The Missouri Republican – St. Louis, Mo. – August 12, 1862

Total Defeat of Porter’s Guerrillas.

300 KILLED AND WOUNDED

Gen. Merrill telegraphs from Hudson further particulars at the battle near Kirksville, between Colonel McNeil’s forces and Porter’s guerrillas, numbering 3,000 men. The loss of the enemy killed and wounded is set down at not less than 300 – of whom 128 were found and buried on the battlefield. Two thousand of Porter’s force deserted him, and have scattered in every direction – several hundred have been taken prisoners, and some of the most notorious of these, found with evidence of their faithlessness to their oaths and their parole in their pockets, were summarily disposed of by Court Martial. Porter, and those rebels who adhere to him are retreating, closely followed by McNeil and his victorious troops.

The Federal loss is stated at eight killed and twenty-five wounded. Col. McNeil was slightly injured.

This victory has broken the back bone of the guerrillas in this State. The troops in pursuit will either drive them out of the State or put it beyond their ability to do any further mischief in it. The right is a broad, and, turn where the Rebels may, there will be troops to meet and conquer them.

THE RAID IN MISSOURI

We think it may be safely said, that the Rebel raid in Missouri has received a check from which it will never recover. Undoubtedly, a scheme had been planned to throw Rebel officers into the State, and to mass as rapidly as possible an army of Secessionists, to be employed in an attempt to control the destinies of the State, and eventually to take her out of the Union; or, failing in this, to swell the Confederate army in Cotton States. But these calculations have all been spoiled by the quickness and courage of the Federal troops, and two weeks will hardly elapse before all the hostile bands have been defeated and driven from our soil. Last week, Porter, the chief of the Rebel gang in Northeast Missouri, at the head of 3000 men, was attacked and defeated by Col. McNeil with a much inferior force, near Kirksville, in Adair County – not less than 300 of his band killed, of whom 128 were found and buried on the battle field. Not only was this defeat suffered, but a large number of prisoners were taken, some of whom were dealt with summarily by a court-martial and two thousand of his command fled in every direction. Col. McNeil was still in pursuit of the flying enemy, and we shall not be surprised to hear of his capture. While this decided victory has attended our arms, it is reported that the loss of the Federal troops was only eight killed and twenty-five wounded.

Porter was the chief marauder in the State; he will not find a resting place, alive, north of Missouri. Poindexter’s and Cobb’s bands are less likely to give trouble. We think they have already left the North Missouri Railroad, and will make tracks for the Missouri river, hoping to find some means of crossing and getting into Arkansas. But this they will hardly be able to do. Guitar’s, McNeil’s and other
State forces, ought to be able to bag the whole of them, and this he proposes to do. Energy, activity and increasing vigilance are sure to restore the peace of the State in a little while.

The Missouri Republican – St. Louis, Mo. – August 14, 1862

From the Keokuk Gate City, August 10.

More About the Fight at Kirksville.

Information derived from an individual who participated in the Kirksville fight represents it as a most bloody and terrible affair for the rebels. Col. McNeil, with a command of some fifteen hundred men, had followed Porter’s force, supposed to be three thousand strong, in hot pursuit for twenty-four hours, without stopping to eat or sleep. Arriving at Kirksville, where Porter had stopped to offer battle behind the protection furnished by the houses of the village, McNeil sent detachments to the right and left of the town, and planted his cannon, some five pieces, in a favorable position. The main portion of his forces dismounted, and leaving their horses in the rear, made their approaches gradually, on their hands and knees, rising and firing as they advanced in intervals, and shifting the artillery from place to place as they discovered more effective positions. Four or five of the principal houses in town were shattered by the artillery, and eventually burned up, with those that were using them as a place of defense.

After the defeat of the rebels, some fifty persons, who had heretofore been paroled or taken the oath, were shot down. Two women and one little boy are known to have been killed, and it is probable others were killed whose names were not reported. Our troops buried of the secesh on the ground about one hundred and fifty, and supposed that as many more had been killed or mortally wounded, whose bodies were burned in the buildings destroyed, and carried off by the retreating foe.

Captain Chayne, of Van Buren county, was shot and instantly killed, while leading a charge against the enemy, early in the fight. No braver officer or better man has fallen on the field of battle since the war commenced, and his death will be lamented by thousands of loyal citizens of Iowa, who knew his worth and loved him for his virtues.

Our loss was seven killed and some thirty wounded. Our troops captured forty to fifty wagons and teams loaded with plunder and about 500 stands of arms.

Col. McNeil rode in front of the battle and cheered his men on to victory, and by his side rode young Moore, of our county, a worthy representative of the gallant Hawkeye soldiers, who have borne so honorable a part in almost all the hotly contested battles of this war.

This victory will not be entirely without fruits, and we trust that our secesh neighbors over the border will take heed of the bloody lesson it reads them of their own impending fate, should they persist in the hostility to the Government.
SHELBYVILLE, MO., AUGUST 14.

EDITOR PALMYRA COURIER: At 5 o’clock, P. M. of August 1st, the first battalion Eleventh regiment M.S.M., under Major Benjamin, left this place on a campaign. Reached Bethel about 8 o’clock, where they found Col. McNeil’s regiment, and spent the night, (forming into line of battle about midnight, from a false alarm of the pickets on the Newark road) At 7 o’clock on Saturday morning, the command started for Newark, where Porter had procession, having taken the town the day before, with the loss of eighty of his men, it is supposed. When within a mile of the town we ran on his pickets, fired on them, and they fled precipitately, leaving coats, clothes, sacks, hats, &c., scattered all along the road. The Colonel, from lessons taught in the experience of Col. Lipscomb and Merrill’s Horse, thought it prudent to put out skirmishers of twenty on each side of the road, behind which the main force marched. This of course made the approach tardy, and by the time the force reached town Porter had left the east end rapidly.

At 2 o’clock, P.M., on Sunday, 3rd inst., we started North, following the trail, and camped near Troublesome Creek, at Kendrick’s, a secesh, where we helped ourselves freely to hay, corn and mutton. About sunrise, Monday, we started, still keeping in the trail, traveling nearly North, to a section of county called Fairmount and camped on a fine farm, where we again found abundance of provender. Tuesday morning we started about 5 o’clock, P.M.; passed around the farm and struck the trail in the bottom of the North Fabius, and a wide, muddy trail it was, in many places the bushes trampled down in flight. At noon we left the bottom and struck towards Kirksville, traveling until after night, when our Battalion and McNeil’s Regiment; Merrill’s Horse a mile and a half back. During the day we found the plans thrown from the bridge over the middle Fabius, in order to impede our pursuit.

Wednesday, the 6th inst., we started at 5 o’clock, traveling moderately for seven miles, still gaining on Porter; then increased the speed to a gallop, and about 11 o’clock the advance reached Kirksville. By 12 o’clock, the baggage and cannon arrived, and the battle commenced; the cannon playing upon the buildings and corn patches on the East end of town; the men in squads rushing and firing; the Merrill Horse doing good service in bold charges upon the concealed foe. For four hours the fight continued, when the town was cleared, the rebels firing an occasional shot from the bush, but the mass with their commander, running for life. A number of shot guns and rifles were left, and two hundred and fifty horses were brought in.

Porter’s plan for fight must have been based upon the idea that Colonel McNeil would order a rapid charge through the town, to the timber on the west end, (two men passed our forces on the way in, stating that Porter had fortified on the west end of Kirksville,) but the Colonel did not bite, and wisely too, for every house was filled with wackers; every corn patch; the court house prepared on its four sides, by nailing heavy plank along the lower part of each window, and for a mile west, on each side of the main road, each panel of worm fence was drawn together so as to form a breastwork. The order was given (as I learned from a Union citizen who remained in his house during the fight,) to shoot the long range guns first, then, as our men entered the streets, use the short guns. But the booming of our five cannon, and the rush of the detached squads to the houses and corn patches, made the deluded rebels see that the
time had come for a dependence on legs, or the white shirt or pillow slip held out as a sign of surrender; and whilst a number of the later were saved, many of the former were left upon the ground dead and wounded.

During the evening of the day of the fight, I passed around among the wounded and found them with but two exceptions, regretting their folly and asserting that never again, if spared, would they be drawn into another raid. Such also were the feelings and assertions of the prisoners, nearly fifty of whom were in the guard room.

On Thursday evening fifteen prisoners who had taken the oath were taken out and shot. The balance were paroled and sent home. After noon on Friday, a scout came in bringing Colonel McCullough who had been taken prisoner the day before, after sundown. He was shot, dying as he lived, a deluded dare-devil.

The following are the names of the wounded in the hospital used for the rebels, and those in several other houses through the town, as I could find them:

Benj Haithman, Monroe county, wounded in neck.
John Adams, Monroe county, wounded in leg.
Hubbard Chinn, Monroe county, wounded in head.
Henry Cartwright, Monroe county, wounded in side.
Andrew Gould, Monroe county, wounded in side.
James Combs, Monroe county, wounded in hip.
George Strode, Monroe county, wounded in thigh.
Daniel Orr, Monroe county, wounded in head.
David Hanger, Monroe county, wounded in hip.
Capt. Robert Hager, Monroe county, wounded in body; since dead.
William Overfelt, Monroe county, wounded in thigh.
F. M. Dry, Monroe county, wounded in thigh.
Harvey Clayton, Monroe county, wounded in left arm, amputated.
Wm. Bell, Shelby county, wounded in arm.
Thomas Robb, Shelby county, killed.
John Richardson, Shelby county, wounded in the side.
William Baker, Shelby county, wounded in the thigh.
Joseph Farmer, Lewis county, wounded in the foot.
John Devilbliss, Lewis county, wounded in the foot.
_____McDaniel, Lewis county, wounded in the arm and thigh.
Albert True, Knox county, wounded in the knee.
Newton Hamilton, Knox county, wounded in the shoulder.
_____ Mezart, Adair county, wounded above the hip.
John Pearl, Adair county, wounded, (not described)
Samuel Dickey, Marion county, (an naturalized citizen,) wounded in the thigh.
Andrew Green, Marion county, (late of Monroe county,) wounded through hips.
Wm. Couch, of Marion county, wounded in left arm.
____ Sumpter, wounded in calf of leg.
____ Hayden, of Scotland county, a boy of sixteen years, leg amputated Thursday – died before morning.
____ Parsons, of Kansas – said he was a prisoner.
Robt. Mudd, of Ralls county, leg amputated.

Our officers and men acted bravely and with spirit. No time was lost either in the chase or fight. Col. McNeil passed along the lines, mounted and exposed to enemy fire, but received only a shot grazing his scalp. Major Benjamin headed his battalion, mounted, giving the commands, and cheering to the conflict. All preformed their part equally. The Iowa troops and Merrill’s Horse are a host.

I have given you a short and very condensed account of the pursuit and fight. If you deem it worthy of publication do so.

PRIVATE OF CO. A, 11TH REG.

P.S. – Being in the prison room the day after the fifteen had been shot, I met an old acquaintance (among some thirty of the counties) from Monroe county, who gave the names of his companions from that county. I will give them to you for publication, if you see proper:


Great is the consternation among the rebels in this region. The participants in the Porter raid fearing for their lives, are coming in and begging for pardon, willingly offering their property for a release; the friends of many of them come in advance to intercede for them. Major Benjamin has been busy attending to their cases.

Yesterday a scout left for Bragg’s, fifteen miles north of this, and in the neighborhood found fourteen kegs of powder, and camp kettles, cups, &c., &c., scattered through the brush, left by the alarmed fugitives, together with a good two horse wagon, taken probably by Porter from a Union citizen. After a period of near three months riding after this arch rebel, and his discomfiture after having gathered into his camp, several thousand sympathizers, another act of pardon has been passed and like the oath and bond of old, they are availing themselves of its benefits. Will this bring peace, or what will be the next move?

PRIVATE, &c.


Through the politeness of Adjutant A. McFarlane, A.A.A. Gen. Of Col. McNeil’s staff, we are enabled to give the following complete list of the Federal killed and wounded in the recent engagement at Kirksville.
KILLED.
E. Mayne, Captain Co. G 3d Iowa cavalry.
A.H. Waggoner, private Co. C, Merrill’s Horse.
Mathias Olstein, private Co. C, Merrill’s Horse.
Sylvester Witham, private Co. C, Merrill’s Horse.
William Bush, private Co. B, 9th M.S.M.

WOUNDED.
Adjutant A. McFarland, A. A. A. General, abdomen, slightly.

OF FIRST REGIMENT, M. S. M.
Wm. R. Dutcher, private Co. A, right hip.
J Critton, private Co. B, shoulder, serious.
Capt. Little, Co. E, forehead slightly.
Jesse Gray, private Co. E, left leg.
H. H. Moore, Co. E, private, right side and left leg, serious.

OF MERRILL’S HORSE
Wm. Furguson, private, Co. A, chest, serious.
Henry Itinec[?], private, Co. A, left hip.
James M. Flagg, 3d Corporal, Co. C, back of head, slightly.
Henry C. Powell, private, Co. C, elbow joint.
J. B. Pool 6th Sergeant, Co. C, right leg, (accidental)
Christopher Waggoner, private, Co. F, knee joint.
John W. Reed, private, Co. H, right leg.
Phillip Foltz, private, Co. K, abdomen, serious.

OF THIRD IOWA CAVALRY
Albert Baker, 6th Corporal, Co. G, left arm.

OF NINTH REGIMENT, M. S. M.
James Perkins, private, Co. A, forehead, serious.
F. E. Lirk, private, co. A, chest, serious.
William Ashbury, private, co. A, chest, serious.
Phillip Melcalfè, private, co. A, left side, serious.
Rowan Feland, Eighth Corporal, co. A, right leg.
Dennis Downing, private, co. A, left shoulder.
Peter Shavoo, private, co. A, wrist joint.
Dr. Lewis, private, co. A, shoulder.
Thos. Purvis, private, co. A, arm, slight.
William H. Goodwin, private, co. B, thigh, flesh wound.
James Madden, private, co. B, shoulder joint.
James A. Wheeler, private, co. B, left side, serious.
William Blackburn, private, co. B, knee and hand.
J. P. Haze, O. S., co. B, shoulder.

OF RED ROVERS.
Capt. Little, right cheek.
J. C. Atwood, private, thigh.

OF ARTILLERY
Isaac H. Mead, right foot.

RECAPITULATION.
Killed on field....................5
Died next day....................1
Wounded.........................32
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Total killed and wounded.....28

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D. Craig Asbury c/o Webmaster