it to the works several miles from the center of the city.

Everybody who was in that campaign remembers how terribly hot and dry everything was.

Si Klegg managed to keep up tolerably near the head of the column until camp was reached, but his shoulders were strained and blisters began to appear on his feet.

"That was a mighty tough pull, wasn't it?" he said to his chum as they spread their blankets on the dog-fennel and made some sort of a bed; "but I guess after a day or two we'll get so used to it that we won't mind it."

For a few days the 200th Ind. lay in camp, but one day there came an order for the regiment to march to Bardstown as rapidly as possible. A battle was imminent. The roads were dusty as ash-heaps, and though the pace was not three miles an hour, the boys' tongues were hanging out before they were out of sight of camp.

"I say, Captain, don't they never have resting spells in the army?" said Si.

"Not on a forced march," answered the Captain, who, having been in the first three months' service, was regarded as a veteran. "Push on, boys; they say that they'll want us before night."

Another hour passed.

"Captain, I don't believe you can put a pin-point anywhere on my feet that ain't covered with a blister as big as a hen's egg," groaned Si.

"It's too bad, I know," answered the officer; "but you must go on. They say

Morgan's cavalry are in our rear shooting down every straggler they can find."

Si saw the boys around him lightening their knapsacks. He abominated waste above all things, but there seemed no help for it, and, reaching into that receptacle that bore down upon his aching shoulders like a glacier on a groundhog, he pulled out and tossed into the fence corner the educational works he had anticipated so much benefit from. The bottle of "No. 6" followed, and it seemed as if the knapsack was a ton lighter, but it yet weighed more than any stack of hay on the home farm.

A cloud of dust whirled up, and out of it appeared a galloping Aid.

"The General says that the 200th Ind. must push on much faster. The enemy is trying to get to the bridge ahead of them," he shouted as he dashed off in another cloud of dust.

A few shots were heard in the rear.

"Morgan's cavalry are shooting some more stragglers," shouted some one.

Si was getting desperate. He unrolled the counterpane and slashed it into strips with his bowie. "My mother made that with her own hands," he explained to a comrade, "and if I can't have the good of it no infernal rebel shall. He next slashed the boots up and threw them after the quilt, and then hobbled on to overtake the rest of his company.

"There's enough dry-goods and clothing lying along in the fence corners to supply a good-sized town," the Lieutenant Colonel reported as he rode over the line of march in rear of the regiment.

The next day Si's feet felt as if there was a separate and individual jumping toothache in every sinew, muscle, tendon and toe-nail; but that didn't matter. With Bragg's infantry ahead and John Morgan's

cavalry in the rear, the 200th Ind. had to go forward so long as the boys could put one foot before the other. The unloading went on even more rapidly than the day before.

"My knapsack looks like an elephant had stepped on it," Si said, as he ruefully regarded it in the evening.

"Show me one in the regiment that don't," answered his comrade.

Thenceforward everything seemed to conspire to teach Si how vain and superfluous were the things of this world. The first rain-storm soaked his cherished album until it fell to pieces, and his sister's portfolio did the same. He put the photographs in his blouse pocket and got along just as well. When he wanted to write he got paper from the sutler. A mule tramped on his fancy coffee-pot, and he found he could make quite as good coffee in a quart-cup. A wagon-wheel ran over his cherished frying-pan, and he melted an old canteen in two and made a lighter and handier pan out of one-half of it. He broke his bowie-knife prying the lid off a cracker box. He piled his knapsack with the others one day when the regiment was ordered to strip them off for a charge, and neither he nor his comrades ever saw one of them again. He never attempted to replace it. He learned to roll up an extra pair of socks and a change of underclothing in his blanket, tie the ends of this together and throw it over his shoulder sash fashion. Then, with his socks drawn up over the bottoms of his pantaloons, three days' rations in his haversack and 40 rounds in his cartridge box, he was ready to make his 30 miles a day in any direction he might be sent, and whip anything that he encountered on the road.



SI'S LOAD BEGINS TO GET HEAVY.

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Joe and Holly Sullivan, Editors

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