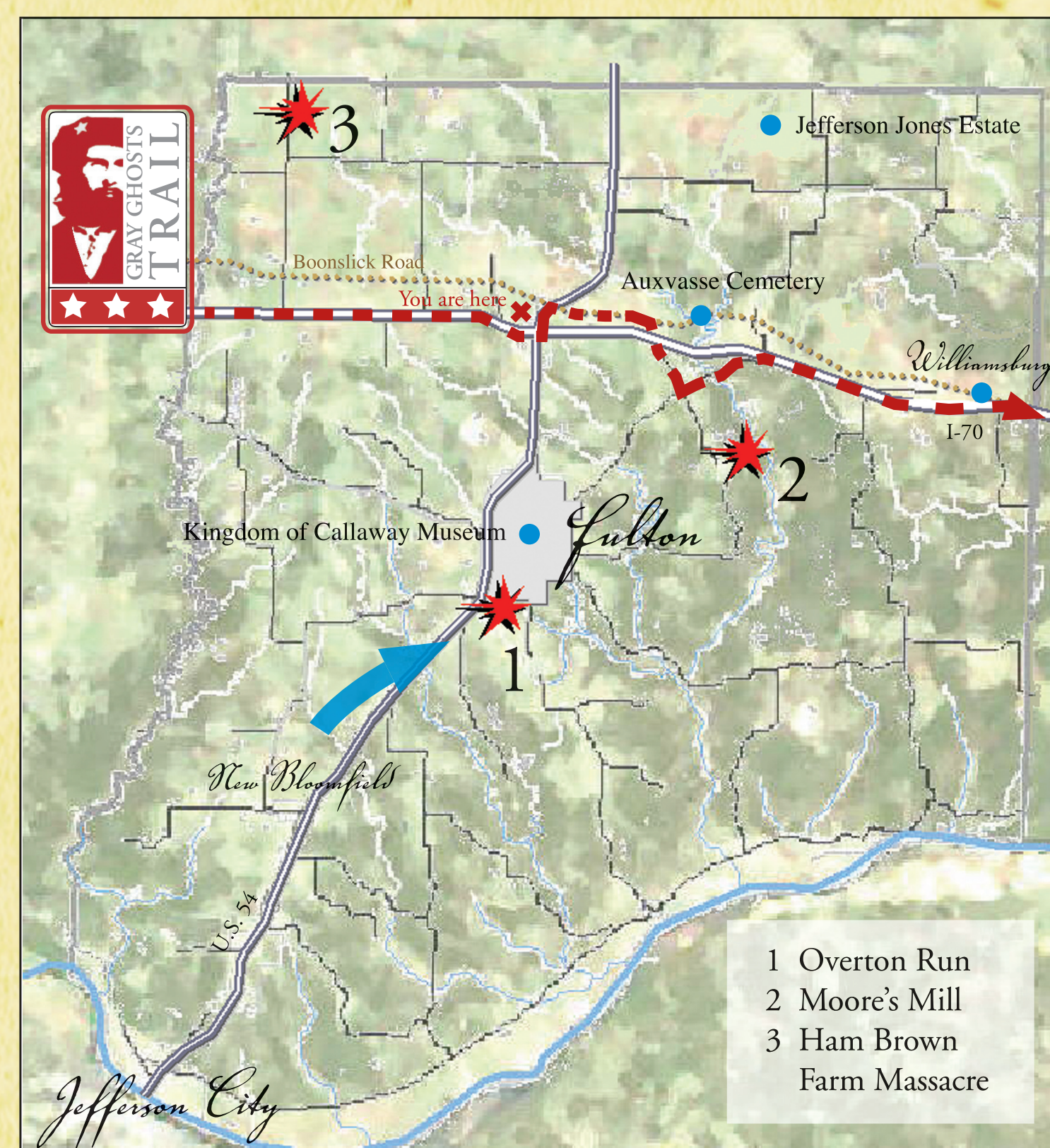


# The Kingdom Comes to Callaway

## Combat in Callaway

Strongly Southern in sympathies, Callaway County was occupied much of the war by Union troops; the latter increasingly included young men with kin serving with the South. At best, there was a nervous truce between locals and soldiers, frequently shattered by small-unit actions, bushwhacking or vigilantism, or violent atrocities — bloody examples of Missouri’s “war of 10,000 nasty incidents.” These are but a local few:



1. While Callaway was yet unoccupied, on July 16, 1861, there was a running fight from New Bloomfield to Fulton between seven companies of U.S. Reserve Corps infantry (German Home Guards) and elements of a large mounted force under General Thomas Harris, augmented by local Southern sympathizers. The Unionists declared victory in this action dubbed Overton Run, occupying Fulton briefly but failing to prevent the transit of Harris’ force.

2. On July 28, 1862, a fierce four-hour battle occurred about 4.5 miles southeast at Moore’s Mill (Calwood), when Union cavalry under Col. Odon Guitar — riding through here from the west — were ambushed by Col. Joseph C. Porter’s 1st Northeast Missouri Cavalry, partisan rangers recruited in this region intending to cross the Missouri River. (story continued on right panel)



Learn more at the Kingdom of Callaway Historical Society Museum, 513 Court Street in Fulton

# Missouri's CIVIL WAR

Kingdom City’s name alludes to the Kingdom of Callaway. How Callaway County came to be called a kingdom is a story dating to the early months of the Civil War.

In Fall 1861, the Union controlled the St. Louis area but the rest of the state was yet undecided. Southern forces were victorious at the battles of Wilson’s Creek and Lexington. General Sterling Price envisioned a Confederate Missouri, and sent many men back to their home counties to recruit troops.

Here in Callaway, Col. Jefferson F. Jones decided to do Price one better — not only raising a brigade but equipping it. On Sept. 26 pro-Southern men raided the State Lunatic Asylum in Fulton, taking blankets, clothes and cookware.

Enraged Union supporters informed authorities who notified General John B. Henderson. He ordered seven companies from Pike County’s 5th Missouri State Militia Regiment to Wellsville in Montgomery County. Some of these troops probed northeast Callaway County, indiscriminately arresting citizens and confiscating property.

Meanwhile, Colonel Jones was organizing and equipping companies of volunteers to await General Price’s call. One company encountered Henderson’s troops and brought word to Jones. The decision was to resist Federal invasion. Jones sent men forth to recruit others, asking all to rendezvous at Brown’s Spring, in central northern Callaway County.

Hundreds of both fully equipped volunteers and fresh enlistees gathered at the hasty encampment. Determined to make a strong show

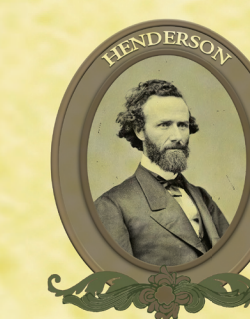
of force, leaders drilled new recruits and fortified the camp with “Quaker guns”— logs painted to simulate cannon. Jones’ camp, it has been reported, also featured a rare, operable wooden cannon.

Receiving reports of the camp’s apparent strength, Henderson sent for reinforcements. Militia Gen. Chester Harding brought troops from Hermann, Mo., across into south Callaway County. Union forces in Columbia were also prepared to assist. Thus Colonel Jones would have been surrounded on three sides.

At a war council, Colonel Jones was persuaded to write a letter to General Henderson stating that Callaway men would defend their homes whatever the cost, but would peacefully disband if Henderson guaranteed he would not invade the county and would also assure their safety.

Three letters of compromise were carried between the camps. When two of the couriers were delayed, Jones moved his troops near Wellsville to prepare for the inevitable battle. Finally, Henderson’s letter capitulating to Jones’ terms arrived and Jones, true to his word, disbanded his forces Oct. 27, 1861.

Thus Jones was able to accomplish something both Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson and General Price attempted but failed — a non-invasion agreement. Sadly, it did not last. For most of the war Callaway County was occupied by Union forces, but not before underlining a reputation for courage and independence that carried into postwar Reconstruction when it was frequently referred to as The Kingdom of Callaway.



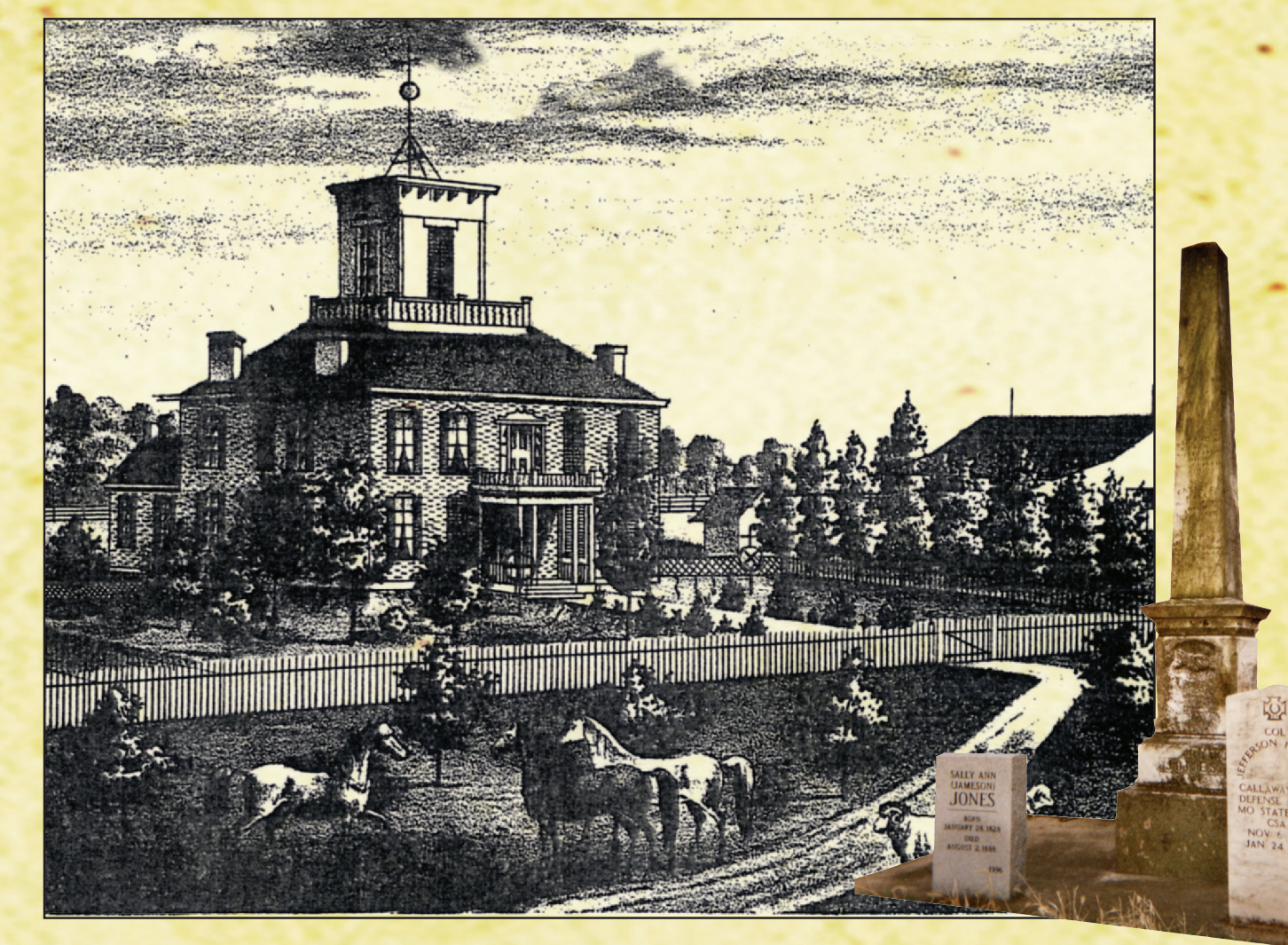
Both attorneys by trade, Henderson and Jones were prominent in Reconstruction politics. As a U.S. senator from Missouri, Henderson authored the 13th U.S. constitutional amendment abolishing slavery in December 1865. Meanwhile, Jones as a Democrat state representative co-sponsored an 1875 concurrent resolution granting amnesty to former guerrillas Frank and Jesse James -- then outlaws; but it failed to pass with the necessary 2/3 majority.



## Combat in Callaway

(continued)

3. In the wake of General Sterling Price’s failed expedition into Missouri, on Nov. 4, 1864, Union militia from Wellsville chased unarmed Confederate recruits onto Ham Brown’s farm nine miles northwest of here, executing seven of them. The atrocity placed an exclamation point on the brutality and futility of fighting in this area only five months before Lee’s surrender.



All that remains of Colonel Jones’ grand home and vast estate about 5 mi. east of Auxvasse is a family graveyard, restored and maintained by the Elijah Gates Camp No. 570, Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV).

Sources: Bell, Ovid. “The Story of the Kingdom of Callaway,” *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society* (April 1952) *History of Callaway County, Missouri*, National Historical Company, St. Louis, 1884, pp. 391-393 (Fulton) Missouri Telegraph, 1861; Louisiana Journal, 1861; Missouri Republican, 1861; (Columbia) Missouri Statesman, 1871; Fulton Gazette, 1914

Learn more at [www.mocivilwar.org](http://www.mocivilwar.org)

