

PATRIOTIC PALS TAILS OF THE CIVIL WAR

By Chris Stuckenschneider

CHAPTER 1: Chat with Chuck.

Shake my paw—pleased to meet your acquaintance. The name's Charles

Tyler Bundebar, but you can call me Chuck.

My pal Walt and I share a rambling two-story in a riverside Missouri town, a house with a wide front porch, great for tail thumpin' and enjoying tall glasses of lemonade.

Just lately, the master and I've been out there a lot, Walt reading and recollecting facts in a journal he's keeping on the Civil War. Walt's a true-blue reenactor, outfitted like a Union soldier, complete with a Springfield rifle, flat-topped cap with a badge, and me by his side, a black and white Border Collie, which is entirely fitting because Missouri was a Border state.

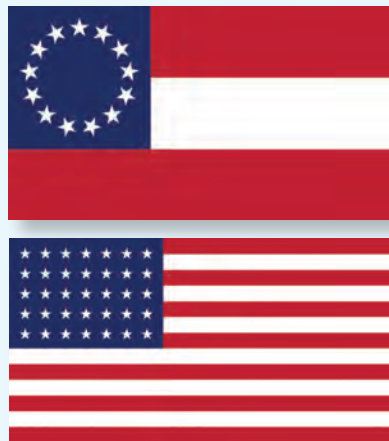
I'll fill you in about that Border state business later, along with other tidbits I've picked up visiting battle sites with Walt and meeting folks who reenact Civil War life. They make history come alive, which is what I hope to do for you.

So gather round the campfire, share a bite of Johnny Cake and listen up, cause you're about to hear some stuff

that's doggone extraordinary—tales about man's best friend during the Civil War, canine mascots, fetching hounds that astound.

The stories I'm about to relate are brimming with turncoats and heroes, mayhem and miracles, plenty of rowdy

excitement, and not one whit of sappy romance. Let's kick the story off right, and if I fail to deliver, you can cut my rations down to Pekingese portions.



FLAGS OF THE CIVIL WAR

"The Stars and Bars" (top) was the official flag of the Confederacy from March 5, 1861, to May 26, 1863. It first appeared with seven stars, then nine, 11, and finally 13, to indicate the number of states in the Confederacy. The Confederacy claimed Kentucky and Missouri, but they were never actually in the Confederacy.

The second flag is the United States flag and was in use from July 4, 1863 to July, 1865. There were six official flags in use during the Civil War, but the 35-star flag is the one most recognized. Each star represents a state in the Union.

The Civil War (1861-1865) was a four-year tragedy, a dog-eat-dog war that divided our country and forced neighbor to fight against neighbor. It began for a number of reasons, one of which concerned slavery. Some states thought it fitting to own slaves while others believed the practice should be "abolished," which is a fancy way of saying "vamoosed," and doesn't refer to a moose away at Scout camp or a mouse in the past-present tense twice removed. Ruff!

Initially, the pro-slavery states acted like a bunch of kids in a scrap. They thumbed their noses at the Union and seceded, broke away to establish a new country, the Confederate States of America. This

wasn't something our just-elected President, Abraham Lincoln, took kindly to.

Honest Abe felt this was kind of rebellious of the South—and that's how I remember the Rebels made up the Confederacy. The rest of the states were "unified," which means they were all chummy with each other. These states stayed in the United States of America as one Union.

Trust you now have a better understanding of the primary reason for the war—and can identify the two sides that did battle. With that we'll set our story aside for a bit. Enough yapping, I need a quick bite to sustain life, and a nap next to Walt's creaky rocker.

Hope you'll tune in for the next chapter. You're sure to lap up the tale passed down through the years by the family of Sergeant Dick, a mascot of the St. Louis Grays. That pooch weathered quite a time in St. Louis in 1861, just a month after the first cannons fired on Fort Sumter in South Carolina.

Lots of people have heard about Camp Jackson, in St. Louis, but not many realize its importance. The incident determined that St. Louis, though in the slave state of Missouri, would remain loyal to the Union and continue to fly Old Glory.

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