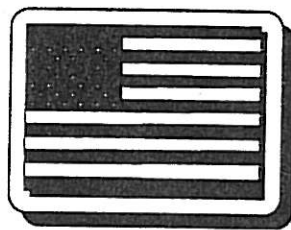


Price's 1864 Missouri Raid Preservation Conference Report



Planned and Prepared
by The Blue and Gray Education Society
for
The Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites,
Department of History, University of Missouri Kansas City
and
American Battlefield Protection Program

March 1996

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Executive Summary Of Price's 1864 Missouri Raid Conference

In late 1864, General Sterling Price led 12,000 mounted infantry in a poorly planned, but politically significant, raid into his adopted state of Missouri. Price's objectives included creating a diversion which might relieve the besieged Confederate armies near Atlanta and Petersburg. In practical terms, Price's motives were much more personal--he intended to liberate Missouri from the yolk of Federal occupation. The result was a four month crusade that nearly resulted in the total destruction of his force and the collapse of any future hopes of liberating that divided state.

Historic Civil War Trail Is A Significant Part Of Frontier Heritage

The states of Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma are considered to be the great American midwest; however, this was not always the case. Nearly 150 years ago these states were in various stages of organization leading to statehood. In fact, they were the great frontier. Today a visit to these states will conjure up memories of the storied expeditions of Lewis and Clark and the pioneer tracks of The Oregon and Santa Fe Trails. Sterling Price and the frontiersmen who chose sides in America's Civil War are as significant to the lore and legend of these states as any of those previously mentioned. In order to understand life in Missouri, Kansas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma, one must understand how the Civil War was fought in this area.

Discussion Summary

It has been said the Civil War started in Kansas and Missouri in 1854, with the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Fort Sumter merely caused it to spread to other parts of the country. It is our purpose to elevate this construct to a level that forces a reappraisal of our traditional understanding of the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi its role in their society.

Recently, a sound bite on a national news program reported that a survey of high school students revealed an appalling lack of knowledge or understanding of America's history. Basic items such as names of Presidents were unknown to the respondents. If we accept the validity of these findings, it is axiomatic that people will bulldoze historic sites to accommodate apartment buildings and shopping malls. They just don't see why these sites are worth saving. It is logical that efforts to turn these sites into educational experiences will be met with indifference or scorn.

There are opportunities for aggressive visionaries. More and more people are seeking their genealogical roots and visiting sites where "Great, great grandpa put his homestead" or where "he fought, bled and died." Heritage tourism is the byproduct of this interest. No-where is the heritage focus greater than on the period of our Civil War. Literally millions of people trek to battlefields around the country buying gas, staying in hotels, eating meals, and acquiring souvenirs. They usually visit related sites and entertainment attractions. A number of them decide to relocate to the areas they visited. There should be no disagreement with the assertion that tourism is and should be a major component of any region's economic development package.

In the states of Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, and Oklahoma, the 1,400 mile trail of Price's ill-fated raid is the perfect feeder route for heritage tourism and improved access to less visited parts of the state. It is now ripe for presentation to the public.

Issues And Recommendations

This section will only include issues identified by the conference and recommendations formulated by the **Blue and Gray Education Society (BGES)**. **BGES** is solely responsible for this report. The recommendations do not necessarily reflect the positions of the conference sponsors or participants.

Issue #1. The length of Price's Raid makes a cogent interpretive trail difficult.

Recommendation #1. The states of Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas should meet to examine the route of Price's Raid, compare resources, and take appropriate actions to designate and mark it. The state of Missouri should be the lead state.

Recommendation #2. Price's Raid should be divided into thematic segments which permit tourists to complete a theme at a logical point without too great an expenditure of time.

Recommendation #3. Priority should be given to completing the application to have Price's Raid designated as a National Historic Trail. NPS historians at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield can assist.

Issue #2. The length of the trail could make it difficult to sustain interest.

Recommendation #4. State Departments of Economic Development and Tourism need to work with State Historic Preservation Officers and Department of Natural and Historic Resource personnel to survey the inclusion of potential tourist destinations which might benefit from linkage to the Price's Raid Historic Trail.

Recommendation #5. State Tourism officials should coordinate with affected counties, interested historical groups, and other nonprofit agencies to determine potential partnerships

Recommendation #6. Interested state and county personnel should contact the State of Virginia (1-800-RETREAT) concerning methodology and results used on Lee's Retreat.

Issue #3. The mechanics of developing, financing, promoting, and managing a Price's Raid Historic Trail are complex.

Recommendation #7. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources should initiate a multi-state planning conference to determine the economic and heritage potential of the proposed trail.

Recommendation #8. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources should isolate the previously appropriated Civil War interpretive signage money from its budget and develop an aggressive, consistent timetable to complete the approved program.

Recommendation #9. The State of Kansas should conduct strategic planning to determine how the Mine Creek Battlefield and Interpretive Center is to be run. Sufficient revenues must be appropriated to ensure that credible operations and maintenance are performed. The state should consider the adoption of a Parks and Soils tax similar to that of Missouri.

Recommendation #10. The Missouri Division of Tourism should evaluate how the Raid is being presented and should make resources available to maximize the return for state and local investments by promoting the availability of the trail.

Recommendation #11. The Missouri Department of Economic Development should engage in a study on the potential benefits of an expanded heritage tourism program as part of the state's total tourism package.

Issue #4. There are so many competing interests that Price's Raid cannot compete for marquee billing.

Recommendation #12. The **Civil War Roundtable of Kansas City** should head up an effort of "friends" groups to examine the economic potential of Civil War heritage tourism in each of the major markets. Validated data should then be advocated to affected communities in public media such as newspapers and special interest groups' newsletters.

Recommendation #13. Each battlefield "friends" group should ensure that it possesses accurate real estate documentation on the core and peripheral areas of their particular battlefields. If no preservation plan has been completed, one should be completed by June 30, 1997.

Recommendation #14. "Friends" groups should undertake a careful review of state and local school curriculums and should press for the incorporation of a local version of the *"Educating with Historic Places"* program.

Recommendation #15. A responsible group, such as the **Missouri Historical Society**, should examine the state of historiography on the Price's Raid campaign and coordinate a cogent effort to increase research, publications, and presentations in this area.

Recommendation #16. "Friends" groups should consider sponsoring high visibility events such as Civil War reenactments, relic shows, bus tours, seminars, or book fairs at sites which would clearly demonstrate the competitiveness of Civil War tourism.

Issue #5. The lead times for all these programs will push beyond the "window of opportunity" and will become irrelevant.

Recommendation #17. The **Kansas Historical Society** and the local government agencies which control zoning in the Mine Creek area should examine current and future transportation requirements and land use zonings to ensure permanent protection of Mine Creek Battlefield and related sites.

Recommendation #18. The **Friends of Newtonia Battlefields** should implement key elements of their strategic plan by February 28, 1998.

About the Report

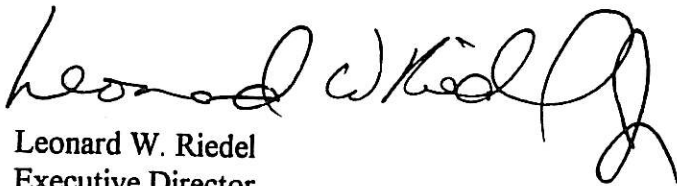
This report is an objective look at the state of surviving Civil War resources relating to General Sterling Price's 1864 Missouri Raid. *I am convinced that these resources are deserving of coordinated and special efforts to preserve, interpret, and promote them as a key component of the frontier heritage.*

Special thanks are due to Mr. Orvis Fitts of **The Civil War Roundtable of Kansas City**, Connie Slaughter, a historian at **Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Park**, and David Roggensees curator of **Fort Davidson State Historic Site** for their extra efforts in helping me develop a credible understanding of the sites. I appreciate the time and consult of Arnold Schofield, historian at **Fort Scott National Military Site**, and Jim Denny of the **Missouri Department of Natural Resources** in challenging our focus. They helped make this conference unique and productive.

Special thanks are due to Colonel Jack Brooks of **The Civil War Roundtable of Kansas City**, *The History Department* at **University of Missouri, Kansas City**, and the splendid staff at the Conference Center for allowing us to use the facilities of the University at no charge.

Finally, I would like to thank Jan Townsend at the **American Battlefield Protection Program**; Dr. Herman Hattaway, Professor of History at **University of Missouri, Kansas City**; Dennis Frye, President of APCWS, Bob Edmiston; and Jeff Driscoll of APCWS for having confidence in **BGES's** ability to plan, organize, and conduct a meaningful conference on a campaign so visible and important--it is a pleasure to work with them.

Any mistakes of fact or interpretation in this document are the responsibility of the **Blue and Gray Education Society** alone. If the reader has any questions, please call 804-797-4535.



Leonard W. Riedel
Executive Director

Price's 1864 Missouri Raid Conference, November 30- December 1, 1995 held at University of Missouri-Kansas City

Background

The divisive nature of the American Civil War was most clearly demonstrated in the border states. The language of our history is replete with terms and events such as "*Bloody Kansas*," "*Redlegs*," "*Jayhawkers*," "**The Missouri Compromise**," and "**The Kansas-Nebraska Act**." However, when the Civil War came, the attention was focused east of the Mississippi River and in the populous Virginia theater. Over the years, the historiography of the war generally focused on the east. Recently, scholars have begun to examine the Trans-Mississippi Department; however, it remains under-reported and misunderstood.

A popular interpretation of the causes of the Civil War includes the thesis that the South finally seceded because of the political climate, which was unfriendly to its interests. It was assumed that an equal number of slave states and free states was essential to the South's security. Abraham Lincoln and Hannibal Hamlin's election provided antislavery "Black Republicans" with a tie-breaking vote.

In Missouri, the controversy was real and bloody. As a frontier slave state, it was the gateway to new territories. With the organization and pending admission of Kansas and Nebraska, frontier politics were both vindictive and cruel. Slave-holding planters along the Missouri and Kansas border were murdered as both factions struggled to ensure a popular majority would organize Kansas according to its particular interests. The murderous habits of these frontiersmen were a prelude to the emotions which ripped the nation asunder in 1861.

Those habits did not abate with the organization of Union and Confederate armies. Historians like to note that Missouri had the third largest number of engagements (behind Virginia and Tennessee) in the Civil War. A large portion of those events were small-scale, guerrilla type engagements which bore no resemblance to the battles witnessed elsewhere in the country.

Sterling Price was a product of the frontier culture. He had earned a general's commission in the Mexican War. As Missouri's governor, he presided over much of the border controversy without

finding a solution. When the Civil War erupted, ex-governor Price saw his function as pro-Missouri, anti-secession. Predictably, when Union soldiers under General Nathaniel Lyon broke up militia organizations in the Camp Jackson Massacre and denounced the state and Governor's neutrality position, Price organized a rebel force.

Despite early successes near Lexington and Wilson's Creek, Price was unable to evict the Union forces or establish control over any portion of the state. Soon the Missouri troops were ordered to support Confederate operations east of the Mississippi River where they proceeded to earn a reputation as one of the hardest fighting units in either army.

Price proved to be troublesome for the Confederate politicians in Richmond and was soon returned to Missouri to recruit additional soldiers. As one of Kirby Smith's departmental commanders and a prominent politician, Price was a force to be reckoned with.

In mid-1864, Smith was asked to create a diversion which would alleviate some of the pressure on the Confederate armies facing Sherman and Grant. Price proposed a large-scale, mounted expedition into "occupied" Missouri. Price billed it as a sound military and political move which would result in countless numbers of recruits to the Confederate cause and the liberation of such key sites as St. Louis and Jefferson City. It says a great deal about the nature of life and politics in the state that Price believed he would be successful. The plan was approved.

Price assembled his force in northern Arkansas and on August 4, 1864 embarked with 12,000 mounted infantry. The raid was mismanaged from the start. Cumbersome supply trains negated the advantage of horse travel, and the daily mileage covered was little better than that which would be made by an infantry column. The slow pace should have resulted in the destruction of the Confederate force much sooner; however, neither Missouri Departmental Commander, William Rosecrans, or Department of Kansas Commander, Samuel Curtis, seemed to be much concerned.

In late September, Price encountered the small Union force at Fort Davidson near Ironton at Pilot Knob. Perhaps motivated by selfish concerns, the Union Commander General Thomas Ewing and his force slipped out of the fort at 3:30 A.M. after administering a defeat to Price's force. Price set off in half-hearted pursuit in the direction of St. Louis. After being intimidated in front of Franklin, Missouri, Price turned in the direction of Jefferson City. However, as Price neared the Missouri capital, he was advised the city was fortified. He decided to bypass it.

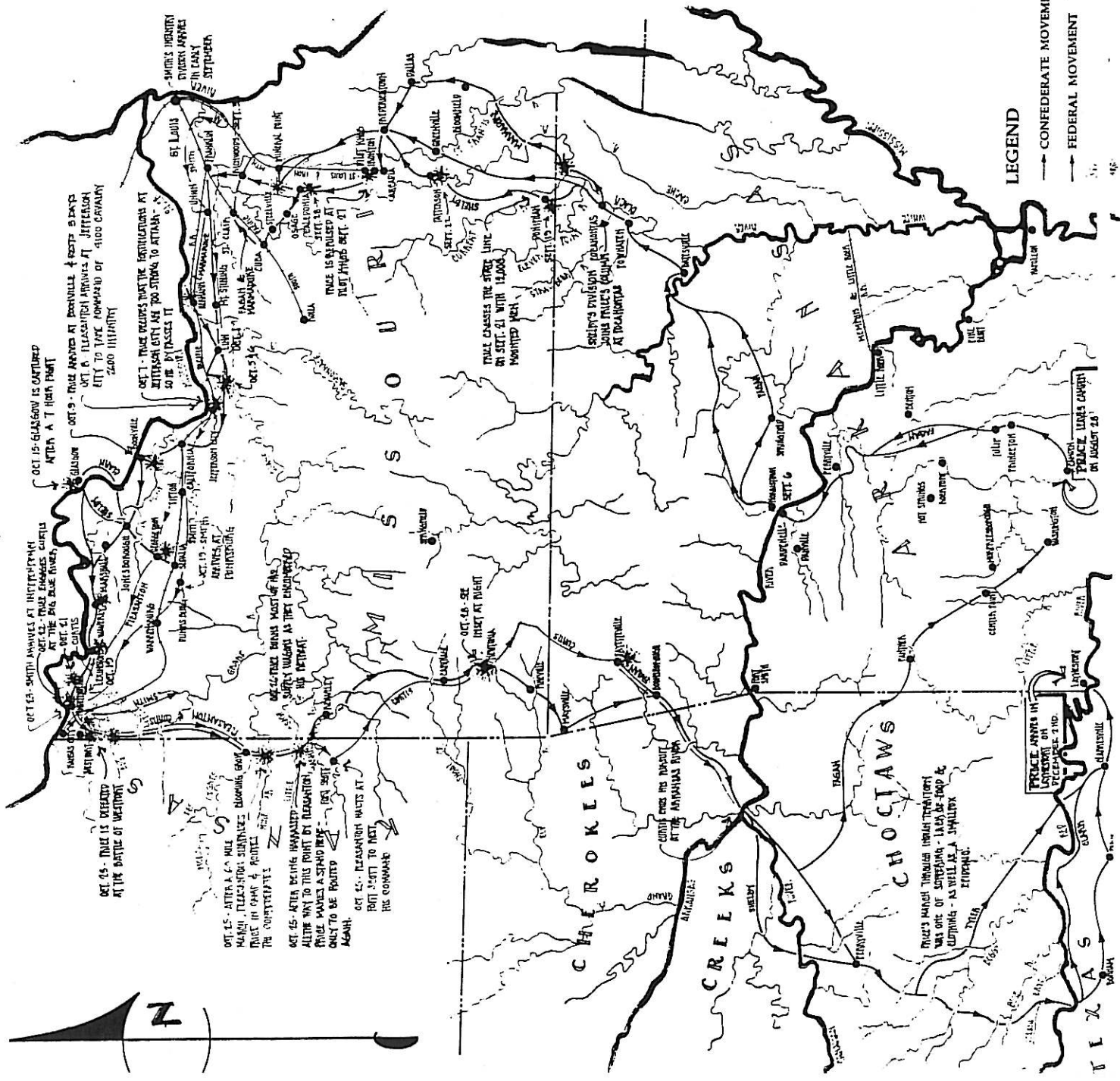
The campaign to date had been unremarkable. Recruitment was nominally successful, but, as in other border states invaded by Confederate armies, nowhere near the promise. Defenders of the raid have said that Price did achieve one strategic objective by preventing a division of Union troops under Major General A.J. Smith from joining Sherman. But this was a hollow victory since Smith was not needed for the ultimate success of Sherman's campaign (Atlanta had fallen on September 1, 1864).

Price's westward movement spawned several minor engagements preparatory to a series of battles along the Little Blue River, Byram's Ford and in Westport. Price's temporary success in forcing Byram's Ford was soon offset by the need to defend against Pleasonton's column which had come up on his rear. Price was soon beaten and in danger of losing his entire force. He quickly determined to move back toward Arkansas and safety--his dreams dashed by reality.

Price's route of retreat compounded his problems by drawing Federal forces from both Kansas and Missouri into a simultaneous pursuit. As Price reached Mine Creek, Kansas, his wagon train and rear guard were caught attempting to cross the creek. The resulting battle ruined the residual discipline of the retreat, and Price's greatly diminished force moved rapidly towards Carthage fighting a small engagement at Newtonia before escaping their pursuers. He slipped into camp at Cane Hill, Arkansas, on November 1st.

As poorly executed as the expedition had been, the last indignities had not been endured. Price's Division Commander, General James Fagan, was detached to assist in the capture of the besieged Fayetteville garrison; however, Fagan's soldiers refused to fight. Price soon got word of the approach of Federal forces and determined to depart Arkansas through Indian territory (Oklahoma). Thoroughly disheartened, Price's force lost its cohesion, and he was forced to approve a significant number of furloughs in hopes that some soldiers might regain their morale and reassemble at Clarksville, Texas. John Bankhead Magruder's orders for Price to move to Laynesport, Texas, ended the sad affair.

Kirby Smith and Price claimed in their reports that the raid was a dramatic success when it was clearly a failure. Nonetheless, the campaign was a fitting postscript to the war in Missouri. It was an opportunity for the state's residents to show their loyalties. Price marched nearly 1,000 miles in his adopted state and in the end left empty-handed. The people of Missouri wanted no more of war.



CONFEDERATE ORGANIZATION
 General Sterling Price, Commanding
 Fagan's Division - Major General James F. Fagan
 Cabell's Brigade
 Simmons' Brigade
 Dabhaus' Brigade
 McCray's Brigade
 Plus 3 unattached regiments

Marmaduke's Division - Major General John S. Marmaduke
 Major General John B. Clark
 (after October 25th)

Marmaduke's Brigade
 Freeman's Brigade

Shelby's Division - Brigadier General Joseph O. Shelby
 Shelby's Iron Brigade
 Jackson's Brigade
 Tabor's Brigade

PRICE'S 1864 MISSOURI RAID

AUGUST - NOVEMBER, 1864
 * * * * *



LEGEND
 — CONFEDERATE MOVEMENT
 - - - FEDERAL MOVEMENT

Present Situation

The trail of Sterling Price and his raiders ranged over approximately 1,488 miles and took nearly four months from start to finish. It is beyond the scope of this report to attempt to chronicle the entire raid. We will focus on the sites of the major actions from Pilot Knob to Newtonia.

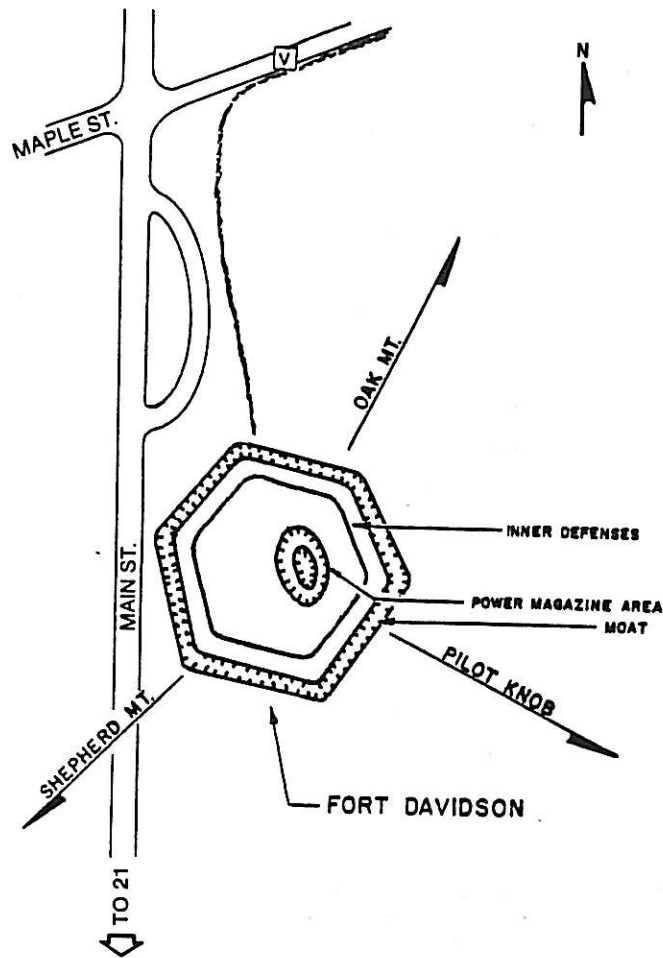
There is no formal commemoration of Price's Raid as a historical event. Some efforts have been made to establish the route as a *National Historical Trail*; however, the paperwork has been held in abeyance pending receipt of an input from the state of Missouri.

Pilot Knob. The first noteworthy action in the raid took place at Fort Davidson. This is now a 31-acre state park. This location, set in the beautiful Arcadia Valley, is well worth a visit. The fort is in excellent condition and has excellent archeological value in that the blown up magazine and some defensive spurs are still visible. The state-run Visitors' Center is modern. Interpretation includes a slide show, static displays, and a fiber optic map. It must be noted that some of the improvements have been funded by the **American Battlefield Protection Program**. It appears the investment was very productive. The site supports nearly 20,000 visitors a year.

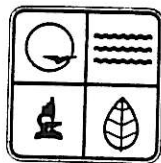
There are, however, several areas of concern. The staff of the Fort Davidson site is also responsible for *Elephant Rocks State Park*, a 129 acre geological wonder which has a higher visitation load. During peak season at Elephant Rocks, the resulting law enforcement/ranger requirements there leave Fort Davidson inadequately manned to provide historic interpretation.

Another area of concern is the disruption of the viewshed on Sheppard Mountain. A private citizen owns the site which he is currently planning to log. He has also indicated an intention to build residential homes. The mountain is a significant landmark in the battle. The owner's asking price of \$330,000 is outrageous in view of the \$128,000 acquisition price of Pilot Knob Mountain. While Pilot Knob Mountain is being purchased with assistance from **The Conservation Fund**, no such plan exists for Sheppard Mountain.

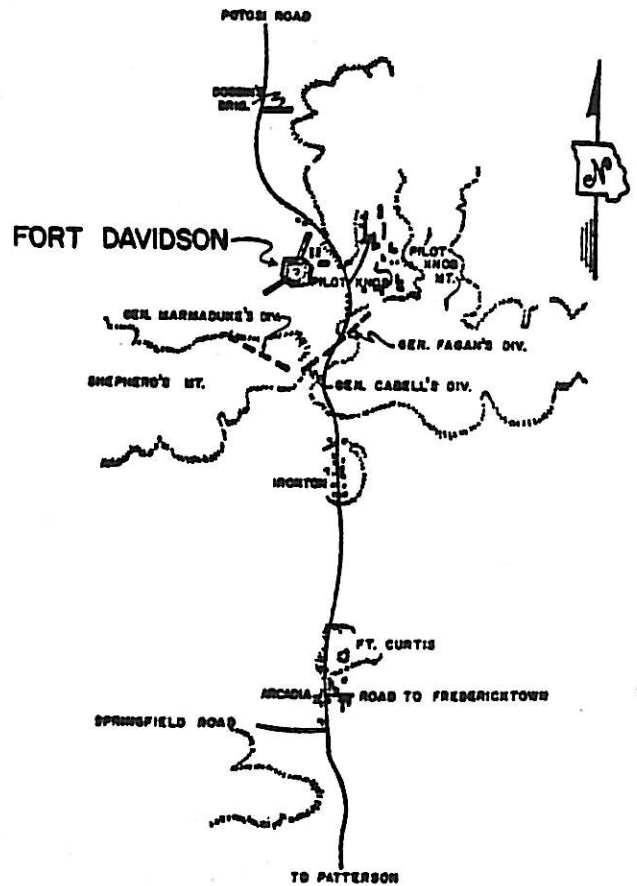
The final observation concerns funding. The State funds its Park system with a 1/10th of 1 cent sales tax. This tax provides 85% of the operating revenue for Fort Davidson, the remainder comes from the State of Missouri's General Revenue fund. This *Parks and Soils Tax* is renewable by referendum. The next referendum is in 1998.

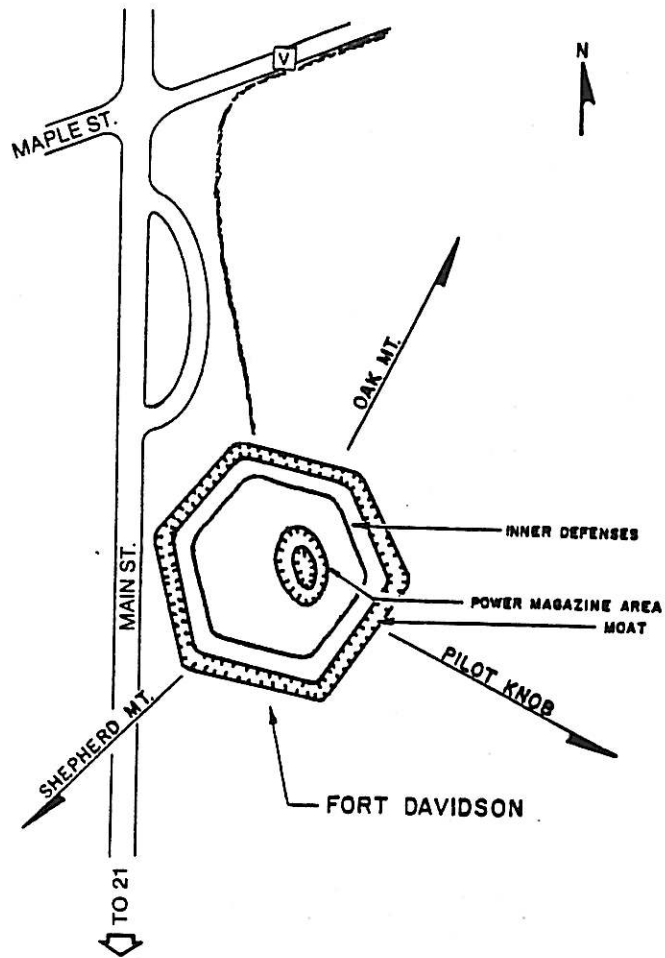


FORT DAVIDSON STATE HISTORIC SITE

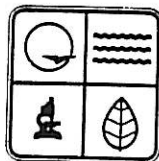


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FORT DAVIDSON STATE HISTORIC SITE



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