

LETTERS WRITTEN BY WILLIAM L. RONEY
VETERAN OF
THE 8TH MISSOURI STATE MILITIA CAVALRY

(Transcribed as written with the exception of punctuation - which was added due to the difficulty leaving it out, produced when trying to read it - There was no punctuation in his letters)

Marquette Kan Nov 16th 1909
Governor H. S. Hadley

Dear Sir Will you please pardon impudence of an old Soldier and allow me to address you on a matter which I have been contemplating ever since you was elected Governor but was waiting for a pretext to do so.

That having arrived I will venture seeing by the K C Journal that since your return from the South that you are enthusiastic on the subject of Monuments to the Missouri Soldiers who fell during the War of the Rebellion. This is the question that interest me as I am one of the old Missouri Soldiers for the Union.

But before I procede farther I want to congratulate you as Governor of the State of Missouri as you are the first Republican to be elected to that position since my Colonel J. W. McClurg and last but not least a Kansas Boy

As stated before I was a Missouri Soldier in the union army from start to finish and when it closed I came to Kansas in Aug 1865 which has been my home ever since.

I will now get at what I want to talk about On Aug the 1st 1862 Colonel McClurg sent two companies of his Regt the 8 Missouri State Militia Cav to report to Brig Gen James Totten at Jeff City. Companies F & H. Gen Totten Sent us to Lexington and there we was placed under command of Major Foster and we went out to Lone Jack and on the morning of Aug 16 1862 our Command of 540 men was surrounded by two Regiments of rebels and the fight raged for 3 hours and when we recaptured our battery the filed was ours. We had lost many men but not a foot of ground we was on the same ground we had been attacted on. Just as our victory was won there came on to the field a new and fresh command of rebels which we did not propose to engage so we left the field. Cole Younter was with that Command that came as reinforcements for he told me so at Lee Summit a year ago. I was mot on the battle ground at Lone Jack from the morning of the fight until Aug 16th 1907. Just 45 years I took a look along the Street of Lone Jack where we fought to a finish arroung the two guns of the 3rd Indiana Batt which the res had captured and which we recaptured after desperate fighting almost hand to hand.

After I had viewed those places with the memories of 45 years ago that morning I then went to the cemetery east of the battle ground and there the first thing to greet my eyes was a monument to the rebel dead. I looked arround over the long ridge where the Union boys Sleeps beneath its Sod and there was nothing to mark their resting place or the cause for which they died.

I resolved then and there that at least against the next anniversary Aug 16th 1908 Something should be there in honor of the brave boys of my Company who lost their lives on that battle field.

So I made my vows good and on Aug 16th 1908 A small monument was dedicated of which I send you a Photo of course it is not a costly one but it is made of very hard cement blocks and will last as long as time does. I had the blocks made here of no 1 gravel and Shipped to Lee Summit. That monument is placed in the cemetery in the alley between the union boys and the rebs. You can read the inscription on it also the names of a few of the Survivors of my Co.

Govenor Hadley you probably have been on the Lone Jack battle ground as it is in your home county Jackson and will say that the spot ocupied by the Battery was just east of main St Toward the cemetery and I understand is the public Square of the Town. And upon this Spot is where I propose a monument of Cement Blocks at least 16 feet high. The base 6 feet square two feet high filled with concrete then the next 8 feet to be 4 feet square filled with concrete with a Smooth face next to the street for inscription the top 6 feet will be near 3 feet Square also filled with Concrete with a Cap on the top.

That would make a Solid monument that would last forever. And this is the inscription that I have Selected for it

Erected in memory of the brave men of the 8th Regt Missouri State Militia Cav that was in the fight here on August 16th 1862 a Regt that was Commanded by J. W. Mclurg who was also Govenor of Missouri 1869-1871.

I have submitted the above specifications to an expert contractor and builder here and he says that he will put it there for \$200.00.

I now come to a proposition which may cause you to Smile. In April 1865 Just as I was mustered out of the Service I was Courtmartialed at Springfield MO and as we were State Troops I was tried under the Statute of Missouri. I was fined \$100.00 for my conduct which I paid and which the General said he would pay over to the Adjut Gen of State. Now Missouri has had the use of my \$100.00 a long time. I don't ask for it back to myself again for I can get along the remainder of my life without it for I have now crossed the Scripture deadline of threescore years and ten. What I would like now is that the State of Missouri would contribute the \$100.00 I paid it to the Lone Jack Monument and I will try and raise the other \$100.00 among the Survivors of the 8th M.S.M Cav of which there is over one hundred yet alive of my Co this is yet alive about 15 who was in the Lone Jack fight.

Govenor Hadley I have now writen you quite a lengthy letter and I hope you will not Take any offence at it for it is only patriotism that prompted me to do so love for the old State that I gave 4 years of my young life for in defence of the union and its flag. And for the erection of a Monument in memorial of Missouris Sons who fought her battles for the union and the Glorious Stars and Stripes that yet floats in the breeze of this our beloved Country.

Yours Most Truly
W L Roney

RESPONSE FROM THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNOR

November 20, 1909.

Mr. W. L. Roney,
Marquette, Kansas

Dear Sir:

Your letter of November 16th to Governor Hadley, in regard to a monument to the Union soldiers on a Jackson County, Missouri, battlefield received.

It would be impossible for the Governor to obtain the return of the fine received by you during the war without an act of the Legislature, which would in effect appropriate the same amount for that purpose. Should you desire to take the matter along that line it might be well for you to submit the question to one of the Representatives or State Senators from Jackson County for their consideration and appropriate action.

Very truly yours,

(Signature Unreadable)

Secretary to the Governor.
