

Shelbina In The Wars

The little village was quite young when the first of several wars in which Shelbina was to participate, broke out. The fact that Shelbina was part of a border state was significant. Shelbina was supposed to sympathize with the South but there were families on both sides. Often families were divided and members and relatives found themselves on opposite sides of the bitter struggle. Each man left his home to fight for the cause he thought right.

The town was only four years old when the first company of soldiers (cavalry) was organized in Shelbina by Captain Hughes. A little later the Shelby County Home Guards were organized and were mustered in at Shelbina on July 23, 1861 by U. S. Marshall Wm. B. Strachan. This company was authorized by General G. A. Hurlbut and continued under his jurisdiction until August 23 at which time it was disbanded. Brigadier General John Pope was assigned by the federal authorities to the North Missouri Command. He made his headquarters part of the time in Shelbina. In September 1861, General G. A. Hurlbut, stationed at Bethel with 500 troops of the 3rd Iowa Infantry, started to Shelbina. He reached Shelbyville at near noon, remained for dinner, after which the march to Shelbina continued. Three of the Union soldiers set out without leave for Shelbina, before the main portion of the company was ready to leave. They had covered about half the distance when they were fired upon by Confederate sympathizers hiding behind some large oak trees about half a mile north of the Salt River bridge. One of the men was killed instantly, another wounded, and the third man escaped unharmed. When the company came along, they found the dead man and brought him to Shelbina where he was buried. The company arrived in Shelbina about seven in the evening, camped over night, and left by train about noon the next day for Brookfield. This was the first incident of a military nature of the Civil War in Shelbina.

This military activity all took place early in the war. There were many incidents which took place in or near Shelbina, but there are a few outstanding ones including Colonel Green Takes Shelbina; Bill Anderson's Raid on Shelbina; the Capture of Tom Sidener, and U. S. Grant's First Command Post, guarding the bridge near Lakenan.

Green Takes Shelbina: General Pope, located at Brookfield in August 1861, sent three companies of the 3rd Iowa Infantry under Col. N. G. Williams and a company of Linn County Home Guards from Brookfield to Palmyra to open the road and proceed to Paris to take possession of the funds in the bank there, fearing the Confederates would get hold of it. On August 31 they set out by train for Palmyra and arrived the next day. Here they found they would have to go to Hannibal so that their engine might be turned around. While in Hannibal they were joined by the 2nd Kansas Regiment. These men gladly joined up with the men under Col. Williams and they set out on foot for Paris. They arrived there September 2 after an all night march, only to find that the cashier had removed the funds from the bank, and they were not to be found. On September 3 the troops started toward Shelbina.

Green, a Confederate, had mustered forces and determined to take the Federals. Williams and his men had reached Shelbina by hard and tiresome marching, and by considerable dodging and shifting from one direction to another to avoid Green. They arrived in Shelbina after dark and soon learned that General Hurlbut had left the town that day for Brookfield. The Union men realized they were in a tight spot with 620 men while Green was close on their heels with 1500 men. On September 4 it could be seen that Green had them surrounded and would accomplish his aim. *The Federals barricaded the streets*

and decided to put up the best defense possible and to make their getaway at the first opportunity. They were much relieved when a train arrived from Brookfield at 11 a.m. At noon Green sent Williams a note which gave the Federals 30 minutes to surrender, first removing the women and children. The order was obeyed as to removing the women and children, but no further. The note was not even answered. Green had obtained a good position just southeast of town, out of range of Federal muskets, and opened fire with his two pieces of artillery. One was a six and the other a nine pounder. Nearly every shot was pointed and fell somewhere near the center of the town and depot square. Here it was that Captain McClure of the 2nd Kansas Regiment lost a foot. Two balls went through the old hotel building. The marksmanship was so accurate that only two balls went astray. Green's men were out of musket range and of course the Federal men could not fight back. So they took the train, all except the Linn Co. Guards, who were mounted. They got out of town by keeping the train between them and the artillery until they were a mile or so west of town. The Confederates then took the town. Their trophies of war were some knapsacks, four mules, a wagon and some guns.

Anderson's Raid: In July 1864 Col. Bill Anderson of Centralia fame, one of the most desperate fighters and boldest men considered guerillas, paid Shelbina a visit. Anderson and his 34 riders, trained and expert shots, reached Shelbina on July 27, early in the morning. They entered from the south by the Paris road, dressed in stolen blue uniforms and so were not conspicuous. Dismounting at the park just south of the depot, the first man to whom Anderson spoke was the banker, Mr. Taylor. He ordered him to hold his horse, which Mr. Taylor did, after looking at Anderson's revolver.

Anderson's men set out in squads of two or three and took prisoner many of the men on the streets. These were lined up and relieved of all their valuables. It is told that when one of Anderson's men called upon Charley King, a well dressed young man, King tossed him a dollar. The man asked if that was all he had. Upon being told it was, the dollar was tossed back. The same story is told of Ed Wood, drug salesman from Quincy. No discrimination was made between the Union and Confederate sympathizers.

Next the raiders began a systematic plunder of the business section of town. Stores were entered, money drawers emptied, and any other loot in the way of clothing, boots, shoes, silk, dry goods and jewelry, was taken. Bolts of fancy dress goods were taken for saddle blankets, laces and ribbons with which hats and clothing of the men were festooned. The manes and tails of the horses were elaborately decked with the loot from the Shelbina stores.

The Anderson men, while relieving the citizens of their cash, and the merchants of both cash and merchandise, harmed no one. Those who lost the most of their possessions included W. A. Reid, \$500 in cash, and \$1,000 in goods. He saved \$500 by kicking it under the counter and covering it with rubbish. J. W. Ford, druggist, lost \$157 in cash and a considerable amount of goods. Turpentine, alcohol and other inflammables taken from his store were used by Anderson and his men to burn both the passenger and freight depots and some freight cars on the track.

After a stay of three or four hours, the guerillas left town to the eastward, after pretty thoroughly cleaning out the community. The depots were rebuilt soon, merchants restocked their shelves, and in time recovered from the shock of the raid. It was one of the most exciting and terrifying incidents of the Civil War in Shelbina.