



Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Division of State Parks  
1-800-334-6946

The Teacher's Guide  
To  
Battle of Pilot Knob  
State Historic Site  
Pilot Knob, Mo.



This guide made possible by the parks, soils and water sales tax.

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**GOAL:**

This guide will acquaint you with Fort Davidson and the Battle of Pilot Knob.

**OBJECTIVES:**

Teachers using this guide will find out why this Civil War site, located in the southeast corner of the Missouri Ozarks, can be a rewarding topic of study and an interesting place to visit for school classes of a variety of education levels.

This guide supports the criteria in Missouri's Show Me Standards of social studies, science, communication arts and fine arts.

## **Fort Davidson: A Historical Summary**

Fort Davidson is in a very rugged part of the Ozarks called the St. Francois (pronounced like St. Frances) Mountains. The area is not like the other parts of the Ozarks. It is primarily volcanic in origin and characterized by tall freestanding hills. In the days of early Missouri settlement, the area was known to be rich in minerals, lead, copper and iron, but it was hard to get to. The lands were not surveyed completely until the 1830s (10 or more years after Missouri became a state), and so settlement was slow to develop.

Finally, in the 1840s, a team of St. Louis and Ste. Genevieve businessmen conceived and started the iron producing ventures, which they hoped would make them famous and rich. Their iron mines were connected to the company's home offices by a road made of wood planks.

When the wood plank road wore out, the businessmen reorganized their company, calling it the Pilot Knob Iron Co. and they built a narrow gauge railroad, the first west of the Mississippi River, to connect the mines with foundries in St. Louis. The rail was called the Iron Mountain Railroad. Completed in 1858, it began in downtown St. Louis and terminated at the iron mine at Pilot Knob Mountain. It ran two passenger and freight trains a day, covered about 100 miles each way and required six or seven hours of travel time.

By 1860, the mines and the railroad were active and vibrant. The company promoted growth of rail siding towns like De Soto, Pilot Knob and Irondale. Had it not been for the Civil War, the Pilot Knob Iron Co. might have been one of 19<sup>th</sup> century America's most successful businesses.

Pilot Knob's mining activity attracted people from all over the United States and several foreign countries. In 1861, when the Civil War began, Pilot Knob and the surrounding valley were home to new settlers from Ireland and Germany.

There were also merchants from New England, cow and calf producers from Virginia and many others just passing through.

Except for a few residents who hailed from Virginia, few in the valley had any enthusiasm for joining the Confederacy even though Missouri's newly elected governor wished to do so. Store owners and company officials tolerated the U.S. Army, which arrived mid-summer of 1861. The commanding officer of the Illinois troops stationed in Ironton, then, was Ulysses S. Grant, who stayed for just a couple of weeks and then went on to his wartime career.

Southeast Missouri suffered at the hands of Confederate partisans (guerrillas) as much as other parts of the state. Nearly all Civil War students know about the exploits of Jesse James and Bloody Bill Anderson. They had an excellent publicist by the name of John N. Edwards. The ones he did not write about go unknown, but yet, even around Pilot Knob, these partisan fighters had the U.S. Cavalry so compromised that a new fort was built at Pilot Knob in 1863, called Fort Davidson, named for the commander of the Southeast Missouri District, John W. Davidson.

It was a fortified cavalry outpost manned by local Union volunteers. Fort Davidson was built out of earth, hexagonal in shape, surrounded by deep trenches, and supplied with four huge cannons and several smaller ones with a large magazine (ammunition storage) in the center.

For most of the war, Union cavalymen from Fort Davidson harried, attacked and captured Confederate partisans and sympathizers. They would ride out into the countryside on a monthly basis to hunt out and destroy these partisans.

Then, in the summer of 1864, the Missouri Confederate commander, Sterling Price, moved out of his camps in southwest Arkansas, through Union lines near Little Rock and into Missouri. This was Price's Raid, the longest cavalry raid in the Civil War. Price's objectives were to remain in Missouri as long as possible, to destroy as much Union property as possible and to bring the sentiments of Missourians around to supporting the Confederate cause.

Near the end of September, he had recruited many men, invaded Missouri, and planned to attack St. Louis. Then, he and his fellow commanders decided to over-run Fort Davidson along the way. The Union commander of Missouri, Gen. Rosecrans, in St. Louis, did not know what was exactly going on until Gen. Price marched through and sacked Fredericktown, only 20 miles east of Fort Davidson.

Quickly, Rosecrans sent Gen. Thomas Ewing, one of his staff officers, and two companies of an Iowa unit just passing through St. Louis, down to Pilot Knob to re-enforce the small regiment of volunteers there. Once there, Ewing prepared for the expected attack. Price had 12,000 men. Ewing had only 1,500.

The two armies met on Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 27, at Pilot Knob.

Price surrounded Fort Davidson, pounded it with withering cannon fire and subjected the defenders to deadly sharp-shooting attacks. When Ewing and his men refused to surrender, generals Marmaduke and Fagan unleashed their fighters. They stormed the walls unsuccessfully three times.

By sun down, Price's men had not overcome the men in Fort Davidson. Despite suffering staggering casualties that afternoon, Price's men failed to take the walls of Fort Davidson. They retired and began making scaling ladders for the next day's attack.

Gen. Ewing and his men came to the conclusion that evening, after measuring what they had left in the powder magazine, that they could not withstand another day's fighting. They decided to evacuate the fort, taking a couple of cannons with them. In the dark early morning they marched out of the fort, past Gen. Price's men, who mistook them for their own men. Once past the enemy, they marched out of the valley. A few men were assigned to lag behind long enough to set fire to the magazine and blow it up.

A couple of hours before sunrise, they did, and the powder magazine exploded with a resounding blast heard for miles around. Gen. Price and his men thought the explosion was an accident and did not investigate. When they did, they found the fort in ruins and the men gone.

Gen. Price sent Gen. Marmaduke to pursue Ewing and his men through the rough hills. It was not much use, for Gen. Ewing went swiftly and cleverly, finally defending a small rail side town called Leasburg, which was on the way to Rolla. Rolla was well defended and soon Union regiments from there arrived to reinforce Gen. Ewing and his men. Gen. Marmaduke decided to rejoin Price and continue the raid west to Jefferson City.

Gen. Price conducted his raid through Missouri until he was soundly defeated in late October just over the state line in Kansas. Price and his men were crossing Mine Creek. They could not get over fast enough to save their wagons full of loot so they left in confusion. Many of Price's men and several of the officers, including generals Marmaduke and Cabell, were captured.

The Battle of Pilot Knob at Fort Davidson prevented Gen. Price from attacking St. Louis. By the time he arrived near St. Louis, the Union forces had the city well defended.

Price's soldiers were near exhaustion and completely demoralized for the rest of the raid through Missouri. Other than the property damage caused by his huge, undisciplined force, Gen. Price's raid failed to rally Confederate Missourians.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site offers a variety of interesting topics to investigate. Tour guides at the historic site often discuss several subjects. They may include the natural history of the region, a short introduction to the geology of the area, 19<sup>th</sup> century pioneer life in the Ozarks, military technology and Civil War history in Southern Missouri, in addition to explanations about Fort Davidson and the battle.

## SHOW ME STANDARDS

For those concerned with developing activities that help meet the requirements of the 1996 Show Me Standards, a visit to Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site or class time devoted to Fort Davidson and the Battle of Pilot Knob can address at least these standard performance requirements:

### Social Studies

- #1. Knowledge of principals expressed in important U.S. documents  
(i.e. Missouri freed its slaves almost one year before the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment put an end to slavery across the United States. The historic site has the document that proves it and a future governor of the state who fought here did it.)
- #2. Knowledge of Missouri history – changes and continuities  
(i.e. Missouri became a state in 1821. It quickly developed from a frontier unmapped territory to one of the most populous states by 1860. Many people from diverse parts of the United States and foreign countries settled in Missouri. The many different cultures and regional communities in Missouri have often been a factor causing sharp political and social conflicts. This was especially true in Missouri during the Civil War.)
- #5. Knowledge of major elements of geographical study and analysis  
(i.e. Settlement in the Ozarks depended on having natural resources to develop and sell close at hand. Pilot Knob and Arcadia Valley would not have been the important places they were during the Civil War if there was no iron ore.

The rugged terrain in the St. Francois Mountains prevented easy access to the Arcadia Valley. It required more time and money to settle and develop the area than elsewhere.)

- #6. Knowledge of how individuals and groups relate to institutions and cultural traditions  
(i.e. There were very many kinds of settlers in the southeast Missouri Ozarks and they all had differing opinions of the Civil War and its causes. Pilot Knob was very pro-Union, Arcadia very pro-Southern and Ironton was caught in the middle. Why? (See Q&A section.)

This battle had about 70 African-Americans participating in it. Some, even black civilians, manned cannons. Several short stories have been located about the African-American influence in this battle.

The German miners and their communities: They just built a church only to have it used as a hospital. Many of them fought in the battle and later wrote a letter to a St. Louis German paper complaining about how they were treated by the Union officers.

What was the woman's role in the war? Was a woman in uniform common? (One was reportedly found among the dead Confederates here.) What tasks did women commonly do for the soldiers?

- #7. Knowledge of the use of tools of social science inquiry  
(i.e. Fort Davidson visitor center has a small research library that is open to the public and holds a wide variety of research tools for the social scientist, the historian, etc.)

## **Science**

- #8. Knowledge of the impact of science, etc. on resources and the environment  
(i.e. Technological development: hand grenades, rifled and repeating rifles; The growth of sophisticated studies in physics: cannon trajectories; Environmental science: denuding forests for coal, iron mining, smelting; Geology: creation of the St. Francois Mountain region can be plainly seen at Pilot Knob.)

## **Communication Arts**

The visitor center at Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site displays several kinds of exhibits. They assist visitors and students by developing an appreciation of historical records of all kinds and an appreciation for over-all comprehension of oral and visual presentations and these standards:

- #3. Proficiency in reading and evaluating non-fiction  
(i.e. The visitor center library has Civil War era newspapers, reports, letters and military manuals. Newspaper non-fiction about the battle can be a study in itself. How can two newspapers reporting a speech about the battle by Gen. Ewing have two entirely different speeches? Is either a historical document? Were they also creative in reporting Col. Fletcher's speech? )
- #4. Proficiency in writing formal and informal reports  
(i.e. There are multitudes of subjects relating to Fort Davidson and the battle that can be used for reports and research papers.)
- #5. Comprehending and evaluating presentations  
(i.e. The visitor center has two presentations about the battle - a fiber optic display that uses a map of the local area and a 20-minute video narrative that uses both first and third person storytelling techniques.)
- #6. Proficiency in formal and informal presentations and discussions  
(i.e. There are several controversial topics relating to Fort Davidson and the battle, the mining and the settlement of Arcadia Valley that would be ideal to debate.)



## **Fine Arts**

#1. Process and techniques for the production, exhibition or performance of one or more of the visual or performed arts.

(i.e. The battle and surrounding events are a drama, which Civil War historians and re-enactors sometimes recreate. Develop/perform a skit/play about the battle (#4 additions).)

#4. Knowledge of interrelationships of visual and performance arts and relationship of the arts to other disciplines-

(i.e. In conveying the story of the battle and of the people in it, the exhibits and presentations at Fort Davidson use several kinds of art – visual, graphic, music, digital and early photography, and an award-winning documentary.)

#5. Visual and performing arts in historical and cultural contexts

(i.e. Discuss different types of art in the visitor center - painting of a soldier and his horse, copy of a lithograph behind the cannon, photographs – and the cultural aspects they portray.)

## **Health/Physical Education**

#3. Diseases and methods for prevention, treatment and control

(i.e. Why did so many soldiers die of disease? How prevalent was alcohol/tobacco use, heat stroke, cholera, smallpox, etc.? Other topics include rancid food served to the common soldier, medical treatment and preventions of the period.)

#4. Principles of movement and physical fitness

(i.e. Have the students form a military "rank and file" and march them at the march, quick time, double-quick and charge pace.)

## **Mathematics**

#2. Geometric and spatial sense involving measurement (including length, area, volume), trigonometry, and similarity and transformation of shapes.

(i.e. Discuss how Fort Davidson is a hexagon shape and why this would make it more difficult to attack. Also, students could measure the distance from the fort to nearby objects by estimation, pacing and using maps and rulers determine actual length and compare the results. Another task would be to take a topographic map and using algebra, determine latitude and longitude of the fort.)

## **Specific Resources for Further Study**

For those who require specific sources for research, Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site staff offers this annotated bibliography.

### **Roggensees, Bonnie - Civil War in Arcadia Valley: A Lesson Plan**

Available for free, this thick manual is full of information and suggestions useful to those planning to teach the American Civil War with a local Missouri touch. Copies of the lesson plan may be requested in advance by writing or phoning the staff at Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site. It is fully illustrated with maps, exercises, activities and a good bibliography. The lesson plan is written with fourth grade in mind, but much of it can be used with adaptations.

Further, this manual will help plan lessons with regard to the Show Me Standards. Parts I, II and III especially apply to the Social Studies Standards, particularly numbers 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7.

Parts IV and V are good when considering Communication Arts Standards, number 5, in particular.

Parts VI, VII and VIII, likewise, apply to Communication Arts Standards, number 5.

### **Cottrell, Steve and Steele, Phillip - Civil War in the Ozarks**

There is not a better book that narrates the Civil War events in Southern Missouri and Northern Arkansas. It is well illustrated and is easy to read.

### **Bartels, Carolyn - The Civil War in Missouri Day by Day**

Something happened every day in Missouri during the Civil War years, 1861-1865. Carolyn Bartels has listed everything – from the well-known battles of Wilson's Creek to little known skirmishes – in chronological order and in as much detail as she can find.

### **Fellman, Michael - Inside War**

For those who wish to read and study a highly detailed book on Missouri guerrillas fighters during the Civil War, Fellman's Inside War is one of the best. Fellman writes with both the academic scholar and the casual reader in mind.

### **Brownlee, Richard - Gray Ghosts of the Confederacy**

This book describes guerrilla warfare west of the Mississippi River, particularly in southwest Missouri and Arkansas. “Bloody Bill” Anderson and William Quantrill, the James’ brothers, Jesse and Frank, are all in this history.

### **Kennedy, Frances - The Civil War Battlefield Guide**

This is another chronological guide to Civil War battles all over the United States including Missouri. (Some guides do not include many of Missouri's Civil War battles.) Many entries include maps and all entries give concise summaries of the battle, who the commanders and forces were and exact location of the battlefield and casualty numbers.

### **Peterson, Cyrus - Pilot Knob- Thermopylae of the West**

Veterans of the Battle of Pilot Knob began holding reunions at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They would tell about what they did during the battle and what they recall happening.

Cyrus Peterson spent several years collecting and editing these stories. He arranged them in chronological order so that the reader gets a detailed narrative from the first shot of the battle to its exciting conclusion. Much of what is known about the men and battle at Fort Davidson comes exclusively from this book. This book has been re-edited and newly printed by Carolyn Bartels, mentioned above. It is for sale at the historic site.

### **Gifford, Douglas - The Battle of Pilot Knob Staff Ride & Battlefield Tour Guide**

Gifford is a major in the Missouri Army National Guard. During his career, he also taught basic military strategy and has written extensively on American military history. The Battle of Pilot Knob Staff Ride is a thorough and detailed tour of the battlefield that gives the reader opportunities to judge the leadership of both Gen. Price and Gen. Ewing and the performance of their men. Gifford does this by introducing the reader to the nine principles of war and how they were used at each stage of the battle. This is an excellent project for advanced students.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Busch, Walter - General, You Have Made the Mistake Of Your Life**

Thomas Ewing, Jr. had one of the most exciting careers in 19<sup>th</sup> century America. His success at the Battle of Pilot Knob and following retreat made him a hero. That was not all, though. He was a lawyer, a chief justice in the new state of Kansas, a U.S. Army colonel and then brigadier general, an attorney for three of the Lincoln assassination conspirators, a speculator and a railroad company president. One can read about them all in this very readable biography.

### **Castel, Albert - General Sterling Price and the Civil War In the West**

There have been only a few biographies of Gen. Price. He was governor of Missouri before the Civil War. This one not only covers Price's career during the Civil War and afterward, but also describes the political and military realities that affected his performance as a commander. Price's 1864 raid into Missouri is thoroughly described.

**Edwards, John Newman - Shelby And His Men**

And

**O'Flaherty, Daniel - General Jo Shelby-Undefeated Rebel**

John Newman Edwards was Jo Shelby's confidant and fellow officer during the Civil War. He was a talented writer and promoter. After the Civil War, he published at least two very popular works on Missouri Civil War history. They were colorfully written and dramatic. Shelby And His Men was one of them, and although fun to read, the suggested book to have is Dan O'Flaherty's biography. It is much better researched, more accurate and contains good footnotes.

**Hildebrand, Samuel S.**

**Ross, Kirby editor - Autobiography of Samuel S. Hildebrand**

When Sam Hildebrand dictated his autobiography (which appeared in print for the first time in 1870), he did it to justify his bloody deeds during the Civil War in southeast Missouri. Hildebrand became the subject of dime novels and colorful biographies. This new edition takes a close look at what Hildebrand relates and attempts to verify as much of it as possible. Out of print for many years, the autobiography has always been popular. This new edition is a valuable and reliable account of guerrilla life in southeast Missouri.

## **MUSIC AND VIDEO/DVD**

**Music CD**

**Dyer, Bob**

**With Cathy Barton and Dave Para**

**Johnny Whistletrigger: Civil War Songs from the Western Border**

**Taylor, Jim**

**The Bright and Sunny South Songs from the Civil War Vol. 1 & 2**

These CDs are very pleasant to listen to. Each features selections played and sung in a way that can be described as historic folk music. There are interesting liner notes in each CD for those who are curious about the songs.

For those wanting authentically performed Civil War era music, Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site has a couple of cassette tapes recorded by Audio-Forum (Library of Congress). Modern listeners may find the music too ornate and operatic for their taste – but it is authentic.

**Audio-Forum - Our Musical Past-Musical Selections For Bands**

**Video Discs**

**Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site - The Battle of Pilot Knob**

**History Channel - Lost Battle of the Civil War (Mine Creek, Kan.)**

**CASSETTE TAPE**

**Arcadia Valley**

**Chamber of Commerce - Battle of Pilot Knob Driving Tour on Cassette**

## GLOSSARY

Here is a list of words frequently used here at Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site that may be unfamiliar to students visiting or reading about the Battle of Pilot Knob for the first time.

**Artillery** = The formal name for cannons of all kinds. It also describes the units assigned to use cannons.

**Brigade** = Soldiers were placed in organized groups according to size. The largest group was the *division*, which might have from 3,000 to 10,000 men. It was commanded by a major general. The *division* was divided into two smaller organizations called *brigades*. The *brigade* was commanded by a brigadier general and it was similarly divided into three or more *regiments*. The *regiment* consisted of as many as 10 companies numbering up to 1,000 men, commanded by a major or a colonel. *Companies* might have as many as four squads of 20 men (although many did not). Company commanders were captains, who were assisted by lieutenants, sergeants and corporals. This organization has changed throughout United States military history and today's military organization is somewhat different.

**Cavalry** = During the Civil War, soldiers who fought on horseback were member of cavalry units. Commanders in the Ozarks favored cavalry because their forces could attack the enemy swiftly and control larger areas than infantrymen.

**Confederates** = The Confederate States of America formed when the Southern states broke away from the Union in 1861. Those who fought for the Confederate nation were called confederates. Because the rest of the country considered this rebellion against the United States, confederates were also called rebels or success (for secessionists).

**Division** = See *brigade*.

**Earthworks** = During the Civil War, military leaders found that forts made from earth protected their defensive positions from cannonballs a lot better than earlier forts made of wood or stone or brick. Fort Davidson is an earthwork.

**Guerillas** = Confederates who did not join an army unit but who fought the United States military were called guerillas, a term popularized in the Spanish Peninsular Wars in Napoleon's time. Guerilla means "little war" in Spanish and refers to the quick, anonymous small-scale style of offensive fighting. Missouri suffered through the Civil War and even thereafter at the hands of terrorizing guerilla bands.

**Hardtack** = Soldiers were issued plain, hard unleavened biscuits as a general part of their food rations. Though nearly unpalatable, the hardtack seldom ruined and was easy to carry in one's gear.

**Haversack** = Soldiers were generally issued this shoulder bag made of canvas or cloth for them to carry their personal things.

**Infantry** = Most all the soldiers joined infantry units. These units were the mainstay of both the Confederate and Union fighting forces. They marched from place to place, camped on a daily basis and often had to forage for their own food. Life was hard, unsanitary and left the poor infantrymen open to exposure. Fully one-third of every unit either died or became unfit for duty because of disease and exhaustion.

**Minie Ball** = See *rifle*.

**Musket** = See *rifle*.

**Pickets** = Soldiers put on guard duty were referred to as pickets. The place to guard was a picket post. A guard often called his duty "out on picket."

**Regiment** = See *brigade*.

**Rifle** = The main firearm for infantrymen during the Civil War.

It is also referred to as a *musket*. Before the Civil War era, most muskets did not have barrels that were rifled. They did not shoot fast or very far. It became possible, however, by the opening days of the Civil War to manufacture or buy from overseas muskets with rifled barrels, which shot accurately and much farther than older models. These muskets were often called rifles. They used, generally, a .58 caliber lead bullet called a *minie ball*. These rifles were loaded at the end of the barrel. Breach-loading models appeared later. Riflemen with breach-loading models loaded their bullets and powder through the near end of their barrel. It was easier and faster. *Breach-loading rifles* generally were lighter, and easier to carry on horseback. Therefore, they were the favorite weapons of cavalrymen.

**Soldier's Housewife** = This is a cute name for a soldier's sewing kit. It was a cloth wallet equipped with needle, thread, sometimes a thimble, a pair of snips and bits of cloth so the soldier might repair his uniform out in the field.

**Sutler** = The Confederate and Union Armies both allowed registered businessmen to accompany the soldiers with a traveling department store. Sutlers supplied everything a soldier might need or want. Many sutlers issued their own trading script that the soldiers would use instead of real cash. Often, they received a discount for doing so. Some sutlers were very good to their units and some were only cheats and liars.

**Union** = This is the name of units of the United States Army or their supporters during the Civil War. It is the same as Yankees or Northern forces.

## **Visiting Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site**

### **Before Your Visit**

Have each student find Pilot Knob on a Missouri road map.

Ask them to find other important Civil War era cities like Cape Girardeau, Greenville, Jefferson City, Boonville, Lexington, Springfield and Rolla.

Introduce students to the leading participants of the Battle of Pilot Knob. Before they arrive, the class should know who the commanders were and whether they were Union or Confederate.

Without showing the students a photo of Fort Davidson, ask each to draw for their own picture of what they think Fort Davidson was like. Tell them to save it so they can compare their picture to the real fort.

If possible, have the class review Missouri's Civil War history so that the Battle of Pilot Knob has some context.

### **Group Activities at Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site**

At Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site, students will be given a tour of the fort, time to look at the museum in the visitor center and will attend one or both, of the two media presentations. Also, if time allows, the tour guides will introduce the class to military gear like that worn by Fort Davidson's soldiers. Encourage the class to pay attention, observe the displays and the presentations closely. This is a good time for them to ask questions, learn to identify various military items and form a full impression of the Civil War era in Missouri.

### **Suggestions for Things to do After Your Visit**

If they haven't already, the class should learn more about Gen. Price's 1864 raid in Missouri. Have the class follow Gen. Price's Confederates as they fight through Missouri.

Discuss the results of the raid. Gen. Price wrote a long and congratulatory report about the raid. Does the class think he did a good job of leading the raid? How did the Battle of Pilot Knob affect Price's raid (see answer below)?

Encourage the class to discuss what might have happened if Gen. Price had performed better at Pilot Knob and gone on to attack St. Louis as he had planned. Would St. Louis have surrendered? How would it have changed the Civil War?

For those with an interest in strategy, follow the story of the battle closely. What mistakes did Gen. Price make? What mistakes did Gen. Ewing make? An excellent resource for this exercise, especially for older students, is to go through the Battle of Pilot Knob Staff Ride book by Major Gifford (mentioned in the bibliography).



If there isn't time for this depth of study, perhaps the class can take the driving tour of the Battle of Pilot Knob. Arcadia Valley has each place of the battle marked with a 'Missouri red' granite marker. The whole tour is about seven miles long, going from the east side of the valley on Highway 72 to Fort Davidson, through the cities of Arcadia, Ironton and Pilot Knob. (See this mentioned in the bibliography.) Ask tour guides or museum staff for directions and additional information.

### **Answers for Questions in the Above Sections.**

#### **1. Why was Pilot Knob very pro-Union, Arcadia very pro-Southern, and Ironton caught in the middle?**

Pilot Knob was settled by mainly Germans who were anti-slavery, as they competed with slaves in the labor field. Arcadia was settled by Kentucky Methodist stock, which largely accepted slavery.

#### **2. How did the Battle of Pilot Knob affect Price's Raid?**

The battle slowed down Price's advance through the state by five days. Price lost time coming here instead of going to St. Louis. He lost two days fighting here and at least three days chasing Ewing's troops. This allowed more Union soldiers to arrive at St. Louis and allowed the local militias more time to organize and drill.

Compare this battle to the ancient Battle of Thermopylae or the 1836 Battle of the Alamo. Both were delaying strategies. All three served their purpose. At the first two, the defenders are massacred. Here, the defenders survive.

#### **3. Would St. Louis have surrendered? How would it have changed the Civil War?**

Most scholars think that St. Louis would not have been attacked, but that Jefferson City might have been. The Union had to bring in Gen. A.J. Smith and more than 10,000 soldiers and put them between St. Louis and Price to defend the city. Price knew this by the time he reached Fredericktown.

**IF** St. Louis would have surrendered, Lincoln probably would not have been re-elected. It would have created a problem with river traffic on the Mississippi River on a scale like Vicksburg had from 1861 to July 1863. McClellan would have been president and he was willing to enter peace negotiations. This means the Confederate States of America might still have been in existence today.

Price's troops did not attack St. Louis and everyone except him considered his raid disastrous. Only today, do we realize that this raid delayed the campaign against Mobile, Ala., by six months; delayed Sherman's march to the sea by two months; and confiscated or destroyed considerable property. Price's raid lengthened the war by at least four months time as Sherman's march and the Mobile expedition were essential in causing the downfall of the Confederate government.

#### **4. What mistakes did Gen. Price make?**

While he made many mistakes, including attacking the fort instead of by-passing it, his biggest mistake, once he decided to attack, was that he did not bring his artillery to bear on the fort. He wasted his infantry in needless assaults against a fort designed to withstand cavalry and infantry attacks. Confederate artillery could have devastated the fort without the loss of Confederate lives. His second biggest mistake was chasing Ewing once he escaped. Price tied up his forces for three more days allowing the Union to consolidate their defenses around Jefferson City.

#### **5. What mistakes did Gen. Ewing make?**

Surprisingly for a novice, politically appointed general - none. Some suggest he lost some of his best troops skirmishing, which is true. However, he needed his best troops as skirmishers. Raw recruits would have been inclined to run.

When Ewing got his general's bars, his father asked President Lincoln why he did that for the "Brat." After the Battle of Pilot Knob, Lincoln asked his father what he thought of his "Brat" now.

## **Group Tour Information**

### **Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site**

118 E Maple St  
P.O. Box 509  
Pilot Knob, MO 63663

(573) 546-3454

FAX: (573) 546 2713

#### E-Mail:

[battle.of.pilot.knob.state.historic.site@dnr.mo.gov](mailto:battle.of.pilot.knob.state.historic.site@dnr.mo.gov)

Web Site: [www.mostateparks.com/park/battle-pilot-](http://www.mostateparks.com/park/battle-pilot-)

[knob-state-historic -site](#)

## **Hours**

### **Summer** (March-October)

Mondays - Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sundays: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### **Winter** (November- February)

Closed each Monday

Tuesdays - Saturdays: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sundays: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Schedule a tour by contacting Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site.

The visitor center accommodates groups of 35 students only. Larger groups should plan to split up, with one group conducting outside activities while the other group is inside.

Presentations feature a 20-minute video (open captioning available for the hearing impaired) and a 10-minute fiber-optic display. There are several interesting exhibits in the museum, too. Plan on about 30 minutes for each group of 35 students.

There is no admission price.

## **Parking**

There is plenty of parking at the historic site for buses.

## **ADA Accessibility**

Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site's visitor center accommodates wheelchairs.

Bathroom facilities also accommodate wheelchairs.

Fort Davidson, the earthwork, is not difficult to get to. It is possible to drive up to the fort and park within 25 feet.

### **Restrooms**

Large groups are somewhat compromised because the visitor center has only one bathroom and there is one outdoor bathroom for each sex. If possible, large groups should try to take care of restroom needs before arriving or schedule plenty of time before their visit.

### **Day Trips, Lunches**

If your group plans to be here for several hours, a picnic lunch might be desirable. Both Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site and nearby Elephant Rocks State Park have picnic facilities (ADA tables, water, electric, restrooms and barbecue grills).

Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site also has one large and three small picnic shelters. The large one can be reserved for a fee. Otherwise, it is available on a first come-first served basis.

Other options are restaurants in town. There are several fast-food places and several other options for more formal group meals.

### **Directions to Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site**

#### ***From St. Louis***

Take I-55 south out of St. Louis to U.S. Hwy. 67, just south of the Festus (Route A) exit. Turn right (Exit #174) onto southbound U.S. Hwy. 67 and drive past Bonne Terre, Park Hills, Leadington and into Farmington. On the south side of Farmington is the Route W overpass. Exit onto State Road 221. Travel on State Road 221 for 18 miles to the town of Pilot Knob. Cross under a railroad bridge at the entrance to town. The historic site is on the left. The trip is about one and one-half hours long.

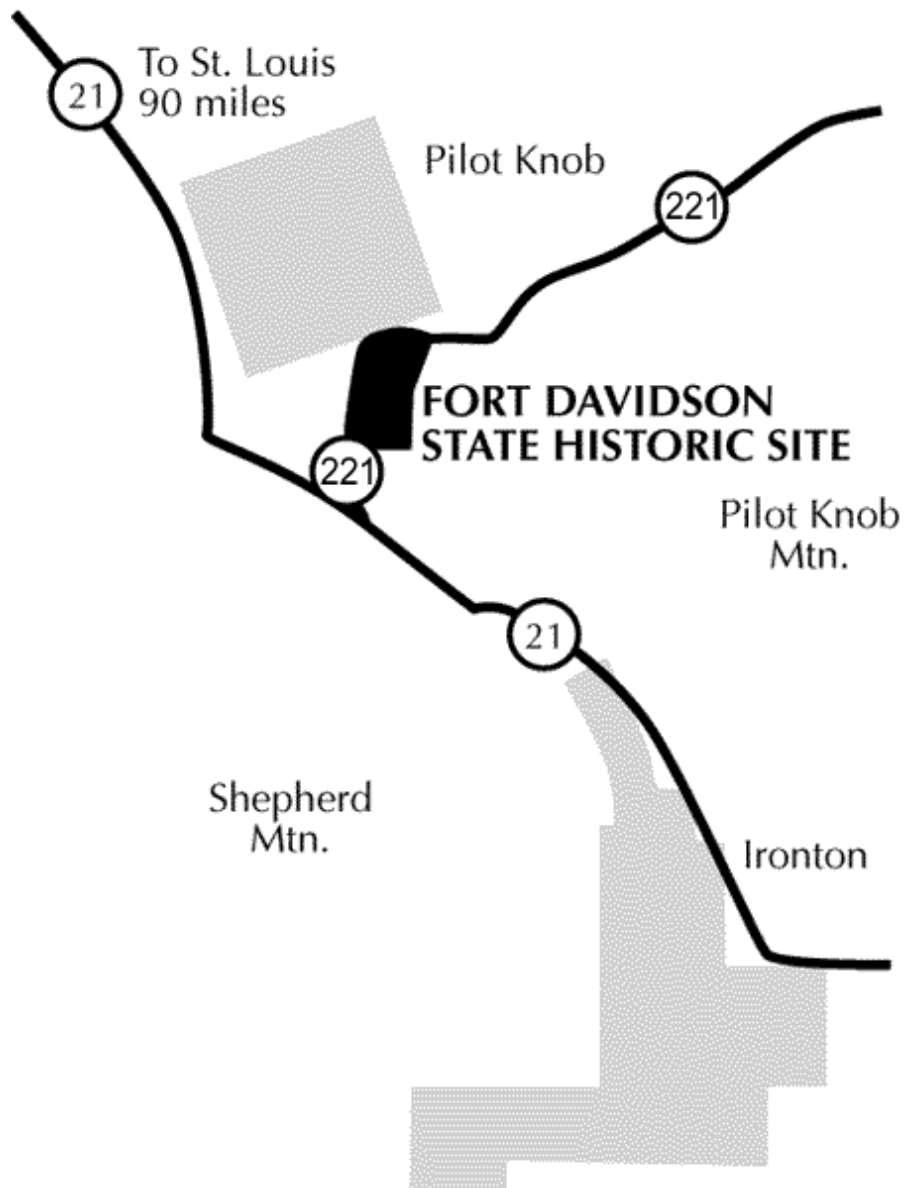
#### ***From Jefferson City***

Take U.S. Hwy. 50 east out of Jefferson City to U.S. Hwy. 63. Turn right onto U.S. Hwy. 63 and travel to Vichy. At the junction of U.S. Hwy. 63 and Hwy. 68, turn left onto Hwy. 68. Stay on Hwy. 68 through St. James. South of St. James at the junction of Hwy. 68 and Hwy. 8, stay to the left. You will be on Hwy. 8. Travel on Hwy. 8 to Potosi. As you leave Potosi, turn right onto Hwy. 21. Stay on Hwy. 21, passing Elephant Rocks State Park. At the junction of Hwy. 21 and Route NN, turn right, staying on Hwy. 21. Travel two and one-half miles to State Road 221; turn left. At the stop sign, turn right. The historic site is on the right. The trip is about two hours, 40 minutes long.

#### ***From Springfield/Joplin***

Take I-44 out of Springfield toward St. Louis. Exit at the St. James overpass (Exit #195) and turn right onto Hwy. 8/68. Stay on Hwy. 68 through St. James. South of St. James at the junction of Hwy. 68 and Hwy. 8, stay to the left. You will be on Hwy. 8. As you leave Potosi, turn right onto Hwy. 21. Stay on Hwy. 21, passing Elephant Rocks State Park. At the junction of Hwy. 21 and

Route NN, turn right staying on Hwy. 21. Travel two and one-half miles to State Road 221; turn left. At the stop sign, turn right. The historic site is on the right. The trip is about four hours, 15 minutes long.



### **Other Civil War Sites of Interest Nearby:**

Tours by request are available at **Immanuel Lutheran Church** on Ziegler Street in Pilot Knob. Immanuel Lutheran Church was built in 1864, survived the Battle of Pilot Knob and is essentially the same as it was through the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It features the same furnishings, the same organ and many items that church members have used through the years.

The **Iron County Courthouse** was built in 1858 just as soon as Iron County was formed. It survived the Civil War and looks very much the same as it did in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It is still used as the courthouse for Iron County.

Two blocks south of the Iron County Courthouse is the **Site of the Grant Oak**, where Ulysses S. Grant received his promotion to brigadier general. Years later, his unit commemorated the event by dedicating a statue by the spring and pond where custom says he received his rank. Julia Dent Grant attended, too, and brought two cannons as a gift. The cannons are now in front of the courthouse. The Grant Monument is in the yard of Ste. Marie du Lac Catholic Church. Both sites are open to the public and free.

**Fort Curtis, Arcadia, Mo.** In 1861, the 33<sup>rd</sup> Illinois Infantry Regiment was stationed in the Ironton area. They built a small earth and wood fort on a hill overlooking the road out of town. They named it for the commander of Missouri at the time, Sam Curtis. The fort was abandoned when Fort Davidson was built in 1863. Today, the site of Fort Curtis is at the junction of Hwy 21 and Hwy 72 just before one goes over the highway overpass. It is the grounds of the Arcadia Valley United Pentecostal Church. The grounds are open to the public.

**Fort Benton, Patterson, Mo.** , is south of Pilot Knob about an hour's drive away. Fort Benton is located above the town of Patterson and it is a small earthwork like Fort Davidson. Fort Benton was a security outpost for Fort Davidson and it was over-run at least twice by Confederate fighters during the Civil War. It is currently maintained by the Wayne County Historical Society, is open to the public and is free. Inquire for directions.

Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site  
P.O. Box 509  
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(573) 546-3454  
1-800-334-6946  
1-800-379-2419 TDD

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