

THE CENTRALIA MASSACRE

The following material was sent in by Richard Schenk. I was not clear if this is something written by Richard Schenk or was something posted on the Shelby Co., Website.

"My research has found that this Massacre is mentioned in a three volume set titled "The Civil War, a Narrative" by Shelby Foote, copyright 1974, Random House, Inc. In Volume three on page 578-579, Mr. Foote states,

"...ruthless attack on Centralia, fifty miles north of the capital, by a force of about 200 butternut guerillas under William Anderson, who bore and lived up to his nickname "Bloody Bill." A former lieutenant in William C. Quantrill's gang, of Lawrence and Fort Baxter fame, he had quarreled with his chief in Texas and returned to his old stomping ground, near the Missouri-Kansas border, along with other disaffected members of the band, including George Todd and David Pool, as well as Frank James and his seventeen-year-old brother Jesse. Clattering into Centralia at midday, September 27-...they held up a stagecoach and an arriving train, killed two dozen unarmed soldiers aboard on furlough, along with two civilians who tried to hide valuables in their boots, and left hurriedly, with \$3000 in greenbacks from the express car, when three troops of Union cavalry unexpectedly appeared and gave chase. Three miles out of town, the guerillas turned on their pursuers, who numbered 147, and shot dead or cut the throats of all but 23 who managed to escape on fast horses. "From this time forward I ask no quarter and give none," Anderson had announced on the square in Centralia, and then proceeded to prove he meant it, first in town and then out on the prairie".

MEMORANDA

Our company was enlisted in Shelby County, Missouri in August 1864, under Capt. William Glover, for one year's service. Rendezvoused at Hannibal, Mo., and was there organized and mustered into U.S. Service, Sept. 8, 1864. Left Hannibal, Sept. 14th, under Major A. V. E. Johnson, and marched to Paris, Mo.; left Paris on the night of Sept. 26th, in pursuit of the "Bushwhackers" and "Guerrillas" infesting that vicinity, who were under the notorious guerrilla Bill Anderson. As we were advancing near Centralia, we met Anderson's guerrillas in greatly unexpected numbers, Sept. 27, 1864. An engagement ensued and Major Johnson's command was disastrously defeated. The loss of four Sergeants, six Corporals and forty privates, killed on the spot, mournfully attests the sad result of our company. Oct. 4th, marched to Jefferson City, to assist in the defense of that place from the rebel attack under "Old Pap Price." We held position in the extreme front during the fight on the 8th, and until relieved by the retreat of the rebels on the 9th. Oct. 10th embarked and moved up the river to near Booneville, but returned down and disembarked at Providence and marched back to Jefferson City. Oct. 18th, marched to Lamine River, to rebuild the bridge burned by the rebels in their retreat. On Oct. 28th marched to Booneville; Dec. 1st, marched to Glasgow; Dec. 13th, ordered to Nashville, Tenn.; proceeded via Macon City, Mo., Quincy and Springfield, Ill., Indianapolis, Ind., Louisville, Ky., and arrived at Nashville, Jan. 1, 1865. The urgency of the occasion being passed, by the rebels under Hood having been whipped by the Union forces under Gen. Thomas, we remained, but four days and were ordered back. Left Nashville, Jan., 4th, and arrived at St. Louis the 8th. At this date March 15, 1865, we were quartered at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, awaiting further orders...

I do not know the date of this document other than it was put together by the first sergeant after the Civil War was over. As you can see many of the names are written or spelled incorrect as the author was writing from memory and he spelled the names as they sounded.

In regards to Company G, in a book titled, "The Shelby County History" indicates of these 51 men, three

were returned to Shelby County for burial, the other 48 were buried in a trench by the citizens of Centralia. In 1873 the remains were all taken up and removed to the National Cemetery at Jefferson City, Missouri.

Company G, 39th Missouri Infantry Vols. Company Officers Commissioned Capt. William Glover 1st Lieut. Thomas Janes
2d Lieut. Josiah Gill etc

Killed in Action at Centralia, Missouri on Sept. 27th 1864

Privates....William T. Whitelock

Mustered into U.S. SERVICE SEPTEMBER 8, 1864 At Hannibal, Missouri

Centralia

Another stern cold death chill,
With gleaming well aimed dart,
Hath plucked and frosted all the flowers,
In the garden of the heart,
And quickened every pulse anew, with painful fitful start.

Why? Well another seeming staunch built boat,
With fifty souls, from shore,
Goes pushing down life's troubled stream,
Is wrecked-'twill rise no more,
And life's hard fight, with all her crew is now forever o'er.
Yes, another day has left us,
A few short hours are gone,
And fifty warriors brave and true,
Lie dead upon the lawn;
Alas! they'll in the morning miss the glorious burst of dawn.

Well, in the morning, sunbeams
Advanced their hearts around,
At night the owl's frightful scream,
Had twice its hideous sound,
For fifty of our comrades dear, lay dead upon the ground.
Yes, the morning opened on us bright,
And near us sang a lark,
But our dear boys when came the night,
Lay motionless and stark,
And not a bright ray to the heart, came through the gloomy dark.
HAWKINS

If anyone wishes to obtain a copy of this document they should contact kwilham@marktwain.net (Kathleen Wilham) of the Shelby County Historical Society. She has the original document.

Everyone who uses this page should say Thank You to T J Bynum who let us borrow this information for Shelby Co. Thanks T J!!"

William T. Whitelock, a Union soldier was born about 1844 the son of Charles Edward & Mary Whitelock of Lewis Co., Missouri. His father Charles was born in Maryland about 1815 and is shown on our WHITLOCK57 chart, The Whitelocks of Yorkshire and Delaware. His grandfather was James Whitelock who died in Tiger Fork, Shelby Co. in 1842. There is some speculation that James Whitelock was the son of Thomas Whitelock who shows in the Delaware Archives, militia lists for January 14,1778.

In a document dated 1801 James and his brother John Whitelock tell of their father's service:

Sir: Please to pay to Mathew Aiken the Dividend of the Prize Money which our Father Thomas Whitelock was intitled to as a private in Capt. Isaac Lewis Company Belonging to the Whig Battalion Comanded by Colonel George Craighead which was Stationed at New-Ark in the year 1777, & you will much oblige
Your Humble Serv't
James Whitelock
John Whitelock

To James Booth, Esqr.
New Castle
March 30th, 1801

To date we have not discovered how this family connects to the WHITLOCK57 chart but it appears likely that they do and I have listed them at the end as "also likely connected". Our thanks to Richard Schenk for sharing this information.

Sources:UBC51,52; X1414/2; X2375/3 X4966; X4967