

Contents	<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
	<i>Introduction</i>	xi
	<i>How to Use This Guide</i>	xiii
	Wilson's Creek	1
	OVERVIEW	3
	Lyon's Attack and the Southern Response	11
STOP 1	<i>Visitor Center</i>	11
STOP 2	<i>Elias B. Short Farm, 4:45–5:30 A.M.</i>	13
STOP 3	<i>Gibson Mill, 5:30–6:30 A.M. (NB1)</i>	15
STOP 4	<i>Ray Cornfield Trail, North Access</i>	19
STOP 5	<i>Ray House, 7:00 A.M. (NB2)</i>	20
STOP 6	<i>Ray Springhouse</i>	23
STOP 7	<i>Ray Cornfield, 6:45–8:40 A.M.</i>	24
STOP 8	<i>East Battlefield Overlook (NB3)</i>	27
STOP 9	<i>Edwards Cabin / Price's HQ, 5:00–6:00 A.M.</i>	29
STOP 10	<i>Fort Smith Light Battery / Pearce's HQ, 5:00–8:00 A.M.</i>	33
STOP 11	<i>Winn Farm / McCulloch's HQ, 4:45–5:00 A.M.</i>	36
STOP 12	<i>Pulaski Light Battery, 5:30–6:30 A.M.</i>	37
	Sigel's Attack and the Southern Response	40
STOP 13	<i>Sigel's Second Position, 7:00–7:30 A.M. (NB4)</i>	40
	Optional Excursion: <i>Dixon Farm</i>	43
STOP 14	<i>Sigel's Final Position (Sharp Farm), 8:00–8:30 A.M. (NB5)</i>	46
STOP 15	<i>McCulloch's Attack, 8:30–9:00 A.M.</i>	48
	Optional Excursion: <i>Sigel's Retreat, 9:00–9:45 A.M.</i>	51
	Bloody Hill	53
STOP 16	<i>Guibor's Battery, 5:15–8:00 A.M. (NB6)</i>	53
STOP 17	<i>Bloody Hill, 5:15–8:00 A.M. (NB7)</i>	61
STOP 18	<i>Totten's Battery, 9:00 A.M.</i>	64
STOP 19	<i>The Lyon Marker, 9:00 A.M.</i>	66
STOP 20	<i>Loop Trail Overlook, 9:00 A.M.</i>	67
STOP 21	<i>The Sinkhole, 6:30–11:00 A.M.</i>	68
STOP 22	<i>Bloody Hill, 9:00–11:00 A.M.</i>	70

	Optional Excursion: Greer Attacks Lyon's Right,	
	9:00–10:00 A.M.	74
STOP 23	Historic Overlook, 5:00–6:00 A.M.;	
	11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M. (NB8)	77
	Pea Ridge	79
	OVERVIEW	81
	Leetown, March 7, 1862	86
STOP 1	Visitor Center	86
STOP 2	Pratt's Store, March 7–8	88
STOP 3	Site of Leetown, March 7	91
STOP 4	Oberson's Field, March 7, afternoon	92
STOP 5	Morgan's Woods, March 7, afternoon	97
STOP 6	Foster's Farm, March 7, midday	101
	Elkhorn Tavern, March 7, 1862	105
STOP 7	East Overlook, March 7–8	105
STOP 8A	Elkhorn Tavern, March 7, late morning	108
STOP 8B	Jones's Battery, March 7, early afternoon	110
STOP 8C	Tanyard, March 7, morning and early afternoon	113
STOP 8D	Huntsville Road, March 7, late afternoon	115
STOP 8E	Clemon's Field, March 7, 4:30–6:00 P.M.	117
STOP 8F	Elkhorn Tavern, March 7, evening	121
STOP 9	Ruddick's Field, March 7, evening	123
	Victory and Defeat, March 8, 1862	127
STOP 10A	Ruddick's Field, March 8, morning	127
STOP 10B	Skirt of Timber, March 8, morning	131
STOP 10C	Welfley's Knoll, March 8, morning	134
	Optional Excursion: Driving Tour of Pea Ridge	
	Campaign	137
STOP 11	Curtis's Fortifications at Little Sugar Creek, March 6–8	139
STOP 12	Skirmish at Little Sugar Creek, February 17	141
STOP 13	Cross Hollow, February 17–19	145

	Sigel's Retreat from Bentonville, March 6	149
STOP 14A	<i>McKissick's Creek</i>	149
STOP 14B	<i>Bentonville</i>	151
STOP 14C	<i>The Ridge</i>	154
STOP 14D	<i>The Y Junction</i>	155
	Van Dorn's Flanking Movement, March 6–7	159
STOP 15A	<i>Bentonville Detour</i>	159
STOP 15B	<i>Twelve Corner Church</i>	162
STOP 15C	<i>Bentonville Detour Meets Wire Road</i>	164
STOP 16	<i>Pott's Hill, February 16, 1862</i>	167
	Prairie Grove	169
	OVERVIEW	171
	Battle for the Wooded Ridge	175
STOP 1A	<i>Visitor Center</i>	175
STOP 1B	<i>The Confederate Center</i>	177
STOP 2	<i>Latta Homestead (The Lord's Vineyard)</i>	180
STOP 3	<i>The Ravine</i>	181
STOP 4	<i>Borden House</i>	182
STOP 5	<i>Carnage in the Orchard (Herron's First Attack)</i>	185
STOP 6	<i>Confederate Right Flank (Herron's Second Attack)</i>	188
STOP 7	<i>Borden Wheatfield</i>	191
STOP 8	<i>Illinois River Ford</i>	195
STOP 9	<i>Borden Cornfield</i>	196
STOP 10	<i>Position of 20th Iowa</i>	198
STOP 11	<i>Confederate Left (West Overlook)</i>	200
STOP 12	<i>Morton House</i>	205
STOP 13	<i>Confederate Left Flank</i>	206
STOP 14	<i>Prairie Grove Church</i>	207
	Optional Excursion: <i>Driving Tour of Prairie Grove</i>	
	<i>Campaign, November–December 1862</i>	208
STOP 15	<i>Herron's Approach on Fayetteville Road, December 7, 1862</i>	210
STOP 16	<i>Battle of Cane Hill, November 28, 1862</i>	213

STOP 17	<i>Skirmishes on Reed's Mountain, November 28 and December 5-6, 1862</i>	216
STOP 18	<i>Morrow House, March 2 and December 6, 1862</i>	218
STOP 19A	<i>Cove Creek Road</i>	220
STOP 19B	<i>Cove Creek Road</i>	221
STOP 20	<i>Hog Eye Road Intersection, December 7, 1862</i>	222
STOP 21	<i>Blunt Reaches Rhea's Mill, December 7, 1862</i>	223
STOP 22	<i>Blunt's Approach to Prairie Grove, December 7, 1862</i>	225
	Wire Road	227
	OVERVIEW	229
	Driving Tour of Wire Road: Springfield, Missouri, to Fort Smith, Arkansas	232
SECTION 1	<i>Springfield, Missouri, to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield</i>	233
SECTION 2	<i>Wilson's Creek to Madry, Missouri</i>	235
SECTION 3	<i>Madry to Missouri-Arkansas state line</i>	239
SECTION 4	<i>State line to Cross Hollow, Arkansas</i>	245
SECTION 5	<i>Cross Hollow to Strickler's Station, Arkansas</i>	246
SECTION 6	<i>Strickler's Station to Fort Smith, Arkansas</i>	252
APPENDIX	<i>Orders of Battle</i>	261
	<i>Notes</i>	269
	<i>Sources</i>	275
	<i>For Further Reading</i>	279



Introduction

The battles of Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and Prairie Grove were three of the most significant engagements of the Civil War west of the Mississippi River. They influenced the course of the first half of the war in that region and helped shape Union military efforts to control the Trans-Mississippi while significantly contributing to Confederate defeat. It was essential that the Federals dominate Missouri and northern Arkansas in order to support their major effort to control the Mississippi Valley. While the Yankees never completely defeated Rebel forces in Missouri and Arkansas, they were able to deny the Confederates an opportunity to dominate this vital region and use its resources for the Southern war effort. The campaigns that led to Wilson's Creek and Pea Ridge progressively drove Confederate forces out of Missouri during the first year of the war, and the Prairie Grove campaign kept them in central Arkansas during the middle part of the conflict. Although these campaigns garnered less attention in the public mind than more-famous battles in the East, they were absolutely vital in maintaining the relentless Union pressure in the western theater that resulted in spectacular victories such as Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's capture of Vicksburg in July 1863.

Two of the three battlefields covered by this book are protected by the U.S. National Park Service. Pea Ridge National Military Park encompasses nearly all the land that saw any action, while Wilson's Creek National Battlefield encloses about 70 percent of the contested ground. This is far more than is typical for the larger engagements east of the Mississippi River. While the same has not been true of the Prairie Grove battlefield, dedicated park personnel and local supporters are protecting more acres every year. As a result, Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park will not only preserve more historic ground over time but also present a more complete vision of the battle to visitors.

There are no major tour guides in print for any of the three battlefields except for those published in *Blue and Gray*, a magazine providing self-guided tours for a variety of Civil War sites. This book is an effort to provide much more than is possible in a magazine article. It will offer the reader a complete guide to the ground, information to understand the larger strategic and grand tactical background of the military action, and vignettes to appreciate the personal experience of participants. The format is generally that provided by the other books in this successful series, *This Hallowed Ground*:

Guides to Civil War Battlefields. We have altered that format a bit to include driving tours for the sites associated with the campaigns that led up to Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove so the reader may understand how the road system and topography of the Trans-Mississippi affected Civil War campaigning. Also, Wire Road itself, which made these campaigns possible, is treated with a driving tour that traverses 150 miles of Ozark terrain.

The authors have collaborated by writing sections of this guide that match their special knowledge of these three related battles. William Garrett Piston and Richard W. Hatcher III wrote the tour of Wilson's Creek, Earl J. Hess the tour of Pea Ridge, and William L. Shea the tour of Prairie Grove. Hess also wrote the guide to Wire Road, with help from his colleagues—Piston contributed the segment from Springfield to Madry, Missouri (and test drove the entire route), while Shea revised the section dealing with the area from Dripping Springs to Van Buren, Arkansas.

More than just a tour guide, this book also provides mini-histories of Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and Prairie Grove. With coverage of the associated campaigns, it also provides a history of Civil War operations in the Ozark region of southwestern Missouri and northwestern Arkansas during the first eighteen months of the war. This area was the center of conflict in the upper Trans Mississippi during 1861 and 1862 and witnessed events that not only changed the region but also affected the entire course of the Civil War.

How to Use This Guide

This book is somewhat unusual for the series in that it provides touring information for your visits to not one but three significant battlefields. The guide format, however, is the same for all three.

The sections devoted to each battle begin with an overview setting out the history of the campaign and battle, including an analysis of their significance, so that you have a solid introduction to the context of the action before you begin your visit. Each battlefield tour is then divided into logical sections that coordinate the flow of combat with the route you will take. Optional excursions take you on side trips of interest.

Two unique aspects of this guide are worthy of note. First, in addition to taking you on a detailed tour of each battlefield, it also provides you with wide-ranging driving tours of sites associated with the Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove campaigns. Both of these operations involved troops marching long distances to reach the battleground, and there are many interesting sites within an easy drive of the respective battlefield park that help explain the campaign. It was not possible to do this with the Wilson's Creek campaign because the Federals marched only a short distance outside Springfield to attack the Southerners, who had been settled in their encampments for some time.

The other distinctive feature of this guide is the tour of Wire Road. Battlefields were like the tip of a spear, the dangerous ground where the results of long marches across hundreds of miles of countryside were decided. But across what kind of landscape did the armies have to move? And for the visitor, how does the modern road system correlate to the Civil War-era network? The Wire Road tour helps answer these questions by taking you across 150 miles of the Ozark landscape of southwestern Missouri and northwestern Arkansas. The battlefield tours examine a constricted landscape, whereas the road tour covers a vast, expansive landscape involving climate, transportation arteries, and sprawling terrain features.

Throughout this guide to three battles, two campaigns, and one road, some of the main stops are divided into two or more substops. Substops seldom ask you to do much additional walking. They are simply designed to develop the action at each point in a clear, organized fashion. In the guidebook, each stop has a section of text "married" to a map. This technique enables you to visualize the troop dispositions and

movements at each stop without having to flip around the guide looking for maps.

The stops and substops follow a standard format: **Directions, Orientation, What Happened, Analysis, and/or Vignette.**

The **Directions** tell you how to get from one stop to the next (and sometimes from one substop to another). They not only give you driving instructions but also ask you, once you have reached a given stop, to walk to a precise spot on the battlefield. When driving, keep an eye on your odometer; many distances are given to the nearest tenth of a mile. Important note: The directions often suggest points of interest en route from one stop to another. We have found that it works best to give the directions to a given stop first and then mention the points of interest. These are always introduced by the words *en route*.

Orientation. Once you have reached a stop, this section describes the area around you so that you can quickly pick out the key terrain and get your bearings.

Often these descriptions use the following directions relative to your facing:

straight ahead
left front *right front*
left *right*
left rear *right rear*
behind/directly to the rear

Often, after the relative directions (left, right, etc.), we add the compass directions (north, south, etc.) in parentheses. The maps can also help you get your bearings.

What Happened. This is the heart of each stop. It explains the action succinctly without becoming simplistic, and whenever possible it also explains how the terrain affected the fighting.

Many stops have a section called **Analysis**, which explains why a particular decision was made, why a given attack met with success or failure, and so on. The purpose is to give you additional insight into the battle.

Others have a section called **Vignette**, whose purpose is to enhance your emotional understanding of the battle by offering a short eyewitness account or a particularly vivid anecdote.

A few conventions are used in the guidebook to keep confusion to a minimum. We have tried not to burden the text with a proliferation of names and unit designations. These are used as sparingly as a solid understanding of the battle permits. Names of Confederate leaders and field units are in italics. The full name and rank of each individual is usually

given only the first time he is mentioned in a tour; the Order of Battle in the back of the book can remind you of each man's level of command when needed.

It is important to drive safely, take your time, get out of your car, and think about the place where you stand and the moment you inhabit. Then think about the moment those thousands of Union and Confederate soldiers inhabited in 1861 or 1862. Understand their emotions, and let yourself be swept along with the tide of history for a while. These battlefields are among the most precious cultural artifacts of our society, and the United States is comparatively blessed with well-protected sites associated with our past wars. It is important that we appreciate this blessing, understand the significance of this hallowed ground—and have fun as well.

Earl J. Hess

*Mark Grimsley,
Brooks D. Simpson, &
Steven E. Woodworth*
SERIES EDITORS