

**Battle of Westport** book, published by Westport Historical Society 1996

Marker No. 10. Wornall House.

This beautiful southern home was built in 1858. It was here that the John B. Wornall family lived at the time of the battle. At that time it was almost a section of farmland.

Frank C. Wornall was a boy of nine when the Battle of Westport was fought. He lived in the home of his father, John B. Wornall, and his mother, Eliza Johnson Wornall.

"I remember well the chief incidents of that day," he later recalled. "Father had gone to Westport to escape probable death at the hands of the Federals, for he had been ordered out of the county by Ewing's Order No. 11.

"Mother and I were alone all day in the house. We stayed in the cellar while the battle raged around us. Every once in a while a cannon ball would strike in our yard with a thud that shook the house. North of the house was the grove of locust trees that still stands. I could hear the cannon balls cut through those trees with a loud swishing noise, severing limbs and tearing trunks of trees. Once in the day mother ventured outside to look around. She wore her hair in a huge 'waterfall' at the back of her head, that was the fashion then, and a cannon ball passed so close behind her head that the wind from it tore her hair down and left it streaming. It was strange that our house was untouched through it all.

I remember seeing the soldiers streaming past from daylight until after noon. They were galloping this way and that and I wondered what it was all about.

When the battle was nearing its close the Confederates took our house for a hospital and the floors were covered with them. While the surgeons worked, mother boiled water to wash the wounds and helped with the bandages. I remember one man who was terribly wounded in the face. Our house was so full he could not come in and he sat on the curb of the cistern and I drew water to wash his wound. Then he got up and walked away.

Several died in our house.

As the Confederates retreated a young man came in and took his wounded brother away. The surgeons said he must not be moved, but the brother insisted. He said he would not leave him there to be killed by the Yankees. He put him on his horse in front of him, but they went only a little way when the wounded man died.

"Later in the day the wounded were taken away to Kansas City.

After the battle father gathered up the saddles from dead horses on our farm and put them near our woodpile. There were hundreds of them."

The Wornall home also served as a hospital for Federal troops during the battle. It is owned and has been restored by the Jackson County Historical Society and is open for public viewing.