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Battle on the Border

Athens, Missouri, August 5, 1861

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A threatened invasion of Iowa was averted by a sharp skirmish on the Missouri border in the opening months of the Civil War. Locally known as "The Battle of Athens," a small force of Union militia commanded by Col. David Moore, including several Iowa men, decisively routed the secessionist Border Guards of Col. Martin Green at Athens, Missouri on the Des Moines River, August 5, 1861. The rebels retreated from the border and six weeks later had been driven out of northeast Missouri.

In view of the results, this skirmish may well be termed a "decisive battle" in the bloody guerilla campaigns that were waged in northeast Missouri in 1861 and 1862. Yet the Battle of Athens has remained unknown to historians. The archives of the War Department contain no Athens documents. The *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* contain but one meagre reference to it in the chronology of the war in Missouri.

The battle was fought and the campaign was conducted between irregular forces of citizenry not regularly inducted into the military service. Regular musters, if kept or maintained, were either lost or destroyed. Pay-rolls for Union

forces were not kept until the organizations came into the national establishment. Men who served in this campaign had to wait two years for Congress to appropriate for their pay. Many of them were never paid at all.

Martin Green's Border Guards also, if mustered at all, were most of them mustered without records. Hundreds of men fought for Green and his lieutenants—with no record whatever of their service. As the historian says, "no documents, no history." Of this entire episode the archives of the nation are almost blank.

EXCITEMENT OF '61

Civil War hostilities in Missouri crystallized with Governor Claiborne F. Jackson's attempt late in April to seize the St. Louis Arsenal. When Capt. Nathaniel Lyon anticipated the Governor and seized Camp Jackson instead, together with General Frost's militia and accoutrements, the whole state arose in wrath and indignation. There were no neutrals. Citizens were either Lyonizers or Lyon haters. Recruiting fires blazed on both sides of the great Question.

Long before the affair at Camp Jackson, southern sympathizers in Missouri had started recruiting their forces. The State set up the "Missouri Border Guards" to protect the state's neutrality. The first such company was organized at Alexandria, at the mouth of the Des Moines river, in Clark County. Officers were Capt. J. W. Johnson and Lieuts. J. A. Hackley, H. J. Dull, and M. S. Mitchell. Alexandria was a hotbed of anti-Lincoln men and sentiment. But Henry Spellman, a strong Union sympathizer lived there also—and he subsequently helped to organize the first Union cavalry troop of Northeast Missouri.

Public meetings were held all over the area, to denounce first one side, then the other. On March 30th there was a great Secession flag-raising at Palmyra, at which Senator James S. Green, the principal speaker, fired the people wildly with a discussion of the "Constitutional Right of Secession." On the 31st Lincoln's new postmaster, Lyman Yancey, attempted to take over the postoffice from the Buchanan appointee, Jim Kneisley. A riot followed.

When Fort Sumpter was fired on, Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers. He called on Governor Jackson to furnish four

regiments. His requisition was refused point-blank. Joseph Winchell, of the Palmyra *Courier* declaimed: "Missouri furnish four regiments of men to assist in desolating her sister states? Never! Never will she do it while the sun continues to shine over her glorious domain!"

Instead of furnishing the national government with four regiments, Jackson ordered the Missouri Militia into training encampments. A part of the training for the Camp Jackson militia was to be the seizure of the St. Louis Arsenal, and the control of all federal facilities in the State's largest metropolis. The arsenal at Liberty was indeed seized, and its munitions were distributed to the Border Guards. But due to Lyon's loyalty, perspicacity and bulldog determination to save the Arsenal, the city and the State were likewise saved to the Union.

MISSOURI BORDER GUARDS

Fort Sumpter blew up the powder keg in Missouri. Governor Jackson convened his war legislature "to place the State in a proper attitude for defense," and reorganized the militia. While General Frost was ordered into Camp Jackson, other divisional groups were put into active training and ordered recruited to full strength. In Northeast Missouri Thomas A. Harris was made Brigadier-General of the Second Division. Florida was his rendezvous, his recruit depot, his hideout. On July 13th, Col. U. S. Grant with the 21st Illinois arrived in Marion County and marched on Florida with his heart in his mouth.

Many companies of Border Guards were set up in April and May. At Canton, Noah Grant organized a company. The ladies of the city presented the national colors. The company rejected them, declaring they would "never march under it in obedience to the requisition of Abraham Lincoln." Three companies were formed in Scotland by Captains John Boyle, John Duell, and William Dunn. At Edina, Knox County, a company was outfitted with handsome uniforms by Capt. John T. Davis. Martin Green, Ralph Smith and John G. Nunn, Lewis County judges, voted \$165.34 for powder and lead for the Border Guards. At Monticello Senator Green declared: "Every man willing to live under Black Republican rule ought to be kicked out of the State like a dog!"

On May 11th the Marion Artillery Company was organized at Palmyra. On the 21st Jim Kneisley reorganized it. Patriotic States Rights men contributed to a fund to purchase artillery. The foundry of Cleaver and Mitchell at Hannibal poured two iron cannon, a 6-pounder and a 9-pounder, before the Federal Reserve Guards commandeered the plant. These two guns became the property of Kneisley's group and served gloriously under Secession Colors. Kneisley took them to Athens in August, and it was one of these guns which sent a shell for breakfast into the old Benning house--and which wrecked the Croton railway station across the Des Moines in Iowa.

Union men were far from contented to see the Border Guards take over. Union companies were organized in every county. On the very date that Nathaniel Lyon captured Camp Jackson, he issued specific authority to loyal men all over the State to set up Union militia groups. Among those who received such authority were Howland at La Grange, Howell at Canton, William Bishop at Alexandria and David Moore at Wrightsville. John Glover in Knox County was authorized to raise a troop of cavalry. Recruiting blazed up everywhere.

D. MOORE, UNIONIST

David Moore, native of Ohio and veteran of our War with Mexico, settled in the brakes of the Wyaconda in central Clark County, Mo., at a place called Wrightsville. It was a hotbed of secession sentiment. There he built a house and started a country store. Over the gable end of it he painted the sign, D. MOORE, WRIGHTSVILLE.

His neighbors soon learned of his strong Union sympathies. The political discussions of 1860 and 1861 made him many enemies. Members of the Southern Legion pinned a notice on his doorway, warning him to leave the state. Instead of heeding the warning, he took a pot of paint and climbed up to his gable sign. He painted out the word WRIGHTSVILLE and painted in the word UNION in great glaring letters. The community has been known as Union ever since. "And if I had more room," he vowed, "I'd put Now and Forever there, too."

About May 20, 1861, the mail from St. Louis brought him

a document from Captain Lyon, in command at the St. Louis Arsenal, granting authority to raise a company of militia. He immediately had a recruiting poster struck off. He pinned the first copy, according to local lore, on the door of the Southern neighbor who had given him the warning to leave the state. The poster read:

THE UNDERSIGNED IS AUTHORIZED TO RAISE A COMPANY OF VOLUNTEERS IN THIS COUNTY FOR UNION SERVICE. ALL WHO ARE WILLING TO FIGHT FOR THEIR HOMES, THEIR COUNTRY AND THE FLAG OF OUR GLORIOUS UNION ARE INVITED TO JOIN HIM, BRINGING WITH THEM THEIR ARMS AND AMMUNITION. UNTIL THE GOVERNMENT CAN AID US WE MUST TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES. SECESSIONISTS AND REBEL TRAITORS DESIRING A FIGHT CAN BE ACCOMMODATED ON DEMAND. D. MOORE.

He organized a squad of ten men among his loyal neighbors. They took to their horses and scoured the county. By the end of May, D. Moore, Unionist, was commander of a goodly troop. Singularly enough, on the same day that Moore started recruiting, Jim Kneisley, scheduled to unlimber his "Black Battery" against Moore's little army at Athens in less than three months, started the organization of his Marion County company.

D. Moore became the Man of the Hour in Clark County. Jim Kneisley was the Rock of Gibraltar two counties further south. In between was Lewis County where Martin Green, still a county judge, who was to give his life for the Southern cause in the trenches at Vicksburg, had not yet taken to the hills.

JIM AND MARTIN GREEN

Two Green boys were born in Fauquier County, Va., in 1815 and 1817. In 1836 they came to Lewis County, Mo., where they started farming and sawmilling. James S. Green, the younger, entered law practice and became a famous attorney. He ably prosecuted Missouri's claim for a strip of Iowa territory before the Supreme Court. When the Civil War broke out, Jim Green was a U. S. Senator, ably espousing the Southern cause in the national Congress.

Martin Green, the elder of the two, became a successful and prosperous farmer whose neighbors made him their

county judge. Later they sent him to the legislature, and still later, in 1858, re-elected him to the county judgeship. He was serving in this capacity in 1861 when a Fourth of July riot broke out in Canton, the river port. Captain John Howell, a Union Home Guard officer who tried to preserve order was brutally murdered by Richard Soward, Southern sympathizer.

At dawn of the 5th there arrived from Quincy, Ill., on the SS Black Hawk the 14th Regiment, Illinois Volunteers, under the command of Col. John M. Palmer. The troops occupied the College building and soon had things under control. Senator Green jumped on his horse and fled to Monticello. There the Illinois soldiers captured him, and Col. Palmer placed him on parole. While Jim was riding hard out of town, Martin Green was riding a horse into the village. On learning of the arrival of the Illinois troops he turned about and took to the hills.

July 5th, 1861, was Martin Green's last day as a civilian, and his first as a soldier. He made his headquarters at the Border Guard camp on Horseshoe Bend near Monticello. There, with Jos. C. Porter of Marion County, he organized a regiment of Missouri southern volunteers. He became its colonel, Porter the second in command. Green became a brigadier general in the Confederate army, falling at Vicksburg, on June 27, 1863. Porter fled from North Missouri with him in September, but came back in 1862 to conduct one of the most spirited underground guerilla campaigns of the war.

From five counties of Northeast Missouri the southern men flocked into the camp at Horseshoe Bend—from Clark, Knox, Lewis, Marion and Scotland. Jim Kneisley, Cyrus Franklin, Frisbie McCullough, J. W. Priestly, and Jos. C. Porter were his leading lieutenants and aids. Dependable Jim Kneisley of Palmyra brought two Hannibal-made cannon to throw into action. These two iron babies spoke lustily for the Southern cause at Athens, Shelbina, Lexington, Pea Ridge, and other battles. To Green's camp also came three brothers from Wrightsville. They were William, John and Gene, the 15-, 17-, and 20-year old sons of D. Moore, Unionist.

MARSHALLED FOR ACTION

The forces of Northeast Missouri marshalled for battle in

June and July, 1861. June was the month of avid recruiting, July a month of marching, counter-marching and consolidation. At Alexandria the middle of July, Union men received a consignment of rifles and other munitions from the St. Louis Arsenal—all too few, but enough to make them feel cocky. David Moore, now known as “Colonel” Moore, had established a camp at Cahoka, and had been elected head of the First Northeast Missouri Infantry. At Canton, the Second Regiment had been organized with Col. Humphrey M. Woodyard as its commanding officer.

Martin Green was recognized as the unique leader of secessionist forces—a leader, an organizer, a substantial, honored and respected citizen. He planned to concentrate all his scattered groups into one maneuverable army, and to swoop down on Moore’s scattered Clark County forces and destroy them. Then he would move down the Mississippi to Canton and play the same trick on Col. Woodyard. And all Northeast Missouri would belong to him and the Southern cause.

Southern leaders had more than a mere region in view by this tactic. A widespread guerilla activity north of the Missouri, if well-organized and conducted, would keep Union forces so occupied that General Lyon would be unable to concentrate any considerable force south of the Missouri. The western and southern parts of the state were already in Southern hands. If Tom Harris and Martin Green could keep the Yankees guessing in the northeast corner, General “Pap” Price would soon have them on the run in the rest of the state.

Martin Green did yeoman service in his bailiwick. Ben Shacklett organized a troop of Border Guards in Scotland County, planning to snap at Moore’s force from the west. On July 20th he was in camp at Etna near the county line. Moore sent Wm. McKee and the Warsaw Grays from Hancock County, Ill., (a volunteer group that had just crossed the Mississippi to lend a hand), to attack Shacklett. They took him by surprise, killed one of his men, wounded several others, and drove the Scotland men out of town. Shacklett had erected a tall “Liberty Pole” at Etna. McKee’s boys ended the fight by chopping it down. The immediate result was an enthusiastic accession of loyal men to D. Moore’s Clark County regiment.

The Union force established a recruiting and training camp

at Athens on the Des Moines River. It was 20 miles west of Keokuk, within reach of aid from Col. Worthington's Iowa troops. Supplies and munitions were available by railway at Croton, just across the river. Here Martin Green planned to make his great coup.

THE EVE OF ATHENS

At Edina in Knox County, Elias V. Wilson had organized a company of 108 men. Ben Northcutt, Nicholas Murrow, Valentine Cupp and Captain Murray raised small companies at Antioch, Millport, Goodland and Greensburg. They rendezvoused at Edina, where they were joined by Joseph Story with a company from Wilmothville in Adair County. Wilson was chosen to command the regimental organization.

Five hundred men at Edina looked like bad medicine to Martin Green. He suddenly ordered the march, and in two days he had taken Edina. There was a bloodless skirmish on Troublesome creek, at sundown on July 30th. Wilson decided that Macon would be a safer stamping ground for Union forces than Edina, for already the Iowa Infantry had taken over the Hannibal and Saint Joe Railway and were stationed at Macon. He marched his men posthaste from Troublesome, and when they got to Macon the wires were burned up with the story of the rebel seizure of Edina. Martin Green was at the latter place for three days, issuing a "Proclamation of Amnesty" to the citizens—one of the few Green documents that have survived.

Meanwhile a "Peace Delegation" (Andrew Maxwell, Chas. O. Sanford, and Capt. Baker) visited Moore's quarters at Athens and endeavored to appease Martin Green by persuading Moore to disband! "If Mart Green wants to avoid bloodshed," roared D. Moore, Unionist, "he had better keep his men beyond the range of my guns!"

Green left Edina August 3rd, made a junction with Franklin's Marion county battalion, and camped on the Fabius east of Memphis. He now had a force estimated all the way from 1200 to 2000 men,—but as no musters are available it is impossible to know just how large his army really was. Regardless of size, it was poorly equipped—depending more upon enthusiasm than arms to frighten Moore's men across the Des Moines into Iowa. Gathering momentum, he moved

across northern Clark County on the 4th, camping on Fox River near Chambersburg. A council of war was held about a campfire on the river bank.

Col. Green there outlined his plan to drive Moore across the Des Moines and then swoop suddenly down upon Col. Woodyard at Canton. He said they would start by scaring the daylights out of Dave Moore—and his officers roared guffaws of enjoyment. An interruption came from the shadows.

"There's one thing you fergot, Kurnel, and that is that my Pap don't scare worth a damn!" It was John Moore, Dave's boy who had contrived to get himself enlisted in Green's Irregulars, and was on his way to Athens to fight his "Old Man!" Camp broke early and the army headed for Athens. The quiet village was rudely disturbed for breakfast by the first barking of Jim Kneisley's little iron cannon.

BATTLE REPORT

Col. Moore's report of the Battle of Athens was made to Col. W. H. Worthington, 5th Regiment, Iowa Volunteers, in command at Keokuk. But the document has never been found. If it is as laconic as most of D. Moore's writing, it is short and pungent. However that may be, the local press carried fairly adequate reports. A fairly good job of reporting was done by the *Chicago Tribune*, *Missouri Democrat*, *Quincy Herald*, *Daily Gate City*, and other journals. The latter published the casualty list of killed and wounded.

The battle started at dawn with the booming of Kneisley's "Black Battery." Twelve hundred or more raw militiamen swooped down upon 400 Union men from three directions. Dull and Kimbrough, leading Clark and Lewis County men, came down the river to the little village. Shacklett's Scotland County boys pressed north through Ike Gray's cornfields. The main body of Green's troops moved in from the west.

Citizens left their breakfast, took to their heels, dashed across the river to Iowa and safety. Ike Bills used to say he caught a wagon bed full of Kneisley's shot as he drove his mules across the "crick." The Keokuk Rifles and Rangers, commanded by Hugh Sample and W. W. Belknap, encamped at Croton, joined in the melee, firing across the stream until their ammunition was exhausted. When flying missiles wrecked the railway station they had to move their bivouac. Uncle

Joe Benning stood watching the battle from his front door. He felt a sudden shock as a cannonball passed through his house and dropped beside the doorway.

Howard Tucker was orderly of the City Rifles and just before the battle Capt. Belknap had sent him with a squad of six rifles to relieve a squad who had all night been keeping some rebel prisoners in the schoolhouse in Croton. As Tucker came near the schoolhouse, a lady of Croton pointing to one of the notable prisoners named Musgrove, said, "Mr. Soldier, I want you to shoot that grey headed old scoundrel," but just then a cannon ball came so near to Tucker's head that he felt its concussion and caused him to turn about and quickly march his squad back to pay their attention to rebels with guns on the other side of the river.

The cannon did little damage, but the rifle fire began to take its toll. Men fell, killed or wounded—most of them southerners—a surprise to Martin Green. He had expected an easy victory, but his men were being killed or maimed by northern bullets. Henry Spellman and Elsberry Small opposed Shacklett's flank movement. A bullet carried Spellman's hat away. He noted the stampede from Athens into Iowa. "Come on, men!" he shouted, "we'll never stop 'em!" He joined the stampede.* But Elsberry Small's company held fast.

In a lull of firing, Col. David Moore's stentorian voice called from the village streets, "Forward! charge! bayonets!" His two boys, John and Gene, behind a worm fence in Ike Gray's cornfield, jumped and ran—starting a rebel stampede back trail from Edina. Martin Green's entire army surged and gave way, leaving horses and stores behind! It was a great victory for Moore and the Union forces.

THE STAMPEDE

Green's Irregulars were defeated. Indeed, they were routed. Instead of driving Col. Moore into the Des Moines at Athens they were given the drubbing of their lives. They stampeded

* NOTE: Contemporary writers held Spellman's superior, Major Callahan, responsible for this flight of mounted troops. Years later, A. W. Harlan, a participant, put it into popular doggerel:

"Our mounted men had no part in the fray,
Callahan ordered a retreat and led the way,
And soon they were all over into Iowa."

from the field at Athens like Texas cattle before a prairie fire. Their only enthusiasm was to get away. Pellmell, individually or by small detachments, they headed in the general direction of Edina.

They left everything behind them. They dropped their rifles, their spare dunnage, their commissaries. Many of them forgot their horses, tethered in a grove near the battle site, until it was too late to retrieve them. They had lost courage, and now they forgot it altogether. Their one ambition was to put Athens behind them. Kneisley's gunners lashed their horses like postillions. One of the carriages snagged on a stump, and the gun had to be abandoned. Kneisley barely had time to cover it with debris so as to camouflage it a little.

Green was in a hurry, too. A favorite anecdote about this famous panic placed him on a long-eared mule too slow for his comfort. The story is apocryphal, of course, but was told about many a Union campfire during the war. When the mule would not move Green gave him a kick in the stern and told him to get out of the way and let someone run who knew how!

The Lewis County colonel may have been defeated on the field of battle by conditions of equipment, training and morale over which he had no control. But he was far from being "licked." In the over-all problem of the campaign he was not defeated. He had thrown the scare of their lives into the Unionists of Missouri and Iowa. While Nathaniel Lyon was in the field south of the Missouri, trying to smash the organized Missouri forces, there was Martin Green in the north, keeping several thousand Union men alerted and unable to go to Lyon's rescue.

For the six weeks following the Battle of Athens, Green was everywhere at once. His lieutenants were able men—Franklin, Kneisley, Porter, Priestly, McCullough. They knew the trails and the hideouts. People loved and trusted them. They struck quickly, silently, and fled into the night. The air was filled with rumors—and with the wails and curses of Union victims of their stealth.

South Missouri was sadly neglected in order to wipe out the Green menace at the north. Missouri militia and cavalry, Iowa soldiers, Illinois soldiers, Kansas soldiers, Fremont stalwarts,

with John Pope towering in command, were thrown into the chase. Gradually they closed in upon Green's Florida hide-out from north, south, east, and west. But when the trap was sprung, lo! Green and his 3000 irregulars had disappeared, evaporated, vanished!

THE RETREAT

After the defeat at Athens, Martin Green rounded up his scattered groups as quickly as possible. He remained at Edina two days, August 7th and 8th, for this purpose. On the 10th he was at Memphis, on the 12th at Horseshoe Bend, Monticello, on the 15th at Sugar Camp Ford, on the 16th at McReynold's Mills, on the 17th at Kirksville, Adair County. On the 20th he was in Shelby County, the 21st at Marshall Mills, the 28th at Palmyra, Marion County, and back to Marshall Mills the 30th.

Several local skirmishes made headlines during Green's memorable "flight." On the 19th there was a skirmish at a farmhouse on Bee Branch, Adair County, in which Corporal Harvey Dix, of the Third Iowa, was killed. On the 20th an action was fought at Clapp's Ford, on the Clark-Lewis line, between Joe Porter's scouts and a part of Woodyard's Lewis County regiment. Porter had led a detachment back to Athens to retrieve the cannon Kneisley had buried there. Sneaking past Moore's force at Waterloo, he secured the gun and returned it almost to Monticello—when he nearly lost it to Woodyard's valorous bloodhounds.

Green seemed to be everywhere at once, but the Union men could corner him nowhere. On Sept. 1st he was at Philadelphia and Newmarket, on the 2nd at the Florida rendezvous in Monroe County. On the 3rd he was at Shelbina with a strong force, and on the 4th he fought an action there with the Third Iowa and Second Kansas regiments. It was a miniature Athens, valorously fought on both sides. Kneisley set up his guns opposite to Shelbina's main street and sent shot after shot in from the prairie through Union ranks. One of them made a one-legged man out of McClure, a Kansas officer. The Union troops were forced to withdraw, abandoning some property to the victorious Confederates.

Colonel Green dashed back to Florida with all his field forces. There, from the 5th to the 8th, he organized his re-

treat from North Missouri. He had done a notable job of diverting some ten thousand Federal troops north of the Missouri while General Price was organizing the Missouri State forces in the south. Now Price, having fought the Federals to a standstill at Wilson's Creek, was before Lexington, attacking a strongly entrenched Union force. He needed Green's 3000 men at Lexington.

With Brigadier-General Thomas A. Harris in command, Green and his lieutenants broke camp at Florida on the 8th of September. On the 9th they tore up a section of the North Missouri Railway at Renick. On the 10th they crossed Randolph and Howard Counties. On the 11th they hid out at Glasgow, on the Missouri. On the 12th, Green and Porter seized on the steamer Sunshine. They moved Harris' entire force of 2730 men across the river to safety—leaving the Federals gasping with amazement at the ease with which they had affected their getaway.

THE CHASE

While Martin Green was collecting his scattered forces at Edina, immediately after the trouncing they received at Athens, Col. David Moore had to take two days for his men to recuperate. They remained at Athens until August 8th, while Colonels Mathies and Worthington sent men across Clark County from Keokuk, to try and overtake the fleeing rebels.

On the 8th Moore moved to Etna, where McKee had defeated Shacklett before the action at Athens. On the 10th he was at Memphis hot on Green's trail—but just late enough to miss him. On the 14th he moved back to Etna. On the 15th Col. Woodyard was at Williamstown, and on the 16th he met Moore's outfit at Fairmont. There the 1st and 2nd Northeast Missourians made their first consolidation.

On the 18th the combined force moved to Waterloo, county seat of Clark. There on the 19th Moore effected an exchange of prisoners with Green. While all this maneuvering was going on, Moore convened a military commission at Athens. The Commission heard many cases of disloyalty growing out of the Athens affair. Eight men were convicted of treason and were marched from Athens to Waterloo, thence to St. Francisville and Alexandria, to embark on the steamer Sucker State

for St. Louis. There the eight Clark County "traitors" languished many days in the Arsenal.

Now Colonel Moore was free to march. On the 21st he and Woodyard moved back to Waterloo, where they reorganized. On the 27th they marched to Luray, on the 28th to the Fabius via Etna, on the 29th to Edina. On Sept. 2nd they marched to Bethel in Shelby County, and on the 3rd to Philadelphia in Marion. It was on the road to Philadelphia that Mary Robinson, a charming guerrilla girl, took a potshot at D. Moore, the Black Republican tyrant. She picked out the wrong man—but she toppled a Union man from his horse nevertheless.

On the 4th Moore and Woodyard were at Palmyra where they met General John Pope, who now had command of all Northeast Missouri troops in the great manhunt for Martin Green. On the 5th, Moore, Woodyard and Col. Smith with an Illinois regiment were at Hunnewell, in a skirmish with Green's supply train. The next day Pope, with Col. John Glover's cavalry, reinforced them—but Green's men were far away. They were now apparently hot on the trail. Moving steadily toward Florida, an all night forced march on the 8th brought them into Green's hideout at sunrise of the 9th—to find it completely abandoned!

Martin Green was already across the North Missouri Railway and well on his way to Glasgow and a ferry across the Missouri. Moore took his men back to Palmyra where on the 12th, after four months' service, they received their first outfit from government stores.

AFTERMATH

Martin Green's campaign had been successful, albeit he had lost the first battle at Athens. All summer long he had kept Union troops too busy north of the Missouri to go to the rescue of Captain Lyon in the field in the south. Lyon had fought a valiant fight at Wilson's Creek against Price's well-organized Missourians. Caught in a trap where he had to fight, beat an ignominious retreat, or surrender, the grave commander chose to fight—his last battle. Lyon had fallen, a staggering blow to the Union cause. The Union debacle at Wilson's Creek may well be chalked up to the credit of Thomas A. Harris and Martin Green who prevented reinforcements to Lyon.

Of Green's escaping legion of North Missourians we hear yet a further report. They crossed the Missouri on September 12th, 2730 in number, made a forced march of 62 miles in 28 hours—and on the 13th were before the entrenchments at Lexington. There the Irishman Mulligan was defending the city against attack and siege. For 52 hours General Price had stormed the breastworks where, reported the Union commander, his men were "dying from thirst, frenziedly wrestling for water in which the bleeding stumps of mangled limbs had been washed . . ."

Martin Green and Joe Porter, fresh from the jaws of death north of the river, took in the situation and developed a maneuver. The southerners could not get close enough to Mulligan's trenches due to the deadly fire of his troops. A great crop of baled hemp lay at Lexington awaiting shipment. Green got his North Missourians around it, rolled it into slack water until thoroughly soaked. Thus protected from Mulligan's heated shot, he formed it into a line of barricade just outside the Yankee range. When the barricade was completed, the Northeast Missouri Irregulars, now seasoned veterans, started rolling the bales of hemp toward Mulligan's trenches, safe behind the moving wall.

Confederate historians compare the episode to the great stratagems of military annals—to the Trojan Horse, and to the siege of Dunsinane Castle. "Poor Mulligan," wrote one of them, "must have gazed on this miracle . . . in much the same wonder as the Scottish king beheld from his battlements, the advance of Birnam Wood . . ." Lexington fell, September 20th, to the attacking Missourians. General Price took 3000 prisoners plus a large amount of valuable government stores. Martin Green and his lieutenants had retrieved their loss.

After Green's escape Col. Moore was ordered to Canton. Shortly thereafter the 1st and 2nd Northeast Missouri regiments were consolidated into the 21st Missouri Infantry Volunteers, with Col. Moore in command and Col. Woodyard the lieutenant-colonel. The regiment saw a real baptism of fire at Shiloh, where Moore lost a leg in action. On the bloody field at Corinth, Moore's and Green's heroes were to meet again. But they were all veterans when that happened. Nobody stampeded.

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