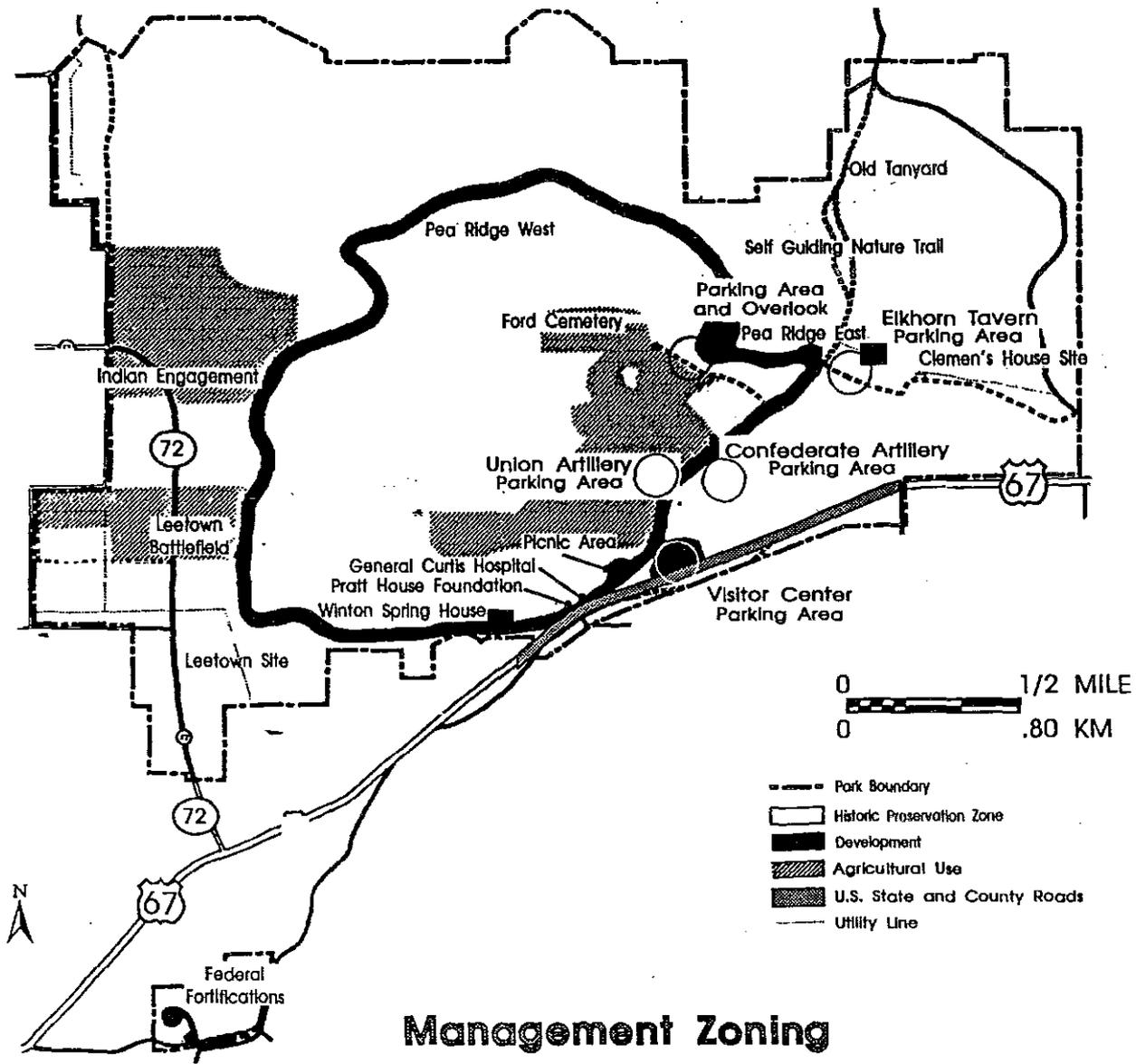


# Pea Ridge National Military Park: An Administrative History

Christopher J. Huggard



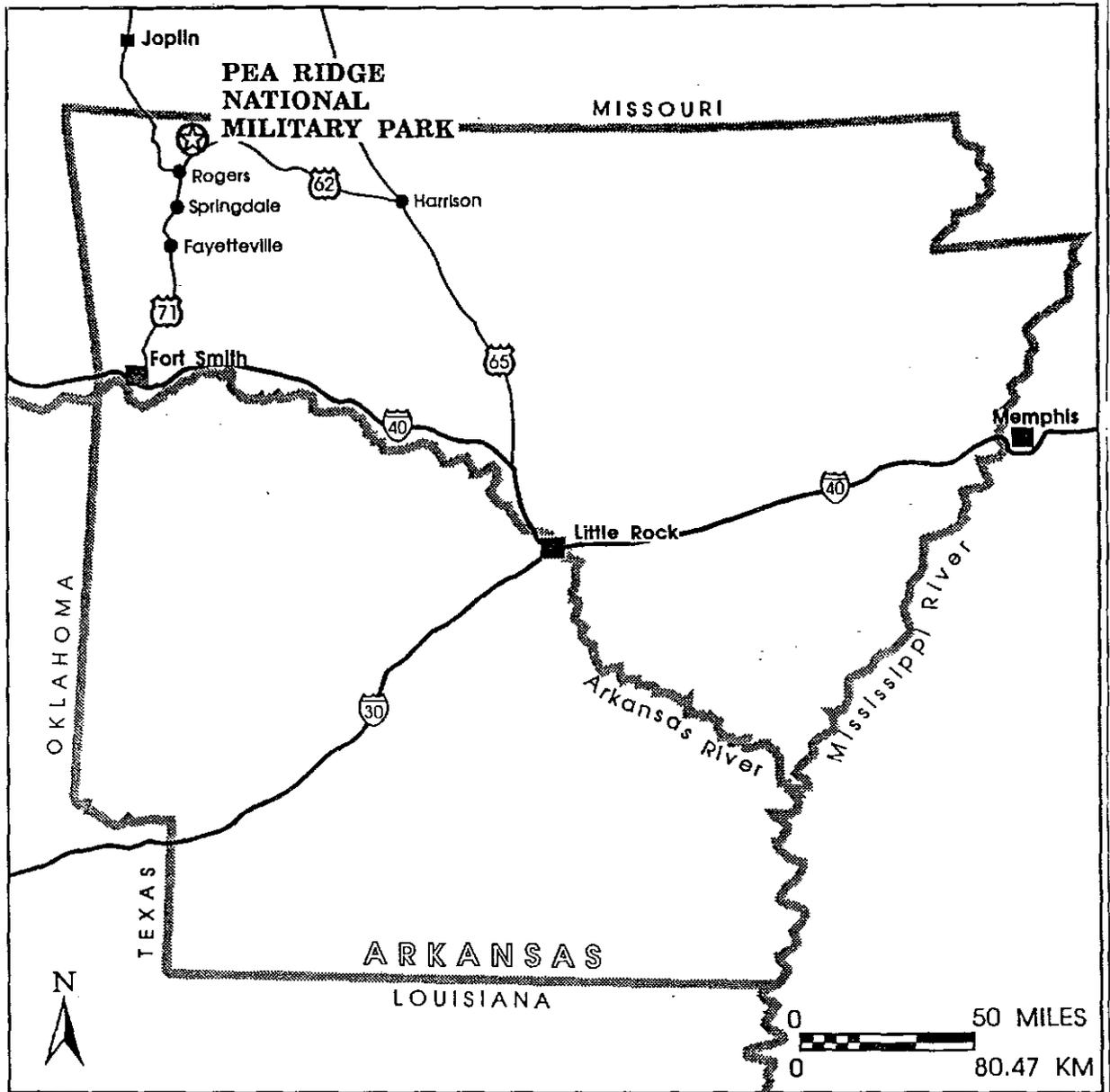
## Management Zoning Pea Ridge National Military Park



National  
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United States Department of Interior

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**Region Map**  
 Pea Ridge  
 National Military Park

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## INTRODUCTION

This is an administrative history of Pea Ridge National Military Park. The following eight chapters examine the history of the Battle of Pea Ridge, the historical efforts to establish a national park, and the subsequent history of the administration of the national military park. Authorized in 1956, the same year the Park Service initiated its Mission 66 plan, the Pea Ridge park opened in 1963 three years after the state of Arkansas deeded the 4,300-acre site to the federal government. The people of Northwest Arkansas had fought diligently for the national park that, although it opened a year after its centennial, did begin to welcome visitors during the centennial celebration of the American Civil War.

The preservation and protection of the cultural and natural resources of Pea Ridge NMP is the principle focus of this study. From its first Superintendent John Willett to its current Superintendent Steve Adams, the park has evolved within a larger Park Service philosophical scheme. First, Mission 66 dominated the formulation of the park facilities--especially the Visitor Center, the Tour Road, and Elkhorn Tavern. The non-historical facilities were fairly easily designed and constructed, whereas the Civil War features such as the tavern have been more difficult to manage. The park, for example, had to research the history of the tavern to determine its architectural integrity as a Civil War-era structure. Unfortunately, guerrillas burned the structure months after the battle, leaving little record of the original structure. Consequently, the historic structure was restored with what few resources could be mustered concerning the Victorian building. Situations like this have challenged the park staff for more than thirty years. The history of the Mayfield and Winton Springs houses similarly concerned park administrators.

In more recent years, since the finalization of the Mission 66 program, the park has become more and more interested in its natural resources and protection of its cultural heritage, a reflection of the impact of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the emerging national environmental movement in the 1960s and 1970s. In the mid-1970s, for instance, University of Arkansas botanist E. E. Dale, Jr., established the native prairie grasses that now thrive in the park. Likewise, living history programs and interpretive activities matured during the 1970s. By the end of seventies, however, fiscal constraints began to threaten the continued evolution of the administration of the park.

During the last decade, 1988-1997, park administration has reinvigorated the park with renewed emphasis on the historical

integrity of both the cultural and natural resources as well as with reorganized management schemata. The Vegetation Treatment Plan, first implemented with the 1963 Master Plan, has become a more important document, serving as the blueprint for more careful management of the historical vegetative landscape. Likewise, the implementation of the Management Ignited Prescribed Fire program has fueled more efficient and careful management of the vegetative landscape and its terrain.

In more recent times, the team approach to management, has also elevated the administrative efficiency and historical accuracy of the park. Consequently, the administration of the park has become less and less autocratic, as was the case in the first few years, to a more democratic management scheme that takes advantage of the various personnel's special training and skills within a team concept. And even though Superintendent Steve Adams still oversees the entire staff, the three teams--Administrative, Ranger, and Maintenance--have thrived under the new administrative strategy. From this perspective, the Pea Ridge National Military Park has promise for a bright future, largely in the form of consensus management, greater historical integrity, and improved protection strategies for the future. How the park evolved from the Mission 66 program to its current state is the focus of this administrative history.

To complete this study required the assistance of many people. Archivist Joan Howard of the Federal Records Center in Denver provided invaluable assistance during my early search to find the appropriate Park Service records. The staff of the Southwest Regional Office Library in Santa Fe also conducted a search for Pea Ridge (PERI) materials and then copied and sent them to me. I am grateful to them. The staff of Pea Ridge NMP was especially helpful in facilitating access to pertinent documents and offering insights concerning the administration of the park. Former NPS Chief Historian Edwin Bearss also offered me an historical perspective of the park's management that could not be found in the documents.

I would like to thank the Division of History of the SWRO for extending me the contract to write the Pea Ridge NMP's administrative history. Neil Mangum and Art Gómez were especially helpful in guiding me along to completion of this project. My Fayetteville lunch buddies contributed insightful conversation concerning the history of Northwest Arkansas. My wife Kay Pritchett provided additional inspiration as well.

## CHAPTER 1

### The Battle of Pea Ridge: Hallowed Ground Revisited

The Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas is considered one of the most important Civil War battles of the Trans-Mississippi West. Some scholars have coined it the "Gettysburg of the West,"<sup>1</sup> and historian Walter L. Brown has suggested, "Pea Ridge was in great measure the critical event of the war in the West."<sup>2</sup> The ramifications of this 1956 assessment eventually brought great historical significance to the battle and helped to identify the battlefield as one of the most hallowed grounds of the western theater. Congress concurred and passed legislation creating the Pea Ridge National Military Park that year after decades of local attempts to achieve national park status for the Civil War battlefield. What follows is a brief look into that dramatic event and its unique location in Northwest Arkansas.

The battle of March 7-8, 1862 began to materialize in the early weeks of 1862. General Albert Sidney Johnston, who commanded Department #2 (Arkansas, western Mississippi, and Tennessee), feared that his western flank was vulnerable and if not protected would leave two of his important forts, Henry on the Tennessee River and Donelson on the Cumberland, susceptible to Federal attack and takeover. Johnston wanted to attack Buell's army in western Kentucky but was not yet ready for a direct assault in the eastern theater. Consequently, he agreed to a plan put together by Major General Earl Van Dorn to initiate a flanking movement against St. Louis with his Arkansas and Missouri forces, his goal being the disruption of Grant's actions against the two aforementioned forts and other Federal actions in the area.<sup>3</sup>

Confederate President Jefferson Davis chose Major General Earl Van Dorn out of a group of elite Confederate commanders (two previous generals turned down the assignment) to head the

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<sup>1</sup>See Walter L. Brown, "Pea Ridge: Gettysburg of the West," Arkansas Historical Quarterly 15:1 (Spring 1956): 3-16 and Dee Alexander Brown, "The Battle of Pea Ridge: Gettysburg of the West," Civil War Times Illustrated (1967).

<sup>2</sup>Brown, "Pea Ridge," 3; also, see Rex C. Conner, "Report of Investigation of the Pea Ridge Battle Field, Benton County, Arkansas, April 8, 1940," p. 4, a report completed for the Arkansas State Department of Parks and the Works Progress Administration, located in the Clyde T. Ellis Papers, Special Collections, University of Arkansas.

<sup>3</sup>Brown, "Pea Ridge," 3-4.

South's Army of the West.<sup>4</sup> Van Dorn, a Mississippi planter and West Point graduate, won his reputation for command in the Mexican War and the so-called Indian wars of Texas. A close friend of Davis, Van Dorn's romantic appeal as a dashing, decisive cavalry officer convinced the Confederate politician to send this military leader to the West. Under his command would be Brigadier General Benjamin McCulloch commander of Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana troops (of the Battle of Wilson's Creek fame), Major General Sterling Price of the Missouri State Guard, and Indian Territory Brigadier General Albert Pike.

By early January, the Federal Army of the Southwest was also making plans at St. Louis, Missouri for its role in the Trans-Mississippi theater. Under Brigadier General Samuel R. Curtis, Union troops advanced southwestward in early February, headed toward Springfield. Curtis's army entered the Ozark city on the 13th, forcing Price's smaller army of Missourians to evacuate and march south into Arkansas. Curtis decided at this point to pursue the Rebels into the northwestern part of the Confederate state and to "disperse his army in a wide front"<sup>5</sup> rather than continue deep into Arkansas.

Curtis's army consisted of four undersized divisions with Brigadier General Franz Sigel (1st and 2nd Div. and 2nd in command), Colonel Peter J. Osterhaus (1st Div.), Brig. General Alexander Asboth (2nd Div.), Colonel Jefferson C. Davis (3rd Div.), and Colonel Eugene A. Carr (4th Div.). Among other noted Federal commanders at Pea Ridge were Iowa's Colonel Grenville Dodge, later of railroadbuilding fame, and Army Quartermaster Captain Phillip H. Sheridan.

On February 17, the Union Army crossed into Arkansas. Five days later, Major General Henry W. Halleck, commander of the Department of Missouri, approved Curtis's decision to entrench at a strategic location near Bentonville, Arkansas. At this juncture, Curtis established an east-west encampment extending from Cross Hollows to Osage Springs. This line allowed the Federals to block both Telegraph Road, the principal north-south highway connecting Missouri and Arkansas, and the Bentonville Road, a local roadway. Holding this position, Curtis decided to end the pursuit of the Confederates and hold his ground.

That same day, Van Dorn learned of Price's retreat to the

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<sup>4</sup>See William L. Shea & Earl J. Hess, Pea Ridge, Civil War Campaign in the West (Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1992), 19-22; Edwin C. Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," Annals of Iowa 36:3 (Spring 1963): 569-70; also, see Robert G. Hartje, Van Dorn, The Life and Times of a Confederate General (Nashville: Vanderbilt Univ. Press, 1967), 99-136.

<sup>5</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 569.

Boston Mountains, so he ordered McCulloch to join the Missourian with plans for a general assault against Curtis to the north. Two days later, Van Dorn set out from Jacksonport, Arkansas for Price's headquarters in the Boston Mountains. On his departure, Van Dorn optimistically wrote to Sidney Johnston that "I have no doubt of the result. If I succeed I shall push on [to St. Louis]." <sup>6</sup>

Van Dorn reached Price's encampment on March 2. After an initial conference with Price and McCulloch on the following day, the general concluded that Curtis was waiting near Sugar Creek for reinforcements. Consequently, Van Dorn believed that immediate action was necessary to take advantage of Confederate numerical superiority. The commander of the Army of the West then prepared orders for Price and McCulloch to get ready to march on the 4th, first to Fayetteville, then to Bentonville. For the next five days, the Confederate troops were to be greatly tested in endurance, in their ability to weather below-freezing temperatures, and with very little food for sustenance. Regardless, Van Dorn's audacious plan was set in motion on the morning of March 4.

A prounion citizen of Fayetteville, Arkansas may have altered the course of Civil War history when he brought word to Curtis that a Confederate force was passing through Fayetteville, headed for Little Sugar Creek and a confrontation. Warned on the brisk, snowy morning of March 5 of the imminent danger his army was in, Curtis took the news to heart and proceeded to entrench his forces at Little Sugar Creek. By noon of March 6, the Federals had erected an impressive line of breastworks along the bluffs, making their position virtually impregnable from the south. In the meantime, Curtis made Samuel Pratt's Store, north of the Federal entrenchments on Telegraph Road, his headquarters. All four of the Union divisions were in place as well, a total of 10,500 men strong, despite Sigel's near-capture by Confederate cavalry commander Brigadier General James M. McIntosh, east of Bentonville. At the end of the day, Curtis made one more fateful decision. He approved of Dodge's idea to blockade with downed timber the only route--the Bentonville Detour--the southerners could have taken to gain the Federals' rear. Dodge's action proved pivotal in the end. <sup>7</sup>

By sunset of March 6, the Confederate forces were amassed on the Bentonville Road at its junction with Little Sugar Creek Road just northeast of Bentonville. Van Dorn estimated he had

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<sup>6</sup>Quoted from Brown, "Pea Ridge," 8.

<sup>7</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 65-68.

16,000 troops<sup>8</sup>, marking one of the few Civil War battles in which southern forces outnumbered the northern. Yet in some ways, Van Dorn's strategy would even the playing field. Even though the Confederates had been marching for three days straight, and were worn out, Van Dorn decided to forsake a frontal assault on the bluffs of Little Sugar Creek in favor of an enveloping movement to the rear of the Federal position. The troops would have no break and most of them had seen their last meal until the battle would be over: they were "almost frozen and starved, having only one biscuit for breakfast that morning, and no prospect of supper. We built fires, and sat around them waiting for the wagons to arrive."<sup>9</sup> At nightfall, the Confederate commander consulted with McCulloch and McIntosh concerning the flanking movement and, after learning of the Bentonville Detour which ran on a northeast-southwest axis in the rear of the Union position, gave orders for a night march on the detour, a calculated risk. Van Dorn was employing the element of surprise at the same time attempting to gain higher ground just east of Big Mountain.<sup>10</sup> At the junction of the Bentonville Detour and Telegraph Road, the Confederates were to turn southward and ultimately to attack Curtis's position on Little Sugar Creek. Clearly, this daring maneuver would require the bedraggled soldiers to march double quick through much, if not all, of the entire night.

Van Dorn's enveloping movement set the final boundaries for the battlefield of March 7-8. The northern extent of the battle ground would be against Big Mountain itself and to its east in Cross Timber Hollow. The southern boundary, of course, was marked by Curtis's entrenched position on Little Sugar Creek. The western border of the battle would be Leetown and the Leetown Road area (although various skirmishes would occur near Bentonville), whereas the eastern boundary would be on Huntsville Road just east of Elkhorn Tavern on Clemons farm.

Within this battle arena were important geographical features that included Big Mountain (2.5 mis. long), which is on an east-west line, Little Mountain just southwest of Big Mountain, and various wooded areas interrupted by farms. A large portion of the surrounding landscape was covered in forest of white oak, post oak, blackjack oak, red cedar,

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<sup>8</sup>It should be mentioned that probably no more than 13,000 troops actually participated in the battle because almost two-thirds of McCulloch's Division never engaged.

<sup>9</sup>Quoted from Edwin C. Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," Annals of Iowa 36:8 (Spring 1963): 570.

<sup>10</sup>Brown, "Pea Ridge," 10. Brown suggests that the local name was either Pea Vine Ridge or Pea Ridge; Edwin C. Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," Annals of Iowa 37:3 (Winter 1964): 218, Bearss suggests that the ridge was known locally as Sugar Mountain.

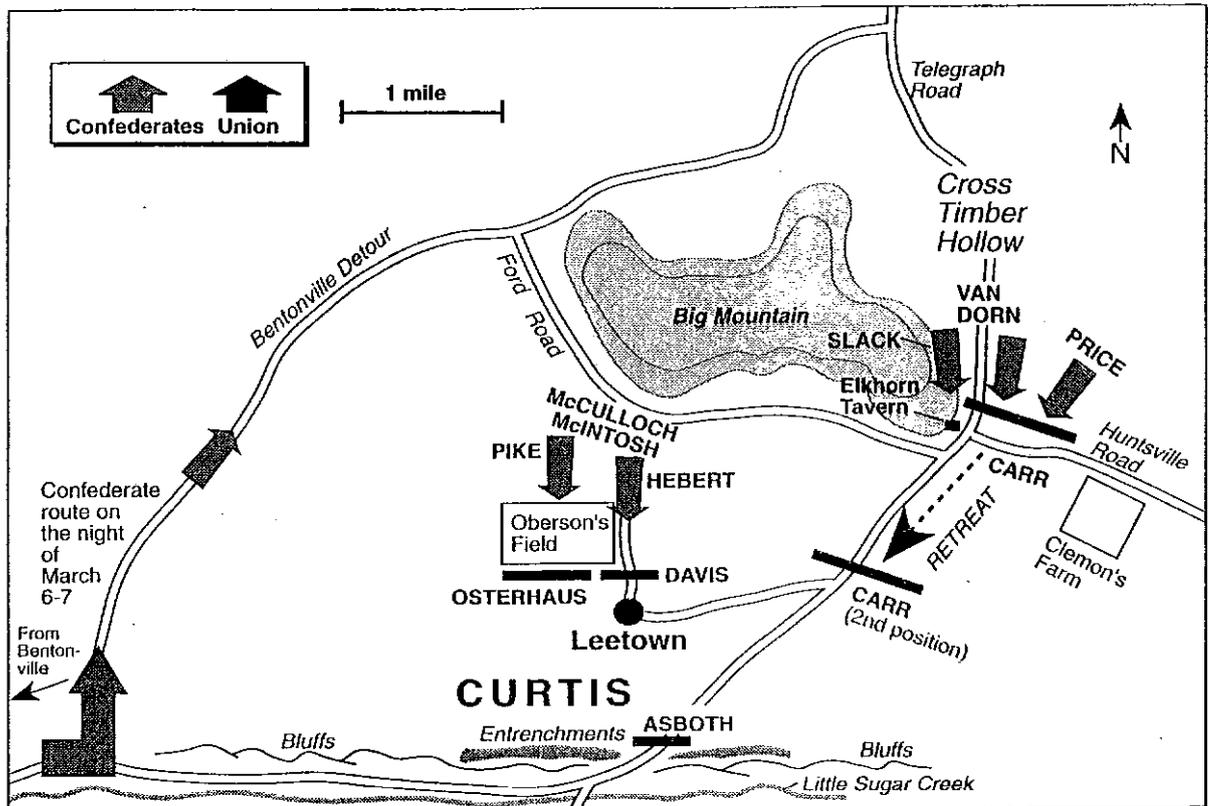


Fig. 1. Map of the Battle of Pea Ridge, March 6-7, 1862. Courtesy University of Arkansas Press.

hickory, elm, poplar, and a variety of vines and briars; about a half-mile west of Little Mountain was Round Prairie, an open grassland scattered with trees. In the Leetown sector, north of the hamlet, were Foster's and Sturdy's farms, that bordered on Ford Road just southwest of Big Mountain and directly west of Little Mountain. South of these farms was Oberson's field which was separated from the above mentioned farms by thick underbrush and a belt of trees.<sup>11</sup>

In the eastern sector, Clemon's farm which bordered on the Huntsville Road marked the easternmost section of the battlefield. West of this farm was a heavily forested area that finally opened up at Telegraph Road and Elkhorn Tavern. South of Elkhorn Tavern was Ruddick's field which lay on both sides of the road. Northwest of this field the area opened up into Cox's field and Ford's farm with Welfley's knoll almost directly centered on the two farms.

<sup>11</sup>Shea & Hess, *Pea Ridge*, 94, 139.

Elkhorn Tavern, the center of much of the most ferocious fighting, was the most distinctive architectural feature on the battlefield and would serve as a hospital. Pratt's Store, also on Telegraph Road but to the south of the tavern, was another important cultural feature that Curtis used for his headquarters and it also saw action as a hospital. Virtually all the buildings of the hamlet of Leetown were also converted into hospitals.

By daybreak of March 7, Van Dorn was able to assess the effectiveness of his flanking movement. It was a mixed result. The leading commander himself did make it to the Bentonville Detour-Telegraph Road junction, but a large portion of his army did not. Price's column did not reach Telegraph Road until 8:00 or 8:30 a.m. and McCulloch and Pike were still some distance from the head of the column. Dodge's timber blockades and a difficult crossing at Sugar Creek combined with the Confederate soldiers' fatigue had greatly deterred a rapid nighttime march. For these reasons Van Dorn had to alter his battle plans. He ordered McCulloch and Pike to counter-march back down the Detour Road around the west end of Big Mountain north of Leetown, then eastward toward Elkhorn Tavern, where the two commanders and their troops would ultimately encounter the bulk of the Union force. At the same time, Van Dorn and Price gradually made their way toward Elkhorn Tavern and a surprise attack on the Federal rear.

In the meantime, Curtis had called a morning conference with his Division Commanders to devise a plan of action after Sigel's scouts revealed the Confederate flanking movement. Curtis now had good reason to believe that the Confederate center was at Leetown and, therefore, ordered a redeployment of Sigel's and Osterhaus's troops from Little Sugar Creek to a position north of Leetown. About the time that Price reached the Bentonville Detour-Telegraph Road junction, Curtis had just ended the conference and received news that Price's men were attacking Federal pickets near Elkhorn Tavern. With this information, Curtis ordered a single division under Carr to advance northward immediately to meet the threat, not yet realizing that the nearly 5,500 Confederates were amassing in Cross Timber Hollow. Curtis may have still anticipated a frontal assault at Little Sugar Creek and believed at this point that the Rebel movements were a ruse to lure Curtis and his men from their fortifications.<sup>12</sup>

The fighting had begun as early as 7 a.m. north of Elkhorn Tavern near the southern edge of Cross Timber Hollow. General Price had encountered a Federal patrol under Captain Robert W.

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<sup>12</sup>Brown, "Pea Ridge," 10-13; Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 578-81; Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 80-82, 90-93.

Fyan and a minor skirmish ensued. Not knowing the strength of the Union force, Price opted for a flanking movement to his left on the Federal right rather than an direct assault down Telegraph Road. Price ordered his troops to ascend Williams Hollow and to head toward the Huntsville Road. The Rebels slowly battled their way out of Williams Hollow, where Elkhorn Tavern was in their view, when a Federal artillery barrage from the 24th Missouri slowed their movement. In the meantime, Price had established an artillery position at the head of Cross Timber Hollow. About this time, Union troops under Carr and Dodge were approaching Elkhorn Tavern and the commanders noted that Price was attempting to outflank their right. They quickly ordered a movement against the Confederate left, successfully repulsing the Confederates who retreated down Williams Hollow.<sup>13</sup>

The Confederates clearly outnumbered the Federals in the Elkhorn Tavern sector of the battlefield. Suspecting this, Price soon deployed his right flank west of Cross Timber Hollow on the eastern face of Pea Ridge; the principal column flanked both sides of Telegraph Road; and his left was engaged in a movement to outflank the Union right. Over the course of the day of March 7, Confederate forces slowly gained the upper hand as the battle waxed and waned and as Curtis gradually realized that the bulk of the enemy force was directly north of him in Cross Timber Hollow, though the Leetown engagement limited the number of reinforcements Curtis could deploy to support Carr at Elkhorn Tavern.

By mid-morning, Confederate artillerists had found the range and began to pummel the Federal position. It became apparent that the blueclads were outgunned when Rebel shells made two or three direct hits on their counterpart's caissons. At the same time, the fire fight intensified and the woods of Pea Ridge and the nearby hollows echoed with heavy infantry fire and the intimidating blasts of the big guns.

Throughout the morning, the combatants exchanged heavy artillery volleys and unrelenting musketfire. Finally, around noon the artillery barrage came to a brief, twenty-minute calm and the troops could hear that another violent encounter was raging to the west at Leetown. In the early afternoon, the fighting resumed at an even heavier pace; at one point the 9th Iowa met the 3rd Missouri at close range, and bloody hand-to-hand combat took place on Telegraph Road. As the Confederate infantry pushed forward in Cross Timber Hollow toward their eventual takeover of Elkhorn Tavern, Price's infantry and a five-gun battery rushed across the Huntsville Road. The Rebel cannoners unlimbered the guns on the eastern border of

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<sup>13</sup>Edwin C. Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," Annals of Iowa 37:1 (Summer 1963): 9-11.

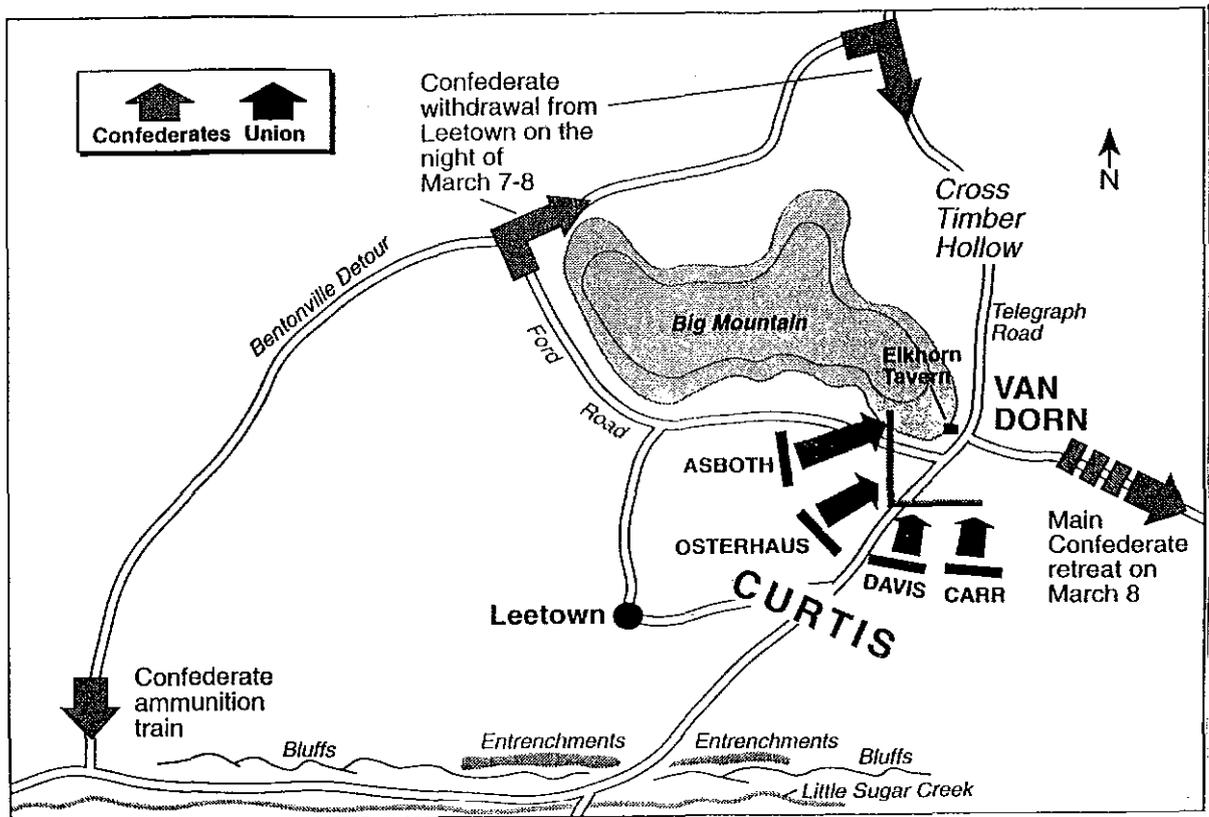


Fig. 2. Map of Battle of Pea Ridge, March 7-8, 1862. Courtesy of University of Arkansas Press.

Clemons field which opened up to the west facing the Federal position.<sup>14</sup>

During most of the remainder of the afternoon, the secessionists and unionists exchanged heavy fire on the Rebels' right on Pea Ridge, at their center on Telegraph Road, and on their left across Clemons field. Gradually, Van Dorn's greyclads gained the upper hand threatening to smash through the heart of Carr's division at Elkhorn Tavern. Sometime after 3 p.m., Carr implored Curtis to send reinforcements. The Union commander obliged Carr's retreating division and ordered Brigadier General Alexander S. Asboth to rush four companies of the 2d Missouri and four gunners of the 2d Battery of the Ohio Light Artillery to the Telegraph Road fire fight. Sigel, who had spent most of the day looking for something to do, was also ordered to come to the aid of Carr on the double quick. Sigel eventually ended up at Leetown by

<sup>14</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 24-27.

late afternoon. In the meantime, Dodge's stand on the Union right was giving way to the superior forces under Price on Clemons farm. Carr could only offer a small reserve of Indianians.

At about 5 p.m., Van Dorn ordered a Confederate charge along a line from the eastern face of Pea Ridge to Huntsville Road. As the bulk of Van Dorn's column rushed on to Elkhorn Tavern, the Federals got off no more than a single volley in face of superior forces and a rampaging, screaming rush of Rebels. One of the charging Confederates later described the charge that won Elkhorn Tavern for the Confederacy that day:

'On the battery' was the cry, and with a yell that rose above the roar of the battle, we closed upon the opposing ranks. The clash of arms and the din and fury of the deadly strife were now fierce and wild; the thunder of the artillery and the opening roll of the muskets of the long, fresh line of infantry, were deafening. Like a withering, scorching blast, the torrent of lead and iron poured through the surrounding smoke. Above all, 'forward, Missouriians,' could be distinctly heard, and, in response to the ringing battle-cry, the men defiantly pressed on, delivering a deadly fire as they advanced. Then came the desperate grapple for victory: the indomitable courage of our men finally prevailed hurling back the Federal lines, and driving them from the field....<sup>15</sup>

As nightfall approached, the Confederates raced ahead taking Elkhorn Tavern, the Federals retreating southward on both sides of Telegraph Road.

Price's division made similar advances on the Federal right despite dogged resistance from Dodge's Union infantrymen and gunners. By early evening, the Confederates had won Clemon's field and Elkhorn Tavern and were threatening to pursue the blueclads across Ruddick's field when nightfall descended on the smoky, bloody landscape. The timing was a godsend for the unionists because all their batteries had run out of ammunition and the infantrymen were running very low. As soon as the Confederate guns ceased firing, Curtis ordered the ordnance wagons up from the Little Sugar Creek encampment, a decision that would ultimately favor a Union victory at Pea Ridge. The exhausted Union soldiers retreated into the woods just south of Ruddick's field no more than a few hundred feet from their spirited foe. And as Curtis noted, "darkness, silence, and fatigue soon secured to the weary broken slumbers

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<sup>15</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 33.

and gloomy repose" of his troops.<sup>16</sup>

Van Dorn and his officers had good reason for optimism, especially before getting news of events at Leetown. They had seized the initiative and were pushing the Federals southward when nightfall intervened to block their sure advance. The troops who had taken Elkhorn Tavern were treated to captured foodstuffs and the rapid late-day forward thrust promised a good day ahead as one soldier noted:

The men were jovial and jubilant over their good fortune: the strong aromatic coffee [found at the tavern] gave forth its exhilarating [sic] and recuperative power; the rich viands delighted the palates of our grateful boys, renewing their worn frames and exhausted strength, and the nice delicacies crowned the whole with a luxurious finish that even an epicure would have enjoyed.<sup>17</sup>

The troops at Elkhorn Tavern, however, were the exception to the rule in the Confederate ranks. Most of the men spent a supperless night trying to stay warm near large bonfires in the below freezing temperatures.

All in all, the greycoats were feeling good about themselves. After establishing the necessary outposts, the men retired for the night. And despite heavy losses, morale was high, the men reflecting on their advanced position as they fell into an amorphous sleep, while other wounded men cried out in pain that bitterly cold night.

Things had not gone so well for the Confederates at Leetown. During McCulloch's countermarch down the Bentonville Detour, the Confederate commander turned southward down a lane branching off the Detour. Once on the Bentonville-Sugar Creek Road, which turned into Ford's Road to the east, the Confederates would be surprised by a Federal force. Unaware of the close proximity of the Federals, McCulloch decided on a three-wave march--Hébert's infantry, followed by McIntosh's cavalry, with Pike's Indian forces taking up the rear--in an attempt to lead his soldiers to Elkhorn Tavern. At about 11 a.m., McCulloch began his drive to the tavern when he heard the big guns blasting to the east near Van Dorn's position.<sup>18</sup>

In the meantime, Union Colonel Peter J. Osterhaus led his

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<sup>16</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 40.

<sup>17</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 41.

<sup>18</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 122.

demonstration force--the 1st, 4th, and 5th Missouri Cavalry and the 1st Missouri Flying Artillery, the 3rd Iowa Cavalry, the 36th Illinois Infantry, the 12th Missouri Infantry, the 4th Ohio Battery, the Independent Missouri Battery, and the 22nd Indiana Infantry--through Leetown. Fearing a direct assault on the Federal rear, Osterhaus ordered his battery to fire on the advancing greycoats. Federal cannons hurled deadly projectiles at the Confederates amidst the wild cheers of the advancing bluecoats. When the smoke settled, the Federals could see the greycoats scurrying for cover. The Federals had gained the advantage through the element of surprise which thrust the Confederates into disarray and broke their ranks, at least initially.

McIntosh and Pike attempted to reorganize their cavalry units in the wooded area north of the Sugar Creek-Bentonville Road. They then ordered a charge against the Federal cavalry under Colonel Cyrus Bussey. In the violent running battle that ensued the Federals retreated so rapidly that McIntosh's Texans were able to capture the three James rifles. In the meantime, Osterhaus ordered Colonel Nicholas Greusel to form a battle line with the 36th Illinois, the 12th Missouri, and the 22nd Indiana with support from the 4th Ohio Battery on the south side of the cornfields north of Leetown. Once the guns were in place, the artillerists opened fire on the advancing Confederates who halted in the face of flying shrapnel in the woods just north of Oberson's field. Still, McCulloch was confident that the Confederates would prevail, predicting that "In one hour they will be ours."<sup>19</sup>

At this point, McCulloch decided to reconnoiter his position on the battlefield before him. Never having donned a uniform in battle, the Confederate general was wearing a black velvet jacket, a narrow brimmed brown hat, and high boots; he would be an easily distinguishable target. With troops of the 16th Arkansas on his right flank and rear, he rode out to the edge of the forest to get a good view of the Federal position unaware of a group of skirmishers in Company B of the 36th Illinois who were kneeling behind a rail fence on the north edge of the cornfields, within shooting range. Not knowing he was in the Federals' sights, McCulloch rode even closer to the enemy's line. When he was about seventy yards away, the union captain of the company shouted, "Fire!" McCulloch had no chance. A bullet pierced his heart and he died instantly. The top Confederate commander at Leetown had been gunned down.<sup>20</sup> This unfortunate event portended a tragic conclusion for the greycoats at Leetown.

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<sup>19</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 109.

<sup>20</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 109-10.

In the fray that followed more bad news shook the Confederate ranks. During the heated confrontation that followed in the aftermath of McCulloch's death, a volley from the 36th Illinois near the center of the Federal line brought down Brigadier General James McIntosh. The result was a deadly shot that killed the general (see Fig. 3). News of his death sent a demoralizing sense of defeat through the Confederate ranks. Worse still, none of the regimental commanders took control of the situation to lead the dismayed Confederates to victory. Rather, the lackluster commanders withdrew to their respective units unable to coordinate an overall battle plan for the remainder of the fighting at Leetown.<sup>21</sup>

The result was devastating. Noticing the Rebel indecision, Colonel Greusel ordered the 36th Illinois to fix bayonets. The cheering, charging Yankees made a deadly organized advance that scattered the Confederate troops in the woods north of the cornfields. The greyclads gave way with little resistance, ending the battle in the western portion of the Leetown battlefield.

In the meantime, silence on the right gave Hébert the impression that McCulloch's advance had succeeded. With this in mind, he ordered his troops to advance into the thick underbrush of blackjack oak and sumac and fallen timbers only to find the artillery barrage too much to continue in the jungle-like conditions south of Little Mountain and east of Leetown Road in Elizabeth Morgan's woods. About the time McIntosh was killed, Hébert's troops of the 4th Arkansas and the sturdy 3rd Louisiana were separated by a crashing volley from the revolving rifles of the 37th and 59th Illinois. But the combat-ready Louisianans did not panic and were able to thwart the Federal onslaught in the end. After an hour or more of close-range combat, the Confederates pushed the Federals back in a spirited charge led by Hébert himself.

The Rebel charge repelled the Federals but at a heavy price. Several of the ranking Confederate officers were captured by a mounted patrol Sigel had sent out to ascertain Osterhaus' position. Among the prisoners were Colonel Hébert, Major William F. Tunnard and Captain John P. Vigilini of the 3rd Louisiana and Colonel H. B. Mitchell and an unidentified captain of the 14th Arkansas. In the counterattack, the Federals nearly encircled the disorganized Confederates. But hard fighting and a little luck allowed the greyclads to repulse the oncoming bluecoated infantry and cavalry. In the end, Union forces had won the field.

The remainder of the Confederate forces were not sure what was

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<sup>21</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge." 136.

happening with the breakdown of command. Because the Federals failed to pursue the retreating Rebels, Pike and his Indian units under Major Elias C. Boudinot made a final reconnaissance of Little Mountain only to see that it was clearly in the range of Federal artillery and not a good position to try to hold. Believing the situation futile, he recalled his troops who were joined by the Texans who had lost their commander (Colonel Hébert) and organized a march on the Bentonville Detour toward Cross Timber Hollow.

Symptomatic of the breakdown in the Confederate command was the case of Colonel Drew who did not realize that Pike had ordered a general retreat until hours later. Not knowing where his commander had gone, he ordered his Cherokee companies to retreat from the woods north of the battlefield and to head to Camp Stephens on Little Sugar Creek Road. Colonel Elkanah Greer, commander of the 3rd Texas Cavalry, also lost touch with the Confederate High Command and learned of McCulloch's and McIntosh's deaths through a chance meeting with a group of horsemen of McCulloch's staff. Greer decided to maintain his position west of Big Mountain to block a potential Federal advance up the Bentonville Detour; the Arkansas and Texas troops bivouaced for the night in a cornfield and on the northwest slope of the ridge to ward off the "chilling mountain air." Greer, however, changed his plans during the night, and after contact was made with Van Dorn, he was ordered to join the bulk of the Confederate force on Telegraph Road. For his part, Pike finally reached Van Dorn at nightfall with news of the Leetown debacle. The next day would determine the ultimate victor at Pea Ridge.

At the end of the first day of battle, General Curtis was satisfied with his left and center positions after receiving the good news about Leetown. He had even been able to reinforce Carr at the Elkhorn Tavern sector before the end of the day. During the night, Curtis ordered further deployment of reinforcements to back up Carr and Dodge. During the early morning darkness, Sigel and Asboth implored Curtis to call a "council of war." But Curtis wanted no part of it and intended to amass his forces on the western side of Ruddick's field. Dodge later learned of the attempt by the junior officers to convene and decided to approach Curtis to find out what the next day's plans were. Clearly, Dodge hoped that Sigel's less tired troops could take the front first both to bolster the Federal soldiers' morale and to make a quick show of force early on that might make the difference in winning the battle.

Other anxieties existed for the Federals. The Army of the Southwest no longer had an escape route to Missouri with the Confederates draped over Telegraph Road; the same highway was also their main access to their supply lines. Although Curtis

was optimistic, many of his troops were skeptical, especially the beaten up infantrymen of Carr's division.

During the night, the Confederates could hear the rumble of wagons, the barking of orders, and the movement of troops even though they could not see the enemy. They, on the other hand, were allowed to build fires which may have revealed too much to Curtis and his commanders. But Van Dorn had more pressing problems to worry about. The Commander of the Army of the West, in particular, was concerned about ammunition. For reasons that could not and cannot be explained, the Confederate ordnance wagons were still stationed at Camp Stephens with the commissary train. But Van Dorn did not learn of this until the following morning when it was too late; these vital supply wagons would never make it to the battle front. Furthermore, the Confederates were still without food and had little promise of a meal prior to the pivotal battle day to come. The early evening optimism had changed to dour cynicism as well. As one soldier wrote, "the night was one of deep anxiety, and many of us had gloomy forebodings for the coming day."<sup>22</sup>

The stillness of the early morning of Saturday, March 8, was broken with the unsettling sound of artillery fire. Davis' 2nd Illinois Light Battery opened fire on the Confederate right. The Rebels responded with their own artillery barrage from Tull's battery at the center just east of Telegraph Road. Initially, the Confederates gained the upper hand when infantrymen sent several volleys at the 22nd Indiana which was positioned in front of the Illinois battery. Sigel was shocked at these early developments because the artillery fire started before he had learned of Curtis's plans to initiate the battle and he had not positioned his men properly to reinforce the Indiana infantry. "The retreat was so sudden that the officers lost control of the situation, a number of men panicked....Things looked grim for the Federals."<sup>23</sup>

The Federals, however, recovered quickly from the first clash of the day. Sigel marched his men and batteries in a right wheeling movement on the left flank into a strategic position on Welfley's knoll overlooking the Confederate lines in the woods at the base of Big Mountain. On seeing this movement, Colonel Little called on Captain Good's six-gun Texas battery to send fire in the direction of the moving bluecoats. Although potentially deadly, Good's fire flew noisily over the target and was not very effective which allowed Asboth, Sigel, and Osterhaus to order a general advance on the Federal right.

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<sup>22</sup>Quoted from Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 215; also, see Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 215-17.

<sup>23</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 220-21.

The battle raged at this movement. And despite the overall ineffectiveness of the Confederate artillery barrage, it made a distinct impression on the troops of the 36th Illinois: "The fatal precision with which the enemy's shot came tearing through our ranks told us that the opposing batteries were not handled by novices in the art of war."<sup>24</sup> Perhaps a slight exaggeration, this reminiscence illustrates the intimidating nature of modern warfare.

Slowly, the Federal artillery made an impression and the Union forces began a general advance. Yankee artillery fire steadily increased and became more accurate during the nearly two hours of shelling after 9 a.m. One Confederate soldier remembered, "The roar of artillery, for several hours, was incessant, the balls from both sides passing a few feet over our heads."<sup>25</sup> At the same time, Union troops advanced on the seemingly impregnable Confederate position across Telegraph Road. Van Dorn soon turned gloomy, blaming the Federal advance on poorly placed artillery fire. His battery commanders responded to this criticism with fears of ultimate defeat if the ammunition was not soon replenished. Believing that the ordnance wagons were still miles away, Van Dorn grew darkly pensive. He had made a decision. At the height of the battle, sometime before noon, Van Dorn gave the drastic order to retreat from the battlefield. He then led a general withdrawal down the Huntsville Road to the east. In the meantime, he sent orders for his commanders, Little and Rosser, to hold their positions on the right as long as possible to salvage a desperate situation.

Colonel Little followed Van Dorn's orders to hold off the invading force as long as possible. Little soon feared an enveloping movement from his left when bluecoated skirmishers began to surface from the battle's thick layer of smoke. That heavy smoke, in fact, may have saved many Confederate lives as Curtis was unable to see the retreat to the east. As the morning turned into afternoon, Little's infantrymen steadily gave ground until they were forced back to Elkhorn Tavern where they joined in the general retreat with Price's and Greer's columns. Captain Emmett McDonald's gunners of the St. Louis Artillery stayed at the tavern until the last possible moment to protect the retiring troops' rear. Aside from three companies and a few stragglers, most of the retreating greycoats rushed down Huntsville Road. The unionists followed on the heels of the retreating foe. Davis' Division made it to Elkhorn Tavern first, set up a battery aimed at Huntsville Road, and then called the rolls. Sigel's troops arrived at

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<sup>24</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 226.

<sup>25</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 230.

the tavern moments later amidst the cheers of the victorious Yankees.

General Curtis, however, was not completely certain of the victory. At Elkhorn Tavern, he ordered the 5th Missouri Cavalry to pursue the retreating Rebels, not yet knowing that the bulk of Van Dorn's forces had gone east. Curtis was very distressed, in fact, when he learned that Sigel had followed a group of Confederates northward on Telegraph Road. Not until sometime just before 2 p.m. did Curtis learn that Van Dorn had escaped down Huntsville Road. By this time, he believed it to be too late to pursue the retiring enemy, especially with Sigel chasing an unknown quantity to the north. Having lost the opportunity to capture the Confederate Army, the Union commander of the Army of the Southwest decided to stay put and begin the process of recovery and reorganization. By nightfall, Curtis felt confident of the Union victory.

Van Dorn, on the other hand, continued to march well into the afternoon. Once across the White River, he gave the order to fall out so that the weary troops could rest. They bivouacked that depressing, sleeting night in the vicinity of Van Winkle's Mill. In the meantime, Van Dorn sent a company back to the battlefield to carry out the gruesome task of burial detail under a flag of truce.

The Federals remained encamped at the battlefield until March 12 when the malodorous conditions from the deadly battle forced the Federals to re-locate to Camp Stephens. As historian Edwin Bearss describes it: "The scenes following the terrible fighting were grim. For miles, the fields and woods were strewn with war's grim harvest. On the 7th, dry leaves had caught fire, adding to the smoke, flame, and confusion of battle. Spreading through the timber, the flames had burned and blackened the dead, and added to the tortures of the wounded."<sup>26</sup>

The description left by Union Captain Samuel P. Curtis of the 37th Illinois Volunteers illustrates the deadliness of the battle and the complexities of modern warfare. At the base of Pea Ridge in the broken cliffs, many Confederates had found refuge from the fighting in a place they believed to be especially protected. Huge building-size rock formations had fallen forward (in previous geologic time) and from the perspective of a soldier appeared to be excellent barriers to hide behind in face of heavy fire. Yet when the enemy shells and infantry fire began to rain down, the flying metal ricocheted off the open cliffs behind the unsuspecting

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<sup>26</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 314.

soldiers and cut them down; the shells' impact with the cliff walls also sent an explosion of splintered rock that delivered the fatal blow to the unfortunate butternuts trapped in what seemed like an impenetrable position. Captain Curtis wrote:

On the cliffs of Elkhorn [Big Mountain] lay many wounded rebels, helpless and suffering in the bushes; here one with a wound in the bowels, imploring every passer-by to put an end to his agony; there another, pale in rapidly approaching death, with an entire leg torn away by a cannon ball and the ragged, bloody stump dabbled in the dirt, yet, calmly smiling and thanking his late Union foe for the swallow of lukewarm water from the broken canteen picked up on the field of battle; here a corpse, with the head as neatly removed by a cannon ball as if done by the guillotine; there a shattered ghastly arm, grasping a bent and broken flint-lock; everywhere scattered blankets and homemade quilts and coverlets, and in the woods below and beyond, muskets, arms, dead and wounded rebels in the common costume of the country, home-spun 'butternut,' or the coarse, gray uniform of the Confederate soldiers.<sup>27</sup>

The Battle of Pea Ridge was one of the first of many horrific encounters between the North and South during America's Civil War. Up to the time of this dramatic Arkansas battle, America soldiers had had very little experience with such deadly warfare using the improved military technology of the day. Artillery was becoming more accurate, its intensity more obvious; people for a fifty-mile radius could hear the crashing barrages of March 7 and 8. Authors William Shea and Earl Hess describe it this way: "It was the most intense sustained artillery barrage ever to take place on the North American continent up to that time [in history]."<sup>28</sup> The result was devastation and death. As a result, nearly every building in the vicinity of the battlefield was turned into a temporary hospital, soldiers of both stripes lying next to each other in many instances. Elkhorn Tavern, for example, became a hospital for Confederates and Federals; sadly, it also served as a morgue, the dead "piled up like cord wood on the porch of the hotel."<sup>29</sup> The healing Rebels were sent to Fayetteville, the recovering Yankees were ordered to Cassville, Missouri.

It's the site of this incredible historical confrontation that

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<sup>27</sup>Quoted from Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 314-15.

<sup>28</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 236.

<sup>29</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 315.

Pea Ridge National Military Park occupies. The deadly fighting between two foes of a torn nation marked this as hallowed ground in the collective memory of Americans throughout the United States. Here one of the most important battles of the western theater of that dramatic and traumatic war was fought. Preservation of the battlefield reminds us of the horrors of war and the destruction that can be wrought by human beings when perhaps more rational thinking might have determined a more satisfactory outcome.

After camping the night of the 8th at Van Winkle's mill, Van Dorn ordered his men to disburse and to recongregate at Frog Bayou near Van Buren. The beaten warriors were on their own to forage for what food they could find. A cold rain descended on the area further adding misery to the bedraggled, gloomy soldiers. On the same day Curtis ordered a withdrawal from the Pea Ridge Battlefield, the last of the Confederates from the battle straggled into Frog Bayou. The casualties were rather high compared to earlier Civil War engagements though not as high as many of the major eastern battles. Curtis reported that of 10,500 men, 203 were killed, 980 wounded, and 201 missing, a loss of about 14 percent. On the other hand, Van Dorn's figures were not so exact and he gave conflicting reports. He initially reported 800 or 1,000 killed and wounded and 200 to 300 captured. Later, he claimed that the killed and wounded numbered 600 with the prisoners about 200. These are very inexact figures that seem low, especially considering that the Federals reported nearly 525 prisoners. Regardless, it seems clear that the Confederate army suffered more than the Federal army.<sup>30</sup>

In the aftermath of the battle, reflection suggested that there were several factors that weighed in favor of a Union victory. First, Curtis confided in Dodge that one of the keys to their victory had been the tenacity of Carr's Division the first day of fighting at Elkhorn Tavern. Outnumbered and outgunned, Carr's men staved off sure defeat. Second, the inability of the Confederates to amass their entire force at Cross Timber Hollow and the tavern altered the course of the battle. The weary condition of the secessionist soldiers combined with Dodge's blockade on the Bentonville Detour thwarted Van Dorn's strategy to envelope the Federals and attack their rear; perhaps the daring Confederate commander had overestimated the ability of his weary men to engage in an all-out confrontation.

The breakdown in the Confederate command at Leetown was a third reason for the Union victory. Once McCulloch and McIntosh were dead and Hébert captured, the junior officers

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<sup>30</sup>Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 316; Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 270.

fended for themselves despite having a numerical advantage. In the meantime, Price's inability to outflank the Federals on their right at Elkhorn Tavern further determined the outcome of the battle. And in the end, when the ammunition train failed to show up for the final day's fray, the South's fate was sealed, the North winning the day. Van Dorn was unable to control and administer his Army despite greater strength in numbers. As a result, he should take the bulk of the blame for the loss.

The Federal victory at Pea Ridge may have shortened the Civil War. No longer was the Union Army of the Southwest consumed with the pesky Confederate Army of the West. Missouri was safe from a Rebel takeover and, aside from guerilla forays against the unionists, was never threatened again in a major way. If Van Dorn's strategy to take St. Louis had materialized, clearly the western theater would have had a much different history. As it turned out, the Confederates had little chance of penetrating into the Upper Midwest and the Federals were free to begin their Tennessee campaign. Instead of an offensive war, the South was now relegated to a defensive strategy for the remainder of the bloody contest. This outcome may have saved many American lives in light of the fact that the Union won the war and reunited the divided nation in the end.<sup>31</sup>

Pea Ridge National Military Park stands as a monument to that great struggle in the western theater of the Civil War. Yet it would be nearly a hundred years after the battle before the national park would be authorized. In the meantime, veterans of the battle and local citizens made a concerted effort to recognize this hallowed ground by establishing monuments and lobbying for national park status. As we will see in the next chapter, this was a long fought battle itself that finally culminated in congressional approval for the military park in 1956.

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<sup>31</sup>See Bearss, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," 317; Brown, "Pea Ridge," 15-16; Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 307-19; for an assessment of Van Dorn's role in the battle, see Hartje, Van Dorn, 155-61.



## CHAPTER 2

### The History of the Efforts to Establish National Park Status for the Pea Ridge Battlefield

#### Introduction

Today Pea Ridge National Military Park is a popular national military park in the south-central United States. More than 110,000 visitors annually visit the hallowed ground of one of the Civil War's most decisive Trans-Mississippi battles.<sup>1</sup> Yet, access to this 4,300-acre historic site has not always been available to the public. Not until July 20, 1956 did President Dwight D. Eisenhower sign the bill that authorized the park. And then in March, 1960, the Arkansas Pea Ridge Park Commission deeded the historic lands to the National Park Service. Three years later the nation's twelfth national military park finally opened, 101 years after the North and the South had fought the famous battle.

For more than half a century, local citizens, politicians, and historians put forth their own battle to win park status for the battlefield. As early as 1887, local citizens established the first monument--to the Confederates--at the battlefield; Union and Confederate veterans returned two years later to erect another monument to both sides. In subsequent years--first in 1914, then again in 1924-1928, 1936, and 1939-1940--Arkansans made numerous efforts to establish a national military park. But before 1956, these attempts proved futile because other national battlefields took precedence over Pea Ridge and an intransigent Interior Department historically opposed the Pea Ridge park.<sup>2</sup>

The tide began to turn, however, when Conrad Wirth became the director of the National Park Service. Through his efforts, and lobbying Congress, the NPS's Mission 66 program was initiated in the mid-1950s. This plan called for the rehabilitation of already established national parks, and the creation of new sites deserving historic preservation. Congress also funded the Mission 66 program with an appropriation of \$1 billion over a ten-year period. With the approach of the 100-year anniversary of the Civil War, many patriotic Americans lobbied to use a portion of these funds to

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<sup>1</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 329-330; see Steve Adams, "Statement for Management," (PRNMP, July, 1992), appendices.

<sup>2</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 329; Arkansas Historical Quarterly 10:3 (Autumn 1951), 237.

gain recognition for battlefields not yet incorporated into the National Park System. One of those sites, of course, was the Pea Ridge Battlefield of Benton County, Arkansas.<sup>3</sup>

When historian Walter L. Brown's seminal essay, "Pea Ridge: Gettysburg of the West," appeared in the Spring 1956 issue of the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, local promoters were able to use the article to sway Congress to pass the act that authorized the establishment of Pea Ridge National Military Park.<sup>4</sup> The result was Report No. 2346, "PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, IN THE STATE OF ARKANSAS," in House Resolution 11611 which Eisenhower signed into law on July 20, 1956.<sup>5</sup> During the following four years, the state of Arkansas, under the guise of the Pea Ridge Battlefield Park Commission, acquired nearly every acre of the battlefield. In March of 1960, the state then deeded these historic lands to the federal government. This symbolic act and real transfer of land initiated the transformation of the battle site from a memorable reminder to local citizens of the Civil War to a national treasure to be visited by more than a million Americans from its opening in 1963 to 1970; more than 3.5 million have visited during the park's thirty-four year history. How Arkansans fought to achieve national military park status for the Pea Ridge Battlefield is the focus of this chapter.

## Memories and Monuments

For more than a generation after the Civil War, Americans had a difficult time dealing with the recent tragedy that had split the nation. This division was apparent in politics in the postwar era, for example, the Republicans waved the "bloody shirt" in the Democrats' faces at each new election. The healing was going to take some time.

By the late 1880s, many of the Civil War veterans and citizens living near battlefields began to express their concerns to recognize the hallowed battle grounds throughout the nation. Consequently, a grassroots preservation movement was initiated that resulted in the creation of the first four national military parks in the 1890s: Chickamauga, Gettysburg, Shiloh,

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<sup>3</sup>For an extended discussion of the Mission 66 program, see John Ise, Our National Park Policy: A Critical History (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1961) and Conrad Wirth, Parks, Politics, and the People (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1980).

<sup>4</sup>Brown, "Pea Ridge:" interview of Walter L. Brown by the author, March 29, 1996.

<sup>5</sup>See Report No. 2346, H.R. 11611, "PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, IN THE STATE OF ARKANSAS," 84th Cong., 2d sess., June 13, 1956.

and Vicksburg.<sup>6</sup> Federal legislation was passed to provide funding for these projects which set an important precedent for future battlefield preservation.

Originally, national military parks were within the jurisdiction of the United States Army because of their importance for military strategy and technology.<sup>7</sup> The battlefields' preservation, however, ultimately hinged on the commemoration of the lost soldiers and the hallowed ground they died on. Veterans and local citizens understood this qualification and were becoming more interested in establishing monuments and park-like atmospheres on the battlefields where they could visit and honor their fallen heroes. Likewise, by the 1880s and 1890s, many veterans were ready to return to the battle sites not only to remember one of the most, if not the most, dramatic events in their lives, but also to put an end to a difficult chapter in their collective experiences. In more modern parlance, they were ready to face their own demons and come to terms with their horrific memories and, in many cases, literally to "cry it out."<sup>8</sup>

For many veterans of the Pea Ridge campaign, the healing process began in 1887. On September 1 of that year, the first reunion was held by Confederate veterans and local citizens commemorating the events of March 7-8, 1862. With donations from the patriotic citizens of Benton County, the congregation erected a simple, yet striking monument to their dead. Located about 100 yards south of Elkhorn Tavern, the marble obelisk bears the names of three of the top Confederate commanders who were killed during the battle: McCulloch, McIntosh, and Slack. And on the southerners' marker, there was inscribed:

The graves of our dead with the grass overgrown,  
May yet form the footstool of Liberty's thrown.  
And each single wreck in the warpath of might,  
Shall yet be a rock in the temple of right.  
O give me the land with a grave in each spot,  
And names in the graves that shall not be forgot.  
Yes, give me the land of the wreck and the tomb;  
There's a grandeur in graves, there's a glory in doom.  
Oh give me a land where the ruins are spread,

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<sup>6</sup>See Ronald F. Lee, The Origins and Evolution of the National Park Idea (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of the Interior, NPS, 1973), 5-15.

<sup>7</sup>Ronald A. Foresta, America's National Parks and Their Keepers (Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future, 1984), 37-39.

<sup>8</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 328. The experience of veteran Asa Payne who visited Pea Ridge in 1911 is just such an example of a former soldier trying to come to terms with his Civil War memories.

And the living tread light on the hearts of the dead.  
Oh give me a land that is blest by the dust,  
And bright with deeds of downtrodden just.

This marker still stands as the first monument to the Battle of Pea Ridge.

Two years later, from September 3 to 9, 1889, a dual Blue-Gray reunion was held at the battle site. As part of the ceremony, the reunionists adopted a resolution acknowledging the defeat of the Confederacy and the restoration of the Union, a difficult pronouncement to swallow for many of the rebel veterans; to the dismay of some of the northerners in attendance, one southern speaker even suggested that the battle be renewed. The "minor controversy" was peacefully settled, however, and the party moved on to the business at hand.<sup>9</sup>

The 1889 monument was titled, "A Reunited Soldierly," in honor of both sides in the war. The white marble shaft was emplaced near the earlier monument where they both remain today. Three stanzas of verse decorate the plain, yet touching marker:

Spirit of eternal light,  
Keep silent vigil o'er the brave,  
The untarnished Blue,  
The unsullied Gray,  
In peace and love unite.

Proud heroes have fallen,  
And over their grave,  
Our hearts are united.

Our country to save,  
Over the dead the living bend,  
And up to their God their voices send.  
That in Liberty's Crown of eternity's day,  
The Blue and the Gray.

This short verse clearly illustrates the veterans' desires to experience a healing process, a process that helped them to come to terms with the bloody conflict that they and their nation went through in the 1860s.

Confederate veterans made annual visits to the battle site in subsequent years, whereas Union veterans appeared from time to time to make their peace as well. One such ex-soldier was Jacob Platt who had served as a lieutenant in the 9th Iowa

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<sup>9</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 328; Alaric Parrish, "Pea Ridge National Military Park Administrative History," (Santa Fe: Southwest Regional Office, NPS Library), 6-7.

Infantry. He came to Pea Ridge in 1904 to reconcile himself to what had happened more than forty years earlier. It was not an easy task, he recalled: "Those terrible scenes and incidents [of the battle] are written on the pages of my memory as though graven with the pen of fire."<sup>10</sup> Asa Payne who served in the 1st Missouri Brigade (Confederate) visited in 1911 and remembered that the sight of the battlefield "unleashed a flood of memories and melancholy thoughts."<sup>11</sup> For many of the veterans, the healing took the rest of their lives.

#### Seeking Congressional Approval For a National Military Park

Arkansas Third District Congressman Samuel W. Peel made the first attempt to acquire the battlefield for preservation. From a well-established and well-connected Benton County family, Peel had served in the Confederate Army. On July 24, 1890, Peel introduced "six petitions of 402 citizens of Arkansas, asking an appropriation to purchase Pea Ridge battle-ground--to the Committee of Military Affairs."<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, the bill failed in the House of Representatives.

The local desire to create a national park or monument continued to burn in Benton County, and Northwest Arkansas in general. This passion partly stemmed from Peel's attempts to get federal legislation passed, from the veterans' reunions, and from local citizens dogged persistence. But there were other reasons that inspired action. As early as 1867, for example, the federal government established a small cemetery in Fayetteville where 110 fallen soldiers of the Pea Ridge encounter were buried. In 1872, the Southern Memorial Association of Fayetteville created a cemetery for additional Confederate soldiers on a hill east of that town. These grave sites served as tangible reminders to Arkansans of the Civil War battle.

The Pea Ridge battle also became part of the popular legend and lore of the Civil War. In 1894, Thomas Knox published a novel, The Lost Army, which he based on war correspondents' experiences in Missouri and Arkansas. Likewise, Herman Melville of Moby Dick fame also commemorated the battle with

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<sup>10</sup>Quoted from Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 328. Platt's memoirs are located in the Platt Memoirs, Pea Ridge National Military Park.

<sup>11</sup>Quoted from Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 328. This comes from Payne's account of the battle, "The Battle of Pea Ridge," Pea Ridge Military Park.

<sup>12</sup>See the Congressional Record, 51st Cong., 1st sess., volume 21, (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1890), 7687.

an "Inscription for the Graves at Pea Ridge, Arkansas." Hunt P. Wilson, a veteran of Guibor's Missouri Battery, produced one of the most memorable paintings of the battle. In the centerpiece, he depicts the final Union assault on Elkhorn Tavern on March 8 from the Confederates' perspective, showing the realistic images of the brutality of the battle.<sup>13</sup> These written and visual depictions along with battle songs and poetry etched the Battle of Pea Ridge into the popular imagination for future generations of Arkansans who passed on these stories for years to come.

A renewed attempt to establish a national military park at Pea Ridge surfaced again in 1914. Yet in that year, very little was accomplished and the hopes for the park soon dissipated. After a decade of little action, Congressman John N. Tillman of the 3rd District in Arkansas reintroduced legislation to authorize the establishment of a national military park. He introduced no fewer than seven bills in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1924 to 1927.

The Pea Ridge National Park Association was also founded during these years. Its officers included Civil War veteran Captain C. L. Pickens as President, indefatigable lobbyist Roland D. Judd, the Executive Secretary, and other notable civic leaders: J. M. Putman, Mrs. E. R. Berry, Claude Duty, and J. S. Elder. Judd, in particular, facilitated the Congressman's efforts, distributing information about the proposed park and its history in Congress. Tillman, like many other Benton County citizens, hoped that times had changed and that the funds were available for the proposed project.

Important legal precedents and federal legislation, in the meantime, had been initiated to give Benton County hopefuls greater optimism. In 1896, for example, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a case involving the Gettysburg National Military Park, had ruled in favor of eminent domain--governmental acquisition of coveted lands for historic preservation (from an 1888 law). Congress then passed the Antiquities Act of 1906 which authorized the creation of national monuments and allowed the federal government to accept private donations of land that had historic significance.<sup>14</sup> Finally, in 1916 Congress created the National Park Service which further enticed battlefield preservationists to fight for their site's recognition as a monument.

In 1924, Congressman Tillman introduced two bills that called

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<sup>13</sup>Shea & Hess, Pea Ridge, 322-26. Douglas C. Jones also wrote a fictional account of Pea Ridge in 1980, see his Elkhorn Tavern.

<sup>14</sup>See Hal Rothman, America's National Monuments, The Politics of Preservation (Lawrence: Univ. Press of Kansas, 1989) for a discussion of the Antiquities Act and its importance for monument preservation.

"To establish the Peel National Park at the Pea Ridge battle field in Benton County, Arkansas"--the first on March 27, the second on April 7. The bill said that a "tract of land" where the Battle of Pea Ridge was fought should be "determined by the Secretary of the Interior...by purchase or condemnation or otherwise...[to] be perpetually dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasure ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States, to be known by the name of Peel National Park, named for Colonel Samuel W. Peel, ex-Member of Congress, and an honored citizen of the county in which this important battle field is located."<sup>15</sup> The bill also asked for an appropriation of \$50,000 to initiate creation of the national park. Both bills failed in 1924.

Tillman proved persistent and reintroduced bills in 1925, 1926, and 1927. The 1925 bill was nearly identical to the 1924 one with the exception of the name which was no longer the Peel National Park. Rather he called for the establishment of a "national military park at and near Pea Ridge, Arkansas." The 1926 and 1927 bills were also more elaborate than the earlier ones. Tillman, for example, called for a park "to mark and preserve for historical purposes the breastworks, earthworks, gun emplacements, walls, or other defenses or shelters used by the armies in said battle, so far as the marking and preservation of the same are practicable, the land herein authorized to be acquired...the land necessary for the park of two hundred and forty acres on or near" the battlefield.<sup>16</sup> The appeal was made to the Secretary of War in this bill rather than the Secretary of the Interior because national military parks were still under the jurisdiction of the War Department. The bill then authorized "condemnation proceedings," "donations," "gifts," and "leases" for acquisition of the necessary acreage for the park. The bill also called for a superintendent to maintain the park and an initial appropriation of \$50,000.

Roland Judd, executive secretary of the Pea Ridge National Park Association, headed the lobbying efforts to gain congressional passage of the national military park. Judd sent a historical pamphlet and the bill to members of the House of Representatives and the Senate asking for support. Texas House Rep. Harry M. Wurzbach who was serving as Chair of the Sub-Committee on Military Affairs in the House was one of the first legislators to be contacted. On receipt of the Pea Ridge information, Wurzbach returned word that he would give Tillman's bill a fair hearing: "Congressman Tillman is a very

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<sup>15</sup>See H.R. 8265, "A Bill To Establish the Peel National Park at the Pea Ridge battle field in Benton County, Arkansas," 68th Cong., 1st sess., 1-2.

<sup>16</sup>See H.R. 9635, "A Bill To establish a national military park at and near Pea Ridge, Arkansas, and to mark and preserve historical points connected with the battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas," 69th Cong., 1st sess., 1-8.

good friend of mine and I will be glad to give him a hearing before the Sub-Committee....I also will be glad to hear any other witnesses that may desire an opportunity to appear...."<sup>17</sup>

Tillman, Judd, and others were encouraged that the bill would pass after receiving supportive letters from numerous Congressmen, especially from Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. The fact that many of the Pea Ridge Battle veterans were from these states is no surprise. Oklahoma Congressman C. D. Carter wrote on February 1, 1926 that the Pea Ridge park bill "appeals to me quite strongly for the reason that my Father was a Captain in the Army and engaged in this conflict...and [I] will be glad to do anything I can to help him with the Bill."<sup>18</sup> Congressmen from Ohio, Mississippi, Alabama, Kansas, Tennessee, Georgia, Utah, North Dakota, Idaho, Missouri, and New York also showed support for the park. Among this group were distinguished Congressmen Reed Smoot of Utah and William Borah of Idaho.

Tillman was admired among the Congressmen, many of whom referred to his gentlemanly and honorable character. Congressman Tilman B. Parks, 7th Dist. Representative from Arkansas, lauded Tillman the most, while also philosophizing about the possibility of the bill passing in Congress:

Replying [to Judd's information packet] I desire to say that it will be a great pleasure to me to assist Judge Tillman in his effort to make a national park of this great battle field. However, I desire to say that this administration [Coolidge] is little inclined to give recognition to requests coming from the South, especially with reference to the Civil War. However, Judge Tillman is recognized by both the Democrats and the Republicans as being a man of sound judgment and extreme fairness and I believe that if there is a single Democrat in this Congress who can get this legislation through it is Judge Tillman.<sup>19</sup>

In the end, Tillman's reputation alone could not sway Congress

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<sup>17</sup>Letter of Harry M. Wurzbach to Roland D. Judd, January 18, 1926, 1, in Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP. Roland D. Judd donated his Pea Ridge papers to the Park in August-September, 1966 through David L. Hyde, the Park historian at the time.

<sup>18</sup>Letter Oklahoma Congressman C. D. Carter to Roland Judd, February 1, 1926, 1, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

<sup>19</sup>Letter Arkansas House Rep. Tilman B. Parks, 7th Dist., to Roland D. Judd, January 25, 1926, 1, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

to pass the Pea Ridge National Military Park bill.

In late January, Tillman assured Judd that the bill had a good chance to pass. The 3rd District Congressman was optimistic that the bill would do well in Wurzbach's committee. "He and I are the best of friends," Tillman insured Judd, "...and I feel sure that he is inclined to want to recommend my bill..."<sup>20</sup> As the day for the Military Affairs Committee recommendation approached, Tillman stepped up his efforts for a favorable decision on the bill. "I am doing everything in my power to get a favorable report on the Pea Ridge Park proposition," he wrote Judd in early February, "and am appealing to my friends and associates [in Congress] to help us out. It is by no means an easy proposition but I am going to have that Park or know the reason why."<sup>21</sup>

On February 22, Tillman argued the Pea Ridge park case before the Military Affairs Committee, telegraphing Judd later in the day that "THIS SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY ENDORSED SAME [the bill] WITH AMENDMENTS AND WILL SO REPORT TO FULL COMMITTEE."<sup>22</sup> As late as March 23, Tillman wrote to Judd that he was "very sanguine about getting a favorable report on the bill, but they have not yet passed on the sub-committees favorable report. I am doing everything that a mortal can do for this measure and am perhaps more anxious to get it through than any man living." But the bill was just one of "more than a thousand important measures" the committee was reviewing and "it is not as easy as it looks to get them to concentrate their minds on any one bill."<sup>23</sup> Regardless, he would continue the good fight.

In the end, the bill failed in April, 1926. Tillman was not one to give in easily, however. In May, the congressman introduced H.R. 9636, "An Act To provide for the inspection of the battle field of Pea Ridge." Perhaps a commission, Tillman conjectured, could examine the grounds and, therefore, set in motion steps toward formation of the national military park. The bill called for the Secretary of War to appoint a three-man committee made up of a commissioned officer of the Corps of Engineers and two veterans of the Civil War who served "honorably"--one from the Union and one from the Confederacy. The bill also requested that each appointee be familiar with

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<sup>20</sup>Letter John N. Tillman to Roland D. Judd, January 25, 1926, 1, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

<sup>21</sup>Letter John N. Tillman to Roland D. Judd, February 1, 1926, 1, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

<sup>22</sup>Western Union Telegram, John N. Tillman to Roland D. Judd, February 22, 1926, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

<sup>23</sup>Letter John N. Tillman to Roland D. Judd, March 23, 1926, 1, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

the battlefield landscape and the history of the battle.<sup>24</sup> A \$2,000 appropriation was included for the inspection. The House and Senate passed the bill which was approved on June 9, 1926.

The inspection of Pea Ridge Battlefield was carried out by C. L. Pickens (Confederacy), Evans S. Morgan (Union), and Donald H. Connolly (Corps). Connolly, a Major in the Corps of Engineers, chaired the commission which placed Pea Ridge in Class IIB, the lowest rank for a military site, with recommendation for a monument on one acre of land with an appropriation of \$30,000, initially, and \$250 thereafter, annually. In that same report, an example of a Class I site was the Saratoga Battlefield; an example of a Class IIA site was Bull Run, Virginia. Other Class IIB sites, like Pea Ridge, were Appomattox Court House, Virginia; Cowpens, South Carolina; and Wilson's Creek, Missouri.<sup>25</sup> After surveying the battlefield, Maj. Connolly gave Roland Judd little hope for the establishment of a park. In correspondence to Judd, the engineer warned "that it is not at all probable the Battlefield Commission would recommend the establishment of a park of that area [Pea Ridge Battlefield] at this time [September, 1926]...." The War Department engineer, however, did not extinguish all hope for a park and even suggested that "it might become the ultimate object."<sup>26</sup>

Despite the mixed report, the inspection provided a precedent for legislative action in the case of Pea Ridge which was competing with many other worthy sites during this time. The study also provided a solid foundation for Arkansans to build on in the fight for park status.

Tillman reintroduced the Pea Ridge park bill in the 70th Congress in December, 1927, but it failed again. Another bill was introduced by Tillman's replacement in the House, Congressman Fuller, in February, 1930, "To provide for the commemoration of the Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas." It called for a \$30,000 appropriation to acquire one acre of land to build a monument, its maintenance not to exceed \$250 annually. It failed as did another bill introduced by Congressman Hill of Alabama.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>House Resolution 9636, Report No. 782, "An Act To provide for the inspection of the battle field of Pea Ridge," 89th Cong., 1st sess., pp. 1-2.

<sup>25</sup>Senate, Doc. No. 187, "Study of Battle Fields in the United States for Commemorative Purposes, Communication from THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITES STATES," 70th Cong., 2d sess., pp.3-9.

<sup>26</sup>Letter Donald H. Connolly to Roland D. Judd, September 30, 1926, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

<sup>27</sup>See House Resolution 9600, "A Bill To provide for the commemoration of the Battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas," 71st Cong., 2d sess., 1-2; House Resolution 11489, Report No. 1525, "A Bill To provide for the commemoration of certain military historic events, and for other purposes," 71st Cong., 2d sess., p. 7.

These setbacks did not interfere with the veterans' last official reunion in May, 1928. As early as October, 1927, Capt. C. L. Pickens resided over the preliminary meeting to plan for the final reunion of the Civil War veterans. Major A. E. Gage of the Federal Army was chosen to reside over the spring ceremony, and Capt. Pickens hoped to convince Secretary of War Dwight F. Davis to come to the august occasion. Congressman Tillman and other notable Northwest Arkansans were to be on hand as well.

Both northerners and southerners realized the societal value of a national military park. A letter of 1926, although predating the final reunion by eighteen months, reveals the special bonds that had developed among long-time Civil War veterans. Written by P. Woodring of Waterloo, Iowa, to a "Comrade Sykes"<sup>28</sup> of Bentonville, the letter illustrates the mending of former enemies' souls, spirits that were reunited to memorialize and rationalize a shared experience. Woodring thanked Sykes for his assistance during his family's visit to Bentonville and the battlefield. But more than the southerner's hospitality, Woodring appreciated Sykes' spirituality and realized that they were no longer enemies. Sykes' prayer at the 1926 reunion at Elkhorn Tavern, in particular, had moved Woodring. "It [the prayer] tells me you love and Worship the Same God & Father--and Son--that we also love and Worship. How wonderful it all seems that you and I were enemies and would have thought it honorable to have killed one another 64 years ago--and now...we rejoice that we did not succeed in what we then strove to do."<sup>29</sup> In surviving, these veterans came to realize that death in war must be celebrated, but that its ultimate purpose was to perpetuate human life and America ideals. And for them, the creation of the park would have gone a long way toward memorializing their experiences as well as the conscience of a nation.

The great depth of the personal and community retrospection of the Civil War in the 1920s spawned from the realization that there were very few veterans alive to recount, firsthand, America's most celebrated war. Reflecting on the 1927 Pea Ridge reunion, a Southwest-Times Record reporter printed what were probably the sentiments of the nation, when he wrote:

When the survivors of one of the most decisive battles of the Civil War journey half way across the United States to dedicate the hallowed spot

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<sup>28</sup>"Comrad Sykes" was probably J. Wade Sykes, first mayor of Rogers, and teacher, farmer, minister. He owned the original lands of Rogers and served in the Civil War in the Confederacy. See, Rogers Daily News, April 9, 1962.

<sup>29</sup>Letter P. Woodring to Comrad Sykes, December 3, 1926, Roland D. Judd Papers File, PRNMP.

as a memorial to the more than 2,500 Americans who made the supreme sacrifice for their country as they saw the right in those three days in March, 65 years ago, and, which one day may be the site of a national memorial military park, they concede that that will be honor enough.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the disappointments of 1926, when Congress failed to pass the Pea Ridge park bill, the Civil War veterans were not going to allow the battle and the site it took place on to go unnoticed.

In May, 1928, the last official reunion of the Civil War veterans took place amid reminiscences of a monumental historical event. Major Gage made his speech, the veterans told of their heroism and fears, and the local community supported their collective remembrances with ceremonial psalms, songs, and floral arrangements. There must have been an air of anxious finality, however, because this would mark the last official reunion of the veterans of the Battle of Pea Ridge. First Arkansas cavalryman A. O. Oakes, 85, of Hiwassee came as did J. W. Milott, 84, of the 53rd Indiana infantry. J. J. Park, 85, of Washburn, Missouri and a former Arkansas infantryman as well as R. Hall Patterson, 86, of Pea Ridge attended the ceremonies. The list of returning veterans revealed an average age of more than eighty-five, a time in life for reminiscence and resolution.

Those veterans who made it to the dedication lamented the recent loss of a former comrade. He was Julius Heidenreich. During the Battle of Pea Ridge, Heidenreich served in the 59th Illinois Infantry. During the night of March 6, 1862, he was detailed to help build a defensive breastwork at Leetown when suddenly he and his comrades "saw soldiers partially concealed by a scrub oak thicket. They displayed the Stars and Stripes, but we suspected them." His troop was ordered to advance but not to fire. When the bluecoats realized that the soldiers were Confederate, they fired on them. In that first Confederate volley, Heidenreich was hit:

I fell in the first volley. One shot went through my forehead, two others which I still carry through my right arm and shoulder, another through my left leg and a fifth through my left side and the sixth struck a needlecase and a tintype that I carried over my right breast....<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>"Blue and Gray..." Southwest-Times Record, October 22, 1927.

<sup>31</sup>"Veteran who Visited Here Dies in Chicago." Rogers Daily News, July 6, 1927.

Heidenreich lay motionless in that spot until a fellow soldier placed him in a makeshift hospital, a wagon, where he lay for the next thirteen days. He was said to have heard the last words of General McCulloch when he was mortally wounded the following day. Later he recounted McCulloch's last utterances which were "words of encouragement to his soldiers but not 'in Sunday School' language."<sup>32</sup> In 1926, Heidenreich, with his two daughters by his side, made his final journey to the battlefield. He, like so many of his comrades, would never witness the creation of the national military park despite their concerted efforts to memorialize one of the West's most important Civil War battles.

#### Congressman Clyde T. Ellis Works for National Park Status

The frustrations would continue in the 1930s despite continued efforts by local citizens. During the Depression years, the Pea Ridge National Park Association (PRNPA) did win strong support from Governor Charles H. Brough who began a funding drive in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri to match federal aid to purchase the battlefield lands.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, "Mr. Rural Electrification," state Senator Clyde T. Ellis, who would later become the 3rd District Congressman, joined the association's crusade for a park. In the end, however, the times were too tough and the region's citizens too consumed by the Great Depression to contribute enough donations to qualify for federal support.

Roland Judd also continued efforts to promote the park. In 1936, during the centennial celebration of Arkansas statehood and the founding of Benton County, Judge Judd led a tour of the Pea Ridge Battlefield. Several locals volunteered to impersonate important men of the 1862 battle. The Benton County school district was encouraged to feature local history, including special emphasis on the battle, and the county's teachers and students were expected to attend the historical ceremonies. Dick Rice of Miami, Oklahoma opened his local museum known as "The Castle" to commemorate the battle and general history of the county.<sup>34</sup> Photographs in the Joplin Globe illustrated the Elkhorn Tavern and other historic buildings, the portraits of important Civil War commanders, a bronze plaque titled, "BATTLEFIELD OF PEA

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<sup>32</sup>"Blue and Gray..." Southwest-Times Record, October 22, 1927.

<sup>33</sup>Claire N. Moody, "Second Battle of Pea Ridge," in "Sunday Magazine," Arkansas Gazette February 24, 1957.

<sup>34</sup>Pea Ridge Battle of the Civil War Figures in Benton County's Centennial, Pageant on Battlefield Near Bentonville, Ark., Will See Great Solers of North and South Impersonated by Citizens of County," Joplin Globe, September 27, 1936.

RIDGE," and a group picture of an earlier reunion at the battlefield.

This centennial celebration surely inspired Clyde T. Ellis who would become an important player in the efforts to establish a national military park at Pea Ridge. In 1939, Ellis was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and while in that office, he made a concerted effort to attain federal approval for a national military park. He and other local citizens interested in achieving park status had good reason for optimism. First, in 1930 the National Park Service (NPS) created the Yorktown Battlefield Monument, initiating the NPS's "historic preservation wing." President Franklin D. Roosevelt followed this example in 1933, signing Executive Order 6166 placing Civil War battlefields under National Park Service management. Congress then passed the Historic Sites Act of 1935, which not only transferred all the national military parks to the NPS, but also assigned the agency broader historic powers and duties to preserve and to interpret historic and archeological sites and buildings in the United States.<sup>35</sup> Congressman Ellis had these new provisions in mind when he fought in Congress from 1939 to 1941 to pass the bill to create the Pea Ridge National Military Park.

Ellis experienced the legend and lore of the Pea Ridge Battle firsthand. "I grew up on the edge of the Battlefield," he once wrote, "and I am fairly well familiar with it."<sup>36</sup> Because of this interest, Ellis diligently worked on the plans to achieve NPS approval for a national military park as early as March, 1939, only a few weeks after taking office. Local citizens appreciated his efforts as well. Charles Hays, secretary of the Rogers Chamber of Commerce, for example, wrote to Ellis in Washington, D.C. on March 20 thanking the congressman for his "fine work for the development of the Battlefield" at Pea Ridge: "we want you to know that your efforts are greatly appreciated."<sup>37</sup>

Ellis understood that it would be difficult to achieve park status because the state did not yet own any of the lands of the battlefield. Consequently, he knew it would take patience to achieve the goals of Northwest Arkansas. As a result, he tried to accelerate the process by attempting and then getting aid from New Deal agencies. His first thought was to approach

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<sup>35</sup>Foresta, America's National Parks, 40-42, 130-32.

<sup>36</sup>Letter Clyde T. Ellis to Walter Coleman, superintendent of Vicksburg National Military Park, July 29, 1939, p. 1, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>37</sup>Letter Charles Hays to Clyde Ellis, March 20, 1939, p. 1, located in the Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

Civilian Conservation Corps officials about developing a camp near the battle site "but was told that it could be done only if a substantial part of the area were publicly owned" even though a CCC camp was in close proximity at the time at Devil's Den State Park; later he would get assistance from the Works Progress Administration (WPA).<sup>38</sup>

Despite the CCC's refusal to help, Ellis went forward with his plans for a park and repeatedly contacted the NPS for support. On March 31, Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, responded to Ellis' inquiries, informing the congressman that he and R. F. Lee were examining historical materials on Pea Ridge to determine its significance to U.S. military history and whether it was worthy of park status.<sup>39</sup> In addition, Cammerer informed Ellis that the research materials were being filed in the Branch of Historic Sites in the NPS.

National Park Service officials chose Walter Coleman, superintendent of Vicksburg National Military Park, to do a "Report of the Battle of Pea Ridge" to determine its merit as a national military park site. Three weeks before Coleman's investigation of the battlefield, Ellis sent a letter to Charles Hays encouraging the Rogers Chamber of Commerce secretary to "make arrangements for some kind of small reception" for the Vicksburg superintendent. "We want to impress him with the fact that we are enthusiastic." Yet, Ellis was somewhat guarded knowing the precariousness of the project: "Frankly, I don't think it is a good idea to stir up too much enthusiasm [in the local press] over the development at this [early] stage of the game."<sup>40</sup>

Ellis' guarded comment, in the end, would be well taken. Coleman's report proved to be less than enthusiastic. In the first ten-and-a-half pages of the report, Coleman described the Battle of Pea Ridge. Nothing about the battle synopsis, except his overestimation of General Van Dorn's skill as a commander, stands out in this section of the report. In the final three pages, however, Coleman gives a lukewarm recommendation for establishment of a national military park. The first two pages of the final assessment simply describe the potential for the development of a park, the area's accessibility for placing markers, and the general conditions

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<sup>38</sup>Washington, D.C. March 16 [1939]," probably a new release, located in the Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>39</sup>Letter Arno B. Cammerer, Director of the NPS, to Clyde Ellis, House of Representatives, March 31, 1939, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>40</sup>Letter Clyde Ellis to Chas. Hays, August 5, 1939, p. 1, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

of the lands on the battle site. He stated that "the land is intensively cultivated and forest conditions while somewhat changed [from the time of the battle], do not present a major problem."<sup>41</sup> Coleman did give Ellis and the local citizens credit for their enthusiasm:

it appears that local people stand ready to assist in every possible way with the development of the area. They do not expect the Federal government to purchase the land, but on the other hand they have expressed the belief that the areas...could be acquired locally and turned over to the Federal government.<sup>42</sup>

Coleman then followed this comment with a statement that appears to affirm the locals' wishes for a park by suggesting that a staff of "two or three persons...with a relatively small museum and perhaps a lookout tower" could administer a national military park.

In the end, however, Coleman made less-than-optimistic statements that must have had a devastating effect on the chances for the park. "The importance of the Battle of Pea Ridge in American history," he wrote on page thirteen of the report, "is certainly not of major rank. It is my belief that there are several other areas of equal, if not greater importance, that have not been acquired." He then recommended that a map of the area "be prepared showing the present condition and relation to that of the war-time period." In the final analysis, on the other hand, Coleman wrote that "I do not feel, however, that this step [making the map] would be justified until the relative importance of the area is considered and until it is determined whether or not its acquisition by the National Park Service is desirable."

The final blow came in an April 12, 1940 letter from A. J. Wirtz, undersecretary of the Department of the Interior, to Congressman Ellis. Wirtz reported that Coleman's report had been submitted to an Advisory Board which carefully considered the Pea Ridge site for park status: "It was recognized that the battle had a considerable influence on the course of the struggle for control of the important border state of Missouri and was an interesting engagement to the military student and to the region." But, the Board "then concluded that the site was not relatively as important as other areas representative of the War Between the States already included in the National Park System...[and] was not an eligible site within the scope

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<sup>41</sup>Walter Coleman, "Report of the Battle of Pea Ridge," p. 11, for the National Park Service, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 12-13.

of the Historic Sites Act." The undersecretary then suggested to Ellis that the states of Missouri and Arkansas cooperate in a joint effort to develop the Pea Ridge Battlefield.<sup>43</sup> With this news, Ellis, local citizens, and members of the Pea Ridge National Park Association were deeply disappointed. Despite this setback, however, Ellis made further efforts that laid the groundwork for future efforts. He also followed up on the advise of Arthur. E. Demaray, Acting Director of the NPS.

In a January 8, 1941 letter to Ellis, Demaray enclosed two drawings of King's Mountain National Military Park as a model for a similar map of the Pea Ridge Battlefield site. In addition, Demaray suggested that Ellis contact the regional Works Progress Administration office to get assistance in constructing a monument at the site.<sup>44</sup>

Ellis also took the NPS Board's advice to work with the state of Arkansas on the project. The Congressman promptly contacted the local branch of the WPA. In a letter to Floyd Sharp, Director of the Arkansas State WPA, Ellis made several suggestions for creation of a monument at the battlefield. He suggested that maps be drawn of the area like the ones he included in the letter of the King's Mountain Monument, to serve as blueprints for the Pea Ridge site. The Arkansas congressman then asked Sharp to work to get sponsorship from the State Park Commission. "But even if we fail to get their sponsorship or an appropriation," Ellis wrote to the state WPA director, "we can get the land, have it dedicated to the Park Commission, have them accept it, then we can get the County or some other organization to be the sponsor. And if necessary we can raise the funds by private subscription."<sup>45</sup> These plans, although not realized, helped to set the proper agenda for the future creation of the park.

The WPA agreed to conduct a "Report of Investigation of the Pea Ridge Battle Field, Benton County, Arkansas." Under the direction of Walter Metschke, District Landscape Architect for the WPA, Rex C. Conner, Assistant Landscape Architect of the NPS, surveyed the Pea Ridge Battlefield. The April 1941 report assessed the site and made important recommendations for preservation, suggestions that would make it much easier for future achievement of park status. There were three goals

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<sup>43</sup>Letter A.J. Wirtz, undersecretary of the Department of the Interior, to Clyde Ellis, April 12, 1940, pp. 1-2, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>44</sup>Letter A.E. Demaray, Acting Director of the NPS, to Clyde Ellis, January 8, 1941, p. 1, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>45</sup>Letter Clyde Ellis to Floyd Sharp, Director Arkansas State Works Projects Administration, January 21, 1941, p. 1, located in Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

for the survey: 1) to determine the existing condition of the battlefield, 2) to appraise the educational, historical, and recreational possibilities of the area, and 3) to determine the appropriate type of preservation, restoration, and development.

Conner concluded that even though the old Telegraph Road (also called Wire Road) was "rough at present," it could be improved and put in "good condition with little work."<sup>46</sup> He also revealed that two maps were available that "show the locations of the roads, cultivated land, wooded land, buildings, and other land marks at the time the battle was fought." Bvt. Brig. General C. B. Comstock drew one of these maps that was "apparently filed with the Office of the Chief Engineer U.S. Army September 11, 1865;" the Comstock map illustrates the positions of the Union and the Confederate troops during the battle. Major Donald H. Connolly of the U.S. Corps of Engineers "stationed at Memphis, Tennessee about 1926...presumably filed [the other map] with that department."<sup>47</sup>

Conner determined that Elkhorn Tavern was still standing on its original foundation and had its original chimney despite having been rebuilt after bushwackers burned it during the Civil War. Leetown, the assistant landscape architect reported, "is now reduced to one remaining structure [Mayfield House] which originally was a two story colonial type building housing a store on the first floor and a Masonic Hall on the second floor." Pratt's Store "was not located during this investigation." Conner also commented that relics were available at Elkhorn Tavern and Rice's museum, things such as "coins, shells, guns, saddles, and other equipment found on the battlefield" as well as other period pieces like "typewriters, spinning wheels, early furniture, and arrowheads."<sup>48</sup>

Other distinctive reminders of the battle were apparent as well. "Faint signs of trenches and fortifications are still to be found in some parts of the area. Several burying grounds are known to be located on the battlefield..." There were also a few "worm type rail" fences in place and one picket fence in front of Elkhorn Tavern. The vegetative terrain was a mixture of farmland and forest: "At present, the valley is largely in cultivation with occasional [sic] patches of timber, while the ridge and Little Round Mountain

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<sup>46</sup>Rex C. Conner, "Report of Investigation of the Pea Ridge Battle Field, Benton County, Arkansas, April 8, 1941," p. 1, located in Clyde T. Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

are largely covered with small oak and hickory timber ranging up to 12" to 16" in diameter."<sup>49</sup>

In the conclusion, "PRESENT RECOMMENDED PLANNING," Conner suggested the following nine recommendations to establish a plan for preservation:

1. that the historic and educational value of this battlefield warrants its preservation
2. that its existing condition makes possible the restoration of the significant physical and cultural features of the battlefield at the time the battle occurred
3. that the actual methods of fighting and events of the battle can be more easily comprehended by observing a single marker, plaque, or museum display
4. that the further erection of monuments to commemorate the battle will have little educational value, will not be a significant addition to similar displays already existing on the battlefield, and would probably tend to subordinate the features of the battlefield which were significant during the battle
5. that the best commemoration of the battlefield would be the restoration and preservation of the area itself
6. that the important cultural features of the battlefield which should be acquired, restored and preserved are Elk Horn Tavern and its environs, Leetown and its environs, Pratts Store and its environs, the trenches and fortifications, the burying grounds, fences, and the old Wire Road and other less important roads
7. that important physical features which should be protected and preserved are at least the southern and eastern portions of Elk Horn Mountain [Big Mt.], Little Round Mountain, and the significant portions of the battlefield, especially those sites where battle lines were formed and where Generals were killed
8. that other lands should be acquired and preserved along roads and the main highway in order to preclude encroachment of commercial interests, and structures which are out of keeping with the environs of the battlefield
9. that the acquisition and display of relics from the battlefield would add to the educational value of

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

the battlefield<sup>50</sup>

In the end, this examination would have no immediate impact on the formation of a monument or park at Pea Ridge in 1941; the exigencies of World War II intervened a few months later, precluding any chance for the establishment of Pea Ridge National Military Park, or even a WPA constructed monument.<sup>51</sup> Likewise, local citizens could hardly have afforded to contribute to a fund to purchase the Pea Ridge Battlefield after having experienced nearly a decade of economic hardship during the Great Depression. On the other hand, these recommendations were now in the public record and available for the postwar generation to ponder and refer to when the time came to rethink the strategy in the fight to establish a national military park at the most important Civil War battlefield of the Trans-Mississippi theater. And in the final analysis, "local people...would rather develop a park and the buildings in preference to a monument."<sup>52</sup>

#### The Final Battle for Congressional Approval

The final thrust in the fight to win congressional approval for a national military park at Pea Ridge began in the early 1950s. Largely through the inspiration of Bentonville Mayor Alvin Seamster and the handy work of George Benjamin of Little Rock, the battlefield park was finally authorized by an act of Congress in 1956. The story of this achievement is intriguing and colorful.

George Benjamin, future chairman of the Arkansas Civil War Commission, sought support from the highest ranks of the American military, with General Douglas MacArthur himself. On a visit to New York City in late 1951 or early 1952, Benjamin decided to stay in the Waldorf Astoria, the current home of the famous general. One day, knowing that MacArthur was a native of Little Rock, Benjamin called the general's aide, Maj. Gen. Courtney Whitney, to invite MacArthur to make a Sunday visit sometime to the Christ Episcopal Church of Little Rock where Benjamin was president of the Men's Club and where MacArthur held his first church membership. On the next day, the MacArthurs invited the Benjamins for a visit at the Waldorf. During the course of the visit, Benjamin mentioned the Battle of Pea Ridge with hopes of winning future support

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>51</sup>"Pea Ridge Park Talked Again." Rogers Daily News, October 18, 1940.

<sup>52</sup>Letter Floyd Sharp, Director Arkansas State WPA, to Clyde T. Ellis, April 14, 1941, p. 1, located in the Clyde T. Ellis Papers, Special Collections, Univ. of Arkansas.

from the general for the establishment of the national military park.<sup>53</sup>

On returning to Arkansas, Benjamin contacted Alvin Seamster to inform him of the chance meeting with MacArthur. Seamster was pleased with the connection especially after Benjamin informed him of the upcoming visit of the famous general. Benjamin then procured a tomahawk from the Bentonville mayor who had picked up the Civil War relic on the Pea Ridge Battlefield; this artifact was later given to MacArthur's son on the general's visit to the Little Rock Christ Episcopal Church in March, 1952. Eight years later when Arkansas deeded the Pea Ridge lands to the NPS, MacArthur wired a congratulatory message: "the Pea Ridge National Military Park....will be a fitting memorial to the gallantry of the forces on both sides engaged in combat 98 years ago....Then, as throughout the War, the units of the state of Arkansas acquitted themselves with unexcelled valor and devotion."<sup>54</sup>

A renewed state-level effort to achieve congressional approval for the Pea Ridge park surfaced with Governor Orval E. Faubus. Faubus would become a national figure in 1957 when he personally blocked passage of African American students into Little Rock Central High School. Ironically, the governor had a reputation as an educational reformer despite his pro-segregation stand in the fifties.

Faubus was fascinated with Pea Ridge largely because he had grown up in Huntsville which had been occupied during the Civil War. During the second year of his term, Governor Faubus commissioned the Arkansas Civil War Commission in 1955 with the express idea of acquiring the necessary land and support for establishment of the national military park. George Benjamin was named the chairman of the new commission which called on more than seventy-five men and women of Arkansas during the process to attain national park status.<sup>55</sup>

"Benjamin was a happy choice," according to an Arkansas Gazette reporter. He was very active, and eager to drum up the necessary state and national support for the project. He instilled "ripples of interest" in his own business quarters among automobile dealers, with dozens of civic clubs, chambers of commerce, the Parent-Teacher Association, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Daughters of the American

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<sup>53</sup>Claire N. Moody, "Second Battle of Pea Ridge," in "Sunday Magazine," Arkansas Gazette, February 24, 1957, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup>"Ike, General Send Plaudits To Pea Ridge," March 8, 1960, newspaper article in Pea Ridge File donated by F. P. Rose, PRNMP.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 1.

Revolution, and the "Five Civilized Tribes." Volunteers in these and other organizations were asked to write letters endorsing the park to the Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay. In the meantime, newspapers throughout the state published editorials in favor of the park and "numerous histories of the battle appeared in print. Practically everyone in Arkansas became familiar with the march of battle" at Pea Ridge.<sup>56</sup>

By the end of 1955, a state strategy was in place to win congressional approval for the park. The Tillman bill of the 1920s was reintroduced in the House by Representative James Trimble from Northwest Arkansas' Third District and in the Senate by U.S. Senator J. William Fulbright. On January 17, 1956, Congressman Trimble presented the bill as H.R. 8558 in the House. Eight days later, Senator Fulbright introduced S.R. 3047.

A Department of Interior report attached to the bill, however, strongly opposed creation of the Pea Ridge National Military Park. Despite generous federal funding for the Park Service's Mission 66 program, Interior Secretary Douglas McKay and his assistants opposed incorporation of Pea Ridge. They believed that the Battle of Pea Ridge was not as significant as other historic battles whose sites were also under consideration. In light of the influx of federal monies into the National Park Service--\$49 million in 1956 and \$224 million over the next three years--this evaluation of Pea Ridge suggested that it would be even more difficult to achieve park status during less fiscally friendly times, so success was now imperative. On the upside, local, state, and national support for Civil War battlefield restorations was very high because of the upcoming Centennial Anniversary of the war.

Even with these factors in favor of a park, the Department of the Interior "recommended that this legislation be not enacted" even though the following statements, which appeared in the report, refuted the Interior's reasons for opposing the creation of the park:

1. The Battle of Pea Ridge was one of the largest engagements of the Civil War fought west of the Mississippi River.
2. Probably as much as any other single factor, the battle determined that the State of Missouri would remain Union rather than become Confederate.

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid.; also, see Benton County Pioneer, 5:3 (March 1960), 2; Claire N. Moody also wrote an important pamphlet history titled, Battle of Pea Ridge or Elkhorn Tavern, March 7-8, 1862 (Little Rock: Ark. Valley Printing Co., 1956) that would be sent to many congressmen.

3. After the battle, there was no further fighting of any major character in the State for the next 2 years.<sup>57</sup>

Assistant Secretary of the Interior Wesley A. D'Ewart spelled it out in plain terms in the report: "Historically, the Battle of Pea Ridge was not a decisive battle in the sense that Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Vicksburg, and Antietam were significant." With these recommendations, the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments "encouraged" the preservation of the battlefield, but under the administration of the "State or some local organization," not the federal government.<sup>58</sup>

The State of Arkansas and its congressional representatives had lost the first battle, but the war was not yet over. This negative response unleashed an incredible positive energy from the state and its interested parties in the months leading up to the final vote in Congress. Historian Walter L. Brown published his essay, "Pea Ridge: Gettysburg of the West," in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly soon thereafter. Copies of the article were presented to many important congressmen by Hugh Park, publisher of the Van Buren New Argus and knowledgeable investigator of the Pea Ridge Battlefield. Governor Faubus appointed Park to appear before the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs when Congress held hearings on the bill. While in the nation's capital, Park and his wife visited the Congressional Library "pouring [sic] over documents" to use to convince Interior Secretary McKay and NPS Director Wirth of the true value of the battlefield in Arkansas. As the comments in the report suggest, the Parks visit did not sway McKay, but did let Wirth and him know how momentous the matter was for the state.<sup>59</sup>

Alvin Seamster and other members of the Benton County Historical Society also did their fair share of promotional campaigning for the park. They gave tours of the battlefield, invited important guests to the site, and organized committees to begin a survey of the lands to be purchased. The Benton County Pioneer made an appeal to local citizens to get involved: "Is there a will? Is there a way? Let's not delay any longer. Let's do something. Please take note, Rogers, Gentry, Bentonville, Siloam Springs, Gravette, Decatur,

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<sup>57</sup>U.S. House of Representatives, Report No. 2346, "PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, IN THE STATE OF ARKANSAS," 84th Cong., 1st sess., January 17, 1956, p. 8-9.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 9-10; also, see Benton County Pioneer 5:3 (March 1960), 2.

<sup>59</sup>Moody, "Second Battle," p. 1.

Sulphur Springs, --Pea Ridge is ready!"<sup>60</sup>

Chairman Benjamin, in the meantime, began a concerted drive for congressional approval through his connections in the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA). He was able to get support throughout the South and Southwest from NADA members who sent bundles of letters to their respective congressmen pleading for support for the Pea Ridge park.

The timing of the bill also helped the Arkansas delegation. A bill funding the development of the Upper Colorado River was introduced at the same time the Pea Ridge bill was being considered. As a result, several western congressmen gave affirmative votes for Pea Ridge in return for Arkansas support for their bill. The connection that seems to have paid off the most, however, was with an automobile dealer in Kansas, R.D. McKay. He turned out not only to be "a close friend of Arkansas," but also a "personal friend" of U.S. Senator Frank Carlson of Kansas who happened to be a good friend of Sherman Adams, the "Alter ego assistant" to President Eisenhower.<sup>61</sup>

Chairman Benjamin continued to seek out supporters. He enlisted the support of General MacArthur, and also former President Harry S. Truman, "a neighbor of the Ozarks region." Likewise, Tennessee chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy flooded U.S. senators Estes Kefauver's and Albert Gore's mail boxes with pro-Pea Ridge commentary.

After news of the negative Interior Department report reached the Arkansas delegation, Benjamin worked even harder with Congressman Trimble and Governor Faubus to strengthen their position by getting the owners of the Elkhorn Tavern to agree to sell their historic property to the state. If they could acquire just a small portion of the battlefield, they believed, it might mean the difference between passage and failure. The price for the tavern and a 100-acre plot of land was also reasonable at \$15,000. The governor then ordered members of the Arkansas Civil War Commission to orchestrate the acquisition of Elkhorn Tavern.

"Then Arkansas had a break." It was discovered that the chairwoman of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Subcommittee was Gracie Pfof of Idaho, a native of Harrison, Arkansas. With this new information, "Everyone interested in the battlefield promptly wrote Mrs. Pfof."<sup>62</sup> One of the

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<sup>60</sup>Benton County Pioneer, 1:4 (May 1956), 1.

<sup>61</sup>Moody, "Second Battle," p. 1.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

more weighty supporters was Walter C. Guy of Little Rock, the Imperial Potentate, Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of America, who wrote to Pfof: "I ask that your Committee enter in its records my unqualified endorsement of this project. I wish to speak for myself personally and for the 775,000 Shriners in North America....[In addition] There is no place in all America where the Indians could place monuments to their warriors who fought in the War Between the States...."<sup>63</sup>

The overwhelming support--from a former president to a five-star general to southern and western congresspersons to everyday citizens of Arkansas--pushed the bill over the top in both the House and Senate. It passed in the House, on June 18, 1956, then in the Senate on July 16. The final approval, of course, would come with President Eisenhower's signature which was not assured because of strong opposition to the park in the Department of the Interior. This final obstacle was overcome, however, when Arkansas Republican Chairman Wallace Townsend won support for the bill from the Republican National Committee. And when Commissioner Benjamin discovered that Sherman Adams, Eisenhower's trusted assistant, was a shriner, he promptly telegraphed Imperial Potentate Guy who in turn sent a wire to Adams at the White House requesting the president's support.

Finally, it could be argued that Arkansas had one of the most powerful congressional delegations in Congress. Along with Trimble were long-time congressmen J. William Fulbright, Wilbur Mills, and Fred Harris. These men's influence played an important role in mobilizing votes in both the Senate and the House.<sup>64</sup>

In the end, the multiple endorsements from various circles of supporters paid off. On July 20, 1956, President Eisenhower signed into law the bill that authorized establishment of Pea Ridge National Military Park despite the odds against it. Four years later when the state deeded the lands to the Park Service, Eisenhower sent a telegram congratulating Northwest Arkansas:

Please give my greetings to those attending the dedication ceremonies for the Pea Ridge National Military Park in Arkansas. This hallowed battleground is a welcome addition to the National Park System. It is visited by citizens of our 50 states. It will help to remind them of the tragic War which once divided us and of the common

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<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

traditions which unite us firmly as fellow Americans. I am delighted to add my congratulations to those who have taken part in the preservation and restoration of this historic site.<sup>65</sup>

With executive approval, the state of Arkansas now had only to acquire the appropriate lands so that they could be donated to the National Park Service. The new bill stated that "when not less than one thousand two hundred acres of the non-Federal lands hereinafter described...known as Pea Ridge Battlefield, near Bentonville, Arkansas, shall have been acquired and transferred free and clear of all encumbrances to the United States with out expense to the Federal Government, such areas shall be...dedicated and set apart as a unit of the National Park System for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States, under the name of the Pea Ridge National Military Park."<sup>66</sup> The key now was for the state of Arkansas to acquire the necessary acreage to establish the park so that it could be donated to the National Park Service.

#### Purchasing the Lands and the Donation to the Federal Government

The National Park Service began its survey of the Pea Ridge Battlefield in December, 1956, setting in motion the actual development of the national military park. Present at the initial survey were Arthur Perkins, Southeast Regional Chief of National Park Planning; James Holland, historian from Richmond, Virginia; Edwin C. Bearss, Vicksburg National Military Park historian; and Roy Appleman, historian from Washington, D.C. The contingent spent several days surveying the park lands, examining records, and consulting with Alvin Seamster, who had led their tour, and other local citizens familiar with the terrain.<sup>67</sup>

In setting the boundaries for the park, the NPS survey team made a calculated decision to acquire the entire area that

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<sup>65</sup>From a newspaper article, dated March 8, 1960, in the "Pea Ridge" File, donated by F. P. Rose of Rogers, 6, PRNMP.

<sup>66</sup>"An Act to provide for the establishment of Pea Ridge National Military Park, in the State of Arkansas," approved July 20, 1956 (70 Stat. 592), 84th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 280-81. The congressional act called for acquisition of lands in sections 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, 30, 31, 32, & 33 in Township 21 North, Range 28 West, 5th Principal Meridian; sections 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 in Township 20 North, Range 28 West, 5th Principal Meridian; sections 13, 14, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, & 36 in Township 21 North, Range 29 West, 5th Principal Meridian; and in sections 1 through 12 in Township 20 North, Range 29 West, 5th Principal Meridian.

<sup>67</sup>Benton County Pioneer, 2:2 (January 1957), 1.

encompassed the 1862 battlefield. Encroachment problems experienced at Antietam National Military Park and other sites forewarned the team of potential boundary conflicts. At Antietam, the NPS had acquired just a portion of the battlefield lands, limiting the ability of the park to protect its borders with the result being commercial and residential encroachment. Hence, Appleman and Bearss, who hiked the area to mark the park boundary, worked to include "all significant areas of the battlefield." In the end, the NPS survey team "got what it wanted, knowing the lessons of Antietam."<sup>68</sup>

After the NPS set the boundaries for the new military park, the state of Arkansas went into action. The state legislature first passed a law creating the Pea Ridge Battlefield Park Commission, Governor Faubus signing the act on March 8, 1957. The bill appropriated \$250,000 for purchase of more than 4,000 acres, none of which was located in commercial zones, that the NPS had already set aside for the park. "The duties of this Commission," Faubus wrote to Max Walker of Pea Ridge, "will be to select appraisers, perhaps enter into a suit to secure land by the right of eminent domain, and to set policies for the park insofar as the state is concerned. The principal duty, of course, will be to secure the land and make it available to the federal government for the establishment of the Pea Ridge Battleground as a national monument." Members on the commission included Homer Fleeman of Rogers, Hugh Park of Van Buren, Neill Bohlinger of Little Rock (chairman), and Clayton Little & Hardy Croxton (attorneys for the commission).<sup>69</sup>

Ironically, the first purchase by the PRNP Commission was the Winton Springs Farm on January 29, 1958. "The farm was one of the choice pieces of property [153 acres] in the whole Park area..." even though the farmhouse was not of Civil War vintage; its status as a historic structure would be questioned for the next thirty-five years.<sup>70</sup> Over the course of the next year and a half, the PRNP Commission acquired virtually all the lands where the battle had taken place, with the exception of the "Detached Area" where federal troops had constructed entrenchments on March 6, 1862; the courts had to condemn that property before it was finally included in the park in the mid-1960s. By the end of 1959, most of the lands were safely deeded to the state of Arkansas, and plans for the transfer to the federal government were made. PRNP Commission Chairman Neill Bohlinger received a letter of congratulations

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<sup>68</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

<sup>69</sup>Letter Governor Orval E. Faubus to Max Walker of Pea Ridge, May 21, 1957, p. 1, File Folder (deeds), "Pea Ridge Park," Pea Ridge National Military Park (hereafter PRNMP).

<sup>70</sup>Letter Clayton Little to Neill Bohlinger, January 29, 1958, p. 1, File Folder (deeds), "Pea Ridge Park," PRNMP.



Fig. 3. Governor Orval Faubus hands NPS Director Conrad Wirth the deed to the Pea Ridge Battlefield lands on "Deed" Day, March 7, 1960. Courtesy Pea Ridge NMP.

from Karl Betts, executive director of the Civil War Centennial Commission in Washington, D.C.: "The National Commission extends heartiest congratulations to you for this magnificent contribution to the advancement of the Centennial program."<sup>71</sup>

The triumphant day of transfer came on the sunny day of March 7, 1960 at the Pea Ridge High School Gymnasium. Known as "Deed Day," the ceremonial moment for the beginning of the \$2-million NPS restoration of the Pea Ridge National Military

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<sup>71</sup>Letter Karl S. Betts to N. Bohlinger, December 4, 1959, p. 1, File Folder (deeds), "Pea Ridge Park," PRNMP; Attorneys Hardy Croxton & Clayton Little received \$41,114.91 for services rendered during the acquisition process, see Letter Clayton Little to Neill Bohlinger, March 8, 1960, File Folder (deeds), "Pea Ridge Park," PRNMP.

Park had come. Pea Ridge school children were dismissed for the dedication and the Rogers and Bentonville High School bands livened up the affair playing patriotic pieces. National Park Service Director Conrad Wirth, who had been almost singlehandedly responsible for Mission 66, gladly accepted the state of Arkansas' donation to the public domain. A week later Director Wirth wrote to Clayton Little thanking Arkansans for their contribution: "It was indeed a pleasure to participate in the ceremonies at Pea Ridge and to meet so many fine and enthusiastic people in Arkansas. The cooperation of all the people down there has been outstanding and we look forward to working with them actively in the future."<sup>72</sup>

Other important notables appeared as well. They included Karl Betts, executive director of the National Civil War Centennial Commission; Governor Orval Faubus; Bentonville Mayor Alvin Seamster; Historian Walter Brown; numerous members of the Benton County Historical Society; and many local citizens and school children. Arkansans could now celebrate their hallowed ground in a national context. This achievement, which took more than half a century to accomplish, insured the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of one of the most important battle sites of the Trans-Mississippi theater of the Civil War. Hugh Park, who had done so much to see the project through in 1956, could not attend the ceremony due to an illness. To fill him in, PRNP Commission Attorney Clayton Little wrote Park to describe the Deed Day events. In the return correspondence, Park commented on the great achievement and how pleased he was:

Your letter warms the cockles of my heart. I'm telling you that I could have missed only one other thing that would have hurt me any worse than missing this big day at Pea Ridge--and that was the day when we stood up and whipped the [pro-eastern] historians at Washington on the value of Pea Ridge to the history of America.<sup>73</sup>

## Conclusion

The dream for Pea Ridge National Military Park had come true. The efforts of hundreds of Arkansans and a multitude of others worked a minor miracle. Clearly, the nation was poised for the 100-year anniversary of the Civil War, and federal funds

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<sup>72</sup>Letter NPS Director Conrad Wirth to Clayton Little, March 17, 1960, File folder (deeds), Pea Ridge Park--Title File, PRNMP.

<sup>73</sup>Letter Hugh Park to Clayton Little, March 9, 1960, p. 1, File Folder (deeds), "Pea Ridge Park," PRNMP.

were available to carry out a project like Pea Ridge.

Perhaps most important of all in this process were the earlier efforts to establish the national military park. As early as 1890, Congressman Samuel Peel introduced legislation in Congress to create the park. From 1914 to 1928, Congressman John Tillman diligently fought for park status, introducing no fewer than seven congressional acts before the U.S. House of Representatives. Clyde T. Ellis' contributions in the late 1930s and early 1940s also made a strong imprint in the collective memories of Benton County citizens. In the end, when Governor Faubus, Alvin Seamster, Hugh Park, Congressman Trimble, Senator William Fulbright, George Benjamin, the members of the Pea Ridge National Park Commission, and others made the final frontal assault to break through the barricades, such as the Department of the Interior's opposition to the park, the Arkansas contingent was left standing even though it had spent the last of its ammunition. Most of all, the Pea Ridge National Military Park is a tribute to the collective efforts of the people of Arkansas.

Now that the war to establish the park was over, the National Park Service faced new challenges in restoring and preserving the Pea Ridge site. "We still have to build a park," George Benjamin told a reporter. "Then we will really have something to show them [the visitors]." <sup>74</sup> That process began in 1960. The story of the early development of the park will be the focus of Chapter 3.

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<sup>74</sup>"Arkansans to Present Deeds to Pea Ridge Park," Arkansas Gazette, January 24, 1956.

## CHAPTER 3

### Interpretive Prospectus and Master Plan: The Early Years, 1960-1963

#### Introduction

At the same time that local congressmen and citizens were fighting to win the creation of Pea Ridge National Military Park, the National Park Service was in a battle of its own. The NPS, in fact, was introducing the famous Mission 66 plan and seeking congressional approval. This plan was designed to update the national park system from 1956 to 1966. The ten-year plan targeted a completion date of 1966 so that the fiftieth anniversary of the Park Service could be celebrated with a rejuvenated program. The ultimate goal of Director Conrad Wirth's plan was to accommodate 80 million annual visitors with facilities that would make the parks more accessible and more comfortable. Park Service facilities and access had deteriorated during the painful depression and World War II years and needed to be improved for the increasingly mobile American public in the postwar period.

The upgrading of America's Park Service facilities won the support of President Eisenhower as had the Pea Ridge National Military Park. The president viewed the development of the national parks as part of his larger interest in developing America's transportation system and in the opening of the "great outdoors" to the average citizen of the United States. President Eisenhower believed that our national parks were so important that he mentioned them in his January 5, 1956 State of the Union Address:

The visits of our people to the parks have increased much more rapidly than have the facilities to care for them. The administration will submit [therefore] recommendations to provide more adequate facilities to keep abreast of the increasing interest of our people in the great outdoors.<sup>1</sup>

Such a statement had impressed the NPS Director Wirth who exclaimed that: "Very seldom has the Park Service been mentioned in so important a document."

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from Conrad L. Wirth, Park, Politics, and the People (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 253-54.

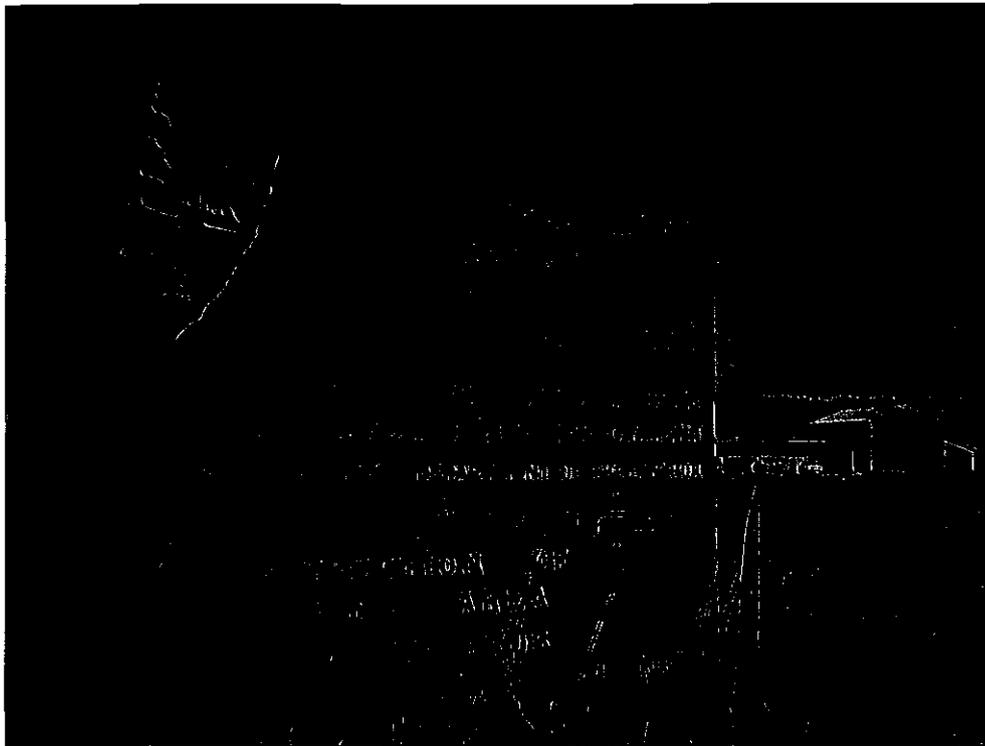


Fig. 4. Pea Ridge National Military Park developed during the Park Service's Mission 66 program, a generously funded improvement strategy from 1956 and 1966. Note the Visitor Center in the background. Courtesy Pea Ridge National Military Park.

In the end, the Mission 66 program would receive wholehearted support from President Eisenhower and over the next decade Congress would allocate more than \$1 billion to the National Park Service. In addition to construction projects and increases in park personnel, those funds strongly supported the formulation of "pilot studies" for each park, the so-called master plans. Because "without them," Wirth noted, "it would have been impossible to organize a sound program. The detail and the in-depth factual material contained in the master plans made it possible for us to formulate policy, administrative, interpretive, and developmental decisions."<sup>2</sup> Wirth also understood that for Mission 66 to be successful, careful, well-thought-out planning and implementation would be needed not only to improve the NPS but to insure future fiscal support from Congress.

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<sup>2</sup>Wirth, Parks, 250.

Pea Ridge National Military Park, then, was established simultaneous with Mission 66. Consequently, the Master Plan (1963) and other plans such as the Interpretive Prospectus (1961) of Pea Ridge clearly reflected the broader NPS goals through 1966. The construction of the Pea Ridge facilities undoubtedly mirrored this larger national plan. The plan for the loop Tour Road, for example, clearly took into consideration the Mission 66 plan to make national parks more accessible to automobile visitors and the designs for the Visitor Center likewise considered historic preservation and interpretation for a broad range of visitors who might come to the park. Similarly, the employee residences that were planned at Pea Ridge also reflected the mission's goal of improving living quarters for NPS personnel. In the end, the Mission 66 plan served as the larger blueprint for the unique, smaller blueprints for the development of Pea Ridge National Military Park.

#### Pea Ridge's Developmental Plans

In the 1962 summer issue of the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, Pea Ridge's first Superintendent, John T. Willett, published an essay on the current status of the national military park. In the article titled, "Development at Pea Ridge National Military Park," Willett summed up the mission of the park and reported on the stage of development of the interpretive projects being constructed. The one hundred year anniversary of the Battle of Pea Ridge had come and gone and the park was still not opened: "Consequently," the Superintendent wrote, "development of the park is still somewhat in the planning stage." Part of the reason for the delay was that he and other National Park Service personnel were in the process of consulting "older established battlefield areas and reviewing conclusions already reached regarding this development."<sup>3</sup> Careful planning was part of the Mission 66 goal and would take time. Yet, in the long run such planning would mean a better park and a better park experience for visitors.

Apparently, some of the local citizens were distraught at the delay in completion of the park. They gossiped about the problems and complained about the passage of the one hundred year anniversary without the park's opening. The razing of the Mayfield House, which was believed to be of Civil War vintage, also upset locals. Editorialist Ernie Deane of the Arkansas Gazette chastised the complainers in "A Report on Historic Pea Ridge Park" as early as February 11, 1962.

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<sup>3</sup>John T. Willett, "Development at Pea Ridge National Military Park," Arkansas Historical Quarterly 21:2 (summer 1962): 168.

Conrad Wirth, energetic head of the National Park Service, had also warned the locals that the park would not be completed by the time of the anniversary. Deane, although not critical of park personnel, did lament that the park was not going to be opened. Yet, the newspaperman looked at the bright side of things: "Quite a number of changes have been brought about in the past year and a half [since Deed Day], although few of these are apparent except to persons who knew the area before then...At the moment, the newly cut [tour] road is unimpressive, until one gives thought to the historic ground through which it runs."<sup>4</sup>

Deane then told his readers that bids would soon be accepted for the major projects at the park: the Visitor-Use Center, two residences for park personnel, a utility center for park maintenance, and a water well. Superintendent Willett had informed Deane of a tree-planting project soon to be initiated. In the end, therefore, Deane argued for patience and appreciation for what had already been accomplished: "Thus, Arkansas's biggest national park, which is also one of America's biggest military parks, is on its way--not moving as rapidly as most of us would prefer [with May 31, 1963 the projected opening day], but showing steady progress that is good to see."<sup>5</sup>

Park personnel obviously understood the dynamics of constructing the facilities for a new park. Their patience, in fact, was a given. Part of that realist philosophy came from the National Park Service which literally had had hundreds of similar experiences since 1916 when the NPS was created. Willett stuck to his guns. He expounded the NPS philosophy in his mission statement in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly:

The mission of the Park Service at Pea Ridge is to provide an opportunity to its visitors to gain a sense of reality of the Battle of Pea Ridge, an understanding of its importance in saving Missouri for the Union, and its influence upon later events of the Civil War. This must be done and at the same time preserve the battlefield for the coming generations.<sup>6</sup>

Proper preservation of the battle site would take time.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ernie Deane, "A Report on Historic Pea Ridge Park," Arkansas Gazette, February 11, 1962.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Willett, "Development," 167.

<sup>7</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, former Chief Historian of the NPS, on July 19, 1996.

In the essay, Willett went on to describe the current status of the park. He described the battlefield landscape as "strikingly beautiful," especially in relation to other military parks in the United States. Furthermore, he stated that the area was "unusual" in that "the acreage comprises all the significant land over which the battle was fought." Yet the only "visible evidence" of the battle was the federal entrenchments of the Detached Area on the bluffs overlooking Little Sugar Creek.

He then told the reader that the Visitor-Use Center would be "located conveniently off U.S. Route 62 on a spot presently affording a panoramic view of Pea Ridge," Big Mountain, and Elkhorn Tavern. At this center would be an "orientation terrace" where the the visitors could see the "major features of the battlefield in clear view" and where they would learn of the "closed-loop interpretive tour route." The visitors would be given the option of going to the Detached Area and the only remaining entrenchments or heading directly on to the Tour Road for a "regular tour."

The Tour Road's route would "follow the chronological order of the battle." "This method, supplemented by markers, exhibits-in-place, overlooks, and the restored war-time Elkhorn Tavern," the Superintendent predicted, "will provide a memorable and inspirational visit for the park guests." Furthermore, to authenticate the visit, the "primary objective" of the Park Service for Pea Ridge was to restore the land "to a condition similar to that of 1862."<sup>8</sup>

The first interpretive stop on the Tour Road was going to be General Curtis' headquarters. "Interpretive signs and markers placed here will provide on-the-ground orientation for those visitors who do not make the side trip to the detached area..." The second stop would be at Leetown, "a principal landmark of the first day's battle." "Just ahead," the visitor would be introduced to the main battlefield of the Leetown sector where confederate generals McIntosh and McCulloch were killed and where much fierce fighting took place. "An interpretive pull-off will be placed at this point to tell the story of the action." Unfortunately, Willett had already made the decision to eliminate the Mayfield House as a potential exhibit on the Tour Road. The Historic Preservation Act of 1966 came a few years too late to save this Civil War structure.

The Tour Road then would "ascend the western end of Pea Ridge Mountain and traverse the whole length of the plateau atop the ridge." There would be two overlooks along this stretch of

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<sup>8</sup>Willett, "Development," 167-68.

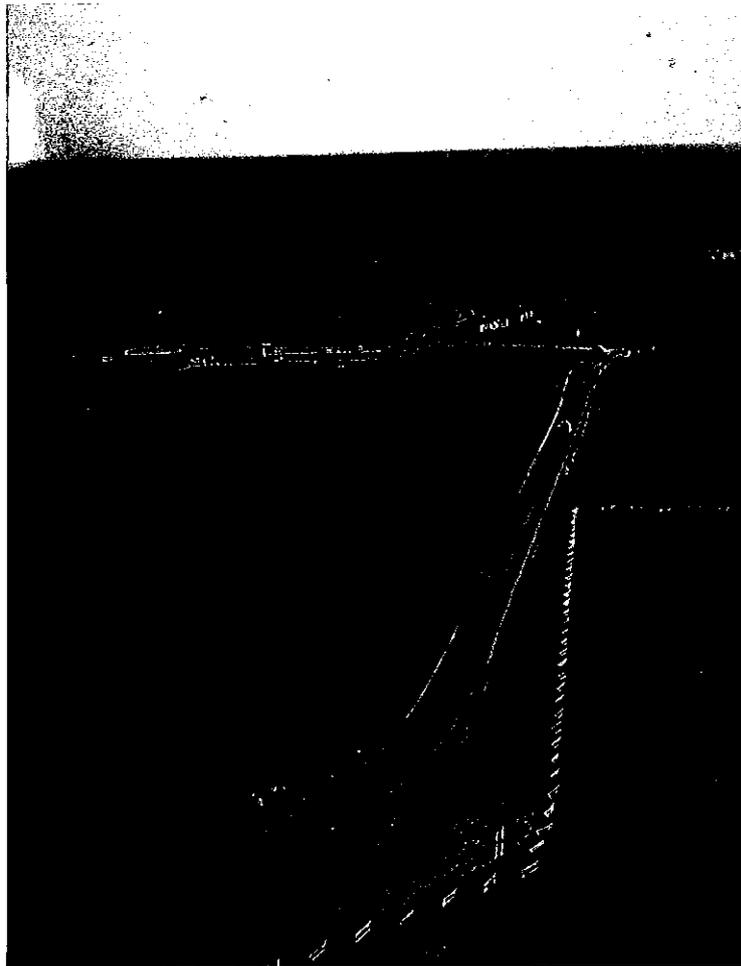


Fig. 5. The Visitor Center and Tour Road, two of the most important new facilities constructing in the early 1960s as part of the Mission 66 program. Also, note the period rail fence running along the Tour Road (also the historic Telegraph Road). Courtesy Pea Ridge National Military Park.

road, "permitting the visitor to review the battle terrain and enjoy the scenery." At the eastern stop would be the "principal overlook and from it part of the first day's and all the second day's action will be told by interpretive devices." The tour then would descend the mountain and pass Elkhorn Tavern, "which is to be restored and equipped with period furnishings." The road then would head to Williams Hollow "where roadside exhibits will explain the final phase of the battle." Here the tour would end, the road proceeding on to the "point of entry on U.S. 62."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 168-69.

Willett then concluded the survey with a discussion of sundry business items. "An effort will be made," he suggested, "to acquire a sufficient number of artillery pieces to provide a representative interpretive display of the type guns used in the battle. Nine original pieces have already been acquired." Prior to the opening of the park, Pea Ridge received cannons from Chickamauga and Shiloh national military parks.<sup>10</sup>

"Efficient operation" of the park also required construction of "a small utility area, a central water system and two residences for rotatable employees. An adequate residence for the superintendent is a building adapted from a residence on the area when the park lands were acquired."

Finally, Willett forewarned of several important construction contracts to be awarded in the coming months. The Visitor-Use Center, the utility group, the two employee homes, the water system, and the Tour Road section on Big Mountain were all up for bidding. Much was to be accomplished in the year to come. He then extended a welcoming gesture to the readers: "All of you are invited to come to the area for a visit once these projects are completed."<sup>11</sup>

In the area of contracting the work at the park, Willett made another controversial decision. In 1962, Congress had passed the Accelerated Works Program designed to infuse local communities with federal monies to reduce unemployment, to "put the maximum amount of money in the maximum number of pockets." When Willett received the AWP monies, rather than hiring local citizens who showed initiative, the Superintendent contracted with a nearby landowner.<sup>12</sup>

In spite of these early problems, Willett made headway at the park. In his essay, on the other hand, he was harkening back to the first Interpretive Prospectus as well as fortelling of the Master Plan for Pea Ridge National Military Park. Historian John W. Bond, in fact, had written an "Interpretive Prospectus for Pea Ridge National Military Park" during late 1960 and early 1961. This document served as a guide for the construction projects, visitation plans, restoration, and other important interpretive features of the park. Likewise, the plans and projects that Willett discussed in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly article appeared in the 1963 Master Plan.

All of these plans and projects, of course, reflect the Park

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<sup>10</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

<sup>11</sup>Willett, "Development," 169.

<sup>12</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

Service's Mission 66 program. The Pea Ridge park clearly evolved in accordance with the fourteen-point plan of Mission 66. First, the NPS plan called for additional accommodations and related services adapted to modern recreational needs. Likewise, employee residences were emphasized in the Mission 66 program. Interpretation and accommodation highlighted the early plans at Pea Ridge as part of larger National Park Service schemata.

### Commemoration

Local citizens played a distinctive role in reminding the general public of the new park by commemorating the battlegrounds during the initial months and years of the NPS developments. For the 99th anniversary of the battle, for example, the Pea Ridge Memorial Association (PRMA), founded on January 8, 1961 in Siloam Springs, sponsored a memorial service and initiated plans to erect several interpretive markers outside the park boundaries. These markers served to connect the broader Northwest Arkansas community to the national park. A functioning board of nine members regularly met to carry out the duties of the association whose mission was to "hold suitable memorial services commemorating the battle of Pea Ridge each year."<sup>13</sup>

The PRMA board "unanimously agreed" to place markers on "historical sites connected with the battle but outside the area of the military park." Markers were placed at: 1) the Eagle Hotel in Bentonville, 2) Potts Hill (on old Telegraph Road), 3) Dunagin's Farm, and 4) Elm Springs. Members of the PRMA board in 1962 were Alvin Seamster, Eva Patterson (chair), Haskell Walker (treasurer), Vera Key (vice-chair), Col. J. Wesley Sampier, Samuel D. Woods, Finis Wood, H.F. Carnell (secretary), and J. R. Craig.

The memorial association, which was sponsored by the Benton County Historical Society, held important ceremonies during the interim between Deed Day in March, 1960 and Opening Day in May, 1963. The two most important ceremonies were held on March 5, 1961 and March 11, 1962, important dates in the national Civil War centennial. Local newspaper reporters and photographers covered the 1961 ceremony. Photographs were taken for the Northwest Arkansas Times, the Tulsa World, the Joplin Globe, the Rogers Daily News, the Ozark Mountaineer, and several other regional newspapers. Attendees included Tom Feathers, president of the Washington County Historical Society, Eva Patterson, chair of the governing board of the

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<sup>13</sup>Arkansas Historical Quarterly, 21:2 (summer 1962): 159.

PRMA service committee, and Vera Key, vice-chair of the PRMA.<sup>14</sup>

The 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Pea Ridge warranted a more elaborate ceremony with visitation by more than 250 people. On March 11, 1962, high winds, rain, and threats of thunderstorms did not deter the large crowd that day. Even though Governor Faubus' flight was cancelled and he missed the ceremonies, the Pea Ridge Memorial Association carried out its duties as stated in the organization's bylaws. State Adjutant General Sherman T. Clinger was the official representative of the governor and laid the first of four wreaths at the battlefield cemetery markers. James Carselow of Adair, Oklahoma placed a wreath honoring the "Five Civilized Tribes." As presiding officer of the ceremonies, Alvin Seamster positioned another wreath at the hallowed site.<sup>15</sup> After the formal placing of the wreaths, a three-volley, six-gun salute was given in honor of the fallen dead while taps was played in the background.

Later in the day, the gathering moved to Pea Ridge Baptist Church where Brig. Gen. (Ret.) James W. Green, Jr., special assistant to the president of the University of Arkansas, read the memorial address. He spoke of the importance of the battle in Civil War history and how if the South had won there the war may have taken a very different turn. Yet, despite the great importance of the battle, the general lamented, it was "far too often overlooked by historians." In the end, however, this oversight did not take away from the solemn, yet forward-looking ceremony:

While the origin of this memorial program--the basis and reason for it--is the battle of Pea Ridge, its observance transcends the battle itself. This service provides opportunity for all of us to rededicate ourselves to the principles that are the cornerstones of our American heritage--Freedom of thought and the right of individual judgment in matters of conscience.<sup>16</sup>

For the citizens of Bentonville, Rogers, Siloam Springs, Pea Ridge, Fayetteville, and elsewhere in Northwest Arkansas the commemoration of the events of a hundred years earlier signified an important exercise in sharing the past. The

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<sup>14</sup>Benton County Pioneer, 6:4 (May 1961) 3-4.

<sup>15</sup>"Governor Forced to Miss Planned Appearance at Battlefield Fete," Rogers Daily News, March 12, 1962.

<sup>16</sup>See the Rogers Daily News, March 12, 1962 and the Arkansas Historical Quarterly 21:2 (summer 1962), 164.

collective memories of the people of the region also legitimized the presence of the national military park at Pea Ridge. In the meantime, park personnel were vigorously working on plans to complete various projects to meet the criteria for the projected opening day of May 31, 1963. Those projects reflected two documents: Historian John Bond's Interpretive Prospectus of 1961 and the Master Plan of 1963.

### The First Interpretive Prospectus

Superintendent Willett's essay in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, in many ways, was a reflection of the interpretive prospectus written by Historian John Bond. Approved for distribution and use on April 6, 1961, Bonds' "Interpretive Prospectus for Pea Ridge National Military Park" set the stage for development of Northwest Arkansas' prized national park. This detailed twenty-seven page report provided a blueprint both for Willett's management plan and for much of the future composition of the Master Plan which was approved by National Park Service officials in 1963. Bond's prospectus also allowed the park personnel to begin interpretation of the battle even before many of the construction projects were completed.

Bond opened the report with a brief SUMMARY of the prospectus. "This prospectus," the Pea Ridge historian began, "is concerned with the over-all development of the interpretive facilities and program, exclusive of the Elkhorn Tavern Restoration..."<sup>17</sup> He then stated that the prospectus' expressed purpose was to propose: 1) Visitor Center interpretive facilities and 2) a self-guided tour of the battlefield with interpretive stops, markers and signs, and the placement of thirty artillery pieces. The estimated cost of the Visitor Center exhibits was \$29,000; for the production of a audio-visual program, \$4,000; and for field interpretation, \$62,900, for a total of \$95,900.

The second section of Bond's interpretive prospectus is titled, THE MEANS OF INTERPRETATION. For the Proposed Media, the historian listed six items:

1. Museum exhibits in the Visitor Center
2. Audio-Visual program in the Visitor Center
3. A self-guided tour of the park with interpretive markers, signs and wayside exhibits

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<sup>17</sup>John W. Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus for Pea Ridge National Military Park," (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, March, 1961), 1.

4. Publications
5. Interpretive talk in the Assembly Room of the Visitor Center
6. Guided tour for special-interest groups<sup>18</sup>

Several factors played into Bond's suggestions for interpretation. In the Analysis of Factors, he first describes the unique environment at Pea Ridge National Military Park. In a "predominantly agricultural environment," the park sat on an upland shelf similar to the Springfield Plateau amidst "gently rolling...elevations from 1250 to 1700 feet" with prairies scattered about. And, of course, there were two prominent geologic structures, Little Mountain and Big Mountain.

"The terrain of the park," Bond suggested, "will be a considerable asset in the interpretation of the park story." The bluffs above Little Sugar Creek afford an excellent overlook so that visitors will be able to "understand the strategic importance of Curtis' position." From the Visitor Center observation terrace, the visitor will have the panorama of the main portion of the battle in front of them. The Tour Road then will serve to take the visitor directly (or very close) to the actual sites of the various important historical features of the battle. Because the park "is fortunate in that it encompasses the entire area" of the 1862 battlefield, "the entire story can be told on Federally owned land. The fact that the visitor will be able to travel, for the most part, over the same roads (in an improved state) as those used by the soldiers in 1862, will give additional meaning to the story." Furthermore, the site would not be "spoiled by commercial developments encroaching upon the historical scene."<sup>19</sup>

Even though a "visitor use pattern" had not been established yet, Bond estimated that about 50,000 visitors came to the park, focused on Elkhorn Tavern, annually through 1960. With the high interest in the Civil War in the early 1960s, Bond predicted that visitation would peak at 225,000 annually by 1966. The heaviest period of visitation, he suggested, would be from April through September with interpretive activities "curtailed somewhat" during the winter months "due to inclement weather." "Such conditions are of short duration, however, and for the most part the visitor services available during the period of heavy visitation will also be available during the winter months."

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<sup>18</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 2.

<sup>19</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 3-4.

He estimated that about seventy percent of visitors would come from the 29 counties of northwest Arkansas, southwest Missouri, and northeast Oklahoma which at that time had a population base of about 1,035,000. Most of the potential guests could make a day trip of their visit to the park. Once the park was finished, Bond anticipated visits from residents in Springfield and Joplin, Missouri; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Ft. Smith, Arkansas as well. Direct access to Highway 62 promised to attract many passers-by and "it can be reasonably expected that a large number of the vacationers using this highway will stop at the park." A large portion of the visitation would come from "organized educational groups." Therefore, the historian argued that "the area should be interpreted in a manner that will allow comprehension of the subject by grade school students and at the same time make the subject interesting and exciting to the high school and college students to the extent that they will want to study the subject further."<sup>20</sup>

Bond estimated that the average visitor would require about two hours and forty minutes to complete the tour. Forty minutes would be spent at the Visitor Center "browsing through the exhibit room" (museum) to learn about the battle and the park; two hours would be needed to take the Tour Road and visit its various interpretive sites.

The interpretive story at the Visitor Center would be told through use of interpretive panels, maps, photographs, exhibits, dioramas, an audio-visual program, an electric wall map, and interpretive literature. Period weapons and uniforms would be put on display for visual representation of the human side of the story. A free two-fold folder with a map would be provided to the visitor to briefly familiarize them with the battle story and describe for them the park facilities and tour. A reasonably priced historical handbook would be made available to those guests interested in a more detailed account of the story.<sup>21</sup>

The audio-visual program, Bond argued, should not be a simple recasting of the "clear-cut story" presented in the museum. Rather, this part of the interpretation should examine the battle in the broader context of Civil War history, especially with a focus on the Trans-Mississippi theater and its significance in saving Missouri for the Union. "An imaginative and tightly written script on this theme" would greatly enhance the narrated slide show. This audio-visual program should be "equipped with synchronized sound and

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<sup>20</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 5-6.

<sup>21</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 5-6.

projection equipment, a large screen and a projection booth." With seating for about 125, the audio-visual room should also have the capability to be used as a "place for group orientation, occasional lectures, and special programs."<sup>22</sup>

The tour of the park should also have the similar goals of telling the unique story of the Pea Ridge Battle and placing it in a broader historical context. With these factors in mind, Bond put together the following "outline of the basic park story":

1. BACKGROUND: The historical background needed to understand the event at Pea Ridge.  
The coming of the Civil War with special reference to the Trans-Mississippi area.  
  
Federal and Confederate War objectives  
Progress of the War to Pea Ridge (including the situation in Missouri)
2. ACTION: Narrative of the action associated with Pea Ridge  
Ridge  
In Northwest Arkansas  
Movement of both armies to the vicinity of Little Sugar Creek  
Confederate flanking movement, evening of March 6-7  
Battle near Leetown, March 7  
Battle near Elkhorn Tavern, March 7  
Battle near Elkhorn Tavern, March 8  
Union Victory
3. SITE: Physical characteristics of the terrain  
Natural character  
Location of positions and events
4. PEOPLE: Those associated with the Battle of Pea Ridge  
Ridge  
Leaders  
Military Organizations  
Individuals (military and civilian)
5. SIGNIFICANCE: The meaning of the park and its story to the people of the United States.<sup>23</sup>

The self-guided tour would serve to transfer this story to the visitor, making such a visit a "unique experience."

The loop tour would also be designed to "be a highly effective one because it follows logically and in sequence the course of action" of the battle. The two-hour tour would have seven interpretive stops, three being major and four being minor

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<sup>22</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 22.

<sup>23</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 8.

stops. The major sites would require at least fifteen minutes, whereas the minor stops would require from five to ten minutes. The three major stops would be: 1) Battlefield northwest of Leetown, 2) Pea Ridge East, and 3) Elkhorn Tavern. The minor stops would be: 1) Site of General Curtis' Headquarters, 2) Site of Leetown, 3) Williams Hollow Wayside Exhibit, and 4) Site of the Tannery. Bond also suggested that two of the major stops have shelters to protect against inclement weather, but more importantly to house interpretive information in "battle maps, paintings, audio units, and other interpretive devices." Bond proposed building shelters for the battlefield northwest of Leetown and for Pea Ridge East.<sup>24</sup>

The first major site would be the BATTLEFIELD NORTHWEST OF LEETOWN. Here would be told the story of the fierce fighting in the cornfields of Leetown on March 7, 1862. At this site, the story of the Confederate flanking movement along the Bentonville Detour would be told and the major Confederate officers McCulloch, McIntosh, and Pike would be introduced. Furthermore, "the monument to the Confederate dead, now located near Elkhorn Tavern, should be moved to the area in which McCulloch and McIntosh were killed."<sup>25</sup>

At PEA RIDGE EAST, the second major site, the interpretation would describe the battle at Elkhorn Tavern on March 7 and 8, 1862. Removal of "some of the timber along the eastern edge of the ridge" would procure a vantage point of the field of battle those fateful two days. With the exception of the orientation terrace at the Visitor Center, Pea Ridge East would be designed to "provide a view of more of the battlefield than any other place in the park. This grand view will enable the visitors to visualize troop movements and overall action in the area they are viewing."<sup>26</sup>

Bond perceived the ELKHORN TAVERN stop as perhaps the most important on the Tour Road. Here "the story of the Tavern during the battle should be emphasized." Likewise, "something should be said...about its pre-Civil War history." Yet before the tavern could be opened to the public, "extensive research" would be necessary for accurate restoration. A controversy arose over the date of reconstruction of Elkhorn Tavern after it burned during the Civil War: 1865 or 1886? Regardless, Bond suggested that neither date was that important and that restoration should be based exclusively on the 1862 tavern,

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<sup>24</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 24.

<sup>25</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 11-12.

<sup>26</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 12.

owned by the Jesse C. Cox family and used by both sides during the war. The historian also suggested that "furniture typical of the War period" be placed in Elkhorn Tavern. Finally, he proposed placing "markers indicating various Confederate and Union positions" during the stages of fighting on March 7 and 8, 1862.

The minor stops would be interspersed with the major stops, the first along the Tour Road being the SITE OF CURTIS' HEADQUARTERS. The interpretation at this site, Bond suggested, should point out to the visitors where the headquarters was located and the positions of the Federal troops in this sector during the battle.<sup>27</sup>

The SITE OF LEETOWN should describe the "role of this hamlet" in the battle on March 7, 1862. Because the knowledge of the village was limited, Bond proposed carrying out an archeological investigation to determine the structural make-up of the town so that "general information" could be provided to the visitor about Leetown. The historian suggested that the Pierce Mayfield House chimney, the only remaining feature of the Civil War structure after it was razed, should remain as an example of the kind of archeological evidence that would provide the visitor with a tangible symbol of the presence of a small town.

The final outcome of the Battle of Pea Ridge, Bond suggested, should be told at the WILLIAMS HOLLOW WAYSIDE EXHIBIT. Here the "main body" of the Confederate army escaped on March 8, whereas the day before the bluecoats had advanced up the same hollow to meet and push back the enemy. The SITE OF THE TANNERY would be the final minor stop and "should explain the activities in the vicinity of the war-time tannery." Archeological digs, however, would be necessary before the exact location of the Tannery could be established.<sup>28</sup>

Bond also proposed placing interpretive signs or markers at various other sites in the park. The possible locations for such markers, he suggested, were Telegraph Road, Huntsville Road, Winton Springs, the sites of McCulloch's and McIntosh's deaths, the place where Slack was killed, the position of the 1st Iowa Battery, the locations of the Union and Confederate hospitals, the 1st and 2nd positions of Davis' artillery and the first position of Sigel's artillery on March 8, and the locations of the Ford and Clemons houses.

The multitude of interpretive exhibits at the Visitor Center

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<sup>27</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 13.

<sup>28</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 14.

and on the Tour Road would serve to enlighten the newcomer to Civil War history as well as peak the interest of the well-informed. The average tourist might spend two to three hours at the park, whereas a seasoned Civil War scholar might take an entire day or maybe two to examine the grounds and interpretive exhibits. For the most part, the visitors would be self-guided, guided tours being "infrequent" because of a "limited staff."<sup>29</sup>

The process of visitation, Bond believed, must begin in the lobby of the Visitor Center. In a relatively open space that could accommodate "at least seventy persons," Bond suggested that the visitors should learn that the park is "administered" by the National Park Service, a bureau of the Department of the Interior. This visitor should also be introduced to the NPS's mission and the "national significance" of the Battle of Pea Ridge in the lobby. For convenience, the lobby should also contain "several seats" and should be "adjacent" to the information desk, "where an attendant will be on duty to answer interpretive questions and to provide information on the area."<sup>30</sup>

Bond's Interpretive Prospectus epitomized the mission of the National Park Service under Mission 66. Modern recreational facilities were being designed not only to preserve the battlefield, but to interpret the important facets of the area for the visitors, whether a complete stranger to Civil War history or a veteran researcher. Similarly, the park was being interpreted to accommodate the "automobile visitor." Like President Eisenhower's highway program of the 1950s, the National Park Service mission focused on making the parks and monuments accessible to the automobile visitor. Convenience would attract more visitors which would in turn bring in more revenue. Fiscal success (or potential success) could also be used to convince Congress of continued financial support for the system. The interpretive plan of the Pea Ridge National Military Park, therefore, was being formulated with these goals in mind: to accommodate the public, to inform the public, and to justify the existence of the park.<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that Bond's interpretive prospectus paid little attention to the natural integrity of the park. Rather he made scant comment about the need to preserve the natural terrain of the park. Yet he did recognize that the landscape of the federally owned park was

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<sup>29</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 15.

<sup>30</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1961), 16-17.

<sup>31</sup>For an excellent discussion of Mission 66, see Conrad L. Wirth, Parks, Politics, and the People (Norman: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 237-284.

a great asset, an asset that would be given greater attention in the future.

### The 1963 Master Plan

The Master Plan of 1963 reflects Bond's interpretive suggestions and much more. In addition to interpretation, the plan spells out the management strategy for Pea Ridge National Military Park. The plan contains fifteen sections that discuss the important issues facing the new national park. These topics clearly reflect the National Park Service's Mission 66 program which called for exceptional interpretive and recreational facilities as well as visitor accommodations. Cultural and natural preservation are also emphasized in the plan. The fifteen sections of the plan are divided into two overriding themes, the NARRATIVE and the DRAWINGS. The Table of Contents are as follows:

#### NARRATIVE

Introduction	G 1
Preservation and Use Objectives	G 2
The Land	G 3 & G 4
The Visitor	G 8
The Staff	G 11
Management and Development Schedule	G 12

#### DRAWINGS

##### Development Plans

General Development Plan	G 5
Utility Layout Plan	G 6
Roads and Trails Plan (later inclusion)	G 7

##### Management Plans

Plan of Interpretation	G 9
Vegetation Treatment Plan	G 10

##### Base Maps

Historical Base Map	G 13
Battle Situation Map	G 14
Climatological Data	G 15 <sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>U.S. Department of the Interior, "The Master Plan for Preservation and Use, Pea Ridge National Military Park, Arkansas," G-1.

The Master Plan was approved by NPS Associate Director A. Clark Stratton on October 9, 1963 after being signed by Superintendent John T. Willett, EODC Chief John G. Hall, and Southeast Regional Director Elbert Cox. This plan has remained the principal plan of the park ever since.

The "Introduction" of the Master Plan provides a brief description of the location and access to the park and the potential for visitation. Located at latitude 36° 27' N and longitude 94° 2' 30" W, the park could be accessed "solely by U.S. Route 62, a northeast-southwest route, somewhat less important than the major transcontinental highways, but traceable on U.S. maps from Buffalo, New York, to El Paso, Texas..."<sup>33</sup> The towns "served by" the highway were Rogers, Springdale, Fayetteville, and Prairie Grove "to the south" and Eureka Springs, Berryville, Harrison, Yellville, and Mountain Home "to the east." "It is anticipated that, during the season, a steady flow of resort vacationers will swell the ranks of other Park visitors."

The population base was broken down into a table:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Population</u>
Rogers, Arkansas	11 miles	5,700
Bentonville, Arkansas	17 miles	3,650
Springdale, Arkansas	20 miles	10,000
Fayetteville, Arkansas	30 miles	20,000

Cities within a "day-use" are included:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Population</u>
Joplin, Missouri	80 miles	43,400
Springfield, Missouri	85 miles	70,000
Ft. Smith, Arkansas	85 miles	60,000
Tulsa, Oklahoma	140 miles	182,740 <sup>34</sup>

Other regional counties of interest in northwest Arkansas (264,978), northeast Oklahoma (464,949), and southwest Missouri (303,511) are then listed with their populations; Tulsa County, Oklahoma and Greene County, Missouri were the only two with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

"Features of Interest" that may have had an influence on the park's visitation were determined to be Roaring River State and Table Rock State parks, Missouri; and Lake Atalanta near Rogers, Arkansas. The upcoming construction of a dam on the White River was anticipated to have an influence on tourism in the region. This project, of course, resulted in the

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<sup>33</sup>"Master Plan," G-1.

<sup>34</sup>"Master Plan," G-1.

formation of the Beaver Lake Reservoir.

In the next section of the Master Plan is "Preservation and Use Objectives" on G-2. "The Purpose of the Park," this section begins, "is to provide opportunity to its visitors to gain a sense of reality of the Battle of Pea Ridge, an understanding of its importance in saving Missouri for the Union, and its influence upon later events in the Civil War."<sup>35</sup> The unequivocal reason for the park is its military heritage. The plan then reiterates Bond's emphasis in his Interpretive Prospectus of 1961, stating in the "Significant Park Resources" and "Significant Values" subsections that the battle should be portrayed in a microcosmic as well as macrocosmic way: that is, from the unique local viewpoint and the broader national perspective. Civil War commemoration, in other words, was extremely important to the authors of the Master Plan.

On the other hand, the plan also warns against overstating the Battle of Pea Ridge. Rather, "the battle of Pea Ridge does not need to be the 'Gettysburg of the West,'" as historian Walter Brown had coined it. "In its own right, it was a dramatic and significant battle." And finally, the interpretation of that battle should be accessible to a wide range of visitors, from young school children to seasoned Civil War scholars.

The Master Plan called for more than just a monument to the fallen soldiers, however. It was an opportunity to preserve a historical natural landscape. "Preservation of the area's values," the plan states (in subsection Atmosphere & Preservation), "includes a program of restoring historic vegetative cover, protecting the area from fire, intrusive development, or other factors which might destroy its historic character." The natural setting, the plan contends, needed careful monitoring and should be resculptured to accurately depict the landscape of 1862 (the Vegetation Treatment Plan, G-10, provides a detailed map of the vegetative landscape at the time of the battle to serve as a guide to return some lands to forest and other lands to prairie). A point made here and reiterated throughout the plan was that commercial development was to be strongly discouraged in the vicinity of the park. Consequently, not only would the park personnel fight to keep the borders non-commercial, but they would also disallow any concessionary development at the park--in the Visitor Center--in particular.

The plan reiterated Bond's emphases for visitors. An interpretive theme "will be developed around the significant

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<sup>35</sup>"Master Plan," G-2.

resources already defined." The interpretive method, of course, would be the self-guided tour at the Visitor Center exhibits and along the Tour Loop Road. In the end, therefore, the visit should affirm a "memorable and inspirational visit for the Park guests." Lunching and picnicing facilities "should be provided" and "a limited number of overnight campsites" constructed "if a justifiable need develops." In addition, interpretive literature should be made available to the public through a "cooperating association," but not through a "concessioner."<sup>36</sup>

The staff is the final piece of the park puzzle. Important park personnel would provide "administrative, protective, and interpretive services to carry out the objectives of the Park." Furthermore, "Considering that the battle is not as well known as some, an effort even greater than usual must be made for the establishment of an interpretive program of excellence here if the Service responsibility is to be fulfilled." To complete this mission would require "research"--historical, archeological, and administrative--to determine the proper interpretation for the park. "The searchlight of scientific investigation needs to be thrown upon this area which has been in the shadow of the larger battles to the east."<sup>37</sup>

To fulfill this mission, the park retained the Winton Springs House for park employee apartments. Likewise, archeological investigation of the sites of Leetown, the Tannery, near the tavern, and important battle landmarks would need to be made. Part of the interpretive integrity of the park would come from a "study collection of artifacts, photographs, and documents directly concerned with the Battle of Pea Ridge" and "will be developed and stored in the Visitor Center." In the final analysis, therefore, "Pea Ridge National Military Park will function within the framework of this approved Master Plan and under published delegations of authority as a Group A organization as defined in the Administrative Manual."<sup>38</sup>

In the next section, "The Land," (G-3 and G-4), the Master Plan discusses the legal background for the establishment of the Park, leases, permits, and easements, the terrain and its flora and fauna, the climate, soils, and the special protection considerations. The legislative background of the park, under "Establishment," is listed (see Chapter 2 for the details) in the column with the discussion of the "Land

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<sup>36</sup>"Master Plan," G-2.

<sup>37</sup>"Master Plan," G-2.

<sup>38</sup>"Master Plan," G-2.

Status." The park was created by a 1956 act of Congress and up to the time had acquired 4,210 acres with 52 acres in the Detached Area currently being purchased.

These lands also had a revenue potential beyond visitation. Special Use Permits, for example, had been awarded on the fields of the park for haying, in particular, to Ray Wilkerson at Winton Springs, the Leetown Battlefield, and on Clemons Field. Yet to be leased were the Hobbs Place, Ruddicks Field, and the "West side of the Park".

The park also had right-of-way easements in various sections. For example, the "United States shall have a perpetual right of easement over, under, and across U.S. Highway 62 and the county road. The State of Arkansas agreed to abandon State Highway 72 which runs east-west through the northern part of the Park and the old Telegraph Road which runs north-south through the eastern portion of the Park."<sup>39</sup> In addition, "There are no local or state regulations concerning water rights which affect the Park."

The terrain is described in the section on land as well. On the Springfield Plateau, the elevations vary from 1,250' to 1,700' (in the park the elevation varies from 1,212' to 1,600'). Pea Ridge, "the dominant relief feature within the Park and after which the battle is named," runs east-west on the northern border of the park. "Another prominent feature is 'Round Top' Mountain." It is located one-half mile south of the western edge of the larger ridge. "'Round Top' stands out like an island in the western half of the Park...from its top can be seen an area equal, if not greater, in size to that seen from the top of Pea Ridge."<sup>40</sup>

Both of these ridges were forested in 1963 "as they were at the time of the battle, primarily with native deciduous trees": oaks, Eastern Redcedar and a mix of hardwoods on the "lower slopes." Most of the battlefield, however, was "much more open than it was in 1862." The most common vegetation in the open area was broomsedge, herbs, and grasses such as orchard grass, bermuda, and cheat. The western portion of the park was predominantly grassland or prairie in 1862. "Rare or unusual species," however, "if present, are unknown."

The northern portion of the park is drained by Big Sugar Creek, the remainder being drained by Little Sugar Creek. These two creeks join in southern Missouri at the Elk River which is a tributary of the Grand River which, in turn, drains

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<sup>39</sup>"Master Plan," G-3.

<sup>40</sup>"Master Plan," G-3.

into the Arkansas River at Fort Gibson, Oklahoma. As for potable water, the park tapped into a "deep well" in the backyards of the residences. The well water was pumped to a 25,000-gallon reservoir on the big ridge just west of Elkhorn Tavern and gravity carried the precious resource to the Visitor Center, the tavern, and the employee residences.<sup>41</sup>

The source of the utilities varied. The sewage system, for example, was "owned and operated by the National Park Service." This system consisted of "gravity collection lines, septic tanks and seepage beds." The electricity, on the other hand, was "owned and operated by the Carroll Electric Co-op, Berryville." It was a three-phase system composed of overhead primary lines with "short runs of overhead and underground secondary lines." The integrity of the park was also important:

The [electrical] system shall be modified to help preserve the scenic and historic qualities of the area by removing or relocating overhead lines as shown on the Utilities and Communications Plan [G-6 of Master Plan].<sup>42</sup>

Western Arkansas Telephone Company of Russellville "owned and operated" the telephone lines, and like the electrical system, the telephone lines would be modified to maintain the scenic and historic integrity of the park. At the Visitor Center and employee residences, heating consisted of "a combination of oil fired hot water and forced hot air," whereas the Winton Springs House was heated with gas spaceheaters. A central unit air conditioned the Visitor Center. Finally, the rubbish at the park was incinerated and the garbage "collected by the Park maintenance staff and trucked to the Pea Ridge town disposal area."<sup>43</sup>

Outside of the creature comforts of civilization, the park did have wildlife. The wildlife, however, had not been studied as of 1963 but it was known that "the smaller species indigenous to northwestern Arkansas are common in the Park." In September, 1961, Superintendent Willett had approved a one-year "wolf control program" which was continued in 1962 and 1963. As part of this program, four Texas Red Wolves were trapped and destroyed in May, 1963 because there "had been repeated complaints of wolves killing livestock in the area adjacent to the Park." The Red Wolf would later be placed on

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<sup>41</sup>"Master Plan," G-4.

<sup>42</sup>"Master Plan," G-4.

<sup>43</sup>"Master Plan," G-4.

the Endangered Species list after Congress passed the Endangered Species Act in 1973.<sup>44</sup>

The plan also describes the climate of the park area, providing the lowest and highest temperatures to date as well as annual precipitation. Likewise, the soil classifications--Centerton-Gerald and Bodine--are given.

The Land section is concluded with a discussion of Special Protection Considerations. Fire was a worrisome concern for the park personnel. "Park neighbors," in particular, seemed to pose the greatest fire hazard when they burned weeds and brush from their land. "Broomsedge is potentially the most hazardous fuel type," the Master Plan contends. On the other hand, "except during periods of protracted drought, fire risk is relatively low." Park personnel patrolled the area regularly and were especially aware of the dangers during the fire season, from October 1 to April 30. Communications in case of fires would be through messengers or by telephone. The Pea Ridge Fire Department agreed to allow the park the "use of its equipment and manpower on forest, grass or building fires...at a cost of \$75.00 for each call."

Forest insects and disease were not serious and the "only known significant...pest" was the fall webworm which fed on persimmons and hickories most often even though it would "attack other species of deciduous trees." It also seemed to be restricted to Big Mountain.

Grazing was another concern for the staff. "No damage to vegetation," however, "is caused by grazing in the Park at the present time." Four park neighbors were given special use permits to graze and hay 567 acres in the park. "The purpose of these permits is, at minimum cost to the Government, to keep open the areas on the battlefield that were open usable land at the time of the battle in 1862." The permits ran on an annual basis and were "designed to maintain the fertility of the soil and protect the forested area of the Park from adverse use." Likewise, soil erosion was a concern of the staff which noted some damage. Most of the erosion, however, was in "restricted...small scattered areas of one acre or less...mainly in wash-outs on slopes with poor soil and inadequate vegetative cover, where in the past, continued over-grazing by domestic stock has caused gulleys and washing away of the top-soil during periods of heavy precipitation." There were no agreements with other agencies concerning soil erosion and moisture conservation, so these "conditions will be corrected [with park management] when S&MC funds are provided annually." The Park Service outlawed grazing in many

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<sup>44</sup>"Master Plan," G-3.

of its parks, including Pea Ridge, in 1978 largely because of erosion problems.

The next section of text in the Master Plan, "The Visitor," (G-8) essentially reiterates Historian John Bond's interpretive prospectus of 1961. The plan repeats Bond's suggestions for potential numbers of visitors, the length of the average visit, the importance of historic interpretation at the museum and on the loop Tour Road, and the need for various media to illustrate the importance of the Battle of Pea Ridge. Seasonal variations in visitation are discussed as are future possibilities for picnicking and overnight camping facilities. Unlike the Bond prospectus, however, the Master Plan does list the range of universities in the vicinity that may be served by the park: John Brown University (Siloam Springs), the University of Arkansas (Fayetteville), Arkansas State Teachers College (Conway), Arkansas College (Batesville), Harding College (Searcy), the University of Tulsa, the University of Oklahoma (Norman), Southeastern State College (Durant), Oklahoma A&M (Stillwater), Phillips University (Enid), the University of Missouri (Columbia), Missouri Valley College (Marshall), and Southwest Missouri State (Springfield).

This section concludes with a discussion of design analysis. Part of that design plan suggests constructing trails "to facilitate interpretation." "A self-guided nature trail will be provided near Pea Ridge West to interpret natural history and geological features." No mention is made of horse trails in the Master Plan, however. Likewise, twenty picnic sites were proposed near the Visitor Center and a "parking turnout" and "foot-trails" suggested "to view the earthworks in the detached area at Little Sugar Creek."<sup>45</sup> The map that follows the text on G-9 details the interpretive plan for the park. Clearly, Bond's previous plan played a key role in the formation of the design: "THIS PLAN REFLECTS THE PLANNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINED IN THE INTERPRETIVE PROSPECTUS FOR PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK APPROVED APRIL 6, 1961, AND THE SIGN AND WAYSIDE EXHIBIT PLAN FOR THE AREA."

The remainder of the Master Plan, G-10 through G-15, is a variation of maps and a description of the staff (The Staff section, G-11, will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4). The "Vegetation Treatment Plan" is mapped out on G-10, Edwin Bearss's "Historical Base Map" is on G-13, the "Battle Situation Map" on G-14, and climatological data are mapped out on G-15. The "Management and Development Schedule" appears on G-12 and provides a buildings chart and distribution of development chart. This description finalizes the Master

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<sup>45</sup>"Master Plan," G-8.

Plan, keeping in mind that the duties and number of staff will be discussed in the next chapter.

### Conclusion

The 1961 Interpretive Prospectus and the 1963 Master Plan set the stage for the development of Pea Ridge National Military Park. Historian Bond's ideas for interpretation and Superintendent Willett's master plans were coordinated in the formation of the park facilities and its interpretive scheme. Clearly, their plans reflected the broader Mission 66 goals of the National Park Service: accommodation for visitors and park personnel, accurate and accessible interpretation, and meaningful historic preservation. How the park personnel carried out these plans and how they defined their duties in the first few years is the focus of the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 4

### The Development of the Park Facilities and the Staff and their Duties through 1966

#### Introduction

Putting the Master Plan into operation was the responsibility of the staff of the Pea Ridge National Military Park. As we shall see, the park personnel's roles were defined in the Master Plan. The staff at Pea Ridge did use the plan as a guide for their duties, yet combined their common sense with supervision to mold their particular roles whether superintendents, administrative assistants, rangers, historians, or maintenance workers. Guidance from the National Park Service's Washington Office and the Regional Office at Richmond, Virginia (PRNMP was in the Southeast Region originally) facilitated the early formation of the administration of the park, like any other site within the system. Likewise, the park personnel brought to their jobs their previous experiences in coordinating a specific plan for management of the park.

The result of this collaborative effort was the construction of the important facilities and development of the park's historic and natural resources that would make Pea Ridge National Military Park a viable addition to the NPS system. The superintendents--John T. Willett (July 1960-June 1963), Raymond L. Nelson (July 1963-June 1965), and William E. Dyer (July 1965-August 1967)--oversaw the important projects such as the construction of the Visitor Center, the Tour Road, the shelter at Pea Ridge East, and general management of the everyday operations at the park. Likewise, the administrative assistants--Nolan Oswald (Oct. 1960-Sept. 1965) and S. Sue Singer (Aug. 1965-?)--worked with the superintendents on the various projects, insuring that proper procedures and paperwork were completed to award and carry out the construction contracts; they also carefully examined financial affairs during this early phase of Park and personnel development.

The management of the cultural and natural resources of the park, of course, fell heavily on the shoulders of the rangers and historians in coordination with the Superintendent. The rangers of this period were Rodney D. Griffin (Oct. 1960-May 1961), Gordon K. Clifton (July 1961-June 1963), C. Newton Sikes (June 1963-January 1966) and Ivan R. Tolley (June 1966-Oct. 1967). The historians were John W. Bond (Sept. 1960-1962), Dwight N. Stinson (April 1962-June 1963), and David L.

Hyde (July 1963-Oct. 1966).

The maintenance personnel coordinated operation of the park physical plant and maintained the park facilities. The principal maintenanceman was Foreman Russell W. Walker who began employment in August 1960 and served until the mid-1970s. John F. Demaree was the caretaker from August 1962 to sometime in 1971.

The above individuals played the principal roles in the management, construction, and maintenance of the Pea Ridge NMP through 1966. They were especially concerned with carrying out the provisions of Mission 66 and, after 1963, the Master Plan. The result was the steady development of the park which by the end of 1966, in many ways, achieved the larger goals of the NPS at their particular site in Northwest Arkansas. And with each succeeding step toward development, visitation steadily increased throughout the 1960s. Beginning with the year 1966 (104,087), more than 100,000 visitors annually began to come to the park, an average that has remained fairly constant to the present.

#### The Staff and the Master Plan

In the Master Plan, on G-11 (the General Package Narrative), THE STAFF, its coordinating agencies, their duties, and the number of staff required are discussed. Clearly, the Superintendent played a pivotal role in the management of the park:

##### Office of Superintendent

Directs and is responsible for all functions of the area, including preservation, development, interpretation and use of Pea Ridge National Military Park.<sup>1</sup>

In other words, the Superintendent was the general manager of the park with multiple duties related to overall administration of the park which clearly fit into the framework of the Mission 66 schemata.

"Financial accounting and payrolling" of the park's employees would "be accomplished by the Southeast Region Field Finance Office in Richmond, Virginia." Cooperating agencies included the state of Arkansas Governor's Office, the Department of Highways, the Department of Conservation, and the Arkansas History Commission. Cooperating societies included the Pea

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<sup>1</sup>"Master Plan," G-11.

Ridge National Park Association, the Benton County Historical Society, and the Arkansas Historical Association. Likewise, the park was to be aware of cooperating federal representatives on the local level in the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, the Department of the Interior, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Staff housing consisted of two, three-bedroom homes built by the Park Service (before 1963) and two apartments in the "remodeled" Winton Springs House. For the staff members who did not live in these facilities, it was made clear that Rogers was only eight miles away and afforded "normal community facilities."

Under the heading "STAFF ACTIVITIES," Land Management, Maintenance, Safety, Law Enforcement, and Administration are briefly discussed in the Master Plan. "All functions of the Superintendent and his staff are centered in the Visitor Center." From this headquarters, the Superintendent and his staff managed the park resources. Duties in this category, which fell mainly to the rangers, included:

Train personnel in protection and other related skills and procedures.

Control public use of the Park, including its historic, natural and developed features, and promote proper and safe use of the Park.

Plan and apply measures for the prevention and control of damage to Park resources and physical improvements by fire, insects, diseases, soil erosion, and other agencies.

Enforce rules and regulations necessary for the protection of the Park.<sup>2</sup>

Under the supervision of the Superintendent, the Ranger played the key role in protection of cultural and natural resources both from natural and human threats to the park and its resources. The maintenance crew's responsibilities were also delineated:

Operate utility systems, building equipment and other facilities of the physical plant.

Maintain roads, trails, buildings, grounds, equipment, and utility systems (except telephone

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<sup>2</sup>"Master Plan," G-11.

and power systems maintained by a public utility company).

Maintain earthworks in the Detached Section.  
Maintain historic buildings and roads.<sup>3</sup>

Upkeep of the park facilities and the grounds fell to the maintenance man and his assistants.

The visitor services were largely the responsibility of the Historian. Yet, "While all staff members serve the visitors, the Superintendent, Ranger and Historian provide most of the personal service." A list of eight duties for the Historian follows:

Train personnel in the procedures and skills utilized in interpretation. Inform other personnel on the resources of the Park.

Coordinate or perform research in the field of history and, to a lesser extent, prehistory.

Prepare and publish technical and popular publications.

Preserve historical and archeological materials; maintain museum records and study collections.

Maintain Park library, photographic files, and audio-visual materials.

Plan and operate the Park's interpretive program.

Maintain relationships with educational and historical organizations concerned with knowledge and interpretation germane to the Park.

Advise the Superintendent and other personnel on matters pertaining to interpretation, and those relating to the preservation of historical resources or materials.<sup>4</sup>

The Historian was to play a key role in the interpretation of the park both for the visitors and for the park personnel. Likewise, the Historian was expected to extend a welcoming hand to the public through educational and civic organizations that would enhance the story of the Pea Ridge NMP and offer

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<sup>3</sup>"Master Plan," G-11.

<sup>4</sup>"Master Plan," G-11.

opportunities for further research and development of the interpretive facilities.

The Superintendent and Administrative Assistant were required to fulfill eight duties according to the Master Plan:

Maintain efficient appropriation utilization, and maintain records necessary to effect control of funds allocated to the Park.

Effect the procurement, and when necessary the storage and issuance of supplies and materials for the Park.

Effect the acquisition and disposal and maintain records of accountability for all equipment and property, except museum collections.

Coordinate and consolidate the Park's budget estimates for submission to the Regional Office.

Maintain mails and files.

Carry out Park responsibility for time, leave, and payroll procedures.

Participate in planning Park Development, in cooperation with the Southeast Regional Office and EODC.

Promote favorable public relations with neighbors and visitors.<sup>5</sup>

The actual administration of the park and maintenance of paperwork and meeting of regional guidelines clearly fell to the Superintendent and his Administrative Assistant. Key among the other duties, of course, was careful management of personnel and their pay as well as maintenance of good public relations.

The Master Plan then assesses the current (1963) state of management in the three major areas of Land Management, Visitor Services, and Staff Facilitating Services. As for Land Management, "The existing operation and staff appear adequate in performing all activities in this category." Yet, "When Park development has been completed, additional help will be needed to properly protect and maintain the expanded facilities." In 1963, the park employed eight full-time staff members: the Superintendent, a Ranger, an Historian, an

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<sup>5</sup>"Master Plan," G-11.

Administrative Assistant, a Clerk-stenographer, a Maintenceman, a Caretaker, and a Laborer. Four seasonal laborers and two seasonal ranger-historians were also employed. These existing personnel, however, did not meet the long-range plan for employment at Pea Ridge. The Master Plan, in fact, called for five additional full-timers--one more Ranger, another Historian, a Janitor, another Caretaker, and one more Laborer. Furthermore, the plan called for hiring another Seasonal Ranger. Fiscal constraints would limit the ability of the Superintendent to hire the full staff called for in the Master Plan, especially after the mid-1980s. The Master Plan's call for 16.7 Full Time Equivalency (FTE) has never been achieved at Pea Ridge. In fact, there has rarely been more than a 12.0 FTE at the park.

Despite the need for additional personnel, the staff was fulfilling its duties in Fire Protection, a subcategory of Land Management. "Fire protection is provided by fire extinguishers and hoses in the buildings and by fire hydrants supplied from the 25,000-gallon reservoir. The park staff and the Pea Ridge Fire Company are available for fire fighting."<sup>6</sup> Fire prevention and fighting would take on a life of its own in the Park Service. For most of the history of the park, in fact, putting out all fires was mandated until 1993 when prescribed fires were first implemented at Pea Ridge.

The current visitor services, the Master Plan states, were "adequate." Anticipated completion of the Elkhorn Tavern restoration, the development of the Little Sugar Creek area (Detached Area), and the "additional interpretive facilities programmed" were projected to require more research and interpretation and consequently, "an additional Historian position will be needed" (this position has not been created to date).

To accommodate the staff, the Park Service had completed the Visitor Center, exhibit shelters, employee residences, and maintenance facilities. The Visitor Center consisted of five office rooms, an information desk, a view area, and an audio-visual room. The maintenance facilities through 1963 included five maintenance equipment stalls, a supply storage room, an office storage area, an oil and paint storage area, a tool storage area, a work shop, and an incinerator (commercial type, portable).

By 1963, the rudimentary responsibilities of the park personnel were laid out in the Master Plan. Likewise, the important facilities to facilitate management and visitor services were constructed. In the following sections of this

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<sup>6</sup>"Master Plan," G-11.

chapter, there will be a discussion of the construction projects (some of which took place prior to 1963), followed by a discussion of the actual activities of the park personnel as recorded in the park's Weekly Staff Reports from 1963 to 1966.

### Construction Projects at Pea Ridge

The principal construction projects in the early years were centered around the Visitor Center, the Tour Road, and Elkhorn Tavern. A major tree-planting project was undertaken as well. Each of these projects involved contractors who bid on the proposed projects. Construction representatives played a key role, along with the park personnel, in administering and overseeing these projects. Among them was Construction Representative James S. Askins who regularly attended weekly staff meetings at the Pea Ridge park to keep the personnel abreast of the most recent developments, both the advances and the setbacks, during 1964-1965.<sup>7</sup>

The first major project to be undertaken was the Tour Road and parking areas on Big Mountain. Administrative Assistant Nolan Oswald, with permission from Superintendent Willett, announced the contract for the Tour Road and parking area on August 25, 1961 and the bids were opened on September 15. The Foresgren Brothers Contractors of Fort Smith, Arkansas won the contract for \$194,254. The company began the project, clearing the right-of-way, on November 6.<sup>8</sup>

The first leg of the Tour Road began near Highway 72 close to Little Mountain. From this point, Foresgren built the road northeastward onto Big Mountain, past the location of Pea Ridge West, and along the ridge to the Pea Ridge East parking area. From there, the road gradually descended to Elkhorn Tavern's parking area for a total of 3.5 miles. At each of the above mentioned stops, the contractor constructed parking areas with slots for ten cars and two buses.

A one-way route, the Tour Road was 12-feet wide with three-foot shoulders, and the 10-inch thick surface was composed of compacted double bituminous asphalt. On the other hand, the spur to Pea Ridge East was 18-feet wide because it was constructed for two-way traffic. Foresgren used the same asphalt for the parking areas which were also equipped with concrete curbs and sidewalks. Carbon black sidewalks and a

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<sup>7</sup>For example, see "Staff Meeting," October 26, 1965.

<sup>8</sup>See Alaric Parrish, "Pea Ridge National Military Park, Administrative History," (1974), Southwest Regional Office, National Park Service Library, 29.

concrete curb were added as well as a 6' by 512' paved trail to the interpretive shelter at Pea Ridge East.<sup>9</sup>

The Tour Road project advanced very slowly due to rainy weather and the contractor's inability to find skilled workers and the proper equipment. Stop orders were initiated from December 20, 1961 to May 15, 1962 (146 days) and from November 17, 1962 to April 5, 1963 (139 days) due to adverse weather conditions. Further delays resulted with Change Orders on August 28, September 5, October 5, 1962 and on April 12, 1963. Adverse weather and additional work caused these delays.

Two subcontractors were hired to provide rock and to complete the paving. The Northwest Arkansas Asphalt Company of Fayetteville laid the surface and the Ozark Construction Company of Rogers provided the necessary rock for the Tour Road project. This initial Tour Road contract lasted from October 14, 1961 to May 21, 1963. The total cost for the construction of the first section of the Tour Road was \$238,692.96.<sup>10</sup> The remainder of the Tour Road was completed in November 1964. F. H. Necessary & Son Construction Company of Rogers, Arkansas won the contract and began the project on May 4 of that year. Despite some delay due to adverse weather conditions, the Tour Road was completed from old Highway 72 north of Little Mountain southeast to the vicinity of Leetown and then north to the Visitor Center, with its terminus at Elkhorn Tavern. The final extension consisted of just over 3.5 miles of pavement, mostly 12-foot width with three-foot shoulders. A half-mile stretch of the extension was 18-foot wide to accommodate two-way traffic. In addition, the Necessary Company constructed two ten-car and two bus parking areas and two parking turnouts of four-car size. In the end, the Park Service paid \$224,525.39 for the final extension of the Tour Road.<sup>11</sup>

Unfortunately, the Tour Road extension was nearly washed away only five months after its completion. A torrential rain that lasted for three days, dropping almost seven inches of precipitation, "raised havoc with the steep cuts and slopes and the drainage ditches along the new section of the Park tour road."<sup>12</sup> The wash sloughed 625 cubic yards of top soil from the slopes and ditches. Nelson estimated the repairs with the aid of Engineer Everhardt:

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<sup>9</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 31.

<sup>10</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 32.

<sup>11</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 58.

<sup>12</sup>Memorandum, Superintendent Raymond Nelson to the Regional Director, Southeast Region, April 9, 1965, 1.

625 cu. yd. topsoil @ \$2.50 per yard, in place	= \$1,562.50
25 units (1,000 sq. ft. ea.) seeding, mulching, and fertilizing @ \$20 ea.	= 500.00
300 lin. ft. of paved gutter (bituminous or concrete) @ \$3.50 per ft.	= 1,050.00
50 rolls of jute mat, with staples, @ \$25 per roll	= 1,250.00
Installation of jute mat @ \$4 per roll	= <u>200.00</u>
Total \$4,562.50 <sup>13</sup>	

In the end, the Tour Road would cost the Park Service more than a \$1.5 million to maintain and repair over the next thirty years.

Prior to completion of the Tour Road, the park announced the next major construction project: the Visitor Center and Utility building, the two employee residences, and the water and sewer utilities. On April 1, 1962, the winners of the contract, the Jones Brothers Construction Company of Joplin, Missouri began the project which was not interrupted for 240 days. The completion date was May 1, 1964. The costs for these facilities were:

Visitor Center and Utility Building	\$168,692.70
Residence #1	17,876.25
Residence #2	17,876.25
Interpretive Shelter	8,025.00
Utilities--Water System	42,953.92
Utilities--Sewage System--Visitor Center	7,983.50
Utilities--Sewage System--Residences	<u>2,109.00</u>
Total \$264,816.62	
PS&S, AP, and/or Facilitating Services-16%	<u>42,370.66</u>
\$307,187.28 <sup>14</sup>	

Simultaneous with this latter project was the contract work for completion of the roads for the Visitor Center, the residences, the entrance, and the parking area. Bids were

<sup>13</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Nelson to Region Director, SE Reg., April 9, 1965, 1.

<sup>14</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 33.

opened on February 20, 1962. The Foresgren Brothers again won the bidding (\$38,494.00) and began their work on June 28, 1962.

The work went ahead slowly due to adverse weather as well as the contractor's "willful neglect." During the summer and fall of 1962, the contractor lost 159 days due to bad weather, mainly rain. More than eight inches fell during both September and October. The primary two-way Entrance Road, however, was completed. This connected the park facilities to Highway 62. The Entrance Road then was connected to the new parking area that could accommodate forty cars and two buses at the proposed area of the Tour Road. This portion of the road ran for 0.4 mile. A 0.2 mile secondary road was also constructed and ran in front of the two residences, across the entrance road, and to the utility section of the Visitor Center. The materials for these roads were bituminous plant-mix surfacing on top of a ten-inch compacted base.<sup>15</sup> In the end, this road project cost \$46,274.32 after nearly nine thousand dollars of subcontracting was added to the original bid.

Another major endeavor was the tree-planting project. After winning the bid, which opened on September 4, 1962, the Ozark Nurseries Company, Inc. of Tahlequah, Oklahoma began planting 2,800 trees native to the park area on October 14. Ozark Nurseries used a tractor operated auger to dig the holes for the trees. Ranger Gordon Clifton visited the nursery's facilities in Tahlequah on November 19 and discovered that an ample supply of the appropriate species existed, and after a slow start the planting was begun in earnest, being completed on December 22, 1962.

Ranger Clifton, Maintenance Foreman Russell Walker, and Superintendent John Willett noted several problems with the tree-planting project. Ozark Nurseries planted some of the trees too shallowly, others were not tall enough (with a 5-foot minimum height necessary), and rodents gnawed on the bark of others, killing them. Initially, the nursery wrapped all the tree trunks with paper for the first 1 1/2 to 2 feet above the ground, yet they found that the rats and mice could eat through the thin paper. Rabbits joined in the feast and the result was a high mortality rate for the trees to the tune of about 700 dead, a discovery made on the final inspection of December 22, 1962. Later, Ozark Nurseries would correct many of the problems with the tree-planting project by replacing the trees that died because of improper planting

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<sup>15</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 37.

techniques.<sup>16</sup>

The following chart describes the type of trees planted and their costs:

<u>Tree Species</u>	<u>Quantity</u>	<u>Tree Price</u>	<u>Total Price</u>	<u>Extra Trees</u>	<u>Value</u>
1. Ash, green Fraxinus penn. Marsch	350	\$2.00	\$700.	4	\$ 8.
2. Maple, silver Acer saccharum L.	350	2.00	700.	12	24.
3. Maple, sugar Acer sacc. Marsh	350	3.50	1,225.	2	7.
4. Redbud, easter Cercis canadensis L.	350	3.00	1,050.	34	102.
5. Sycamore, American Blatanus occidentalis L.	350	2.00	700.	1	2.
6. Hackberry Celtis occidentalis L.	350	3.00	1,050.	6	18.
7. Dogwood, Flowering Cornus florida L.	350	6.50	2,275.	2	13.
8. Oak, pin Quercus palustria M.	350	7.00	2,450.	15	105.
	2,800		\$10,150.	76	\$279.
			+ 1,624.		
		[Total]	11,774. <sup>17</sup>		

#### Elkhorn Tavern and Other Improvements

The most popular place at the military park, of course, was Elkhorn Tavern. A tourist attraction since the late nineteenth century, the tavern proved to be a very important and challenging interpretive site at the park. Because the structure was in need of major renovations, the Park Service worked diligently to insure that a proper architectural interpretive scheme was planned for rebuilding the old Civil War hospital and supply station. In the end, the Park Service would opt for the architectural style of the tavern after it was rebuilt in the late 1860s (see the next chapter for a detailed history of Elkhorn Tavern).

There were two stages of development for the rehabilitation of

<sup>16</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 39; Weekly Staff Meeting, November 12, 1963, 1.

<sup>17</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 40.

Elkhorn Tavern. The first was the planning phase, the second the actual restoration. Historian Dwight E. Stinson, Jr. completed a "Historic Buildings and Structures Report for Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge National Military Park" in May 1963. The actual details of this report will be discussed in the next chapter. Its Contents, however, are listed below:

	<u>Page</u>
Forward	1
Administrative Data	4
A. Building or Structure	4
B. Proposed Use of Structure and Justification of Such	4
C. Provision for Operating the Structure	5
D. Preliminary Cost of Resoration and Furnishings	6
Historical Data	7
Bibliography	50
Notes	53 <sup>18</sup>

Stinson's report provides the guidelines and justification for restoration of the tavern.

Because of fiscal constraints, the restoration of Elkhorn Tavern was delayed until fiscal year 1965. By this time, Stinson's report had been completed and Construction Representative James S. Askins had been appointed by the Washington, D.C. office of the NPS. The overall cost to complete the tavern's rehabilitation was in the neighborhood of \$34,362.68.<sup>19</sup> In late 1965 and the first half of 1966, Elkhorn Tavern was rehabilitated to include a utility room with storage cabinets, a utility sink, an electric water heater, and an exhaust fan. In addition, two bathrooms were added for visitors' convenience which included exhaust fans, wall heaters, ceramic tile, plastic walls, and flooring. The cost to make these changes at the tavern was \$15,116.28.<sup>20</sup>

Numerous other construction projects were undertaken at Pea Ridge NMP throughout this period. At Leetown, site improvements (from Superintendent Willett's perspective) were made with the removal of the Pierce Mayfield House and large stone debris, and the lawn was seeded. Similarly, the Ford Place received site improvements with the removal of debris and seeding with permanent grass. The two monuments at

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<sup>18</sup>Dwight E. Stinson, "Historic Buildings and Structures Report, Part I, for Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge National Military Park," (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, May, 1963), index page.

<sup>19</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 43. Parrish provides this figure for the cost of restoring the tavern. He suggests that the project began in October 1962.

<sup>20</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 71.

Elkhorn Tavern were stabilized with concrete footings in the spring of 1963.

Trails and roads to the Ford Cemetery were constructed from March 29 to June 20, 1963. A 400-foot stabilized turf access road from Highway 72 was constructed and a drainage pipe installed. The County of Benton completed the project at the same time it completed a by-pass road. The County's completion of the 1.8 mile gravel road allowed for the abandonment of Huntsville and Telegraph roads for access in the park. Benton County crews put in bridges, culverts, and pipes after clearing and disposing of the timber. The county crew then graded the bed and put in a base for the road with the total cost for the project, \$34,017.54.<sup>21</sup>

On April 12, 1963, John Mahaffey & Associates of Fayetteville won the contract for surveying and placing the monuments on the park boundary. At a cost of \$10,215, the surveying company completed its work ahead of time, partly because of good weather. Many park neighbors eagerly anticipated this work so that they could learn where the exact borders existed. One surprise resulted from the completion of this project when the survey crew discovered that part of Big Mountain was not in the park boundaries. As a result, the park submitted a boundary status report.<sup>22</sup>

Among the other contract jobs awarded was the repair of Winton Springs House, treatment for termites there, and installation of gas and water service upstairs. The park also contracted for the construction of 25 precast concrete monuments for the park's borders. Restoration and construction of rail fences was undertaken as well. As much as eight miles of rails were built from September 1965 to July 1966. The cost was \$3,490.97. Likewise, a picnic area was constructed from November 1966 to September 1967. The picnic area was equipped with twenty tables at the same number of sites with fifteen barbeque pits and eight garbage receptacles at a cost of \$3,274.34. The park also made a trail, known as Tanyard Trail. The trail was designed to meet the criteria set forth in the Master Plan for recreational development to interpret the natural and military history of the park. Completed in March 1965, the construction of the trail cost \$6,200.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 52.

<sup>22</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 53. Parrish does not mention what the result of that status report was, nor does he give the location of the site on the mountain that was supposedly not in the park's boundary.

<sup>23</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 72.

## The Leetown Excavations, 1965

Another key project was the archeological study conducted by Rex L. Wilson. At a cost of \$7,986.69, Wilson completed excavations at Leetown, Elkhorn Tavern, and the Tanyard. From February to August 1965, the archeologist pursued potential sites using Edwin C. Bearss' "exhaustive" 1964 study of the Pea Ridge Battle. In particular, Wilson used Bearss' interviews to determine the placement of archeological trenches and excavations.<sup>24</sup>

Wilson states that the purpose of the project was "the recovery of physical evidence of the several buildings which comprised the small community of Leetown in March, 1862." The NPS archeologist "hoped" to find "architectural materials such as brick, window glass, nails, plaster, charcoal, and rotted building timbers." Such relics would help to determine the location and character of individual buildings at the site. However, "More realistic expectations were to expose occupational debris such as china and glassware fragments, clinkers from cooking fires, broken household utensils, and the like."<sup>25</sup> In the end, the archeological findings were to be used for a "conjectural painting" of Leetown. The Elkhorn Tavern and Tanyard digs were of "somewhat lesser importance" and conducted more "to test or clarify the sometimes scanty historical evidence" than to make sweeping conclusions.

Wilson gathered from the historical record that Leetown's buildings were commandeered for use as hospitals during and after the battle and were occupied by the Union troops for just over two weeks. With the conclusion of this occupation, however, Wilson noted that "Leetown seems to pass out of the picture. The entire hamlet may have been burned to the ground by bushwhackers some time between March 19 and late October, 1862," a conclusion Bearss made. The archeologist then suggested that "a more likely possibility is that the buildings were pulled down and hauled away, leaving little evidence of their having existed."<sup>26</sup>

At the time that Wilson conducted the dig, there was no visible evidence or "any hint of the whereabouts of the dozen or more Leetown houses." The "heavy growth of Bermuda grass" covered everything in the area radiating outward from where the Mayfield House had stood. The remainder of Leetown, which

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<sup>24</sup>Rex L. Wilson, Archeologist, "Archeological Investigations in Pea Ridge National Military Park," (Dept. of the Interior, National Park Service, 1965), 1; also, see Memorandum: Acting Resource Studies Advisor, John W. Griffin, Southeast Region, to Superintendent Nelson, January 2, 1965, 1.

<sup>25</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 2.

<sup>26</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 2-3.

had been under cultivation for generations, was "hidden by native weeds and a volunteer growth of domestic grass."

A "local engineer" prepared a topographic map for the survey so that "outstanding features" could be recorded according to "existing landmarks." The northeast corner of the Masonic Lodge, which was known from the Benton County Deed Books, was used as the "0-0 stake in a grid system that was staked out over the approximate location of the Masonic Lot, an area of about one-half acre."

With a small, bladed tractor and picks, the archeologists (assisted by PRNMP maintenance) excavated numerous trenches of 2' x 100' long at Leetown. Matted grass and sedimentary rocks "severely hampered shovel work" but they continued on. "Trench floors and walls were carefully examined for features and a close watch was kept of every shovelful of soil taken from each trench." In the end, "Nothing of importance was found in either of the first two trenches."<sup>27</sup>

Several more cuts were made with little result: "The expected concentration of debris from the Lodge was not found, nor did any feature appear in any of the trench floors or walls." Only a "small batch of material" was unearthed which Wilson determined to be modern debris associated with the Mayfield House. Wilson then listed six possibilities for the lack of evidence at the Masonic Lot site:

- 1) A building never stood on the Masonic Lodge Lot.
- 2) If there ever was a building on the lot, it was not burned.
- 3) A building stood on the property for a short time and was later moved in toto to another location.
- 4) There were no outbuildings, such as privies, barns, or storehouses.
- 5) There were no wells, cisterns, or trash dumps.
- 6) Cultivation has completely destroyed all traces of Civil War occupation of the Masonic Lodge Lot.<sup>28</sup>

In the south part of Leetown, Wilson made another excavation at a site where John A. Shepherd, then 80 years old, had recalled the presence of a home that may have existed during the Civil War. The archeologist's cuts revealed little, however. "Tiny scraps of decomposing window glass, household

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<sup>27</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 4.

<sup>28</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 5.

china, and an occasional cut nail indicate that a house once existed in the neighborhood, but its exact location could not be determined." With this disappointing find, Wilson concluded that "Perhaps, through years of plowing, Leetown has been more thoroughly erased than anyone had imagined."<sup>29</sup> And after making excavations at the supposed site of the Mayfield House, Wilson concluded further that "None of the slim artifact recovery could positively be identified with the prewar hamlet of Leetown."<sup>30</sup> The destruction of the Mayfield House was thorough, if unfortunate, at the Leetown site.

Wilson's excavations did reveal a cemetery at Leetown. The archeological crew found several headstones, although not inscribed, that suggested as many as sixteen gravesites were present; the tomb of Robert Braden, a child at death, was the only conclusively identified grave. The grave of a freedman named Ike, according to local legend, may have been present as well.

To conclude his investigations, Wilson put in two trenches in search of the Leetown Road and several more were dug in the "far north end" of Leetown in search of a house and out-buildings. "Not one single object was found in the excavations which would indicate that the site had ever been occupied."

Wilson concluded his excavations at the park with digs in the backyard of Elkhorn Tavern, at a site of a supposed mass burial trench between Curtis' headquarters site and Sugar Creek, and at the Tanyard. Virtually no evidence of nineteenth-century life, however, surfaced at any of these sites.<sup>31</sup>

### Construction Projects Conclusion

From 1960 to 1969, the National Park Service invested more than \$1 million<sup>32</sup> for construction projects at Pea Ridge NMP. The Mission 66 Plan, in other words, was taken seriously by Park Service officials in Washington, D.C., at the Regional Office in Richmond, Virginia, and at the park itself. The Visitor Center, the Tour Road, the employee residences,

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<sup>29</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 5-6.

<sup>30</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 7.

<sup>31</sup>Wilson, "Archeological Investigations," 7-10.

<sup>32</sup>According to Alaric Parrish, the total expenditure for construction projects at Pea Ridge from 1960 to 1969 was \$1,098,186.82.

parking lots, trees, and a variety of additions were made to the national military park. The fiscal health of the nation was reflected in the expenditures for actual construction and development at the Pea Ridge park.

#### Pea Ridge Personnel and their Duties, 1960s

Simultaneous with the emergence of Pea Ridge's new construction projects was the on-the-job experiences of the park personnel. In the first several years of the park's existence, in fact, the employees carried out their duties according to the Master Plan and the individual visions of the superintendents. The result was that each employee had specified duties, yet was required to display an ability to be flexible on the job. The multi-dimensional capabilities of the superintendents, the administrative assistants, the rangers, the historians, and the maintenance crews facilitated the development of the park, while also meeting the Park Service goals to accommodate and inform the American public during the 1960s.

#### The Superintendents

The superintendents of Pea Ridge, unfortunately, did not leave as conclusive a record<sup>33</sup> of their activities as one might hope. Yet, clearly, the superintendents played the key administrative role at Pea Ridge. They managed the budget, supervised the other personnel, and developed and administered protection of the resources of the park. Likewise, the early superintendents began to cultivate a working and cooperative relationship with the Northwest Arkansas public.

John T. Willett served as the first Superintendent from July 1960 to June 1963. Raymond Nelson arrived in July 1963, serving until June 1965. His replacement was William E. Dyer who managed the park from July 1965 to August 1967.

The first Superintendent was John Willett who had transferred to Pea Ridge from Stones River. He had earned a B.A. from the University of Arkansas, and then later served as a military policeman during World War II. Like many of the early superintendents in the Park Service, Willett administered the park with a strong hand, an autocratic style that complicated

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<sup>33</sup>The superintendents' reports have been difficult to attain for the early years at Pea Ridge. The bulk of my discussion on the personnel and their duties in the 1960s comes from Weekly Staff Reports during Superintendent Raymond Nelson's tenure from the fall of 1963 to July 1965. The park personnel continued to record their meetings into the fall 1965 under the new superintendent, William E. Dyer.

working relationships with his historians and rangers.<sup>34</sup>

Willetts cultivated a community relationship visiting and speaking at the Rogers Chamber of Commerce, at the local Kiwanis Clubs, and before the Arkansas Historical Society. The first Superintendent worked to establish a good relationship with the public. He published a short essay in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, for instance, to inform the readers of the "Development at Pea Ridge National Military Park" after complaints arose in 1961 about the slowness of the construction projects at the park.

Superintendent Raymond Nelson replaced Willett during the summer of 1963. At the time considered a "guiding light" in the Park Service, Nelson was a naturalist and hiker who worked diligently to accelerate the interpretive program at Pea Ridge. His love for the natural and historical integrity of the park was evident when he and his wife hiked the park on New Year's Day, 1966.<sup>35</sup>

Superintendent Nelson continued Willett's public relations efforts, making it one of his primary responsibilities. In one of the first weekly staff meetings, which Nelson regularized beginning in September 1963, the Superintendent informed his staff that "good neighbor relations are very important, and everyone should do his best to lend a helping hand where needed."<sup>36</sup> Nelson put his own advice into practice on a regular basis. He, for example, attended a local meeting at Avoca concerning rebuilding of Highway 62 in November 1963. In late January 1964, he spoke to Beta Sigma Phi, a group of "civic-minded ladies" from Bentonville, and to the Kiwanis of the same town.

Some weeks, the Superintendent spoke nearly every day to cultivate a positive relationship with the Northwest Arkansas citizenry. On one occasion, Nelson spoke to the Tourist Service Institute sponsored by the Beaver Recreation Association; during his tenure, he spoke before the Hiwasee PTA, the Rogers Garden Club, and other civic organizations. In October 1964, the Pea Ridge Superintendent agreed to become an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors of the Rogers Chamber of Commerce; in the spring of 1965, he joined the Regional Management Appraisal Team. By becoming involved in the local community, Nelson was "trying to make the public aware of the NPS as a whole and what it is trying to do,

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<sup>34</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

<sup>35</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

<sup>36</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," October 7, 1963, 2.

rather than just Pea Ridge as a separate Park." In this same light, he also wrote a weekly column for local newspapers, a job that sometimes fell to the Historian.<sup>37</sup>

Along with public relations, management of the park and its personnel preoccupied the Superintendent. Superintendent Nelson, for example, was required to insure that other employees carried out their duties properly and that the budget was carefully adhered to. Consequently, Nelson often coordinated work with the others, including the activities of Administrative Assistant Nolan Oswald, Ranger C. Newton Sikes, Historian David L. Hyde, and Maintenance Foreman Russell Walker. He encouraged the park personnel not only to manage the cultural and natural resources properly but to be aware of their larger mission as Park Service employees. In November 1963, for example, Superintendent Nelson commented that:

In future months, an attempt will be made to enlighten everyone [who works at Pea Ridge] on the purpose and function of the National Park Service. It will be a requirement for all employees, permanent or seasonal, not only to be acquainted with this Park, but to have some conception of the National Park Service. Then, when questions are asked by the public, they can be answered intelligently.<sup>38</sup>

Reiterating the importance of the larger picture, Nelson ordered all employees to answer the telephone with "National Park Service" rather than "Pea Ridge Park."

Nelson was cognizant of the Mission 66 plan set out by Conrad Wirth in 1956. As the ten-year goals approached, the Superintendent hoped to bring Pea Ridge NMP up to date and in tune with current national trends in the NPS. With the assistance of Construction Representative James Askins and the rest of his staff, for instance, Nelson carefully supervised the restoration of Elkhorn Tavern as part of the Mission 66 plan. On the other hand, he also made his staff aware of the vicissitudes of Park Service management when he informed them of the resignation of Wirth. Nelson warned his staff that changes were in the offing and that they should be prepared for a possible swing in policy that might result under the new NPS Director George Hartzog, although Nelson "felt that we could look forward to a bright future."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Quoted from "Weekly Staff Report," February 3, 1964, 2; also, see "Weekly Staff Reports" for November 4, 1963; May 25, 1964; September 8, 1964; October 5, 1964; April 19, 1965.

<sup>38</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," November 4, 1963.

<sup>39</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," October 28, 1963.

When President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, the Pea Ridge Superintendent showed a sensitivity that belied his role as the chief administrator when he stated that "he felt that he could better commemorate the day by doing his best at his job. However, he urged everyone to spend the day as he felt was proper--if it could best be done at home, then he would be excused."<sup>40</sup> Nelson also encouraged his staff to attend the "family get-togethers" sponsored by the park for employees; potluck suppers and informative movies characterized these occasions.

In an advisory role, Nelson recommended that his staff read Stewart Udall's recently published book The Quiet Crisis, a study of the nation's natural resources and the need for more careful management and stewardship over the nation's precious natural gifts. Clearly, the Superintendent was anticipating future resource concerns of the National Park Service and, in particular, of Pea Ridge.<sup>41</sup>

There seems to have been a clear hierarchy at the park under Superintendent Nelson, who took his job very seriously. He perceived himself as a management leader who directed the actions of the park personnel. The Superintendent made this clear to his staff during the April 6, 1964 Staff Meeting when he declared "that all statements on Park Policy, pertaining to contracts, etc., should come from the Superintendent."<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, Nelson clarified that he wanted to monitor the employees who were required to give a "concise statement on...[their] past week's activities" at the weekly staff meetings. A firm hand with guidance seems to have characterized Nelson's stint as Pea Ridge's Superintendent.

Nelson set the administrative standard in the early years at Pea Ridge. He showed a real desire to restore the park to its Civil War appearance and felt saddened at previous destructive practices, especially the razing of the Mayfield House. His replacement William Dyer, in fact, noted the efficiency of the park operations on his arrival in July 1965, several months after Nelson had accepted reassignment at Grand Portage National Monument in Minnesota. Unfortunately for the Pea Ridge park, Nelson's tenure lasted only two years. He would later become Director of the Harpers Ferry Center.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 26, 1963.

<sup>41</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 26, 1963; March 23, 1964.

<sup>42</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," April 6, 1964, 2.

<sup>43</sup>Interview of Edwin Bearss, July 19, 1996.

Dyer "opened the [first] meeting by saying how happy he was to be here [Pea Ridge], and that he was very much impressed by the staff and the Park operation."<sup>44</sup> The new Superintendent quickly learned the routine at the park "spending most of his time in orientation of the area and its facilities, and meeting with local supporters in the community."<sup>45</sup> He also visited several local museums and familiarized himself with the Detached Area. During his two-year superintendency, Dyer perpetuated the management practices established before him.

### The Administrative Assistants

For the first five years of the park's existence, Nolan Oswald served as the Administrative Assistant. A native of Mena and graduate of the University of Arkansas, Oswald had transferred from the Department of Agriculture to take the Pea Ridge position. As the Administrative Assistant, Oswald served as the Superintendent's principal assistant in fiscal, hiring, contracting, and other administrative matters at the park.<sup>46</sup> Unlike the other staff members, the Administrative Assistant, along with the clerk-stenographer, did not have daily contact with the public and was not required to wear the traditional NPS uniform. The administrative assistants and the clerks, therefore, played a purely administrative role at the park.

The Administrative Assistant performed a multitude of tasks. Closely working with the superintendents, Oswald and his successors (S. Sue Singer, after May 1967) wrote up job descriptions for the park personnel, formulated accounting systems, composed numerous reports--sometimes even the superintendents monthly and annual reports--handled construction and other contracting, maintained careful fiscal records, surveyed and inventoried park property, and paid the bills. The busy work kept the Administrative Assistant occupied on a daily basis. When so-called "down time" resulted, Oswald often worked on annual operations plans, monthly reports, and the Master Plan. Answering correspondence also required daily attention. Of more pressing concern were the times when the Superintendent took leave or traveled to conferences. In those cases, the Administrative Assistant served as the Acting Superintendent.

Examples of the Oswald's duties are numerous as recorded in

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<sup>44</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," July 27, 1965, 1.

<sup>45</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," August 10, 1965, 1.

<sup>46</sup>Rogers Daily News, October 8, 1960.

the weekly staff reports. During the week of November 19, 1963, for example, he "consumed much time" putting together a Notice of Award and Order to Proceed for a contract extended to Carter's Lawn and Tree Service of Dardanelle, Arkansas for worked conducted at the park. Three weeks later, the administrator contacted the Western Arkansas Telephone Company to seek permission to have a pay phone installed in the Visitor Center. A couple of weeks after that, Oswald recorded the raises of the Maintenceman, the Caretaker, and a Laborer. In early February, 1964, he put together roads and property inventories and opened the bids for the Extended Tour Road project. In late March 1964, Oswald wrote a job description for a clerk-steno position, interviewed to fill a clerk-typist position, accepted the bids for the Tour Road extension, and worked with Ranger C. Newton Sikes on a Resources Study Proposal.<sup>47</sup>

The Administrative Assistant performed other duties as well. Oswald completed Quarterly Property and Employment Security Division reports along with Record Disposition during the week of June 30, 1964. That same week, he also ordered janitorial supplies and "entered into the work force" Harlye Greene. Oswald also had the less savory task of terminating seasonal employees; he kept Official Personnel Folders on each employee as well. Any type of employment involving the park and the Park Service went through the Administrative Assistant who performed the necessary paper work and determined if the proper administrative channels had been followed in the process. When Rex Wilson was planning for his archeological dig at Leetown in April, 1965, for example, Oswald worked on recruitment of personnel to assist with the excavations. In the end, he reported that six laborers had been hired for the archeological dig in early June.<sup>48</sup>

In September 1965, Oswald decided to join the private sector. In one of his final acts as Administrative Assistant, he hired Sue Thompson (later, Sue Singer) as an Administrative Clerk on a temporary basis. In May 1967, she became a full-time member of the staff, taking on the duties Oswald had been committed to for the first five years of the park's existence.<sup>49</sup>

Clearly, the Administrative Assistant played a key role in the management of the park. Nolan Oswald provided five years of service that offered continuity in the administration of the park, at a time when three different superintendents served.

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<sup>47</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 26, 1963; December 9, 16, 1963; February 3, 1964; March 23, 30, 1964.

<sup>48</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," July 7, 1964; October 26, 1964; December 7, 1964; April 19, 1965; June 14, 1965.

<sup>49</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," September 7, 1965; Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 28; Oswald would return to Pea Ridge in the mid-1970s as an interpretive specialist.

When Superintendent Dyer arrived in July, 1965, Oswald gave the new supervisor an orientation session, explaining the various management processes at the park. And in a fitting scenario, the outgoing administrator also assisted the new Superintendent in moving into his new living quarters.<sup>50</sup> Consequently, Oswald showed an ability to be flexible, a quality that seems to have provided a modicum of continuity in the daily, monthly, and annual operations of the national military park. Oswald would return to the park in the 1970s to serve as an Interpretive Specialist.

### The Rangers

One of the most multi-dimensional positions in the Park Service is that of Ranger. Pea Ridge's rangers of the early years clearly fit into this mold. They literally ranged the park maintaining the peace as law enforcement officers, watching over park property and its natural resources, and working to maintain the integrity of the historic and cultural resources of the national military park. In addition to these "outdoor" duties, the rangers also performed the more mundane administrative tasks of filling out monthly, quarterly, and annual reports concerning safety, law enforcement, resource development, wildlife and pest management, and fire prevention. They also trained park personnel in safety and first aid and on how best to fight fires.

The rangers also devoted ample time directly serving the public. At Pea Ridge, they worked the visitor-center information desk one day a week, usually Sundays. In another public relations role, they went into the community to speak or to show films related to the park, safety, fire fighting, and law enforcement.

During the early years, four individuals served consecutive tenures as the single, full-time rangers at the park even though the Master Plan called for two rangers; they did hire seasonal rangers in summer. Rodney D. Griffin was the first and served from October 1960 to May 1961, giving him little time to make a lasting impact. Likewise, Gordon K. Clifton served a short stint from July 1961 to June 1963. C. Newton Sikes stayed longer, performing ranger service at Pea Ridge from June 1963 to January 1966. Ivan R. Tolley came on board in June 1966, serving until October 1967.<sup>51</sup> During the

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<sup>50</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," July 27, 1965.

<sup>51</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 26-27. The dates for the rangers' service, I have culled from Parrish's report.

park's informative years, consequently, there was a fairly rapid turnover among the full-time rangers. Despite this obvious fact, they performed essential duties that played an important role in the development of the park and its resources.

As with the other personnel, the clearest record of the rangers' daily activities appears in the weekly staff reports. If these reports were any indication of how active the park's employees were, the rangers covered the most ground at the park. The multi-dimensional nature of the rangers can be illustrated by examining the activities of C. Newton Sikes.

During the month from late September to late October 1963, for instance, Ranger Sikes performed a multitude of duties. He leased lands in the park for haying, showed the maintenance crew a film about fire fighting, went to the Rogers and Pea Ridge high schools to present the movie, "Eruption of Kileau" (and had to perform first aid on one student who was injured at the Pea Ridge school), inventoried the fire equipment and checked the extinguishers, and finished several reports including the quarterly safety report. He drew up an agreement concerning water use and clean-up with the construction company relocating Highway 72. He and the Russell Walker went to Rogers to order two heaters for the Winton Springs House. Later that week, he completed the road signs plan, "worked up" a tentative fire control plan, and showed the park staff the film, "Safe As You Think." And in the last week of the month, ending in late October, 1963, he discovered a torn down sign at Pea Ridge East Overlook, installed a traffic counter at the Visitor Center, and checked the first aid kits. In the meantime, he supervised a fire fighting mission along Highway 62 near Bush Hatchery; five months later another fire appeared at this same site suggesting arson: "It reached the edge of the Park but was suppressed in a short while."<sup>52</sup>

It's interesting to note that fire prevention proved to be a key duty of the rangers. Sikes not only performed the daily tasks of maintaining the fire equipment and offering safety seminars to the park personnel and school children but he himself received yearly fire-fighting training and continually worked to maintain a viable fire control plan for the park. Carrying out these duties, Ranger Sikes did everything from building shelves to house the fire hoses to putting out fires in and around the park. In this capacity, Sikes announced a new fire control plan in early November, 1963. His three-point plan is very telling in that it demonstrates the fire-fighting philosophy of the Park Service at the time.

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<sup>52</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," September 30, 1963; October 7, 14, 21, 28, 1963; March 16, 1964.

To begin with, Sikes argued that training was the first essential to fire prevention. Each of the park personnel, he declared, should know at least the rudimentary principles of fire fighting. Second, he announced that an alarm system would "be set up." This system would be designed to alarm the park personnel and fire fighters in the region; State Forester Glen Lawrence, for instance, was contacted through this system in January 1964 to aid in putting out a fire in the southwest corner of the park; Sikes returned the favor in April 1964 when he aided the state forester in putting out a fire near Garfield, Arkansas. Finally, Sikes warned the other staff members that false alarm drills would "be staged, day or night, and everyone should know what to do."

The Ranger's concern for fire control extended to the broader community as well. During the week of February 24, 1964, for example, Ranger Sikes offered a two-hour course on fire fighting for the Pea Ridge Jaycees; he in return went to Fayetteville, on an annual basis, to receive training himself in modern fire fighting techniques. The Pea Ridge ranger also distributed Smokey Bear literature to the surrounding schools; as Sikes' fire-fighting management plan evolved, he posted a fire danger chart on the park's weather station beginning in September 1965 "to have a day to day indication of fire conditons."<sup>53</sup>

Overall, it's interesting to note, this plan reflects the current theories of the time concerning fires and their management. Put them out regardless of their origins. In later years, as we will see, controlled fires were set by the rangers to burn off excess fuel and arson fires were contained rather than put out immediately as part of a changing Park Service philosophy in managing the natural resources of the parks; at this point, however, burning of brush was the extent of controlled fires in the park. On the other hand, arson fires would continue to plague the park on an annual basis.<sup>54</sup>

The rangers managed the land in other ways as well. The major fields of the park became part of a leasing program designed to bring in some revenue and to preserve some of the fields as they might have been during the Civil War period. Consequently, the rangers administered the Special Use Permits, through which fees were charged to the farmers who leased the hay fields. Ranger Sikes and Superintendent Nelson worked together surveying these fields during 1963 and 1964. After surveying the tracts, Sikes platted the leased fields on

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<sup>53</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 4, 1963; January 20, 1964; April 20, 1964; February 24, 1964; March 16, 1964; May 17, 1965; September 21, 1965.

<sup>54</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," October 26, 1964.

a map. To assign the lands efficiently, Sikes coordinated assignment of the Special Use Permits with the "cooperative" aid of the Benton County Agricultural Agent, a Mr. Price. The Ranger also supervised the refertilization of the fields, annually placing several tons of fertilizer on each field; the Annual Park Acreage Statistical Summary was the Ranger's administrative record of this aspect of land management at Pea Ridge.

As part of the beautification and historical integrity of the fields, Sikes also managed the rail fence project. Park neighbors (e.g., Benton Sims and a Mr. Turney) and local farmers often delivered split rails to the park in return for barbed wire. In a similar bartering system, Ranger Sikes traded wire to local farmers who in return "bush hogged" various overgrown areas to prepare the ground for Ozark Nurseries tree-planting project. These projects facilitated management of the historical fields.<sup>55</sup>

Protection of the park was another vital duty of the rangers. Ranger Sikes, his predecessors, and his successors all paid special attention to the park's property. This concern required careful observation, through random monthly patrolling during the day and at night, in the park and just outside its borders. In late January, 1963, for example, Sikes conducted a night patrol to safeguard against arson in light of a recent fire. During these patrols, the Ranger often encountered less severe problems, however. A week after the night patrol mentioned above, he had to prod a cow off park property, and a neighbor, Mr. Matlock, was contacted concerning his littering practices. Dogs could also become a nuisance.<sup>56</sup>

Ranger Sikes devised a communication strategy to facilitate protection of the park. In January 1964, for instance, he contacted Harley True of the Benton County Civil Defense Division to acquire a mobile radio and geiger counter. By September of that year, he had procured a two-way radio system that allowed him to monitor the park through a coordinated effort with the rest of the park personnel, a system that is still in place at the park. Sikes also kept open law enforcement channels with local authorities, regularly attending the meetings of the Northwest Arkansas Law Enforcement Society; he also filled out monthly reports for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 12, 18, 1963; December 9, 1963; January 13, 20, 1964.

<sup>56</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," February 3, 10, 24, 1964; March 22, 1965; August 10, 1965.

<sup>57</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," January 13, 1964; September 1, 1964; October 26, 1965.

Sikes took care of more mundane law enforcement tasks at the park as well. He posted "No Hunting" signs on the park boundaries, handed out tickets to motorists driving the wrong way on the Tour Road, fined a man for unauthorized use of a metal detector on park lands, and warned neighbors who let their dogs run loose on park property. On the humanitarian side of things, the Ranger also returned lost belongings to visitors, when ownership was known. On one occasion, Sikes contacted the Rogers Airport "concerning low-flying aircraft."<sup>58</sup> A multitude of tasks surrounded law enforcement.

Natural resource management also consumed the Ranger's time. Ranger Sikes was responsible for soil and water testing, administration of the tree-planting project (with the Superintendent), and wildlife and pest management; he also gauged precipitation and coordinated road plans with the State Highway Department. These duties often required correspondence and coordination with other agencies. The Public Health Service (Dept. of HEW) headquartered in Dallas, Texas, for example, aided Sikes in testing water, which was contaminated at the Winton Springs. The Pea Ridge ranger also encouraged entomologists and botanists from the University of Arkansas to study insect and plant life in the park. As early as 1965, Professor Edward E. Dale, Jr., who would later implement the prairie program at Pea Ridge, was contacted by the Ranger for possible study of the park flora. Entomologists studied the webworm problem that emerged in the park in the mid-1960s and helped devise a plan for spraying these and other pests. Superintendent Nelson believed in this cross-agency cooperation stating that "we wish to encourage more of this type activity."<sup>59</sup>

Wildlife management seems to have been superficial during these early years. Few comments are made in the weekly staff reports concerning the fauna with the exception of the occasional killed deer; Sikes aided Norman Smith with a rabbit and quail count in June 1964 and later that month an albino squirrel was spotted. The only other distinctive wildlife concern was the Red Wolves which from the perspective of the park and its neighbors were predators that committed cattle depredations rather than endangered species.<sup>60</sup>

The rangers proved to be vital to the daily operations of the park. Their principal roles as park protectors, law

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<sup>58</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," September 1, 1964; December 21, 1964; August 10, 1965; January 4, 1965.

<sup>59</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," February 24, 1964; March 2, 1964; June 1, 1964; September 1, 1964.

<sup>60</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," June 8, 1964.

enforcers, and safety experts were combined with other duties in resource management and public relations.

### The Historians

The historians at Pea Ridge focused their attentions on interpretation and serving the public. In this framework, they composed important interpretive planning and historic structure documents that served as guides for the development of the cultural and historic features of the park and provided a strong background for public presentations. Like the rangers, the historians played a number of roles at the park: attendant at the information desk, public speaker, historical researcher, interpretive adviser, and audio-visual specialist. Each of these roles is delineated in the Master Plan.

During the early years, the historians were John W. Bond (Sept. 1960-sometime in 1962), Dwight N. Stinson (April 1962-June 1963), and David L. Hyde (July 1963-Oct. 1966).

Despite their short periods of service at Pea Ridge, both Bond and Stinson composed key documents. Bond's 1961 "Interpretive Prospectus for Pea Ridge National Military Park" provided the outline for the development of the museum, the interpretive stops on the Tour Road, and the means with which to present the history of the battlefield and its environs (see Chapter 3). Stinson, on the other hand, completed a pivotal study in May 1963 on Elkhorn Tavern, "Historic Buildings and Structures Report for Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge National Military Park."

This study, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter, facilitated the restoration of the tavern in 1965 and has served as the history of the inn as well.<sup>61</sup>

The everyday activities of the Historian are best depicted in the weekly staff reports from late 1963 to late 1965. Consequently, the duties of Historian David L. Hyde are well documented during this early phase of Pea Ridge's development.

Hyde spent much of his time serving the public at the information desk or in giving speeches to park visitors and citizen groups of Northwest Arkansas. These activities consumed a great deal of his time and required a cheerful countenance and careful management of words. On the other side of the coin, Hyde's other activities required quiet

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<sup>61</sup>See John W. Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus for Pea Ridge National Military Park," (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, NPS, March 1961) and Dwight E. Stinson, Jr., "Historic Buildings Structures Report for Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge National Military Park," (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, NPS, May, 1963).

inquiry into the historical facets of the battlefield and its environs. Busy work also consumed a portion of the Historian's time: audio-visual maintenance and preparation, completion of monthly and annual reports concerning the interpretative facilities, computation of the number of visitors, and contemplation on the future plans for development of the cultural resources of the park. He also kept the books on the ENP&MA sales. During the summer, the permanent Historian hired seasonal "historians" to assist in the daily operations of the park as well (a luxury that no longer exists).

Historian Hyde worked the information desk on a daily basis, but was only required to stay at that position all day on Saturdays. Regardless, while at the desk Hyde cordially greeted the visitors as they came to insure a proper introduction to the park. In this capacity, the Pea Ridge Historian also gave special historical presentations to visitors, impromptu or planned, in the Visitor Center or in the park. In February, 1964, for example, Hyde led a group of Girl Scouts from Siloam Springs "around the Park," interpreting the various sites as they went; he gladly provided similar interpretive services to a group of Cub Scouts from Rogers as well. The same week, he went to the Cassville (Mo.) Fifth Grade class to talk about Pea Ridge. In May 1964, Hyde planned and attended a Civil War Roundtable with 120 Gravette school children, offering a more detailed examination of the battle and its impact. On one occasion, he spoke to a group from the Ozark Academy of Gentry. He showed an ability to present the same material in different ways to a multitude of audiences from grade schoolers to civic-minded citizens.<sup>62</sup>

Historian Hyde performed other public relations duties as well. He regularly attended the meetings of the Pea Ridge Memorial Association and Benton County Historical Society, for example, and periodically visited the Rogers Chamber of Commerce and Bentonville Rotary Club meetings. Similarly, he annually attended the University of Arkansas Career Days to offer explanations and brochures to prospective National Park Service recruits. In the fall 1965, he presented ten lectures to the Army ROTC at the university, spending "considerable time" on the history of the Civil War and the Battle of Pea Ridge. His away-from-the-park activities also took Hyde to the Benton County Fair and the Pea Ridge Fair, where he set up booths to introduce local citizens to the park and the National Park Service.

To facilitate communication with those interested in the park,

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<sup>62</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," February 3, 1964; May 11, 1964; January 25, 1965; September 21, 1965.

Hyde put together a list of Park Friends and Supporters. His public relations activities also extended to the local newspapers which often published Hyde's news releases concerning the park and his editorials in the absence of Superintendent Nelson. In the fall 1964, he also coordinated a public relations activity, "laying the groundwork for a televised program" on Pea Ridge, with Bob Roberts of KTHV television of Little Rock.<sup>63</sup>

Historian Hyde devoted a large portion of his time to interpretation. The interpretive development of the park required careful investigation and observation and the offering of advice concerning the various sites of the park and in the museum in the Visitor Center. One of Hyde's first projects was to write a script for the audio-visual program presented in the Visitor Center. He also maintained the museum displays, periodically inquiring about new acquisitions and rearrangements. In a similar interpretive capacity, he updated the scripts for the audio recordings at the Pea Ridge East Overlook and at Elkhorn Tavern. He maintained the visitor center library, recataloguing and rearranging the volumes from time to time.<sup>64</sup>

Aside from visitor service, the bulk of the Historian's work focused on the interpretive and historic facilities. Hyde, for example, kept a close inventory of the artifacts and materials that were displayed in the museum and throughout the park. This responsibility required careful management of the museum resources as well as coordination between the exhibits and the Pea Ridge Battlefield and Civil War themes. On occasion, the Pea Ridge Historian worked outdoors emplacing cannons in strategic spots to maximize visitor interest and understanding of the battle.<sup>65</sup>

Hyde also conducted extensive research on the historic features of the park. In addition to culling through the research materials at the park, such as soldiers' diaries and Civil War chronicles, the Historian also consulted local citizens, future NPS Chief Historian Edwin Bearss, and Benton County Historical Society President Alvin Seamster. On one visit with Seamster, Hyde was attempting to "obtain information on the Clemons family and cemeteries in the area were checked for graves of anyone with the name of Clemens." Other research trips took Hyde to the Benton County Courthouse to determine the location of Pratt's Store and the family

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<sup>63</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," January 7, 1964; November 9, 1964; September 21, 1965; November 2, 1965; January 25, 1965; September 1, 1964.

<sup>64</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," July 14, 1964; December 9, 1963.

<sup>65</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," April 19, 1965.

house.<sup>66</sup> In 1966, through Hyde the park landed a research gem when Roland D. Judd, who had been instrumental in the fight to establish the park since the 1920s, donated his papers, a collection that is still housed at the park.

Hyde served as a consultant for the Leetown Archeological Investigations and for the Elkhorn Tavern Restoration Project in 1965. Prior to the Leetown digs, the Historian had made several visits to the townsite "trying to ascertain the exact location of the town;" during the 1965 digs, Hyde "staked out the three pits the archeological crew found" that marked distinct gravesites. On another occasion, he made a trip to Washburn, Missouri to visit Mr. and Mrs. I. E. Grimes "in relation to the Elkhorn Tavern furnishings and construction." He also visited the Van Winkle House and War Eagle Mill in May 1965 "searching for similar architecture as in the Tavern" to provide accurate information to James Askins the construction representative in charge of the Elkhorn Tavern rehabilitation project.

Using Edwin Bearss' historical studies, Hyde advised the project chiefs at Elkhorn Tavern and Leetown to insure an adherence to historical integrity. The historian was attempting to coordinate the past with the present to preserve the historic features of the park in the days prior to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 which would later provide a firmer framework for the restoration of cultural resources within the NPS.<sup>67</sup>

Clearly, the historians at Pea Ridge NMP carried out their duties in accordance with the 1963 Master Plan. They conducted important research and field work while also serving the public on a daily basis. With accurate and informative interpretation of the park's historic resources as their principal goal, the historians both devised a clear plan and then carried it out, despite some difficulties, through 1966.

## Maintenance

The maintenance crews at the Pea Ridge park have provided continuity in upkeep since the transfer of state lands to the NPS in 1960 largely because of Maintenance Foreman Russell W. Walker. Walker was appointed in August 1960 and supervised the maintenance of the park for the first fifteen years of its existence. He was assisted by Caretaker John F. Demaree from

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<sup>66</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," February 3, 24, 1964.

<sup>67</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," February 10, 1964; May 17, 1965; July 20, 1965; June 14, 1965.

1962 to 1971 along with numerous other seasonal and part-time crew members. His vigilant presence during the early construction projects and then in the normal upkeep of the park offered the other, less permanent personnel, a long-established source of knowledge and understanding of the facilities.

During the first six years of the development, Walker supervised more than just the mowing of the park grounds. The job was much more complex than that. The foreman and his crews often assisted construction crews with their projects. The park crew, for example, often hauled crushed rock for the Foresgren Brothers who were in the process of putting in the Tour Road; they also poured concrete for benches and helped to survey near Elkhorn Tavern.

They also maintained the drainage ditches and culverts along the Tour Road, which continually faced heavy run-off and seepage causing perennial damage to the road. On one occasion in December 1963, the crew reported that the Winton Springs bridge had "fallen in" and that it "would need to be taken care of quickly," a job they soon completed. In June 1965, they put in a 450-foot concrete gutter to facilitate tour road drainage. During the early development of the park, the maintenancemen also put up important tour road signs. They performed their duties so efficiently in November 1963, that Superintendent Nelson made a point to mention "that the maintenance crew should be commended for their efforts in getting the signs for the tour road put up in record time."<sup>68</sup> Walker's crews also periodically painted center and shoulder lines on the Tour Road and parking space lines at the Visitor Center.

Walker and his crew regularly assisted the historians and rangers with interpretive displays and facilities as well. During the first few years, the maintenance crew continually found problems with the message repeaters at the Leetown and Pea Ridge East stops along the Tour Road. On numerous occasions, the crew cleaned and painted the field guns and then helped the historians to place them into battle positions in the park; in April 1965, they placed three cannons in a "wooded pasture area west of Elkhorn Tavern, locating them where the Historian indicated." The maintenancemen also built and maintained the rail fences which were based on the Civil War era model; by the end of April 1964, the crew had split and laid more than 1000 rails in the park.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 4, 1963; October 14, 21, 28, 1963; November 18, 1963; January 7, 1964; June 7, 1965.

<sup>69</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," November 26, 1963; December 16, 1963; January 7, 27, 1964; April 27, 1964; November 16, 1964; April 19, 1965.

Walker's maintenance crews were also responsible for the normal upkeep of the employee residences and the Visitor Center. The foreman and his laborers regularly checked the Visitor Center and residence heaters, for example, repairing them when necessary. Seasonal duties included removing air conditioners (window units) from the residences and cleaning them; they returned the units to the residences in late spring. They also painted exterior and interior walls, window sills, and shelves, fixed the plumbing, added safety features such as an outdoor ladder to the Winton Springs House.

The Winton Springs House and Visitor Center required perennial upkeep. Beginning in February 1964, the maintenance crew initiated the partial rehabilitation of the Winton Springs House. Some of the tasks the crew performed included raising the "I" beam under the downstairs floor, enlarging the downstairs bathroom, painting the interior, rerouting the pumping system to by-pass the contaminated storage tank, constructing cabinets in the pantry, hanging a mirror in the upstairs apartment, and constructing an escape ladder for the upstairs. Despite its status as a non-historic structure (not of the Civil War period) in the park, the Winton Springs House required ample attention, while serving as an employee residence. As we will see, the debate over the house, whether to keep it or destroy it, would continue for more than two decades.<sup>70</sup>

The Visitor Center, with its flat roof, proved to be a maintenance problem as well. As early as the summer of 1964, the roof began to leak, a problem that would reemerge on a regular basis at the park for the next three decades, mainly because the roof was flat and not well designed for the humid climate of the area. Walker and his crew built a ladder to access the roof and then repaired it in July 1964. The effort, no matter how noble, proved futile because the leaks reappeared. The minimal costs for tarring the roof would escalate into the tens of thousands in subsequent years. As early as February 1965, for example, the "roof beams under the flat sections of the roof were buckling and causing leaks," a problem for "almost a year." Superintendent Nelson "believed that steps should be taken in the near future or the situation could eventually become critical and result in great expenditures." He even suggested that "another roof over the top of the present [1965] one, [be] constructed with various pitches so that water, [will be] unable to stand in puddles." The projected cost: \$2,505.<sup>71</sup> With time, the roof problems

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<sup>70</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," February 24, 1964; March 2, 16, 1964.

<sup>71</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," July 7, 1964; September 8, 1964; Memorandum from Superintendent Nelson to Regional Director, Southeast Region, March 5, 1965, 1-2.

were beyond the maintenance crews capabilities for repair.

Despite the construction flaws, both at the Visitor Center and the Tour Road, the maintenance crews diligently attended to the more routine repair needs at the park. In addition to these major problems, the crew also initiated preventive maintenance on their tractors, mowers, trucks, shop machinery, the utility systems, and equipment in general. They provided a continuity in upkeep that remains to the present.

### Visitation

In the period from May 1963, when Pea Ridge NMP was first opened to visitors, to the end of 1966, the numbers of visitors dramatically increased. This trend suggested a continued increase in visitors through the 1960s and into the 1970s, when visitation peaked at 184,545 in 1972:

#### Park Visitation

January 1963 to January 1964	44,694
" 1964 to " 1965	68,804
" 1965 to " 1966	96,804
" 1966 to " 1967	104,087
" 1967 to " 1968	120,587
" 1968 to " 1969	142,245
" 1969 to " 1970	134,990
" 1970 to " 1971	135,785
" 1971 to " 1972	133,721
" 1972 to " 1973	184,545
" 1973 to " 1974	110,000
" 1974 to Nov. 1974	<u>81,098</u>
Total to date [through 11-74]	1,357,360 <sup>72</sup>

These figures seem to suggest that visitation was lower than it might have been during the Civil War centennial years because the facilities--e.g., the Visitor Center, Elkhorn Tavern, the Tour Road--were not in full operation until after 1964.

The task of keeping track of visitation numbers fell to the Historian. Consequently, the Historian paid special attention to the visitors and their experiences at the park. Historian David Hyde put together a visitor questionnaire in late 1963. After receiving the appropriate approval, Hyde began handing out the questionnaires and discovered that the average length of stay at the park was forty-six minutes, a seemingly short

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<sup>72</sup>Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 74.

time considering the 7-mile auto tour. However, this discovery also may suggest that the visitors were not as inclined to take the Tour Road during the first two years (when Hyde administered the questionnaire) of the park's existence because of the incomplete and ongoing construction projects as well as the wash out caused by the seven-inch rainstorm in April 1965. This conclusion also suggests that the visitors spent most of their time viewing the twenty-minute slide presentation, walking through the museum, and perusing the ENP&MA offerings at the information desk.<sup>73</sup>

### The Texas Monument Controversy

Mention should also be made of a significant controversy surrounding the park in the early years. During the summer of 1964, the Texas State Historical Survey Committee approached Superintendent Nelson with the idea of placing a monument in the park to the Texans who fought in the Battle of Pea Ridge. Among the most distinguished of the Texas soldiers was General Ben McCulloch who was killed during the fighting. Nelson and the Pea Ridge personnel, however, declined the offer concerned that if one monument went up several more would follow and the park would be inundated with non-historical markers like Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania.

Several local citizens protested the Superintendent's decision, however. They believed that the monument should be erected in the park to commemorate the confederate Texans at Pea Ridge. When Nelson refused to budge, the citizens sent a flurry of letters to President Lyndon B. Johnson, to their congressional representatives, and to the NPS offices in Washington, D.C. In the meantime, the City of Pea Ridge agreed to erect the Texas monument in hopes of attracting tourists. When President Johnson finally gave approval to erect the monument in the park, the people of Pea Ridge protested its removal for sentimental and economic reasons. The Texas delegation eventually gave in and left the memorial in the small town.

Despite this compromise, complaints continued to plague the park employees for the next decade. The strongest protests came in the spring of 1965 from Elsa Vaught of Fayetteville who "objected strenuously" to Nelson's decision concerning the Texas monument. Knowing of her anger concerning the decision, Nelson warned his staff that Vaught "will very likely stir up a ruckus over it." He then warned them: "If Park neighbors or visitors ask questions about the situation, personnel are

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<sup>73</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," December 16, 1963; July 7, 1964; August 10, 1965.

to state that Texas presented the monument to the citizens of Pea Ridge, and that's all they know about it." As late as the end of 1974, Alaric Parrish, a seasonal employee and author of an unfinished administrative history of the park, commented that "The controversy lasted for many years and is still not entirely settled."<sup>74</sup>

There was another minor controversy in the park during the early years as well. Southern patriotism clearly ran high in Northwest Arkansas because one visitor vehemently protested that "the Park was not flying a Confederate flag" just a few weeks before the Texas monument issue arose.<sup>75</sup> Despite the complaints, these examples suggest that the people of the region were extremely pleased to have the national military park to commemorate the fallen soldiers even if the federal government did not allow them to interfere in the operation of the park.

### Conclusion

During the early years at the Pea Ridge National Military Park, the park personnel successfully developed and maintained the Northwest Arkansas unit of the National Park Service. Careful supervision from the national and regional offices combined with efficient management of the park, especially after 1963, resulted in the development of the Visitor Center, the Tour Road, a rehabilitated Elkhorn Tavern, and fundamental interpretive facilities. The staff clearly understood the Mission 66 plans for the park and carried out the necessary duties to complete those plans, working toward visitor access and resource preservation. In many ways, the park was now on a strong foundation, a firm base that would serve the employees and the visitors in good stead for the next thirty years. After this initial developmental thrust, the staff would focus on careful maintenance and continued development in subsequent years.

One of the key features of that early development was Elkhorn Tavern. This historic structure has a rich history of its own, one that suggests the importance of the tavern as a major attraction for the park and as an example of the difficulties faced in preserving such a facility. The next chapter examines the life of Elkhorn Tavern which played such a pivotal role during the Battle of Pea Ridge and in subsequent years as the centerpiece for remembering the Civil

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<sup>74</sup>"Weekly Staff Reports," December 21, 1964, April 19, 1965; Parrish, "Pea Ridge," 85-86.

<sup>75</sup>"Weekly Staff Report," March 23, 1964.

War in southern Missouri and northern Arkansas.



## CHAPTER 5

### Elkhorn Tavern: Its History and Management

#### Introduction

The principal historic structure of Pea Ridge National Military Park is Elkhorn Tavern. Originally built in the early 1830s, the tavern has had a storied history, mainly because of its role in the Civil War. Used as a supply depot and hospital for the Union as well as Confederate troops during the Battle of Pea Ridge, the building played a monumental role in the decisive western battle. Later, Elkhorn Tavern was the focal point for regional Civil War engagements. The Federals, in particular, used the inn for their headquarters during the Prairie Grove campaign and in the months following that Union victory. Sometime in 1863,<sup>1</sup> however, "bushwackers" burned the strategically located building, probably in an attempt to thwart further Federal advances into Arkansas.

Evidence seems to point to 1865 as the year of the reconstruction of the tavern. The owner of the building, Jesse Cox, left to live in Kansas, turning over the property to his son, Joseph. With a growing family, Joseph rebuilt the tavern to accommodate his wife Lucinda and their increasing number of children; the new building was a one-story structure that would have another floor added in the 1880s. This version of the tavern would later serve as the model for the rehabilitated structure that now stands in the park. Altered in 1917 by Joseph Cox's son-in-law, Lorenza Scott, Elkhorn Tavern was given a new facade and other features that disguised the original Civil War structure.

When the state of Arkansas deeded the battlefield lands and Elkhorn Tavern to the National Park Service in 1960, the 1917 version of the tavern still existed. Consequently, the NPS had to decide the ultimate fate of the building. To make its assessment, the Park Service decided to conduct a historic structures study to determine the strategy for preserving the building for display at the park. The results were three studies: John W. Bond's "Historic Buildings and Structures Report, Elkhorn Tavern" (1961), Dwight E. Stinson's "Historic Buildings and Structures Report for Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge

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<sup>1</sup>Controversy surrounds the date of the burning of Elkhorn Tavern. Dwight Stinson suggests late 1863 or early 1864, where as Shea & Hess in Pea Ridge, 364, suggest that it was burned in December 1862 by secessionists.

National Military Park" (1963), and Henry A. Judd's and Buford L. Pickens' "Historic Structures Report, Architectural Section on Elkhorn Tavern" (1965).

From these studies, the Park Service decided to remove the 1917 alterations and restore the tavern to its reconstructed version of the 1880s. Even though this version was not the original, it was a fairly close rendition of the Civil War era tavern. This decision was made in large part because the only evidence of the original building was Hunt P. Wilson's 1880s painting depicting the Civil War battle scene at the tavern. Although an eye witness account, the painting was produced from memory, the remembrance of an event that took place about twenty years earlier. In the meantime, photographs of the 1880s were discovered clearly showing the salient features of the outside of the tavern. With this sure evidence in hand, the Park Service decided to rehabilitate the building using the 1880s photographs as the guidelines. Furthermore, Judd's architectural study and the work of Construction Representative James S. Askins, who supervised the restoration of Elkhorn Tavern, revealed important characteristics of both the exterior and the interior of the building that could be interpreted and incorporated into the restoration of the reconstructed tavern (1880s' version).

The interpretation of the tavern has proven to be difficult. In the aftermath of the 1965 rehabilitation of the building, the Park Service has had a difficult time determining the ultimate role of Elkhorn Tavern in the interpretive scheme of the Pea Ridge park. Because the tavern was used as a supply depot and a hospital during the Civil War, for example, the plan for the interior has been difficult to determine. Should it be a hospital? Or should it be a supply depot? On the other hand, the park personnel have also debated placing period furniture in the tavern. Sarah Olson's 1976 furnishing study further complicated matters because of the weak documentation she offered supporting historical furnishings at the tavern. Despite this effort and intervention by the administrators at the park, a limited amount of period furniture has been placed in the tavern in accordance with the hospital-supply depot motif.

In very recent times, the park personnel have decided to combine the supply depot-hospital motif by placing wooden supply crates in the building among the makeshift hospital tables that they have also put in place. With this in mind, the furniture plans have gone by the wayside for the most part, especially because of the renewed emphasis at the park on historical continuity with the Civil War period.

As we will see, the history of Elkhorn Tavern is a storied one. Yet there will always be controversy surrounding the

historic preservation of this structure. Regardless, the famous inn, which has attracted tourists since the late 1860s, plays a key role in the national military park's interpretation of the Battle of Pea Ridge and in the park's annual visitation. How that history played out and how the management of the tavern evolved is the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

## The History of Elkhorn Tavern to 1960

According to local legend, William Ruddick and Samuel Burks, originally of Illinois, built Elkhorn Tavern in 1833.<sup>2</sup> This early date is certainly questionable; however, evidence suggests that the tavern did definitely exist as early as 1842 when the Benton County Baptist Society recorded its first meeting there, church services being held in the north upstairs room until 1862. In addition to serving as a place of worship, Elkhorn Tavern also earned a reputation as a post office, a voting place, a mercantile establishment, and an inn.<sup>3</sup>

In October 1858, Burks sold the tavern to Jesse and Polly Cox for \$3,600.<sup>4</sup> Like typical American settlers, the Coxes had moved progressively westward during the mid-nineteenth century from Kentucky to Indiana to Kansas, then back to Arkansas. Of their seven children, four came to Arkansas, their son Joseph being most commonly associated with the famous tavern; five slaves also lived and worked for the Coxes in and around the tavern.<sup>5</sup> The timing of the purchase was fortuitous as Cox soon learned that the Butterfield Overland Trail was going to pass by the tavern, and even though a scheduled stage station was never created there, the stagecoaches often stopped to transfer and feed travellers and sometimes to stay the night. Within two years, a telegraph line was also put up along the highway now known as Telegraph Road.<sup>6</sup>

Prior to the Battle of Pea Ridge in March 1862, Jesse Cox made

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<sup>2</sup>See Dwight E. Stinson, Jr., "Historic Buildings Structures Report, Part I, for Elkhorn Tavern, Pea Ridge National Military Park," 7, and Elsa Vaught, "A History of the Building that has been known for Over One Hundred Years as Elkhorn Tavern," Benton County Pioneer 6:4 (May 1959), 3. Ruddick received the patent for the land where the tavern sits on September 28, 1840, see Benton County Land Records, Deed Book A, 94. Also, see John W. Bond, "The History of Elkhorn Tavern," Arkansas Historical Quarterly 21 (1962): 3-15.

<sup>3</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 7.

<sup>4</sup>Benton County Land Records, Deed Book E, 93.

<sup>5</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 53.

<sup>6</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 8.

some alterations to the building. First, he hung weather board and painted it white. He then put in an outdoor staircase on the northeast part of the front porch to accommodate the Baptist parishioners who no longer had to enter the rooms of the Cox family and the guests. Finally, Cox added the elk horns on the ridgepole of the building thus giving the tavern its famous name. It was at this juncture that the Civil War interrupted the daily routine of the Elkhorn Tavern and its occupants.

As is well documented, Missouri proved to be a hotbed of activity early in the Civil War. Throughout 1861, Confederate and Union Missourians vied for position on the western front of the national struggle. The early success of the Confederates and the indecisiveness of the Battle of Wilson's Creek portended an ominous fate for Elkhorn Tavern which stood on the main highway between Springfield, Missouri and Fayetteville, Arkansas two important towns in the western theater of the war. When Major General Sterling Price of the Confederate Missouri State Guard decided to join other southern troops south of the Arkansas-Missouri border in early 1862, Brigadier General Samuel R. Curtis pursued the pesky Guard hoping to rid the embattled state of Missouri of the Confederate force (for a more detailed account of the movements of these Union and Confederate forces, see Chapter 1 and Shea and Hess, Pea Ridge); the occupants of Elkhorn Tavern watched anxiously during the early weeks of 1862 as both armies passed along Telegraph Road. Yet, the ultimate fate of the tavern and its environs could not have been predicted.

By early March 1862, Major General Earl Van Dorn had been assigned to the western theater as the leading Confederate commander of the region. The dashing, if foolhardy Van Dorn soon put together an army of 16,000 men and decided to attack Curtis' force of about 10,500 north of the latter's entrenched position along Little Sugar Creek. During the night of March 6-7, the Confederate general gave his famous orders to outflank the Federalsto prepare for an attack of their rear. If the southern troops had been better fed and equipped, this daring move might have worked. Yet, this was not the case. The troops had been marching for three days straight on meager rations and, furthermore, the extremely cold weather hampered the enveloping action. In the end, Van Dorn's force was divided resulting in a two-sector battle that raged during March 7. The principal sector, to be sure, was centered on Elkhorn Tavern, especially from noon on the 7th to noon on the 8th.

Although Curtis' main Union force was entrenched along Little Sugar Creek, he had sent a detachment and scouts to the north as far as the junction of the Bentonville Detour and Telegraph

Road. Major Eli W. Weston occupied Elkhorn Tavern, establishing the Provost Marshall Headquarters there by the end of the day on March 6. Troops from the 24th Missouri Infantry created a supply depot and prisoner stockade in and nearby the tavern. During the early hours of March 7, Weston learned of the Confederate advance south toward the tavern in Williams and Cross hollows. Realizing that he was facing a major offensive, Weston sent a message to Curtis of the impending engagement near Elkhorn Tavern. Curtis promptly ordered Colonel Eugene A. Carr's division to block the advance just north of the tavern. The Coxes were either forced to stay in the cellar or had made their way to Clemons farm to the east a half-mile or so on Huntsville Road.<sup>7</sup>

Carr established his headquarters at Elkhorn Tavern then initiated plans to thwart the greycoats' advance. By mid morning the fighting was fierce and the Federals' position threatened. A New York Herald reporter described the action near the tavern:

Shells which were thrown too high for effect upon Colonel Vandever's brigade [in Carr's division] were just the elevation for the Elkhorn, and a rifled projectile passing within a few feet, and bursting twenty yards beyond me, rendered my notes of that moment somewhat difficult to decipher. Two companies of infantry were drawn up near the house, awaiting orders. A shell burst in their midst, killing two men and wounding five others. Another struck the yard in the rear of the house...Had it not been for the determined course of...Carr, who, pistol in hand,...a serious stampede would have been the result. A solid shot struck the house and passed completely through injuring no one, as the family had taken shelter in the cellar.<sup>8</sup>

The bluecoats held off the brutal attack for much of the day, making room in Elkhorn Tavern for the wounded.

As nightfall approached, the Union troops finally gave way to superior Confederate numbers. Colonel Henry Little's brigade made the final push and "as with a shout of triumph Rives' and Gates' regiments [of the Missouri Confederates] dashed onward past [sic] the Elkhorn Tavern, and we stood on the ground

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<sup>7</sup>Stinson suggests that the Coxes were in the cellar, other accounts suggest that they were at the Clemens farm.

<sup>8</sup>Frank Moore, ed., The Rebellion Record: A Diary of American Events, with Documents, Narratives, Illustrative Incidents, Poetry, etc. volume IV (New York: 1862), 256.

where the enemy had formed in the morning."<sup>9</sup> As the rebel troops made their way in and around the tavern, they quickly realized that there were supplies and food in the two-story building. One soldier described what he saw when he entered the Cox home:

Just beyond the Federal line at the head of the gulch the Elkhorn Tavern and a large barn where the horses were kept were in plain view and when we reached the top of the ridge the Federal line fell back to the Tavern and across a field beyond. It fell to my lot to pass through the house in our advance and there was a sutler store in there and as we passed through we filled our haversacks with crackers, oysters, sardines, etc. and I remember some of the boys stuck their bayonets into and carried off a pile of cheese on their shoulders as they passed through.<sup>10</sup>

For some of the ravenous greycoats, the captured food was a blessing even though the bulk of the force would go hungry that cold March night.

In the wake of the infantry followed the artillery batteries. Captain Henry Guibor's battery established a position on Telegraph Road between the tavern and the blacksmith's shop. Among the cannoneers was Hunt P. Wilson who later memorialized the fighting at Elkhorn Tavern in several drawings and paintings.<sup>11</sup>

By nightfall, General Van Dorn had established his headquarters at Elkhorn Tavern. There he assessed his position, deciding to keep the high ground at the tavern where he concluded the battle would be fought the following day. Unfortunately for the Confederates, however, that next day's battle would not last very long. By 10 a.m., it was clear that the ammunition supply train had not made its way to the tavern. Evidence suggests that Van Dorn gave the order for the wagons to advance from Camp Stephens and then changed that order. Regardless, the Confederates had no choice but to retreat which they did to the east on Huntsville Road. By noon, the Federals had won the day and were in possession of the tavern.

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<sup>9</sup>The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies Volume VIII (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1882), 308.

<sup>10</sup>Quoted in Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 14-15.

<sup>11</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 15.

The importance of Elkhorn Tavern during the battle is undisputed. For the Confederates the tavern was also a symbol of the ferocious battle that took place; they named it, the Battle of Elkhorn Tavern. Indeed, the tavern served both sides during the battle as a hospital, as a supply depot, and as headquarters for both the Union and Confederate forces. Its presence served as a focal point for troop movements throughout the day on March 7 and during the morning of March 8, 1862.

Despite the pivotal role the tavern played in the Battle of Pea Ridge, no known photographs exist of it prior to the 1880s and the only visual account is Wilson's painting which he composed from memory twenty years after the fact. Consequently, no accurate record of the Civil War building exists.

For about a month, the Federal troops stayed at the battlefield assessing their position and tending to the wounded. After leaving the battlefield, Curtis established a Federal garrison at Cassville, Missouri, leaving Elkhorn Tavern unattended. By the summer, southern guerillas were harrassing the Cassville outpost, forcing a northward retreat of the Union garrison. Realizing the potential danger in losing Missouri, a Federal force under Brigadier General John M. Schofield initiated a campaign to stop the Confederate skirmishers. On October 12, his force retook Cassville and proceeded to the tavern. Four days later, a skirmish took place at Elkhorn Tavern, foretelling of more bloodshed in Northwest Arkansas. On October 17, Schofield established his headquarters at the tavern. Four days later, Schofield led the pursuit of a Confederate force in the direction of Huntsville. On October 24, the general returned to Elkhorn Tavern and reported to his superiors that the southerners had been driven south of the Boston Mountains.<sup>12</sup>

For the remainder of the fall, 1862, Elkhorn Tavern served as an outpost for the Federal troops roaming Northwest Arkansas in pursuit of rebel skirmishers. On November 14, Lieutenant Colonel Albert W. Bishop arrived at the tavern to command two battalions with the expressed duty of keeping the telegraph lines open. While there, Bishop described Elkhorn Tavern with "two apartments and a 'lean to' that served as a kitchen." The building, he wrote, was a "rude old fashioned structure, on the Virginian model of a hundred years gone. Its overhanging roof and capacious chimneys, built up sturdily from the outside, as though scorning modern improvements, give

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<sup>12</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 20-21.

it an air of comfort...."<sup>13</sup> Bishop also commented that the tavern was used to detain political prisoners and was the home of the Coxes.

For the remainder of November and into early December, 1862, the Confederate and Union troops of the region jockeyed for position in Northwest Arkansas. The bluecoats continued to occupy Elkhorn Tavern, anticipating the movements of the enemy greycoats. On December 7, the Battle of Prairie Grove was fought, the Union coming out on top. In the meantime, the Federal ammunition train passed by the tavern two days later. Bishop ordered most of his men to accompany the wagons toward the battle front. On December 14, Bishop and the remaining five men left the tavern for good.

Local legend suggests that "bushwackers" burned Elkhorn Tavern on December 9. However, this date cannot be correct because Bishop did not leave until December 14. Consequently, some controversy surrounds the date of the fiery destruction of the tavern. Historian Stinson suggests that it was burned much later than December, 1862. In fact, he notes that a garrison "consisting of the 7th Missouri State Militia Cavalry [was] stationed at Elkhorn Tavern" on December 31. As late as January 22, 1863, Stinson argues, the tavern "continued to be used as a telegraph station..." Later, pro-union southerners passed by the structure in route to safety in federally protected Missouri. On February 10, William Baxter of Fayetteville traveled by the tavern and commented on the battlefield. "Although Baxter does not say in so many words that the Tavern was standing when he passed within a few yards of it," Stinson writes, "his phrasing [in his recollections] indicates that it was. Giving as much attention as he did to the landmark he would certainly have mentioned if he passed a pile of rubble on its site."<sup>14</sup>

Because the tavern had served as a Federal garrison and was along the telegraph line, it remained a target for southern guerrillas who feared that it might be used again by the Federals after the Battle of Prairie Grove. The forty-mile region between Cassville, Missouri and Fayetteville, Arkansas was a "veritable hotbed of partisan activity and during this time [February 1863 to August 1864] the Tavern could have been burned with comparative ease."<sup>15</sup> So, the exact date of the

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<sup>13</sup>Quoted from Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 22, from A.W. Bishop, Loyalty on the Frontier or Sketches of Union Men of the South-West (St. Louis, 1863), 57. Bishop began work on this book "while on duty" at Elkhorn Tavern in November, 1862.

<sup>14</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 27. Stinson is referring to William Baxter, Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove: or Scenes and Incidents of the War in Arkansas (Cincinnati, 1864), 241, 246-248.

<sup>15</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 28.

burning is unknown. Regardless, the deed was completed by the end of summer 1864. "All that remained of the original structure were the chimneys and the stone foundation."<sup>16</sup>

As the war wound down in late 1864 and into 1865, Federal commander Colonel M. LaRue Harrison, stationed at Fayetteville, ordered all males over the age of fourteen in Northwest Arkansas to report to an agricultural colony. This order is significant in that it virtually eliminated guerrilla activity in the area and allowed Joseph Cox to rebuild the tavern. Stinson suggests that even though Harrison's order would have presumably affected Cox, the owner of the tavern may have been able to work out an agreement with the Federal authorities to gain exemption from the colony. This fact is significant because it would have allowed Cox to rebuild the tavern during the fall of 1865. And because southern guerillas probably burned the building, the Unionists may have sympathized with Cox and, thus, would have given him permission to stay at his homestead.

In Cox family lore, Joseph was supposed to have rebuilt the tavern in time for the birth of his second daughter, Malinda Francis, who arrived on December 7, 1865. On the other hand, another source states that the tavern was rebuilt in 1886.<sup>17</sup> Stinson suggests, however, that this latter date is inaccurate. Not only did Cox need the reconstructed building to accommodate his fledgling family, but all the children claimed later that they were born in the tavern. Photographs were also supposed to have been taken of the tavern in 1882 and 1885.

Stinson also points out that the tax evaluation disproves the 1886 reconstruction date. The principle reason for this conclusion, he argues, is that "there is no significant change in the recorded value of the property from 1871 to 1922" suggesting that the tavern would have been built before 1871. Regardless, Joseph Cox received ownership of the property in 1876, a year after his father's death, marking the beginning of a new era for the tavern.<sup>18</sup>

When Cox rebuilt the tavern, he reincorporated the chimneys and the stone foundation into the new structure. According to Stinson, he "naturally built the new structure along the

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<sup>16</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 30.

<sup>17</sup>Goodspeed Brothers, History of Northwest Arkansas (Chicago, 1889), 92.

<sup>18</sup>Even though Joseph was closely associated with and lived in the Tavern prior to his father's death, Jesse Cox had willed the property to his older son James. James in turn deeded the property to Joseph a year later. Hence, this explains why Joseph received the property a year after his father's death. See Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 34.

lines of the original building." Several sources suggest that, in fact, the new structure was based on the old version. On July 6, 1887, for example, former General Franz Sigel returned to the scene of the battle and commented on the area: "The house and barn...are still standing, and even the new Elkhorn Tavern stands on the old site...Late in the war the tavern was burned, but Mr. Cox rebuilt it after the plan of the old one, and still lives there." In December 1888, a newspaper reporter from Topeka, Kansas noted that the "present Elkhorn Tavern...is a close copy of the original." And the Goodspeed Brothers wrote in 1889 that Cox "rebuilt the tavern upon the original plan and on the original site."<sup>19</sup>

A comparison of the Wilson painting and the photographs of the 1880s show that some changes were made to the exterior in the reconstructed version. "Most obvious," in Stinson's estimation, "is the absence of an outside staircase in the second building."<sup>20</sup> More subtle changes included the addition of two windows on the second floor of the facade of the building and the omission of the shutters. Yet these windows were probably in the location of the upstairs doors of the original building; the remaining doors and windows of the facade were nearly identical with the original. Cox also put in more beams to support the porch. "The only other difference worthy of note," comments Stinson, was that the "picket-bannister on the lower porch was open in the center" while the new one was "left two breaks for entrance directly in front of the doors."<sup>21</sup>

Further comparisons are very tenuous indeed because the 1880s photographs illustrate the facade of the building only. Wilson's painting, on the other hand, does show the north end of the building. Two photographs taken in the 1890s do reveal the south end of the tavern. There were no windows on the upstairs floor whereas two windows were put in west of the chimney downstairs.

It should also be noted that Henry A. Judd writes in his report, "Historic Structures Report, Part I, Architectural Data Section on Elkhorn Tavern" (1965), that the reconstructed Elkhorn Tavern was in fact a one-story log structure originally (1865 version). Washington University Professor Buford L. Pickens, as a member of Judd's architectural team, discovered that a water color illustration existed showing the

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<sup>19</sup>Quoted from Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 38-39.

<sup>20</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 35.

<sup>21</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 36.

tavern as a one-story structure. Martha H. Hoke, an illustrator for the Post Dispatch of St. Louis, had painted the water color of Elkhorn Tavern sometime in 1865. Housed in the Missouri Historical Society Collections, the Hoke illustration depicts the tavern as a one-story log cabin, "snugly resting between two tall stone chimneys..."<sup>22</sup> In the background appears Big Mountain and in the foreground a wooden rail fence with a picket gate.

According to Pickens, another account of the reconstructed version of the tavern suggests it was built before 1882 when a photograph was taken showing the second story which must have been added in the 1870s or very early 1880s. Consequently, the rehabilitated tavern of 1965, which has two stories rather than one, was not based on the original reconstructed version but rather on the altered structure which was two-stories tall.<sup>23</sup>

The arrangement of the interior cannot be conclusively determined. However, Stinson states: "If Cox followed the plan of the original Tavern faithfully, that building must also have had four large rooms, two on each floor, each of the vertical divisions connected by a staircase." Any descriptions of the back of the building, on the west side, can only be conjectural. Lt. Colonel Bishop's comment that a "kitchen made of a lean-to" existed prior to the burning "may indicate that he did not mean a lean-to per se," suggests Stinson. In fact, it was probably an addition used as a kitchen, "giving the building the shape of an abbreviated 'L.'" This arrangement would also explain the extra downstairs window west of the chimney on the south end of the building; it was a kitchen window.<sup>24</sup>

Joseph Cox made no major changes in the tavern after adding the second floor. In addition to serving as a home, inn, post office, and general store, Elkhorn Tavern became a popular meeting place for veteran Confederates as early as 1887; later veteran Union soldiers visited the site as well. Two monuments were put up near the tavern in 1887 and 1889 (see Chapter 2). Clearly, Elkhorn Tavern became the dominant symbol of the Battle of Pea Ridge and served as the principal site for reunions and for visitation by tourists.

The next phase of the tavern's history began in 1905 when Lorenza Scott, husband of the Coxes' daughter, Malinda

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<sup>22</sup>Henry A. Judd and Buford L. Pickens, "Historic Structures Report, Part I, Architectural Data Section on Elkhorn Tavern," (Washington, DC: NPS, Design and Construction Division of Architecture, 1965), 1.

<sup>23</sup>Judd, "Historic Structures," 2.

<sup>24</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 37.

Francis, bought the property from his wife's siblings. Lucinda Cox had passed away in 1902 and Joseph died in 1903, the property passing to their children. The heirs then sold to Scott, the transaction completed on February 15, 1905.

Like his father-in-law before him, Scott farmed the nearby fields and continued to use the tavern as an inn. As late as 1911, veteran A. M. Payne visited the site and commented on the building. "I was surprised to find how little it had changed, what seemed to be the same old tavern with its elk horns was standing there still, but the barn was gone and in its place an apple orchard grew."<sup>25</sup> As Stinson points out, Payne, after forty-nine years, was impressed with the integrity of the tavern, believing that he was staying in the original building. Payne's impressions certainly suggest that the reconstructed tavern was very much like the original.

Scott, however, was not content with the near original building. He made several prominent alterations. The first changes were made sometime between 1905 and 1917, probably in the former year or 1906. During these initial alterations, Scott added two rooms to the rear and center of the building, approximately 23' by 14'. To make the changes, he "temporarily detached the 'lean-to' or kitchen," a 7' by 9' room and "equalized the ends of the roof of the main building," the "east and west walls...now equidistant from the chimneys." Scott then "reattached" the kitchen and constructed a roof for it and the new rooms.<sup>26</sup> Finally, he added three new windows, one downstairs and two upstairs on the south side of the building.

The final alterations made to Elkhorn Tavern before the Park Service's rehabilitation in 1965 were made in 1917. Scott took out the original stone chimney and fire place on the north and then extended the building six feet on that side, a brick flue replacing the stone chimney. He also removed the "double porches" on the facade, replacing them with a "narrower set of porches covered by a gabled extension coming out from the center of the roof." He then made the last exterior alteration, removing two upstairs doors and placing a new one between their old locations.

Scott also made several "radical" interior changes. After making the six-foot extension on the north, he decided to use the extra space for a hallway and staircase, leaving the north and south rooms the same size and taking out the two staircases that separated the home from the inn. The upstairs

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<sup>25</sup>Quoted from Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 41.

<sup>26</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 41-42.

rooms were divided with partitions, adding two additional rooms, the east ones a little larger than the west ones. "No further physical changes were made in the Tavern" after 1917, according to Stinson. This final version of Elkhorn Tavern stood at the site in 1963 when Stinson completed his report.<sup>27</sup>

Lorenza Scott lived and farmed at the tavern until his death in January 1932. His wife Malinda lived alone in the home until 1934 when her daughter, Lucy, and her son-in-law, Coen Ross, arrived to live in the north apartment. In 1936, Malinda Scott decided to work out an arrangement with businessman M. B. "Pat" Ellis, who created a museum to sell souvenirs and snacks at the often visited tavern. Ellis moved into the north apartment after the departure of Cox's daughter and son-in-law sometime in 1936.

Under Ellis' supervision, Elkhorn Tavern took on the appearance of being an important historic site, mainly so that Ellis could make a profit. He organized the historic relics and battlefield memorabilia, erected signs to advertise, built a lookout tower on Big Mountain, and constructed several lesser structures to serve the refreshments. Ellis' initiative was rewarded during the 1930s as he attracted enough visitors to justify the employment of five girls or "car hops" in summertime. A National Park Service historical investigator visited the site in 1937 and reported that Ellis was earning about \$3,000 annually. Occasionally, visitors were given a tour of the tavern and Malinda Scott often discussed the past events surrounding the building with those interested in its history.

Ellis seems to have mislead the public concerning the authenticity of the building, however. He, for example, placed a sign on the south chimney stating that the tavern was built in 1833, not mentioning that it was rebuilt later. Another sign inaccurately declared that the building was burned by bushwackers a couple days after the Battle of Pea Ridge. These seemingly contradictory facts added to the lore and legend of the tavern which generated a decent profit for Ellis.

World War II intervened in 1941, putting a halt to the thriving business. As a result, Ellis left the tavern in 1942. At 77 years of age, Scott could not carry on the business, although the north downstairs room remained a self-guided museum bankrolled on donations. Little changed until 1958 when the state of Arkansas purchased the tavern and the

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<sup>27</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 47.

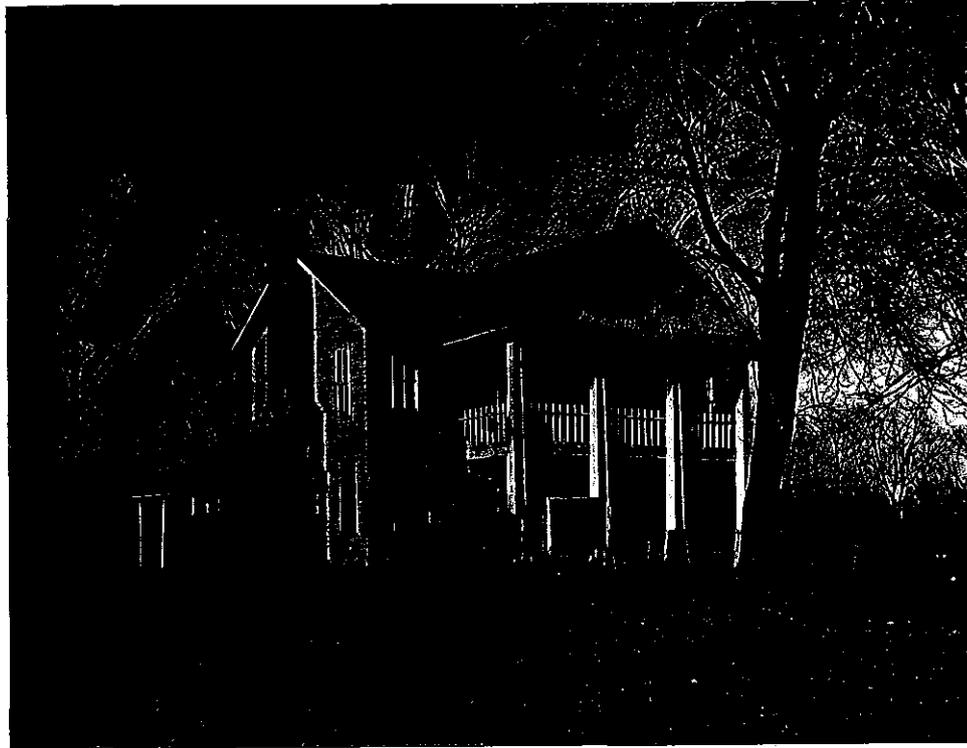


Figure 6. The Elkhorn Tavern just prior to its restoration during the Summer of 1965. Note the original chimney (left of center). Courtesy Pea Ridge National Military Park.

surrounding property.<sup>28</sup>

Three months after the state purchased the tavern, the property was deeded to the federal government. "Deed Day" took place on March 7, 1960, the state of Arkansas donating the tavern, along with more than four thousand acres of battlefield lands, to the National Park Service. Symbolic of this monumental transformation at the tavern was the passing of Malinda Scott only a month later on April 3 at the age of ninety-five. A new era had dawned on Elkhorn Tavern. By May 1963, the NPS had installed an audio station the tavern to relate some of the highlights of the storied building. As the Visitor Center, Tour Road, and other new facilities began to emerge at the new national military park after 1960, NPS historians and the Pea Ridge staff began seriously to ponder the ultimate fate of the historic Civil War structure. The

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<sup>28</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 47-48; Rex C. Conner, "Report of Investigations of the Pea Ridge Battle Field, Benton, County, Arkansas, April 8, 1941," 2.

administrative challenges and ultimate decisions are discussed in the following pages.

#### The Restoration of Elkhorn Tavern, 1965

In his 1961 Interpretive Prospectus, Historian John W. Bond addressed the role of Elkhorn Tavern in the park's historical presentation. He suggested that the Tour Road stop at the tavern should be "centered primarily around restored war-time Elkhorn Tavern." To insure that this centerpiece receive proper attention, Bond also suggested that "extensive research...be accomplished to determine what type of structure was located on the site..." He then commented that "it should be determined what the 1862 structure looked like. Then, if the present [1961] structure can be altered to appear like the 1862 structure that should be done."<sup>29</sup> To be sure, Bond was not certain at this juncture when the tavern was rebuilt, the years 1865 and 1886 debated. Clearly, Bond and other park personnel were not aware that the tavern had been rebuilt in 1865 as a one-story frame structure that would be altered to two stories some time later.

Bond went on to recommend that the "Tavern should be furnished with furniture typical of the War period." Superintendent John T. Willett agreed with Bond on this latter point, stating in a published essay that the tavern would be "restored and equipped with period furnishings." Two years later, Superintendent Raymond Nelson acted on these recommendations, and sent a Research Study Proposal titled "Furnishing Plan for Elkhorn Tavern" to the Southeast Regional Office with hopes "To adequately and properly interpret the Battle of Pea Ridge and the role played by Elkhorn Tavern in this history, the interior of this building should be properly furnished." The study was not conducted in 1964, however, perhaps because of the \$4,000 request to conduct the study.<sup>30</sup> In 1976, Sarah Olson would finally conduct such a study (discussed below).

The restoration of Elkhorn Tavern was initiated through the planning process. In 1961, Bond, for example, completed the "Historic Buildings and Structures Report, Part I, Elkhorn Tavern" and then two years later Dwight Stinson prepared the "Historic Buildings and Structures Report for Elkhorn Tavern, Part I, Pea Ridge National Military Park." These studies examined the history of the tavern and dates for possible

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<sup>29</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," 13.

<sup>30</sup>Bond, "Interpretive Prospectus," 13; Willett, "Development of Pea Ridge," 169; Resource Study Proposal, "Furnishing Plan for Elkhorn Tavern," April 10, 1964, 1.

alterations in the building. Henry A. Judd and Buford Pickens then completed the "Historic Structures Report, Part I, Architectural Data Section on Elkhorn Tavern" in 1965. This latter report served as the guidelines for the rehabilitation of Elkhorn Tavern.

Stinson clearly spelled out the goals of his project and the potential for the development at Elkhorn Tavern. Historically and as a park structure the building was extremely important. According to the Pea Ridge historian, "the original Tavern was historically significant in both the Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove campaigns...." "It also figured to a degree in the history of the Butterfield Overland Mail Company." However, Stinson was quick to point out that the "reconstructed building had no major significance except for its relation with the original." This argument, on the other hand, was probably moot because the "present building...has acquired a certain notoriety of its own."<sup>31</sup>

Regardless of the current status of the building, Stinson understood the importance of the standing structure in the proposed rehabilitation of Elkhorn Tavern. Consequently, he and other NPS personnel made a concerted effort "to establish how close a physical resemblance there is between the present building and the original. That is, to decide whether the subsequent alterations on the present building could be eliminated and thereby provide a replica of the original." In the end, Stinson made three conclusions:

- A. The present building [in 1963] has no major historical significance of its own.
- B. The present building has undergone such extensive alterations that it bears little resemblance to its own original appearance, let alone that of the original Tavern.
- C. That to eliminate the alterations would require such a complete overhaul that it would be more practical to reconstruct the building. The reconstruction should be based upon what is now known, and what can be determined by architectural study, about the original appearance of the building as well as that of the original Tavern.<sup>32</sup>

Despite the historical nature of the rebuilt tavern, Stinson suggested a total reconstruction of the building. Even though Bond's 1961 Interpretive Prospectus proposed restoration,

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<sup>31</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 1.

<sup>32</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 2-3.

Stinson disagreed. "It is our conclusion, however, that a reconstruction of the original Tavern would be a more practical way to approach the problem, considering the great amount of alterations made over the years that would need to be eliminated in a restoration."<sup>33</sup>

Stinson understood that his proposal for a completely reconstructed building would cause a controversy. Visitors clearly associated the current tavern with the original Civil War structure. Despite its general popularity, however, Stinson "believed that a reconstructed building would not lessen this sense of association" felt by the visitors. "It would...be far more historically accurate...than the present structure." Prior to passage of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the preservation of the current structure was far less important than historical integrity despite the potential for the destruction of part of, if not all of, the standing structure. Perhaps the local citizens appreciation of the standing building did make sense. As Stinson noted: "To reconstruct the Tavern rather than restore the present building might arouse some local hostility."<sup>34</sup> In the end, Stinson estimated that the "reconstruction or restoration" of Elkhorn Tavern and "furnishing it" would cost about \$55,000.

In the end, the decision was made to restore the Elkhorn Tavern, not to rebuild it. A movement within the Park Service precluded destruction of the historic building despite its lack of unqualified historical integrity. Robert E. Smith, Chief Architect in the EODC, strongly opposed razing the tavern. In a memorandum to the Southeast Regional Director, Smith made his point in rather stark terms: "We do not agree with the administrative recommendation that the present structure [Elkhorn Tavern] be demolished and a new structure built."<sup>35</sup>

During late 1964 and early 1965, Henry Judd's architectural study was conducted. The Southeast Regional Director agreed with Judd's conclusions. The study called for "exterior restoration, restoration and strengthening the first floor to allow for public use, no restoration of the second floor, removal of the dilapidated kitchen wing, and provision for toilet facilities for an employee." The report further called for "use of existing water service at the building and not running a water line all the way from the Visitor Center as

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<sup>33</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 4.

<sup>34</sup>Stinson, "Historic Buildings," 5.

<sup>35</sup>Memorandum: Robert E. Smith, Chief Architect, EODC, to Regional Director, Southeast Region, January 15, 1965. 1, Box 54, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records.

urged by the Superintendent. The aim is to rehabilitate the existing structure with a minimum restoration and keeping the cost at the lowest possible level."<sup>36</sup>

The decision to make these alterations did not comply with Park Service Director Hartzog's wishes, however. Hartzog had requested the construction of "public toilet facilities with a water line from the visitor center, and full restoration of the interior, strengthening the second floor to permit use by visitors. Judd stated that if we were required to comply with the alleged decision of the Director the cost would be exorbitant."<sup>37</sup>

The Southeast Regional Office was skeptical about the Washington Office's understanding of the Elkhorn Tavern project:

The Washington Office seemed to be quite in the dark as to our plans for this building and the latest item that Mr. Stratton had was the memorandum written by Raymond Gregg nearly two years ago following a visit to the park. At that time I believe it was still planned to tear down the present building and make a hypothetical reconstruction of the building that, presumably, was there at the time of the battle. Obviously, we have gone a long way beyond this idea...the current trend in reconstruction philosophy would make the earlier plan difficult to justify at this time.<sup>38</sup>

Stinson's suggestions for total reconstruction went by the wayside even before the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 was passed. Clearly, preservation-restoration rather than demolition-rebuilding was becoming part of the National Park Service philosophy. As a result, much of the reconstructed Elkhorn Tavern was saved despite its numerous historical flaws.

Superintendent Nelson responded to the proposed changes by suggesting that "the inside restrooms be located in the lean-to on the back end of the building." Furthermore, the Superintendent commented, the park personnel "recommend that electric heaters be employed during the winter rather than an

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<sup>36</sup>Routing Sheet, January 12, 1965, 1, Southwest Regional Library, Santa Fe Office, National Park Service.

<sup>37</sup>Routing Sheet, January 12, 1965, 1.

<sup>38</sup>Routing Sheet, January 12, 1965, 2.

oil space heater."<sup>39</sup> Nelson later suggested that the northeast fireplace be enlarged to accommodate a display consisting of cooking utensils used during the battle. He also requested that screens be put in to provide summertime ventilation and to deter insects. And, "for the sake of the handicapped in wheelchairs, we hope that the front porch will be easily accessible, and door sills will not present a hazard."<sup>40</sup>

In the end, the NPS decided to restore Elkhorn Tavern. James S. Askins was put in charge of the project. Askins was one of the few building restoration specialists in the NPS at the time he supervised the rehabilitation project. Later he would play a principal role in the establishment of the Williamsport Training Center, a kind of command center for historic preservation projects within the Park Service. During his stay at the Pea Ridge park (May 1965 to May 1966), Askins used the park as a base for other restoration projects such as the Ray House at Wilson's Creek NMP and the Shirley House at Vicksburg NMP. In the summer of 1965, he completed the Elkhorn Tavern rehabilitation.<sup>41</sup>

At the height of the Elkhorn Tavern project, Askins had a crew of seventeen workers. Among the laborers were carpenters, a stone mason, and numerous general laborers, all who had been hired by the park with Askins' advice. The project was designed to tap into the local economy by not only hiring locals but also by purchasing supplies and equipment locally. The NPS used this strategy as an "idea to stimulate the local economy."<sup>42</sup> Public relations, according to Askins, were high on the list of priorities for the restoration project. Superintendent Nelson played his part when he invited local newspaper reporters to watch the rehabilitation team in action. Nelson even had benches built to accommodate the onlookers.<sup>43</sup>

Askins followed the recommendations of his supervisor, Henry "Hank" Judd. In the architect's plans, it was "recommended that the exterior be restored to its appearance of ca. 1886, when the existing building received its second story..." The

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<sup>39</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Nelson to Regional Director, Southeast Region, January 21, 1965, 1.

<sup>40</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Nelson to Regional Director, Southeast Region, March 24, 1965, 1, Box 54, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records.

<sup>41</sup>Memorandum: Construction Representative James S. Askins to Chief, EODC, June 18, 1965, 1, Box 54, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records; interview of James S. Askins by the author, July 2, 1996.

<sup>42</sup>Interview of James S. Askins, July 2, 1996.

<sup>43</sup>Interview of James S. Askins, July 2, 1996.

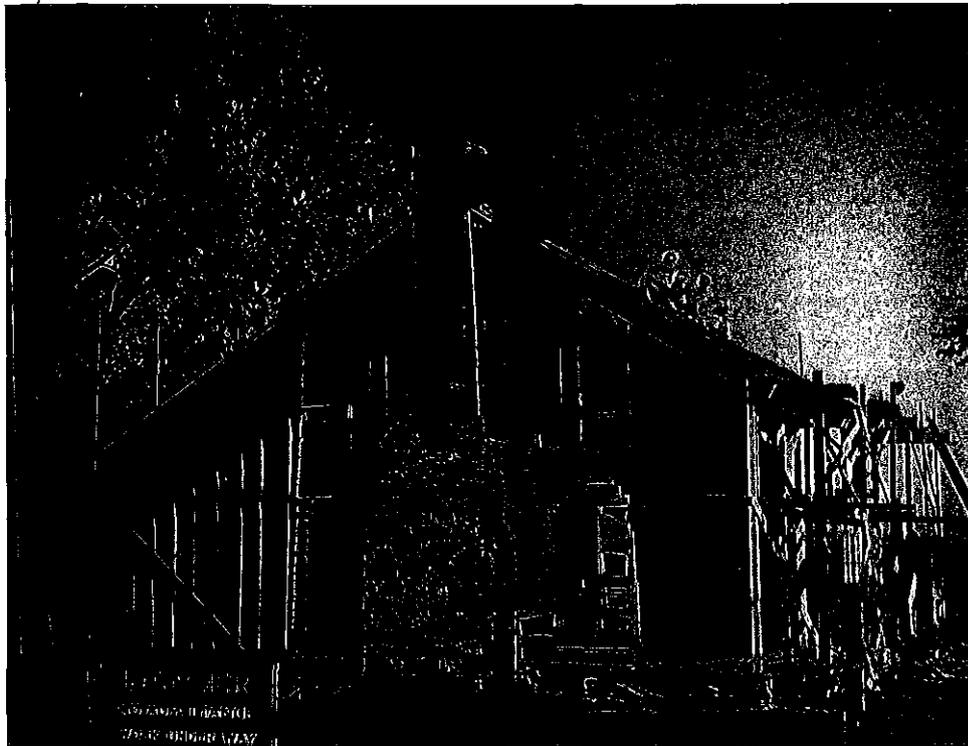


Figure 7. The Elkhorn Tavern being restored during the Summer of 1965. Note that the 1917 additions have been removed on the front and back of the tavern. Courtesy Pea Ridge NMP.

report also suggested that the 1917 antebellum porch addition and the six-foot extension on the north end of the tavern be removed; the north wall was then to be repositioned "in its original location." A two-story front porch was to be added, based on the 1880s photographs rather than the Wilson painting. In addition, specified windows and doors were to be removed and relocated. The kitchen lean-to was also scheduled for removal.<sup>44</sup>

Judd then recommended reinforcement of the "structural framing" of the tavern for public safety. He suggested stabilizing the first floor from the basement, whereas the exterior walls "can be strengthened by removing the exterior finish and inserting additional studding and/or reinforcing the existing frame, particularly at the junction of the second

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<sup>44</sup>Judd, "Historic Structures Report," 10; interview of James S. Askins, July 2, 1996.

floor addition to the original one story structure." The second floor restoration was going to be too costly. Consequently, Judd "recommended that visitation be restricted to the first floor only, and only the minimum necessary reinforcement be made to the second floor area."<sup>45</sup>

The interior of the building was not given as high a priority in the rehabilitation project. However, some changes were made. Judd recommended that the "first floor rooms be restored to their probable original appearance." On the other hand, the basement and second floor were not scheduled for restoration.

Judd also made recommendations for the utilities. When the north chimney was to be reconstructed, "provisions can be made for a flue to serve a new heating system, with the furnace in the basement." A forced hot-air system was suggested as being the "most economical and the easiest to install, without serious intrusion on the visual appearance of the rooms." Electrical work should be limited "to provide convenience outlets for housekeeping and maintenance, and lights....Lighting on the first floor should be as inconspicuous as possible."<sup>46</sup>

The Judd report then suggested that if a "comfort station" were built that it be an "outbuilding." The architect clearly did not want a restroom constructed in the tavern, but rather called for a "typical privy which would have stood behind the tavern in the historic period." This suggestion, however, would not satisfy NPS Director George Hartzog as we will see.

Askins took Judd's recommendations to heart. After completion of a "very, very indepth building pathology," he "prepared plans agreed to by all participants to the plans." With this completed he then followed Judd's suggestions and removed the antebellum porch, the modern chimneys, windows and doors, and the lean-to. He then oversaw the stabilization of the building's frame and foundation; termites were discovered and arrangements were made to "have exterminators rid the premises of these pests." With these preliminary jobs out of the way, Askins and his crew then rebuilt the north chimney of sandstone and stabilized the south one.<sup>47</sup>

During the removal of the lean-to, Askins' crew discovered a

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<sup>45</sup>Judd, "Historic Structures Report," 11.

<sup>46</sup>Judd, "Historic Structures Report," 11-12.

<sup>47</sup>Memorandum: Construction Representative Askins to Chief, EODC, June 4, 1965; June 11, 1965; June 18, 1965; June 25, 1965; Memorandum: Chief Architect, EODC, to Superintendent, Pea Ridge, Attention: Construction Representative Askins, June 23, 1965.1

piece of bannister from the front porch, probably from the 1880s. This seemingly insignificant rail piece provided the crew with a key morsel of evidence to determine the proper height, configuration, and rhythm of the hand rails and balustrae that were used on the reconstructed tavern (probably 1880s). With this key link, combined with examination of the 1880s photographs, Askins was able to reconstruct the front porch according to Judd's plans.<sup>48</sup>

To replace the elk horns, Askins contacted cousin NPS personnel at Yellowstone National Park. They obliged Askins and sent a "nearly identical" pair of horns based on the photograph of the previous rack Askins had sent to them.

Askins also carried out extensive research on the exterior paint of the building. He noted that the Civil War era paint was actually quite poor. The red paint that would have been used, in fact, probably chipped very easily. With this in mind, Askins devised a paint system design that would have given the tavern the appearance of needing a paint job as was the case during the period of the war. After completing the paint scrapings, Askins determined that the exterior had been painted in red and the interior in ivory. He therefore conducted paint research to replicate these two paints, the new paints being applied to the rehabilitated tavern. The paint proved to be controversial because the tavern appeared to need a new paint job all the time and Askins had not taken into account the historic realities of the boards on the exterior of the tavern. The Southwest Regional Office eventually directed the Pea Ridge park to use latex, which was also historically inaccurate, on the exterior of the structure. This paint proved to be as faulty as Askins' new paint. As a result, a different, more durable and better appearing stain was applied in more recent times (early 1990s), despite its historical inaccuracy; fiscal and maintenance concerns took precedence in this case.<sup>49</sup>

For the most part, the rehabilitation of Elkhorn Tavern went smoothly. However, one minor controversy did arise near the end of the completion of the project. On a visit to Pea Ridge, NPS Director Hartzog arrived some time in June to examine the Tour Road. About two-thirds through the tour, which is where the tavern is, Hartzog needed to use the restroom which was not present. Anticipating this need for future visitors, Hartzog, who had earlier recommended the installation of such a facility in Elkhorn Tavern, ordered Askins to put "his" and "hers" rooms in the tavern. This

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<sup>48</sup>Interview of James S. Askins, July 2, 1996.

<sup>49</sup>Interview of Askins, July 2, 1996.



Figure 8. NPS Director George Hartzog and Pea Ridge Superintendent Raymond Nelson at the East Overlook discussing developments at the park during the Summer of 1965. Courtesy Pea Ridge NMP.

order was contrary to Judd's suggestions for restoration, and Askins viewed it as irresponsible from a historic preservation viewpoint. Despite Askins' vehement protests, however, Hartzog won the day and the two restrooms were added to the tavern. More recently, historic preservationists have argued for their removal.<sup>50</sup> As early as 1973, Superintendent Lionel Bienvenu suggested removal of the public restrooms because they "destroyed the integrity of the Tavern." He called for a "separate comfort station."<sup>51</sup> It was too late, however, to change what had already been done.

The final touches on the rehabilitated tavern were completed in 1967. In that year the Economy Electric Service of Rogers finished interior electrical work in the historic building.

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<sup>50</sup>Interview of Askins, July 2, 1996.

<sup>51</sup>See Development/Study Package Proposal, "CONSTR ELKHORN TAVERN COMFORT STATION," April 23, 1973.

By this time, the park personnel had installed an audio station at the tavern to tell its important story. Likewise, the maintenance crew hung a sign at the tavern noting its historical significance to the Pea Ridge and Prairie Grove campaigns.<sup>52</sup>

During Superintendent Kevin McKibbin's tenure as chief administrator at the park in the mid-1970s, an alarm system was installed in the restored tavern to protect against vandals and thieves. As part of his goals for 1977, McKibbin also suggested replacement of the shake shingles on the roof as well as replacement of the elk horns; these two projects were soon completed.<sup>53</sup>

### Elkhorn Tavern Since the Restoration

Elkhorn Tavern was opened to the public by the end of the summer of 1965. Again, it became a focal point for visitation. In subsequent years, the tavern played a key role in the interpretation of the Battle of Pea Ridge. In 1976, for example, Superintendent Betty Gentry organized interpretive demonstrations at the tavern. These living history exhibitions served to solidify Elkhorn Tavern's role as the principal interpretive site at the park. That same year Sarah Olson completed a furnishing study for the tavern.

In 1968 the director of the Southeast Region recommended an interpretive plan and development for Elkhorn Tavern. The four-point recommendations called for:

1. stereo-sound program outside the Tavern, suggesting battle action in the area
2. exterior exhibits such as discarded military transportation gear
3. interior furnishings (boxes, barrels, straw, etc.) to suggest brief use as commissary & hospital then hasty abandonment
4. wayside exhibits with early photo of Tavern & brief text on history of the building<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Memorandum: Acting Superintendent, John W. Bryce, Jr., to Vernon Ingram, Regional Director, Southeast Region, August 28, 1967, 1, Box 40, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>53</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent McKibbin to Associate Regional Director, Professional Services, Southwest Region, September 17, 1975, 1, Box 327, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records; memorandum: Superintendent McKibbin to Regional Director, Southwest Region, September 29, 1976, 1, Box 306, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records.

<sup>54</sup>Memorandum: Regional Director, Southeast Region, to Director, August 13, 1968, 1, Box 138, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

In time, the park constructed an outdoor sound system with a message on the history of the tavern. The wayside exhibits, however, were not installed as suggested. Furnishing plans were kept in mind by the park personnel.

In 1970, the park also initiated an environmental study area program at the tavern "to support and stimulate environmental education programs in local school districts." Because the tavern was such a popular site for the citizens of Northwest Arkansas, it seemed like a logical choice for just such a program. The Elkhorn Tavern Study Area, the guidebook stated, "can be used to teach students about man's relationship to his environment by examining man's interaction and interdependence with his surroundings through all disciplines in the school program."<sup>55</sup> Clearly, the new environmental awareness on the national level was gradually making its way into park policy at Pea Ridge. This emerging philosophy would have important ramifications for management of the park, especially in the 1990s.

Other programs accompanied the tavern as well. During the summers, for instance, volunteers attended to the visitors at Elkhorn Tavern. The volunteers often worked at the site to provide interpretation of the tavern and the Battle of Pea Ridge. The volunteers, however, did "no role playing" at the tavern, rather they provided a steady interpretive voice at the historic building in the summertime.<sup>56</sup>

Living history, on the other hand, offered a "real life" interpretation of the events at Elkhorn Tavern. Future Pea Ridge Superintendent Betty Gentry noted the elaborate living history program at the tavern on a 1976 visit:

Living history interpretation is the key word for the Elkhorn Tavern. The interpreters variously portray Confederate and Union officers and enlisted men. They definitely 'role play.' I observed both a 'Union' soldier and a 'Confederate' soldier, on different days. Both were outstanding. They had obviously done their research thoroughly and were very believable. It certainly adds a great deal to the story to have a

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<sup>55</sup>Pea Ridge National Military Park, "School and Park Manual, Elkhorn Tavern Environmental Study Area," (Pea Ridge National Military Park, 1970), 1.

<sup>56</sup>Memorandum: Betty Gentry, Interpretive Specialist, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services to Chief, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services, September 30, 1976, 1, Box 300, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

'participant' tell you what happened.<sup>57</sup>

The living history program clearly impressed Gentry who, the following year, was appointed Superintendent of the park. She also commented in a recent interview that the living history program was one of the highlights of her superintendency (1977-1988).<sup>58</sup>

During her superintendency, Betty Gentry recalled that the tavern was "pretty well restored" when she arrived in 1977. However, several changes were initiated during her eleven-year management of the park. The tavern, for example, was equipped with a "handicapped ramp" for the physically challenged visitors. Twice the elk horns were replaced. Because of water seepage, Gentry recalled having to repave the Tour Road "hill" to the tavern. She also oversaw the construction of walkways to the two monuments in the grassy area south of the tavern. During her superintendency, a study was completed proposing the removal of the current parking lot south of the building. She had hoped to move the parking area to the west on the ridge so that it would be out of the view of the tavern's visitors behind a small grove of trees. This project, however, was not initiated because of fiscal constraints.<sup>59</sup>

To Furnish or Not to Furnish?

Despite Sarah Olson's furnishing study of 1976, Gentry was never able to initiate a furnishing program during her superintendency. The lack of funds and lack of agreement on what best to do precluded the advancement of this program. Olson, however, did suggest furnishing changes that could be made to the tavern. Her interview with the daughter of Malinda Frances Cox Scott, Mrs. Ira Grimes, provides a list for the possible interior decoration. For the lower rooms, Grimes recalled the use of "white linen 'scrim' curtains on strings or on rods," "a rope spring bed with straw ticked mattress in the southwest room," "home made bedspreads with embroidered flower designs on all beds," "a dutch oven in the southwest fireplace (no crane)," and "a cook stove in the

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<sup>57</sup>Memorandum: Betty Gentry, Interpretive Specialist, Div. of Interpretation & Visitor Services, to Chief, Div. of Interpretation & Visitor Services, September 30, 1976, 1, Box 300, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>58</sup>Interview of Betty Gentry, June 25, 1996.

<sup>59</sup>Interview of Gentry, June 25, 1996.

kitchen (no oven)."<sup>60</sup> An 1885 photograph confirms the use of lace curtains. Grimes also contended that the "parlor room" was in the northeast downstairs and that a ladder led to a storage area in the lean-to kitchen.

Other eye witnesses of the tavern's downstairs furnishings were Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Shepherd of Brightwater, Arkansas. Both recalled childhood visits to the tavern. Mr. Shepherd, born in 1886, remembered it as his "second home." They remembered several items of the southwest room:

- a rope spring bed
- a stand with a lamp
- a bible
- a dresser and dresser scarf
- a cane bottom chair
- a clock on the mantel
- a framed picture on the wall
- a dutch oven in the fireplace
- and irons in the fireplace<sup>61</sup>

They also recalled the furnishings of the northeast downstairs room: two chairs, one or two rocking chairs, and a stand with a lamp.

Another long-time resident of the area, Mrs. Ernest Rich of Pea Ridge remembered the tavern's decor around 1900. She told Olson that the downstairs room contained:

- 'old' bed steads with pre-Civil War spreads
- 'old' straight backed and straight legged chairs,  
with hickory bark bottoms
- kerosene lamps
- home made, weight powered clock
- a high headboard bed and small table, both in  
the northeast room
- a table in the southwest room measuring approxi-  
mately 24 x 40 inches<sup>62</sup>

The furnishings that were in the tavern when the Park Service acquired it were in the possession of Wallace Scott of Garfield.

In the end, Olson concluded that she had found little evidence

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<sup>60</sup>Sarah Olson, "Elkhorn Tavern Pea Ridge National Military Park, Arkansas, Furnishing Study," Pea Ridge National Military Park, 1976, 21.

<sup>61</sup>Olson, "Furnishing Study," 22.

<sup>62</sup>Olson, "Furnishing Study," 23. From Bond, "Notes of interview with Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Rich, December 14, 1965.

of the furnishings of the tavern prior to the Civil War. "There is no documentation of the tavern furnishings before 1862," she wrote in her study, "and...comparative data from related structures along the Butterfield Overland Trail offers only a vague picture of 'a way of life' at these stations." However, she did suggest that because the national military park "is centered around the Battle of Pea Ridge...some consideration should be given to refurnishing the tavern as the field hospital that it became in March, 1862."<sup>63</sup> She suggested that "more solid evidence" for comparison would be available to reconstruct a Civil War field hospital. Clearly, Olson's report is quite inconclusive about the furnishings at Elkhorn Tavern before and during the battle. Consequently, the park personnel were left with a limited reference for refurnishing the famous tavern.

The furnishing study received a very mixed reception from the Director of the Southwest Region and Superintendent Kevin McKibbin. After review of Olson's report, the Regional Office commented that it had "several reservations about the report which occasioned telephone discussions with the Superintendent at Pea Ridge...He [McKibbin] has indicated...that he is in general agreement with the reservations held by the Regional Office." More than anything, McKibbin was concerned with the incompleteness of the tavern. "His primary concern is the fact that the Elkhorn Tavern is one of the major interpretive features of the Park, and the incomplete status it now has is somewhat disappointing to the visitor." The Regional Office, however, was not sure what was going to be the result for Elkhorn Tavern. McKibbin was "understandably anxious to complete as soon as possible the interpretive program for this structure, whatever that might ultimately be."<sup>64</sup>

Several items concerned the Regional Office. First, because the tavern was burned "the building as it now stands [1976] is a restoration of the rebuilt Elkhorn Tavern, not the original. Therefore, although the event commemorated by the Park is the Battle of Pea Ridge, any refurnishing of the structure to the time of the Battle is a distortion of history. We therefore question the propriety of any refurnishing of this structure." The key for the Regional Office was proper interpretation of the Civil War battlefield structure. They, therefore, suggested that an "interpretive exhibit" rather than refurnishing "could possibly say much more about the Battle than a misleading refurnishing to an appearance the existing

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<sup>63</sup>Olson, "Furnishing Study," 24.

<sup>64</sup>Memorandum: Regional Director, Southwest Region to Manager, Denver Service Center, February 23, 1976, 1.

structure never had."<sup>65</sup>

On the other hand, the Regional Office did concede that the existing structure was not "too dissimilar from the original." Yet if the tavern were to be refurnished, "a great deal of additional information would be needed." Olson's study was inconclusive. "This report appears to have assembled in one location material that was already generally available, but contains little original research." Instead of comparing the tavern with Butterfield Stage stations, the study should have compared the structure with others in the vicinity, suggested the Regional Office: "Surely the Elkhorn Tavern was not an isolated phenomenon...."<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, the furnishing study never made suggestions for the development of a field hospital which would be more appropriate for the interpretation of the battle.

Finally, the Regional Office suggested that the report needed additional research material and "at least floor plans and illustrations of typical furnishings" to facilitate the process of refurnishing Elkhorn Tavern. Two years later another furnishing study was completed. The Director of the Southwest Region, however, made it clear that the tavern should not be furnished. "In the best interest of the resource the structure should not be furnished." The greatest obstacle to refurnishing the building was its lack of historical originality. The restored tavern was not, according to the Regional Office, authentic "with regard to the Tavern that stood on this site during the Battle of Pea Ridge." Furthermore, the Regional Office claimed that:

The best use of the two main downstairs rooms appears to be to house an exhibit relating to the history of the Elkhorn Tavern, with special emphasis on the time of the battle. This would avoid the pretense of a historic furnishing and would allow the interior to be used effectively for interpretation. Planning for this structure should begin to take this direction.<sup>67</sup>

From this time forward, the Elkhorn Tavern's interior plans were to be focused on interpretation of the building's role in the Battle of Pea Ridge and not on the style of furnishings of

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<sup>65</sup>Memorandum: Regional Director, Southwest Region to Manager, Denver Service Center, February 23, 1976, 2.

<sup>66</sup>Memorandum: Regional Director, Southwest Region to Manager, Denver Service Center, February 23, 1976, 2.

<sup>67</sup>Memorandum: Regional Director, Southwest Region to Manager, Denver Service Center, September 19, 1978, 2.

the average home in Northwest Arkansas in the late nineteenth century.

The 1976 Resources Management Plan for the park reflected this plan for the tavern. Because of the difficulties with the furnishing plans set forth by Olson, the RMP suggested "no action." To place inaccurate furnishings at the tavern, the plan determined "would sharply limit the interpretive value of the structure."

The park finally devised a substantial interpretive plan for Elkhorn Tavern in 1981. In that year, park personnel completed the most recent (as of 1996) Interpretive Prospectus. Pages 14 through 17 discuss the plans for interpreting Elkhorn Tavern. The tavern was clearly recognized as the principal interpretive site at the park. On Stop 7 of the Tour Road, Elkhorn Tavern was determined to still be the "focal point for most visitors." Because of this elevated status for the historic structure, the author declared that: "Caution should be exercised in interpretation at the Tavern, to avoid giving visitors the impression that the existing building was in place during the battle."<sup>68</sup>

That caution translated into a decision to design and construct "interpretive media" for the tavern based on its role during the Civil War. The prospectus, therefore, opted to display exhibits in the "two lower level front rooms." In the south room, the exhibitry "will deal with the original tavern's history and its use as a hospital by both armies." To formulate this display, the "feature objects" were to be medical--surgeon's implements and medical equipment--and "graphic and written materials such as statements from diaries, medical reports and official records."<sup>69</sup>

The north room, on the other hand, was to have two other complimentary themes: the tavern as an army headquarters and the "war's effect on the local citizenry." To this end, two audiovisual presentations were proposed. The first, 3-5 minutes in length, was to "deal with what happens in a battlefield headquarters." This depiction should focus on the hustle-and-bustle of a frantic battle scene, the coming and going of couriers and the "fragile line of command control between headquarters and units on the line." This interpretive scheme should describe a "headquarters...absorbed into the conflict."<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Park Personnel, "Pea Ridge National Military Park, Interpretive Prospectus," (Harpers Ferry Center: NPS, May 1981), 15-16.

<sup>69</sup>Park personnel, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 16.

<sup>70</sup>Park personnel, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 16.



Figure 9. The restored Elkhorn Tavern.  
Courtesy Pea Ridge NMP.

The effect of the war on the local citizens should also be shown with a 3-5 minute presentation describing "topics such as conscription of locals into both armies, widespread destruction and confiscation of private and public property, the considerable exodus of citizens to escape war's upheavals, plundering of the area by outlaw bands, and bitter animosities between neighbors resulting from divided loyalties." The plan also calls for the construction of seating for 12 to 15 visitors. Likewise, the programs in the north room should be designed for a "single viewing station" and "should be visitor activated" with a minimum amount of "soundspill into the adjoining south room."<sup>71</sup>

This plan has served as the blueprint for developing the interpretation of Elkhorn Tavern to date (1996). Like many Park Service facilities, the Pea Ridge NMP had to deal with fiscal constraints and consequently did "not have sufficient manpower to open the Tavern on a year round basis." Despite this difficulty in 1982, it was "partially furnished with period pieces" in "one room" and had "park-built exhibits" in

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<sup>71</sup>Park personnel. "Interpretive Prospectus." (1981). 16-17.

another room.<sup>72</sup>

The goals set forth in the 1981 Interpretive Prospectus have been very gradually addressed. Because of the fiscal limitations, the tavern has remained opened only seasonally from about Memorial Day to Labor Day each year. Volunteers have been and still are depended on to open the tavern and to interpret its role in the war. Since 1991, the park has been able to depict the tavern as an impromptu hospital and as a supply depot. In the north downstairs room, for example, the staff has put together make-shift surgery tables, an amputation kit, medicines, bandages, and other medical supplies. Likewise, crates of hard tack and other supplies accompany the period furniture in the south downstairs room.<sup>73</sup> These displays have facilitated the volunteers' presentations during the summer and have allowed the visitors to examine close-up the primitive medical conditions and the multiple uses of the tavern during the Civil War.

### Conclusion

Elkhorn Tavern is a key historical resource of Pea Ridge National Military Park. Yet, because it was burned during the Civil War and then was later reconstructed, the Park Service's interpretation of the historic structure has been extremely difficult. On the one hand, the tavern has been a very popular landmark for the people of Northwest Arkansas and the region. It is a necessary part of the story of the park and the historical events that it seeks to commemorate. On the other hand, the building is a restoration, not the original. Because the restoration was completed in recent times (1965), the tavern's historical integrity has been compromised. Yet without those changes, the building would have been dangerous and still inaccurate historically, at least as of its status in 1862.

As a result, the interpretive plan for Elkhorn Tavern has been molded to avoid any further complications, or at least to limit those difficulties. The solution has been to devise a plan that focuses on construction of exhibits that best display the tavern as a Civil War structure and especially as a key cultural feature of the Battle of Pea Ridge.

Despite the problems surrounding Elkhorn Tavern, the historic structure has remained and will remain the most popular site

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<sup>72</sup>Park Personnel, "Resource Management Plan for Pea Ridge National Military Park," (Santa Fe: Southwest Regional Office, May 1982), 7-8.

<sup>73</sup>Interview of Superintendent Steve Adams by the author, May 13, 1996; interview of Interpretive Specialist Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

on the battlefield. The successful restoration, continued active management, and the successful VIP program have made it a lasting feature of the park. Whether all of the historical questions will be answered at Elkhorn Tavern, however, is another matter. Circumstances suggest that the tavern will always remain controversial despite the daily visits of hundreds of people, many of whom will never know the arduous task that the Park Service has had in developing and maintaining the Elkhorn Tavern.



## CHAPTER 6

### The Evolving Administration of the Park, 1967-1977

#### Introduction

The decade from 1967 to 1977 in many ways was a transitional phase in the administration of Pea Ridge National Military Park. The Mission 66 program had been completed and the Park Service was taking a decidedly environmentally conscious direction. This change was definitely reflected in the policies and plans for the Pea Ridge park. The initiation of University of Arkansas Botany Professor Edward E. Dale's prairie program is the best example of this changing attitude. However, other concerns also consumed much of the attention of the park personnel, to some degree, because of inadequate construction and natural conditions. The Visitor Center roof, for example, needed constant attention and repair as did the Winton Springs House. Likewise, management and interpretive planning, safety and law enforcement, land purchases and policy, and other administrative concerns preoccupied the park staff during the decade.

Management of the park fell principally to two superintendents: Lionel J. Bienvenu (1967-1974) and Kevin McKibbin (1974-1977). Rangers during this phase included Joseph L. Sewell (1967-1972) and Lynn Wightman (1972-?). Robert Holmes (1968-1973) and Dennis Chapman (1973-?) served as the historians. Adding continuity to the administrative team were the long-time Administrative Assistant Sue Singer and Maintenance Foreman Russell Walker. Former Administrative Assistant Nolan Oswald had also returned to the park as an Interpretive Technician and Ranger John Knox (1972-1996) was hired in 1972 as a Technician.

#### The Bienvenu Years, 1967-1974

When Lionel Bienvenu became Superintendent, he was inheriting the administration of a park with a solid tradition of service, yet a park in need of renewed attention to its cultural and natural resources. The new Superintendent's concerns are reflected in the "Management Appraisal of Pea Ridge National Military Park" composed in 1968 by a team consisting of an assistant to the Regional Director, Robert N. McIntyre (chair); Regional Chief, Division of Budget and Finance, Gordon Cox; Regional Staff Park Ranger, Division of Resource Management and Visitor Protection, Anthony Stark; and

Bruce Arnzen, Horticulturalist, Division of Maintenance.

Superintendent Bienvenu reflected on the appraisal and then expressed concern for various aspects of the management of the park to the Director of the Southeast Region in a memorandum of September 4, 1969. Bienvenu made important suggestions, the first being a request for additional personnel. In particular, he claimed that the park needed a Maintenance Foreman, a Caretaker, and an Administrative Officer. Because of the absence of these personnel, Bienvenu felt that his hands were tied. "I have tried to develop the team approach to management," he wrote, "but cannot do so with the present organization. I will put in for these positions at the next opportunity."<sup>1</sup> The Superintendent would find it increasingly difficult to deal with the fiscal constraints that would gradually reduce the size of the staff, especially among seasonals, in the years to come.

The report also reflected Bienvenu's hope to build a new residence to add to the two already present at the park. At this juncture, it should be pointed out that the Winton Springs House was still being used for employee residences and two NPS modeled homes were (and are) still in use. In 1997, one of the NPS Mission 66 homes was converted into administrative offices.

The report also announced the need for a new program to train the staff in fire-fighting, something that Ranger Sewell was required to address. Safety continued to be a major concern for Bienvenu and his staff as well. Permanent employees were required to update their standard first aid card. Bienvenu was actually perpetuating the already strong record of safety at the park. Just prior to Bienvenu's appointment, in fact, the Safety Assistant of the Southeast Region reported to the Regional Director that:

Every aspect of this park is indicative of the detailed care with which it is administered and maintained. The first impression made evident by the excellent condition of the physical plant, and of its fine natural setting, is further enhanced by the helpful and friendly manner with which visitors are greeted and given personalized interpretive service. From the Safety view, as well as the visitor aspect, there is much to admire, nothing about which to be critical....What is most important, there is ample evidence that the entire staff is making every effort to follow

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<sup>1</sup>Memorandum: Lionel Bienvenu to Director, Southeast Region, September 4, 1969, I, Santa Fe Library, National Park Service.

the precepts stated in the program and, from the excellence of the accident-free record, is doing very well at it.<sup>2</sup>

Other safety concerns included taking "steps to have the dump on Old Telegraph Road cleaned up, and in the same area, to have weeds on Park Service Property...mowed regularly." The appraisal report also suggested that the Regional Director "take steps to insure that requirements of the U.S. Public Health Service relative to all water systems in the park be complied with." The report also suggested that the director require the Design and Construction Division "to review access to the visitor center projection room for the purpose of correcting the present unsafe mode of entry." Anticipating the worst disaster, the Appraisal Team requested that the SER Director "consider provision for a tornado or cyclone storm shelter in this area to care for residents and visitors," a concern that proved quite legitimate because in 1970 a tornado hit the park, nearly wiping out the Winton Springs House.<sup>3</sup>

On the whole, the Appraisal Team was pleased with law enforcement efforts at Pea Ridge. "Cooperation with adjacent law enforcement jurisdictions and fire fighting forces is good." Agreements had been reached with the County Sheriff concerning cooperative search and rescue efforts and with the Pea Ridge Fire Department in case of fire.<sup>4</sup>

Superintendent Bienvenu also hoped to purchase additional land, known as the Bush property, to safeguard the "integrity of our Park Tour Road." This was reflected in the report which warned that the land would cost \$40,000.<sup>5</sup>

In the Management Appraisal, the proposed management goals were put forward as well. First, they called to include an "Environmental Awareness Program" in Objective IV of the Master Plan as part of the initiative of the National Park Service. It also called to "examine the park's goals for Fiscal Year 1970 and make them more specific, meaningful, measurable and attainable under existing conditions of management."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Memorandum: Safety Assistant, Southeast Region to Regional Director, Southeast Region, 1, Box 23, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records.

<sup>3</sup>"Management Appraisal of Pea Ridge National Military Park," (Richmond: Southeast Regional Office, 1969), iii.

<sup>4</sup>"Management Appraisal," 10.

<sup>5</sup>Memorandum: Lionel Bienvenu to Director, Southeast Region, September 4, 1969, 2.

<sup>6</sup>"Management Appraisal," i.

Several goals were set for the Superintendent. The appraisal suggested that the Superintendent should begin "regularly scheduled staff meetings to be conducted not less often than once a month, so all staff members may have an opportunity to discuss their mutual problems." During Raymond Nelson's superintendency, such meetings were held on a weekly basis and served the staff well in airing their concerns and acting as a team. Since Nelson's reassignment in 1965, however, the meetings were no longer required.

Already busy presenting lectures and talks at the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs in the area, Bienvenu was asked to expand "his influence in public affairs to the college town of Fayetteville...for the good of the Service in the field of conservation." Mentioning another conservation concern, the team suggested that the Regional Director "approve, when submitted, a research proposal for the live trapping and removal of coyotes, ferral dogs and 'wolves.'" The reforested areas of the park became a major concern as well for the staff. Dutch Elm Disease, in fact, had ravaged many of the trees. As a result, the Appraisal Team suggested that "replanting of resistant species...[was] necessary."<sup>7</sup> Clearly, the influence of environmentalists on Park Service resource management had an impact at the local level, in this case, at the Pea Ridge park.

To facilitate closing the park in the evenings, the Appraisal Team, with Bienvenu's support, also proposed closing the Tour Road half an hour before closing the Visitor Center. Interestingly, the park was already on a reduced schedule during this time because of fiscal constraints probably brought on by the expense of the Viet Nam Conflict. From November 1968 to May 1970, the park was opened only five days a week. Because of fewer visitors on Mondays and Tuesdays, Bienvenu and his staff decided to close the park those two days during the week. Prior to this change, the Visitor Center and Tour Road had been opened from 8 a.m. until dark. The new hours were now 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the days the park was opened.<sup>8</sup>

The Appraisal Team found the relations among personnel at the park especially good:

There seems to be no lack of communication between the Superintendent and other employees, or across Division lines between employees. Morale is high

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<sup>7</sup>"Management Appraisal," ii, 12.

<sup>8</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent, Pea Ridge, to Regional Director, Southeast Region, November 15, 1968; News Release, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Pea Ridge National Military Park, May 15, 1968, Box 105, Denver Records Center, Park Service Records.

among staff members, and the families living on the area appear to get along well together.<sup>9</sup>

Indicative of these good relations were the careful records kept concerning job descriptions. "Every position was covered by a current job description, and all employees have been furnished a copy of their job description sheet."

The congeniality within the park also extended to the local community. Bienvenu and his staff had become members of several "local religious and service organizations within a radius of ten miles from the Park." Despite the fact that "Leaders in the town of Rogers speak highly of the National Park Service representatives at Pea Ridge National Military Park," the Appraisal Team recommended that the staff "do a bigger and better job on public relations, the Superintendent should expand his efforts to the college town of Fayetteville on U.S. 70 and perhaps to Harrison...on U.S. 62."<sup>10</sup> Promotion of Hot Springs National Park and the Buffalo National River were also recommended to the Pea Ridge staff.

The Appraisal Team made a very positive assessment of the interpretive services at the park. It was suggested, however, that the museum receive more attention and "overhauling." The museum was completed in 1963 and was undergoing gradual changes.<sup>11</sup> By April 1966, the exhibits for the museum were in place "designed to relate to each other..." in a chronological sequence.<sup>12</sup> In 1967, the year prior to the appraisal, several "obsolete" black and white photographs were replaced with color ones and glossy prints of Generals Van Dorn and Curtis were added. In the fall of 1968, a special plan was designed for the museum, "Forming For Action." New illustrations were added and the old ones removed with greater emphasis being placed on troop movements during the battle.<sup>13</sup>

In the aftermath of the appraisal, which called for "overhauling" the museum, the park staff made some important

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<sup>9</sup>"Management Appraisal," 3.

<sup>10</sup>"Management Appraisal," 8.

<sup>11</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Bienvenu to Chief, Division of Museums, Harper's Ferry, June 5, 1970, 1, Box 128, Denver Records Center, National Park Service Records. 1

<sup>12</sup>Letter Howard W. Baker, Assistant Director, Southeast Region, to Senator J. William Fulbright, April 7, 1966, 1, Box 45, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>13</sup>Memorandum: Assistant Regional Director, Operations, Southeast to Chief, Branch of Museum Operations, January 31, 1967, 1, Box 45, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Chief, Branch of Museum Operations (Ralph H. Lewis) to Superintendent William Dyer, Pea Ridge National Military Park, January 10, 1967, 1, Box 45, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Acting Chief, Branch of Museum Operations to Regional Director, Southeast Region, October 16, 1968, 1.

changes. Through funding from the Division of Museums, Historian Holmes was able to acquire new museum pieces such as the Colt Revolving Rifle, and strengthen the interpretive presentation at the museum in the Visitor Center. In February 1969, Division of Museums funds also facilitated the repair of the "Forming For Action" panel. Later that month a request for additional funds to repair the "Auto Tour of Pea Ridge Battlefield" panel was made.<sup>14</sup>

One of the prized displays at Pea Ridge in the early 1970s was the Colt Revolving Rifle which was on an "indefinite loan" from the Ralph Foster Museum of Hollister, Missouri. After receiving the gun in June 1970, Maintenance Foreman Russell Walker built a display case to feature the Civil War gun. The Branch of Exhibit Development recommended later that month that Historian Holmes title the exhibit, "Yank."<sup>15</sup>

Pea Ridge's interpretive specialists continually worked to vary the displays in the museum. From time to time, this job was made easy with the return of preserved artifacts that often had been sent years earlier for preservation to the Harpers Ferry Center. In September 1974, for example, Historian Dennis Chapman received from Harpers Ferry a horseshoe, a bayonet with half the blade missing, a wedge, an axe head, and several other items. In June 1975, Harpers Ferry Center returned several additional preserved artifacts including a saber and scabbard, a .69 caliber musket, and a leather knapsack.<sup>16</sup>

In September 1975, Ranger Lynn Wightman devised a collection policy for the Interpretative Division of the park. Noting that the park had catalogued 291 items, Wightman recommended that all artifacts received be catalogued and accessioned regardless of "the condition of these items [which]...ranges from very good to quite poor."<sup>17</sup> No more than twenty-five percent of the accessioned specimens were to be displayed at one time. In the meantime, additional pieces found were to be

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<sup>14</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Bienvenu to Chief, Branch of Exhibit Production, February 14, 1969, 1, Box 128, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Donald H. Robinson, Acting Regional Chief, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services to Director, Southeast Region, February 20, 1969, 1, Box 128, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>15</sup>Memorandum: Historian Robert F. Holmes to Assistant Director, Park Support Services, June 15, 1970, 1, Box 128, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Chief, Branch of Museum Operations to Director, Southeast Region, June 30, 197, 1, Box 128, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>16</sup>Memorandum: David E. Warthen, Registrar, Division of Museum Services to Regional Director, Southwest Region, September 4, 1974, 1, Box 332, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: David E. Warthen to Regional Director, Southwest Region, June 20, 1975, 1, Box 332, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>17</sup>Memorandum: Lynn R. Wightman, Acting Superintendent to Regional Director, Southwest Region, September 24, 1975, 1, Box 332, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

sent to Harpers Ferry Center to be properly preserved.

The park's maintenance was considered to be "good" by the Appraisal Team. The Tour Road stops, the Visitor Center grounds, and the special use areas were all well maintained and "the successful use of special use permits as a management tool" greatly benefitted the maintenance of the park. However, there was "a need for additional maintenance personnel." The opening of interpretive displays at the Tanyard and the "only remaining earthworks" increased the need for more maintenance staff. Likewise, additional help would be needed to maintain the rail fencing.

Maintenance Foreman Russell Walker and his assistants, Powell David, Renard Bray, and John Demaree, faced continued repair duties on the Visitor Center roof, the Tour Road, and the Winton Springs House. Many of the roof repairs and, later, the Tour Road repairs were beyond the crews' capabilities and were contracted out.

In 1966, for example, the Visitor Center roof sagged 1 1/8 inches at the junction of the main flat roof and a vertical wall for the vista area of the roof. To complete the repairs, the park contracted the work for \$670.23.<sup>18</sup> This type of damage appeared periodically at the Visitor Center for the next decade, however. In February 1970 accumulated snow sagged the roof again, warping the beams in the foyer some 2 1/2 inches. In response to this most recent roof problem, Superintendent Bienvenu wanted a solution:

This long time [roof] problem of the Visitor Center cannot be corrected by minor construction changes. Efforts should be made in the near future to develop and program the required construction. Perhaps this would be a good time for a team from D & C to visit us and propose a rebuilding of the audiovisual room foyer ceiling and a new design for the entrance and stairway to the audiovisual booth.<sup>19</sup>

The estimated \$3,500 cost to repair the roof was beyond the budget for 1970 and was delayed until the following year. (The Winton Springs House will be discussed later in this chapter, whereas the Tour Road problems will be examined in a later chapter.)

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<sup>18</sup>Memorandum: James S. Askins, Construction Representative to Chief Architect, EODC, January 10, 1966, 1, Box 39, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: James S. Askins to Regional Director, Southeast Region, February 10, 1966, 1, Box 39, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>19</sup>Memorandum: Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southeast Region, February 4, 1970, 1, Box 123, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

One of the last concerns in the appraisal report was the question of land acquisition. In 1969, Superintendent Bienvenu and the Appraisal Team were concerned with the Bush property. Made up of two parcels of 5 and 2.19 acres, the land was located on the park's southern boundary, and Lloyd Bush, the owner, was asking \$45,000 for the acreage. According to the Appraisal Team, it was in "close proximity to the Tour Road" and, therefore, could pose a problem later if left in private hands. At the time, "the property in question...[was] in agricultural use and...[was] not considered an intrusion." If the property were sold to private interests, on the other hand, "the present boundary...would not be in keeping with the Park's historical theme."<sup>20</sup>

If the land could not be purchased, the Appraisal Team recommended that the park "should plant a screen of trees and shrubbery to protect its interests." In the end, the Regional Office denied the request for funds to purchase the Bush property. "We are entirely sympathetic to your desire to acquire these properties," Acting Regional Director Charles Marshall wrote to Bienvenu in February 1970, "and I wish we could give you some encouragement....I must point out..., however, that the most recent Master Plan... in 1963 carries a notation that present boundaries and land holdings are entirely adequate." Marshall went on to point out that the 1956 act authorizing the park, which stated that when the park land was "acquired and transferred" that the federal government would be "free and clear of all encumbrances...without expense," made "it impossible to use appropriated funds for land acquisition at Pea Ridge." Unless the land was donated, the NPS could not acquire the acreage.

Apparently Superintendent Bienvenu was not convinced that the Bush property could not be acquired. He made further requests for support when an Omnibus Bill was put before Congress with provisions for federal acquisition of private lands. Acting Southeast Regional Director Marshall made it clear in a memorandum to Bienvenu where the Park Service stood on land acquisition at Pea Ridge: "The subject of whether...we would undertake appraisals, title evidence, etc., on the Pea Ridge property was brought to a halt when it was determined between the Director's Office and the Service Center that Pea Ridge would not be included...in the Omnibus Bill for land acquisition. Until such time as legislation has changed and the Master Plan has changed, it would be non-productive to undertake appraisals, title evidence, or negotiation with

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<sup>20</sup>Memorandum: Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southeast Region, January 20, 1970, 1, Box 144, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; "Management Appraisal," 15.

the property owner."<sup>21</sup>

Bienvenu remained adamant in his quest to acquire the Bush property. As late as 1972, he was working with the Civil War Area Boundary Status Task Force in hopes of convincing the Park Service to add the border lands. In the end, however, the land would not be added.<sup>22</sup>

The 1969 Management Appraisal provided guidelines for the administrative duties of the Superintendent and the other staff members of the Pea Ridge park for several years to come. The following depiction of the administrative life of the park comes primarily from the Annual Reports of Superintendents Bienvenu (through 1973) and McKibbin (through 1975). These reports reflect a concern for continued excellence in service and a determination to improve the management of natural resources in the park.

### The Early 1970s

In their annual reports, the superintendents of Pea Ridge were concerned with several important themes. Among them were training, Interpretation and Resource Management, the Environmental Education Program, Maintenance, Safety, and other administrative issues. Bienvenu seems to have paid special attention to training and living history, whereas McKibbin, though concerned with these issues, placed greater emphasis on environmental issues and resource management.

The early 1970s took a decidedly different turn for the staff of Pea Ridge when the park joined the Southwest Region of the NPS in 1972. Immediate administrative concerns now were sent to the Santa Fe Office versus the Richmond Office. That same year Technician John Knox was added to the staff as was Ranger Lynn Wightman, who replaced Supervisory Park Ranger Joseph Sewell who joined the Padre Island National Seashore staff.<sup>23</sup> Historian Robert Holmes would also leave, being replaced by Dennis Chapman in 1973.

### Training

The staff attended various important training seminars and

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<sup>21</sup>"Routing Sheet," Charles Marshall, July 31, 1970, 1, Box 144, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>22</sup>Superintendent Lionel Bienvenu, Annual Report, Pea Ridge National Military Park, 1972, 5.

<sup>23</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1972, 1.

courses on an individual and annual basis. Historian Robert Holmes, for example, attended the Civil Service Commission session, "Role of Management in Equal Employment Opportunity," in El Paso, Texas for forty hours in 1972. Like the environmental concerns that were developing during this period, the NPS was also concerned with greater opportunity in employment for minorities and women. That same year, Holmes attended a 16-hour workshop conducted by the U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Arkansas in Hot Springs.

Other training sessions for the Pea Ridge staff in 1972 included Technician Nolan Oswald's attendance at an "In-Service Law Enforcement Training" course and a law enforcement training session conducted by the Arkansas State Police and the FBI; Technician John Knox, who had been hired earlier in the year, also attended the law enforcement training in Arkansas; Maintenance Foreman Russell Walker attended a training session in Hot Springs to become a certified Driver Examiner. According to Superintendent Bienvenu, "1973 proved to be a very good year as far as training was concerned." New Historian Dennis Chapman, who replaced Holmes in 1973, attended an Environmental Education course at George Williams College. Technician Nolan Oswald attended the SWR Interpreters Conference and a Management Systems Workshop in April. Ranger Wightman attended the latter workshop as well, while also receiving training at the Managerial Grid, Phase I training session at Albright; Technician Knox attended the Arkansas Law Enforcement Academy at Camden, Arkansas from January through February. His other training sessions took him to an In-Service Law Enforcement course in Marana, Arizona and to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina for training in emergency medical relief; Knox also completed correspondence courses in Wildlife Resources and the Natural Environment.

Members of the maintenance staff, Russell Walker and Roland David, attended a management systems workshop in Hot Springs as well as a water and wastewater technical session at Neosho, Missouri. Bienvenu and Clerk Sue Singer attended a PFM course in Santa Fe; Bienvenu also took a course on Position Management in New Orleans in 1973.

During 1974 and 1975, the staff attended similar training sessions throughout the United States. Notable among the sessions was Historian Chapman's attendance at the "Interpretation of History" program sponsored by the American Association for State and Local History and held in early June, 1974 in Springfield, Illinois. Superintendent McKibbin attended a week-long session on Historic Preservation at the Lyndon Johnson National Historic Site in October, 1974.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>McKibbin, Annual Reports, 1974, 1; 1975, 1.

## Interpretation

As the annual reports stated, "the interpretation program is principally carried out under the direct supervision of the park Historian with subordinate assistance by a GS-5 Park Technician, two temporary employees are required and an Association paid employee during the heavy periods of visitation."<sup>25</sup> The historians' duties also included counting the number of visitors. In 1972, visitation peaked at 184,000 after nine years of gradual increases. These numbers dropped dramatically during the early and mid-1970s because of the Energy Crisis. In 1973, the park had 111,000 visitors; in 1974, 88,000; in 1975, 96,100.<sup>26</sup>

The Annual Reports listed the available interpretive services at the park:

- Bus Tours (School and Special Groups)
- Orientation and Interpretive Talks in the Visitor Center
- Demonstrations by Park Service Employees (Living History)
- Offsite programs given by various members of the staff to schools and other organizations

- Centennial Travelling Exhibit. This exhibit was placed in local schools.
- Special exhibit shown at local fairs
- Visitors contacted through Audio-visual presentations
- Use of Historic Building (Elkhorn Tavern)<sup>27</sup>

The number of bus tours varied from a high of 53 in 1972 (2,533 visitors) to a low of 14 in 1975 (520 visitors). As many as 1,653 interpretive talks to 36,909 visitors were given in 1972, a figure that dropped to 97 for 1,716 visitors a year later. The living history presentations also dropped off from a 1972 high of 47 presentations to 2,547 visitors to 14 presentations to 351 visitors a year later. This program, however, grew dramatically after 1973 with 200 demonstrations to 5,400 visitors in 1974 and 277 demonstrations to 9,615 visitors in 1975 despite the much lower visitation rates in 1974 and 1975 as compared to 1972.

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<sup>25</sup>See Superintendents' Annual Reports for 1972 to 1975.

<sup>26</sup>Superintendents' Annual Reports, 1972, 1; 1973, 2; 1974, 1; 1975, 1.

<sup>27</sup>See Superintendents' Annual Reports for 1972-1975.

Other park services included nature walks and talks, offsite programs, and, of course, audio-visual presentations. The nature walks and talks were not reported on until 1975 and only six were conducted, serving 104 visitors. The audio-visual program was the largest attraction, which included the slide show in the Visitor Center and offsite presentations at local schools. In 1972, Superintendent Bienvenu reported that 417,638 people were reached through the audio-visual presentations (there is no explanation for the seemingly inflated number). The following year 100,000 people were introduced to Pea Ridge through audio-visuals. That number dropped to 72,500 in 1974 and 33,000 in 1975.<sup>28</sup>

The park also maintained and operated its Indian Neighborhood Youth Corps and Student Conservation Association programs in the summers. In 1972, for example, the INYC boys worked with the Maintenance Division "mainly on construction and repair of period oak rail fences." The following summer, four Navajo boys--Lawrence King, Henry Keith, Dan Clark, and Leonard Phillips--worked at the park and "did an excellent job of repairing and building the rail fences plus other maintenance work;" they constructed .75 miles of new fence and repaired seven miles of old fences. Because of his work with the Indian boys, Maintenance Worker Neal Stanley was presented a Superior Performance Award. The program proved to be successful but short-lived because of fiscal constraints which reduced the program to near nothing by 1980.<sup>29</sup>

The living history program became one of the most popular interpretive displays at the Pea Ridge park. "The staff continued to strengthen the Living History Program with the acquisition of additional equipment and material to be used by the individual depicting the role of the Civil War soldier."<sup>30</sup> The success of the program, which conducted presentations on the battlefields and at the Visitor Center and Elkhorn Tavern, was largely due to the efforts of the VIPs. These volunteers "dressed as Confederate soldiers" to give the visitors a hands on experience during their visits to the national military park. As early as the summer of 1974, fourteen people "spent one day per week in living history attire at Elkhorn Tavern answering questions and showing visitors around the tavern and immediate area."<sup>31</sup> According

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<sup>28</sup>Superintendents' Annual Reports, 1972, 2; 1973, 2; 1974, 2; 1975, 1.

<sup>29</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Reports, 1972, 2; 1973, 1; memorandum: Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southwest Region, March 13, 1974, 1, Box 284, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; interview of former Superintendent Betty Gentry, June 25, 1996.

<sup>30</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1972, 1.

<sup>31</sup>McKibbin, Annual Report, 1974, 4.

to Superintendent McKibbin, the VIP program continued to expand after 1974. "Some 38 men and women from the retirement community of Bella Vista manned the tavern during the entire summer and also during October" in 1975. This cooperative agreement with the Bella Vistans also extended to that community's annual Arts and Crafts Festival at which the Pea Ridge staff manned a booth each year after the inaugural year of 1974.<sup>32</sup>

The interpretive program of the early 1970s also focused on library acquisitions and rebinding damaged books. In 1972, the park received the back issues of the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, which provided a reference "of interest to our understanding of this area's and the state's past..." The ENP&MA often worked with the park Historian to maintain the library and its books. In 1973, the ENP&MA donated the funds needed to rebind fifty books as part of the growing Pea Ridge park library.<sup>33</sup> It should be mentioned here that the ENP&MA sales had dramatically increased since the first two or three years that the park was opened. As early as 1971, for example, ENP&MA sold \$20,242.85 in books, pamphlets, postcards, slides, and other items. That figure rose to \$27,041.46 in 1972, then dropped back to \$20,973 in 1973. In 1974 these figures stayed about the same at 19,972, and then increased to \$23,658 in 1975.

In addition to the library and museum (which is discussed earlier in this chapter), the Historian and interpretive technicians began to pay much more attention to environmental issues. In particular, the Environmental Education Program was launched at the park. As early as 1970, the park staff had put together the Elkhorn Tavern Environmental Study Area manual for use by area school children to discover some of the wonders of the natural world with special focus on the tavern and its environs. This initiative was a direct response by Superintendent Bienvenu to a directive from SERO. In December 1969, in fact, Assistant Regional Director, Charles Marshall advised Bienvenu to pay more attention to environmental issues to improve the park's record. Marshall was clear in his suggestion: "We would...like to see more environmental awareness worked into the regular interpretive programs, both on and off-site, wherever appropriate. With a bit of ingenuity and interdivisional planning, this could be made pertinent both to the park and the local people and children who visit."<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>McKibbin, Annual Report, 1975, 2.

<sup>33</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1973, 2.

<sup>34</sup>Memorandum: Charles S. Marshall, Assistant Regional Director, Southeast Region, to Superintendent Bienvenu, December 23, 1969, 1, Box 95, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

As the park staff would come to learn, the local community was not yet in tune with the new environmental awareness. The Regional Office hoped to use Pea Ridge NMP as an example of the new way to treat and think about the ever more threatened environment.

The environmental manual included discussion questions on the regional flora and fauna and how important their protection was for posterity. The guide informed children about the various types of biota and the interaction of the animal kingdom with plants and the landscape; maps and drawings facilitated the sharing of this information. The manual also illustrates the life cycle (food chain concept) and the special features--terrain, vegetation, wildlife, soils, etc.--of the Pea Ridge NMP and Elkhorn Tavern. This manual served as a guideline for the Environmental Education Program in the 1970s.<sup>35</sup>

As part of the Environmental Education Program, staff members often attended environmental workshops. The information was then passed on in public presentations to school children from the elementary through high school levels as well to the adult visitors. Cross-agency cooperation facilitated the execution of this program. In 1974, for example, the U.S. Forest Service and the Arkansas State Education Department provided professional and financial assistance to the Environmental Education Program. The program faced some difficulties, however. As early as 1973, Superintendent Bienvenu reported that: "Due to the uneasiness of the energy crisis, it is difficult to predict the future of the environmental program here..."<sup>36</sup> The program eventually faded, especially in light of declining interest, as early as 1974. Superintendent McKibbin reported that: "Interest in this area [Northwest Arkansas] concerning environmental education is low."<sup>37</sup> That would gradually change in the period after 1976.

It should be mentioned here that the park practiced good conservation during the early 1970s in response to the Energy Crisis and Oil Shortage. The 1974 Pea Ridge Energy Conservation Plan, for instance, spelled out the importance of conservation and the specific duties of the personnel to that end. All employees leaving the park in NPS vehicles were required to get approval from the central office to reduce "such trips." Likewise, employees were encouraged not to

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<sup>35</sup>Pea Ridge National Military Park, School and Park Manual, Elkhorn Tavern Environmental Study Area (Pea Ridge: NPS, Pea Ridge National Military Park, 1970).

<sup>36</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1973, 2.

<sup>37</sup>McKibbin, Annual Report, 1974, 2.

drive above 50 mph. These policies resulted in a 20 percent decrease in mileage in 1973. Other conservation measures included reducing the heat in the Visitor Center to 65 degrees, while lighting was reduced "as much as possible." In 1975, use of electricity dropped from a base year high of 24,800 kilowatts in 1974 to an adjusted base of 21,680 a year later; likewise, fuel oil use dropped from a base year high of 3085 gallons in 1974 to 2597 gallons a year later. This energy plan was implemented throughout 1973, 1974, and 1975.<sup>38</sup>

### Maintenance

Maintenance projects for the early 1970s varied from awarding a contract to reseal the Tour Road in 1972 to the painting of the principal structures in the park in 1973.

In 1972, the park contracted with Northwest Arkansas Asphalt Company to reseal 7.5 miles of the Tour Road. That same year the maintenance crew painted residence "number 8" and part of residence "number 7." The trash collection contract in 1972 went to Randy Gauwain. The only other notable event for the Maintenance Division according to the Superintendent's Annual Report that year was the purchase of a John Deere tractor with a front-end loader.<sup>39</sup>

The following year proved free of major projects for the maintenance crew. Foreman Walker and his assistants resealed the secondary road to the Winton Springs House, painted the exteriors of the Visitor Center, the Maintenance Area, the Winton Springs House, Elkhorn Tavern, and the Pea Ridge East interpretive shelter. The crew also oversaw the treeplanting operation carried out by the Midwest Region's tree crew; eighty trees were transplanted with "near 100% survival rate."<sup>40</sup>

During Superintendent McKibbin's first year (1974) at the park, the maintenance crew installed three gates on access roads, "using steel post and link chain with locks." Maintenance workers also replaced 34 shrubs and trees in "developed areas." Using a Park Service transplanter, the crew also transplanted trees in the bed of Old Highway 72. Bridges proved important that year as well. A contract was

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<sup>38</sup>Memorandum: Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southwest Region, February 21, 1974, 1, Box 309, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: McKibbin to Regional Director, Southwest Region, February 27, 1975, 1, Box 309, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.1

<sup>39</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1972, 4.

<sup>40</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1973, 3-4.

awarded to inspect all the park's bridges. The bridge on the secondary road to the Winton Springs House was replaced by maintenance personnel under the supervision of Regional Engineer Dick Huff. The drain channel under the Leetown Bridge was straightened and fill was replaced around the abutment. Part of the parking area at the Detached Area was repaired and replaced on contract.<sup>41</sup>

In 1975, the maintenance crew achieved major relief for the employees when it soundproofed the furnace-air conditioning room in the Visitor Center. "This greatly diminished a serious noise problem in the administrative offices" and brought relief to the staff. The floor of the front porch of the Winton Springs House "was completely rebuilt." "The old floor fell victim to the elements and constituted a severe safety hazard." "All other maintenance during the year [1975] was routine in nature."<sup>42</sup>

### Safety

With the increased emphasis on the environment at the park, outdoor safety became a greater concern for the staff. In response to wider use of trails and other outdoor facilities, in February 1974 Superintendent Bienvenu created a list of the potential dangers at Pea Ridge. They included poisonous snakes, ticks, and poison ivy. Ranger Wightman and others who advised and prepared hikers were careful to warn the visitors of these threats to their health, and to keep an eye out. Warnings were also given to visitors with "heart problems" to avoid the steep trails and the walk to the Detached Area.

Precautionary measures were also taken in 1974 to prepare the park for Search & Rescue operations. Ranger Wightman reported that three Motorola Handi-Talkies with a two-watt frequency were acquired. The transport vehicle was a 1973 Plymouth Custom Suburban that could carry eight passengers, and had emergency lights and a siren. Likewise, the park was equipped with standard first aid items, a resuscitator with oxygen, inflatable splints, litter, and other necessary gear. Ranger Wightman listed the Rogers Municipal Airport, which was eight miles from the park, as the closest air transport available in case of a medical emergency.<sup>43</sup>

In May 1974, Regional Safety Officer Morgan inspected the Pea Ridge park and discovered a few problems. He deemed the

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<sup>41</sup>McKibbin, Annual Report, 1974, 3.

<sup>42</sup>McKibbin, Annual Report, 1975, 3.

<sup>43</sup>Memorandum: Park Ranger Lynn Wightman to Regional Search Officer, Southwest Regional Office, July 10, 1974, 1, Box 282, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

stairs leading to the projection room as problematic as they did "not comply with OSHA" standards. He also declared the back porch of the Winton Springs House a fire hazard because of the excessive use for storage there. Morgan also asked maintenance personnel to use ear plugs when using chain saws for more than an hour; ear protection was also suggested during "use of all heavy equipment or during weapons demonstrations." Eye protection was also recommended when firing arms. The Safety Officer also noted that the Maintenance Yard was too narrow because stored equipment overlapped into the area. Morgan suggested that a turnaround pad be added outside the fenced-in area to allow vehicles to turn more safely. Finally, the Safety Officer suggested that a fire intrusion alarm system be considered for Elkhorn Tavern and the Winton Springs House.<sup>44</sup>

In 1975, Maintenance installed two new features as preventative safety measures. Following the approval of \$5,000 for an burglar-fire alarm, Superintendent McKibbin contracted to have an alarm system installed in Elkhorn Tavern. In the meantime, he had also worked to update the radio system, which would be replaced two additional times, including in 1995-1996, at the park. First, rangers were provide with a two-way mobile unit for the Park Patrol Vehicle. Then a better radio system was installed at the Visitor Center and in the administrative offices. The new system was operated on frequency 37.10 MHz, and was "to be used for cooperative communications with the Benton County Sheriff's Department."<sup>45</sup>

### Natural Resource Management

Despite the decrease in public interest in the environment, the superintendents placed greater and greater emphasis on the management of natural resources and the environment at the park in the 1970s. Kevin McKibbin, in particular, emphasized the need for proper treatment of the park's resources and continued awareness and training concerning the ecological balance between humans and their natural surroundings, while also maintaining the historical and cultural integrity of the park. The best example of this new environmental awareness, of course, was the reestablishment of native prairie.

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<sup>44</sup>Memorandum: Associate Regional Director, Park Systems Management, Southwest Region to Superintendent Bienvenu, May 15, 1974, 1, Box 283, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>45</sup>Memorandum: McKibbin to Associate Regional Director, Professional Services, Southwest Regional Office, September 17, 1975, 1, Box 327, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: McKibbin to Departmental Communications Engineer, Through Manager, Denver Service Center, April 9, 1975, 1, Box 328, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Ralph R. McFadden, NPS Communications Engineer to Superintendent McKibbin, August 6, 1975, 1, Box 328, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

The park's trees were an important feature of natural resource management in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The maintenance of the trees and other vegetation, especially after the initial tree plantings in 1962 and 1965, concerned the park's administrators. It should be pointed out that as early as 1964, an experimental control project was conducted by the U. S. Forest Service. The Forest Service crew sprayed phosphamidon over much of the park from a helicopter. "Coverage was considered good," according to Ranger Sewell, "but the kill of fall webworm was negligible."<sup>46</sup> To combat the webworm problem, Superintendent Dyer invited the University of Arkansas in 1965 under the auspices of the Biological Sciences Division of the National Science Foundation to study the webworms in hopes of finding a solution to the growing problem. The project was part of an international collaboration with the Commission Internationale De Lutte Biologique with personnel assistance from the Institute for Plant Protection, Belgrade, Yugoslavia.<sup>47</sup>

In 1966, rangers and maintenancemen applied a bacterial control agent to the webworms in cooperation with the Department of Entomology at the University of Arkansas. The Thuricide 90TS worked well on the webworms, resulting in a continuation of the program at least through 1970.

Another problem that emerged was Dutch Elm Disease. In 1966, the fungus "began to take its toll of trees," Ranger Sewell later recorded. "Since only DDT in fairly high concentrations has been effective as a control agent, no treatment was started." The Forest Service, however, did recommend clean-up of the dead trees to prevent a major fire hazard. Consequently, the dead trees were cut down and burned, the clean-up continuing through the mid-1970s.<sup>48</sup>

Other diseases and pests threatened the trees in the park as well. In 1969, for example, bagworm infestation became problematic. Because of limited personnel during the height of the visiting season, no measures were taken to control the pests. In the end, the lack of control resulted in reinfestation in 1970. Ranger Sewell managed to gain "fair control" of the problem by applying 2 percent Malathion 50 percent concentrate, "but much better results followed the use of Carbaryl (Sevin)." Chinquapin Blight, Fire Blight, and

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<sup>46</sup>Memorandum: Ranger Joseph Sewell to Superintendent Bienvenu, November 24, 1970, 2, Santa Fe Archives, SWRO.

<sup>47</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Dyer to Regional Director, SERO, November 29, 1965, 1, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>48</sup>Memorandum: Ranger Sewell to Superintendent Bienvenu, November 24, 1970, 3, Santa Fe Archives, SWRO.

Apple Rust also afflicted sections of vegetation.

Ranger Sewell also noted a "most serious problem" with ornamentals in the park. He blamed poor mowing practices for the deaths of dozens of ornamentals because of mowers striking the lower trunks of the plants, taking off the bark which rendered them defenseless against insects and rodents. The solution, Ranger Sewell suggested, was threefold:

1. Greater care on the part of machine operators to avoid striking trees and shrubs.
2. Removal of soil around base of tree in a two foot band to a depth of 3" and replace with crushed stone.
3. Heavy mulching around the base of the tree to choke out the growth of grass.<sup>49</sup>

These problems led Sewell to make a strong statement about the park's natural resource management practices: "In many Park Service areas the management of natural resources is a hit and miss affair for several reasons. Perhaps the most significant element is the lack of direction because of i m p r o p e r planning. Certainly, a good resources management plan would generally cover this topic. Another factor is frequent transfer of personnel and incomplete narrative reporting which results in lack of program continuity."<sup>50</sup>

Although not making direct reference to the Pea Ridge park, Sewell's subsequent discussion of tree management suggests that he was referring to his own park. Regardless, he noted that the trees in the park had suffered greatly since the initial plantings in 1962 and 1965. Perhaps more than lack of planning, he reported that drought, disease, and poor mowing practices resulted in a high mortality rate for the trees. Only 30 percent of the trees planted in 1962, for example, survived to maturity. To alleviate this problem, the park planted 190 mixed hardwoods in February 1968. With close care and watering, 90 percent of the trees were still living in September 1969. This success resulted despite the interference of the buck deer which had rutted and rubbed almost 40 percent of all the trees. Sewell suggested three practices to facilitate future reforestation:

1. Using seedlings which are easy to plant and low in cost.
2. Planting alternate rubs for buck deer in the form of pine seedlings. A thousand pine

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<sup>49</sup>Memorandum: Sewell to Bienvenu, November 24, 1970, 1, Santa Fe Archives, SWRO.

<sup>50</sup>Memorandum: Sewell to Bienvenu, November 24, 1970, 1, Santa Fe Archives, SWRO.

seedlings could be purchased for the cost of two 5 foot b/b hardwoods.

3. The smaller seedlings may prove more adaptable to adverse weather conditions and wouldn't be as likely to suffer from rodent or deer damage during the first three to five growing seasons.<sup>51</sup>

Sewell concluded his four-page memorandum on tree management with this appropriate comment: "Helpful though this report may be in avoidance of repeating the mistakes of the past, it is no substitute for imagination and adaptation to changing conditions in the future."<sup>52</sup>

Despite Sewell's admonitions about natural resource management, the park continued to neglect its natural resources. This fact was particularly evident to Superintendent Kevin McKibbin only a month after his arrival at the park in August 1974. In a memorandum to the director of the SWR, McKibbin blasted the previous natural resources record at the park. Previous superintendents and other staff had not carried out the proper plans for "perpetuation of the 1862 battlefield scene" and management practices "could be significantly improved." The efforts prior to McKibbin's arrival focused on "delineating historic fields with period rail fences, permitting area farmers to harvest fescue hay and pasture livestock, and permit natural succession to re-establish historically forested areas." McKibbin and the staff "came to the consensus that these efforts are insufficient in these days of enlightened historical management."<sup>53</sup>

McKibbin suggested some alternative practices to alleviate the natural resources problems. "To begin with, the historical scene was obviously more complex than merely a series of nicely mowed hayfields and well-bred beef cattle. Historical research done by Ed Bearss established [in the late 1950s and early 1960s] that cornfields, orchards, woodlots, garden plots, grainfields, native grass lands and other types of land use were present in the park during the period of the battle. Certainly it is an exaggeration and over-simplification to imply to visitors that 'this is the appearance of the

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<sup>51</sup>Memorandum: Sewell to Bienvenu, November 24, 1970, 4, Santa Fe Archive, SWRO.

<sup>52</sup>Memorandum: Sewell to Bienvenu, November 24, 1970, 4, Santa Fe Archives, SWRO.

<sup>53</sup>Memorandum: McKibbin to Regional Director, SWRO, August 28, 1974, 1, Box 372, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

battlefield at the time of the battle.'"<sup>54</sup>

McKibbin then called for a "historical evaluation of vegetation" at Pea Ridge with the expressed idea of "possibly reintroducing native species, period crops, and livestock where appropriate and feasible." The Superintendent suggested that these goals along with a prairie grass project "would be an appropriate bicentennial thrust [1976] for the park since conversion of prairie areas to crop land influenced the rate of westward expansion during the 1880's."<sup>55</sup>

#### The Native Prairie Grass Program

With this, McKibbin's idea for the re-establishment of native prairie grasses at Pea Ridge was born. The environmentalist-administrator immediately sent a "feeler" to Dr. Edward E. Dale, Jr., a botany professor at the University of Arkansas, with the idea to create a prairie at the park. Interestingly enough, this attempt was not the first to get Professor Dale to interpret the park's vegetative life. As early as 1965, Superintendent Raymond Nelson contacted Dale about conducting an ecological investigation of the park similar to the one the botanist had done for Hot Springs National Park. However, this project never materialized.<sup>56</sup>

Tens years later, however, Dale accepted the challenge to create a native prairie at the park. To this end, Superintendent McKibbin assigned Seasonal Park Technician Steven R. Hayes the task of writing a "Background Paper in Support of Pea Ridge Battlefield Vegetation Research Proposal." Finished in August 1974, Hayes showed that prairie areas had existed within the park's boundaries at the time of the battle. Colonel Cyrus Bussey, in fact, had referred to the prairies in his battle descriptions of 1862. According to the Civil War officer, the prairies were in the western portion of the park, near the "existing highway 72" in 1974. After the Civil War, according to Hayes, "agricultural practices led to the destruction of these valuable ecological entities in the 1900's."

Hayes justified re-establishment of the native prairie for

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<sup>54</sup>Memorandum: McKibbin to Regional Director, SWRO, August 28, 1974, 1, Box 372, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>55</sup>Memorandum: McKibbin to Regional Director, SWRO, August 28, 1974, 2, Box 372, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>56</sup>Letter Superintendent Nelson to E.E. Dale, Jr., Botanist, University of Arkansas, May 11, 1965, 1, Box 80, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

various reasons. First, a native prairie would offer the Pea Ridge visitors "a unique experience" because "vast portions of original prairie [were] vanishing on a nation-wide scale." Re-establishment would not only improve the historical accuracy of the vegetative landscape, but it would also allow for "prairie interpretation...showing how early settlers utilized the prairie in westward expansion." The prairie could also be used as an environmental education tool for school groups, colleges, and visitors. In addition, if the prairie were to be designated as a National Environmental Study Area, environmental education and awareness would take a step forward in Northwest Arkansas and might lead to important "faunal and floral" studies. And finally, Hayes believed that the "proposed area would also function as a regional model for prairie re-establishment and possibly act as an incentive for other groups (federal, state, and local) to initiate similar projects."<sup>57</sup>

Armed with this report, McKibbin won support for the re-establishment of native prairie at Pea Ridge. Dr. Dale initiated the program in 1975, creating a one-acre plot that first year and adding a new acre each of the three succeeding years.<sup>58</sup> With the aid of Park Technician John Knox, Dale plowed and disked the acre, then added fertilizer, broadcasting the seeds of five native prairie grasses later in June 1975. The grasses were Indian grass (Sorghastrum nutans), big bluestem (Andropogon Gerardi), little bluestem (Andropogon scoparius), switchgrass (Panicum virgatum), and side-oats grama (Bouteloua curtipendula). Later in the growing season, Dale transplanted and seeded other native prairie grasses and forbs (herbaceous non-grass-like species). He then divided the area into "16 square sub-plots, and periodic measurements were made of germination, growth, and development of all prairie species" until October 1975.<sup>59</sup>

The prairie grasses thrived in the soils of the park. Within ten days of planting, germination had occurred. The seedlings rose to 3 inches high by mid-July, more than 8 inches in August, and from 8 to 10 inches in September. "Most parts of the prairie supported at least one and usually several seedlings per square foot of area, and the stand is considered as sufficient to insure a good cover of mature prairie grasses

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<sup>57</sup>Steven R. Hayes, "Background Paper in Support of Pea Ridge Battlefield Vegetation Research Proposal." (NPS: PRNMP, August, 1974), 1-2.

<sup>58</sup>See E. E. Dale, Jr.'s, "Reestablishment of Native Prairie at Pea Ridge National Military Park, Benton County, Arkansas," (Southwest Region, NPS, November, 1975, November 1976, April 1979, April 1980, and December 1981) for a thorough discussion of the detailed procedures and results of the native prairie project.

<sup>59</sup>Edward E. Dale, Jr., Principal Investigator, Department of Botany & Bacteriology, University of Arkansas, "Investigator's Annual Report," Pea Ridge National Military Park, December 31, 1975.

during the 1976 growing season."<sup>60</sup> Eventually the grasses would reach heights of six and seven feet.

Professor Dale's prediction for a good growing season in 1976 proved correct. In fact, the prairie took hold quite well and survived its initial planting. The botanist reported annually on the prairie through 1981, illustrating the various grass successions at the plot which was at four acres by 1980. From 1980 to 1984, the prairie was "let go" according to Dale. The botanist later returned to examine the long-term results of the project. From 1986 through 1996, Dale has taken censuses of the grasses twice a year in the Fall and Spring. He discovered that "as time goes on, the diversity of grasses goes down."<sup>61</sup> Consequently, the weeds and wild flowers lost out in favor of the prairie grasses. Likewise, the big bluestem grass won out over the little bluestem, switchgrass, and side-oats, this last grass dying out because it was too dry at the plot for it to thrive.<sup>62</sup>

The Native Prairie Grass Program proved to be a great success. Not only was Professor Dale successful in creating a prairie, but it served as a focal point for two master's thesis written under Dale at the University of Arkansas, and he published four studies of the prairie in scholarly botanical journals. These studies have brought attention to the park and the Park Service's interest in conducting cooperative ecological and environmental studies on its lands. The native prairie persists today as a symbol of the maturing environmental philosophy of the National Park Service and Pea Ridge NMP (see Chapter 8).<sup>63</sup>

In addition to the prairie program, Superintendent McKibbin encouraged continuation of the environmental education program despite limited interest. He also paid greater attention to forest fires and their management. During his tenure, a Horse Trail was created "in response to increased demand and to provide an alternative to horse use along the auto tour road and Boy Scout hiking trail." The nine-mile trail "was established with a minimum of effort by incorporating old fields, abandoned woods roads and existing fire road." The

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<sup>60</sup>Dale, "Investigator's Report," PRNMP, December 31, 1975.

<sup>61</sup>Interview of Dr. Dale, June 17, 1996.

<sup>62</sup>Interview of Dr. Dale, June 17, 1996.

<sup>63</sup>The native prairie was planted in an historically inaccurate place on the park. As a result, the current administration is in the planning stages of regrowing the plot to make it accurate with the 1862 battlefield.

park also produced a mimeographed brochure with a map for the horse trail users.<sup>64</sup>

McKibbin's concern for fire management was obvious. In 1974, for example, he encouraged the purchase of a 100 gallon slip on the pumper unit for "wildland fire suppression." His concerns became a reality in 1975 after four fires blazed through the park. One was a Class A size fire, two were Class B, and one was a Class C. His fear was that they were all "man-caused."<sup>65</sup> On March 23, 1975, Maintenance Worker Roland David spotted a fire at 5:45 p.m. while driving south on Highway 72, near the eastern boundary of the park. As he approached the park property where the highway crossed, "he came upon a fire that had originated approximately 30 feet off the highway in dormant sage grass." The fire could not have been more than ten minutes old because another park employee had just passed by the same location. David immediately sent his wife to warn park headquarters, about three miles away, and began putting out flames near the rail fence with a coat. Superintendent McKibbin was notified at 5:50 p.m. and left the headquarters at 6:00 p.m. with the proper "hand tools" to fight the conflagration.<sup>66</sup>

The weather conditions favored the fire at this point. "With temperature about 60°, relative humidity of 26%, and westerly winds gusting to 40 MPH, the fire was impossible to control until it reached heavier fuels in the woods."<sup>67</sup> By 6:45 p.m., other park employees had joined in the firefight along with members of the Pea Ridge Volunteer Fire Department. The volunteers brought a 300 gallon pumper and a 1000 gallon 6X6 tanker with a positive result, the fire coming under control by 8 p.m.

The fire did not cause "significant tree kill" but did cause a scare because of its rapid advance across the Leetown Battlefield. The light fuels were burned rapidly leaving little chance for a "dense fire." However, the fire did have its costs:

Personal Services.....	\$172.28
Pea Ridge Fire Dept.....	75.00
(Cooperative Agreement)	
Replacement of rail fence.....	200.00

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<sup>64</sup>McKibbin, Annual Report, 1975, 2-3.

<sup>65</sup>McKibbin, Annual Reports, 1974, 3; 1975, 3.

<sup>66</sup>Roland David, "Leetown Fire Narrative," Santa Fe Archives, National Park Service, March, 1975, 1.

<sup>67</sup>David, "Leetown Fire Narrative," 1.

Replacement of fusees.....	20.00
Engine repairs to pumper.....	30.00
	<u>\$497.28<sup>68</sup></u>

The following day the "fire was declared out after mop up of hotspots" at 4:30 p.m. At the peak of the battle, twenty firefighters, most of them local volunteers, were at the scene. In this case, the fire had been brought under control without major destruction. On the other hand, the danger for a massive breakout was still apparent, especially prior to the new Management Ignited Prescribed Fire program initiated in the early 1990s of which we will hear more in the concluding chapter.

Clearly, Superintendent McKibbin had initiated the environmental awareness phase of the Pea Ridge park. His successor did not share the same enthusiasm for ecological and environmental responsibility at the park. Regardless, McKibbin was largely responsible for one of the most successful natural resource initiatives at the park since its opening in 1963. The reestablishment of native prairie introduced greater historical and ecological integrity to the park as well as brought recognition to the Park Service for its cooperative efforts on the botanical research project.

#### Winton Springs House

If the prairie program was a refreshing new experiment at the park, the Winton Springs House was a long-time management headache. As early as 1965, the spring waters were contaminated and the house was in disrepair. At that time, no accurate record of the house's history had been compiled and the superintendents prior to Bienvenu did very little to investigate the historic importance of the structure. Consequently, Superintendent Bienvenu called for removal of the house until 1973 when a study revealed that the house may have in fact been standing during the Battle of Pea Ridge. The result would be the survival of the structure at least for another fifteen years or so even though it would ultimately be proven that it did not exist during the battle.

The Winton Springs House stood just north of the Tour Road about halfway between the Visitor Center and the Leetown site. Sitting up on a knoll, the house had a nice vista of the surrounding countryside and forests. From the time of the opening of the park, employees had been living in the structure which had been converted into two apartments. The general upkeep of the deteriorating structure clearly

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<sup>68</sup>David, "Leetown Fire Narrative," 1.

concerned the maintenance staff which often had to spend valuable time repairing the building each year.

In addition to the continued repair attention the Winton Springs House required, its spring also proved to be problematic. In 1965, Ranger Sikes' water samples showed that the spring water was contaminated. Park Service Sanitary Engineer Ronald F. Coene, who conducted the "Environmental Health Survey, PRNMP," in early 1965, declared the spring waters "unfit for human consumption" because coliform organisms were present. The solution was to put in a drain field and septic tank at the house. It was proposed that water be piped from the Visitor Center to the residence as well. In the meantime, a water sampling program proved that the water was not potable and, therefore, was not used after 1965.<sup>69</sup>

The water and repair problems at the Winton Springs House resulted in a negative assessment of the value of the structure. Acting Director E. M. Lisle of the Southeast Region was one of the first administrators to question the need for the house in the park:

There is a growing concern with regard to the property and the desirability of continuing the present use of the Winton Springs House and for that reason we do not wish to unnecessarily increase our capital investment toward that end. Its retention as a true historic house is, of course, not justified....its present use introduces a two-way traffic situation on a portion of the one-way historical tour road and precludes the management advantage of being able to lock the gate on the interior road system without serious inconvenience to occupants....<sup>70</sup>

Despite this assessment, park employees still used the Winton Springs House for a residence and the maintenance crew continued its regular upkeep of the lingering structure.

Three years later Superintendent Bienvenu again raised the question of what to do with the Winton Springs House. He believed that the building was a burden to the park. Safety

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<sup>69</sup>Report, "Department of the Interior, NPS, PRNMP, Pea Ridge, Benton County, Arkansas," Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Region VII, Dallas, Texas, April 26, 1965, 1, Box 42, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; Sanitary Engineer Ronald F. Coene, "Environmental Health Survey, PRNMP," March 17, 1965, 2, Box 42, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; letter of Assistant Regional Director, E. M. Lisle to Regional Program Director, U.S. Public Health, Dallas, Texas, June 23, 1965, 1, Box 42, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>70</sup>Memorandum: Acting Regional Director, E. M. Lisle to Superintendent William Dyer, PRNMP, December 28, 1965, 1, Box 36, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

compliance was costly, the water system was inadequate, and it needed another round of extensive repair work. The metal roof leaked in "several places," termites had invaded the floor joists, and mice, rats, bats, and fleas regularly tormented the residents. Ranger Joseph Sewell reported that the water pressure was so low that "his wife must wait an hour between automatic clothes washer loads." This latter problem, which might have seemed trivial, was in fact quite significant because of the need for higher pressure in case of fire.

Bienvenu's response to these problems, recorded in a memorandum to the SER Director, was predictable: "We believe the house should ultimately be levelled. If period foundations exist, they should be interpreted...We would not, of course, want to tear down the house until a new residence...and a storage building were constructed. We can think of no reason, other than financial, why this house should be retained."<sup>71</sup> To raze or not to raze was clearly the question before the chief administrators of the park.

An event on April 30, 1970 may have portended the ultimate fate of the Winton Springs House. At approximately 1:05 a.m., a tornado ripped through the park causing \$1,925 in damages to the house and another \$1,575 in destruction to the surrounding trees, grounds, and Tour Road; 120 spans of oak rail fence were lifted away as well at a loss of \$450. This Act of God legitimized Superintendent Bienvenu's call to raze the building only a month earlier.<sup>72</sup> However, the outcome would not be so quick and decisive. The Associate Regional Director Charles Marshall wrote back to Bienvenu informing him that no funds were available to raze the structure.

In addition, before the Winton Springs House could be razed, a historic structures study would be required. Just such a report was completed in March 1973 by David Leonard, Historical Architect, Division of History in the Southwest Regional Office. His investigation, "Winton Springs Historic Structure Report," threw a wrench into the administration of the building. Leonard believed that the building, albeit in a different form, was present during the Battle of Pea Ridge. Under the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, this building was now much more significant than it had been previously.

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<sup>71</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southeast Region, April 25, 1968, 1, Box 123, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>72</sup>Memorandum: Bienvenu to Assistant Director, Park Support Services, May 14, 1970, 1, Santa Fe Library, Southwest Regional Office; memorandum: Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southeast Region, March 4, 1970, 1, Box 135, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Associate Director, Southeast Region Charles Marshall to Chief, Office of Archeology & Historic Preservation, March 13, 1970, Box 135, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

Leonard suggested that the recommendations contained in his report be incorporated into the 1963 Master Plan. He based this recommendation on the architectural investigation that revealed that the building's foundation and perhaps the 10" logs that were mortised into hewn timber "pre-date the present [1973] structure" which had been renovated in 1915. The "rear portion of the house, as well as the second story" was of "more recent vintage" and included the floor framing. In the final analysis, then, Leonard was suggesting that the main floor timbers and the stone foundation were present during the Battle of Pea Ridge.<sup>73</sup>

Leonard's findings, however, were not as conclusive as the park staff and the Regional Office would have liked. In fact, the Architectural Historian called for further study to determine for sure whether any of the building was present during the Civil War:

since no authentic original structures from Civil War times exist in the Historic District [at the park], it is further recommended that a study be made (perhaps during the period of restoration) to determine, for future reference, how much of the fabric of the present house dates to Civil War times, and whether or not documentary evidence of the original house (such as photographs) exist among the local populace.<sup>74</sup>

Despite this lack of conclusive evidence in favor of the presence of the structure during the battle, Leonard obviously believed it played a historically significant role in the Civil War conflagration. In addition, he suggested that the spring waters were used by both armies.

More than its potential significance as a factor during the battle, however, was its importance in the region. "The house," Leonard wrote, "...is an example of a style and grandiose scale of rural residential architecture which is in a class by itself in the Ozark Region. No other examples of this type of structure are known to exist in the area." But more than this architectural significance, the building was admired and loved by local citizens. "It is well-known and highly regarded by local residents as an important landmark and is impressive as well to the visitor to the park."<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>David Leonard, Historical Architect, "Winton Springs Historic Structure Report, Pea Ridge National Military Park," (Division of History, Southwest Regional Office, March 1973), 1-6.

<sup>74</sup>Leonard, "Winton Springs," 8.

<sup>75</sup>Leonard, "Winton Springs," 2.

Despite this plea, Leonard's final recommendations for the treatment of the house (listed below) and the inconclusive evidence for its existence during the battle resulted in mixed feelings. Superintendent Bienvenu's also made an about-face call to restore the building after the report's conclusions. Probably the overriding factor in the end was Leonard's "Recommended Treatment" of the structure which would have cost \$36,000 in 1973 terms. The Architectural Historian made claims for eleven restoration items:

1. replacement of the central stairway
2. repair or replacement of the damaged front porch
3. complete exterior scraping and painting
4. removal of the metal roof
5. provision for new wood shingles
6. leveling and shoring of the first floor in places and selective treatment of termite damaged floor joists
7. insulation of the building
8. addition of central duct heating and air-conditioning
9. replacement of the interior staircase as close to the original as possible
10. repair of interior plaster in places
11. painting of entire interior<sup>76</sup>

The cost for this restoration would be approximately \$10,000 for the exterior work, \$10,500 for the interior work, \$4,100 for contractors overhead and profits, and \$11,400 for project planning, construction supervision, and contingencies and facility services.<sup>77</sup>

Leonard's report clearly influenced Superintendent Bienvenu. The park's chief administrator initiated efforts to save the Winton Springs House. As early as March 1973, when the report came out, Bienvenu suggested beginning steps toward placing the Winton Springs House, along with Elkhorn Tavern, on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>78</sup> A year later, the Superintendent made further appeals to do something about the structure. In a memorandum to the Director of the SWR, he stated that both the Winton Springs House and Elkhorn Tavern had "been woefully neglected in the past, as far as plans and specs and surveys are concerned. We are trying to get a Master Plan Amendment to save Winton Springs." Nine days

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<sup>76</sup>Leonard, "Winton Springs," 7-8.

<sup>77</sup>Leonard, "Winton Springs," 9-10.

<sup>78</sup>Memorandum: Bienvenu to Director, Southwest Region, March 12, 1973, 1, Box 346, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

later, Bienvenu reiterated his concerns: "Pea Ridge would like to recommend a Master Plan amendment for the Winton Springs House....The building was scheduled for demolition under the 1963 Master Plan. We should now try to save the building, restore it, and use it as a residence."<sup>79</sup>

To the this end, the Park Service hired the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities to x-ray the Winton Springs House to determine the extent of its disrepair. After examination of this data, the Survey Architect of the Division of History in the SWRO calculated that the renovation costs would be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100,000, nearly triple the estimated funding Historical Architect Leonard predicted.<sup>80</sup> This high estimate could not have helped the cause to save the Winton Springs House.

NPS Architect David Battle wrote to Superintendent McKibbin in December 1974 concerning the x-ray of the structure. And even though the x-ray "tends to confirm" the findings of the Historic Structures Report, the cost for restoration would be prohibitive:

Although I would personally like to see the Winton Springs House preserved, it is doubtful that this can be economically justified unless it can be put to a viable adaptive use, especially in view of the fact that we are hard pressed to care for more significant historic resources. A decision to remove the structure should also be weighed against an adverse local reaction to such action. If the decision is made, and clearances received, to demolish the structure, there are some material, hardware, glass, etc., which are potentially valuable for maintenance or restoration of other historic structures throughout the service. Such demolition should be carried out by, or under the direction of, the Regional Historic Preservation Team so that this material can be salvaged.<sup>81</sup>

The Winton Springs House's fate had been sealed. It was going

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<sup>79</sup>Memorandum: Bienvenu to Regional Director, Southwest Region, April 25, 1974, 1, Box 346, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>80</sup>Letter David M. Hart, Architectural Consultant, Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, to David Battle, Architect NPS, November 11, 1974, 1, Box 346, Denver Records Center, NPS Records; memorandum: Survey Architect, Division of History, SWR to Superintendent, PRNMP, April 9, 1975, Box 346, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>81</sup>Memorandum: Historical Architect, SWRO, to Regional Director, SWRO, November 26, 1974, Santa Fe Archives, SWRO.

to be demolished. It was just a matter of time to plan and then execute the razing of the Pea Ridge structure. This process would be gradual, the NPS finally razing the building in 1993.

### Miscellaneous Items

In addition to cultural and natural resources issues, the park personnel also paid close attention to their visitors. This is evident in the response of guests to the park's services and the interpretive presentation of the historical and cultural resources of the national military park.

Because of this concern, the park obviously provided a valuable service to the local and regional community as well as to those visitors who had stopped from far away. This was quite evident in a letter from a visitor addressed to Ranger Joseph Sewell in August 1969: "This letter is just to tell you how much Mrs. Riegler and I appreciate all the kindness shown us while we were in and around your headquarters and while walking the trail on the Battlefield....It was a source of comfort to have Larry [Handley] check up on us three different times on the trail."<sup>82</sup>

Good service and positive public relations were obvious goals of the park during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Another highlight during the early 1970s was the arrival of the one-millionth visitor. On August 15, 1973, Wesley and Betty Moreland and their daughter Karen from Tulsa, Oklahoma were declared the lucky one-millionth visitor to the park. The Morelands were taken aback when they were greeted by Superintendent Bienvenu, Historian Dennis Chapman, and a group of local reporters. Local merchants joined in the media event, offering the lucky visitors gifts. Free lodging was provided by the Rogers Holiday Inn and the Lost Bridge Lodge during the Morelands' stay. "It's just a dream," Betty Moreland responded to reporters when Joe Bill Hackler, president of the Rogers Chamber of Commerce, presented Betty and her family with the gifts.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Letter Colonel, Infantry, USAR, retired, Roger W. Riegler to Joe Sewell, August 23, 1969, Box 90, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

<sup>83</sup>Bienvenu, Annual Report, 1973, 2; Parrish, Administrative History, 81-82.

## Conclusion

The decade from 1967 to 1977 proved to be a rather eventful one. The park gradually began to look beyond the Mission 66 plan toward a more environmentally conscience administrative strategy. Similarly, the interpretive programs matured and natural resource management advanced to a new level. Granted, Superintendent McKibbin showed more interest in environmental matters, whereas Superintendent Bienvenu illustrated acumen in the interpretive field, especially by introducing more living history opportunities at the park. The question of what to do with the Winton Springs House continued to linger, however, and various maintenance problems--the Visitor Center roof and the Tour Road--continued to plague the administrators at the park. In the end, the decade had its ups and its downs with an overall good rate of achievement.

Superintendent McKibbin's 1977 goals reflect the administrative concerns and needs for the park as it entered a new transitional phase with the departure of McKibbin and the arrival of Betty Gentry. He listed ten goals that provided an outline for continued administration of the park for Superintendent Gentry:

1. Local public relations over Winton Springs House  
--responsibility of Superintendent
2. Installation of new information signs  
--Maintenance
3. Repaving of trail to trenches, detached area  
--Maintenance, SWRO
4. Re-sign Boy Scout & horse trails  
--Resource Mgt.
5. Rebuild foot bridge on Boy Scout trail  
--Resource Mgt. & Maintenance
6. Rebuild one mile of rail fence  
--Maintenance
7. Replace shake shingles on Elkhorn Tavern  
--Maintenance, SWRO
8. Replace elkhorns on Elkhorn Tavern  
--Superintendent, Maintenance
9. Plan & implement revised training/orientation program for VIPs  
--Interpretation
10. Carefully monitor & prepare interpretive material for the Prairie Project  
--Interpretation & Resource Mgt.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent McKibbin to Regional Director, SWRO, September 29, 1976, Box 306, Denver Records Center, NPS Records.

In many ways, these would be the challenges facing the incoming Superintendent Gentry. The story of the administration of the park after 1977 to the present is the focus of the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 7

### The Gentry Years, 1977-1988

#### Introduction

Betty Gentry served the longest term as Superintendent of Pea Ridge National Military Park from 1977 to 1988. A perusal of the documentation suggests that she initiated a flurry of planning changes from 1977 through 1983, recommending with the aid of her administrative assistants and the Southwest Regional Office that the park facilities, its cultural and natural resources, and its overall management be upgraded. During her tenure, something as mundane as the construction of the Leetown pull-off was achieved at the same time that she and a planning team proposed a \$2-million dollar renovation and expansion of the Visitor Center and Maintenance Area. Although the latter would not come to fruition, her administration did provide the precedent for making gradual changes to the administrative facilities at the park.

In the meantime, Superintendent Gentry oversaw the continued development of an environmental management plan that, along with the facility development plan, culminated in the 1983 publication of the Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment. In combination with the Resource Management Plan, this document set the tone for the development and maintenance of the park during the mid-to-late 1980s and 1990s.

#### The Early Years of the Gentry Superintendency

Superintendent Gentry arrived at the park in 1977. She came with substantial experience in federal positions both in the U.S. Marines and the National Park Service. After graduating from Tennessee Technological University in 1958 with a degree in Business Management and History, she joined the Marines, graduating top in the women's officer class. This experience would later facilitate Gentry's administrative duties in the Park Service. In 1961, she became a Park Guide at the Vicksburg NMP at times typing Edwin Bearss' manuscripts on the history of the Pea Ridge Battlefield. After a short stint at Morristown, New Jersey, Gentry returned to Vicksburg as its historian. In 1971, she received a promotion to Park Manager at Sagamore Hill, Theodore Roosevelt's famous home, and served there until 1974. The following two or more years, she worked as an Interpretive Specialist at the SWRO in Santa Fe. In her

travels, Gentry visited many sites including Pea Ridge which she later recalled as being "one of the most interesting sites" in the NPS.<sup>1</sup>

In 1977, Gentry received the appointment for the superintendency at Pea Ridge. With this new position, she began to initiate her management plan at the park. In the first six years, she introduced a flurry of changes to address the deteriorating facilities at the park. Yet, Superintendent Gentry would experience many fiscal constraints during the Reagan era that would limit her dreams for extensive renovations at the Pea Ridge park. In the end, the Park Service's thrust toward satisfying the "customer" or visitor in the 1980s over continued development and proper maintenance would convince Gentry that her time to retire had come. The Park Service's emphasis on "taking care of people [visitors] rather than taking care of the facilities" proved too much for the former Marine to deal with, and she retired in 1988.<sup>2</sup>

#### New Projects and Initiatives

Clearly, the most pressing concern of Superintendent Gentry and the park personnel in the late 1970s and early 1980s was the Visitor Center facility. The 1963 structure had proven to be inadequate for the number of workers, it had structural problems, and it needed to be updated in accordance with new federal regulations concerning safety and access for the handicapped visitors and personnel. Prior to the proposed \$2-million 1983 Visitor Use/Development Plan, Gentry and her staff proposed and then initiated several stopgap measures to alleviate the problems the staff was facing at its headquarters.

One of the first measures was to replace existing glass in the Visitor Center with safety glass. Because "children continually bump[ed] their heads against the glass while peering through at the sights," Maintenance Foreman Bobby Flickinger replaced the non-safety glass after the Regional Safety Engineer had concurred. A Development/Study Package Proposal was initiated in July, 1978, and this project was completed the following June.<sup>3</sup>

Another safety concern was the entryway to the audio-visual room in the Visitor Center. Flickinger proposed putting in a

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<sup>1</sup>Interview of Betty Gentry, June 25, 1996.

<sup>2</sup>Interview of Betty Gentry, June 25, 1996.

<sup>3</sup>Pea Ridge National Military Park, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Safety Glass for Public Use Area), July 18, 1978, 1.

new stairway to replace the existing stairs which were "a hazard waiting for an accident to happen." After the Regional Safety Engineer condemned the stairs, the restoration proposal was accepted by the SWRO and the new stairs were constructed in June, 1979.<sup>4</sup> At the same time that the above repairs were being conducted, Superintendent Gentry proposed rehabilitating the heating system which had proven to be inefficient and noisy. With the aid of Maintenance Foreman Flickinger, Gentry received permission from the SWRO to reseal and reset the cast iron section of the fire box "to prevent combustion fumes escaping into [the] building." The maintenance crew also replaced water pressure regulators and replaced a supply pump on the furnace. The problems, however, did not end there. The boiler "blew up" in early 1980, resulting in a major dilemma which was resolved by repairing the defective system with emergency funds.<sup>5</sup>

As the problems at the Visitor Center mounted, Superintendent Gentry and her staff became quite concerned with the overall condition of the park's facilities. Consequently, in June 1979, she proposed conducting a Development Concept Plan. Even though "no major new development" was needed, increasing visitation and new park programs "made expansion of most existing facilities necessary." With this in mind, Gentry proposed a plan to "address the need for additional parking facilities at the visitor center and the Elkhorn Tavern" and new restrooms at Elkhorn Tavern and expanded restroom facilities in the Visitor Center. "Additional office and storage space" was requested for the Visitor Center as was "additional maintenance storage and work space." "Attention" was also to be "given to the disposition of the Winton Spring House which [was]...no longer needed for quarters."<sup>6</sup> The funds were finally granted for the concept plan which was completed in 1983 and of which we will hear more about later in this chapter.

Other projects included the rehabilitation of the museum exhibits. First installed in 1963, the museum exhibits had deteriorated partly because they "had only [received] what maintenance [that could]...be accomplished locally." There was a "very bad flaking problem" with the background paint in the exhibits and leaks had "caused additional problems." The "wear and tear" of fifteen years of visitation had "also taken its toll." In essence, the rundown exhibits reflected "poorly

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<sup>4</sup>PRNMP. "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Reconstruction of Stairway to AV), July 18, 1978, 1.

<sup>5</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Gentry to Chief, Office of Programming and Budget, February 1, 1980, 1.

<sup>6</sup>PRNMP. "Development/Study Package Proposal," June 15, 1979, 1.

upon the park and the National Park Service." According to Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management, Billy Stout, "failure to correct this situation" would "create an adverse effect upon the NPS and this park." Previous emergency funding requests had been denied and it was time to accept the facts about the deteriorating museum exhibits.<sup>7</sup> When funds were approved the following summer, Stout and the maintenance crew were able "to correct" seven panels and "freshen-up the remaining eight cases."

During the summer of 1979, Maintenance Foreman Bobby Flickinger received funding for a request to pave the Leetown pull-off. The new paving reduced the grade slope and, thus, eliminated a perennial rainy weather problem, a mudhole. Once completed, this small project also increased "the safety of pulling off and on the tour road at this designated stop."<sup>8</sup>

In early 1980, Chief I&RM Stout proposed a new fire-intrusion alarm system for the Visitor Center complex. Because there was no sufficient alarm system, the visitors, the park personnel, the museum exhibits as well as Civil War period artifacts were all susceptible to theft or fire. Likewise, the audio-visual equipment and materials, the administrative records, and the maintenance area and the valuable tools were at risk. Furthermore, the existence of a gas pump, diesel and propane tanks, and other flammable storage facilities made the complex vulnerable to fire. A new system was needed "for the protection of the complex and its contents." "Early awareness," Stout argued, would "result in quick response/suppression resulting in less damage. Without the alarm system we could conceivably lose the whole complex due to late response to fire." Superintendent Gentry concurred as did the SWRO which extended funds for the alarm system that was partially installed in August, 1981, and finalized in September, 1984.<sup>9</sup>

### A New Interpretive Prospectus

In 1981, Superintendent Gentry and her staff worked vigorously to update the 1961 Interpretive Prospectus. The Study Team for the IP was headed by Gentry and included Chief I&RM Billy Stout; writer-editor Dan Murphy of the SWRO; Brian Jones of the Division of Audiovisual Arts, Harpers Ferry; Julia Holmaas, Division of Exhibits, Harpers Ferry; Larry J.

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<sup>7</sup>PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Rehabilitate Museum Exhibits), July 31, 1978, 1.

<sup>8</sup>PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Construct Leetown Pull-Off), July 18, 1978, 1.

<sup>9</sup>PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Install Alarm System in Visitor Center Complex), January 31, 1980, 1.

Tillman, Interpretive Planner, Harpers Ferry; and consultants Ray Price, Branch of Wayside Exhibits, Harpers Ferry, and Larry D. Walling, Southeast/Southwest Team, Denver Service Center. Through this team effort, the new plan was completed in the spring of 1981 and approved by the SWRO on May 4, 1981. The new IP reflects many of the most common interpretive concerns of the park during the 1980s and 1990s.

The new prospectus reiterated the importance of some aspects of the first plan and added new suggestions for the future. Historian John Bond's "initial planning for Pea Ridge dealing with how visitors experience the park was well done," according to the planning team. The Visitor Center stop, the self-guided Tour Road, and the second stop at the VC after the tour were still considered the best sequence and should be continued. "However," the report continued, "some significant changes in interpretive content and emphasis will be made at some sites, especially at the visitor center and Elkhorn Tavern."<sup>10</sup>

In the Visitor Center, the report suggested that the "existing visitor use space" was adequate, but that the "storage space and staff office space" was not sufficient. Consequently, the plan called for four new "interpretive related spaces":

1. association storage (100 sq. ft.)--needed for storing association sales inventory and it should not be mixed with any other function. Ideally, there would be one entrance, no windows, and a location near the lobby.
2. library/curatorial space (200 sq. ft.)--library and artifact storage, table and chairs, and controlled access to the public, and visibility from the information desk would be ideal.
3. staff workspace (200 sq. ft.)--for staff program preparation, lunchroom, and meetings with tables and chairs.
4. additional entranceway in north hall--need for a new outside doorway along the north wall across from the auditorium entrance to allow for direct access to the battlefield so that visitors and staff could easily assemble groups behind the Visitor Center for orientation talks.<sup>11</sup>

Interestingly, these proposed changes would appear in the \$2-million dollar expansion proposal in 1983, suggesting a real

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<sup>10</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (Harpers Ferry Center, May, 1981), 7.

<sup>11</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (Harpers Ferry Center, May, 1981), 8.

need in these areas for interpretation and visitation as well as administration. To complete these designs and construction, the park was going to need the direct assistance of the Denver Service Center as well.

In the lobby, the plan called for a new orientation map ("showing all park facilities and development"), a menu board to post announcements, and "new lobby decor," that included an information desk and sales display. In the lobby extension, the plan called for one floor-mounted relief map "designed for orienting visitors," new furnishings, and "room decor." Because of the need for space for group orientation, it also suggested that the cannon and carriage be removed and relocated.

In the auditorium, which seated seventy-two, the plan claimed that the existing sound/slide show was "ponderous, slow-paced, and sometimes redundant." The plan was to replace it with a "cineconversion slide show which addresses the Pea Ridge setting in relation to the Civil War, with emphasis on the War in the West; objectives of opposing commanders; Indian participation in the battle; and the war's influence on the local population." Controls would be put in at the front desk for an automated program.<sup>12</sup>

To complete the auditorium renovations would require enlargement of the screen, new removable theater seats, a new stereo sound system, new projection equipment, and perhaps changes in the room's interior to improve the acoustics which were very poor. The lobby foyer was also in need of some changes. The walkway that connected the lobby, auditorium, and exhibit room, required new seating and decor. It was also proposed that the two exhibits in the foyer--one on the prairie restoration program and one on natural history--be removed.

The exhibit room was declared "old and dated" of "Mission 66 vintage." The proposal was to replace everything in total "except for one unit"--the small diorama of a model carriage, mounted cannon, and some soldiers. The new exhibitry would "develop the same two broad themes [of the museum]--the common soldiers (Union, Confederate and Indian), and Civil War weaponry." Because the "Indian participation at Pea Ridge...[was] unique among major Civil War battles," greater emphasis on their role in the battle should be put on exhibit.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 10.

<sup>13</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 11.

On the Tour Road, several changes were suggested in the new Interpretive Prospectus. First, the waysides made of cast metal were to be replaced by a "design which allows for full color photographs." The native stone exhibit mounts were to be retained, however. Stop 2 (Winton Springs) and Stop 1 (Detached Area) were to be eliminated from the self-guided tour. At the same time, several new proposed stops were suggested for a "revised Auto Tour":

1. General Curtis Headquarters--two new waysides proposed, one as an introduction to the Auto Tour and another for the opening phases of the battle.
2. Leetown--to locate the former hamlet and explain movement of Confederate troops around Pea Ridge.
3. Leetown Battlefield--description of the first day's combat around Leetown with an audio component.
4. The Indians at Pea Ridge--description of the capture of a Union battery by Indian troops. With pullout for this stop being enlarged.
5. West Overlook--interpretation of the natural history with some shaded seating overlooking the battlefield. Three waysides were proposed: feature orientation, local geology and geography, and park flora and fauna.
6. East Overlook--because this site provides the best view of the battlefield, two new waysides were proposed with one having audio: battlefield feature orientation and an audio on the second day's battle.
7. Elkhorn Tavern--three waysides were proposed: the culmination of the battle, the Telegraph road, including the Butterfield Stage, and the Trail of Tears.
8. Confederate artillery line--wayside to locate the March 8 Confederate line of artillery.
9. Union artillery line--this exhibit locates the March 8 Union line of artillery. The cannons at this exhibit should be within sight of the cannons at Stop 8. Such placement will emphasize the terror of the March 8 artillery bombardment by showing the near point blank range at which the artillery duel occurred.<sup>14</sup>

Elkhorn Tavern, of course, was considered the most important stop on the Tour Road. The plan declared that "Caution should be exercised in interpretation at the Tavern, to avoid giving

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<sup>14</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (May 1981), 13-14.

visitors the impression that the existing building was in place during the battle." Because of this fact, no proposals were made to refurbish the structure because its "primary function should be to house interpretive media for the area." The proposed media included:

1. Exhibitory in the South Room that considers the original Tavern's history and its use as a hospital by both armies. Exhibit content might feature a period surgeon's implements and medical equipment, as well as graphic and written materials from diaries, medical reports, and official records.
2. Exhibitory in the North Room that considers two themes: use of the original Tavern as a headquarters by both armies and the war's effect on the local citizenry. The room would contain two audiovisual presentations: 3-5 minute discussion of the Tavern as a headquarters and 3-5 minute discussion of the impact--conscription, widespread destruction, the citizens' exodus to avoid the armies, plundering by outlaw bandits, and divided loyalties--of the war on local citizens.<sup>15</sup>

Seating in the tavern for from 12 to 15 visitors was also proposed.

Because of the increasing popularity of the park's trails, the plan also called for changes concerning the hiking routes. The ten-mile hiking trail, which contained a 1/3 mile segment from the East Overlook to Elkhorn Tavern, needed better trail signs. Consequently, the plan proposed placing new signs to make visitors aware of the "pleasant alternative way to reach Elkhorn Tavern." A new trailhead orientation wayside exhibit, therefore, was to be placed at the East Overlook. The sign was to contain information on the distance and walking time along with descriptions of the terrain.

At the Headwaters Creek Trail, the plan proposed replacing the existing trail guide dispenser with a "newly designed trailhead wayside incorporating a dispenser." At the same time, a new interpretive wayside would be put in at the Tannery to display the functions of that nineteenth-century industrial endeavor.<sup>16</sup>

Brief mention should be made here about a bicycle route. The

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<sup>15</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 16.

<sup>16</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 17.

park staff had discussed the proposition but decided that because only two or three bicyclists used the park each day, the costs for building such a route were unwarranted.<sup>17</sup>

In the area of publications, the Interpretive Prospectus made several suggestions. First, the plan called for a Pea Ridge handbook, "both as a one-source telling of the story of the battle, and as a guide to the use of the park." This was proposed as a "new project" not as a replacement project because the only available story of the battle to date was a "magazine article reprint," probably Historian Walter Brown's 1956 essay that appeared in the Arkansas Historical Quarterly. The plan also called to replace the official park map & guide. In its current form, the Pea Ridge leaflet was "keyed to the auto route" so it was not useful as a "take-home item" and its map was "unreadable."

The ENP&MA Boy Scout trail guide was considered useful and was continued; it was later replaced in 1995 with a site bulletin format which is more usable and cost effective. On the other hand, the reading materials on sale in the lobby were woefully inadequate concerning the history of the Civil War. The Interpretive Prospectus, therefore, called for sale of "at least one authoritative volume on the whole war" and "good books on the war in the west." Finally, a "good children's item" was called for, "probably on the life of the soldier."<sup>18</sup>

Finally, the Interpretive Prospectus addressed the issue of special populations. The team concluded that the only representation in this category were the area school groups. The staff had already planned orientation and service to these groups and therefore did not need to change any of its procedures in this area. However, even though the percentage of physically-challenged visitors was negligible, "the bulk of interpretive media proposed... [would] be made available to the handicapped."

The planning and production of these changes would not be cheap. Planning costs alone were estimated at \$75,000 and production costs at a phenomenal \$500,000. Museum exhibit expenditures were broken down into \$52,000 for planning and \$279,000 for construction; audiovisual upgrading would be \$11,000 for planning and \$149,000 for production; and wayside exhibits were to be \$12,000 for planning and \$72,000 for

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<sup>17</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 1.

<sup>18</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 18.

production.<sup>19</sup> Clearly, revamping the Mission 66 program and updating it was not going to come without major expenditures, at least on the local level at Pea Ridge.

### Resources Management Plan, 1982

Superintendent Gentry and the Pea Ridge staff worked together to complete the RMP for 1982, updating the management strategy for the next five years and providing the framework for administration of the park through Gott's administration and until the arrival of Steve Adams as the Superintendent in 1991. In addition to suggesting many of the changes that appeared in the 1981 IP, the 1982 RMP addressed issues surrounding the cultural and natural resources of the park. The largest portion of the report, in fact, discusses natural resource management strategy, including the formulation of an elaborate Fire Management Plan.

In the Introduction, Gentry wrote of the two primary functions for the RMP: 1) "as a manual for management activities that will preserve the environment or achieve an environmental status quo to comply with Park Service Standards," and as 2) "a set of research projects and priorities that are designed to obtain additional information for management and interpretation."<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, she reiterated the space and storage problems the park was facing at that time. Finally, she claimed that with the anticipated visitation rates that additional personnel would be needed to operate the park smoothly.

In the area of cultural resources, the RMP called for greater attention to prehistoric cultural resources as well as historic cultural resources. No survey of the prehistoric remnants in the park had been conducted. As a result, such a study was needed. Gentry reiterated the needs at Elkhorn Tavern which are discussed above in the section on the IP. In addition, Gentry informs the reader of the attempts made to address the important Indian heritage and presence in the area of the park. She had contacted Sylvester Tinker, Principal Chief of the Osage Nation to inquire "whether or not there were any sites of religious significance to the Osage Nation located within the park." From all previous accounts, the area had been used only as a hunting ground. Tinker never responded suggesting that a sacred Osage ground did not exist

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<sup>19</sup>PRNMP, "Interpretive Prospectus," (1981), 20-21.

<sup>20</sup>Betty Gentry, "Resources Management Plan for Pea Ridge National Military Park," (Santa Fe: SWRO, May 1982), 1.

in the park.<sup>21</sup>

The RMP then discusses the Remote Sensing Project that was currently being completed. Superintendent Gentry's hope was that the project would help in "identifying for us the probable location of missing historic structures." In the meantime, the Winton Springs House, which the RMP dates as c. 1905, was declared to have "no significant architectural features and serves no administrative purpose for the park."<sup>22</sup>

In the RMP, Gentry suggests three alternative actions for dealing with the Winton Springs House. First, "No Action" was a possibility. Second, the building could be retained for use as a maintenance office and light storage. Third, it could be removed "at NPS expense with NPS personnel." However, the recommended action was to remove the structure at "private expense under NPS supervision....This would save the government money both in the short term and long term. An intrusion on the historic scene would be removed. A hazardous structure would be removed. [Even though] There may be adverse reaction."<sup>23</sup>

Regardless, Gentry believed that the Winton Springs House was not worth keeping. "The structure has no particular outstanding architectural features," the RMP declared. In 1976, the Regional Safety Officer and the Public Health Officer ordered the structure closed to human habitation. To reopen the building as a residence would cost at least \$124,000 for the repairs. In the end, "a decision was made not to incur the costs of the modifications" and WASO and the SHPO of Arkansas extended Gentry and the park the authority to remove the structure.

The RMP also reflects a strong interest in restoring the historic scenes of the park. Of particular concern were the overhead power lines that marred the visual landscape. "Some of these lines," the RMP reported, "are highly visible and detract from the historical scene as well as scar the landscape." The RMP recommends replacement of these overhead lines with underground utility lines. "This [change] would restore the battlefield appearance and reduce the necessity of utility maintenance personnel from often entering the park where visitor vehicles are not allowed." In this case, no action was taken during Gentry's tenure even though removal

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<sup>21</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 8; PRNMP, RMP, (1987), 10.

<sup>22</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 9.

<sup>23</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 17.

funding documentation was completed in 1978.<sup>24</sup>

Superintendent Gentry's concern for historical integrity also extended to secondary historic structures in the park. The RMP suggested a need to preserve the three historic traces: the Telegraph Road, the Ford Road, and the Huntsville Road. Likewise, the RMP called to restore the trenches in the Detached Area; the Winton Springs, believed by some to be an important source of water during the battle, needed to be recognized; the foundation stones of Pratt's Store, part-time headquarters of Union General Curtis, should be preserved as well. Furthermore, the Clemons House site should also be preserved. Simultaneous with these preservation measures, the RMP also suggested that twenty-three cannon be emplaced on the battlefield "in positions where there were artillery batteries during the battle."<sup>25</sup>

To maintain the integrity of the above mentioned sites, the RMP recommends careful maintenance of the sites. For the roads, "occasional mowing and use by park vehicles [would be appropriate] to retain a 'trace' appearance approximating their historic appearance." Winton Springs would be "cleaned as necessary to remove all plant growth impeding the flow of water and changing its historic appearance." In addition, the monuments near Elkhorn Tavern, the foundations stones of Pratt's Store, and the Detached Area trenches would be "kept trimmed and free of grass and undergrowth." In the end, the RMP states that "All of the above actions are continuing routine maintenance and have no adverse or significant affect upon any of these historic structures." Each of these measures, of course, were to comply with the provisions of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966.<sup>26</sup>

### Natural Resource Management

Superintendent Gentry and the park staff paid greater attention to natural resource management than any previous administration. Clearly, the impact of a growing national awareness about the environment was becoming contagious. The RMP, for example, declares the Natural Resources Basic Inventory as "Priority #1" for the park. Yet, because the park personnel did not have the training to conduct such as study, the RMP recommends a joint action between the SWRO and the University of Arkansas. Gentry hoped "to conduct an

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<sup>24</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 18.

<sup>25</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 19.

<sup>26</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 20.

exhaustive inventory of the Park's natural resources." A year earlier, the park had submitted a "research request" to ENP&MA for "a vegetative map with particular attention to be given to rare, threatened or endangered plants." The project was eventually approved and Botany Professor E. E. Dale, Jr. of the University of Arkansas oversaw the project which was completed in 1983.

The Number 2 priority in the natural resource area was the growing concern over the increasing numbers of deer in the park. Prior to establishment of the park, "deer were rarely seen." By the early 1980s, however, there was a thriving herd of deer and the increases had warranted the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission to open hunting in the region (outside the park, of course). Officers of the state agency, in fact, believed that the herd already exceeded the "carrying capacity" of the park. Consequently, because no previous studies had been conducted, one was needed to determine the extent of the growth of the herd and what measures, if any, were needed to alleviate the problem.

There was also a concern centered on wild turkeys. The RMP states that "some wild turkeys" were in the park and that "historically turkeys were common." Because the turkeys "reintroduced themselves, in much the same way as the deer," a study was suggested "to determine whether...sufficient habitat exists and what, if anything, ...we can do to encourage or add to their numbers if it seems desirable."<sup>27</sup>

The RMP also displays a real concern for the historical integrity of the vegetation of the park. Priority #3 was a Vegetative Management Plan. A study was needed "to give us guidance so that we [can] manage the vegetation so that it approximates the historic scene more accurately." With this in mind, the RMP suggests a course of action. "Control measures may be needed to reduce the spread of red cedar, black locust and perhaps other tree species."

The RMP also called for a study to quantify the park's water rights. Careful attention was to be paid to natural and unnatural fires in the park (more on this later). And general maintenance measures were reiterated. The park staff was planning to continue to eliminate hazardous trees in visitor use areas, to initiate erosion control, to control feral and diseased animals, to continue maintenance of the re-established prairie, and to control forest and ornamental tree pests.

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<sup>27</sup>RMP for PRNMP, (1982), 40.

## Fire Management Plan

Since the inception of the first fire management plan at the park in the early 1960s, the bottom-line policy did not change during the 1980s. Regardless of the nature of the fire--whether "man-caused" or "natural"--every conflagration was to be extinguished "as quickly as possible." Furthermore, the RMP team made it clear that "there is little, or no, evidence to show that wildfire could be of benefit in the hardwood forest of Pea Ridge." The irony was that previously in the RMP, Superintendent Gentry and her staff had complained of invader trees such as the cedars. Fire management principles used at the time did not recognize the benefit of fire to manage forest species.

The FMP did entertain the idea of burning underbrush. However, it was determined that such burning would threaten the "available food resource for wildlife that inhabit the area." This was a mistaken principle because burning usually reduced dead materials that are then replaced with new growth after the fire, thus, actually supporting a thriving vegetative cover for the animals to graze.

The question of "fuel hazard reduction" was also addressed in the FMP. Prescribed burning, in fact, had been suggested as a policy prior to 1982. Gentry and her staff concluded, however, that "prescribed burning would...present problems in carrying out the Resource Management objective of permitting some old fields to return to their 1862 appearance." In particular, the management team worried that the heat of a burning field would kill the hardwood seedlings that were being allowed to overgrow some of the fields to reshape the vegetative landscape in accordance with Edwin Bearss' Vegetative Map. Consequently, the FMP concludes that "Fire as a management tool cannot be suitably adapted to the conditions" at Pea Ridge. Continuation of the suppression of all fires "as promptly as possible" would be the policy.<sup>28</sup>

The old "grown over fields" contained the "most hazardous fuel types" which included broom sedge grass, blackberry cane, weeds, brush, and cedar trees. This "combination of light fuels" posed a particularly difficult fire problem because they burned so rapidly. Sumac, sassafras, and persimmon were also very common "but rarely present[ed] a fire hazard."<sup>29</sup>

Strategy for approaching fires was also mapped out. The "avenues" for reaching potential fires were determined as the

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<sup>28</sup>PRNMP, "Fire Management Plan," in RMP (1982), 1-2.

<sup>29</sup>FMP, (1982), 3.

Tour Road, historic trace roads, crude roads "made for the purpose of fire access," vista clearings, electric easements, grown over fields, and meadowland. The park personnel were warned that most fires occurred during winter and early spring. The combination of the accumulation of "light, dry fuels" with gusting winds were "significant factors in fire occurrence and severity at these particular times of year." Through 1982, every fire in the park had been human-caused and less than ten percent of those were accidental. Better than ninety percent of the fires had been "deliberately set during times when control...[was] especially difficult."<sup>30</sup>

The fire organization was based on a well-planned scheme for attacking fires once they broke out. Superintendent Gentry was to be the coordinator/dispatcher, I&RM Chief Billy Stout the fire boss, and Administrative Clerk Sue Singer, the radio operator. Maintenance Foreman Bobby Flickinger served as the supply officer, Park Technician Nolan Oswald as first aid expert and crew boss of the volunteers. Park Technician John Knox served as crew boss for the park staff, whereas Pea Ridge Fire Chief Sam Spivey was crew boss for the Pea Ridge Volunteer Fire Department. Maintenance Worker Powell David was a nozzleman, tractor operator Renard Bray a tank truck driver/pump operator, and Park Technician Charles Ward a nozzleman. Motor Vehicle Operator Billy Clark was the pumper operator.<sup>31</sup> Each of the above listed individuals had extensive training in their particular skills.

One of the key principles of fire management was prevention and observation. Superintendent Gentry made it clear that it was the responsibility of "each employee to develop an understanding and awareness of fire prevention techniques." Most important of all was "constant vigilance on the part of each park employee" to recognize and eliminate hazardous fires. With this in mind, Gentry declared that it would be the I&RM Chief's responsibility to organize a "day of refresher training" every fall sometime in early October. Likewise, the I&RM Chief and the Park Technician (in protection) were advised "to keep park neighbors advised on high fire danger periods." Neighbors, in fact, were encouraged to keep on the lookout for fires and to report any apparent dangers to the park personnel.

The I&RM Chief and the Park Technician were also required "to maintain communications and good working relations with the local Arkansas Forest Ranger, the U. S. Forest Service (Mark Twain National Forest, Cassville, MO), and the Pea Ridge

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<sup>30</sup>FMP, (1982), 4.

<sup>31</sup>FMP, (1982), 10.

Volunteer Fire Department." And finally, it was the Superintendent's responsibility to insure that the above responsibilities were carried out properly and that the personnel were properly trained to take on these specific duties.<sup>32</sup>

All employees were supposed to familiarize themselves with the location of the fire suppression equipment as well. The fire fighting equipment available to the staff in 1982 were as follows:

1. One four-wheel drive Jeep with a 300-gallon tank. (it did have a temporary pump that needed to be replaced).
2. One 100-gallon slip-on unit. This unit was placed on a 1/2-ton truck during the fire season and stored in the maintenance building during the rest of the year.
3. One 75-gallon slip-on unit. It was being utilized until a larger pump could be acquired for the fire truck.
4. Hand tools sufficient for a crew of 20-25 persons for fighting grass or timberland fires. Three caches were also located at strategic points in the Park: one inside the Pea Ridge East Overlook, one midway along the ridge of Big Mountain a short distance from the Tour Road, and one at the west end of Big Mountain also near the Tour Road. The bulk of the Hand Tools were housed in the Visitor Center and Maintenance Building.
5. Fireshirts, goggles, leather gloves, and hardhats were also available for each employee involved in fire suppression.<sup>33</sup>

With the availability of this equipment and positive relations with the local fire fighting establishment, the park staff was well prepared to prevent and suppress fires in and around the borders of the park.

Further aiding the park personnel were the firefighting procedures that were to be followed. First, the first firefighters available in the case of a fire were required to "pick up a radio and hand tools and proceed with the slip-on unit to the fire." A tank truck would then "follow as soon as possible." The second step required "all available designated personnel to pick up safety equipment and hand tools and

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<sup>32</sup>FMP, (1982), 12.

<sup>33</sup>FMP, (1982), 14.

proceed to fire." After suppressing the fire, the fire boss was to choose one firefighter to remain behind to "cold trail the fire" to insure that the blaze did not reignite. The remaining crew then was to return to the Visitor Center to refill the tanks of the fire trucks. Likewise, any damaged or lost equipment was to be replaced as soon as possible.<sup>34</sup> The Regional Office was then supposed to be notified concerning all fires as well as unusually high fire dangers in the park.

The Fire Management Plan reflected the larger management plans of the park to protect the cultural and natural resources of the PRNMP. The RMP and FMP both addressed important resource issues that would continue to require the attention of the park staff in the years to come. In the meantime, Superintendent Gentry worked to implement many of the changes that were suggested in her first RMP.

#### New Changes and New Plans, 1982-1983

The years 1982 and 1983 proved extremely busy and influential in the history of the Pea Ridge park. The management team not only implemented new changes but also made numerous suggests for additional changes in the Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment. The heating system was further improved, alterations were made to the Visitor Center, and other small-scale projects were completed. At the same time, a planning team made up of Denver Service Center, Southwest Regional, and Pea Ridge staff members researched and then composed the \$2-million dollar expansion scheme for the Visitor Center (as part of Visitor Use/Development Plan).

In September, 1982, an emergency emerged when the air conditioning system broke down. Superintendent Gentry made a special funding request to the SWRO and was granted the funds needed to complete the repairs. The automatic air controlled three-way by-pass and three-way mixing valves, globe valves, vents, screens, and other parts were replaced and the heads on the condenser were removed and checked for possible freeze damage. The problem had resulted in part from the buildup of mud in the pipes which caused one of the tubes in the chiller to collapse.<sup>35</sup>

In December, 1982, Maintenance Foreman Bobby Flickinger proposed replacing 5,000 feet of telephone-type buried cable

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<sup>34</sup>FMP (1982), 15-16.

<sup>35</sup>PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Replace Valves, Gauges, Vents, etc. of Heating System), September 14, 1982, 1.

from the pumphouse to the water tank. The twenty-year-old cables had "become damaged beyond repair, due to the frequent lightning storms..." That same month Flickinger proposed placing "one continuous vestibule across the front of the Visitor Center...[to] enclose not only the main double door entrance, but also the two visitor restrooms." At the same time, he proposed putting in a new doorway in the foyer in the Visitor Center. "The exit would provide a second egress," Flickinger suggested, "for the public use area of the Visitor Center in the event of an emergency situation." He also recommended that a "hard surfaced area" be laid outside the doorway "to allow safer use by the elderly and the handicapped and for interpretive talks." A new doorway would also "minimize congestion in the event of an emergency."<sup>36</sup>

The following month, Maintenance Foreman Flickinger proposed improvements for the maintenance building. He requested funds to extend two walls "to provide new space to house fire cache and allow more area to park and store maintenance equipment under roof out of weather." He hoped to install a exhaust blower and welding booth in the main shop to improve safety in the work area. The plan also called for air piping from a compressor and installation of metal cabinets for tools and parts. Lockers for "workers' changes of clothing, fire suits, and boots" was also recommended.<sup>37</sup>

#### Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment

The above proposed projects all reflect the park staff's concerns for expansion of the Visitor Center and Maintenance Area. In 1982 and 1983, a planning team researched and then wrote the Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment for the park. In large measure, the plan reflects Superintendent Gentry's and the staff's initiatives in the previous five or six years. The plan, however, clearly spelled out in broad terms the long-term goals for expanding the Visitor Center and Maintenance Area and for managing the cultural and natural resources of the park. Filled with charts, maps, and architectural drawings, the plan spells out in clear terms the hopes of the planning team.

The planning team was composed of twelve members. From the Denver Service Center were John Murphy, Project Manager; Larry Walling, Team Captain; Janet B. Dixon, Environmental Specialist; David R. Stuart, Cultural Resources Specialist;

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<sup>36</sup> PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Provide Additional Exit for Visitor Center), December 1, 1982, 1.

<sup>37</sup> PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal," (Improve Maintenance Building), January 20, 1983, 1.

Andrew Barton, Architect. Out of the SWRO were Melody Webb, Regional Historian; David Battle, Regional Architect; and Laura Wilson, Landscape Architect. Pea Ridge's staff members involved in the planning strategy were Superintendent Betty Gentry, I&RM Chief Billy Stout, and Chief of Maintenance Bobby Flickinger. Larry Tillman of the Harpers Ferry Center served as the interpretive planner.<sup>38</sup>

The purpose of the study is laid out in clearcut terms in the Summary: "This Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment inventories existing conditions at Pea Ridge National Military Park, identifies problems, presents a proposal and two alternatives for addressing those problems, and discusses their environmental consequences."<sup>39</sup>

With these goals in mind, the plan also called for remodeling of the Visitor Center, the professional and administrative staff office space, the storage areas, and the restrooms. The plan also recommended moving the Maintenance Area "to an adjacent area" away from the Visitor Center. Elkhorn Tavern and the Detached Area were also to be "upgraded."

One of the principal reasons for this proposed upgrading of PRNMP was that "no major renovation of facilities" had occurred at the park in the previous twenty years. The visitor use was "regularly 135 percent above what was anticipated when the facilities were built." Consequently, there were "deficiencies in safety, resource protection, and administrative programs."<sup>40</sup>

The plan then reiterates many of the proposals that Superintendent Gentry and her staff had suggested in the 1982 RMP. More importantly, however, the Visitor Use plan included a team effort as well as very elaborate written and illustrative directions for initiating the renovations at the park. For example, an architectural drawing of the Visitor Center as it was in 1983 was compared to a drawing showing the proposed changes. At each step or phase of the alterations, alternative plans were offered for proposed actions. In most of the cases, the "existing conditions" were discussed and then alternative plans suggested. In the development plan for the Visitor Center, for instance, Alternative 1 explained that the existing conditions of the park facilities had "accompanying problems." Therefore, Alternative 2 recommended that the Visitor Center and Maintenance Areas be expanded and

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<sup>38</sup>National Park Service, "Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment, Pea Ridge National Military Park," (Denver Service Center, January, 1983), 64.

<sup>39</sup>NPS, "Visitor Use...Plan, PRNMP," 1.

<sup>40</sup>NPS, "Visitor Use...Plan, PRNMP," 3.

the Maintenance Area be relocated altogether. This latter alternative also clarified that "Elsewhere, modern development would...intrude upon the historic Civil War battlefield scene."<sup>41</sup>

Ultimately, the plan called to phase in for construction ten projects in the following order:

1. Solarium addition
2. Outdoor viewing platform addition
3. Elkhorn Tavern remodeling and parking lot relocation
4. Additional parking construction at the Visitor Center
5. West Overlook remodeling
6. Maintenance Yard and Shop construction
7. Visitor Center/Administration Building rehabilitation
8. Winton Spring House demolition
9. Road intersection realignment at start of tour loop
10. Trailhead redesigning and trail realignment at Detached Area<sup>42</sup>

Each of these changes were to be made in compliance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. Each of the proposed actions, of course, would "receive prior certification by NPS regional cultural resources specialists." The certification would 1) "ensure that actions are consistent with all relevant NPS management policies and standards, 2) provide adequate documentation of effects, 3) incorporate all feasible mitigating measures, and 4) be within the scope of the programmatic memorandum of agreement."<sup>43</sup>

The natural resources of the park were also addressed in the plan. After describing the topography, the soils, and the groundwater of the park, the plan describes the condition of the vegetation and the location of fields and forests and the importance of working for historically accurate depictions of the natural landscape as it was during the 1862 battle. The plan also noted that the wildlife was "about the same as at the time of the battle, except that elk, bear, and mountain lions...no longer [were] present." There were "no known endangered or threatened animals in the park, but the bald

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<sup>41</sup>NPS, "Development Use...Plan, PRNMP," 19.

<sup>42</sup>NPS, "Visitor Use...Plan, PRNMP," 18.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

eagle and the gray bat" were spotted in the region of Beaver Lake.<sup>44</sup>

The visual quality of the park was considered excellent but with reservations. Because there was a "lack of governmental jurisdiction over development adjacent to the park," the staff would have a difficult time conforming to NPS policies of maintaining the "historical scene and protecting visual quality." However, the problem was not acute by any means and it was not "likely to be in the future." On the other hand, the plan proposed "manipulation of the vegetation by planting more evergreen trees and shrubs...[to] help screen park structures" that were not visible from the auto tour stops; this task was later completed prior to Superintendent Gentry's retirement. Visual perfection could not be achieved because the West and East overlooks were too high in elevation to screen the panoramic views from modern development in Benton County. This lack of perfection, however, was a minor quibble and was not considered a major hindrance to continued high visual quality in the park.<sup>45</sup>

On the whole, the Visitor Center and Maintenance Area expansion plan suggested that there would be minimal environmental degradation if the alternatives were carried out. Soils would be lost under new structures; some wildlife would experience inconveniences; and some vegetative cover--both grasses and forested area--would be lost but on a very small scale. Threatened and endangered species, the integrity of the historic vegetation plan, and water resources would not be threatened largely because of the plan to limit the changes to already developed, or adjacent, areas in the park.

The Visitor Use/Development Plan and Environmental Assessment provided the park staff with a long-term planning tool for revamping some of the deteriorating facilities at the park. During the last five years of her superintendency, Gentry used the plan as a guide for making changes in the park. And gradually some of those measures would be undertaken. On the whole, however, many of the proposals remained unfinished in 1988 when Superintendent Gentry retired. Her RMP for 1987 reflects the need for continued vigilance in carrying out the 1983 Visitor Use/Development Plan.

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<sup>44</sup>NPS, "Visitor Use...Plan, PRNMP," 39.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

## The 1987 RMP and the End of the Gentry Administration

Few differences appeared in the 1987 RMP that had not already been addressed in the 1982 RMP. There were some minor exceptions. The 1987 RMP, for example, listed the visitation numbers for the years after 1980 and a revised administrative history was recommended to replace or update Alaric Parrish's 1974 version. Otherwise, very little changes in management policy and proposals appeared.

Visitation did increase in the 1980s, probably a reflection of Reaganomics which supported a short-term economic growth period for several years. Americans were interested in traveling and taking advantage of the seemingly good economic times (see Appendix C for visitation numbers).<sup>46</sup>

The 1987 RMP also called for a revision and update for the Administrative History. The 1974 version did "not meet the criteria established in NPS-28." The job, however, could not be carried out by the staff because they were "lacking the expertise to do this type of research," and as a result, "the park could still have an Administrative History which does not meet the prescribed criteria." The RMP recommended that a "research historian, either in-house or contract, ... revise and update the Administrative History to insure it is complete, accurate and meets the criteria." By the 1987 approval date of the RMP, a 10-238 had been approved for the project.<sup>47</sup>

Superintendent Gentry and her staff had completed some of the proposals that appeared in the 1982 RMP. A vegetative map was completed through the ENP&MA in 1983 and served as the blueprint for "other studies" to be conducted in the future. On the other hand, the Natural Resources Basic Inventory proposed in 1982 was not completed because the "park staff... [did] not have the background nor expertise to conduct the needed research."<sup>48</sup>

As for the management of the deer herd, the park staff had conducted a head count in cooperation with the Arkansas Fish & Game Commission in March, 1982. Ninety-one deer were counted in the survey. The number seemed controversial, however, because one of the Fish & Game biologists stated that all the survey determined was that there were 91 deer in the park at the time of the survey. On the other hand, the chief

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<sup>46</sup>PRNMP, RMP, (1987), 4.

<sup>47</sup>PRNMP, RMP, (1987), 21.

<sup>48</sup>PRNMP, RMP, (1987), 30.

of the division in Little Rock "interpolated that we have over 900 deer in the park." The survey seems to have caused more confusion than assistance because Gentry and her staff determined that they needed "to know the size of the herd and other dynamics affecting it in order to know what to do to adequately manage the herd."<sup>49</sup> Nothing had been done to date either to study the wild turkeys purported to have been seen in the park since 1976.

The 1987 RMP's contents suggest that few of the goals of the 1982 RMP had been met. This assessment is consistent with Betty Gentry's recent comments in an interview. Fiscal constraints and a new NPS philosophy, from her perspective, were the culprits. The "financial problems" that she faced as Superintendent frustrated her and her staff. The park was able to hire only one seasonal, for example, by the time of Gentry's retirement in 1988. This number had dropped from three when she first took office in 1977. Likewise, Superintendent Gentry was unable to make important changes that she had hoped to when the 1982 RMP was composed. The Detached Area, for instance, never received the attention it needed for development. In part, she blamed the new NPS philosophy of serving the patrons over taking care of the cultural and natural resources of the nation's parks. She was lamenting the emphasis on consumerism over that of stewardship that characterized the Reagan years.

This story would be remiss, however, if some of the other accomplishments of the Gentry administration were not mentioned. She, for example, strongly supported a growing living history program. Living history encampments were encouraged by the Superintendent who had first visited the park during a 1976 encampment and was enchanted then with the park. Union and Confederate living history camps were organized and put together near Elkhorn Tavern and in the battlefield below Big Mountain. Park Service regulations forbade the combat reenactments, still the living history actors enjoyed the sharing of stories, hymns, and food at the park at these annual occasions. Women also dressed in period clothing, some of which were mourning gowns.<sup>50</sup>

Special living history programs were organized in 1981 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the creation of the park. Actors performed their usual rituals at the encampments and then joined at the Benton County Fair Grounds to watch the annual parade that in this year featured a Pea Ridge NMP float. The colorful NPS display featured a cannon, Union and

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<sup>49</sup>PRNMP, RMP, (1987), 31.

<sup>50</sup>Interview of Betty Gentry, June 25, 1996.

Confederate troops, and the emblems of the important federal agency. Third District Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt spoke at the august occasion in the shaded area north of the Visitor Center. In 1986, the park sponsored and funded the creation of another float to celebrate Arkansas's sesquicentennial in the Benton County Fair parade. The float, titled "Soldiers Through the Years," featured a cannon and soldiers from the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War II, and the Modern Era.

There were other achievements during the Gentry years. Walkways were constructed to the Union and Confederate monuments near Elkhorn Tavern. Handicapped ramps were put in at the tavern and its elkhorns were replaced two or three times. Likewise, the Tour Road on the hill leading to the tavern was also repaved during Gentry's tenure.

### Conclusion

The Gentry administration witnessed several improvements at the park, but also it experienced some disappointments. The far-flung plans of the \$2-million expansion of the Visitor Center and Maintenance Area never came to fruition, yet gradually changes were made to alleviate some of the problems the staff faced in the office building. The heating and air conditioning systems were revamped, a new doorway was put in the foyer, and an extension plan for renovation was completed, providing guidelines for possible future development to the administrative facilities.

In the end, however, fiscal constraints limited what Superintendent Gentry and her staff could accomplish prior to her departure in 1988. These tasks would be left to the next two administrations under superintendents Jim Gott and Steve Adams. The next and final chapter will examine their administrations from 1988 to 1996.



## CHAPTER 8

### The Modern Era, 1989-1997

#### Introduction

The recent administrative history of Pea Ridge National Military Park in many ways reflects the broader trends of American society and government. Clearly, the two superintendents during this period, James Gott (1988-1991) and Steve Adams (1991-present), have had to face continued fiscal constraints even as environmentalists call for more governmental regulation of the natural world. With these influences, they have had to devise plans to protect the cultural and natural resources of the public lands. Both superintendents' participation in the Battlefield Protection Program demonstrates, for instance, a growing concern to protect the historic and natural landscape at the Pea Ridge park. Their concerns certainly reflect the broader society's concerns for the environment and historic preservation in the face of continued urban and commercial development in our growing nation.

Along with environmental and historical issues, the park administrators have been concerned with expansion of the facilities as well, an issue inherited from Superintendent Gentry. Gott initiated plans to reorganize the space of the Visitor Center, for example, to facilitate visitation and ENP&MA sales and to provide greater and safer space for the staff in the Divisions of Interpretation, Protection, and Maintenance. Likewise, Adams has coordinated a plan to more efficiently and safely store fuels, tools, and materiel at the main facility and at other locations within the park. Both chief administrators also have had to deal with a problematic Tour Road which has been damaged because of water runoff and seepage.

Administrative organization has also been altered during the Modern Era. First, Gott restructured the divisions and then Adams incorporated a successful Team Approach to management. These changes have allowed the superintendents to maximize their human resources knowing that limits on hiring of special personnel were enforced in the face of federal fiscal constraints that have plagued the Park Service since the Reagan era. These approaches have worked to utilize the special training and skills of the park personnel. Without a doubt, the concerns of the Gott and Adams administrations suggest that creative initiative and team planning are going to dominate the administrative strategies at the Pea Ridge

park in the future. Such strategies will allow for improved protection of the cultural and natural resources of the park at a time when congressional concern for the deficit will limit the opportunities for parks such as PRNMP to hire new personnel, especially after skilled staff members retire. As a result, the Park Service will have to continue to focus on training its current personnel and working toward incorporating still more qualified employees into the system when the opportunities arise. In the end, then, the park administrators will need to continue to maximize their staff and their skills in the years to come.

Mention should also be made of the recent transfer of Pea Ridge NMP to the Midwest Field Area (Midwest Region) in 1996. Consequently, since its opening in 1963, PRNMP has been part of the Southeast Region, the Southwest Region, and now the Midwest Region.

#### The Gott Years, 1988-1991

Superintendent Gott arrived at the park some time in late 1988. His first staff meeting took place on March 14, 1989. In that first conference, Gott announced that he had two overriding duties as Superintendent of PRNMP. First, he was determined to get "involved with local communities." As we will see, he took this goal very seriously and became heavily involved in public relations. Second, he stated that his other main duty was to serve as the principal administrator of "internal park management and operations."<sup>1</sup>

By the time of this first meeting, Gott had already joined two Chambers of Commerce in Rogers and Pea Ridge. Likewise, he had been appointed to the Tourism Commission of Rogers, had joined the Rogers Art Guild, had become a member of the Lions Club of that town, and had joined the Northwest Arkansas Civil War Roundtable. Gott was going to keep his promise to promote the park and coordinate positive public relations. Governor Bill Clinton facilitated Gott's mission by announcing in 1989 that the last week in August would be "National Park Service Week" in Arkansas.<sup>2</sup>

As part of his public relations campaign, Superintendent Gott encouraged his staff to recognize Black History Month (January) and National Women's History Month (March). In January, 1989, for example, the park fee collectors handed out

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<sup>1</sup>"Monthly Report, PRNMP," March 14, 1989, 1.

<sup>2</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," September 6, 1989, 3.

a brochure on the "life and dream of Martin Luther King, Jr." That same month, a poster recognizing the history of African Americans was hung "in [the] window next to the entrance to the visitor center." Two months later, a Women's History poster was hung in the same window.<sup>3</sup>

To facilitate public awareness of the Pea Ridge park, Gott ordered the production of more than 50,000 copies of a new park folder. Many of these brochures were to be used "to promote Pea Ridge." "We need to let people know we are here and what we are about," Gott announced in a staff meeting. "With 5 million people visiting Beaver Lake [each year], we should reach more than 100 thousand [of those visitors]." Gott took every opportunity to promote the park. In July, 1990, for instance, he worked with the staff of KHOG-TV to videotape a thirty second promo about the park to be seen on Channel 40/29. The following May, Gott did an interview for a two minute "tourism promo" that was to be aired on Channel 24/51 during the weeks leading up to Memorial Day, 1991. In January, 1990, Gott also announced that Southern Living was going to publish an article on the park in its May or June issue of that year.<sup>4</sup>

Gott encouraged his staff to engage in positive public relations as well. He extended special recognition to Maintenance Crewman Bill Clark and his wife and daughter for their role in a promotional activity at the Rogers Wal-Mart in May, 1989. Clark and his family volunteered their time to cook and sell barbeque Cornish game hens with the proceeds going to the Children's Hospital in Little Rock.<sup>5</sup>

Gott also mentioned the fiscal concerns in that first meeting that he and the other staff members would face in the near future. "Money, or the lack thereof," he announced, "has attracted a fair amount of attention." Despite this dour reality, Gott took the initiative and showed an ability to work with his staff to make changes. By the time of that first report, for example, Gott had already coordinated plans with Maintenance Chief Larry Widdifield to begin to address the problems of storage and space in the Visitor Center and administrative offices. His first initiative was to work with Maintenance to build storage shelves for the furnace room and the employee restroom. "This will free-up the room used by employees," he suggested, "and permit creation of a staff break room." This prediction, in fact, came true a few months

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<sup>3</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," March 15, 1989, 4.

<sup>4</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," July 5, 1990, 2; "Staff Meeting," May 14, 1991, 2; "Staff Meeting," January 24, 1990, 3.

<sup>5</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," May 14, 1989, 2.

later.

Superintendent Gott was in high gear and ready to implement many of the changes that Gentry proposed but was never able to put into action. "Obviously a great amount of work remains," Gott told his staff in that first meeting, "but I feel we are off to a good start, with everyone keeping busy and changes becoming visible."<sup>6</sup> The new Superintendent meant business and believed that his staff was amenable to his incoming tenure: "Park morale seems good," Gott commented, "We now have monthly park-wide staff meetings and weekly squad meetings" to take on the new challenges.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the fiscal constraints that the park staff faced during the late 1980s and 1990s, the fiscal year budgets were more than \$300,000 annually from Gott's administration forward, reaching \$511,000 in 1995. In 1989, for example, Gott reported that the FY budget for 1990 was going to be \$340,000. In that budget was also a request for an additional \$25,000 for park management and \$5,000 to replace five garage doors at the park facilities.<sup>8</sup> This budget, of course, came through the Southwest Regional Office which with the rest of the Park Service regional offices was emphasizing thrift during the downsizing period.

Likewise, in light of the continuing fiscal constraints, the Park Service began to emphasize fee collection to generate revenue at the individual sites such as Pea Ridge. Superintendent Gott forwarded a fee collection policy in 1990 to insure that proper guidelines were followed. In that directive, it is interesting to note that Gott clarifies the role of fee collection when discussing service to the public. "Underlying the whole policy is the fact that our NPS mandate says we are here to serve the public. Any time there is a conflict between serving the public and collection fees, we must serve the public, yet not neglect our fee collecting responsibility."<sup>9</sup>

Gott went on to state that this emphasis on public service did "not mean that collecting fees...[was] unimportant." To the contrary, the new NPS fee collecting policy reflected the broader federal concerns to generate revenue in a deficit-spending era even though most of those funds were never returned to the national parks. Regardless, there were rules

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<sup>6</sup>"Monthly Meeting," March 14, 1989, 3.

<sup>7</sup>"Monthly Report," March 14, 1989, 1.

<sup>8</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," January 24, 1990, 2.

<sup>9</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Gott to PRNMP Staff, July 12, 1990, 1.

to insure that monies were collected. Certain days were set aside as fee-free days. August 25, for example, was a free day because it commemorates the anniversary of the founding of the NPS. In addition, there was to be no charge for educational groups. Visitors from 17 to 61 years of age were to pay \$1.00 each and groups "a maximum family rate of \$3.00." Non-citizen visitors were to be charged under the same guidelines. In 1997, the fee is \$2.00 for individuals and \$4.00 for a family or a carload of visitors.

Decorum in collecting fees was also stressed in Gott's guidelines. "Keeping the goodwill of the park visitor," however, was more important than collecting fees. Instead of anxiously attempting to collect fees from large numbers of people during busy times, Gott urged his staff to use good judgement: "do not go chasing after them or confront them for payment" if they do not pay immediately. "Most of the time they will return and purchase their tickets freely. If not, mention it when they come to the desk for information."<sup>10</sup> Obviously, Superintendent Gott did not want the new fee collecting policy to serve as a detriment to visitation. Yet, he understood the growing fiscal concerns and, therefore, implemented the policy in accordance with NPS directives even if most of the funds would never go toward improvements at the park.

During the first full year of fee collection, 1988, the park collected \$30,294 in fees, a figure that dropped to \$12,927 in 1989 due to the Tour Road rehabilitation (to be discussed later); fee collection for 1990 increased to \$29,882; this figure would reach \$52,000 by 1995. Interestingly, the ENP&MA sales had actually increased in 1989 over 1988: \$57,643 and \$49,994, respectively.<sup>11</sup> These figures suggest that the park's visitation figures remained high in 1989. And, in fact, that was the case. In 1988, the park received 108,075 visitors compared to 104,612 in 1989.<sup>12</sup> Even though there were fewer people in the latter year, the ENP&MA sales increased. This suggests that visitors spent more time in the Visitor Center because the Tour Road was closed for much of 1989. Increases in the costs of sale items may have played a factor in the improved sales as well.

Donations seem to have gradually increased in the late 1980s as well. In 1988, for instance, donations amounted to \$1,857. These figures increased in 1989 to \$2,647 with a slight drop

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<sup>10</sup>Memorandum: Gott to Staff, July 12, 1990, 2.

<sup>11</sup>Jim Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP (1989), 1-2.

<sup>12</sup>PRNMP, "Statement for Management, July 1992," (Santa Fe: SWRO, July, 1992), see Appendices.

in 1990 to \$2,490. Eastern National sales continued on an upward swing reaching \$71,470 in 1990, an increase of 23 percent over 1989.<sup>13</sup> This trend would continue in the 1990s, ENP&MA sales reaching \$87,300 in FY 1991.<sup>14</sup>

As for the fiscal story of the historic leasing of the hay fields, income hovered around ten thousand dollars. In 1989, the park brought in \$11,270 from the leasing of the fields. These funds were used to finance the Youth Conservation Corps that had been limited by earlier fiscal constraints.

### Facility Repairs and Improvements

Despite the apparent funding problems, Gott and his staff were able to chip away at the space and storage difficulties that the park had been facing since the late 1970s. Maintenance Chief Larry Widdifield and his crew in many cases were able to make repairs and build shelves and partitions to maximize the space of the facilities. Likewise, the staff received new equipment from time to time to facilitate administration and protection of the park resources.

In 1989, the Visitor Center roof, which had proven problematic since the building was first constructed, received rehabilitation treatment. Emergency roof repair was required, the Historic Preservation Crew of the SWRO making the repairs during their visit in 1989. The team retarred the roof and shoveled gravel over the repairs; the problem, however, was not solved. In April, the SWRO Rehab Team also installed insulated glass on the north wall and viewing area of the Visitor Center; the crew also put in a security light in the Maintenance Area.<sup>15</sup>

In September, 1989, the SWR Historic Preservation Team installed two skylights in the employee break room, did emergency repairs along the shop wall, and did more repairs on the Visitor Center roof. By the end of the year, the Historic Preservation Team had also restored the stone wall at the West Overlook, repainted the stone entrance to the Visitor Center, rebuilt the flagpole base, and built a cement pad for the cannon in front of the Visitor Center.<sup>16</sup> Superintendent Gott was very pleased with the regional team: "Their dedication and hard work were a real benefit and inspiration to the park.

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<sup>13</sup>Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP (1990), 2.

<sup>14</sup>Steve Adams, Annual Report, PRNMP (1991), 1.

<sup>15</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," April 4, 1989, 4.

<sup>16</sup>Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1989), 5.

My hat is off to Henry Apodaca and his entire crew." Unfortunately, the SWR team discovered some "bad news" that the Visitor Center roof was "so deteriorated and filled with rot that their efforts will buy us only three to five years, at which time the entire roof will have to be rebuilt."<sup>17</sup>

Gott encouraged the staff to work with the SWRO as a team. When Deputy Regional Director Dick Marks and SWR Chief of Interpretation Glen Kaye visited in August, 1989, Gott worked with them to devise plans to improve the facilities, the interpretation, and the general exhibitry at the park. "This [team approach] is good," the Superintendent told his staff, "because they [SWRO] see the park with fresh eyes, and can offer suggestions and support to help us improve our operations and the park as a whole." Gott worked out a ten-year plan for the '90s with Marks and then later in the fall, 1989, consulted with his staff on what might be included in such a strategy. "Let's make this a team effort," announced Gott at a September, 1989, staff meeting.<sup>18</sup>

That same year Widdifield's maintenance crew converted the storeroom into an employee break room. The stored goods were relocated after the shelves of the room were torn out and two skylights put in. In March, 1989, the break room table was enlarged and a cabinet was installed for a microwave oven, coffee machine, and other conveniences. Similarly, a section of the old breezeway was incorporated into the Visitor Center building. This provided more space for ENP&MA displays, and probably facilitated sales which, as the figures above show, dramatically increased after 1989. In late summer, 1989, Gott began planning to incorporate new bookshelves in the Visitor Center to display ENP&MA sales items. Before having the maintenance crew build the shelves, Gott received drawings and photographs of similar ENP&MA shelves at Lookout Mountain, Chickamauga, and Chattanooga national military parks. In 1990 the maintenance crew remodeled the Visitor Center lobby and installed new wall-mounted display shelves with funds donated by ENP&MA.<sup>19</sup>

The year 1989 proved extremely busy. The Superintendent's office was enlarged. Likewise, the Chief of Maintenance's office was moved, creating work room for a copy machine, a fax machine, and room for more storage for supplies. In essence, Gott with his Maintenance Chief Widdifield were incorporating some of Gentry's ideas for expansion at a cost far below the

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<sup>17</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," September 6, 1989, 1.

<sup>18</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," September 6, 1989, 2.

<sup>19</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," March 15, 1989, 4; "Staff Meeting," August 2, 1989, 3; Superintendent Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1990), 3.

\$2-million tag that appeared in the Visitor Use/Development Plan of 1983. Using the skills of his maintenance crew, Gott was able to make additional room for important personnel to facilitate their job performances as a whole.<sup>20</sup>

In December, 1989, Widdifield and his crew made further improvements to the administrative facilities. They created a work room and remodeled Superintendent Gott's office. According to Gott, the change made "a much more efficient use of our office space and will improve operations, especially regarding copying and storage of office supplies."<sup>21</sup> Widdifield and his crew made improvements to the Maintenance Area in April 1991 as well. They built a partition in the shop "to allow for better organization of shop tools and equipment."<sup>22</sup>

Further facilitating staff performance was the installation of a telephone line so that ENP&MA could use credit cards. An IBM Selectric typewriter was acquired from Buffalo National River. Likewise, once Chief IR&M Billy Stout informed the Harpers Ferry Center of the need for upgraded audio-visual equipment, the park received a battery-powered tape player to replace the model in use. In May, 1989, Harpers Ferry Center sent a VHS Camcorder and cassette recorder purchased with ENP&MA funds. The ENP&MA also donated money to acquire a television mobile table.<sup>23</sup>

Maintenance Chief Widdifield was able to work with the SWRO to rebuild the air conditioning system in 1989. Likewise, he and his crew rehabilitated the West Overlook on the Tour Road. That same year Widdifield made request for funds to replace the water softening system and the fire/alarm system. At a cost of \$4,400, the Maintenance Division was able to replace the water softener system in 1991. The following year, Widdifield oversaw the installation of a new alarm system, which required major rehabilitation after a 1992 lightning strike. In 1990, Maintenance had replaced the water drinking fountain in the Visitor Center as well.<sup>24</sup>

Mention should also be made of the Maintenance Division's rehabilitation of the park signs. The Division set a goal to

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<sup>20</sup>Gott, Annual Report, 5.

<sup>21</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," December 7, 1989, 1.

<sup>22</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," April 16, 1991, 2.

<sup>23</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," May 31, 1989, 2.

<sup>24</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," April 16, 1991, 2; interview of Maintenance Chief Larry Widdifield, June 30, 1995; "Staff Meeting," July 5, 1990, 3.

finish re-painting all the Tour Road signs prior to it reopening in 1989. This project was completed along with rehabilitation of the signs along highways 62 and 72. Likewise, the boundary marker signs were replaced. Along with mowing, litter removal was one of the "major duties" of the Maintenance Division, which focused on cleaning around the split rail fences, the parking areas, and the Visitor Center entrance.<sup>25</sup>

Other Maintenance Division concerns were space and storage of equipment. Superintendent Gott proposed funding the construction of a new maintenance building in September, 1989. After financial approval, he hoped to build a 3,000 square foot "maintenance building with work shops, hoist and storage facilities in cleared area behind Winton Spring House," where a "bone yard" of equipment had been stored in the past. This project, however, was never approved.<sup>26</sup> In the meantime, Widdifield's Maintenance Division made changes to the current facility. The security fence was moved back ten feet to increase storage space and improve vehicular maneuverability in the area. Because the underground gasoline tanks posed a pollution risk, Maintenance also installed overhead diesel and gasoline tanks above the new storage space after removing the underground tanks in 1993.<sup>27</sup>

### The Tour Road

During the Gott administration, the Tour Road received a great deal of attention. Since the late 1970s, the loop had proven to be problematic. Cracks in the asphalt, in particular, accelerated the deterioration of the pavement and roadbed. As a result, the Tour Road was closed during the spring and most of the summer of 1989, while the Larry Snyder & Company, which had contracted to repair the road, did its repair work. In the end, despite inspections and advice from Federal Highway Administration (FHA) personnel, the Tour Road continued to crack. The persistent problems caused a financial nightmare for the NPS. Before all the repairs were completed from 1989 through 1994, the costs would exceed \$1.3 million.

The FHA completed a report, "Pavement Evaluation, Tour Road, Pea Ridge National Military Park, Arkansas," in May, 1981. At the time the report was completed, FHA Division Engineer H. C.

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<sup>25</sup>Memorandum: Superintendent Gott to Larry Widdifield, "Sign Coordinator Designation," October 19, 1993; "Staff Meeting, PRNMP," September 6, 1989, 1; Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1989), 5.

<sup>26</sup>PRNMP, "Development/Study Package Proposal, Construct Maintenance Shop and Storage Building," PRNMP, September 26, 1989, 1.

<sup>27</sup>Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1990), 4-5.

Wieland suggested there were three alternatives with costs varying from \$155,000 to \$108,000 to \$84,000. These figures now seem reasonable compared to the ultimate expenditures.<sup>28</sup>

The NPS requested that the FHA complete "a detailed pavement evaluation" in March, 1981. The Eastern Direct Federal Highway Office, located in Arlington, Virginia, completed the survey and report. In the report, the evaluators discovered that the Tour Road had been constructed under two contracts in 1962-1963 and in 1963-1964. The two sections of the road were composed of ten-inch thick crushed aggregate base with liquid bituminous surface treatment. In subsequent years, maintenance measures were taken. In 1972 a "liquid bituminous surface treatment or seal coat" was applied to the road. During the mid-to-late 1970s, similar treatment for cracking was done on an annual basis.<sup>29</sup>

To determine the extent of the damage, the FHA engineers conducted "dynaflect testing, sampling of the bituminous surface, base course, subbase, and subgrade materials, and a visual inspection and distress survey" was made. "The purpose of the dyaflect testing is to measure pavement deflections under a dynamic loading condition." The deflections taken showed that the parking areas were low, "indicating adequate strength," and the Tour Road was high showing "a weak pavement surface with a generally strong base and subbase." Several "conditions" were noted by the survey team:

Extensive longitudinal cracking was observed in the roadway beginning at the base of Round Top Mountain for a distance of approximately 3.3 miles. The cracking varied in width from hairline cracks to 1/4-inch wide, and from a few scattered cracks to extensive racking in the longitudinal and transverse directions.

The pavement rode well and there was no rutting within the wheel tracks. However, pavement settlement was noted at three drainage structures.

Random portions of the pavement exhibited edge raveling. This condition is caused by vehicles leaving the roadway and the 'overshooting' of the liquid bituminous surface treatment onto the shoulder. Vehicle runoff was particularly evident at both ends of the visitors center parking area

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<sup>28</sup>Letter W. C. Wieland, Division Engineer, FHA to Robert I. Kerr, SWR Director, May 28, 1981, 1.

<sup>29</sup>FHA, Eastern Direct Federal Division, "Pavement Evaluation, Tour Road, PRNMP, Arkansas." (FHA, May, 1981), 1.

and at the turnaround at stop No. 7, Pea Ridge East Overlook.

Ponding water was observed in the parking areas for stops No. 4 and 8.

A great deal of standing and running water was observed in the ditches along the roadway and seeping from the pavement at approximately .1 mile before stop No. 7.

Approximately .5 mile past stop No. 4 there is a localized area of pavement distress and roughness. This area extends for approximately 75 feet.<sup>30</sup>

The FHA engineers concluded that the "lack of distortion or rutting in the pavement surface combined with the longitudinal cracking pattern indicates a surface fatigue problem rather than a load-related problem." Consequently, the repair alternatives were designed "to restore the surface and prevent the infiltration of surface water into the base. Unchecked, the present condition of the roadway would further deteriorate, resulting in the need for complete reconstruction."<sup>31</sup>

The report then discussed the three alternatives for rehabilitation of the Tour Road. Alternative 1 was "the most desirable from an esthetic viewpoint and for reducing future pavement maintenance costs." With a \$155,000 price tag, however, this alternative was not within the \$100,000 allocated for the restoration. Alternative 2 was nearly identical to one "with some sacrifice in esthetics due to the different pavement types." Alternative 3 was designed to reduce costs below the \$100,000 allocation. Because of this, however, the final alternative came with "some risk" because approximately 3.1 miles of the Tour Road would not receive any attention. The FHA recommended Alternative 2.

During Superintendent Gentry's tenure, a portion of the Tour Road was repaired. The portion of the road leading to Elkhorn Tavern was repaved. Apparently, the \$100,000 fiscal constraint limited the restoration to this section of the road only. A "permanent reseal" was proposed by Maintenance Foreman Flickinger but it was refused because of the \$254,000 price tag.<sup>32</sup> So, the section leading up to the tavern was

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<sup>30</sup>FHA, "Pavement Evaluation," (1981), 2-3.

<sup>31</sup>FHA, "Pavement Evaluation," (1981), 3.

<sup>32</sup>"Development/Study Package Proposal, PRNMP," December 17, 1978, 1.

targeted for repairs. Despite this repair work, the Tour Road remained a problem. Underground and above ground water flows undermined the base of the road. And because the Tour Road was laid in a perennially "wet" area of the park, especially on Big Mountain but also near the creek tributaries of Little Sugar Creek, the problem was not solved. Current Superintendent Steve Adams believes that the reality of the situation is that the Tour Road was laid on wet ground and, therefore, will continue to have problems as long as it exists; because Big Mountain nearly qualifies as wetlands, the Tour Road cracks open up during the wet season and tend to close during the drier part of the year.<sup>33</sup>

Obviously, the pavement problems did not end during the Gentry administration. Two years later in 1983, Maintenance Foreman Flickinger discovered that "the cracks began to appear within months after placement of the overlay and that they are occurring in the same locations as the previous cracks in the old pavement." In the end, the FHA made this assessment: "It is my [Gregory Dolson] conclusion that the cracking is caused by fatigue failure of the asphalt surface due to weak foundation support. The weak foundation is restricted to certain areas where the road base is resting on a gray fissured clay, typically found interbedded with rock in the area. When inundated, water seeping through the fissures causes this material to disintegrate into a soft wet mass. While in this weakened state the load induced by traffic causes lateral movement and tension cracks to develop in the subgrade which eventually propagate to the pavement surface. During this period, the occasional use of the Tour Road by busses and 18-wheel trucks, which can be equivalent to 500 to 1,000 passenger cars, helps to accelerate the cracking."<sup>34</sup>

Geotechnical Engineer Gregory Dolson recommended that further repairs be made to the Tour Road after a "detailed subgrade investigation consisting of hand augering and soil classifications be performed to locate the weak foundation materials."

During the transitional phase from the Gentry to the Gott administrations, the Larry Snyder & Company began work on the Tour Road repair contract for \$809,881.60. The first excavating and borrow hauling began on November 8, 1988. As a result, the Tour Road was closed for the remainder of 1988 and the first half of 1989. Due to inclement weather, the project was dramatically slowed after December 25 and only one

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<sup>33</sup>Interview Betty Gentry, June 25, 1996; interview Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>34</sup>FHA, Region 15, Arlington, Va., "Field Trip Report, Gregory Dolson, Geotechnical Engineer to H.C. Wieland, Division Engineer, To inspect the Tour Road pavement at PRNMP," November 2, 1983, 2.

day of work was completed until mid-March, 1989. The completion date, however, was not changed. Visitation did lag during the rehabilitation period, March's figures, for example, dropped from 1,707 visitors in 1988 to 832 in 1989.<sup>35</sup>

The weather improved substantially in the late spring and the Snyder Company was able to complete the project on time. Still, paving, striping, and finishing work on the shoulders was underway when the Tour Road was opened on Memorial Day weekend, 1989. Superintendent Gott was pleased that the rehabilitation of the loop was completed so that visitors could enjoy the full fruits of the park.

Unfortunately, the repairs work proved to be of limited success. As early as late July, 1989, the Pea Ridge staff noted major cracks developing in the repaired road. "The tour road has already developed serious cracks in an area where the worst damage existed prior to reconstruction." Gott contacted the FHA and the Denver Service Center to give them the bad news. He, in turn, wondered aloud to his staff that the problem was an enigma: "At this time, it is not clear what can or will be done to correct this problem. Unfortunately, there was no warranty period."<sup>36</sup>

By early September, FHA and Denver Service Center evaluators had examined the Tour Road for damage. In the meantime, new cracks were developing. FHA officials assured Gott that the park would "have a fully acceptable road before they finish[ed] with the project." At the moment, however, the Pea Ridge staff seemed skeptical of eliminating the perennial problem.<sup>37</sup>

In the Fall of 1989, the Snyder Company along with FHA engineers cooperated to complete emergency repairs on the Tour Road. Yet, neither group clearly understood the source of the continued nuisance. The FHA, however, continued to assure Superintendent Gott that a solution would be found to "correct the problem." In the meantime, the FHA core drilled the sections with extensive cracking and determined that there were "saturated sub soils." In other words, unless the ground and the groundwater could be altered altogether, the problem would persist indefinitely. Perhaps the park staff would have to accept this problem as part of nature's answer to building a road on "wet ground." Although esthetically displeasing,

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<sup>35</sup>"Staff Meetings, PRNMP," March 14, 1989, 2; March 15, 1989, 2.

<sup>36</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," August 2, 1989, 1; Work Session Summary Sheet, PRNMP, August 1-2, 1989, 1.

<sup>37</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," September 6, 1989, 2.

the cracks had not deterred travel on the Tour Road, suggesting that a perfect road would not be necessary to leave the loop open in the future.

The FHA has returned to the park on an annual basis to test the road conditions. In February, 1990, FHA core drilling revealed continued deterioration due to the presence of water. They did what was expedient and reasonable considering previous expenditures. They sealed the cracks and awaited further recommendations from FHA officials. By the summer of 1990, FHA examinations revealed that the cracking seemed "to have stabilized."<sup>38</sup> The following spring the Zebra Striping Company of Elm Springs repainted all the cross walks, arrows, handicapped insignias, and parking space lines to finalize the project.

Yet, the Tour Road problems had not been solved even after the final cost of the 1988-1989 rehabilitation increased to a total of \$885,342.25.<sup>39</sup> What made matters worse was the continued deterioration of the road even after the major repairs, causing the auto loop to be closed in late 1992 and early 1993. In 1993, the park had to extend another rehabilitation contract to APAC of Fayetteville, Arkansas for another \$380,333, a figure that, before the repairs could be completed, exceeded \$600,000. The company began repairs in October, 1992, but because of inclement weather did not complete their work until "late [in 1993] and at considerable cost, . . . causing much inconvenience to our visitors," according to Superintendent Steve Adams who became PRNMP Superintendent in 1991. The work to repair cracks was a complete failure in the end. In his 1993 Annual Report, Superintendent Adams was quite dissatisfied with APAC's work: "the new road sections have cracked [as early as the Fall, 1993], resulting in pre-rehabilitation conditons--it appears the project was a waste of time and money."<sup>40</sup>

The Tour Road continues to be a source of concern at Pea Ridge: the "problem has not been fixed," according to Adams. In large measure, Adams believes, the Tour Road was poorly conceived from the start. First, it was built on top of a historic trace, the Telegraph Road. In today's world with historic preservation laws, the road would not have been built on top of a historic roadway. In addition, the section of the loop on Big Mountain probably would not have been constructed today because there is little of historic significance along

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<sup>38</sup>Work Session Summary Sheet, PRNMP, August 21-22, 1990, 1.

<sup>39</sup>FHA, "Final Construction Report, PRNMP," (U.S. Dept. of Transportation/U.S. Dept. of the Interior, June, 1990), 17.

<sup>40</sup>Superintendent Steve Adams, Annual Report, (1993), 2.

this section, resulting in damage to the vegetation and ecosystem, in general, for no legitimate reasons. Consequently, as Superintendent Adams has pointed out, the park staff and the NPS have to live with the Mission 66 decision to build the Tour Road as it is.<sup>41</sup>

In the end, the park staff believes the best solution seems to be to accept the cracks as part of nature's way of criticizing the earlier decision to build the road in its present location. As long as the road is safe, it seems adequate. As soon as safety becomes an issue, the Tour Road should be closed and given the proper rehabilitation attention it needs to continue serving the public. In the meantime, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on rehabilitation that will deteriorate almost as soon as it is completed seems unwarranted.

### Administrative Reorganization

In 1990, Superintendent Gott made an important decision concerning administrative organization at the park. Realizing the antiquated nature of the park's management scheme, which seemed to have changed little since the early 1960s, Gott dissolved the old Division of Interpretation and Management and replaced it with two new divisions:

1. The Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services to be headed by Park Ranger Billy Stout.
2. The Division of Resource Management and Protection to be headed by Park Ranger John Knox with Park Ranger Ron Harkins in this division.<sup>42</sup>

In many ways, Gott was hoping to divide the duties related to the visitors and the Visitor Center--e.g., the museum and Elkhorn Tavern--from the responsibilities associated with natural resource protection. The responsibilities for interpretation, visitor services, resource management and protection had become too far flung. It was time to reel in the growing bureaucratic endeavors at the park and organize it more efficiently.

In essence, Gott was initiating delegation of authority to his various technicians. And even though the Superintendent would retain overview authority in this new organization, the new

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<sup>41</sup>Interview Superintendent Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>42</sup>Superintendent Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1990), 2.

system did provide for greater individual autonomy on the job, yet instilled in the staff a sense of team work, a concept that the future Superintendent Adams would spell out in starker terms for the park administrators.

### Battlefield Protection

In April, 1991, Superintendent Gott began working with a Resource Management Team "to identify those areas outside the park boundaries that need some sort of protection against future development." In a staff meeting, he announced that "Unfortunately, development is spreading this way [toward the Park] in a rush and seems to be speeding up rather than slowing." Gott was definitely correct in this assessment. Northwest Arkansas had been growing at a tremendous clip since about 1980 and that population and commercial expansion was greatly accelerated in the late 1980s and early 1990s. With this encroachment in mind, Superintendent Gott became very actively involved in the American Battlefield Protection Program. He initiated himself in early 1991 by visiting the Honey Springs Battlefield in Oklahoma. There and at later meetings, Gott learned of the various strategies for protecting the park's resources as well as its boundaries.<sup>43</sup>

Gott took this work seriously and a few months later decided to act on his instincts to protect the Pea Ridge park. In August, 1991, he proposed a study "to protect the fields of battle, encampment and troop movement in the Civil War battle at Pea Ridge, resources required to fulfill our mandate in preserving requirements in conjunction with mandates of the American Battlefield Protection program." He went on in the proposal to state that the PRNMP was "the premier Civil War battlefield in the Southwest Region, indeed, west of the Mississippi River." If this precious cultural and historical monument to the past was not properly protected, it could be overrun. "Growth through strip development along highways 62 and 72 is rapidly changing the traditional rural farm/ranch/dairy character of the area, which has existed from the time of the battle in 1862 to today. Failure to determine our permanent protection needs at this time will result in an opportunity that is forever lost."<sup>44</sup>

Superintendent Gott hoped to lose no time in preparing the study to accelerate land acquisitions to serve as buffers to residential and commercial growth. Yet, he ran into an

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<sup>43</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," April 16, 1991, 2.

<sup>44</sup>"Development/Study Package Proposal, PRNMP, Conduct Boundary Study/Resource Study," August 15, 1991, 1.

immediate difficulty. The enabling legislation that created the park precluded "increasing the size of the park through purchase." Here, the Superintendent ran into a brick wall. Still, he persisted and insisted that additional lands be acquired for protection. He maintained that there were five priorities for the Pea Ridge park in accordance with the American Battlefield Land Protection Program. The first priority was a parcel of land "visible from tour stops 4 and 5 on the tour road...." This piece of real estate was owned by 13 individuals and composed 580.97 acres. The second parcel of land "poses perhaps the greatest threat to the battlefield proper because of its close proximity to Leetown, Winton Springs and areas of Union troop movements." The land, which was 342.16 acres, was owned by sixteen individuals.<sup>45</sup>

Priority three, according to Gott, would be the land that "directly overlooks Elkhorn Tavern and is owned by heirs of the occupant, a man in his 90's. If developed, it will create a major intrusion on the historic landscape." The land made up 234.27 acres and included 11 owners. The fourth parcel would be purchased to serve as a buffer along Highway 62 and was composed of 101.02 acres with three owners. The final priority for protection was the area that "includes the Federal Earthworks, the only remaining original structures dating from the Battle of Pea Ridge (owned by the park, but separated from the main portion...)." To acquire this land would "permit constructing an access to the Federal Earthworks area from Highway 62, essential for future handicap accessibility."<sup>46</sup> After Gott's departure, park administrators decided not to make the Detached Area handicap accessible because it would not have been a "reasonable accommodation" (projected cost of \$100,000) under the guidelines set by federal legislation.

Gott anticipated a great deal of public interest in his proposed Battlefield Protection Program which recommended acquisition of more lands. He understood that the landowners, many of whom were in the area when the park was created in the late 1950s, would oppose sale of their lands to the park. "They are unlikely," Gott predicted, "to be more amenable now or in the future. Too, there are people who love the park, but who may resist its expansion." Gott recognized the difficulties the park would face in trying to acquire additional lands, especially in light of the federal legislation that precludes acquisition, especially if the land is a buffer only with no real historical value.

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<sup>45</sup>"Conduct Boundary Study/Resource Study," 3.

<sup>46</sup>"Conduct Boundary/Resource Study," 3.

Gott felt compelled, however, to initiate a boundary study because of the limits to the protective boundaries of the park. In particular, there were no zoning restrictions "to regulate the useage of any land outside the boundaries" of the park. And even though most of the surrounding land was in farm or pastureland, development was "fast encroaching on the historic scene." One of the perceived threats was strip development along Highway 62 that was growing at an accelerated pace only ten miles southwest in Rogers. Gott also anticipated the construction of a four-lane highway where 62 currently runs with two lanes. "It will either have to be rerouted or will go through the Park. Either result could be disastrous to the integrity of the battlefield..." In addition to this direct encroachment would be "a strong visual impact" even if the park were not physically damaged.<sup>47</sup>

Gott proposed several alternatives for site preservation. First, was "the obvious alternative...to do nothing beyond what already has been done in the establishment and development" of the park. However, times had changed and the status quo "is not possible." "Unrestrained development," Gott contended, "will have a strong negative visual impact..." In other words, from Gott's perspective the status quo was not a real alternative if the park were to be properly protected from physical and visual impairment.

Next on Gott's list was an alternative calling for expansion of the administrative and maintenance facilities "preferably away from the existing visitor center, but near enough to remain effective." Gott must have worried that facility expansion on the historic site would itself be an encroachment. Therefore, expansion of these facilities should be done on new lands outside the historic site and in accordance with the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and its amendments.

Easements were another possibility. Gott understood, however, that this strategy could be tedious as each easement would have to be "negotiated on a case by case basis." An examination of "testimony from others who have tried this approach claim it is almost as costly as outright purchase." This alternative was not very appetizing from the Superintendent's viewpoint. Another better possibility, Gott suggested, was to acquire first rights to purchase lands. In other words, the NPS could attempt to get the rights to be the first purchasers of lands once they went on sale. Or, the NPS could negotiate an agreement so that the new owners could not develop the purchased lands in question.

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<sup>47</sup>"Conduct Boundary/Resource Study," 10.

Least savory to Gott and the surrounding landowners would be to force sale of the property to the NPS. "It is doubtful," Gott suggested, "that this will be utilized in any way at Pea Ridge, but it must remain an option." This approach could be very damaging to the reputation of the NPS in the region and would be a last resort from Gott's perspective.

If these protective lands were acquired, Gott proposed development of new interpretive facilities. And even though the main sites of the park were already interpreted, new interpretation could be incorporated to show troop movements in the outlying areas. New tours could be developed and signs, booklets, and waysides could be made available for interpretation. Furthermore, this type of development could result through the cooperation and in agreement with "the various property holders."<sup>48</sup>

Gott's successor, Superintendent Steve Adams, has continued to pursue greater protection for PRNMP. In September, 1992, he proposed conducting a study of the "battlefield resources outside the current boundary: fields of battle, encampment areas, major troop movement areas." He suggested that the study use criteria of the American Battlefield Protection Program to "determine resource integrity and significance and recommend measures to protect the resources, including the historic scene." But more than propose a study, Adams suggested amending the 1963 Master Plan "to complete a General Management Plan which will set forth a contemporary management concept for the park, establish a role for the unit within the context of regional trends and plans for conservation, recreation, transportation, economic development, and other regional issues; and identify strategies for resolving issues and achieving management objectives within a period of ten years."<sup>49</sup> He wrote a Scope of Work and organized two public workshops to begin the formal process to begin the study. In the end, Adams hopes to address the broader issues surrounding Northwest Arkansas so that they can be incorporated into a management strategy at the Pea Ridge park. As a result, Adams is working to acquire lands, not as buffers as Gott suggested, but to incorporate historical lands into the park.

The protection of PRNMP will be an ongoing concern for the NPS. Acquisition of new lands outside the park boundaries may be a very difficult task, however. Congress has opposed new land acquisitions (especially since 1994), partly because of fiscal concerns, but also due to widespread public opposition.

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<sup>48</sup>"Conduct Boundary/Resource Study," 12.

<sup>49</sup>"Development/Study Package Proposal, PRNMP, Conduct Boundary and Resource Study and Amend General Management Plan," September 11, 1992, 1.

As the recent fight to expand the Prairie Grove State Battlefield suggests, local citizens strongly oppose governmental acquisition of more land. This opposition in many ways reflects the escalating values of real estate in Northwest Arkansas. Investors and owners have witnessed this increase with hopes of profiting as well. Consequently, park expansion may be an almost impossible task. Despite this disadvantage, the PRNMP staff must continue to work to protect the park lands in the face of new and encroaching development in Northwest Arkansas.

#### Miscellaneous Items

Mention should be made of various changes that influenced the park management during Gott's superintendency. First was the hiring of several new staff members who still work at the park. Gott hired Judy Speer (now Bachler) from Bandelier National Monument in 1990. "Her knowledge of computers," which Gott had begun to introduce in the administrative unit, "and experience in a 'big park' enabled her to take quick control of the situation" after the loss of Budget Clerk Ollie Sweeney. Perrennial seasonal worker Robert Still, who was working on a history degree at the University of Arkansas through the Co-op program, was placed on full-time as a Park Ranger in June, 1991; to correct an administrative error, however, Still was made an intermittent permanent staff member late in 1991. He has since become a permanent, full-time Ranger. Current Interpretive Ranger Doug Keller was also hired in 1991 as was Maintenance Worker Dale Preston.<sup>50</sup>

In the area of law enforcement, John Knox reported two incidents during Gott's administration that warrant mention so that future park rangers can be aware of the threats. In April, 1989, Ranger Knox reported that he had "discovered several small marijuana plantings, usually individual plants," especially in the north portion of the park. Another incident involved the poaching of a deer. On the first day of deer season in the fall, 1989, Knox witnessed the shooting of a six-point buck. "This was a first; his being an eye-witness, and waiting at the kill when the poacher came to claim his prize, namely a summons to appear before the Federal Magistrate and a fine of \$500." Ranger Knox worked with the Arkansas Fish & Game Commission to prevent and control deer poaching in the future.<sup>51</sup>

Another protection issue was fires. In 1989, six fires were

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<sup>50</sup>Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1990), 2; "Staff Meeting, PRNMP," May 14, 1991, 2.

<sup>51</sup>"Staff Meeting, PRNMP," April 4, 1989, 2; Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1989), 4; (1990), 3.

started in or near the park. Two arson fires were set on Palm Sunday and one on Easter that year. Later in 1989, Gott reported that three spot fires flamed up on Saturday, December 2. Each of the grass fires was quickly extinguished by passers-by "before developing into full-blown fires." The park still clung to the old policy of putting out fires as quickly as possible. During Superintendent Adams' administration, a new fire policy would be implemented.

The Maintenance Division was pleased to receive new Yazoo Mowers in 1990. "This [new acquisition] greatly cut down on 'down-time' required to repair old machines." The maintenance crew also revamped the two residential quarters at the park in 1990. Maintenance Chief Widdifield oversaw the installation of central heating and cooling in both quarters #7 and #8, the construction of a privacy fence for Quarter #8, and the installation of a garage door opener, a half bath floor, and tile flooring in Quarter #7. The Winton Springs House was also a concern of the Maintenance Division because of the excessive repair time that the structure annually required. Because of the expense of upkeep, the NPS had proposed razing the historic structure. The State Historic Preservation Office signed off on the house's destruction in 1989. Because the current administration did not expedite the destruction of the house, however, future administrators had to redo the paper work to attain proper authorization to destroy the Victorian structure which was done in 1993.<sup>52</sup>

In May, 1991, one of the highlights of the year occurred. Interpretive Ranger Keller was named by the Secretary of the Interior, Manual Lujan, as the Outstanding Federal Employee of the Year with Disabilities in a ceremony held in the Interior Building in Washington, D.C.

#### Conclusion to Gott Years

Superintendent Gott's administration proved to be a pivotal turning point in the park's history. Under his supervision, the park staff learned to coordinate and to cooperate on an unprecedented scale, an administrative strategy that Steve Adams would continue to develop. One of the greatest achievements during Gott's stint as Pea Ridge Superintendent was the revamping of the Visitor Center lobby. Using the skills of his Maintenance Division, Gott coordinated the construction of new bookshelves and wall shelves to better display the sale items of ENP&MA. He also expanded the area for visitors, creating a new breezeway and maximizing space

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<sup>52</sup>Gott, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1990), 3.

with a new information counter. A new employee break room was added as well and more space was made for supplies, a copy machine, a thermofax machine, and other administrative equipment. If the \$2-million expansion program first proposed by Gentry and a Visitor Center Development team could not be realized, at least new space was made available through ingenuity and divisional cooperation that was carried out within the annual budgets of the park.

When Gott created the two new divisions, the park and its staff witnessed another important change. The Interpretation and Visitor Services Division and Division of Resource Management and Protection were administrative changes that served to anticipate future team reorganization under Superintendent Adams.

#### The Adams Administration at Pea Ridge, 1991-1997

In late 1991, Superintendent Gott decided to retire from the NPS, and he was replaced by Steve Adams who served a few months as Acting Superintendent before being chosen for the permanent position in March, 1992.<sup>53</sup> Adams brought with him a strong archeology background and extensive experience in the NPS system. After serving in the "Brown Water Navy" in Vietnam, he went on to earn a master's degree at the University of Arizona in anthropology with a specialization in archeological method and theory. Before coming to Pea Ridge, he had served in various capacities in the Park Service since 1974, including stints as an archeologist at the Western Archeological Center (1974-1977) and Group Archeologist with the Navajo Lands Group (1978-1983). Later, he served as Chief Ranger at San Antonio Missions (1984-1989) and at Padre Island National Seashore (1989-1990). Just before his appointment to Pea Ridge, he was serving as Chief of the Branch of Cultural Resources Management for the Southwest Regional Office.

But more than his experience, he also brought a modern point of view to the Pea Ridge park. In his own self-styled way, Superintendent Adams has worked to incorporate greater historical and natural resource integrity into the administration of the park. His focus is on a greater environmental awareness, stronger cultural and natural resource protection strategies, development of a vigilant public relations campaign, better understanding of the ethnography of the park, a new team approach to administration, and, in general, a positive modernization program. The protection and conservation of the park's

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<sup>53</sup>Superintendent Steve Adams, Annual Report, PRNMP (1992), 2.

resources, Adams recently stated, takes precedence over development; in this light, Adams believes that the park will be best served if staff who are historically trained personnel administer historical resources and natural resource experts administer the natural resources. These ideas have infused in the park a new philosophy and closer adherence to the NPS's modern mandates.

Adams' philosophy has resulted in various changes at the park. In the area of public relations, Adams has cultivated greater participation and awareness of the larger community of Northwest Arkansas. As early as late 1991, which proved to be a "mixed bag" year because of Gott's sudden retirement and the transition, Superintendent Adams began an ambitious public relations campaign. He became involved in the Trail of Tears National Historical Trail, a program that was working to preserve the heritage of the famous Indian trail which crossed the Pea Ridge Battlefield. He also acquainted himself with the Rogers and Bentonville Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, chambers of commerce, and the Northwest Arkansas Civil War Roundtable.

In 1992, Adams continued to develop relationships with the outside public. He and his staff were involved in the Arkansas Governor's Tourism Conference, the Kiwanis and Lions clubs, and other civic organizations. At these meetings, Adams discussed important "history and management issues" with the associations. He also became heavily involved in the American Battlefield Protection Program. He promoted cooperative relations between the PRNMP and the Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park and produced a flier to promote the two military parks. The Superintendent also participated in the national education initiative "America 2000" in 1992. Adams continued programs that promoted positive public relations such as special presentations for Black History Month, Women's History Month, Arkansas Archeology Week, Memorial Day Requiem, and Battle Anniversary Encampments and Requiem. Just prior to Adams' appointment, U. S. Senator Dale Bumpers visited the park in 1991 as well, contributing to promotion of the national park.<sup>54</sup>

Because of the maturing relationship of the park to the general public, Adams reported in 1993 that, "Our [PRNMP] profile within the community and conservation area is slowly but steadily increasing." The Superintendent continued to attend public meetings of various civic organizations and also initiated plans to begin a local Friends of the Pea Ridge National Military Park, which was founded in 1994. The Friends, a fund-raising organization interested in protecting the cultural and natural resources of the park, began meeting

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<sup>54</sup>Adams, Annual Report, (1992), 1-3.

on a regular basis to discuss important funding issues and strategies. To facilitate the activities of the Friends, Adams transformed one of the resident's quarters (closest to the Visitor Center) in December, 1996, into an office building with offices for the Superintendent, the Administrative Officer and Clerk, and the Friends of PRNMP.<sup>55</sup>

In 1995, Adams continued to extend himself in the public relations area. "Our Advisory Team was functional...working mostly on the boundary study. The Friends Group continued to make slow progress toward establishment as an officially non-profit organization: they also supplied some support for our interpretive activities." Boundary issues have been incorporated into the broader civic discussions of the region because of Adams' participation on the Advisory Team as well.

Along with these community-based activities, Superintendent Adams also participated in the Benton County Ad-Hoc Environmental Committee, the Resources Stewardship Working Group (as Chair), the Bentonville and Rogers Chamber tourism committees, the Northwest Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail (Chair), the Lower Mississippi Delta Civil War Task Force, the Federal Executive Association (Treasurer, then Vice President, then President), and Combined Federal Campaign Committee. "The Superintendent also supported partner agencies and organizations by attending their special functions such as dedications, conferences, commencements, and workshops." Adams shares park issues with state and federal legislators "to keep them abreast of park issues and activities."<sup>56</sup>

One of the major goals of the park during the 1990s according to Superintendent Adams has been "to improve our profile in and cooperation with the communities and our partnering agencies." This public relations campaign began to pay off on an unprecedented scale in 1995. "We received a great deal of publicity in the newspaper, television, and radio media," Adams reported, "both for national issues affecting the park and for activities the park was undertaking. This helps to get our messages out to a sometimes ambivalent public." Since the inception of the park, when the Superintendent barely left the grounds, to the current administration, the public relations strategies have become much more sophisticated and expansive. The maturation of the public relations at the park also reflects Steve Adams' exhaustive efforts to improve the park-community relations in Northwest Arkansas. This strategy promises to continue to facilitate management and protection of the park and bring the important issues before the public,

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<sup>55</sup>Adams, Annual Report, (1994), 3.

<sup>56</sup>Steve Adams, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1995), 2-3.

which once aware of the issues, will act cooperatively and in support of the Park Service in Arkansas.

Visitor services during Adams' tenure have been substantial. In 1991, the park staff created a site bulletin to pass on information about the summer schedule and developing interpretive events. During that year, 156 personal service programs were given by rangers to 4,077 visitors, whereas eleven battlefield tours were given to 324 visitors. The audiovisual program was presented to nearly 40,000 visitors even though overall visitation had dropped from 110,000 in 1990 to 103,034 in 1991. Despite this decline, ENP&MA sales continued to rise, reaching \$87,300 in 1991.<sup>57</sup>

Visitation increased in 1992 to 117,025. More than 4,000 audiovisual programs were presented to 42,126 visitors. Seventeen tours were given to 641 visitors, while 220 talks were presented to 11,259 visitors. Group visits were high in 1992, 176 visiting groups totaling 5,606 visitors having come to the park. School group visitation was also high with 1,568 children making the visit. Seven off-site programs were also given to 246 interested attendees.<sup>58</sup>

By 1995, the volunteers were giving more than two thousand hours a year to the park: 2,279 hours to interpretation and 140 hours to curatorial services. Because visitation was down in 1995, however, ENP&MA sales dropped by 3.7 percent from the previous year to \$80,351. Not a small amount considering the slim pickings of the early 1960s. The ONPS for 1995 reached a new high of \$511,000 of which 95 percent went to personnel services, (27% to interpretation and resource management, 33% to administration and park management, and 40% to maintenance). Fee collection was at \$52,000 for the year as well.<sup>59</sup>

In the area of natural resources, Superintendent Adams has worked to implement the Vegetation Treatment Plan. This program has brought into question some of the previous natural resource practices at the park. The Prairie Establishment Program, for example, proved to have flaws that needed to be addressed. The three or four acres of prairie that Botanist Edward E. Dale, Jr. and Ranger John Knox established were, in fact, located on lands that were forested during the Battle of Pea Ridge. As a result, Adams has planned a reforestation program on the site and has made plans to re-establish another

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<sup>57</sup>Adams, Annual Report, (1991), 1.

<sup>58</sup>Adams, Annual Report, (1992), 2.

<sup>59</sup>Steve Adams, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1995), 1-2.

prairie, using Professor Dale's data, to the west of the current site near Highway 72 when the funding for such a project is available.<sup>60</sup>

Replacement of the prairie, however, is not as simple as cultivating a new plot. Because of the growing threat to the park's western boundary due to residential and commercial growth, the western viewshed may be threatened. Consequently, Adams suggests that a portion of the current hay fields that are on lease should be allowed to grow over with trees "to create a physical, vegetative barrier" even though this vegetative scheme would not appear on Ed Bearss's Vegetative Map. Simply put, alterations in the historic vegetative landscape are required to protect the park from outside intrusion, according to Adams. In other words, historical integrity is a very high priority, but without proper protection of the cultural and natural resources of PRNMP, there cannot be a high degree of historical integrity.<sup>61</sup>

Another concern involving the Vegetation Treatment Plan is what to do with the intrusive eastern red cedars that have invaded the park in the last thirty years. Superintendent Adams has devised a "sustainability" plan for the invaders. Because the historic rail fences have deteriorated over time, Adams and Ranger Knox decided to contract for tree cutters to remove the trees and split them so that they can be used to rebuild the rotting rail fences. As a result, two goals have been met. First, the invader cedars are removed to meet the standards of the Vegetation Treatment Plan. And second, the rail fences are replaced at a far lower cost using resources within the park itself. In the end, interpretation and preservation of the vegetation and rail fences is achieved.<sup>62</sup>

Adams also initiated an annual clean-up plan for the park. The park also continues to use the Adopt-a-Highway program, along with the more recent Alternative Sentence program to keep the highway area clean. Through both the efforts of the Pea Ridge staff and with cooperative assistance from outside agencies, the park has been cleaned up and greater protection schemes have been devised. In 1992, for example, Superintendent Adams initiated the First Annual Clean-up Initiative. Park staff members, especially Maintenance personnel, have been encouraged to pick up trash and report the need for addressing pollution issues. With this strategy in mind, Adams also became involved in the County

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<sup>60</sup>Interview of Superintendent Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>61</sup>Interview of Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>62</sup>Interview of Adams, May 13, 1996.

Environmental Sub-Committee to address dumping, groundwater pollution, and other environmental issues for the county and within a regional planning strategy. Likewise, the Superintendent has begun to address other water pollution issues such as sewage and solid waste concerns.<sup>63</sup>

Adams has also acted on his concerns for the park's environment. In conjunction with the construction of a new equipment storage facility, Adams directed his maintenance staff to remove the "bone yards" that were near the Winton Springs and Clemon's houses. "Thirty years worth of junk" was dumped behind the Victorian house and needed to be removed to eliminate the pollution hazard. The park staff has carted off most of this waste material. This clean-up fits within Adams's sustainability scheme. He hopes to reduce or eliminate non-renewable wastes to "limit the impact on the scene." Furthermore, the management designs "should blend in with the surrounding environment." Adams has devised an additional strategy "to purchase materials on a need basis only" so that the "impact on the environment and viewshed can be isolated." Under Adams, the park has also eliminated several hazardous underground fuel storage tanks and consolidated fuel storage in one above ground tank. This change will reduce the potential threat to groundwater and vegetation in the park.<sup>64</sup>

Because of the strategy to protect the historic scene, Adams's administration supported the removal of the Winton Springs House. A controversial structure since the 1960s, the building was razed in 1993 after many years of debate. The state Health Department agreed that the structure was a hazard. The State Historic Preservation Officer also agreed that the house lacked the historical integrity of the Civil War battlefield park. As a result, the Health Department condemned the structure in 1978, and the SHPO concurred with plans for its removal. Eventually, funding was made available in 1993 to remove the one-time park residence. Now that the house has been removed, the area is being allowed to reforest.

Adams has also reduced the amount of mowing at the park. This strategy is designed to limit the human influence on the natural landscape. Consequently, only mowing that is "absolutely needed" is done "to preserve the historic resources." "We don't manage for the way it looks," Superintendent Adams has argued, "but for its historical and

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<sup>63</sup>Adams, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1992), 2; interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>64</sup>Interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

natural integrity."<sup>65</sup>

In a similar vein, Adams and his staff have had to deal with erosional problems caused by the horse trail which was created in 1973. Because the trail has caused erosion and resource damage, its existence has come into question. Yet, even though the funds are not available to properly maintain the trail, it remains an important visitor resource because of the recent establishment (1993) of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail which runs right through the park. Because the federal legislation, the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail Act, encourages equestrian access on historic traces, the park plans to continue to maintain and allow use of the horse trail. The erosional problems will have to be addressed in the context of preventing damage to the historical and natural resources of the park.<sup>66</sup>

Another example of environmental awareness was the relocation of the Picnic Area. Formerly located less than a tenth of a mile west of the Visitor Center, the Picnic Area lacked the room and viewshed that would make it a convenient and enjoyable experience for visitors using it for basket lunches and to rest. Because of its location, it also required that part of the Tour Road be two-way, sometimes causing traffic congestion and mishaps. The area was also used by deer, causing it to be tick infested, and it also posed a fire hazard because of the proximity to underbrush and woodlands which, in fact, blocked the visitors' view of the battlefield. With these hazards and inconveniences in mind, it was decided in 1994 that the Picnic Area would be moved to the grove just east of the Visitor Center. The new area has better access to water and the restrooms and the Visitor Center, and it also has clear view of the battlefield and other cultural and natural resources in the park.<sup>67</sup>

Historical integrity also plays a key role at various stops along the Tour Road. Because of past inaccuracies and deficiencies at some of the stops, Superintendent Adams has proposed altering specific stops. The Tour Stop that has been labeled "Shooting Wagons," for example, needs to be reassessed. This stop, which is on the western slope of Big Mountain, needs to be reinterpreted because it is not known if the term "Shooting Wagons" was used to describe cannons by the Indians who fought at the Battle of Pea Ridge. Consequently, Adams requested funding for an "Ethnographic Overview and

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<sup>65</sup>Interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>66</sup>Interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

<sup>67</sup>Interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

Assessment" of the park as a whole to address these kinds of issues. According to the Superintendent:

There has been no overview and assessment of ethnographic resources in the park nor has an overview of existing data been completed. Existing and potential data are needed to guide management decisions concerning interpretation, development, and resources management in the park. Failure to complete the overview and assessment will perpetuate an inadequate data base, resulting in difficult and less than ideal management decisions. Those decisions, in turn, have the potential to adversely affect the associated groups whose values we are trying to protect.<sup>68</sup>

With this study, Adams hopes 1) to learn whether descendants of Indians who fought at the Battle of Pea Ridge have prescribed any religious and/or social significance to the park lands, and 2) to obtain assistance from Indians concerning the retelling of the story of the Trail of Tears and Native American participation in the Civil War battle.

Superintendent Adams also hopes to improve the historical integrity of other features of the park. The area around the Pea Ridge West stop on the Tour Road, for example, needs to be interpreted, especially from a natural resources perspective. Because there are no cultural features nearby, and the proposed kiosk has never been constructed, Adams suggests reevaluating this stop's role in the park. He also suggests that the Pea Ridge East stop receive attention to upgrade its displays and audio program. Because the current exhibits are susceptible to vandalism, the Superintendent suggests replacing the old exhibitry with more modern and protected displays.<sup>69</sup>

#### Administrative Changes: The Team Concept

One of the most revealing features of Superintendent Adams' tenure is his reformulation of the administration of the park. In 1992, the entire park staff went through thirty hours of Total Quality Management training which included heavy emphasis on the Team Approach to administration. In particular, the training redirected the park staff away from

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<sup>68</sup>Steve Adams, "Development/Study Package Proposal, Complete Ethnographic Overview and Assessment," (need the date).

<sup>69</sup>Interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996.

the traditional divisional management philosophy and structure to the work-team concept; the change to this new management strategy was to take place in stages, phases one through five. The Team Approach is also designed to motivate individual members and teams to be self-directed in the planning and implementation of their duties.

By late 1996, the Pea Ridge park staff had implemented the new team approach to management. The old divisions of Administration, Maintenance, and Interpretation and Resource Management (the Ranger divisions had actually recombined in March, 1995) were replaced by three new teams: Administrative, Ranger, and Maintenance. The Administration Team consists of facilitator (or leader) Judy Bachler, the Administrative Officer, and an Administrative Clerk (Cheryl Koenig until recently when she resigned that position). The Ranger Team is facilitated by Ranger Mary Davis and includes Interpretive Rangers Doug Keller and Robert Still. Ranger John Knox's retirement in October, 1996, will require a shift in this team. The current plan is to hire two new employees to fill Knox's vacancy even though Davis, Keller, and Still will be completing many of Knox's former duties. The two new positions will be a visitor-use assistant (behind desk interpretation) and a cash clerk who essentially focuses on fee collection. These latter positions will free up Davis, Keller, and Still from desk duties to spend more time on interpretation and resource management.<sup>70</sup>

The Maintenance Team consists of three team members: Bill Clark, Dale Preston, and Sheri Nodine. Their various team roles are described below.

With this team approach, Superintendent Adams, although overall team leader or facilitator, has given his staff greater autonomy within their teams to perform their duties according to each team members' particular skills. In many ways, this experiment in management reflects the current changes occurring in the NPS, which in turn reveals broader societal trends in management strategy. At the Leadership Training Seminar in January, 1996, for instance, leadership personnel were encouraged to begin to experiment with new strategies that even if not mandated by the NPS might work at their local sites. Adams took this as validation of the park position management plan of implementing the team approach during the past five years.

The team approach has allowed the staff at Pea Ridge to coordinate their duties according to each member's particular skills and training. On the Ranger Team, for example, Ranger

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<sup>70</sup>Interview of Steve Adams, May 13, 1996; interview of Mary Davis, December 1, 1996.

Davis has taken on specific duties that reflect her training in interpretation. On the other hand, because of the team approach, when a team cannot perform particular duties, another team may step in to complete the task. As a result, what appear to be gaps in personnel training and skills are filled with new training experiences that allow the team approach to work, especially in light of current trends to cut budgets and positions. In the end, the staff members are given greater autonomy to solve their team's particular dilemmas under the guidance of the Superintendent.

#### Team Members and their Duties, 1990s

In Chapter 4, I examine the duties of the various staff members of Pea Ridge during the 1960s. In the interim of thirty years, much has changed at the park and in the management strategies. Because of this change in time and space, it seems fitting to conclude this study with a similar examination of personnel at the park today. Therefore, what follows are several sections on the current employees and their duties in the 1990s. My hope is that this descriptive material will help to show the changes at the park and how current practices have potential to succeed and perhaps have room for improvement.

#### Administrative Team: Administrative Officer Judy Bachler

Because I have already delineated the specific role of Superintendent Adams and his various strategies, it seems fitting to examine each staff member and their duties within their teams, beginning with the Administrative Team.

Administrative Officer Judy Bachler came to the Pea Ridge park in July 1990 after having served at Fort Davis during the early 1980s and Bandelier National Monument from 1984 to 1990. She arrived with experience as a volunteer, a seasonal, a Law Enforcement Ranger, and a Ranger Activities Clerk. Her first year or so at Pea Ridge, Bachler served as a commissioned law enforcement staff member before being promoted to Administrative Officer in 1991.<sup>71</sup>

As part of the Administrative Team and as the Administrative Officer, Bachler performs her principal duties in Budgeting, Purchasing, and in Personnel. Budgeting is probably the primary duty of Bachler because of the importance of carefully managing the park's funds. She literally "keeps the check

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<sup>71</sup>Interview of Judy Bachler, July 18, 1996.

book" of the park. Administrative Officer Bachler also calculates costs during the fiscal year, continually updates estimates, calls meetings to discuss the adjustments, and provides the funds for various priorities set by the park Superintendent and the staff. In the Budgeting area, she also manages the ONPS monies that have to be spent annually.

Other financial concerns of the Administrative Officer are donations, management of the historic leasing program funds, the VIP funds, and the renting of the park quarters; the rents, in fact, serve as the funds to finance the repair of the residential quarters. She also handles the Fee Enhancement Account which is money that comes from fee collection of which a percentage is returned to the Pea Ridge coffers for spending.

In recent years, Bachler has noted some important changes that have affected budgeting. Computers, in particular, have been a useful addition, especially the programs loaded on to the computers. Administrative Officer Bachler uses the Federal Finance System (FFS) which allows her to complete the budgeting at the park, whereas in the past she had to send the materials to the Accounting Operations System (AOS) which required valuable time and energy. Bachler is quite pleased that more and better computers have been purchased by the park. When she arrived in 1990, there were only three outmoded computers. Today, there are eight contemporary systems.<sup>72</sup>

Purchasing is the second priority for Bachler. As a Level 1 warrant officer, Bachler has the authority to spend up to \$10,000 for contracting a job. As the only warrant officer with this authority, Bachler is the key financial player at the park. This skill, however, is not taken for granted as Bachler has to take refresher training courses every two years. Despite this authority, on the other hand, she can only administer service contracts. She also handles the Requests For Quotes concerning bidding on jobs the park has advertised. In the summer of 1996, for example, she sent out a RFQ for water reservoir maintenance. Administrative Officer Bachler also keeps monthly records of the Blanket Purchasing Agreements.<sup>73</sup>

In the area of Purchasing, Bachler points out that Pea Ridge is part of a mini-cluster that includes Buffalo National River and Fort Smith National Historic Site. The cluster allows larger parks "to take care of smaller ones." Buffalo, for

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<sup>72</sup>Interview of Judy Bachler, July 18, 1996.

<sup>73</sup>Purchasing Order Files, Pea Ridge National Military Park.

example, has a Level 4 warrant officer who can contract for larger amounts of money. Consequently, when Pea Ridge needs a larger job completed, Buffalo's warrant officer assists its cluster partner. Bachler views this strategy "combining resources and capabilities as positive and helpful to the management of the park."<sup>74</sup> Bachler completes one or two large purchase orders a year.

In the area of Personnel, computers have also facilitated the duties of Bachler. The FPPS computer program allows her to do SF52 personnel actions, upgrades, reclassifications, changes in tours of duty, and "major things happening to personnel (tracking)." As personnel manager, she also announces vacancies and does recruiting which sometimes requires her to visit employment offices, schools, and employment agencies.<sup>75</sup>

Bachler also has other duties. She takes deposit monies to the bank, is the training coordinator and provides training authorizations, and has begun training to mediate work disputes that may arise in the NPS. She is also responsible for hiring new employees in the Administrative Team. Like other staff members at Pea Ridge, Administrative Officer Bachler believes in a cooperative team approach to conducting business in the administrative wing of the park. With a congenial personality and a positive outlook, Bachler brings experience, stability, and specialized skills to the Administrative Team at the Pea Ridge park.

#### Administrative Clerk: Cheryl Koenig

Administrative Clerk Cheryl Koenig essentially served as the assistant to Administrative Officer Bachler. Arriving in October 1994, Koenig came to the park with twenty-two years of government service in the Air Force and the Department of Defense. She also had worked at the Big Thicket Land Acquisitions Office in Texas. She resigned her position in the Fall of 1996.

According to Koenig, "simply, I answer the phones, am responsible for mail distribution, filing things, etc. I pay and order supplies and forms." Clearly, Koenig played an important clerical role at the Pea Ridge park. She also took care of the impressed fund, petty cash management, and served as the park property manager. This latter duty required her to inventory property and input it into the data base system for record keeping. To alleviate some of Bachler's pressures,

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<sup>74</sup>Interview of Judy Bachler, July 18, 1996.

<sup>75</sup>Interview of Judy Bachler, July 18, 1996.

Koenig also gave travel authorizations and vouchers as well as training authorization. Until the creation of the Administrative Team, Koenig was under the supervision of Bachler. With the new team approach, the Administrative Clerk is supervised by the Superintendent.<sup>76</sup>

Administrative Clerk Koenig's position did change some from the previous clerk, Angela Raible. Rather than also doing low levels of interpretation and working at the front desk in the Visitor Center, Koenig's role has been a "behind-the-scenes" role. Like Bachler, Koenig was not required to wear the traditional NPS uniform and, therefore, appeared to be an administrator not an interpreter. However, this factor did not preclude Koenig from addressing the public, especially on the telephone. She regularly answered the telephones, often answering questions concerning the park, its hours, and how to make reservations. Interpretive questions she would forward to the Rangers. As a result, she was often the "first contact" at the park, but not the last. In a sense, she served as a go-between in the public relations area.<sup>77</sup>

#### Ranger Team: Ranger Mary Davis

Ranger Mary Davis came to the Pea Ridge park in February, 1995, after numerous years of experience in the Park Service. She ran the Gulf Islands National Seashore campground in Florida from 1975 to 1984,<sup>78</sup> then she went on to serve at Vicksburg National Military Park (1984-1990) and Pipe Spring National Monument, Arizona (1990-1995), a satellite of Zion National Park, prior to joining the Pea Ridge staff.

The duties of Ranger Davis reflect several aspects of NPS management. First, her duties reveal her particular skills in interpretation. Second, her role reflects the multifunctional duties of Park Rangers that have become part of the NPS strategy in recent years. Ranger Davis coordinates and conducts interpretative planning and strategies at the park. Davis also believes it is a "godsend to have a very productive working group [Ranger Team]. I provide assistance where it's needed and we coordinate" the duties as a team.<sup>79</sup>

Davis believes that the restructuring of Pea Ridge into teams in many ways reflects the broader trends in society to

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<sup>76</sup>Interview of Cheryl Koenig, July 18, 1996.

<sup>77</sup>Interview of Cheryl Koenig, July 18, 1996.

<sup>78</sup>Interview of Mary Davis, May 20, 1996.

<sup>79</sup>Interview of Mary Davis, May 20, 1996.

streamline operations. Reduction in supervisors as a strategy in the corporate world has begun to effect the NPS. As parks lose supervisory personnel to retirement and cutbacks, they are often not replaced and current personnel are required to pick up the slack. Davis herself has taken on a multiple purpose role at the park.

With this in mind, Ranger Davis has to do various tasks, including the mundane duties of completing reports. These reports reflect the Ranger Team's justifications for needs, accounting of projects, statistical account of the ranger activities, and project statements. Davis completes Triple X forms to describe and set criteria for projects to be placed on the record. She has noted that these reports, which actually are less cumbersome than in previous years, reflect Superintendent Adams' cultural preservation goals as well as the changing environmental awareness strategies of the NPS as a whole. "Paperwork has become more reasonable and focused," Davis contends, "with NPS goals reflecting greater environmental awareness." Historical integrity is at a premium as well at Pea Ridge because Davis and others believe that "even nailing things in the walls of Elkhorn Tavern" need to be done "carefully" and through "historic awareness."<sup>80</sup>

Mary Davis is an example of the multifunctional Ranger. She brings special interpretive skills to the table as well as a special ability to work as a team facilitator to coordinate the various activities of the rangers at Pea Ridge. With a congenial style, Davis epitomizes the "new" Ranger in the NPS.

#### Ranger John Knox

Even though Ranger John Knox retired in 1996, his contributions and duties need to be examined so that future Pea Ridge rangers can have an idea of the evolving role of rangers at the park since the 1970s. Knox began his career at Pea Ridge in 1972 as a Park Aid. Ranger Knox remembers that his then Superintendent Bienvenu wanted new employees to work "outside" rather than "inside" before they took on administrative duties. Bienvenu, in a sense, wanted them to get to know the natural and cultural features of the park firsthand before pretending to know what they were and how they should be managed. As a result, Knox found himself outside during most of his career as he learned to thoroughly enjoy the "outdoors" at the Pea Ridge park. Over time, Knox climbed the Park Service ladder becoming a Park Ranger in 1985. "I wanted to stay on one job at Pea Ridge. I didn't want to transfer around," Knox recently stated. He would

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<sup>80</sup>Interview of Mary Davis, May 20, 1996.

begin and end his NPS career at Pea Ridge.<sup>81</sup>

By the time of the Adams administration, Knox had become a capable natural resource manager and law enforcement officer at Pea Ridge. As early as the 1970s, he had worked with Botanist E. E. Dale Jr. to cultivate the well-known native prairies of Pea Ridge. With Superintendent Kevin McKibbin's approval, Knox worked with Dale to put in about seven acres of native prairie over the course of twenty years. Knox plowed and disked the land and Dale and his team broadcast the seed for the grasses. Knox also coordinated the burning of the prairie every two years or so to replenish the soils with nutrients for regrowth. When Arkansas Post considered putting in a similar prairie, Knox provided information to facilitate that program. In the end, the Pea Ridge native prairie became famous in the region as one of the very few grassland experiments in the nation.<sup>82</sup>

He also played a key role in the establishment of the historic leasing program. Leasing the fields of Pea Ridge at a minimum of \$15 per acre per year, Knox was able to administer the leasing of the fields to local farmers to coordinate the Vegetation Treatment Plan, especially after Adams' arrival in 1991. This historic plan required the lessees to fertilize the fields every year as well as cut and remove the hay twice a year around July 15 and October 15, respectively. The County Extension Office and the University of Arkansas tests the soils every three years to determine the proper application of fertilizers. The justification for the historic leasing program was "to maintain open and clear views of the battlefield," while also bringing in an income to fund resource protection projects.<sup>83</sup>

The leasing program was designed to maintain the integrity of the historic battlefield while also reducing the costs to manage the hay fields which required fertilization, labor, and use of equipment. Consequently, sustainability was initiated with the fields as it had been with other natural resource management strategies at the park.

After cooperating to establish the native prairie, Knox contemplated putting in wild peas or "hog peas" on Big Mountain. The historical significance of the wild pea is not difficult to understand considering that the entire plateau where the battle took place was named Pea Ridge.

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<sup>81</sup>Interview of John Knox, July 5, 1995.

<sup>82</sup>Interview of John Knox, July 5, 1995; interview of E. E. Dale, Jr., June 17, 1996.

<sup>83</sup>Interview of John Knox, July 5, 1995.

Reintroduction of the species, Knox has contended, would bring still greater vegetative legitimacy to the park. The peas "after all are where the park got its name," states Knox.<sup>84</sup>

Knox also played a pivotal role in the sustainability plan for the rail fences at the park. Working with timber cutters, Knox coordinated cutting contracts so that red cedar, an invader to the park, would be cut down and used to replace deteriorating rails. The former cost to replace the cedar rails was \$2.80 per rail, and they were acquired in Mountainburg. The cost to construct the fences by seasonal, maintenance, or contract workers was an additional expenditure. To reduce these costs, cutters were hired to remove the invader red cedars at a charge of \$2.40 per split rail that then could be put in place by the cutters or park staff members. Red cedars have proven to last longer and will serve a better purpose than the oak.

Grazing is no longer permitted on the fields of the park. This policy resulted from the NPS's 1978-1979 mandate to reduce grazing on Park Service lands due to environmental degradation. To examine the importance of grass and other plant species to the park, Knox coordinated a research program with the University of Arkansas during mid-1996 with Cindy Seeger and Brad Griffin. Knox built exclusionary pens sixty-foot square to determine what impact the deer had on the local vegetation and discovered that, like cattle grazers, the deer did have a dramatic impact on the floral landscape. Consequently, questions have begun to arise about the management of the deer which have proliferated at an alarming rate.<sup>85</sup>

#### The Management Ignited Prescribed Fire Program

About the same time that the impact of deer grazing was discerned, the park staff began to realize the influence of fires on the vegetative landscape. The result was implementation of the Management Ignited Prescribed Fire (MIPF) program. Ranger Knox played a key role in implementing the fire program beginning in 1993. As has been noted, Superintendent Gentry considered prescribed burning in the early 1980s but determined incorrectly that it would not work at Pea Ridge, that the fires would be too hot and would therefore kill young saplings that were necessary to implement the Vegetation Treatment Plan. After many consultations with Sammie Lail of Buffalo National River, Knox determined

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<sup>84</sup>Interview of John Knox, July 5, 1995.

<sup>85</sup>Interview of John Knox, July 5, 1995.

otherwise. He, in fact, believed that controlled burning, which is the essence of prescribed burning, could benefit the vegetative scenery. The burning of eastern red cedar, the invader mentioned before, for example, and allowing the burned area to regrow in hardwoods such as oak and hickory was feasible. In addition, prescribed burning also helps to reduce dangerous accumulation of leaves, branches, underbrush, and other very flammable materials. Occasional prescribed burning reduces the amount of fuel and, therefore, decreases the threat of a major conflagration at the park. Knox also noted that the reduction in fuel decreases the chances of fire along the "urban interface" of the park. That is, those homes, chicken farms, and other farm structures will be in less danger of burning if the park keeps its fuel levels manageable.<sup>86</sup>

Beginning in 1993, wildfire management also took a new turn. Rather than extinguish all wildfires immediately, a strategy for "burning out" fires became the new policy. The previous policy required red carded, or trained fire fighters, often to put their lives on the line to immediately extinguish the flames of wildfires. Lives and equipment were often at great risk because of the obsession with putting out the fires. In many cases, because forested areas had not been burned, the fuel levels became dangerously high and, therefore, presented a potentially lethal threat to the park. To reduce this threat, Superintendent Adams has implemented the Management Ignited Prescribed Fire program as a result of interagency cooperation (e.g., Forest Service, NPS, BLM, BIA, Reclamation, and Fish & Wildlife bureaus) to formulate the fire management program.

Concerning wildfires, for instance, a new strategy centers around managed burning. Instead of putting out all flames on the spot, the trained fire fighting staff, which includes Initial Attack Incident Commander Sheri Nodine, Ranger Robert Still, Carpenter Dale Preston, and ENP&MA Rep. Troy Banzhaf, devise a strategy to put out the fire that will reduce dangers to the firefighters. For example, rather than attack some wildfires directly, the firefighters can manage the conflagration by starting black lines or fire lines that, due to wind factors, burn toward the wildfire. Roads, natural barriers, fields, ditches, and creeks are used to contain the fires, especially in areas of the park that are already under plans for burning.

Unlike wildfires, which are arson or caused by nature, prescribed fires are deliberately set by park staff to burn excess fuel so that the forest floors and fields do not become

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<sup>86</sup>Interview of John Knox, July 5, 1995.

overgrown and present fire hazard problems. Once the flames are ignited, however, the natural and human-made barriers are used to contain the prescribed fires when the firefighting strategy is properly implemented.

If wildfires or prescribed fires become too powerful for the local team to manage, Sammie Lail of the Buffalo National River is called to head a fire management team. Pea Ridge is part of a fire cluster program in Arkansas whereby fire fighters from various federal agencies, such as the Park Service and Forest Service, combine their efforts in case fires become dangerous.

To demonstrate the cooperative nature and potential benefits of MIPF program, Ranger Knox invited news reporters to the park when the plan was first initiated. Mike Freeman of the The Times of Northeast Benton County and Rogers newspeople arrived and asked questions concerning the feasibility of the burn program. This public relations strategy helped to alleviate the fears that park neighbors might have had concerning prescribed fires, which actually reduce the threat of out-of-control wildfires.

On the scene of a fire, the Incident Command System is implemented. This strategy requires the Initial Attack Incident Commander, formerly Knox, but now Sheri Nodine, to assess the fire and then devise a strategy for containing it or putting it out. The ultimate goal is to protect people first and then the park's resources. To burn out the fire, natural barriers are chosen in the park to manage the wildfire and black lines are ignited. The new line of fire eventually meets the conflagration. Fields, drainage ditches, roads (e.g., the Tour Road, Ford's Road) serve as the boundaries of control zones that once burning from two or more sides will eventually burn the fire out. The back fire is started by "black lines," or hand-generated fire lines, which proceed toward the area already on fire.

The park's fire team is on a vigilant watch for fires, especially during the fire season from November to March. Unfortunately, most of the park's fires are arsons. Fortunately, on the other hand, none of the fires has burned out of control to threaten the park staff and their neighbors.<sup>87</sup>

The MIPF and new wildfire strategy have actually reduced the fire hazards in the park while also improving conditions for regrowth of hardwood forests to meet the Vegetation Treatment

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<sup>87</sup>Interview of John Knox, June 25, 1996; also, see "Management Ignited Prescribed Burn Plan, PRNMP," sections XI-XIII.

Plan. Likewise, the burn plan may also facilitate compliance with historical integrity.

### Wildlife Management

Ranger Knox has also played a pivotal role in wildlife management at the Pea Ridge park. He has cooperated with the Arkansas Fish & Game Commission, for example, to study deer numbers, the impact of the deer, and possible reintroduction of wild turkeys (this strategy suggests that wild turkeys never returned despite some reports to this effect in the late 1970s). Just prior to his arrival in the park in 1972, Knox recalls that studies were done to determine if there were Red Wolves in the park and also what impact coyotes may have had in the park. Unfortunately, in the end, the wolves were captured and destroyed.

All in all, Ranger Knox was a stabilizing influence at the Pea Ridge park for more than twenty-four years. His devotion to natural and cultural resource management resulted in protection of the vegetation, wildlife, and structures of the park.

### Park Ranger: Doug Keller

Another member of the Ranger Team at Pea Ridge is Doug Keller. Park Ranger Keller arrived in January 1991 after having previously served at the then Custer Battlefield National Monument in Montana (now Little Bighorn Battlefield NM) and at Bent's Old Fort in Colorado. An interpretive specialist with a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Northern Colorado, Keller sees his role as one of a historian: "we [interpretive specialists] all live with the historian's cap on." Unfortunately, Ranger Keller does not have the time, because of extensive duties, to complete research and writing on the scale he would like. Ultimately, Keller takes his job seriously and very much believes in service to the visitors. With this in mind, the Ranger claims that his principal goal is "to help people understand what happened here [at Pea Ridge] and why it is important."<sup>88</sup> To do this correctly requires the development of various strategies for the interpretive facilities to serve the public with integrity.

If we were to examine "a day in the life of Park Ranger Keller," we would find him devoting his time to various duties. Foremost among them at this time is collection of entrance permits. Keller opens the building at 7:45 a.m. and

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<sup>88</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

takes charge of the Visitor Center operations, spending approximately 80 percent of his time collecting entrance fees and providing information at the Visitor Center desk; he also collects the fees that go into the general treasury of the land and water conservation fund. In the near future, Keller hopes to have these duties reduced when a fee collector and a visitor-use assistant are hired. When these new staff members are brought aboard, Keller will be able to focus on other duties, listed below.<sup>89</sup>

Among his most interesting duties is interpretive planning for special events and activities. In July, 1996, for example, Keller planned the interpretive events in recognition of the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of the park. He also annually prepares a Christmas Program, an All Hallow's Eve Program, and plays the key role in the planning and preparation of the wreathing ceremony, held annually in March to commemorate the battle. Interpretive Specialist Keller also coordinates the annual Civil War Encampments and other living history programs at Elkhorn Tavern.<sup>90</sup>

An area of responsibility Keller would like to expand is writing and research. Because of his information desk duties, Keller pines for more time to do historical research and writing. Regardless of the constraints, he has completed several site bulletins that provide relevant historical data and information. Two of the brochures are titled, "Trail Where They Cried: Nunahi-Duna-Tlo-Hilu-i" and "A Great Many Indians Among Them...", and show Keller's interest in expanding the ethnographic parameters of the park. The brochures have also been handsomely illustrated, the SWRO having completed the art work. These brochures are also designed to educate the public as they take their tours and visit the interpretive facilities such as the museum.<sup>91</sup>

Another of his varied duties includes editing a quarterly Pea Ridge NMP newsletter titled, The Sentry. The newsletter, which is distributed throughout Northwest Arkansas, has become a positive public relations tool with which to capture the public's attention and offer interpretive stories about the park and its history. Keller plans to include more interpretive pieces to educate the public of special events and the history of the park.

Ranger Keller also gives public presentations to various

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<sup>89</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

<sup>90</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

<sup>91</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

special visitors. He annually presents programs to three to four thousand school children, most of whom are elementary students. "The park is a classroom," Keller insists, and provides an educational experience as well as a hands-on experience. Keller presents the story of the Battle of Pea Ridge in two or three formats which are based on length of time of the visits. Consequently, he offers two and ten minute lectures as well as one to two hour presentations. No matter what the circumstances, "You've got to tell a story." Keller has a strong faith in story-telling. His special narrative style introduces his audiences to important factual data of the Battle of Pea Ridge as well as a historical synthesis of the broader issues of the American Civil War.<sup>92</sup>

Keller's final duties center around the museum. A "universal problem," the museum needs to be improved, according to Keller. Funding problems and manpower have deterred the proper development of this interpretive facility. The Ranger suggests that the exhibits need updating, historical errors need to be corrected, and additional exhibits are needed to more accurately and more clearly delineate the story of the Battle of Pea Ridge. Essentially, there is a need for greater historical integrity in the museum, just as there is a need for historical integrity of the natural and cultural resources of the park.

To meet some of the developmental goals for the museum, Keller did complete a revolving display case. "Otherwise, the museum is as it was before I came," Keller stated in an interview. More than anything, Keller has been faced with a limited budget and sparse amounts of work time to complete his goals for the museum. He "would like to see a professional exhibit planner come to the park and actually rethink the museum."<sup>93</sup>

Development of the interpretive program at the Pea Ridge park has been limited, Keller contends, because of limited manpower and sparse funding. These personnel and financial shortcomings reflect the status of the park in the system as a whole. "We don't have the visitation," Keller suggests, "to support greater funding and manpower." As a result, the park remains a "do-it-yourself" site with much non-personal interpretative media informing the public of the battle and the history of the park. To alleviate some of these pitfalls, Keller hands out his brochures and sells audio cassettes that tell the Pea Ridge story. Visitors, therefore, have interpretive guides, both written and in cassette form, that

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<sup>92</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

<sup>93</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, May 28, 1996.

augment the information that he and other personnel provide for the visitors.

Ranger Keller sees potential for greater development of the Interpretive Program at Pea Ridge NMP. In particular, with new plans for the two new positions--a cash clerk and a visitor assistant--Keller will be freed up to do more duties related to actual development of the interpretive facilities at the park. His hopes to upgrade the wayside exhibits, for example, will have a better chance of coming to fruition as long as the funding follows suit. Finally, the Park Ranger would like to see more high-tech interactive computer technologies incorporated into the interpretive strategy for the park. Through such a program, he could develop a museum information program "to teach more about the Civil War and the park." More "visuals" and "touching" interpretation, Keller believes, will enhance the educational experience of the visitors, especially the school children who represent America's future. "There is a fine line," Keller insists, "between entertainment and education."<sup>94</sup>

A congenial staff member and a positive welcome wagon to visitors, Keller completes his duties with a healthy countenance and a desire to serve the public at large.

#### Park Ranger: Robert Still

The most recently hired Ranger is Robert Still. Ranger Still began working at Pea Ridge as a volunteer after participating in the living history program during the summer of 1989. Superintendent Gott hired Still on a co-op basis the following summer. After he graduated from high school in 1991, Still joined the staff on a full-time basis, while also entering the University of Arkansas that fall. However, Still had been hired without proper authority. So, when Superintendent Steve Adams began his administration, he went through proper channels to hire Still to work on weekends during the school year and full-time during summers. In 1995, Ranger Still received a B.A. in history and was promoted to a full-time Ranger position. Throughout his early training, Still was mentored by Ranger Knox, providing the young Ranger with a solid training in cultural and natural resource management.

Early in his career at the park as a volunteer and co-op employee, Still carried out various duties. He collected fees, assisted in Visitor Center operations, distributed park information, worked on museum and wayside exhibits, and assisted in formulating interpretive plans. He also worked on

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<sup>94</sup>Interview of Doug Keller, November 21, 1996.

the vertical files of the park library, conducting a modicum of research as well.

During his university training, Still also learned fire fighting techniques, fire response methods, and black lining under the tutelage of Ranger Knox. While learning this wildland fire management strategy, he also became intimately acquainted with the natural and cultural resources of the park. He soon learned the importance of maintaining the historical and cultural landscapes of the park. "I have grown into the Ranger profession," Still stated in an interview, "and there's a lot more to it than just history."

As an important cog in the park's ranger unit, Ranger Still hopes to meet various goals while on staff. First, he plans to support "green space" use of the park. In other words, he wants to be part of the strategy to protect the park from regional growth, at the same time serving the visitors and general public interested in the historical and natural resources of the park. As greater pressures and potential encroachment increases, Ranger Still also hopes to facilitate both increased use of the park by visitors and still more efficient management of the natural and cultural resources to insure that future generations will be able to share the fruits of the Park Service's administrative efforts. In the end, then, Still looks forward to protecting the park, while also making it amenable to visitors: "Management of natural resources directly compliments the cultural resources. The story would not be here without the people and their history."<sup>95</sup>

#### Maintenance Chief: Larry Widdifield

More than 35 percent of the park's overall budget is spent by the Maintenance Team. Although former Maintenance Chief Larry Widdifield has retired, he has played an important role in the maintenance of the park during the last decade (1987-1996). Arriving at PRNMP in 1987 after gaining experience at the Chiricuhua National Monument, Buffalo National River, and Arkansas Post, Widdifield came to the park with extensive Park Service experience. In this capacity, Maintenance Chief Widdifield supervised and evaluated the maintenance crew, kept a computer inventory of the Maintenance Team equipment, and set priorities for park projects considering needs and available funding.<sup>96</sup>

Widdifield's management philosophy was based on team work.

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<sup>95</sup>Interview of Robert Still, December 10, 1996.

<sup>96</sup>Interview of Larry Widdifield, June 30, 1995.

"Let the workers do their thing," he commented in an interview, so that they can complete their jobs with a minimal amount of interference. His team philosophy spilled over into the use of his office, which he called "our office" to emphasize the team approach to management of the park's maintenance facilities. "Since day-one I've wanted my crew to know it's a team concept." Widdifield considered the human resource--in this case, the employee--more important in the end than the jobs they performed. On the other hand, efficiency and cooperation were essential to complete their duties and those not complying were encouraged to upgrade their work.<sup>97</sup>

During his tenure at Pea Ridge, Maintenance Chief Widdifield supervised the completion of several major projects. In 1989, for instance, he coordinated the rebuilding of the air conditioning system, and completed the rehabilitation of Pea Ridge West Overlook. He oversaw the replacement of the water softener (at a cost of \$4,400) in 1991. In 1992, three major projects were completed under Widdifield: the maintenance crew installed a new alarm system, built wood decks at the residences, and replaced the rotted wood picnic tables with aluminum ones. The following year he assisted the Williamsport Training Center, which rehabilitates NPS buildings, during its \$36,000 renovation of Elkhorn Tavern. After receiving special training, the Maintenance Chief was able to strip the tavern's paint, add primer, and repaint the facility with a large measure of historical accuracy. Likewise, he and his crew assisted the Williamsport team when they replaced the tavern roof. Widdifield also supervised the reroofing of the Visitor Center at a cost of \$22,000 in 1993. The Winton Springs House, which was condemned by the state Health Department in 1978, was finally razed in 1993 as well.<sup>98</sup>

The Tour Road repairs, which were contracted for repair, also required assistance from the Maintenance Division. The maintenance crew often assisted in hauling and moving earth and gravel to facilitate rehabilitation of the problematic Tour Road. In 1989, 1991, and 1992-1993, Widdifield assisted the Federal Highway Administration and the Snyder Contractors. Despite their concerted efforts, however, the Tour Road remained closed for more than six months in late 1989 and much of 1990 as well as during late 1992 and early 1993. This repair project proved frustrating to Widdifield who lamented that more than \$1 million was spent on a futile repair job.

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<sup>97</sup>Interview of Larry Widdifield, June 30, 1995.

<sup>98</sup>Interview of Larry Widdifield, June 30, 1995.

The year 1994 proved especially busy for the Maintenance Division. To facilitate the removal of the "boneyard" at the Winton Springs site, Widdifield and his crew did remedy work on a recently constructed metal storage building which initially cost \$25,000. Located behind the park residences, the storage facility, with 900 square feet of space, 12' by 12' doors, and sitting on a cement pad, has proven a valuable addition to the park. Formerly unsightly piles of material were removed and a new warehouse for equipment created. That same year, Widdifield supervised the rehabilitation of the park residences at a cost of \$14,000. Toward the end of the year and into 1995, the maintenance crew had to complete remedial work on the recently reroofed Visitor Center. In the end, the problematic roof drained the NPS treasury for \$70,000.<sup>99</sup>

In 1995, the Maintenance Division replaced the viewing deck windows in the Visitor Center at an expense of \$8,000. Two tractors and a mower were also purchased (1994-1995), the cost rising to \$74,000 for the heavy equipment. More housing rehabilitation was undertaken in 1995 at a cost of \$10,000. Finally, a water pump, which had been replaced for the first time in 1978 (since 1962), was replaced in 1995 for about \$6,000.<sup>100</sup>

Maintenance Chief Widdifield decided to retire in 1996. Since his retirement, the Maintenance Division has been designated a team made up of Bill Clark, Dale Preston, and Sheri Nodine. Clark has taken on much of the paperwork Widdifield formerly completed, whereas Preston and Nodine have helped to pick up the slack for Clark out in the field. In the end, the team approach has made the transition manageable and feasible.

#### Maintenance Worker: Bill Clark

The longest standing employee of the Pea Ridge NMP, and known affectionately as "Billy," Maintenance Worker Clark has been with the park since 1975. A native of the area (Avoca), Clark became a permanent employee subject to furlough from 1977 to 1984. He attained permanent status in 1984. While growing up in the area, Clark witnessed the creation of the park and heard many of the stories concerning the state's acquisition of the park lands. He and his family were living on the Morgan farm which was sold to the state in the late 1950s. After graduating from Pea Ridge High School in 1958, Clark worked for the Crane Company in Rogers for eight years, then

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<sup>99</sup>Interview of Larry Widdifield, June 30, 1995.

<sup>100</sup>Interview of Larry Widdifield, June 30, 1995.

in another machine shop in Joplin, Missouri for about eight years. Before becoming a permanent fixture at the park, he also drove busses and did janitorial work for the Pea Ridge School District.<sup>101</sup>

Clark's duties are varied. He does electrical repairs, plumbing, tractor repair, trail mowing, trimming of the brush, building maintenance, and maintenance management on the computer. This latter duty has been an important skill for Maintenance Worker Clark since 1988, and has served him in good stead since the retirement of Chief Widdifield. As Clark recently stated in an interview, "My duties haven't changed much over the past twenty years." The only major change being the introduction of computers in the late 1980s, and the leadership of Widdifield, who Clark admires for allowing the maintenance crew a measure of autonomy to complete their duties without being hounded.<sup>102</sup>

Clark has played an important role in completing various projects at the park. In recent years, for example, he contributed to the enlargement of the maintenance shop, has upgraded much of the heavy and light equipment, and has generally assisted in the expansion plans at the park facilities. One of his principal duties, of course, is mowing. Since Superintendent Adams' arrival, Clark has had to mow less ground to meet the standards established in the Vegetation Treatment Plan. In complete agreement with Adams, Clark believes that the historical integrity for the park is extremely important, although some areas have to be mowed because of natural threats such as ticks and snakes. "Everything in open space was mowed," Clark remembers, "even though it wasn't supposed to be [mowed] according to the Vegetation Treatment Plan." The Maintenance Worker claims that his mowing load has been reduced by one-third since Adams initiated the new vegetative management strategy, which Clark believes is meant to allow reforestation in certain areas of the park.<sup>103</sup>

Beginning in 1994, Clark began purchasing Grasshopper lawn mowers which seem to have a better record and reduced repair rate compared to the previous models in use. He uses two John Deere tractors to do brush hogging, dirt removal for landscaping, and to pull the flail mowers.

Maintenance Worker Clark also brings a positive outlook and

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<sup>101</sup>Interview of Bill Clark, June 30, 1995.

<sup>102</sup>Interview of Bill Clark, June 30, 1995.

<sup>103</sup>Interview of Bill Clark, June 30, 1995.

cooperative attitude to his job at the park. He has served diligently and contributes to a generally congenial atmosphere among the workers at the Pea Ridge park.

#### Maintenance Worker: Dale Preston

Maintenance Worker Dale Preston stands alone as the carpenter of the park. Becoming a permanent employee in 1991, Preston brought with him lifetime experiences as the son of a carpenter, a former soldier in the U.S. Army, and with seventeen years of maintenance experience at the Veteran's Hospital in Fayetteville. He has a special attachment to the park because his great-grandfather Marion West, a Civil War veteran, visited the battle site in September, 1862.

Preston's duties center around his carpentry work which takes up about 90 percent of his time. He spends the other 10 percent of his time completing various maintenance duties. He is licensed by the state of Arkansas to apply pesticides. Most of the pesticide application involves "right-of-way" spraying and killing weeds at the base of the historic rail fences. He may have to occasionally spray for webworms or other insect pests as the need arises.<sup>104</sup>

Carpenter Preston has also earned his red card to fight fires. This skill may prove very valuable in the future in light of the sixteen fires that were ignited during fiscal year 1996. His other duties include ordering materials for completion of various woodworking projects. "All of us took over most of Larry's [Widdifield] work," Preston has noted. "Bill is doing most of the paperwork and Sheri and I have taken up the slack in other areas."<sup>105</sup> Clearly, a team philosophy determines the planning and execution of maintenance strategy at the park.

Since coming aboard in 1991, Preston has completed various major projects. In 1993, he helped reroof and paint Elkhorn Tavern. After attending a training course under the guidance of the Williamsport Training Center for rehabilitation and historical renovation, Preston stripped the old paint and then applied primer and paint that met the Williamsport guidelines. Unfortunately, the paint proved to be faulty (perhaps this is historically accurate, however, it is not practical) and lasted only two months. Preston has experimented with a latex-based Olympic stain that seems to be working much better

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<sup>104</sup>Interview of Dale Preston, December 3, 1996; also, see Dale Preston's "Position Description," Maintenance Worker WG-4749-08, Position Number J7330-30, pp. 1-4, located at the Park.

<sup>105</sup>Interview of Dale Preston, December 3, 1996.

than the Williamsport paint. Carpenter Preston also rebuilt the porch and kitchen and renovated the restrooms at the tavern. Despite these renovations, Preston hopes to see greater historical integrity for the tavern. In particular, he believes that the modern kitchen and restrooms are objectionable, if not outright out of place in the historical scene.<sup>106</sup>

Preston's experience working with the Williamsport people resulted in his participation in other projects away from Pea Ridge. He, for example, served as a carpenter during the renovation of the Pope Mansion at Lake Tahoe, where he spent thirty days assisting the project team. He also spent a week at Buffalo National River assisting with carpentry work there. Both of these outside duties were performed in 1993 the same year Elkhorn Tavern was reroofed and painted and provided the maintenance worker with important on-the-job training experiences.

Preston also renovated both park residences in 1994. He replaced the old single pane windows with thermal panes, put up new siding, removed the old cyprus boards and replaced them with western red cedar, and insulated the houses while he was at it. He also stripped the carpet from the floors and sanded the original oak-veneered floors. Because the floors have only 1/4" oak veneer and 1/4" plywood as a base, Preston is currently stabilizing the floors by placing 1/2" plywood beneath the original base plywood.

Maintenance Worker Preston also constructed the fee collector's station at the park. Framed with two-by-fours, the small structure stands sturdy, with 1/2" plywood walls screwed directly into the siding. "It's a strong little box." Other duties Prestons has performed include digging a line with the Ditch Witch from the Visitor Center to the north residence. The line allowed electricity to be transferred from the Visitor Center to the new offices. Preston also built the cabinets in the maintenance and administrative offices.<sup>107</sup>

Ongoing projects for Preston include replacing more windows in the Visitor Center and reroofing the structure again, and closing up all the old wells in the park. The Visitor Center roof, which was repaired in 1994, already needs replacement which really concerns the carpenter. According to Superintendent Adams:

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<sup>106</sup>Interview of Dale Preston, December 3, 1996.

<sup>107</sup>Interview of Dale Preston, December 3, 1996.

The new Visitor Center roof [1994 repairs] was not appropriately designed for this climate area and the roofing contractor performed very poorly. The roof leaked immediately after installation and continued to leak thereafter, resulting in replacement of the contractor and forcing remedial action by the park maintenance staff.<sup>108</sup>

Preston believes that the current flat roof should be replaced by a pitched roof, which he contends would have cost less to build than the total repair bill that has accrued just since 1994. The Denver Service Center and regional offices, however, have determined rehabilitation strategies for Park Service facilities in the region. As for the wells, Preston has located about a dozen open wells that he has built fences around to protect visitors. Fortunately, only deer bones have been found in the bottoms of the old wells.<sup>109</sup>

Currently, Preston is renovating the offices of the Visitor Center. Rangers Still has just moved (February 1997) into his new office which used to be Administrative Officer Bachler's office. Superintendent Adams' former office will be renovated next and will be used by Ranger Davis. These changes have come about because one of the former park residences has been transformed into administrative offices for Superintendent Adams, Administrative Officer Bachler, Administrative Clerk Bill Cocoran, and the Friends of Pea Ridge.

As a carpenter, Preston appreciates the historical integrity of the structures of the park. With this in mind, he would hope to see the removal of all electricity from Elkhorn Tavern along with removal of the kitchen and bathrooms. On the other hand, he would not be averse to seeing the addition of a blacksmith shop and a line of telegraph wire to further interpret the Elkhorn Tavern area even though they are not called for in the Interpretive Prospectus. Masonry work around the original and existing chimneys would also be a welcomed repair project for Preston.<sup>110</sup> These ideas demonstrate Preston's concern for historical integrity and public service.

#### Maintenance Worker: Sheri Nodine

The newest permanent addition to the Maintenance Team is Sheri Nodine. After serving on a temporary basis during 1992,

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<sup>108</sup>Steve Adams, Annual Report, PRNMP, (1995), 3.

<sup>109</sup>Interview of Dale Preston, December 3, 1996.

<sup>110</sup>Interview of Dale Preston, December 3, 1996.

Maintenance Worker Nodine was hired in July 1994 on a permanent basis to replace the retiring Renard Bray. While a temporary worker, she served as a relief worker during the Hurricane Andrew disaster in 1992. Nodine has had experience in the U. S. Army Air Traffic Division, in the construction business, and in the heavy equipment business.<sup>111</sup> Her duties vary from building utilities and ground maintenance (35%) to mowing to operating a tractor (25%) to coordinating the park safety program (20%) and serving as Initial Attack Incident Commander in managing fires. Janitorial duties consume about 15 percent of her time, and the other five percent is spent on odds-and-ends duties.<sup>112</sup>

When Maintenance Worker Nodine is not seen operating a tractor, she might be seen painting signs or park facilities, or maybe she would be repairing something; recently, for example, the park painted its entrance sign and other signs the traditional NPS brown, covering the blue and gray formerly used on the signs. At times, she can be found at Elkhorn Tavern doing general maintenance and janitorial services. On other occasions, she might be studying the details of the operations of the water treatment facilities. Recently, she received training to become the hazardous material coordinator. With this responsibility, she must devise a waste management strategy for the park.

Nodine also has extensive training for first response emergencies. As safety officer, she regularly prepares the park staff for emergency situations at scheduled safety meetings. Such safety training includes demonstrations on CPR techniques, emergency preparation techniques, and safety measures to take in case of fires.

As the Initial Attack Incident Commander, Maintenance Worker Nodine is also in charge of fire fighting activities and is responsible for determining the burn strategy for individual fires. On initial warning of the fire, the red card staff members with training in firefighting must report to Nodine before initiating the burn or extinguishing the fire. If the fires are not contained with the first burning period, IAI Commander Nodine is required to contact Sammie Lail of Buffalo National River to determine the final strategy for fighting a persistent fire. As part of the Arkansas cluster of a national fire district program, Pea Ridge and other nearby parks can count on the assistance of other red card firefighters to come to their aid in case of an out-of-control conflagration. Fortunately for Pea Ridge, most of the fires

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<sup>111</sup>Interview of Rovetta Sherine Nodine, November 21, 1996.

<sup>112</sup>See "Position Description, Maintenance Worker, WG-4749-07," PRNMP, 1-4.

have been very manageable. Nodine attended Initial Attack Incident Commander training in Montana and California during the summer of 1996.<sup>113</sup> Nodine also comes to work with a positive outlook and cooperative attitude adding the to the overall congeniality of the Maintenance Team.

Eastern National Parks & Monuments Association:  
Troy Banzhaf

The Eastern National Parks & Monuments Association has made dramatic strides since first coming aboard at Pea Ridge in the early 1960s. Under Site Manager Troy Banzhaf, ENP&MA sales have reached the \$80,000 mark. Considering the two or three hundred dollars in sales of the first years, ENP&MA has come a long way over the years.

Banzhaf was first hired in 1992 as a Sales Clerk for ENP&MA. In 1994, he was promoted to Site Manager. His duties have included ordering new inventory items, rining up sales, taking care of ENP&MA payroll, taking care of cash receipts and depositing the sales, restocking the sales shelves, financial management, and assisting visitors. On occasion, Site Manager Banzhaf gives talks to college students, repairs audio-visual equipment, opens the Visitor Center, and collects entrance fees. Banzhaf also has earned a red card for firefighting; in this role, he usually serves as radio dispatcher, however.

Since joining the Pea Ridge staff, Banzhaf has introduced more than 100 new sales items to the ENP&MA list. New items such as books, hard tack, pins, patches, and postcards have been added to the inventory to broaden the visitors' choices for purchasing Civil War memorabilia.

As the ENP&MA representative at Pea Ridge, Site Manager Banzhaf offers a variety of sales items for visitors as well as assistance to them. Likewise, because the park is understaffed he plays an important role assisting staff by attending to visitors as well as serving on the firefighting team.<sup>114</sup>

Conclusion (to 1997)

The park has come a long way since its opening in 1963. The Mission 66 goals and strategies of that time have given way to

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<sup>113</sup>Interview of Sheri Nodine, November 21, 1996.

<sup>114</sup>Interview of Troy Banzhaf, February 26, 1997.

a new awareness about natural and cultural resources reflected in the protection strategies put forward by Superintendent Steve Adams and his staff. No longer is the park operated and administered under the "rule" of the Superintendent, rather a team approach has replaced the somewhat autocratic administrative style of the early 1960s. During the gradual transformation of the park, larger national cultural and natural resource issues were superimposed on the administration of Pea Ridge NMP. The results have been noticeable, especially in the last ten years.

Adams' continued public relations and management developmental strategies are paying big dividends. The Friends of Pea Ridge National Military Park, the Battlefield Protection Program, and the team approach to administration are some excellent examples of a maturing administrative strategem for the park; ethnographic research also will enhance the service capabilities of the park. As Adams reported in 1995, "Our resources management program took some major strides forward in research and projects to support management goals; as a result, the park is looking ever more as it did during the time of the battle, and we are paying long-overdue attention to our natural resources." The Pea Ridge NMP has joined the Modern Era largely because of the progressive mindset of its current Superintendent and the cultural and natural resources are receiving the attention they have deserved from the beginning. The ultimate result is historical and environmental integrity never before seen at the Pea Ridge park. This new philosophy forewarns of a positive future for one of America's largest and very significant national military parks.

APPENDIX A: Legislation

An Act To provide for the inspection of the battle field of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, approved June 9, 1926 (44 Stat. 715)

Pea Ridge, Ark., battle field. Commission created.

Army Engineer officer.

United States Civil War veteran.

Confederate States Civil War veteran.

Qualifications of commission.

Inspection and report on feasibility of preserving, for historical study, etc.

Amount authorized for expenses. Post, p. 878.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That a commission is hereby created, to be composed of the following members, who shall be appointed by the Secretary of War:

(1) A commissioned officer of the Corps of Engineers, United States Army;

(2) A veteran of the Civil War who served honorably in the military forces of the United States; and

(3) A veteran of the Civil War who served honorably in the military forces of the Confederate States of America.

SEC. 2. In appointing the members of the commission created by section 1 of this Act the Secretary of War shall, as far as practicable, select persons familiar with the terrain of the battle field of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, and the historical events associated therewith.

SEC. 3. It shall be the duty of the commission, acting under the direction of the Secretary of War, to inspect the battle field of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, in order to ascertain the feasibility of preserving and marking for historical and professional military study such field. The commission shall submit a report of its findings and an itemized statement of its expenses to the Secretary of War not later than December 1, 1926.

SEC. 4. There is authorized to be appropriated out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$2,000 or such part thereof as may be necessary, in order to carry out the provisions of this Act.

PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEA  
RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, IN THE STATE OF  
ARKANSAS

JUNE 13, 1956.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State  
of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. ENGLE, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H. R. 11611]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 11611) to provide for the establishment of the Pea Ridge National Military Park, in the State of Arkansas, having considered the same, report favorably thereon without amendment and recommend that the bill do pass.

PURPOSE OF H. R. 11611

If enacted, H. R. 1611 would provide for the establishment of the Pea Ridge National Military Park, in the State of Arkansas, after all lands to be included within said park have been donated and transferred free and clear of all encumbrances to the United States without expense to the Federal Government.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BATTLE OF PEA RIDGE

The Battle of Pea Ridge, Ark., March 7 and 8, 1862, also known as the Battle of Elkhorn Tavern, has been referred to as the Gettysburg of the West. The Union victory in this battle thwarted a Confederate attempt to take Missouri and ended major hostilities for several years in the area west of the Mississippi.

The importance and historical significance of the Battle of Pea Ridge may best be realized when one considers that had the Confederates gained a decisive victory at Pea Ridge, they probably would have taken Missouri. Much of the State was pro-Southern in sentiment; she was the eighth largest State and was strategically located with respect to Kansas, Nebraska, Illinois, and Arkansas; she could control

the Mississippi River; and she bordered Kentucky and Tennessee. Some historians believe that had Missouri gone with the Confederacy the whole story of the Civil War might have been different.

The committee notes that the Battle of Pea Ridge has been of particular significance and interest to the people of Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, western Kentucky, and western Tennessee.

The significance of the Battle of Pea Ridge is well presented in a report prepared by the Legislative Reference Service (J. S. Sweet, History and General Research Division, May 28, 1956), Library of Congress. The report was prepared at the request of this committee and is set forth following:

#### THE BATTLE OF PEA RIDGE

The Battle of Pea Ridge (or Elkhorn Tavern), Ark., March 7 and 8, 1862, like many of the other Civil War operations in the trans-Mississippi region, is often given little attention because the main theater of activity, as the Civil War developed, was to the east. The Union victory at Pea Ridge, in the northwestern tip of Arkansas, however, ended major hostilities for several years in the area west of the Mississippi.

The principal importance of Pea Ridge is that the Union victory there thwarted a Confederate attempt to take Missouri. A critical question for the Union at the outset of the war was whether or not the so-called border States (the slave States of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri—and the area of western Virginia which subsequently became West Virginia) would join the Confederacy. Local public opinion played its role in bringing all of these States into the conflict on the Union side, but military factors were also important.

Particularly important was Missouri. Much of the State was pro-southern in sentiment, but there was a large German population in St. Louis which was strongly pronorthern. "Had Missouri gone with the Confederacy," states Henry S. Commager, "the whole story of the war might have been different. She was the eighth largest State; she controlled the Mississippi; she bordered Illinois and Kentucky; she commanded the road to Kansas and Nebraska" (New York Herald Tribune Book Review, Aug. 21, 1955, p. 6).

During the year 1861, rival Union and Confederate forces had been organized in Missouri. In June 1861, the Union general, Nathaniel Lyon, pursued the Confederates into southwestern Missouri. In August, he decided to attack the Confederates at Wilsons Creek, 10 miles southwest of Springfield, Mo. The Union troops were defeated and retreated toward Rolla. The Battle of Pea Ridge, just across the Arkansas border, in the following year, was decisive in breaking up a Confederate troop concentration there and bringing Missouri under definite (if precarious) Union control.

Meantime, Grant had taken Forts Henry and Donelson, on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers (February 1862)

in Tennessee. Following Pea Ridge (March) came the battle of Shiloh (April), in southwestern Tennessee, and Grant's subsequent attempts to take Vicksburg (1862-63). Most of the available troops, both Union and Confederate, were soon engaged in this struggle. One reason for the decisive character of Pea Ridge was the fact that troops on both sides were withdrawn from the area for the campaigns to the east.

The Battle of Pea Ridge came about because Union troops under Gen. Samuel R. Curtis, commander of the Union Army of the Southwest, had pursued the Confederate forces into southwestern Missouri and across the border into northwestern Arkansas following the battle of Wilson's Creek (Springfield, Mo., August 1861) and defeat of a Union force at Lexington, Mo. (September 1861). The Union forces had penetrated as far as Fayetteville, Ark., when the Union commander became aware that the Confederates were preparing to oppose him and consolidated his position at Pea Ridge, several miles south of the Missouri line in Benton County, Ark.

General Curtis was outnumbered, but the superior generalship and the fine superiority of the Union troops, plus the unreliability of some of the Indian troops on the Confederate side (many of whom proved unmanageable), and the fact that Gens. Benjamin McCulloch and James McIntosh, two of the top-ranking Confederate officers, were killed turned the battle into a Union victory. Curtis had retired to prepared fortifications near Pea Ridge, but during the night of March 6-7, 1862, Van Dorn, the Confederate commander, managed to work his forces around to the rear of Curtis' positions. Curtis, however, learned of this stratagem in time to prepare for Van Dorn's attack about 10:30 a. m. on March 7. The first day's fighting, although indecisive, went heavily against the Union troops, which were forced in several places out of their positions. Concentrating his troops in a more compact manner, next day Curtis' forces, particularly those under Siegel, who had helped organize the St. Louis Germans on the Union side, did an excellent job of knocking out most of the Confederate batteries on Pea Ridge, which lay above them to the north. One element in the Union victory was apparently the superior range of the Union rifles. Seeing that the Confederate forces were apparently in confusion, Curtis ordered a charge and dispersed them. The Confederate leaders were unable to regroup their men, who scattered into the woods.

The number of troops engaged at Pea Ridge was probably closer to 30,000, according to Monaghan, the most recent writer on the subject (p. 249), than to 60,000. Probably both the Union and Confederate commanders had more troops at their disposal, but they were not all on the scene at the time of the battle. The number of Indians on the Confederate side under Gen. Albert Pike has been estimated at between 1,000 and 5,000. Some of the troops on the Union side were probably recent German immigrants, but

no reference has been found to hired Hessians. It is possible that some Germans may have come to the United States in hopes of gaining monetary bounties paid for enlistments, and perhaps land grants after the war. (The Homestead Act, opening up much western land for free settlement, was signed in May 1862, but it had previously been passed and vetoed by President Buchanan.)

The Union victory at Pea Ridge might be regarded in one sense as being a "Gettysburg" of the West—for, like Gettysburg, it marked the failure of a southern attempt to invade Union territory. A comparison of the estimated number of troops at Gettysburg and Pea Ridge shows:

Pea Ridge:
Troops:
10,500 Union.
16,000? Confederate.
Casualties: <sup>1</sup>
1,500 Union.
1,500 Confederate.
Gettysburg:
Troops:
82,000 Union.
75,000 Confederate.
Casualties: <sup>1</sup>
23,000 Union.
30,000 Confederates.

The troops involved, of course, were far less at Pea Ridge, and the stakes were different. Had Lee won at Gettysburg, he would probably have taken Philadelphia and come up on Washington from the rear. Had the Confederates won at Pea Ridge, they would probably have taken Missouri. Pea Ridge, while decisive in its area, was not on the grand scale of Gettysburg.

Estimates as to the number of troops at Pea Ridge vary, but according to Jay Monaghan (*Civil War on the Western Border, 1854-65*, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1955, p. 336), there were 26,700 there, as compared to Westport, 29,000 men (October 1864); Prairie Grove, 24,000 (December 1862); Lexington, 21,000 men (September 1861); and Wilson's Creek, 15,575 men (August 1861). These were all battles in the area west of the Mississippi. Westport, at which the third attempt of the Confederates to invade Missouri was defeated, has itself been called "the Gettysburg of the West" (*Dictionary of American History*, vol. 5, p. 449). "In every one of these engagements," says Monaghan, "except Pea Ridge, the army with the greatest number won the victory—a commentary on Curtis' generalship when at his best." The Confederates were badly outnumbered at Westport, on the outskirts of Kansas City, Mo.

Van Dorn, the Confederate commander at Pea Ridge, Monaghan states elsewhere (p. 249), "entered the conflict with an army estimated as numbering from 16,000 to 25,800 men, and on March 11, 1862, he was reported to have only 2,894 answer rollcall—a misleading statement, for many more

<sup>1</sup> Killed, wounded, and missing.

reported later. Van Dorn declared his losses to be 1,000 with an additional 300 made prisoner. Curtis, with 10,500 men before the battle, admitted losing 1,384 in killed, wounded, and missing."

Following are some other comparative figures: <sup>1</sup>

Pea Ridge:  
Troops  
10,500 Union  
16,000? Confederate  
Casualties:  
1,500 Union  
1,500? Confederate

Seven Days' Battles:  
Troops:  
105,000 Union  
86,500 Confederate  
Casualties:  
16,000 Union  
20,000 Confederate

Chancellorsville:  
Troops:  
130,000 Union  
60,000 Confederate  
Casualties:  
17,000 Union  
12,500 Confederate

Shiloh:  
Troops:  
55,000 Union  
50,000 Confederate  
Casualties:  
10,000 Union  
10,000 Confederate

Antietam:  
Troops:  
50,000 Union  
40,000 Confederate  
Casualties:  
12,000 Union  
9,000 Confederate

Chickamauga:  
Troops:  
60,000 Union  
60,000 Confederate  
Casualties:  
16,000 Union  
16,000 Confederate

Wilderness-Cold Harbor:  
Troops:  
118,000 Union  
60,000 Confederate  
Casualties:  
55,000 Union  
30,000? Confederate

What effect had Pea Ridge on saving Missouri, southern Illinois, Arkansas, and the Indian territory (Oklahoma) for the Union?

The Battle of Pea Ridge undoubtedly saved Missouri from the threat of Confederate attack. The State was the scene of much guerrilla activity during the subsequent period, but so far as overall control was concerned, it was principally under Federal control.

<sup>1</sup> These figures are all rough approximations.

Had the Confederates been able to take St. Louis, they might have been able to extend their control over the contiguous area in southern Illinois. As Pea Ridge was the point at which the proposed attack on St. Louis was halted, it is possible that success at Pea Ridge might have led to Confederate seizure of St. Louis and an invasion of southern Illinois.

The situation in Arkansas following Pea Ridge became more favorable to the Union, and General Curtis, the Union commander at Pea Ridge, was able to take Batesville, threaten Little Rock, and go on to Helena, on the Mississippi. This might have been considered a direct consequence of Pea Ridge. Most of southwestern Arkansas remained in Confederate hands during the war, however, although the Union troops managed to take Little Rock in September 1863.

The Five Civilized Tribes, being slaveholders, generally supported the Confederacy. Some Oklahoma Indian troops fought at Pea Ridge on the Confederate side. Some of them proved to be unreliable soldiers who had no real desire to aid the South. The Indian Territory itself was split between Confederate and Union sympathizers, and was a constant scene of guerrilla war. Parts were under the control of pro-Union Indians and parts under the control of pro-Southern Indians.

Although fighting went on on a hit-and-run basis in Missouri, Arkansas, and the Indian Territory, Pea Ridge is generally agreed to have been decisive in ending the concerted Confederate attempt to gain predominant control of the area. After Pea Ridge (and Apache Canyon, N. Mex., March 1862), the Confederate forces west of the Mississippi were generally on the defensive, except for guerrilla and raiding activities. The general Confederate strategy throughout the war, was of course, defensive.

As such, it was an important factor in clearing the Mississippi area of effective Confederate opposition. Grant's victories at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, the Union victories at New Madrid and Island No. 10, the Confederate retreat at Shiloh, Memphis, New Orleans, and, above all, the Union invasion of Mississippi and victory at Vicksburg (July 4, 1863), were all essential parts of this operation. Pea Ridge was decisive in ridding the northern part of Arkansas and most of Missouri of hostile Confederate forces.

What was the influence of Pea Ridge on Kentucky and Tennessee?

Viewed as part of the Union's general strategy to clear the Mississippi Valley of Confederate troops, failure at Pea Ridge, and at New Madrid, Mo., and at Island No. 10, in the Mississippi, southeastern Missouri (March and April 1862) would have been a definite setback. Had the Confederacy won at Pea Ridge, it certainly would have followed up its victory by attempting to occupy Missouri up to the Missouri River line or farther, and perhaps to take St. Louis. Assuming success, they would then have been in a position to attack the Union forces in Kentucky and Tennessee. Perhaps the

Union would have had to fight the Confederacy in Missouri once more before proceeding to the invasion of Mississippi. The Union objective of seizing control of the Mississippi would probably have been delayed, to some extent, at least.

The extent of the Confederate threat to Kentucky and Tennessee, supposing it to come from Missouri, would depend, of course, on the number of troops the Confederacy would have been willing to commit in that area. Most of the available Confederate troops, as it developed, were concentrated by Jefferson Davis east of the Mississippi. Davis had to meet the aggressive threat of Grant's troops as well as think about raiding the Union rear. By the time of Pea Ridge, Grant was already approaching northern Mississippi. The Federals were only momentarily halted at Shiloh (April 1862). A Confederate success at Pea Ridge might have enabled the South to rush a few more troops to Shiloh. The available evidence indicates Van Dorn had difficulty reforming his forces after Pea Ridge. Probably some of them never came back, but joined guerrilla bands. However, by the time the Union took Corinth, Miss. (October 1862), Southern troops in the area were far outnumbered.

Had the Confederates won Pea Ridge and gone on to take Missouri, it is possible that they might have been in a position, with the Indian allies, to exert pressure on Kansas Territory to the west. They might have been able to raid or invade Kansas, destroying crops and interfering to some extent with Northern food supplies originating in that area. A certain amount of this raiding did go on during the Civil War, despite the fact that Missouri was in nominally Union hands. Had Missouri been under complete Confederate control, the raids on Kansas would have doubtless been much more effective. Possibly Confederate raids might have been staged on Iowa to the north also, but it would have been easier to raid Kansas.

The fact that the gold and silver mining areas of Nevada and California were in Union hands, of course, was useful to the Union in maintaining the soundness of its currency during the Civil War. Although both Union and Confederate currency depreciated, there is no doubt that Union finances were in a stronger position. At the outset of the Civil War, the Butterfield Stage Route to California, which was a predominantly southern route through Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, and New Mexico, was necessarily closed to the Union. The North therefore had to rely on a more northerly route. The route of the Overland Trail, which went through the Platte Valley to Wyoming, with its California cutoff via Nevada, was still open. Had the Confederacy taken all of Missouri following Pea Ridge, they might have been able to seize the eastern terminus of this route. However, it might have been shifted north in that event, or gold and silver shipments might have been sent by sea. The decisive factor was that California and Nevada, where the gold and silver mines were located, were in Union hands.

8 ESTABLISHMENT OF PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

While it was not a major battle on the scale of Gettysburg, Pea Ridge was decisive in its area. The war was decided elsewhere, but outside of the Red River campaign of 1864, and the Battle of Westport, 1864, few other Civil War operations beyond the Mississippi rank with it in historical interest.

EXPLANATION OF THE BILL

H. R. 11611 is a clean bill introduced by Representative Trimble of Arkansas following hearings on H. R. 8558, a similar bill also introduced by Mr. Trimble.

If enacted, H. R. 11611 would authorize and direct the Secretary of the Interior to make an examination of the Pea Ridge Battlefield with a view to determining the area or areas thereof deemed desirable for inclusion in the Pea Ridge National Military Park and which, except for not more than 20 acres, lie within the lands described in the bill. The measure provides that the lands designated by the Secretary shall not become a unit of the national park system until all non-Federal lands, which shall not be less than 1,200 acres, have been acquired by others and transferred in whole, free and clear of all encumbrances, to the United States without expense to the Federal Government. The land is not to be accepted piecemeal.

The measure provides that following the establishment of the Pea Ridge National Military Park the unit shall be developed, administered, and protected under the provisions of the act which established the National Park Service in 1916, as amended. It is also stipulated that in order to provide for the proper development and maintenance of the park, the Secretary of the Interior shall construct and maintain therein such roads, trails, markers, buildings, and other improvements, and such facilities for the care and accommodation of visitors as he may deem necessary.

The measure would authorize the appropriation of such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of the act.

The committee does not have an estimate of the cost of developing and maintaining the park since the National Park Service has never undertaken such a study. However, it does not appear that such costs would be substantial for the following reasons:

1. All of the necessary land will be donated to the United States;
2. Elkhorn Tavern, a landmark dating back to the Civil War days and a station on the old Butterfield Stage Route is located near the center of the battlefield and is to be donated for inclusion within the park unit. This building is reported to be in good condition and suitable for use as a museum;
3. Many battlefield and Civil War relics are in the possession of residents of the area who have expressed a desire to donate them for use in the park unit; and
4. A number of roads traverse the area, including U. S. 62; from this it would appear that only minor roads and trails to various points of interest on the battlefield may be needed for access purposes.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORT

The report of the Department of the Interior, wherein it is recommended that this legislation be not enacted, is set forth below. The assertion in the Department's report that the Battle of Pea Ridge

was not of sufficient significance appears to have been to a substantial degree refuted elsewhere in the report wherein the following statements appear:

1. The Battle of Pea Ridge was one of the largest engagements of the Civil War fought west of the Mississippi River \* \* \*.
2. Probably as much as any other single factor, the battle determined that the State of Missouri would remain Union rather than become Confederate.
3. After the battle, there was no further fighting of any major character in the State for the next 2 years.

These three facts alone well mark the decisiveness and outstanding importance of the Battle of Pea Ridge, the Gettysburg of the West. One need only to consider what the Confederacy might have done had it been able to gain the manpower, resources, and strategic location of Missouri for use against the Union early in the Civil War. The report of the Library of Congress, set forth earlier in this report, treats with this subject.

One suspects that if the Battle of Pea Ridge had been fought in the well-populated East, the main theater of the Civil War activity, it would have been given much attention and memorialized as a military park long ago.

The reports of the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of the Budget are set forth as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
Washington, D. C., April 27, 1956.

HON. CLAIR ENGLE,  
*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington 25, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. ENGLE: Your committee has requested a report on H. R. 8558, a bill to provide for the establishment of the Pea Ridge Battlefield National Park, in the State of Arkansas. This bill would require the Secretary of the Interior to acquire by gift, purchase, condemnation, or otherwise, the Pea Ridge Battlefield property, situated near Bentonville, Ark., for national park purposes.

We recommend that H. R. 8558 be not enacted.

Our studies of this proposal, as well as the advice we have received from the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, indicate that the site of the Battle of Pea Ridge and the events that took place there, although of much local interest, do not warrant inclusion of the area in the national park system. Historically, the Battle of Pea Ridge was not a decisive battle in the sense that Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Chattanooga, Vicksburg, and Antietam were significant. These areas are already represented in the national park system. The Battle of Pea Ridge was one of the largest engagements of the Civil War fought west of the Mississippi River, but the results and significance of the battle were principally regional in character. Probably as much as any other single factor, the battle determined that the State of Missouri would remain Union rather than become Confederate. After the battle, there was no further fighting of any major character in the State for the next 2 years.

10 ESTABLISHMENT OF PEA RIDGE NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

In the circumstances, we recognize that the battlefield is of much local interest and importance. The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments has expressed a wish to encourage the preservation of the battlefield, with the hope that the State or some local organization may be able to save it for public use. We concur in that suggestion, and would be pleased to cooperate with the State or any such organization desiring to develop a plan for local preservation of this historic area.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the submission of this proposed report to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,

WESLEY A. D'EWART,  
*Assistant Secretary of the Interior.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,  
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,  
*Washington 25, May 8, 1956.*

HON. CLAIR ENGLE,  
*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington 25, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in response to your request for the views of this Bureau on H. R. 8558, to provide for the establishment of the Pea Ridge Battlefield National Park, in the State of Arkansas.

The Secretary of the Interior, in a report he is making to your committee, recommends against enactment of this bill. This Bureau agrees with the views set forth in that report.

Accordingly, you are advised that the Bureau of the Budget does not recommend enactment of H. R. 8558.

Sincerely yours,

ROBERT E. MERRIAM,  
*Assistant to the Director.*

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs recommends enactment of H. R. 11611.

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APPENDIX B: Karl Betts Speech, March 7, 1960

Speech of Karl Betts, Director of the National  
Civil War Centennial Commission,  
Deed Day, March 7, 1960<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps you ladies and gentlemen of Arkansas are too close to home to appreciate fully just what you did in setting aside these historic acres, not for yourselves alone, but as a common property of all who glory, as we do, in the riches of the past.

But in the sharper focuses of distance we watched you in the unbelievably short time of two years perform what, in the words of Director Wirth of the National Park Service, was "a miracle."

The miracle, crystallized in over \$500,000, came with the freest of will from your own treasuries and without appeal to other Americans in the West, a high-water mark of who should stand equally to share with you all the renown cast upon our national history by the fields of Pea Ridge.

Please let me tell you this: Since the Civil War Centennial Commission was appointed, nothing has occurred that we hold so important as the acquisition of the Pea Ridge Battle Site and its delivery to the National Park Service for perpetuation.

From here you have fenced about a veritable "Gettysburg" of its kind where millions will come and find within their introspections a strengthening of character.

Actually, you have forged a link in the chain of study of battlefields in the West, where many historians now agree that the war was won, and lost. For with roads, dining facilities and indeed all the benefits which the National Park Service will bring, millions of people will be encouraged to come here to examine at first hand the entire complex military operation which includes nearby Prairie Grove and other sites in Arkansas where more than 450 battles and war events occurred.

Here, also, is something of deepest importance: When the State of Arkansas acquired these battle acres, it purchased land in depth. This means that the land on which the actual fighting occurred is protected by "a wall" of surrounding land.

This was not done at either Gettysburg or Antietam--and now to everyone's dismay. For right now, against that hallowed ground are being marshalled battalions of juke-box joints and nondescript enterprises of all sorts, disturbing to the view,

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<sup>1</sup>Betts' speech appeared in the Rogers Daily News, March 10, 1960.

and disquieting to the spell of the historic parks themselves.

By your generosity and will to keep alive the American heritage within your borders, you have placed Arkansas notably alongside Virginia from a standpoint of student interest in the war. These more than 4000 acres which you have memorialized are suggestive of sites, say, at Fredericksburg, sites which unfailingly stir the visitor to travel along to Chancellorsville, the Wilderness, to Spottsylvania, or not-too-distant Gettysburg.

Indeed, you may be too close upon it to know fully the enormous contribution you have made. And I need be no prophet to say that other States will follow your far-seeing lead.

That lies ahead. But here today, in the stillness of hills once trembling under massed and troubled guns, our minds may relive that March day of 99 years ago and the crimson contest of arms which weighed the hopes of the Confederacy in all this region.

Remember that Arkansas was a vital state in the Confederacy planning beyond the Mississippi River. Remember how in March of 1862 that very energetic general, West Pointer Earl Van Dorn, had a plan of his own of no less size than the capture of St. Louis, to be followed by an aggressive movement into Illinois. In general command, Van Dorn had strong lieutenants to aid him.

There was General Sterling Price, native of Prince Edward County, Virginia, but Missourian to the heart by adoption, a veteran of the Mexican War, former Governor of Missouri, and utterly loved by his soldiers who called him "Old Pap."

And there was General Ben McCulloch, himself a veteran of Mexico, a one-time Texas Ranger and Indian fighter. He has been called "a good practical soldier," one with a passion for marksmanship, an edge for straight shooting which he insisted that all his soldiers share. It was by capricious fate that he himself was killed by a sharpshooter at Pea Ridge. You know, of course, the legend that Wild Bill Hickock fired the bullet.<sup>2</sup>

And there was General Albert Pike, with all of a soldier's daring, a scholar he was with a scholar's brooding brow, and an amazing facility for handling Indians.

There was the immovable Stand Watie, Red Man who rose to brigadier--the only Indian general officer in the Confederacy.

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<sup>2</sup>No evidence exists to substantiate Bett's claim that Wild Bill Hickock shot McCulloch.

And behind these two stalwarts, Pike and the Indian, filed three Indian regiments with rifles and knives, highly civilized Indians of Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, and Seminole tribes.

An early March snow covered the ground, holding the columned tracks of Van Dorn's Confederates as they moved against the Federal lines commanded by General Samuel Curtis on Sugar Creek, here at Pea Ridge. Each commander counted some 14,000 men<sup>3</sup>--a fair line-up as many Civil War battles were to go.

And Van Dorn did a dangerous thing in military practice: He divided his force in the presence of the enemy, a thing that Robert E. Lee did once or twice and got away with. Van Dorn placed McCulloch's force as a right wing before the enemy. He dispatched Price against the Federal's rear. Those were good striking positions, at first blush--and on paper.

But seven miles intervened between the two corps commanders and seven hard miles those were, miles of crumpled hills, of gullies, creeks, and woods.

Contact naturally vanished. And Curtis proved himself a good outdoors fighter. He strung his lines back to back, shifting troops constantly to points of great need.

McCulloch's Confederates on the right wing received a fearful fire, and watched their General die. General James McIntosh, the second in command, met his death; the ranking officer, Colonel Louis Hébert, of the Third Louisiana, became a prisoner.

So, leaderless and consequently without orders, the troops of the dead McCulloch gave way in withdrawal--leaving the hard-swinging Curtis free for severer blows at Price--who, be it said, fought back mightily. Next day when the guns were quiet, McCulloch's men rejoined Sterling Price.

The upshot of this battle was a withdrawal by Van Dorn, upon learning that the Federals had cut him off from his ammunition supply. He retired growling, as old soldiers would say, with stinging rear-guard actions.

To the Secretary of War he reported: 'Although I did not, as I had hoped, capture or destroy the enemy's army, I have inflicted upon it a heavy blow, and compelled him to fall back into Missouri; this he did about the 16th inst.'

There was more to it than just that, of course.

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<sup>3</sup>The Confederate fielded about 16,000 soldiers and the Federals about 10,000.

For now in the quiet aftermaths, when the muse of history has spoken and the story streams clear to us in our arm chairs at home, we know that on the Union side 203 were killed, 980 wounded and 201 missing. And for the Confederates, 800 to 1000 were slain and wounded, with 200 to 300 missing and captured.

There, at least, was the poignant meaning; for they were good Americans, all of them, killed or hurt for principle as dear to one side as the other. The valor of Pea Ridge is as timeless as the bravery of Thermopylae where the simple inscription says: "Stranger, go tell it in Sparta that we lie here in obedience to her commands."

Men will come and go from here with varying notions of who won the fight--and it does matter in the scales of ultimate results. As a matter of fact, the Battle of Pea Ridge virtually ended the war in Missouri. The Confederates were never again able to invade the State in force.

So now the battle sleeps forever. But something still lives--the inspiration of the courage and sacrifice it handed down to us all who unite in the untorn family of America.

Remember that this field which Arkansas so generously gives to the United States will be a tremendous stage in the unfolding drama of the Civil War Centennial. Your precious gift comes at the most opportune time.

For the Centennial opens on January 8, 1961, ten months to the day from tomorrow. During the ensuing five years millions of people will visit Pea Ridge, Gettysburg, Antietam, Shiloh, Chickamauga, the Virginia Peninsula, all the combat sites and some among them with some slightly-known names as Saylor's Creek, New Hope Station, Raccoon Ford, and Red Bone.

Your great State, through foresight, a love of its heritage, and an almost unparalleled generosity, is ready for the Centennial. You need take your hats off to nobody.

With your interest in the Centennial so dramatically asserted, you will want to hear, I am sure, a little of what's going on elsewhere. Forty states have now organized Centennial Commissions and over 700 distinguished Americans are now serving as members of our Advisory Council.

Impressive opening day ceremonies are being planned for Sunday, January 8, 1961, when the Centennial curtain arises all over the Nation. Colorful religious services in the churches of every faith, and a proclamation from the President of the United States are being scheduled for this auspicious occasion.

On succeeding anniversary dates throughout the Centennial, many observances, re-enactments and special programs are being planned by communities in every section of our country.

Our nationwide publicity service to 3000 daily and weekly newspapers; our Speakers' Bureau; projected films and tourist maps, commemorative medals and stamps all will serve to focus public attention on this most significant era in American history.

Interest in the Centennial is mounting rapidly throughout the country and most impressive about this interest is the sincerity, the enthusiasm and the good humor displayed by our citizens both in the South and in the North.

Indeed the intensive preparations now being made in Virginia, in South Carolina, in Mississippi and elsewhere leads me to the strong suspicion that while the South may have lost the war it surely intends to win the Centennial!

But our National Commission desires above all to emphasize the great lessons learned from the conflict--to encourage the study of Civil War history and, in doing so, to perpetuate for coming generations the high aspirations, the enthusiasm and the complete dedication to principle in those sturdy ancestors of ours of a century ago!

It is an undertaking in which we all can proudly join!

Always for me, to look ahead is to spice my days with delight. Just like all of you, there are so many things I want to do--more things than I can do, indeed; but some things I certainly shall.

One of those promises is already marked in my little book of days to come. And that great expectation is to return to Pea Ridge in March of 1962, for any exercises you may choose to have by way of anniversary dedication.

I want to come back for several reasons--to witness the exercises and to be once more among the people of Arkansas who are always so good to me. And to experience the peace of these hills which holds long in my heart in Washington.

During the last two years I have made some new friends whom I prize very highly--Mr. Sam Dickinson, the able and dedicated Chairman of your State Centennial Commission; and the resourceful, keen and aggressive Centennial co-ordinator of your State, Mr. George H. Benjamin.

I assure you that I am looking forward with keenest pleasure to my continued association with these gentlemen and with the

other members of your fine Commission in forwarding our Centennial program.

You were good to have me here today. I shall carry away strong memories, and leave with you the gratitude of the Commission I represent and its most heartfelt good wishes.

APPENDIX C: Visitation



Visitation, 1963 to 1995

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Vistors</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Number of Visitors</u>
1963	44,694	1986	131,161
1964	68,804	1987	98,688
1965	96,804	1988	108,075
1966	104,087	1989	104,612
1967	120,587	1990	109,972
1968	142,245	1991	103,034
1969	134,990	1992	117,025
1970	135,785	1993	77,686
1971	133,721	1994	90,407
1972	184,545	1995	106,513
1973	110,000		
1974	86,288		
1975	94,473		
1976	101,314		
1977	95,392		
1978	110,036		
1979	94,197		
1980	94,687		
1981	105,117		
1982	105,296		
1983	113,930		
1984	124,282		
1985	118,613		

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