

Prado 2006



71st PVI at Prado 2006

Sorry it's taken so long to get this done and out. On Friday 2nd Cpl Jenkins showed up early, checked in and laid out the company street. Of course then the grumpy old 1st Sgt showed. We started setting up the street and things started taking shape in quick fashion.



The temperature started dropping and we started up Iron Mike. Friday evening we had a good meal of stew which hit the spot. Things got cleaned up and we settled in for some fellowship around the fire. The clouds started forming and we knew things were going to get wet. It rained off and on through the night.

Saturday morning dawned cloudy and cool. We were able to get through breakfast before the rains started. It would rain for a bit and stop, I'd call 1st call for company drill the it would start raining again. This happened about four or five times through the morning. The first fight was supposed to be around 1100. It was still raining and there was no public. Word came that the first fight would be at 1600. Around 1300 the weather broke and the sun came out. At last we could shake the cob webs out and get some company drill in. We practiced wheeling,

marching by the flanks and the firings. We were all a bit rusty, but pretty soon we were marching like we'd been at it for some time.

We were part of the 2nd Battalion and we managed to stay as a stand alone company even though there were only 8 of us, plus two of our civilian members. The 2nd Battalion was given the mission to flank the Confederates, which meant we had to travel quite a ways. If you've never been to Prado, it is a huge battlefield. So over hill and



through the weeds we traveled. The Union Command was using flag signals to move units forward. The ball started and we waited and waited. The 2nd Battalion flag was waved from the hill and we moved forward. Pretty soon the Rebs moved to confront us and a running fight ensued. We continued to push the Rebs and then they pushed back. We waited for support from the other two Battalions but it appeared we were left out on a limb. We took two Rebs cannon and then we were pushed off the cannon. We had pretty much formed a solid hold on a road when the Rebs turned the two cannon on us and let loose with triple canister – so ended the fight with the 71st and what was left of the 2nd battalion being obliterated.



We were told that there would be a skirmish at 1800 which of course was getting onto sunset. The 71st declined to take the field for the so called skirmish. As it turns out it was a full blown battle. We watched it from the sidelines and it looked pretty cool with the muzzle flashes from musket and cannon.

For supper we had a great treat. 2nd Cpl Jenkins had brought some homemade chili. It was great! It was so good we asked him to do it again for Wooden Nickel. So ended the day with the unit sharing war stories, past and present, around Iron Mike.

Sunday dawned clear and cool. The ground fog made the area look surreal. It was something you had to see and experience to believe. It looked like some of descriptions I've

read about sights of actual Civil War camps. For the lack of better words – it was an awesome experience.



We had a great breakfast and started getting ready for the days activities.



Just before lunch the Rebs attacked while we were still in camp. The 2nd Battalion was the first to form and face the Rebs as they came into view. We held our own until the other Battalions formed and started putting pressure on the Rebs. We thought we were doing pretty well when out of seemingly nowhere more Rebs showed up.



We started withdrawing under pressure and taking casualties. Even with a squad showing up from the 1st Battalion the 2nd Battalion was absolutely devastated; so ended the first fight.

The unit ate lunch and refitted for the second fight. After lunch we formed for pay call. Soon it was time for the 2nd fight. Once again the 2nd Battalion was given the farthest to go. Pretty soon the 2nd Battalion was engaged in a hot fight with the Rebs. At first we thought it was going to be a repeat of Saturday, but soon we had support and pushed the Rebs hard. The Rebs started taking heavy losses and soon gave up the field; the Union Brigade had succeeded in driving the Rebel force from the field.

All in all this was a great weekend and went far satisfy my wool withdrawal. The camping area was sufficient, even though there was an issue with one idiot unit who shall remain nameless (no not the 69th). The battlefield was huge, biggest I've been on. The organizers were quite friendly and glad we were there. The scenarios were maybe a bit weak and not so sure one

side or the other really understood what was supposed to happen, but overall the fights were good. Sutler row was not bad at all – appeared to be something for everyone. And if you didn't like what we had thrown together for meals there were food vendors. Most folks brought stuff to throw into the pot for meals. No problem with the cooking as the Cpt, Cpl Jenkins and I pretty much took care of that. Those that didn't cook took care of the cleanup. I for one however REALLY MISSED OUR COOKS! At the end of the event everyone pitched in and helped break the camp down and get everyone packed up

If Orange Empire doesn't make the ACWS schedule for 07 then I highly recommend that Prado be put on our schedule as a full push event. Of course if there is an ACWS event on the Prado weekend we as a unit should of course attend the ACWS event.

I'd like to end this letter as I normally do with some particular thank you's. I'd like to thank Traci and Scout Jenkins for watching the camp while we were on the battlefield. Thank you to Cpl Jenkins for getting the camp laid out, bringing the chili for Saturday and just plain being a help to me. Although everyone pitched in to help clean up, I'd like to thank Pvt G. MacCleverty for really pitching in to clean up nasty pots and skillets.

So until we all come together again as the 71st PVI at Wooden Nickel, I remain Your Obedient Servant, 1st Sgt C.