



## The Hughes News Br. General John T. Hughes Camp 614

### Historians Corner, Paul R. Petersen



The Hughes News is excited to start featuring a monthly column by Author and Historian Paul R. Petersen. Paul is the Author of *Quantrill of Missouri*, *Quantrill in Texas*, *Quantrill at Lawrence* and *Lost Souls of the Lost Township*. Petersen is a retired U.S. Marine Corps master sergeant and a highly decorated infantry combat veteran of the Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. He is a member of the William Clarke Quantrill Society, the James-Younger Gang Association, the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Jackson County and Missouri State Historical Societies. He received his A.B.A. from Longview Community College and attends Ottawa University. Petersen lives in Raytown, Missouri.

### Federal Cavalryman proves Quantrill fought at Cane Hill and Prairie Grove by Paul R. Petersen

Since the death of William Clarke Quantrill much has been written concerning his early life and military career. As more and more written accounts are made public a much more accurate story of his life can be made. A startling new discovery has recently been made by Quantrill historian and author Paul R. Petersen. During the Battles of Cane Hill and Prairie Grove, Arkansas on November 28 and December 7, 1862 respectfully, all written accounts report that Quantrill did not take part in these battles. When the leaves began to fall in Missouri during the autumn of 1862 Quantrill led his men south into Arkansas. On November 17 Quantrill requisitioned forage from the quartermaster in Fort Smith, Arkansas for his men.

Quantrill's command remained in camp at Fort Smith for a week. After this brief respite, Quantrill took his command across the Arkansas river at Van Buren, Arkansas. At Dipper Springs the guerrillas joined Confederate Gen. John S. Marmaduke with orders to attach themselves as an independent cavalry command to Col. Benjamin Elliott's cavalry battalion serving under General Joseph O. Shelby. After the Confederates made it safely into Van Buren, they set up camp and remained there for four days. Here they awaited the arrival of Sterling Price's infantry. The first units to arrive had many men who were close friends of those in Quantrill's company. Here far away from home they were reunited with old friends from Jackson County that they had not seen for many months.

Following this date Quantrill was suppose to have left his command in charge of his adjutant Lt. Wil

liam H. Gregg then traveled with his orderly sergeant Andrew Blunt to Richmond, Virginia seeking an independent commission of partisan rangers from President Jefferson Davis. Without any official records it was assumed that Quantrill left for Richmond sometime before November 28 when the Battle of Cane Hill began. Noted Quantrill historian William Elsey Connelley said of Quantrill during this period that "While Quantrill's company was attached to the command of General J. O. Shelby when it reached the Confederate lines in Arkansas, Quantrill himself did not remain with it." Another noted modern author, Edward E. Leslie of *The Devil Knows How to Ride* wrote: "In the coming months Marmaduke's division saw considerable action and was much bloodied; Shelby's brigade earned the nickname the 'Iron Brigade,' but Quantrill would miss all the fighting. In the middle of November he left Todd in charge of the band and, accompanied by Andy Blunt and a man named Higbee, went to Richmond."

With all due respect done by these contemporary and modern historians the officers of [quantrillsguerrillas.com](http://quantrillsguerrillas.com) are proud of being able to continue the research into the life of William Clarke Quantrill and show the truth behind the false accounts that have been perpetrated for so many years. Cavalryman Homer Harris Jewett was from Pella, Henry County, Iowa. He enlisted in Company D, 7th Missouri Cavalry at Oquaga, Illinois on September 17, 1861. During the First Battle of Independence on August 11, 1862 he was slightly wounded and taken prisoner by Quantrill's men. Before being exchanged he was led south

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into Arkansas as a prisoner of war. While being guarded and held in the Confederate camp near the Cove Creek road he wrote in his diary on Tuesday, December 9, 1862, "We had learned before that Quantrill was here and that it was by his men we were taken. We were marched into an open field and bivouacked for a while. The Provost Marshal took possession of us. We were inspected by them to see if any of Willhite's men were among us. Willhite is a Union bushwhacker. Col. Shelby and Quantrill rode up and down the line looking at each one. Quantrill is a small man about 5 ft 8 in, light hair and eye brows with a mustache and 'imperial' of the same colour. There was a very quiet look about him and I observed his compressed lips to slightly quiver as he ran his eye over us. I would here observe that the officers who were taken were paroled after the battle. Lt. Combs, Lt. Merihue and a Major of the 1st Missouri were taken. The artist Camell from Independence who joined Quantrill at the Independence battle came and talked with us, also some others from there."

Private Homer Jewett wrote this entry in his diary concerning his personal meeting with Quantrill on December 9, 1862. The Battle of Cane Hill Arkansas took place on November 28, 1862. The Battle of Prairie Grove took place on December 7, 1862. This single written account sets the record straight for all future historians that Quantrill was present with his men during these two epic battles.

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References: William Elsey Connelley - *Quantrill and the Border Wars*; Edward E. Leslie - *The Devil Knows How to Ride*; Tom Jewett - *Failed Ambition - The Civil War Journals & Letters of Cavalryman Homer Harris Jewett*



**Photo of the Federal cavalryman, Homer Harris Jewett, who wrote in his diary that he saw Quantrill with Shelby during the battle of Prairie Grove when he was captured. Photo courtesy of Tom Jewett, author of Failed Ambition - The Civil War Journal & Letters of Cavalryman Homer Harris Jewett.**