

1909

FORT RUSSELL LOCATION

BY

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From observations and findings we contend Fort Russell was located on what is now the Frank Miller farm formerly the Gremer farm. The facts are there the creek terraine from this vantage point was several miles to the northeast and several to the southwest and about four miles southeast. Indian camps and villages were located just out of these observation ranges and there were a number of lakes and sloughs and deep holes in the creek. From artifacts found in this area many were of the finest species and indentified with a number of tribes. Large stones and parperts of stone are found on the Miller farm where portions of cast iron and copper and other metals were found and what we believe to be the base of the cacons used at the fort are still to be found.

The most convincing fact is that canon balls were found along the east of this location and on the Dettmer farm, Gilson Brown bottom lands and on the Frank Trares farm.

Several of these canonsballs were in the collection of Cosmos Meyer and several in the Sutter collection and Chas. Spanholz found one and Henry Little found two in the Patterson Lake. Jas T Waters found one on the Daube farm and I found one on the slopes of the Andrew Gremer farm.

These facts along with numerous Indian mounds just out of range of these guns show conclusively that the fort faced the east on this land.

Much hermitite and granite was found just out of this

circle and good pottery and excellent discodels, tomahawks and spears.

A large spring was located in the first area and several on the slopes to the east.

Fancy buckets and rings of brass were found in this area and it was the only place where I found traces of glass beads, stone beads and metal beads in considerable quantity, and two powder flasks were found in the small wooded area to the south of where the Miller home now stands. Traces of heavy iron objects were also found at the foot of this east slope. Some eight or ten Indian peace pipes were found near here. Indicating that meetings were held within the fort itself. A long rod of iron several inches in diameter and about five feet in length was found in creek to east of Miller house site by Wm. Werner and it was supposed to be a ramrod for canon, according to Ed Naher and Jake Dunsteder.

An old corduroy road passed in front of these canon mounts to the east and a hut of stone and logs was up along the creek about a mile.

Kenner Schwartz and Wm. Schwartz both found canon balls and powder flasks and gun cotton in the bottom between the Al Miller farm and the Wabash RR. Mr. Kenner Schwartz also found a huge battle axe just south of Patterson Lake made of copper.

The canon bases were facing south and east on what now is the Miller farm formerly the Gremer farm. The stone bases are one about 400 feet north of the new house, the other about 700 feet south of the new house partly down the hill. The

other was north of where the house is about 200 yards.

Andrew Gremer now lives about 900 feet from his old home and it appeared to us that the guns and weapons were stored over west of the Proplex Mfg. Plant just at the brink of the hill in front of the Indian mounds.

Springs were located in three places. Animals and wagons and provisions were stored in draw in between Proplex and Gremer home and the other on slope going east from Miller house. There were two other spring just outside the fort.

A log house of immense sized trees was on the site now occupied by the Blackmore family, and this was the out post of the fort. Another such log hut very long and narrow was north of the miller farm along what is now RT112, and another was about where the Burroughs house is located along 112.

The stockade was built in the shape of a cross about 3000 feet in length and 1200 feet in width, and was located about the middle of the three log houses. The fort over all faced east from the Millers farm and could see miles up the creek and over Patterson's Lake, the other end faced west and overlooked creek and sloughs visible for miles.

To verify these facts Jos. Waters, Chas. Benedict, John Sutter, Cosmos Meyer and myself along with two other youths, dug and located large trunks of trees set up right and placed side by side. We located those outlines of the fort in about 1908 and also found huge stones buried to support the logs. This was all compiled in a book in long hand by Chas. Benedict and was at one time in the safe of John Sutter. Many pieces of petrified oak and hickory have been found out at the fort site, but just who has them I am unable to say. I have one

piece left that weighs about five pounds. It is of oak.

There were quite a lot of stones from the fort in the cellar of the old Wabash Hotel on Main Street, put there by Mrs. Crocker and ? Ash. On the south end of the fort there was found ? stone that Dunsteder and Wahl said came from Spain. John Hoffemeier found four stone tomahawks buried together just west of what we call Springer's woods on II2. These were all of a different material. They were given to Father Metzler who sent them to Europe.

Mr. Pruitt and Leonard Eberhatdt along with Jim Ray and John Kemp found many stone implements and metal spears and tomahawks on the edge of the fort site, and a good deal of this was given to John Storiz who operated a tavern near the mouth of Mooney and Cahokia Creek.