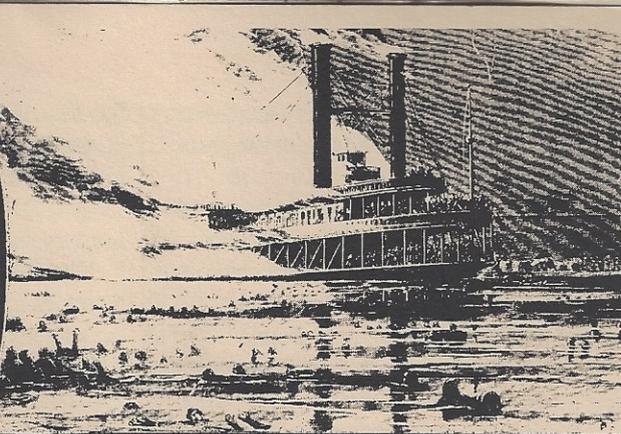


the SULTANA REMEMBERED



Newsletter of the Association of Sultana Descendants and Friends

April 27, 1865

FALL 2001

Sultana Past, Present, and Future

By Pam Newhouse

(In this issue I will present, for your consideration, Sultana-related events from the past, the present, and the future. Only by studying the past we can we better understand our present and perhaps, have a chance to make a better future for ourselves and our country. God willing.)

- Editor, Pam Newhouse)

The Past: Padding the Loading Manifest?

I received an email from descendant Steve Wright of Elizabethtown, Kentucky. His gr gr grandfather was Alfred Wright, a private in Company H, 6th Kentucky Cavalry. His wife's brother, James Morris, was also a private in the same company and was among those killed on the *Sultana*.

Steve is doing research in order to write a history of the 6th Kentucky Cavalry, and in the process he has come across some interesting information. In cross-checking the presently known lists of men on the *Sultana* with microfilmed compiled service records of the 6th Ky Cavalry, the Adjutant General's Report for the State of Kentucky, two rolls of National Archive microfilm covering the *Sultana* inquest, and a list of men in the 6th Kentucky at the time of their capture during "Wilson's Great Raid" (April 1st and 6th, 1865), there are discrepancies. And here is where it gets interesting, to quote Steve:

"There are a number of names of men who are listed as being on the *Sultana* who were never in the 6th Kentucky Cavalry. I have cross-checked the names from the compiled service records to the Adjutant General's Report. This seems innocuous since

there could have been men who were unintentionally listed in the 6th when they belonged elsewhere. But here, in my opinion, it turns sinister. There are also a number of men listed who had been with the regiment but had long departed. There is one man who accidentally shot and killed himself in January, 1865 and he's listed on the *Sultana*! There are several men who had been gone for two years or more by discharges. There is a Lemuel Hartman listed as a sergeant that was supposed to be on there. Hartman HAD been a sergeant and subsequently a sergeant major and finally a 2nd lieutenant. That is until he was dishonorably discharged from the regiment in February of 1864!

Now it would have been easy for Lt. Col. Hatch to add phony names to the list of those in the 6th Kentucky Cavalry but he would have needed a member of that regiment to give him names of men who had previously been in the regiment. It looks like a big kickback scheme. If I am correct in my thinking, Capt. J. Cass Mason got so much per head to get on his boat. If an officer could pad the lists then

**"And drowsy Memphis,
lost to sight, Now
fainter shows her
beacon light, As the
Sultana streams in
dead of night, And the
Union Soldiers rest...**

-Wm. H. Norton, 115th Ohio Inf.

the Captain would get more money and some of that would trickle down to Hatch and anyone who could give him more names to add to the list.

I can tell you without a doubt that at least when it comes to men of the 6th Ky Cav there was some serious scamming going on in making out the list of men on the *Sultana*."

Steve points out this statement which was made by Captain James M. McCowan, Co K 6th Kentucky Cavalry at the *Sultana* court of inquiry 7 May 1865 before Bvt. Brig. Gen. Hoffman, the Commissary General of Prisoners "Lt. [James J.] Surber of [Co G] 6th Ky Cav told witness he and this Quartermaster at Vicksburg were engaged in counting the first batch of troops that were put aboard the *Sultana* in [the] morning, and they counted them differently; the Quartermaster counting 118 more than Surber." (The chief QM at Vicksburg for the Department of Mississippi was Reuben Hatch. The QM referred to here was probably he, although it could have been someone else from that department. -ed)

By Steve's count, there were at least ten names of former members of the 6th Kentucky Cavalry who were not even with the regiment when most were captured in early April: "These names could only have come from someone who knew them. The informer knew that these men had been in the 6th Ky and also knew that they were not among the men at the parole camp or at Vicksburg. This information absolutely shows collusion on the part of someone in the regiment with someone preparing manifests and subsequently links them with whomever doled out the money. In this case, following the money seems to lead to Hatch and ultimately to Capt. Mason. The other nine and even a half dozen or so others could have been

a part of the scheme also. They are just a little too ambiguous to add with the rest. At least at this point.

It makes me wonder how extensive this scheme actually was. There must have been a million con games perpetrated on the government during the war. This seems to have been just one more.

I would like to hear from anyone who has thoughts on the matter.

- Steve Wright

email: slwright@ne.infi.net

The Past: Sabotage?

D.H. Rule has written a fine, wonderfully researched article for the November 2001 issue *North & South* magazine, "Sultana: A Case for Sabotage."

Below follows the beginning of the article, which I encourage you to read in its entirety for yourself. The author presents some compelling evidence in favor of sabotage:

"At any other time, the event would have raised an outcry. However, it faded quickly into near-obscurity, for the attention of both nations, Union and Confederate, was focused eastward - first on Lee's surrender in Virginia, then on the death of President Lincoln. Three investigations into the *Sultana* disaster took place in May. But only a brief time was spent in Memphis seeking the exact cause of the explosion, before the investigators moved on to concentrate on who was responsible for overloading the boat in Vicksburg. Though sabotage was not conclusively ruled out, neither was it strongly investigated. The destruction of the *Sultana* was eventually dismissed as the result of either a flaw in the boilers, a faulty boiler, or negligence in letting the water level fall too low in the boilers.

There the matter remained for twenty-three years. Then on May 6, 1888, an article appeared in the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* citing a St. Louis resident named William C. Streeter, who claimed that a 'Confederate mail carrier and blockade runner' named 'Robert Lowden,' alias 'Charles Dale,' had actually destroyed the *Sultana* in an act of sabotage. 'I had the statement from his own lips,' Streeter told the newspaper.

Two days later the *Memphis Daily Appeal* printed a substantially abbreviated version of the article on May 8, 1888, but it had little impact. Most historians have dismissed it as a mere

footnote to the event. Typical is the comment of James W. Elliott in *Transport to Disaster* (1962) that 'the idea (of sabotage) was adopted by the usual weird assortment of cranks and publicity seekers.'

The answers to the fate of the *Sultana* were not to be found in Memphis, where the tragedy occurred, nor in Vicksburg, where the original federal investigations focused, but in St. Louis. There could be found two extremely significant items: the identities and histories of William Streeter and Robert Lowden.

The St. Louis resident who made the claim of Confederate sabotage against the *Sultana*, William Streeter, was a local sign painter who had enlisted for three months in the Union army in St. Louis in May 1861. Subsequently he was employed by the provost marshal's office as assistant keeper and chief clerk of Gratiot Street Prison, the federal prison established in St. Louis in December 1861. The man Streeter claimed confessed to blowing up the *Sultana* was Robert Lowden (note spelling), a Confederate agent who smuggled mail and was notorious for the destruction of steamboats along the Mississippi River. 'There is not another man in this or any other state as dangerous a spy as this R. Lowden,' said St. Louis Provost Marshal George E. Leighton in 1863. After the war Lowden worked as a painter with Streeter. If anyone was in a position to know Lowden's secrets, it was Streeter..."

Be sure to read the rest of the article for yourself. (In my opinion, sabotage of the *Sultana* is a sobering thought and worth reevaluating. -ed)

The Present: Sultana Memorial in Ohio

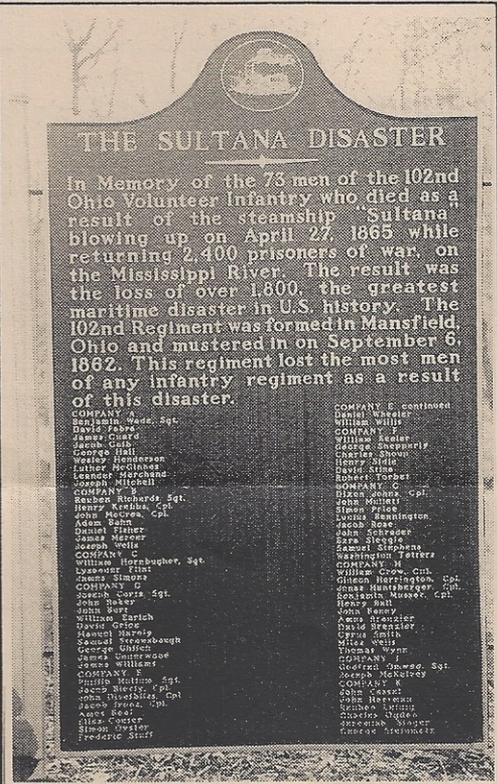
- by Richard Troup

Clear skies and sunshine greeted the crowd of over one hundred and twenty *Sultana* descendants, re-enactors and friends for the Mansfield, Ohio *Sultana* Monument Dedication on Saturday, November 10.

The ceremony was held in historic South Park, the site of many G.A. R. reunions and picnics. The Mansfield Senior High Band opened the program with a group of patriotic selections. This was followed with Ed Noble singing and the band playing the National Anthem. Following the Invocation, Mansfield Mayor Lydia J. Reid welcomed the

crowd and expressed her appreciation to the Sultana Association for donation of the plaque. Richard Troup, chairman of the monument project and member of the *Sultana* Association, introduced the many special guests that were on hand for the ceremony, including George L. Powell, Commander-in-Chief of the Sons of Union Veterans (SUV), who came all the way from Philadelphia, PA for the ceremony.

Next, the band played a stirring rendition of "America the Beautiful," followed by remarks by Richard Troup regarding the



Sultana tragedy and a brief history of the 102nd Ohio Infantry regiment which was being honored by the plaque.

Sara Davis entertained the gathering with the singing of patriotic songs. This was followed with Robert E. Grim, Senior Vice-Commander of the SUV who read the names of the men of the 102nd Ohio who died on the *Sultana*. Relatives were asked to briefly raise their hand as their ancestor's name was read and many in the crowd did so as a bell tolled after each name was read.

The beautiful plaque was then unveiled to applause from those assembled and the national officers presented wreaths and a Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) flag marker in front of the memorial plaque as Sara Davis led the crowd in singing "God Bless

America." The playing of taps and benediction ended the beautiful ceremony.

As chairman of this project I would like to thank the members of the Association who contributed to the cost of the monument by purchasing over 175 *Sultana* Association pins.

As refreshments were being served by my wife Rachael and daughter Nancy, ten applications for membership were handed out and some additional membership pins were sold. The event will be written up in the next National Sons of Veterans magazine which has 15,000 subscribers. We also had a very nice article written in the Columbus Dispatch before our ceremony which went out to 675,000 readers, so we are receiving good publicity about the *Sultana* disaster.

(Good job, Richard! We salute you for this fine effort, and the new Ohio *Sultana* Memorial. Richard is a descendant of Manuel Harnly, 102nd OH Inf, Co. D - ed)

The Present: Sultana Memorial in Michigan

- by Pam Newhouse

In Hillsdale, Michigan, on Sunday, November 11, a monument was dedicated, honoring the 280+ Michigan soldier passengers who were on the boat at the time of her destruction. Erected several weeks before, the monument, which was created by Arnet's Memorials of Ann Arbor, features a white etched image of the *Sultana* at the top of the 6 foot tall polished black granite stone, with an inscription below. Approximately 250 people were in attendance at the dedication, more than 50 of them descendants of *Sultana* soldiers.

The project started with a conversation this past spring between myself (gr gr granddaughter of Pvt. Adam Schneider, Co. C, 183rd Ohio Infantry) and descendant Bene Fusilier (gr granddaughter of Sgt. Aaron V. Waterbury, Co. H., 17th Michigan Infantry). We wondered if we could get a memorial erected to honor the Michigan men who were on the *Sultana*. We decided that Hillsdale would be an excellent site because so many Michigan men on the boat were in the 18th Michigan Infantry which was recruited from this area in south central Michigan.

Bene approached a friend, Dan Doyle,

who lives near Hillsdale in Somerset, and who also is a member of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Austin Blair Camp No. 7, located in Jackson, MI. This is a very active camp, whose members have completed many memorial projects. Member Bill Lowe also joined the project at this point.

Dan in turn contacted Ken Lautzenheiser, Chairman of the Hillsdale County Board of Commissioners to see if he could help. Ken and the Board were very enthusiastic, and by summer we had been offered a site on the grounds of the Hillsdale County Courthouse for our monument.

Next, Judie Warren (Gr granddaughter of Cpl. Orlando Cole, Co, F, 18th Michigan Infantry) joined the project, and Judie, Bene and I went to Arnet's Memorials to discuss the actual monument and talk to the artist who would etch the image. The total cost would be nearly \$6,000, and so we knew we had to get to work. We asked donations of state historic organizations, and were gratified to receive funds from Civil War Round Tables, Michigan SUV camps, Hillsdale residents, and *Sultana* descendants. One private donor ensured

the success of the project by giving two thirds of the total needed.

The dedication day dawned clear and cold. At 11:30 AM, after the conclusion of Veterans Day services conducted at the front of the Hillsdale County Courthouse by the American Legion and Auxiliary, a bagpiper led the crowd over to the far northeast corner of the courthouse lawn for the *Sultana* dedication service.

Bill Lowe gave the Welcome, followed by the Invocation given by Chaplain Bill McAfee, member of the Carpenter-Welch SUV Camp in Ann Arbor. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Bene Fusilier and Judie Warren. I then gave a short talk about the *Sultana* and her men, which was followed by "Hillsdale Men and the *Sultana*," given by Arlan Gilbert, Professor Emeritus of History, Hillsdale College.

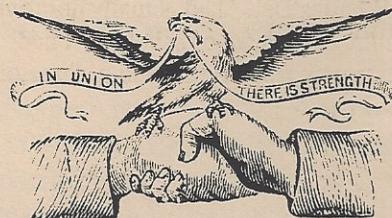
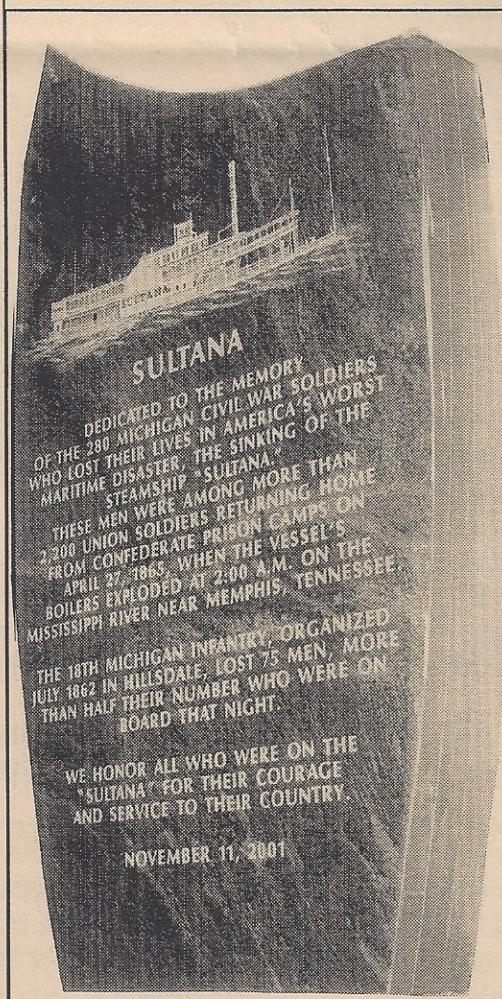
I then accepted, on behalf of all descendants, a framed resolution passed by the Michigan Legislature, honoring Michigan men who were on the *Sultana*. It was presented by Michigan 58th District Rep. Steve Vear. It will be permanently installed in the lobby of the lovely Victorian-style Hillsdale courthouse.

The monument was then unveiled by Judie Warren's mother, who was the oldest descendant in attendance. Wreaths and bouquets were placed in front of the monument, the Descendants' Bouquet laid there by one the children - and youngest descendant there.

After a musket salute and taps by the 18th Michigan reenactment group, the ceremony was closed by Bill McAfee giving the Benediction.

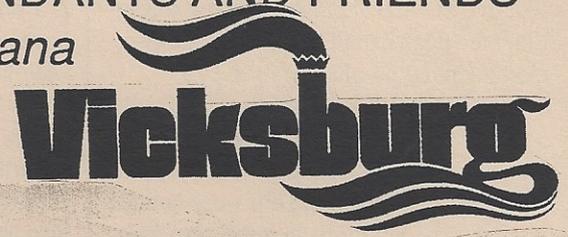
We adjourned to the lobby of the courthouse where descendants had set up displays of *Sultana*-related items belonging to their families. Cider and donut holes were served, and we enjoyed connecting with each other - meeting new friends and greeting old ones.

We all agreed: Our ancestors would be proud of the monument and of our coming together to honor them.



The Future:

15th ANNUAL REUNION OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF *SULTANA* DESCENDANTS AND FRIENDS
and the Dedication of a *Sultana*
State Historic Plaque in



Vicksburg

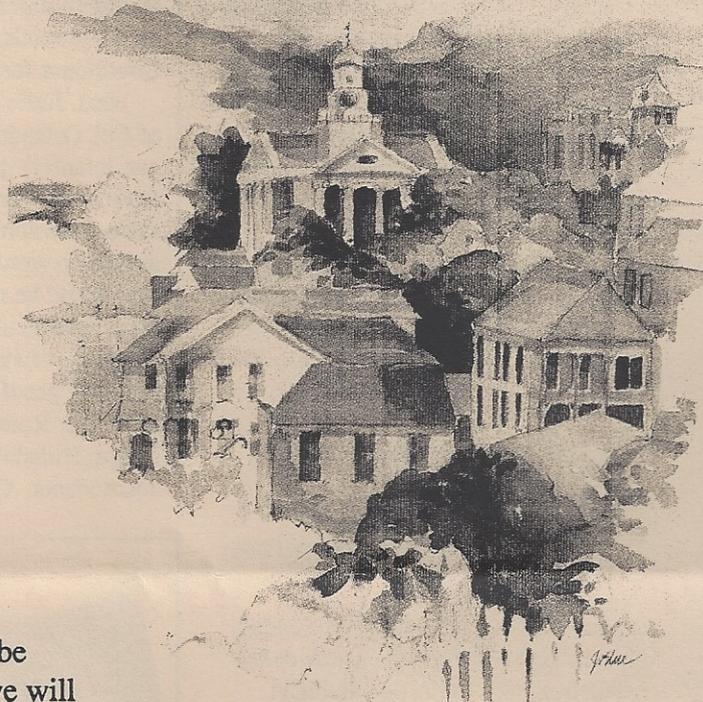
APRIL 26-27-28, 2002

Accommodations at the lovely Battlefield Inn,
Vicksburg, Mississippi

A memorial to the *Sultana*, along with four other historic plaques which commemorate other momentous events in Vicksburg riverfront history, will be erected in early 2002 with Vicksburg city funds, near the site where the *Sultana* was loaded with more than 2200 Union Soldiers. The initiative was taken by Lamar Roberts of the Gray and Blue Naval Museum in the city.

It seems altogether fitting that we therefore hold our annual reunion in Vicksburg this year instead of Knoxville and ask that as many descendants as possible be there to dedicate the marker. (I hear that one of our members whose FATHER was on the *Sultana* is coming!)

What follows is a tentative schedule. The final plan will be mailed with the next newsletter in January, and at that time we will ask that you return a registration form and fee. The costs will be extremely reasonable!



Friday PM and evening, April 26:

Check in at the Battlefield Inn and social gathering. Displays of *Sultana*-related items, photos, stories, etc. (Bring yours to share!) Complimentary refreshments at the Inn, 5:30-7:30.

Saturday, April 27:

Dedication of the Historical plaque, mid-morning(?) time TBA. We need you all there! Afterwards, lunch with time to look in the shops in downtown Vicksburg and a visit to the Gray and Blue Naval Museum. Other sites we will see, (perhaps by bus) led by *Sultana* authors Gene Salecker and Jerry Potter include: Camp Fisk site, where the paroled prisoners were held before boarding the boat, the Union HDQ site on Cherry Street, the courthouse where Frederic Speed was tried, the site of Speed's mansion, Speed's grave.

Banquet at the Battlefield Inn, 7 PM(?) Fine Southern cooking! Main speaker will be Terry Winchel, Chief Historian at the nearby Vicksburg National Military Park.. Gene Salecker, Jerry Potter, Norman Shaw and Pam Newhouse will also have something to say. A time for sharing momentoes and stories and looking at displays.

Sunday, April 28:

Check out by 11 AM. Don't leave Vicksburg without visiting the Vicksburg National Military Park (VNMP), some of the mansions which are open to the public, etc. Not too far: Historic Natchez, Shiloh, Memphis, Andersonville, Cahaba.

Now here's the deal: You need to make your room reservations NOW. (Ten have already been reserved!) We have set aside a limited number of rooms at a great price- \$50 /single, \$56.double per night. Includes a full Southern-style hot breakfast each morning and refreshments from 5:30- 7:30 PM each night.. The banquet will be about \$13. per person, which you will pay for when you check out. CALL THE BATTLEFIELD INN TO RESERVE YOUR ROOM: 1-800-359-9363. Mention the *Sultana* Reunion. - Pam Newhouse and Charles Dawkins, Reunion Co-chairs

A Letter Home

Colonel Thornton F. Broadhead, 1st Michigan Cavalry(*)

August 31, 1861

My dearest Wife,

I write to you, mortally wounded, from the Battle Field. We are again defeated. And as this reaches you, your children will be fatherless. Before I die let me implore you that in some way it may be stated, that General Pope has been outwitted and that McDowell is a traitor. Had they done their duty, as I did mine the dear old Flag had waved in triumph.

I wrote to you this morning. The letter was dated Saturday. It should have been dated as Sunday. And today I sink to the green Couch of our final rest. I have fought well, my darling, and I was shot in the endeavour to rally our broken battallions. I could have accepted; but would not run till all hope was gone, and was shot; about the only one of our Forces left on the Field. Our cause is just. And our generals - not the Enemy's have defeated us. In God's good time he will give us victory.

And now, Good bye, Wife and Children. Bring them up, I know you will, in the fear of God and love for our Savior. But for you and the dear ones so dependant, I should die happy. I know the blow will fall with crushing weight on you. Trust in him who gave manna in the wilderness.

Dr. Nash is with me. It is now after midnight; and I have spent most of the night in sending Messages to you. I send my silver watch to Johnny. And all my Military Equipment at home, guns, saddles & etc are his. The Rebels took my horse, saddle, pistols and Sabre as soon as they shot me. It lucky that I had this pencil and paper in my pocket to write you.

Two bullets have gone through my Chest and directly through the Lungs. I suffer little now, but at first the pain was acute. I have won the Soldier's name, and am ready to meet now, as I must, the Soldier's fate. I hope that from Heaven I may see the glorious old Flag wave again over the individual Union I have loved so well.

Fairwell Wife and Babes and Friends. We shall meet again.

Your loving Thornton

(*) *There were four men from this regiment on the Sultana. -ed*

Andersonville Historic Fair

by Carol Lundquist

Jack and I traveled to Andersonville, Georgia, on the 6th and 7th of October as representatives of the *Sultana* Descendants' Association at the 26th Andersonville Historic Fair and Festival. We were joined by Tommy and Ruth Coleman from Selma, Alabama. Tommy is the Chief Ranger at the Cahaba Historic Site and a regular attendee at the Knoxville *Sultana* meetings.

The small town of Andersonville, population about 250, hosts 8,000 to 10,000 visitors per day during the fair, held twice a year in May and October. Fred Crane and his wife Terry were parade marshals this year. Remember Fred? Fred, as Brent Tarleton, speaks the first words in "Gone With the Wind" on the veranda of Tara (George Reeves - Superman! - was the other Tarleton twin). He is one of only a handful of original cast members of the movie still alive and now runs a B&B in Barnesville, Ga. The parade on Saturday was held despite some rain, and I had the honor of

sharing a float with the people representing the Hanging Judge of Andersonville (supposedly Pete McCullough of the 8th Missouri Infantry).

On the porch of an old store on Main Street, directly opposite the Wirz Memorial, Jack and I set up our table and displays. Tommy was right next to us and we spent the two days happily answering myriad questions about the *Sultana* Disaster and Cahaba Prison. Jack's extensive research on Andersonville Prison also qualified him as the "resident expert", and we had a great time both days visiting with Civil War buffs and non-buffs.

The highlight of both days was a mock battle staged by perhaps 600 Civil War reenactors who created as much noise and smoke as any Civil War skirmish. To keep the score even the Yanks won on Saturday and the Rebs on Sunday.

The Festival Committee extended us an invitation to return in 2002, an invitation which we certainly hope to keep.

Norman's Notes

You will read in another part of this newsletter a description of our next annual meeting in Vicksburg, MS. I feel this will be a great event that will go far in gaining recognition for our group and its goals and in publicizing the story of the *Sultana* through local newspaper and TV coverage. Thanks to Pam for her hard work in planning the event. Next year we will return to Knoxville and then maybe gather in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 2004.

The 2001 meeting in Knoxville was one of the few in the last 14 years that we did not have in attendance a "real" son or daughter of a Union soldier who was aboard the ill-fated *Sultana*! I checked on two in the East Tenn. area. Elsie Huffaker, now 97, is holding her own in a Knoxville health care facility although she is legally blind and almost totally deaf. Glenna Green, a young 82 who lives near Chattanooga, TN, is in good health and plans to attend the Vicksburg event in 2002. Sadly, she lost her husband of 65 years of marriage who passed away a year ago last October.

I believe it is important to give an accounting of money collected at every meeting. The 2001 collection resulted in \$278.00. As usual, \$100.00 will be donated to Mt. Olive Baptist church in appreciation for the use of their building and facilities, about \$45.00 will defray costs for supplies and soft drinks, and the balance will go to our editor, Pam Newhouse, to offset her ongoing communication costs for the monthly Internet expense, postage, and long distance phone calls, which doesn't begin to compensate her for the untold hours spent on our fine quarterly newsletter.

About three people gave me a name that is not on the *Sultana* monument in Knoxville (which only contains names of the Tennessee men). Are there other names that need to be added? Let me know.

- Norman Shaw, Founder,
Association of *Sultana* Descendants and Friends



ONE OF OUR COUNTRY'S EARLIEST
FLAGS; SEEMS APPROPRIATE NOW.