



October 18th 1862 Palmyra Massacre...you will see this reported as the execution of Confederate soldiers, it was not...

When a Union informant was abducted by confederate forces in Palmyra Missouri; 10 civilians who had been jailed on suspicion of being confederate sympathizers; were randomly selected and shot, without trial by order of the Union commander. Those shot ranged in age from 19 to 60; a month later, Lincoln promoted the officer who ordered the execution. Mark Twain called it "hideous, horrible and infinitely pathetic."

After the massacre, it has been claimed that Strachan spared the life of one of the intended victims (Tom Humphrey of Lewis County) in exchange for \$500 paid by Humphrey's wife. Strachan is also said to have violated the chastity of Mrs. Humphrey, whether as part of the bargain or not. (Capt. Griffin Frost, quoted by Joseph A. Mudd, "With Porter in Northeast Missouri"). In 1864 Strachan was tried for the rape of Mrs. Humphrey and other offences, including misuse of funds. Found innocent of rape but guilty of embezzlement, he was sentenced to prison and was released by General William Starke Rosecrans on the grounds of persecution and an unfair trial, even though his accuser was another Union officer.

The execution of these citizens, which was widely discussed in the media, enraged and horrified people on both sides of the conflict. Ultimately, the massacre is remembered as just one of the many brutal events of the war perpetrated by the Federals.

~Robert Mestas