

The following correspondence is from Judge J. S. Utley's collection, and was loaned to REVIEW by the late Diana Sherwood.

July 21, 1941

Mrs. Matilda E. Phillips,
Jacksonville, Arkansas

Dear Mrs. Phillips,

I read with a lot of interest in the "News About People" column of today's Arkansas Gazette your statement that you are willing to give up your Jacksonville home if it will help in "putting a stop to Hitler". Not everybody is as self-sacrificing as that, and I hasten to congratulate you.

The article also said that you saw the dead who were left on the battlefield at Reed's Bridge during the War between the States, and I was interested in that. In traveling toward Jacksonville from Little Rock I have often wondered whether the present bridge over Bayou Meto stands where the bridge stood when the battle was fought, and I shall be ever so grateful to you if you will tell me, using the inclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

Wish I could have the opportunity of making your acquaintance some time. Thanking you, I am

Sincerely yours,
J. S. Utley

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Jacksonville, Ark.
R. 2, Box 80
July 25, 1941

Mr. J. S. Utley

Dear Sir:

My mother was very happy to receive your letter. She was about 6 or 7 years old at the time of the battle at Bayou Meto. She says at that time there was no bridge, but a flat boat was used as a ferry. Later a bridge was built which was just the width of the bridge above where the bridge now stands.

A tree (cypress) which had a limb partly severed stood where the present bridge is. Any resident who has lived around here can remember seeing where the cannon ball partly severed the limb. My father has pointed it out to me many times.

My mother says she visited the battlefield several days afterwards and saw the dead, who were already mortified. Some are buried in Bayou Meto cemetery, others are on a pine ridge to the left of the road north of the bridge.

My mother would be glad to talk with you. We live on the centennial road just two miles off 67 highway north of Toney's service station. We will be at this place until the area is taken.

Yours very truly,
Her daughter,
Mrs. Emma Baker