The Wilson's Creek Staff Ride and Battlefield Tour

by
Major George E. Knapp, U.S. Army, Retired



FOREWORD

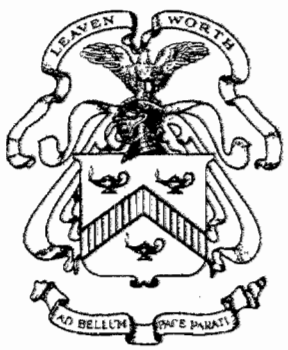
Staff rides and battlefield tours provide officers with the opportunity to obtain important insights into military operations, concepts of leadership, and how men have fought and endured in battles. In this work, *The Wilson's Creek Staff Ride and Battlefield Tour*, Major George E. Knapp, U.S. Army, Retired, offers students of military history a guide to the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield south of Springfield, Missouri. In the process, officers are presented with an overview of the Missouri campaign and a detailed narrative of the battle replete with vignettes by its Northern and Southern participants.

All the information and components needed to conduct a staff ride or battlefield tour to Wilson's Creek are provided by the author—ensuring an enlightening experience of one of the great engagements of the Civil War for those visiting the site.

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March 1993

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CSI publications cover a variety of military history topics. The views expressed herein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense.

Cover: Lyon's death in the Battle of Wilson's Creek, from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated*, 24 August 1861.

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INTRODUCTION

Armies of the North and South fought the Battle of Wilson's Creek about ten miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri, on Saturday, 10 August 1861. Like most battles, Wilson's Creek provides fertile ground for studying military art and science. It is particularly useful for examining the dynamics of battle and the effect of personalities on the action. While the action at Wilson's Creek was small compared to that at Gettysburg or Chickamauga, it remains significant and useful to students of military history.

Within the context of the military and political campaign within Missouri in the spring and summer of 1861, the battle had the effect of securing the state for the Union. The Union defeat in battle and the death of General Nathaniel Lyon, so closely following the disaster at First Bull Run, caused the North to adopt a more serious attitude about the war and to realize that victory would come only with detailed planning and proper resourcing. Thus, the Union reinforced Missouri with soldiers and weapons during the fall and winter of 1861–62, while the Confederacy applied its scanty resources elsewhere. Although the exiled pro-Confederate state government voted to secede and sent delegates to Richmond, Virginia, Missouri effectively remained in the Union. Any questions about Missouri's fate were settled at the Battle of Pea Ridge in March 1862, when Union forces turned back the last significant Confederate threat to Missouri.

Wilson's Creek was a "first battle" for most of the soldiers who fought there. First battles often provide armies with special insights into the application of military art and science, and Wilson's Creek was no exception. The Mexican War model of organization and combined arms battle was generally confirmed, but some key observations relating to technology and command and control emerged as well. For example, Regular soldiers, who were expected to outclass volunteers in both discipline and expertise, found the volunteers at Wilson's Creek standing up manfully to the task of battle, as they had earlier in Mexico. In addition, artillery proved decisive at several key moments during the fighting. Cavalry, on its part, proved to be much less valuable, and this fact hinted at lessons to be learned later in the Civil War. Ultimately, the infantry of both sides played out the drama, and many of the most useful insights came from that branch.

Casualty percentages in the fighting were among the highest recorded for any battles of the Civil War. Although the men lost on both sides were almost equal in number, losses were not proportional;

nearly one of every four Federals was either killed, wounded, captured, or missing in the battle, but only one of every eight Confederates. These figures exceeded those of the Mexican-American War and foreshadowed the stupendous totals that emerged as the Civil War evolved. While casualty figures do not always serve well as a measure of valor or expertise, clearly at Wilson's Creek, generally inexperienced soldiers led by equally inexperienced officers fought determinedly for six bloody hours. Meanwhile, the numbers of dead and wounded overwhelmed the capacity of the local population to care for them—as it did at every Civil War battlefield. How those men were ministered to offers additional opportunities for study and insight.

Many of the participants in the conflict went on to become important leaders and generals in the Civil War and afterward. In some respects, their experiences at Wilson's Creek gave some indication of how well or poorly they would perform later in the war. Colonel Sigel; Majors Schofield, Osterhaus, and Sturgis; and Captains Granger, Gilbert, Herron, Stanley, and Steele went on to command armies and corps for the Union. Other officers on both sides at Wilson's Creek eventually commanded divisions and brigades in some of the great battles of the war. The effects of the interaction of these personalities in war provide useful teaching opportunities at Wilson's Creek because the battle was small enough that individual actions had decisive results.

The Union and Confederate battle plans were especially innovative and bold. General Lyon, like General Lee at Chancellorsville two years later, found himself outnumbered more than two to one with his enemy preparing to attack. He faced the unpleasant prospect of being too weak to defend, so he had to either attack or withdraw. In choosing to attack, Lyon employed a difficult tactic, dividing his available forces into two attack columns, one led by himself, the other by Colonel Sigel. Sigel moved to attack the Confederate rear, while Lyon attacked its front. Making their approach marches at night, Lyon and Sigel completely surprised the Confederates and in a remarkably well-coordinated attack seized key positions on the field. After recovering from their initial surprise, the Confederates countered with a particularly innovative battle plan of their own, mixing militia and "regular" troops armed with a bewildering array of weapons. Ultimately, the fortunes of war turned against the Federals. Sigel's force was routed, Lyon was killed while leading a charge, and the Federal Army evacuated Springfield the next day and fell back on its base at Rolla.

Battlefield Tour

This book outlines the general usefulness of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield for both battlefield tours and staff rides. A battlefield tour is defined as

> . . . a visit to the site of an actual campaign [or battle] but with little or no preliminary systematic study. If led by an expert, the historical battlefield tour can stimulate thought and encourage student discussion but within limits set by the lack of systematic preparation and involvement. A historical battlefield tour uses both terrain and a historical situation but does not have a preliminary study phase.[1]

A successful battlefield tour of Wilson's Creek can achieve many objectives. It can (1) expose students to the "face of battle" and the timeless dimensions of warfare; (2) provide case studies in combined arms operations as well as the operations of the separate arms; (3) furnish case studies in the relationship between technology and doctrine, particularly as they relate to untrained and untried armies; (4) supply case studies in leadership from company through army level; (5) provide case studies in the effects of logistical considerations on military operations; (6) show the effects of terrain on military plans and battles; (7) furnish a framework for studying battles and an introduction to studying campaigns; (8) encourage the use of military history to develop expertise in the profession of arms; and (9) kindle or reinforce interest in the history of the U.S. Army, the American Civil War, and the evolution of modern warfare.

A battlefield tour of Wilson's Creek requires about twenty hours of instructor preparation time, including a preparatory visit to the battlefield to conduct reconnaissance. If possible, students should read a campaign and battle overview prior to arrival at the battlefield. The walking tour included in this book should take less than eight hours, assuming arrival at 0900 and departure at 1700 (with a thirty-minute break for lunch on the field). The tour takes place entirely on foot within the confines of the national battlefield. If time is short, students can be bused between selected groups of stands, which reduces the required time to about six hours. The battle is sufficiently dynamic to allow several groups to tour the field simultaneously. Although the sequence of stands is not critical, some groups of stands should be taken in sequence for the sake of simplicity, clarity, and continuity.

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[1]This quote and the list of objectives that follow it come from William G. Robertson, *The Staff Ride* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1987), 5–6.

Staff Ride

A staff ride goes beyond the scope of a battlefield tour and consists of a

> . . . systematic preliminary study of a selected campaign, and extensive visit to the actual sites associated with that campaign [and battle], and an opportunity to integrate the lessons derived from each. It envisions maximum student involvement before arrival at the site to guarantee thought, analysis, and discussion. A staff ride thus links a historical event, systematic preliminary study, and actual terrain to produce battle analysis in three dimensions. It consists of three distinct phases: preliminary study, field study, and integration. [2]

A staff ride has the potential to accomplish all the objectives of a battlefield tour, plus it provides case studies in the application of the operational art by focusing on the theater campaign, supplies an introduction to the study of strategy, and furnishes a framework for a systematic study of campaigns in general.

The preliminary study phase for a staff ride to Wilson's Creek should take about ten hours of student preparation and small-group seminar time. In this period, students will familiarize themselves with the campaign and battle and prepare to represent a particular character or event in the battle as their personal responsibility to the group's discussion in the field (see appendix A). As part of the staff ride and battlefield tour package for Wilson's Creek, vignettes are provided in chapter 3 that may be read at the various stands to enhance student involvement. These vignettes will give students an insight into the emotional disposition and attitudes of the battle participants.

During the field-study phase, instructors must show greater flexibility in the time spent at each stand, because student discussions will tend to cause each stop to be longer than in a battlefield tour. The integration phase—a meeting of the staff ride group after the tour of the battlefield—should take about one hour and occur as soon as possible after the field-study phase to allow synthesis of observations and insights. At this time, instructors should encourage students to evaluate the staff ride experience and make suggestions for its improvement.

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[2]Ibid., 4–6. The distinction between staff rides, battlefield tours, and other forms of field study is important because of the nature of small-group instruction, so popular now in military training. A battlefield tour is similar to a classroom lecture, while a staff ride is akin to a seminar where all participants have prepared in depth.

The Wilson's Creek National Battlefield is about ten miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri, and encompasses an area five kilometers by three kilometers. Maintained by the National Park Service, it has a modern Visitor's Center with a good terrain map, slide show, period exhibits, bookstore, and library. The park staff is helpful and can assist instructors in arranging visits. In many respects, the battlefield is in nearly the same condition as it was in 1861. A five-mile-long blacktop road encircles the major portion of the park and is a great aid to navigation and movement. The park is open every day except Christmas and New Year's Day. Any queries should be addressed to

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield
P.O. Box 403
Republic, Missouri 65738
Phone: (417) 732-2662

There are no latrine facilities or potable water sources on the field except at the Visitor's Center. Visitors should carry canteens and wear hiking shoes or boots and long trousers. Groups may visit Wilson's Creek in any season, but the best times are late fall, winter, and early spring. At other times, the foliage makes terrain associations and visibility more difficult. In addition, chiggers, ticks, and snakes abound in the warmer seasons. Groups should consider carrying rain gear, as no shelters, except at the Visitor's Center, are located on the field. There are several fast-food restaurants along Highway 60 in Republic, Missouri, less than five miles from the battlefield, and the Springfield area has many hotels that may easily accommodate groups staying overnight.

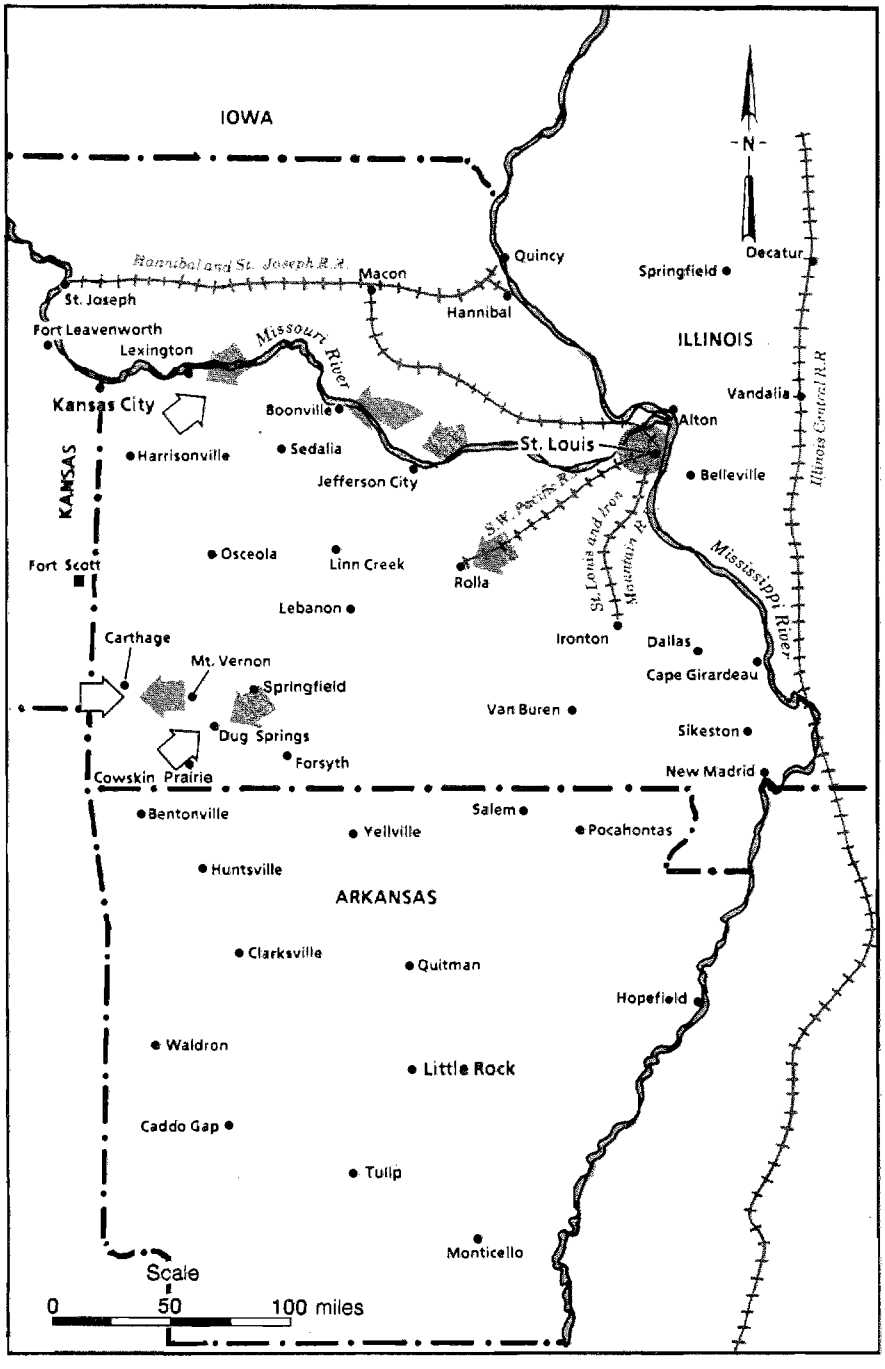
I. THE CAMPAIGN FOR MISSOURI, SUMMER 1861

The Confederacy lost the important border state of Missouri in the summer of 1861 in a campaign that stretched from St. Louis to Springfield. The campaign provides examples of some of the best leadership, decision making, and fighting in the war. It was a decisive campaign that resulted in Missouri remaining in the Union through the crucial winter of 1861, during which time the North became more organized and started executing a coherent strategy. (For a map of Missouri and a chronology of the struggle for the state, see map 1.)

According to the 1860 census, Missouri was the most populous and wealthy trans-Mississippi state. Nationally, Missouri ranked third in the production of corn; fourteenth in wheat and oats; second in livestock and oxen; sixth in horses, mules, and cattle; and second in the production of hemp. It also produced over 2 million pounds of wool annually. Moreover, the state produced five tons of copper in 1860 and ranked twelfth in the value of its products—including boots, shoes, clothing, wagons, saddlery, harnesses, tin, and sheet iron; first in the mining of lead; and eighth in the production of iron ore. Not the least of Missouri's resources was its white population of 1.2 million and slave population of 115,000. If, through the fortune of war, Missouri had been added to the Confederacy, the resource imbalance favoring the North over the South would have been lessened.

In 1861, Missouri was a slave state with strong Southern sympathies and a border state second only to Kentucky in importance. Once secured by the North, Missouri would anchor the Union effort in the western theater of operations by controlling the Mississippi River north of New Madrid, Missouri. The state was edged by two Confederate states, Arkansas and Tennessee, as well as the border state, Kentucky, and pro-Southern Indian Territory. On the other hand, if the Confederacy won Missouri quickly, it would strengthen the South's military and political position. Missouri was critical ground, since control of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers would give the South a significant maneuver advantage in the west. Missouri was a great political prize. Winning this border state into the Southern fold would signal the South's ability to spread the rebellion into new territory and encourage its sympathizers everywhere.

After President Abraham Lincoln's election in November 1860, the Southern states seceded, and in February 1861, representatives of the seven Confederate states met in Montgomery, Alabama, and



Map 1. The campaign for Missouri, summer 1861

Chronology of Events

Date	*Event*
8 Feb	State convention meets at Jefferson City to consider secession.
14 Apr	Fort Sumter surrenders. President Lincoln calls on states for 75,000 volunteers. Governor Jackson refuses Lincoln's request and declares Missouri's sympathies with the South.
6 May	Captain Lyon clashes with St. Louis authorities. Militia begins gathering at Camp Jackson.
10 May	Lyon arrests the militia. Citizens riot in protest.
24 May	State troops under Jackson and General Price refuse to disband.
31 May	Lyon is promoted to general and assumes command in West.
11 Jun	Lyon, Frank Blair, Jackson, and Price meet in St. Louis but cannot agree. Lyon begins move on Jefferson City.
15 Jun	Lyon captures Jefferson City and then pursues Jackson to Boonville. Armies skirmish at Boonville on 17 June. Jackson retreats to Cowskin Prairie and calls for help.
24 Jun	Colonel Sigel arrives in Springfield with his brigade, followed by General Sweeny. Jackson and Price gather troops at Cowskin Prairie.
5 Jul	Battle of Carthage. Sigel withdraws to Mt. Vernon.
13 Jul	Lyon arrives in Springfield and begins maneuvering on Price's force at Cowskin Prairie.
22 Jul	Forces skirmish at Forsyth. Pro-Union Missouri legislature declares loyalty to the United States and elects pro-Union Governor Gamble.
25 Jul	General Frémont assumes command of Union forces in the West. Troops under General McCulloch join Price and Jackson.
2 Aug	Forces skirmish at Dug Springs.
5 Aug	Lyon withdraws to Springfield. Price and McCulloch occupy Wilson's Creek.
10 Aug	Battle of Wilson's Creek is fought. Lyon is killed.

Legend

Confederate forces

Union forces

formed a new government. Meanwhile, Governor Claiborne F. Jackson, an active secessionist, agitated to get Missouri to join the Confederacy. The pro-Union Blair family of St. Louis, however, worked equally hard to keep Missouri in the Union.

Lincoln's inauguration in March 1861 prompted Northern and Southern sympathizers in Missouri to begin their struggle for control of the state. Already anticipating trouble, the U.S. government had transferred Captain Nathaniel Lyon and his company of the 2d U.S. Infantry from Fort Riley, Kansas, to St. Louis to protect the arsenal. Lyon arrived in February just as the state convention voted eighty-nine to one to keep Missouri in the Union. The issue seemed settled until Fort Sumter was attacked and surrendered in mid-April. Lincoln now responded by calling for 75,000 volunteers to put down the rebellion.

Governor Jackson considered Lincoln's call an act of despotism that threatened civil war and declared Missouri's sympathies with the South. Within a week, the Federals disbanded the Missouri State Militia and arrested secessionist leaders in St. Louis. These actions provoked local rioting by Southern sympathizers.

Meanwhile, Jackson and the secessionists sought the 60,000 muskets, powder, and cannon in the St. Louis Arsenal. On the night of 25 April, while his superior, Brigadier General William S. Harney, was absent, Captain Lyon—recognizing the threat to the arsenal and acting with presidential approval—removed the weapons to Alton, Illinois. Then, he fortified the arsenal and prepared to fight.

Another important event occurred on 3 May 1861, when General Winfield Scott, general in chief of the United States Army, proposed the famous Anaconda Plan that advocated Northern control of the Mississippi River and its tributaries south of St. Louis. This strategy set the stage for a Union campaign that eventually secured the Mississippi River and began the dismemberment of the Confederacy.

The success of the Anaconda Plan was far from certain, however, in the spring of 1861 when the campaign for Missouri began. But the Union campaign outline was simple enough. The Federals would keep the Mississippi River open as far south as possible, at least as far as Cairo, Illinois, and the junction with the Ohio River. Then, as manpower became available, the Northern armies would move rapidly southward along the river lines of communication and supply. Union forces could then contain the Confederates in western and southern Missouri by moving along the Missouri River and the railroads that

radiated westward from St. Louis. In retrospect, the Union plan was overly ambitious, but at least the Unionists had a plan.

By comparison, politics divided the initiators of the Confederate plans for the Missouri campaign. Governor Jackson and the commander of the Missouri State Militia, Major General Sterling Price, prepared to fight for every square mile of the state. Their militia army was large and well-organized but poorly armed and trained. Nonetheless, Jackson declared Missouri's intention to secede, hoping that the Confederacy would support it with recognition and troops. But the Confederate government in Montgomery was preoccupied in organizing the rebellion in the East and chose a defensive strategy that made the prospect of sending troops into Missouri remote. Ultimately, however, the South organized several forces along the southern Missouri border, and these armies soon poised to invade Missouri in cooperation with Jackson and Price. General Leonidas Polk commanded this western theater of operations for the South from Memphis. This centralized command arrangement, which proved admirable later in the war, was unequal, however, to the task of coordinating the fight for Missouri in 1861.

In St. Louis, most of the aristocratic families sympathized with the Confederacy, and many of the male members were enrolled in the Missouri State Militia. In early May, Governor Jackson ordered these men, commanded by Brigadier General Daniel M. Frost, to muster for a few days of training. About 700 men responded to the call and established Camp Jackson (named in honor of the governor) on the western edge of St. Louis. Jackson hoped that these troops might eventually recapture the arsenal and consequently arranged to have Confederate arms and ammunition smuggled into the camp.

In response, Captain Lyon, in his puritanical zeal and hatred of slavery and the Southern cause, prepared to attack Camp Jackson, which he viewed as a great menace. On 10 May, while his superior was again absent, Lyon surrounded Camp Jackson with several thousand loyal troops and made the militia prisoners. The Northern press hailed Lyon as a hero whose resolute action had saved the state for the Union, but this day was one of the blackest in St. Louis history. Instead of paroling the disarmed militia, Lyon marched the prisoners back to the arsenal through the streets of St. Louis. Excited and resentful Southern sympathizers poured into the streets and lined the route, hurling insults and then stones and bricks at the Union soldiers guarding the prisoners. Finally, someone fired shots at the Union column, killing and wounding several soldiers. The troops fired back

indiscriminately, killing twenty-eight people. With this bloodshed, Missouri began four years of violence and cruel intersectional warfare.

The state legislature reacted to the bloodshed by passing a bill creating the pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard. Governor Jackson immediately appointed former governor Sterling Price to command it. At this time, secessionist forces controlled much of the state outside of St. Louis, and some of these men, in irregular bands, drove Union sympathizers from their homes and began guerrilla activities.

Meanwhile, Harney returned to St. Louis and did his best to restore public order and calm. Harney's moderate policy, however, outraged Lyon and Frank Blair Jr., a prominent St. Louis politician and staunch Unionist. Blair manipulated his contacts in Washington to persuade Lincoln to replace Harney with Lyon. The powerful Blair family had considerable influence in Washington, and Frank's brother, Montgomery Blair, was Lincoln's postmaster general. Finally, Lincoln yielded to pressure and sent Frank Blair an order for Harney's removal in the event of an extreme emergency. On 31 May, Blair dismissed Harney and appointed Lyon a brigadier general in charge of Union troops in Missouri.

Blair and Brigadier General Lyon now took steps to disrupt the truce that Harney had worked out with Price (by which the state would restrain itself from arming further). On 11 June, Blair and Lyon held a conference with Price and Jackson in St. Louis. Both sides made demands that could not be met, and Lyon closed the meeting by summarily ordering Jackson and Price outside his lines. They left immediately, and Jackson returned to Jefferson City, while Price went to rally his troops.

Meanwhile, Lyon moved west along the Missouri River to Jefferson City with about 2,000 men on steamboats. In response, Jackson and the state government evacuated the capital on 14 June. Lyon now pursued Jackson's small force to Boonville where, on 17 June, the first of nearly 1,100 Civil War skirmishes in Missouri took place.

By putting the governor and the pro-Southern portion of the legislature to flight, Lyon forced the secessionists to operate without a base, money, or legal footing. At the same time, he gave Missouri Unionists time to set up a new state government, and on 31 July, a state convention elected pro-Union Hamilton Gamble as governor. On the other hand, Lyon destroyed any possibility of compromise and forced everyone to take sides. Thanks to Lyon and Jackson, who was

equally stubborn, bloody and bitter civil war ruled in Missouri for the next four years.

After the battle at Boonville, state troops under Colonel John S. Marmaduke and Governor Jackson retreated southward toward Cowskin Prairie in the southwest corner of the state where General Price gathered other Missouri State Guard forces. Meanwhile, before leaving St. Louis, Lyon ordered U.S. Army Captain (and recently elected Missouri Brigadier General) Thomas W. Sweeny to lead a column of troops to the southwest part of the state to block any move south by Missouri State Guard forces. Colonel Franz Sigel with two volunteer infantry regiments from St. Louis and an artillery battery led the column and arrived in Springfield on 24 June. Sweeny arrived in Springfield with 1,500 more troops on 1 July.

When Sigel received news of the governor's retreat from Boonville, he was determined to intercept and prevent Jackson from forming a juncture with Price. To effect this outcome, Sigel moved along the Mt. Vernon Road to Carthage, sixty-five miles to the west of Springfield, with the 3d and 5th Missouri Infantry Regiments (Missouri Volunteers), a company of Regulars, and the eight pieces of Backoff's light artillery. Meanwhile, on 3 July, Lyon left Boonville in pursuit of Governor Jackson.

Before Lyon could catch up with Jackson, however, the governor and the Missouri State Guard defeated Sigel at Carthage and forced him to fall back to Mt. Vernon and Springfield. By this time, Major Samuel D. Sturgis arrived from Kansas City and reinforced Lyon with a 1,600-man brigade consisting of Regular Army infantry, cavalry, and Kansas volunteers. Hearing of Sigel's defeat, Lyon began a forced march and arrived in Springfield on 13 July. Meanwhile, Jackson moved south and joined Price at Cowskin Prairie.

At Springfield, Lyon assumed command of all Federal troops in southwest Missouri and reorganized his little army. In the meantime, he requested reinforcements and supplies from St. Louis. On 20 July, he sent Sweeny with a 1,200-man task force of infantry, artillery, and cavalry to break up a secessionist camp reported to be at Forsyth. In a sharp skirmish on 22 July, Sweeny scattered about 150 Missouri State Guard troops stationed in Forsyth and occupied the town for about 24 hours before returning to Springfield.

The secessionists now made plans to attack the Federals in Springfield. At about the same time, the Confederate government ordered Brigadier General Ben McCulloch of Texas, who commanded a

brigade of Confederate troops in northwest Arkansas, to go to the aid of the Missouri secessionists. On 25 July, Price, in command of the Missouri State Guard, moved his troops from Cowskin Prairie in McDonald County toward Cassville. A brigade of Arkansas state troops under Brigadier General N. Bart Pearce reinforced McCulloch, who marched into southwest Missouri to rendezvous with Price. The Southern army that assembled near Cassville was really composed of three separate small armies: a brigade of Confederate troops under McCulloch, a brigade of Arkansas state troops under Pearce, and the Missouri State Guard under Price.

Through his numerous and faithful scouts and spies, Lyon soon learned of the concentration of Southern troops at Cassville and their intention to march on Springfield. Lyon determined to march south along the Telegraph Road (or Old Wire Road) with his army of 5,868 men and 3 artillery batteries of 18 pieces to defeat the Southern forces in detail before they could combine. Meanwhile, he sent more messages to Major General John C. Frémont, the new Federal commander in Missouri, begging for reinforcements. Frémont, however, was preoccupied with his own plans for defending the eastern portion of the state and refused Lyon's requests. Unable to wait any longer, Lyon left a force of several hundred civilian volunteers and Home Guards to protect Springfield and began his movement toward Cassville on the afternoon of 1 August. That night, he camped ten miles southwest of Springfield along Wilson's Creek, near the place where the battle would be fought nine days later.

The next day, Lyon continued his march southward down Telegraph Road. At 1700, the army halted at Dug Springs, about one mile south of present-day Clever. Here, they came upon the Southern army's advance guard, consisting of several hundred mounted Missourians commanded by Brigadier General James S. Rains. Both sides suffered a few casualties in this skirmish, but Rains' troops were routed and fled southward in a panic to the main Southern army camped along Crane Creek. Later, in his report, McCulloch made derisive remarks about "Rains' Scare" and expressed little confidence in the mounted Missourians.

The next morning, 3 August, the Federals resumed their advance, going as far as Curran Post Office (or McCulla's Store) near the county line between Stone and Barry Counties and twenty-six miles from Springfield. There, they skirmished with a small secessionist patrol at Curran and scattered the rebels with a few artillery rounds. By this time, Lyon realized that the Southern forces had united and decided to

return to Springfield, completing the 26-mile march on the afternoon of 5 August.

The three Southern forces subsequently assembled near Cassville and began their march north along the Telegraph Road to Springfield on 31 July, with McCulloch's troops in the lead. By the evening of 1 August, they reached Crane Creek and went into camp. While camped along Crane Creek, McCulloch received reinforcements, including Colonel Elkanah Greer's South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment.

On the morning of 4 August, after meeting with Price and Pearce, McCulloch reluctantly agreed to take command of the Southern forces in an attack on Springfield. McCulloch, believing that the Federals were still at Curran, issued orders for a surprise attack there only to find that Lyon's army had departed about twenty hours earlier and moved back to Springfield. McCulloch then decided to make a forced march to overtake Lyon's retreating column. By the time the Southern troops went into camp at Moody's Spring, however, McCulloch realized that the Federals had escaped. On 6 August, learning of good camping grounds and cornfields several miles ahead where the Telegraph Road crossed Wilson's Creek, McCulloch ordered the march resumed. Arriving at their destination, the Southerners went into camp along both sides of Wilson's Creek.

On 8 August, after two days of fruitless reconnaissance, Price received news from two women that Lyon was preparing to evacuate Springfield. Impatient with the delay, Price demanded an immediate attack, and McCulloch reluctantly agreed, issuing orders for the march on Springfield to begin at 2100, 9 August. He planned a converging attack on the city with four columns, to begin at daylight on Saturday, 10 August. Just as the army was preparing to move, however, a light rain began falling, and McCulloch ordered the troops to wait. He realized that a heavy rain would ruin their ammunition, which was none too plentiful. The night passed uneventfully.

When Lyon returned to Springfield, most of his troops camped around the city, while others acted as guards to seal off the town and prevent information from reaching the Confederates. Frémont again advised Lyon not to expect any reinforcements. Lyon now consulted with his senior officers about whether to abandon Springfield and retreat to Rolla. The majority favored falling back to Rolla in view of the overwhelming number of Confederates facing them, and Lyon agreed. But the impetuous Sweeny argued for a battle before retreating, and Lyon changed his decision. He now planned to attack



Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon



Colonel Franz Sigel



Brigadier General Ben McCulloch



Major General Sterling Price

Some of the major commanders at the Battle of Wilson's Creek

the Confederates at daylight on 10 August, hoping that surprise would offset the Southerners' superior numbers. Sigel also persuaded Lyon to let him take his brigade on a flanking march to attack the south end of the Confederate camp.

About 1800, 9 August, while Sigel's column prepared to march toward the Confederate rear, Lyon moved westward along the Little York Road to a point opposite the north end of the rebel camp, where he turned south over the prairie. About 0100, when the Union advance guard approached within sight of the enemy campfires, Lyon ordered the column to halt and rest until daybreak. While the men rested, Lyon's scouts penetrated to within a short distance of the enemy camps and discovered that the Southern pickets had withdrawn.

Lyon's column now pressed forward, and his advance guard contacted Confederate pickets at dawn. The battle began at about 0500, when the Federals drove off the Missourians outposting the ridge to the north of what came to be known as Bloody Hill. As the Southerners retreated south to Bloody Hill, Lyon ordered Captain Joseph B. Plummer and his 1st U.S. Infantry Battalion to cross Wilson's Creek to guard the Union's left flank. The 1st Kansas and 1st Missouri composed Lyon's first attack wave, and they charged up the north slope of Bloody Hill, forcing the Confederates to retreat once again. The two regiments seized the hill about 0600 with the rest of Lyon's column following closely behind. The sound from these attacks and the retreating Missourians alerted Price and McCulloch, who were breakfasting together. McCulloch immediately went off to get his troops, while Price moved his Missourians up Bloody Hill to meet Lyon's attack.

By 0500, Sigel had his artillery battery placed on a plateau in a position to shell the Southerners' cavalry camp located in Sharp's cornfield at the south end of the rebel camp. The Union's 3d and 5th Missouri Volunteer Infantry Regiments waited for Sigel's signal to attack. When Sigel heard the musket fire on Bloody Hill, he ordered his battery to open fire and began his advance, sweeping through the cavalry camp as the Southerners fled from his bombardment. By 0700, Sigel's brigade crossed Wilson's and Terrell Creeks and deployed in Sharp's cornfield.

Meanwhile, shortly after the battle opened, Captain James Totten's 2d U.S. Artillery Battery and Captain W. E. Woodruff Jr.'s Battery exchanged shots on Bloody Hill. Woodruff's fire caused the Union attacks to stall. Early in the engagement, Lyon had ordered

Plummer's infantry battalion to cross Wilson's Creek to guard the Union left flank. As Plummer advanced, he sought to silence Woodruff's guns, and by 0700, Plummer's command was in a sharp fight in Ray's cornfield with the 3d Louisiana and 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles led by Colonel James McIntosh. Plummer's small force was soon forced to retreat back across Wilson's Creek. In the meantime, Second Lieutenant John V. Du Bois' Battery on Bloody Hill turned its guns on Plummer's pursuers and forced the Confederates to retreat.

By 0830, Sigel established his final position near Sharp's house, blocking the Telegraph Road. As Sigel waited for Lyon to drive the Southerners out of their camps, McCulloch moved part of his force toward Sigel's position. Sigel's men saw the gray-clad 3d Louisiana approach and held their fire, mistaking the Louisianans for the 1st Iowa from Lyon's column, who also wore gray uniforms. The 3d Louisiana, along with some Missouri State Guard infantry supported by the fire of Captain Hiram Bledsoe's and Captain G. Reid's Batteries, charged Sigel's position. Surprised, Sigel's men ran in panic in several directions, losing five of their six guns in the rout.

Meanwhile, Lyon's Federals and Price's Missourians charged and countercharged each other several times on the remaining front. Lulls and sporadic firing followed each attack. About 0900, Price launched his whole force in attacks all along Lyon's front. The Federal line wavered, and Lyon was slightly wounded twice while rallying his troops. As some of his units retired to regroup, Lyon ordered the 1st Iowa and 2d Kansas to attack and led the 1st Iowa himself. At about 0930, a bullet hit Lyon in the heart killing him. The Iowa and Kansas troops, nonetheless, continued to press their assault against Price's line, and the Missourians backed down the hill to regroup. In the meantime, Lyon's aide carried the commander's body to the rear.

About 1000, Greer's South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment launched an attack against the Union right and rear. But Greer's cavalry attack was easily dispersed by musket volleys from several companies of the 2d Kansas in reserve in the rear and by artillery fire from part of Totten's battery. By this time, Sturgis discovered Lyon's death and assumed command of the Union force. At this point in the battle, all the Union senior officers were wounded or out of action.

While Price reorganized his troops for another attack, Pearce took his 3d and 5th Arkansas Infantry Regiments to reinforce the Missourians. With these additional troops, Price launched his most

determined attack of the day. However, the Federal line held firm, aided greatly by the fire of Totten's and Du Bois' batteries. About 1100, Price ordered his troops to disengage and fall back. During the pause that followed, Sturgis ordered the Federals to slowly retreat back to Springfield. By 1130, they began an orderly retreat, covered by a rear guard and artillery. Price now directed another attack, but as the Southerners advanced over the abandoned Bloody Hill position, they saw the last of the retreating Union column disappearing over the next ridge to the north. The Confederates did not pursue.

The Battle of Wilson's Creek, or Oak Hills as the Confederates called it, was the first important Civil War battle after Bull Run. Among other things, the battle proved that volunteer troops in their first battle can fight bravely and effectively. Nonetheless, casualties in the battle were extremely high in relation to the numbers engaged and the duration of the fighting. The Federals had 1,317 casualties out of 5,400 engaged. Of these, 258 were killed, 873 wounded, and 186 missing or captured. The Confederates reported 1,230 casualties out of 10,200 engaged, with 279 killed and 951 wounded. The Federals lost 24 percent of their men, while the Southerners lost 12 percent.

The next day, the defeated Federals, now commanded temporarily by Sigel, began an orderly withdrawal toward Rolla. Meanwhile, the Confederates entered Springfield but made no attempt to pursue. After remaining in Springfield less than a month, McCulloch and Pearce returned with their troops to Arkansas. Price soon marched his Missouri State Guard north and, on 12 September, began the 9-day siege of the 3,000-man Union garrison at Lexington, which surrendered on 20 September.

Frémont received much criticism after Lyon's death and Price's victory at Lexington. On 25 October, he finally took the field with an army of 20,000 troops and recaptured Springfield. But his critics prevailed, and he was replaced by General Samuel R. Curtis, who subsequently led Union troops to victory at Pea Ridge in March 1862, which further ensured that Missouri would remain in the Union.

After the victory at Lexington, secessionist hopes in Missouri peaked and soon faded. Price ultimately withdrew to the southwest corner of the state. Meanwhile, Governor Jackson assembled part of the pro-Southern Missouri legislature at Neosho. There, at the end of October 1861, it passed an act that soon delivered Missouri into the Confederacy as its twelfth member. It was a hollow act, however, as Jackson's government in exile had neither troops nor money. Although

Missouri suffered guerrilla warfare and periodic Confederate raids, it henceforth remained securely in the Union fold and soon became a backwater theater as the war moved deeper into the South.

II. THE ARMIES AT WILSON'S CREEK

Both the Federals and Confederates employed men from a variety of units at Wilson's Creek. Like Bull Run only three weeks before, Wilson's Creek was a "first battle" for most of these combatants. Because of this, their actions and reactions give modern military students the opportunity to acquire special insights into the timeless human dimensions of warfare (sometimes called "the face of battle"). The battle also provides splendid examples for the study of leadership, unit cohesion, technology, doctrine, and other factors that interact to produce victory and defeat. For the most part, both armies at Wilson's Creek fought well—Regulars, Volunteers, and militia. Certainly, many of the men fought better than they were led. And in this relatively small battle, the actions of individuals often made the critical difference.

Unit Organization

General Lyon's army consisted of small Regular Army, infantry, artillery, and cavalry units, as well as larger Volunteer infantry formations organized much like the U.S. Army units in the Mexican-American War. Notable among the Regular units were Plummer's battalion of four companies from the 1st U.S. Infantry; Totten's Battery F, 2d U.S. Artillery; and Captain Eugene A. Carr's and Lieutenant Charles E. Farrand's companies of the 1st U.S. Cavalry and 2d U.S. Dragoons. Commanders on both sides felt that these Regular troops brought an additional measure of discipline and reliability to the battle. Confederates who engaged the Regulars in battle were quick to note that fact in their after-action reports, as if fighting against the U.S. Regulars was a significant mark of the severity of the battle.

Most of Lyon's army, however, consisted of ninety-day volunteer regiments from Missouri, Kansas, and Iowa. In fact, soldiers in at least one regiment, Colonel John F. Bates' 1st Iowa, volunteered to remain beyond their three-month enlistment date to participate in the fight. Because these regiments were recently raised, most numbered from 600 to 800 men, nearly as large as some brigades in 1864 and 1865. The men of these regiments were generally well-armed with rifle-muskets and rifled conversion muskets. Volunteers made up two of the artillery batteries, Du Bois' and Major Frank Backoff's. Most of the cavalry was from the Regular Army.

Lyon organized his army into four brigades, but with the exception of Colonel Sigel's brigade, he employed his formations

without regard to organizations higher than the regiment. During the battle, Lyon placed units into position as he saw fit, and it was a measure of the relatively small scale of this fight that he could do so. In July, commanders at Bull Run had acted similarly. This habit was a direct result of lessons learned in the small battles in Mexico. For the most part, regiments at Wilson's Creek, and even companies, acted at the direction of higher-level commanders. Lyon's staff consisted of only a few aides and some civilian guides. Lyon himself led several attacks consisting of only two or three companies, and he died doing so. The Confederates, on their part, did not field regular troops at Wilson's Creek—at least not in the same sense as Federal Regulars—but General McCulloch considered that the formations he had brought with him from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas were more reliable and steadfast in battle than General Price's Missouri State Guard formations. Among McCulloch's formations were many former officers from the United States Army, such as Captain Woodruff, who commanded the Pulaski Arkansas Artillery Battery. It is worth noting that most of the formations in both McCulloch's and Price's commands went on to have worthy combat records fighting for the Southern cause during the war.

Perhaps the most unusual formation at Wilson's Creek was the Missouri State Guard (MSG) commanded by Major General Sterling Price. This militia organization formed more than one-half of the Confederate host and consisted of infantry, artillery, and cavalry. Although well-organized and adequately drilled, Price's command was armed with a mixture of poor weapons ranging from shotguns and pistols to swords and knives. Many of the men had no weapons at all. In their organization, each of the MSG "divisions" contained both infantry and cavalry. This caused some difficulty in the way the combined campsite at Wilson's Creek was laid out. Most of the infantry camped near the Edwards' cabin, while most of the cavalry camped in Sharp's cornfield. Thus, when the battle started, the mounted men were out of touch with their division commanders, and this led to much of the confusion that plagued the Confederate camps in the opening phase of the battle.

McCulloch organized his army into two major formations. He retained personal control of his and Pearce's Confederate brigades and allowed Price control of the MSG. Essentially, then, the Confederates had two division-size formations, but during the battle, McCulloch and Price (like Lyon) employed units without regard to organization above the regimental level. In fact, both Confederate commanders moved

from unit to unit attempting to personally influence the action. In this regard, they had good success.

Weapons

There was a great variety of individual weapons used by soldiers at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. Generally, the Federals enjoyed superiority in muskets and rifles, while the Confederates had the advantage in numbers of men. This balance is important in understanding how the battle developed, especially in its later stages on Bloody Hill.

The primary infantry weapons used were smoothbore muskets, rifle-muskets, and shotguns. Most of the Federal volunteer regiments carried conversion muskets that fired .69-caliber ball ammunition. These muskets were the most common shoulder weapons on the field. The U.S. Army Regulars carried a version of the newly adopted Springfield rifle-musket, Model 1855 or possibly 1861. This weapon fired .58-caliber cylindro-conoidal rounds, often called Minié balls. The Confederates fielded a bewildering array of weapons, including conversion muskets, hunting rifles, carbines, shotguns, and, in one company of Greer's South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment, the very modern Colt revolving rifle.

Both sides employed field artillery effectively at Wilson's Creek, the armies fielding a total of thirty-one smoothbore cannons of two calibers (6-pound guns and 12-pound howitzers, see table 1). Most of these guns were of Mexican-American War vintage, Model 1841, considered obsolete at the time but found commonly in both armies during the Civil War. Neither side fielded any rifled cannon nor the famous new-model 12-pound gun-howitzer, commonly called the Napoleon. Bledsoe's Battery of the Missouri State Guard had one 12-pound gun, nicknamed Old Sacramento, that was originally a 9-pound gun captured from the Mexicans in California and rebored to take 12-pound ammunition. Supposedly, it had a distinctive ring to it when fired that soldiers could hear and know that it was in action. All of these cannons fired solid balls, hollow balls filled with explosives, hollow balls filled with smaller balls and explosives, and canister. Ammunition was of the fixed type, that is, the powder charge and projectile were connected to each other and loaded simultaneously. Both sides organized their cannons into batteries of three, four, or six guns.

The Federal cavalry used a carbine converted to use percussion caps. The Confederate cavalry employed a variety of weapons ranging

from carbines, swords, and pistols to hunting rifles, shotguns, and knives. Much of the Confederate cavalry, particularly that of the Missouri State Guard, was unarmed, which may explain, in part, their generally poor performance in the battle.

Table 1. Artillery at Wilson's Creek

	6-lb. gun, Model 1841	*12-lb. howitzer, Model 1841*
Confederate	12	3*
Federal	11	5
Bore diameter (inches)	3.67	4.62
Tube weight (lbs.)	884	788
Tube length (inches)	60	53
Carriage weight (lbs.)	900	900
Range at 5 degrees elevation (yds.)	1,523	1,072
Projectiles (lbs.)	Shot 6.15	Shell 8.9
Spherical case	5.5	11
Canister	6.8	9.64
Powder charge (lbs.)	1–2	1–1.25
Muzzle velocity (ft./sec.)	Shot 1,439–1,741	Shell 1,054–1,178
Spherical case	1,357	953
Canister	1,230	1,015
Penetration of oak timber at 1,000 yards (inches)	6–8	4

*One of the Confederate guns was Old Sacramento, a 9-pound gun captured from the Mexicans in California and rebored to 12-pound size.

Source: *The Ordnance Manual for the Use of the Officers of the United States Army*, 3d ed. (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1862).

Tactics

The armies that fought at Wilson's Creek employed tactics proven effective in the Mexican-American War. The basic maneuver units were infantry regiments, infantry and cavalry companies, and artillery batteries and sections. By later Civil War standards, Wilson's Creek was a small battle. But one should remember that about 16,000

men fought at Wilson's Creek, making it the second largest battle ever fought by Americans up to that time. First Bull Run, fought only twenty days before Wilson's Creek, was the largest American battle up to its time.

The tactical situation in the week before the battle suggested that the most likely course of action for McCulloch's army was to attack Lyon's army, then defending Springfield. The Confederates outnumbered the Federals by more than two to one and had a particularly strong advantage in cavalry. Lyon's greatest fear was that the Confederates would use their great cavalry advantage to prevent his withdrawal to the Federal base at Rolla. Lyon was in a quandary: he could not remain on the defensive at Springfield, and yet he feared withdrawing without striking a blow. Thus, when McCulloch moved his Confederate army to Wilson's Creek, less than fifteen miles from Springfield, Lyon knew that he had to act. Like Lee two years later at Chancellorsville, he was too weak to defend; he had to attack.

Emulating Winfield Scott's attack at the Battle of Cerro Gordo, Lyon divided his already outnumbered army into two parts, sending Colonel Franz Sigel's brigade of Volunteers on a night march to flank the south end of the Confederate camps, while Lyon himself led the main force on a night march to attack the north end of the Confederate camp. Like Lee at Chancellorsville, Lyon's outnumbered attackers gained the element of surprise and tactical initiative that temporarily made up for their lack in numbers. In fact, Lyon came close to winning the battle.

Once the battle began, the tactics on both sides devolved into a series of regimental and company advances and retreats across the southern slopes of Bloody Hill. But the battle at Wilson's Creek was not devoid of tactical initiative and adroitness. Sigel's initial attack of the Confederate cavalry camps in Sharp's cornfield was a model of combined arms maneuver. He bombarded the Southern camp while simultaneously maneuvering infantry against it. Meanwhile, his cavalry secured his flanks. Moreover, once in possession of the field, Sigel moved rapidly to a position from which he could block an expected Confederate retreat and, hopefully, cooperate with Lyon's attack.

Plummer's subsequent crossing of Wilson's Creek and attempt to attack Woodruff's Battery was, in effect, a flanking maneuver, another example of tactical aggressiveness. Later in the battle, Lyon held a tactical reserve on the northern slope of Bloody Hill until the critical time and then skillfully led it forward into battle. Finally, the

Federal withdrawal, while not assailed by the Confederates (due to their exhaustion), was a small model of control and precision.

After the Confederates were initially surprised, several units, particularly the cavalry, lost their effectiveness for the remainder of the battle. Soon, however, McCulloch and Price began to get the situation under control—aided significantly by the initiative displayed by Woodruff's Battery in delaying the main Federal advance early in the fight. Confederate infantry, particularly General Slack's "division" of the Missouri State Guard, reacted quickly to Lyon's presence on Bloody Hill. Meanwhile, two regiments of Confederates led by Colonel McIntosh moved decisively against Plummer's flanking attack and soundly defeated it. This kind of initiative by subordinate commanders was commonplace at Wilson's Creek. McCulloch himself led the attack that routed Sigel's brigade. McCulloch then moved to reinforce Price in the battle against Lyon on Bloody Hill.

What tactical lessons did the armies learn at Wilson's Creek? Since it was a first battle for most of the soldiers and officers, they got the experience of participating in a live conflict for the first time. They also learned the value of surprise, security, and the difficulty of controlling the separate parts of large armies. In addition, they learned that personal leadership and the initiative of subordinates could narrow the supposed gap between Regulars, Volunteers, and militia. Furthermore, astute officers learned the value of position and the power of combining artillery, cavalry, and infantry in a fight. Perhaps the clearest lesson was the one that was the least learned—that fighting this sort of battle leads to heavy casualties. Union losses were 23.5 percent of those engaged, while the Confederates lost 12.1 percent. The losses on both sides were nearly equal in raw numbers, and this proved that both sides could and would fight. Although Civil War commanders later devised some brilliant operations and tactics and eventually learned to protect their men better against the effects of musketry and artillery, they never really learned how to prevent high casualty rates. Wilson's Creek was merely the prologue to further disastrous bloodlettings.

Logistics

Logistics played a significant part in both the campaign and Battle of Wilson's Creek. In fact, the battle took place where and when it did because of logistics.

Earlier in 1861, the Federals had driven the Confederates from most of Missouri and into the southwest corner of the state near

Springfield. From there, Governor Jackson and the remnants of his pro-Southern legislature found it very difficult to sustain the Missouri State Guard, recruit additional men, and gather forage. Neither could they seriously threaten the Union logistic network that radiated from St. Louis like spokes from a wheel along the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers and the railroads to Jefferson City, Ironton, and Rolla. The railhead at Rolla was of principal importance to General Lyon's efforts in Springfield because the rail and telegraph lines issuing from it were his most direct link with St. Louis. Less critical, yet important, were the U.S. Army outposts at Fort Scott and Fort Leavenworth from which Lyon received reinforcements and supplies.

Although Lyon had seized most of the state, he still found himself in a precarious position at Springfield, for his army was less than half the size of the Confederates' army, which was receiving reinforcements from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Also, additional Confederate armies were organizing along Missouri's southern border. Lyon could not remain in the defensive at Springfield, and he thought himself too weak to attack. In addition, the enlistments of his Volunteers were nearly expired, and his army's equipment, uniforms, and shoes were nearly worn out. He appealed to St. Louis one final time and then prepared to withdraw to his base at Rolla. After a council of war, however, he decided to attack the Confederates at Wilson's Creek before giving up Springfield. Lyon's belief in the critical nature of his logistic situation was the most significant factor in his decision to attack.

While Lyon discussed a possible withdrawal with his subordinates, Generals McCulloch and Price debated with each other concerning an attack. Price felt that the Southerners could recruit plenty of soldiers and sustain a major force by advancing and recapturing Missouri. McCulloch was more cautious and generally fearful of proceeding deeper into the state. In the meantime, the Confederate generals moved their forces from Cowskin Prairie to Wilson's Creek to find food, forage, and water. Wilson's Creek supplied all three of those needs, while at the same time placing the Confederates in a position to threaten Springfield. The Confederates used their time wisely, molding bullets, fashioning artillery rounds, and generally preparing to attack.

On the evening of 9 August, Lyon began moving toward the Southern camp to attack. On the same night, McCulloch ordered his army to attack Springfield, but as the Confederates took down their camp, it began to rain softly. Fearing that his scarce ammunition would become soaked, McCulloch promptly canceled the movement

order. Had he continued with his plan, the two armies might have clashed somewhere southwest of Springfield or, perhaps, passed each other in the night. After their false start, the Confederates did not repost their security outposts, and most of the men simply layed down on their arms and slept. McCulloch's concern over his ammunition was the determining factor in his cancellation of the Confederate advance order and contributed significantly to the Federals achieving surprise at dawn on 10 August.

Communications

Communications in the campaign for Missouri in 1861 essentially took two forms—the telegraph and messengers. Both sides used these forms extensively. In this regard, the Federals had something of an advantage because St. Louis was their communications hub, and it connected them with the rest of the Union via telegraph and rail. The Confederates had a more difficult and roundabout communications system, further complicated by the fact that Missouri had not yet seceded. Memphis, Tennessee, the center of Confederate communications in the Western theater, was connected by telegraph and rail with the rest of the South.

Good roads, the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, and the railroads to Jefferson City, Rolla, and Ironton gave the Federals good lines of communications to support their field operations. By August 1861, the most important of these was the rail line from St. Louis to Rolla and the road from Rolla to Springfield. General Lyon communicated easily with St. Louis along this line, and any supplies and reinforcements that reached him would most likely come that way.

Several factors complicated the Confederate communications problem. First of all, most of the pro-Southern strength in Missouri lay along the Missouri River—in the northern one-third of the state and farthest from the South. Governor Jackson and the legislature became more isolated as Lyon drove them into the southwest corner of Missouri. There, the Ozark Mountains and the increasingly primitive state of the countryside combined to make communications difficult. But on the positive side, there was a good telegraph line that ran from Springfield to Little Rock, Arkansas, that the Confederates could use. In addition, Wilson's Creek was something of a communications center itself, as the Ray house was the local post office. Also, as Jackson's force withdrew to Cowskin Prairie, it drew closer to the Arkansas

border and potential help from that direction. At the same time, Lyon extended his communication line by occupying Springfield.

Tactical communications at the Battle of Wilson's Creek were of two types—by direct leadership and messengers. For this reason, the Confederates generally fared better, because they held a central position from which they moved troops to meet Federal threats. Coincidentally, Generals McCulloch and Price were breakfasting together when the attacks began, and they were able to effect and coordinate a general plan of action almost immediately. Although Wilson's Creek divided the Confederate campsites, two usable fords crossed the creek within the Southern lines, and units moved from place to place with reasonable ease (complicated only by stragglers, both mounted and afoot, that congested the camp's center).

Although General Lyon gained the huge advantage of surprise at the battle's onset, the way he employed that tactic also caused his plan to falter; since Lyon and Sigel were separated, they could not communicate with each other, and while each achieved great success initially, they could not coordinate their efforts and rapidly finish the battle. What is more, at a critical point in the battle, Sigel could not determine if approaching troops were friendly or enemy and was overrun. Later, Lyon and his successor, Major Sturgis, continued to hope for Sigel's arrival but remained ignorant of his plight.

Personal leadership by commanders communicating directly with their troops and units played a central part in the outcome at Wilson's Creek. The battle was small enough that personal direction was possible. Lyon, McCulloch, and Price each placed units into line, led charges, directed movements, and rallied formations. In fact, Lyon died doing so. Their subordinates, for the most part, followed instructions, demonstrated initiative, and facilitated the flow of information. All tried to coordinate their efforts but with mixed results.

Finally, the survivors of Wilson's Creek wrote extensive after-action reports that are recorded in *War of the Rebellion: Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. In this way, they communicate with us today, telling us what they did or thought they did. By doing so, they allow us to form images of the battle and make connections to military events more proximate to our own time.

Medical Care

The Battle of Wilson's Creek produced 2,361 dead and wounded soldiers in an area whose civilian population at that time was less than

50. Both sides were shocked and overwhelmed by the number of casualties. This battle, like Bull Run before it and so many others afterward, created a volume of medical needs far beyond the capabilities of local institutions. This became a common theme of all Civil War battles. Only later in the war did the North and South develop techniques to deal with mass casualties. At Wilson's Creek, these medical-care techniques were still very much undeveloped.

What we know of medical care at Wilson's Creek comes to us from private journals, letters, and the very few official reports, but we know enough to make some specific observations. Obviously, both sides greatly underestimated the likely number of casualties. For example, the Federals had only two ambulances with their army, each of which was designed to carry only four to six wounded. In the eventual retreat from Wilson's Creek to Springfield the afternoon of the battle, every wagon, caisson, and buggy carried wounded. One of the reasons that General Lyon's body was accidentally abandoned on the field was that a sergeant had his remains removed from a wagon so that wounded men could be carried away.

Neither Lyon nor McCulloch had identified a medical director for his army. Consequently, care and evacuation of the wounded was poorly coordinated. Most of the Federal wounded were taken to Springfield, where the army had established a field hospital prior to the battle, but this facility soon overflowed, and men were taken to churches, hotels, and private homes around Springfield's main square. Confederate surgeons at the Wilson's Creek campsite had prepared to move with their army toward Springfield on the night before the battle and had had to reestablish their facilities hastily during the morning of the battle. After the Federals withdrew, most of the wounded were brought to the Ray house, which became the field hospital.

Because the Confederates held the field of battle, they inherited the difficult task of tending to the wounded and burying the dead of both sides. Although the Federals evacuated most of their wounded, many fell into Confederate hands and were sent to Springfield under flags of truce along with Lyon's body on the afternoon of the battle. The Confederates buried some of their dead on the field and evacuated others to their homes in the South. The Federal dead received less charity. Many were thrown into the sinkhole on Bloody Hill and others into wells and minor depressions. Ultimately, all the dead were removed from the field, and many of them found their final rest in the military cemetery at Springfield.

As they withdrew toward Rolla on 11 August, the Federals left most of their wounded in Springfield with a store of medicines and supplies under the care of Army surgeon, Dr. Phillip C. Davis. On 11 August, the Confederates occupied Springfield and moved their wounded there over the next several days so that Springfield became a consolidated hospital for the wounded of both sides. Dr. Caleb Winfrey, a volunteer from Lone Jack, Missouri, and other Confederate surgeons moved into Springfield with some of the Confederate wounded on 12 August. In his journal, Winfrey notes his use of chloroform for the amputation of limbs and extraction of bullets both at the field hospital at the Ray house and in Springfield, indicating that many of these operations were still taking place several days after the battle.

The Battle of Wilson's Creek, as one of the "first battles" in the Civil War, suggested many of the lessons that emerged as the war progressed. As with tactics and logistics, medical care was one of the many areas in which the Federals and Confederates had much to learn. The time it took to learn some of these lessons was purchased later with the lives and limbs of soldiers on fields far from Wilson's Creek, Missouri.

III. STAFF RIDE AND BATTLEFIELD TOUR STANDS

Stand 1

(Visitor's Center [inside], grid 627076)

Situation: The Wilson's Creek Visitor's Center is a logical place to begin a staff ride or battlefield tour because a clear, concise overview of the campaign and battle can be obtained there. A short slide program at the center provides a good campaign overview, and a good terrain model demonstrates the battle with colored lights and audio narration. Unlike most presentations of this kind, this one is quite effective and helps clarify tactical movements and the battle's flow. Preferably, this presentation should be experienced before and after walking the battlefield. (For a sequence of the stands and their grids, see table 2; for a map of the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield and the location of the various staff ride stands, see map 2.) In addition, the park historian may be available for a short demonstration of Civil War artillery and infantry tactics.

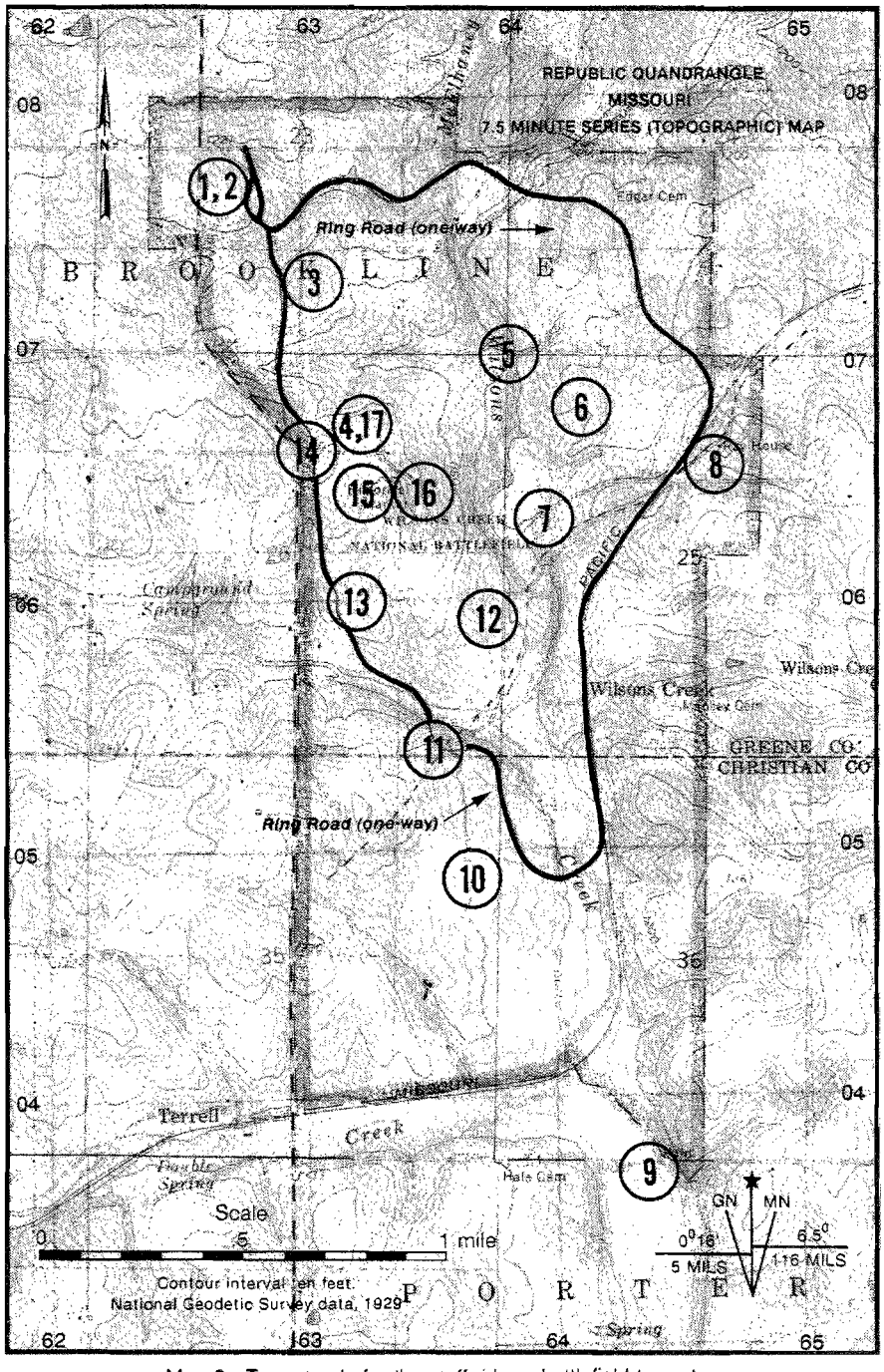
Teaching Points: The Union plan and principles of the objective, offensive, and surprise.

Vignettes: General Lyon wrote this message to General Frémont on 27 July 1861 from Springfield:

> Memorandum for Col. Phelps (the bearer). See General Frémont about troops and stores for this place. Our men have not been paid and are rather dispirited; they are badly off for clothing and the want of shoes unfits them for marching. Some staff officers are badly needed, and the interests of the government suffer for the want of them. The time of the three months volunteers is nearly out, and on their returning home my command will be reduced too low for effective operations. Troops must at once be forwarded to supply their place. The safety of the State is hazarded. Orders from Gen. Scott strip the entire West of regular forces and increase the chances of sacrificing it. The public press is full of reports that troops from other States are moving toward the northern border of Arkansas for the purpose of invading Missouri. Springfield, July 27. (Adams and Return Ira Holcombe, *An Account of the Battle of Wilson's Creek* [Springfield, MO: The Springfield Public Library and Greene County Historical Society, 1961], 18.)

General Lyon, in his last message to General Frémont on 9 August 1861 (the day before the battle), reports:

> I retired to this place [Springfield] . . . reaching here on the 5th [of August 1861]. The enemy followed to within 10 miles of here. He has taken a strong position, and is recruiting his supplies of horses, mules, and provisions by foraging into the surrounding country, his large force of mounted men enabling him to do this without much annoyance from me. I find my



Map 2. Tour stands for the staff ride or battlefield tour at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

1. Visitor's Center (inside)
2. Visitor's Center (outside)
3. First contact
4. Bloody Hill
5. Plummer's crossing
6. Plummer's repulse
7. Woodruff's Battery
8. Ray's house
9. Sigel's crossing
10. Sigel's attack
11. Sigel's defeat
12. Price's headquarters
13. Gulbor's Battery
14. Sokalski's section
15. The sinkhole
16. Lyon's death marker
17. Federal withdrawal

position extremely embarrassing, and am at present unable to determine whether I shall be able to maintain my ground or be forced to retire. I can resist any attack from the front, but if the enemy move to surround me, I must retire. I shall hold my ground as long as possible, though I may endanger the safety of my entire force. . . . The enemy yesterday made a show of force about five miles distant, and has doubtless a full purpose of making an attack upon me. (*The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, ser. 1, vol. 3 [Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1881; reprint, Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publishing Co., 1985], 57. Hereafter referred to as *O.R.*)

Table 2. Stands and Grid Numbers for the Staff Ride or Battlefield Tour*

Stand 1	The Visitor's Center (inside), grid 627076.
Stand 2	The Visitor's Center (outside), grid 627076.
Stand 3	First contact, grid 631073.
Stand 4	Bloody Hill, grid 632066.
Stand 5	Plummer's crossing, grid 637069.
Stand 6	Plummer's repulse, grid 642066.
Stand 7	Woodruff's Battery, grid 639063.
Stand 8	Ray's house, grid 646066.
Stand 9	Sigel's crossing, grid 644037.
Stand 10	Sigel's attack, grid 635047.
Stand 11	Sigel's defeat, grid 635054.
Stand 12	Price's headquarters, grid 638058.
Stand 13	Guibor's Battery (Confederate line extends to the west), grid 633059.
Stand 14	Sokalski's section (Totten's battery), grid 631066.
Stand 15	The sinkhole, grid 633065.
Stand 16	Lyon's death marker, grid 635064.
Stand 17	Federal withdrawal, grid 632066.

*Suggested routes for movement between the stands are given at the end of each stand narrative.

What intent does this message convey to Frémont? Is it possible that this message was a ruse? Contrast Lyon's message with the report of Major John M. Schofield, Lyon's adjutant general, written 20 August 1861:

During the forenoon of [the 9th of August], General Lyon and Colonel Sigel held a consultation, the result of which was the plan of attack upon the enemy's position at Wilson's Creek. . . . General Lyon informed me of his determination to make the attack the next morning and gave me the general features of the plan but owing to the press of time did not go into much detail. Colonel Sigel was to move with his brigade . . . to the left [east] of the main Cassville Road leading to the right [south] of the enemy position, while General Lyon with the remainder of the force . . . was to

> move down the road toward Little York . . . and attack his left [north] flank. Colonel Sigel was to make his attack as soon as he heard that of General Lyon. (*O.R.*, 60.)

Route to Stand 2: Stand 2 is at the picnic area just outside the Visitor's Center. This is a good place to remind the group that there are no latrines or fresh water facilities on the field. Remind the group also of regulations governing removal of items found on the battlefield and of the seasonal danger of snakes, ticks, chiggers, poison oak, and cactus.

Stand 2

(Visitor's Center [outside], grid 627076)

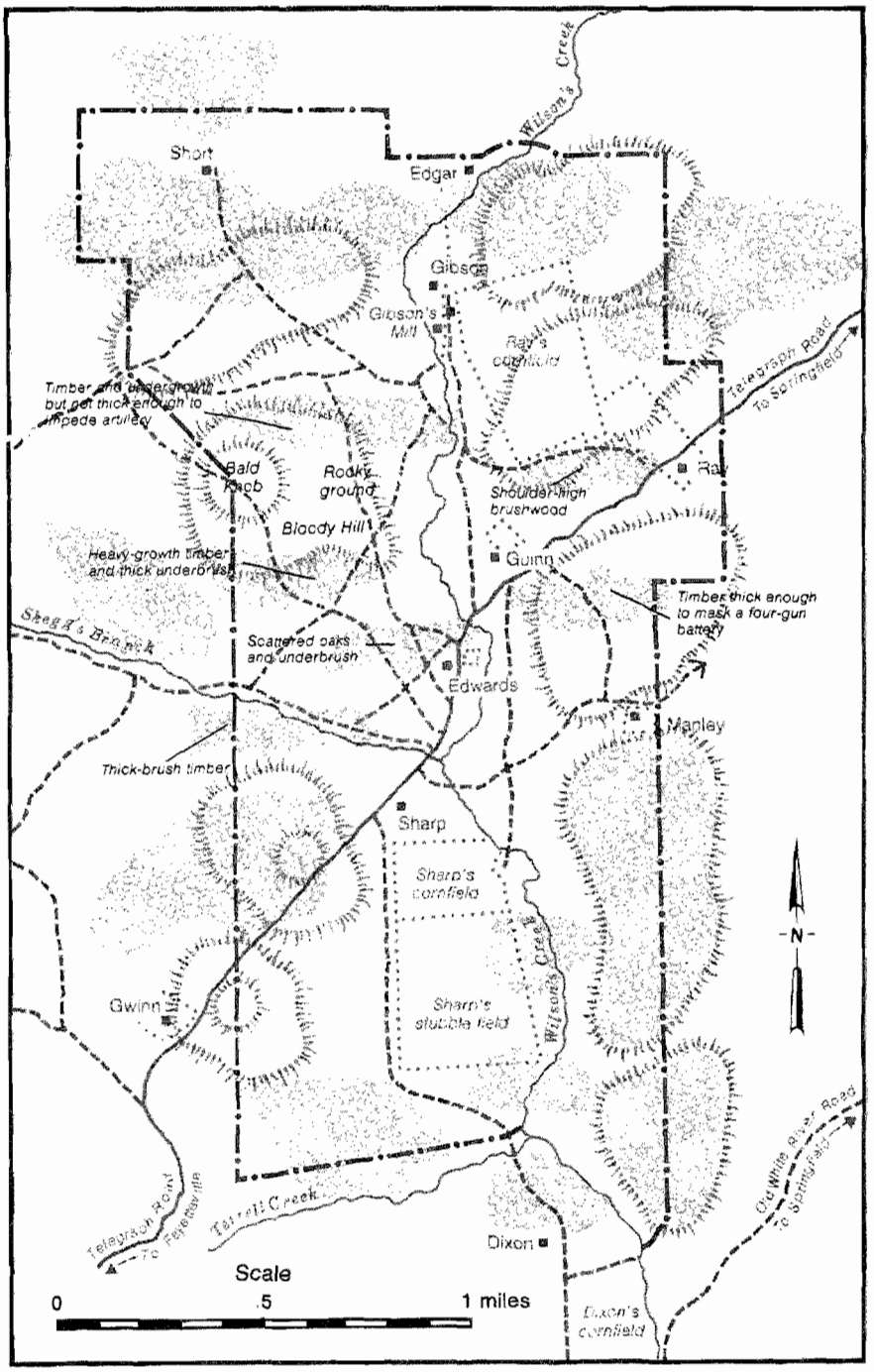
Situation: General Lyon's column left Springfield at about 1700 on 9 August and reached a point about one and one-half miles north of this stand at about 0100, 10 August. About twenty local residents served as his guides and rode with the Union column. Lyon expected to encounter Confederate pickets but did not do so because the Confederate commanders had recalled their pickets in preparation for their own planned advance. When the Confederate advance was canceled because of light rain about 2100 on 9 August, they had failed to repost their pickets. Therefore, the Confederate camps were unprotected by outpost pickets as Lyon approached them and mounted his attack. (For a map of the battlefield area in 1861, see map 3.)

When the Union column halted at about 0100, the men laid down on their arms. Meanwhile, Lyon sent the cavalry forward to determine the Confederate positions. At dawn, the Union march resumed, with Captain Plummer's battalion of Regular infantry leading, followed by Major Peter J. Osterhaus' battalion of Missouri Volunteers and Captain Totten's battery of six guns.

Teaching Points: Navigation to this point, use of local guides, organization for combat, order of march, intelligence, principles of security, and surprise.

Vignette: On 9 August, it was hot, but it became cooler when the sun set. Private Eugene F. Ware of the 1st Iowa describes the march:

> . . . life became more endurable and the marching was anything but a funeral procession. The boys gave each other elaborate instructions as to the materials out of which they wanted their coffins made, and how they wanted them decorated. . . . We moved short distances from 20 to 100 yards at a time, and kept halting and closing up, and making very slow progress . . . . There were some little light clouds, but it was light enough to see a short distance around us, by starlight. . . . Finally, word was passed along the line that we were inside the enemy's picket line but were two or three miles from their camp. Rumors magnified the number of the foe to 25,000. We



Map 3. The Wilson's Creek battlefield, 1861

Meteorological Data

- Little or no rain fell for three weeks. Light rain developed on the evening of 9 August, ending by 2200.
- Daytime temperatures rose to as high as 110 degrees.
- Nighttime temperatures fell to 65 degrees.
- Friday, 9 August 1861: sunrise, 0501; sunset, 1909–fourteen hours and eight minutes of daylight. Moonrise, 2027; moonset, 0240.
- Saturday, 10 August 1861: sunrise, 0502; sunset, 1908–fourteen hours and six minutes of daylight. Moonrise, 2055; moonset, 0331.

Legend



Thin growth of timber, little or no underbrush

Park boundary

Fields

Farmhouses

Elevated areas

> could see the sheen in the sky of vast campfires beyond the hills.... We also heard, at times, the choruses of braying mules .... About this time [0100] . . . the line stopped at a place where our company stood on a broad ledge of rock. We all laid down on this rock to get rested. The cool dewy night air made me feel chilly . . . but the radiating heat which the rock . . . had absorbed, was peculiarly comfortable. (Eugene F. Ware, *The Lyon Campaign in Missouri* [Topeka, KS: Crane & Co., 1907], 310–13.)

Meteorological data from the Farmer's Almanac, 1861, indicates the following:

> August 9, 1861. Sunrise 5:01 AM, sunset 7:09 PM, 14 hours and 8 minutes of daylight. Moonrise 10:27 PM, moonset 2:40 AM.
>
> August 10, 1861. Sunrise 5:02 AM, sunset 7:08 PM, 14 hours and 6 minutes of daylight. Moonrise 10:55 PM, moonset 3:31 AM.
>
> Full moon on August 20, new moon on August 6th, 1st quarter on August 13th, last quarter on August 28th.

Route to Stand 3: If moving by foot, leave the Visitor's Center picnic area and follow the western Ring Road to the National Park Service's stop number 8, historic overlook. Follow the gravel path eastward for about 125 meters until you come out into the open. From this vantage point, you can take several bearings. The Ray house is almost due east at a range of 1,750 meters. Far to the northeast, you can see the red and white chimneys of a power plant. Bloody Hill is almost due south about 700 meters. From this position, move cross-country to the northeast about seventy meters to the vicinity of grid 631073.

If moving by vehicles, go completely around Ring Road and park at National Park Service stop number 8, historic overlook; then, follow the instructions above. You are now standing in the field where Confederate Colonel B. A. Rives' cavalry first encountered General Lyon's column. Lyon deployed along the wood line to your north.

Stand 3

(First contact, grid 631073)

Situation: The Union advance took the Confederates by surprise. At dawn on 10 August 1861, a patrol from Colonel Cawthorn's mounted brigade (attached to General Rains' division of Missouri State Guards) worked the west bank of Wilson's Creek and discovered Federals in the area (see map 4). Another force of about 300 mounted Missouri Confederates under Colonel Rives moved northward to this point and discovered Lyon's main force. Confronted by this large force, the Missourians fell back to the north face of Bloody Hill where Colonel Cawthorn established a line of about 600 dismounted men.

Lyon now deployed with Plummer on the left (east), Major Osterhaus on the right (west), and Lieutenant Colonel George L. Andrews (the 1st Missouri) in the center. Totten unlimbered one section (two guns) under First Lieutenant George O. Sokalski and began firing. After driving off the 300 mounted Confederates from this area, Lyon continued his advance to the south and discovered Cawthorn's dismounted brigade in the low ground just north of Bloody Hill. Lyon then deployed the 1st Kansas (under Colonel George W. Deitzler) to the left (east) of the 1st Missouri. The Union line advanced so rapidly, however, that Totten could not get the remainder of his force organized into a supporting battery. A brief skirmish followed, and the Confederates withdrew in disarray, leaving Lyon in control of Bloody Hill. Lyon now brought the remainder of his force forward to the shelter of the north slope.

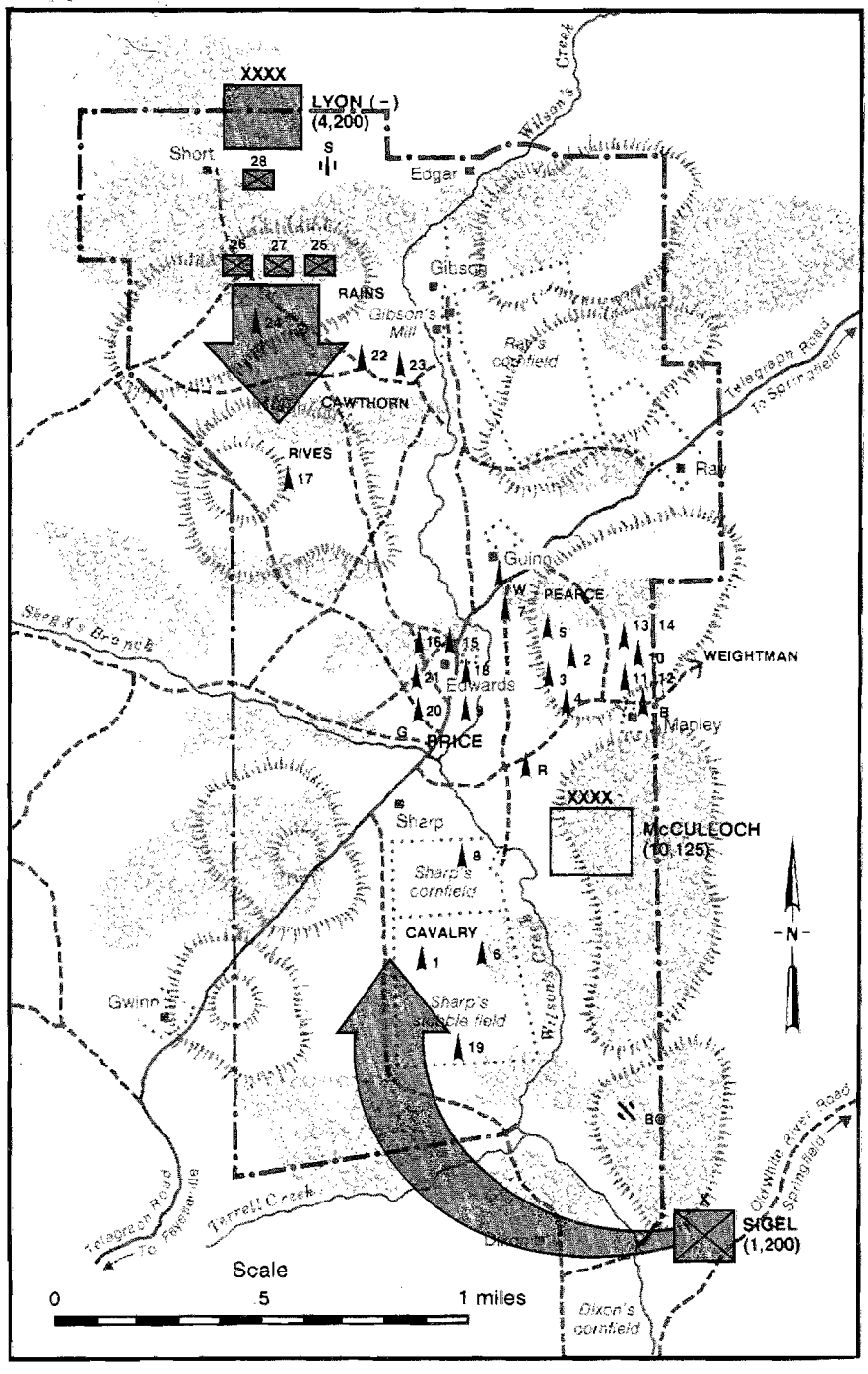
Teaching Points: Security, surprise, and the experience of real battle. Compare the reactions of Lyon's and Cawthorn's troops. What was the effect of Sokalski's section? Discuss deployment from the line of march.

Vignettes: In his official report, Andrews of the 1st Missouri claims that his unit had the honor of firing the first shot of the battle:

> Soon after the column was again in motion, I received an order to bring the regiment forward . . . I received orders to deploy one company forward as skirmishers, and this was the last order that reached me during the entire day. Company H, Captain Yates, was at once thrown out as skirmishers, closely followed by the regiment in column of companies, and advancing up the hill, the action was commenced by a shot from my skirmishers at 10 minutes past 5 o'clock. Immediately advancing in person, I was informed by Captain Yates . . . that the enemy were in force immediately in our front, and reinforcing our line of skirmishers with Captain Maurice's company (B), I ordered the regiment forward into line. . . . The action now became general and for a short time the fire was very hot . . . the regiment continued to advance under a galling fire until the enemy again gave way. (*O.R.*, 75–76.)

Confederate General Rains, Colonel Cawthorn's commander, reported this portion of the battle as follows:

> By sunrise on the 10th, the pickets which I had sent out at daybreak reported the enemy advancing in force on the west side of Wilson's Creek and within 3 miles of camp. . . . I reported their advance to Major General Price and General McCulloch. As they approached the position occupied by my second brigade [Cawthorn's] they extended their lines, placing their artillery in battery, and opening a heavy fire on my encampment. For an hour this brigade resisted the fire of the enemy's artillery and infantry before being sustained, and under their gallant leader, Colonel Cawthorn, they maintained their position throughout the day. (*O.R.*, 127.)



Map 4. The Battle of Wilson's Creek, 0500–0600

Chronology of Events

- Lyon attacks the north end of the Confederate camps and captures Bloody Hill.
- Sigel attacks and captures the cavalry camps in Sharp's cornfield.
- McCulloch and Price learn of the attacks and begin to react.

Confederate and Federal Forces

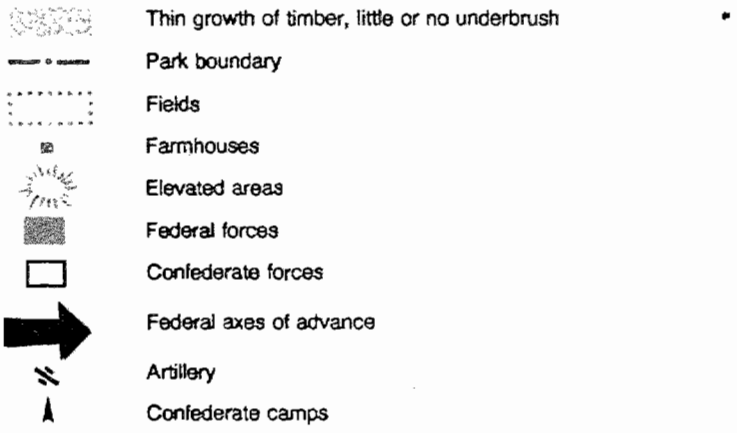
Confederate

W	Woodruff	11	1st Missouri State Guard
R	Reid	12	2d Missouri State Guard
B	Bledsoe	13	3d Missouri State Guard
G	Guibor	14	4th Missouri State Guard
1	1st Arkansas Cavalry	15	Hughes' Infantry
2	3d Arkansas Infantry	16	Thornton's Infantry
3	4th Arkansas Infantry	17	Rives' Cavalry
4	5th Arkansas Infantry	18	Burbridge's Infantry
5	3d Louisiana Infantry	19	Major's Cavalry
6	1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles	20	Wingo's Infantry
7	2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles	21	Foster's Infantry
8	South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment	22	Peyton's Cavalry
9	Kelly's Infantry	23	McCowan's Cavalry
10	Brown's Cavalry	24	Hunter's Cavalry

Federal

S	Sokalski	26	Osterhaus
BO	Backoff	27	1st Missouri
25	Plummer	28	1st Kansas

Legend



Route to Stand 4: Your next move simulates Lyon's advance to seize Bloody Hill. Imagine two large regiments facing south, each formed into two lines, with another regiment following closely in support, all advancing shoulder to shoulder across this open field, down the slope to your south, and up the slopes of Bloody Hill (which you can clearly see to your south). Move southward about 750 meters to the open ground on the northern slope of Bloody Hill, near grid 632066.

Note the swampy pond that you pass en route near grid 632070. This area was the Union rear during the battle. Supply wagons, wounded, and stragglers filled this area. Company D, 1st U.S. Cavalry, and about 200 Springfield Home Guards formed a line across here to halt stragglers and to guard the army's wagons. Later, somewhere in this area, the retreating Union troops abandoned General Lyon's body. This place was safely out of artillery and small arms fire from the Confederate positions farther south.

Stand 4

(Bloody Hill, grid 632066)

Situation: Cawthorn's Cavalry Brigade (Rains' 2d Division, Missouri State Guard) camped near here and was the first Confederate unit to discover Lyon's approach. The attack by the Union's 1st Missouri and 1st Kansas (infantry) subsequently drove off Cawthorn's men. As a result, Lyon's surprise attack had seized this critical terrain feature at little cost to his force. Now, he held this position and waited for Sigel to attack the southern end of the Confederate camps.

The rest of the battle in this area consisted of a seesaw fight up and down the slopes of Bloody Hill as the Confederates fed more and more troops into the line and Union commanders committed their meager reserves. At the height of the battle, the Union line consisted of (from left to right, east to west) the 1st Iowa, Du Bois' Battery (four guns), 1st Kansas, Captain Frederick Steele's battalion of Regulars, Totten's battery (four guns), 1st Missouri, 2d Missouri, and Sokalski's section of Totten's battery (two guns). Meanwhile, Lyon held the 2d Kansas (infantry) as a reserve on the north slope of Bloody Hill.

It is likely that Lyon intended to continue his attack to the south into the main Confederate camps. This course of action is consistent with Lyon's personality and explains why Sigel expected Lyon to drive the enemy into his position. At any rate, artillery fire from Woodruff's (Pulaski County, Arkansas) Battery checked Lyon's advance. Woodruff's position was near the Guinn farm on the east side of Wilson's Creek. Brigadier General William Y. Slack's Brigade of

Missouri State Guards quickly got into line and helped stop Lyon's advance. Slack's portion of the main Confederate camp on the west side of Wilson's Creek was closest to Lyon's force. Slack did not wait for orders but sent his two regiments into battle immediately. This action combined with the fire of Woodruff's guns slowed the Union advance long enough to stabilize the situation on Bloody Hill.

At the same time, Woodruff's fire partially enfiladed Lyon's advance. For a time, Totten dueled with Woodruff, but the Confederate position was in a slight defilade, and Totten's fire was ineffective. In response, Lyon brought up Du Bois' Battery and put it into action against Woodruff's. After making his dispositions, Lyon resumed his advance, but he no longer had the advantage of complete surprise, and his renewed attack met increasingly stiff resistance.

As Lyon advanced, he posted Captain Plummer's battalion of Regulars on the extreme left (east) flank of the Union line with orders for him to keep pace with the main attack. Plummer decided, possibly on his own initiative, to cross to the east side of Wilson's Creek and attack Woodruff's Battery.

Teaching Points: Subordinates acting without detailed instructions, loss of momentum, effect of artillery fire on unit morale, advantages of position, and principle of the offensive.

Vignette: Major Sturgis' official report describes this point in the action:

> DuBois' battery, supported by Steele's battalion was placed some 80 yards to the left [east] and rear [north] of Totten's guns, so as to bear upon a powerful battery of the enemy [Woodruff's], posted to our left [east] and front [south], on the opposite [eastern] side of Wilson's Creek, to sweep the entire plateau upon which our troops were formed. The enemy now rallied in large force near the foot of the slope. . . . During this time, Captain Plummer, with his four companies of infantry, had moved down a ridge about 500 yards to our left [east], and separated from us by a deep ravine [Wilson's Creek] . . . where he found his farther progress arrested by a large force of infantry occupying a corn field [Ray's] in the valley in his front [south]. Our whole line now advanced with much energy upon the enemy's position. The firing, which had been spirited for the last half hour, was now increasing to a continuous roar. After a fierce engagement, lasting perhaps half an hour, and in which our troops retired two or three times, in more or less disorder, but never more than a few yards, again to rally and press forward with increased vigor, the enemy gave way in the utmost confusion, and left us in possession of the position [Bloody Hill]. (*O.R.*, 66.)

Route to Stand 5: If moving by foot, go approximately 600 meters east-northeast to Wilson's Creek. A good way to get there is to move north about 150 meters to the power lines that you crossed under earlier.

Then, follow the power lines northeast about 350 meters to an unnamed stream bed that flows east into Wilson's Creek. Next, follow the unnamed creek bed to the place where it intersects Wilson's Creek in the vicinity of grid 637069. You are now at the position of Plummer's crossing.

Gibson's mill and homestead were here on the east side of Wilson's Creek. They no longer stand, but archaeologists marked and excavated the sites in the early 1980s. The site made a good camp for Rains' Confederate troops. Normally, the creek is shallow enough to ford at this point, but do so carefully. Do not drink the water, and watch out for snakes.

If moving by vehicles, assemble at the Bloody Hill parking area and follow the Ring Road to National Park Service stop number 1, Gibson's mill. From this point, move on foot along the National Park Service trail that follows the east bank of Wilson's Creek southward to the vicinity of grid 637069. Stop at the site of Gibson's mill, and try to visualize the scene as it was in 1861.

Stand 5

(Plummer's crossing, grid 637069)

Situation: Captain Plummer's mission was to guard the Union left flank and keep pace with the main attack. Plummer's task seemed simple enough. He could keep Wilson's Creek on his left while keeping pace with the rest of the army, which was on his right (his command may have been detached for this mission). Whether Plummer decided to cross Wilson's Creek on his own initiative or was ordered to cross is not clear. At any rate, he crossed at this site, moved into the Ray cornfield, and attacked to the south. His objective was to silence Woodruff's Battery (see map 5).

Teaching Points: Initiative of subordinates who understand their commander's intent, compartments, and support.

Vignette: Plummer describes his actions from the time the column resumed its movement at daybreak:

> Immediately before setting out, Captain Gilbert's company (B) was thrown forward to feel for the enemy, whose camp was known to be in the valley of Wilson's Creek. As soon as his position was ascertained, which was shortly after sunrise, the general directed me to follow Captain Gilbert with the balance of the battalion, and uniting with him, to carry forward the left flank of the attack. I overtook Captain Gilbert with his skirmishers in a deep jungle, where he had been checked by an impassable lagoon. Much time was consumed in effecting the passage of this obstacle. The battalion,

> however, finally emerged in good order, and all present, into the corn field to the left of the attack, which by this time was in full progress. (*O.R.*, 72.)

Route to Stand 6: Move by foot westward to the fence (about 100 meters); then, proceed cross-country to the southeast to grid 642066. An easier way to this position exists along the trail that follows Wilson's Creek to the south. If you take that trail, you have to leave it at some point and move east to come out into Ray's cornfield near grid 642066. As you move, discuss the difficulty of moving 300 men through a cornfield that is not planted in rows. At this point in the action, Plummer led his men in the general direction of Woodruff's Battery, intending to put it out of action. Plummer, however, met and fought a superior force and escaped with heavy casualties and a personal wound that put him out of action for the rest of the battle.

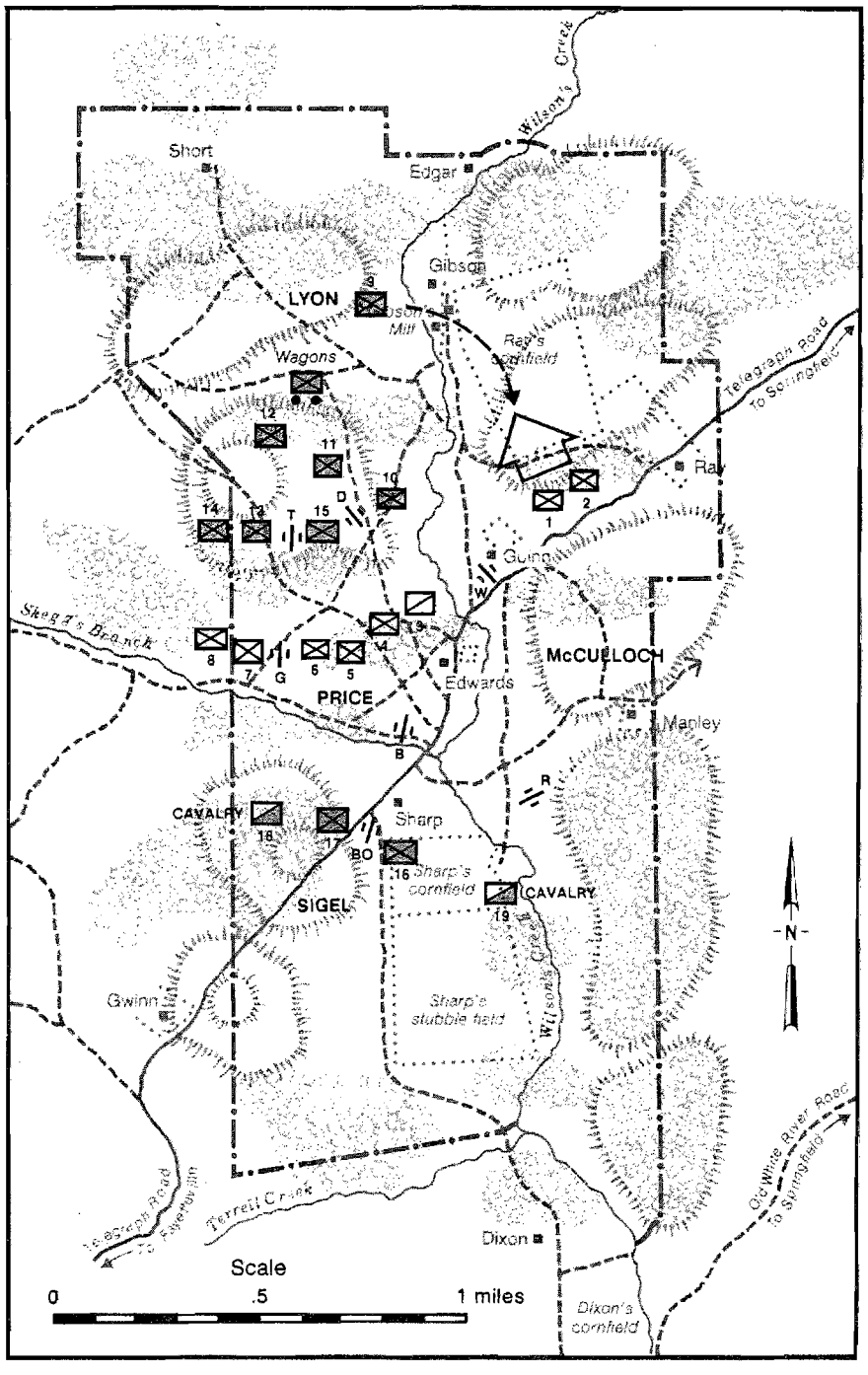
Stand 6

(Plummer's repulse, grid 642066)

Situation: Plummer had difficulty getting across Wilson's Creek, and by the time he was in position on the east side of the creek, the battle on Bloody Hill was in progress. Plummer's objective now was to storm the hill from which Woodruff's guns were stalling the Union's main attack. To accomplish this objective, he deployed skirmishers and moved through the western portion of the Ray cornfield, which was broadcast with corn rather than planted in rows. Therefore, the going was difficult and navigation a problem.

Before Plummer's men reached the southern edge of the cornfield, the 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles (under Colonel McIntosh) and the 3d Louisiana (under Colonel Louis Hébert), with a total strength of 1,100, arrived and counterattacked. Plummer's men sought cover behind the rail fence at the southern end of the field, but greatly superior numbers of Confederates drove them back to their fording site.

Plummer's battalion of 300 Regulars lost 19 killed, 52 wounded, and 9 missing in this fight, and their losses doubtless would have been greater if Du Bois' Battery had not intervened to break up the Confederate counterattack. This ended the fighting on the eastern side of Wilson's Creek. Plummer's men got back across the creek and remained in the Union rear for the rest of the battle. Meanwhile, the 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles withdrew into low ground out of the line of Du Bois' fire. The Louisiana infantrymen withdrew to the Ray house where they continued to be bombarded by cannon fire until they



Map 5. The Battle of Wilson's Creek, 0600–0800

Chronology of Events

- Sigel clears Sharp's field, blocks Telegraph Road, and waits for Lyon.
- Price stops Lyon's attack and begins to build a line of battle.
- Plummer crosses Wilson's Creek and tries to silence Woodruff's guns.
- McIntosh attacks and defeats Plummer.

Confederate and Federal Forces

Confederate

W	Woodruff	3	Cawthorn
R	Reid	4	Weightman
B	Bledsoe	5	Slack
G	Guibor	6	Clark
1	2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles	7	1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles
2	3d Louisiana Infantry	8	McBride

Federal

T	Totten	13	1st Iowa
D	Du Bois	14	2d Kansas
BO	Backoff	15	Steele
9	Plummer	16	3d Missouri
10	Osterhaus	17	5th Missouri
11	1st Missouri	18	Carr
12	1st Kansas	19	Farrand

Not shown:

McCulloch's Brigade, organizing east of Wilson's Creek near the ford on Telegraph Road.

Pearce's Brigade, organizing just west of Manley's house.

Company D, 1st U.S. Cavalry and Home Guards, which were deployed near the wagons.

Cavalry from the Confederate camps, which wandered in confusion within the Confederate lines.

Legend


Thin growth of timber, little or no underbrush

Park boundary


Fields

Farmhouses


Elevated areas


Federal forces


Confederate forces


Confederate axis of advance


Artillery

showed a yellow hospital flag, at which time Du Bois turned his guns elsewhere.

Teaching Points: Initiative, support, and combined arms.

Vignettes: In his official account (the briefest one submitted), Captain Plummer reports:

> The battalion was pushed forward rapidly, and soon the enemy opened on us from the left, but his fire was light and easily quelled. Our advance was in the direction of the enemy's battery, on the hill opposite Lieutenant Du Bois' battery, with the intention of storming it, should the opportunity offer. This was observed by the enemy, and a large force was accumulated in our front and on our left flank, and our forward progress was checked. Nevertheless, the men stood steadily and squarely up to their work, until I deemed our position no longer tenable, and I then drew off my command, steadily and without confusion. . . . In this field, I had many men killed and wounded. . . . We were materially aided in extricating ourselves by the timely aid of Du Bois' battery, which beat back the advance of the enemy with much slaughter. (*O.R.*, 72.)

Second Lieutenant Du Bois' report gives credit to another officer:

> After assisting Captain Totten to silence the enemy's batteries . . . I received orders from General Lyon to move my battery to the right [west]. Captain Granger was to place me in position. While limbering, our left flank (Plummer's battalion) . . . was driven back by an overwhelming force of the enemy (five regiments, I think), [actually only two]. . . . Captain Granger now countermanded my order to move and by a change of front to the left, I enfiladed their line and drove them back with great slaughter, Captain Granger directing one of my guns. Their broken troops rallied behind a house [Ray's] on the right of their line. I struck this house twice with a 12-pounder shot, when they showed a hospital flag. I ceased firing, and their troops retired. (*O.R.*, 80.)

Colonel Hébert of the 3d Louisiana reports:

> At the moment of deploying in line of battle . . . the enemy opened their fire on our front, within fifteen paces at the most . . . an advance was ordered, led gallantly and bravely by Captain McIntosh, to whom I owe all thanks for assistance. The enemy was posted behind a fence and in the corn field. The companies moved up bravely, broke the enemy, pursued them into the corn field, and routed them completely. On emerging from the corn field, the regiment found themselves in a naked oat field, where a battery on the left [Du Bois'] opened upon us a severe fire. The order was given to fall back to a wooded ground higher up to the right. (*O.R.*, 113.)

Lieutenant Colonel Benjamin T. Embry, second in command of Colonel James McIntosh's 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles, reports:

> While at breakfast on the morning of the 10th instant, the regiment was surprised by the opening of the enemy's batteries on the western heights of Oak Hills [Bloody Hill], but at the call of the bugle, the regiment rallied immediately, mounted, and formed in line of battle in good order, you at the time being at General McCulloch's headquarters. I marched the regiment

> to the timber north of Captain Woodruff's battery, to shield them from the fire of the enemy's batteries on the west, and dismounted them, at which time you made your appearance and took charge of the regiment, and in person led them in a charge upon a division of the regular Federal troops stationed upon our north. In the charge many of the enemy were slain and the rest repulsed. From some misunderstanding in regard to orders, only about half the regiment participated in the action at this point. About this time, your service being needed or required upon other portions of the field, General McCulloch ordered me to move the regiment to the hills to the west, where a close and bloody contest was going on. (*O.R.*, 111.)

Finally, General McCulloch in his official report to the Confederate War Department states:

> Hébert's regiment of Louisiana volunteers and McIntosh's regiment of Arkansas Mounted Riflemen were ordered to the front, and after passing [Woodruff's] battery turned to the left and soon engaged the enemy with regiments deployed. Colonel McIntosh dismounted his regiment, and the two marched up abreast to a fence around a large corn field, when they met the left of the enemy already posted. A terrible conflict of small-arms fire took place here. The opposing force was a body of regular United States infantry, commanded by Captains Plummer and Gilbert. Notwithstanding the galling fire poured upon these two regiments, they leaped over the fence, and, gallantly led by their colonels, drove the enemy before them back upon the main body. (*O.R.*, 105.)

The 3d Louisiana lost nine killed, forty-eight wounded, and three missing. The 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles lost ten killed and forty-four wounded. Plummer's battalion lost nineteen killed, fifty-two wounded, and nine missing.

Route to Stand 7: The route to Woodruff's Battery position is about 600 meters away. Initially, move downhill southwest toward Wilson's Creek until you reach the level field along the creek at grid 638066. Imagine the Confederates camped in this field and reacting to the sounds of battle developing around them. Plummer wanted to silence Woodruff's Battery, positioned on the hilltop about 400 meters southeast of here. Move across the field in that direction. Note that you must cross a considerable ditch (which was known as Ray's Branch) to get there. The Confederates had no infantry deployed here to protect Woodruff's guns. Climb to Woodruff's position at 639063. Under what conditions could Plummer's Regular battalion of 300 infantrymen have succeeded in their attack?

Stand 7

(Woodruff's Battery, grid 639063)

Situation: Near here, Captain Woodruff's Battery began the night and awaited orders for the move on Springfield. The battery was slated to be in the vanguard of the movement, but General McCulloch canceled

the movement order because of the rain, and the battery spent the rest of the night in the open. Woodruff worried about a possible surprise attack and reconnoitered this position for his battery. Then, he got approval from his superiors to occupy it. When Woodruff sighted the Federals moving onto Bloody Hill, he opened up enfilading fire on them, which caused Lyon's attack to stall. This delay probably saved the main Confederate camp from being overrun by Lyon's main attack.

Woodruff's Battery had two 6-pounder and two 12-pounder smoothbore cannons. Woodruff detailed his officers to act as gun commanders, and Woodruff was with his number two gun when it fired the first shot. Lieutenant Weaver, at number one gun, was killed in the ensuing fight along with two of his men. The battery's total casualties at Wilson's Creek were three men.

Teaching Points: Initiative of subordinates, reconnaissance, leaders at the front, and security.

Vignettes: Woodruff went on to command eleven field artillery units, serving the Confederacy from 1861 to 1865. Forty-three years later, he writes this of Wilson's Creek:

> About 6 a.m. on the 10th, just as my men had finished breakfast, a great commotion was observed on the Springfield road. . . . Men, horses, and other animals . . . were seen rushing hurriedly and confusedly in great numbers down the roads and to the fords to the west and south. It seemed to be a repetition of the affair at Crane Creek a few days ago, and we were not greatly disturbed. Nevertheless, I ordered officers and men to posts and mounted drivers while awaiting orders. A minute or two later, on the hill five or six hundred yards northwest a rush of teams was observed, which rapidly developed into a light battery, that quickly unlimbered and commenced firing, seemingly in the direction of General McCulloch's headquarters. . . . Almost simultaneously a second battery or section rushed forward to the right and in front of the first, about 200 yards, unlimbered and commenced firing. . . . I passed my caissons to the rear and ordered "in battery". . . . The second battery . . . observed my movement and opened fire on us. . . . Feeling the importance of staying the assault until our infantry lines were established, the cannonade with the hostile battery was continued half an hour or more. . . . (William Edward Woodruff, *With the Light Guns in '61–'65*. . . . [Little Rock, AR: Eagle Press, 1903, 1987], 39–42.)

Once the rebel line formed, Woodruff shifted his fire as targets presented themselves. Woodruff explains his practice of having officers command the gun crews:

> It had been arranged by the company officers long before, that in our first engagement each should take the post of gunner at designated pieces . . . the tendency is to overshoot the mark. . . . Only experience can qualify a

> gunner to determine what elevation to give his piece. . . . I fired the first shot and the others followed. (Woodruff, 44.)

Route to Stand 8: The Ray house is about 800 meters northeast of here near grid 646066. Leave the battery position and move toward the southeast along a trail that takes you downhill to Telegraph Road. Move along Telegraph Road toward the northeast. As you proceed, talk about the considerable change time produces on battlefields. For instance, after the war, this area became a quarry. Students might be tempted to think that this route is unchanged since Civil War days. That is not the case. Also, note the denseness of the underbrush. This was not so dense at the time of the battle.

In 1861, rural people fenced their land to protect their crops from their roaming farm animals. This was also a wood-burning society. When the National Park Service began in the late 1800s, it decided to allow most parts of this battlefield to grow wild. One can hope that the Park Service will be able to restore the battlefield someday to nearly its original ground cover. In doing so, the Park Service will more closely satisfy its original mandate from Congress to preserve these battlefields in order for military officers to study them.

Stand 8

(Ray's house, grid 646066)

Situation: Some of the Ray children were herding horses in the valley south of the springhouse when a Confederate soldier warned them that a fight was about to happen. They ran home and told everyone else. In response, everyone hid in the cellar except John Ray, who watched the battle from his front porch. Ultimately, the house and yard became a hospital. At one point, a cannon shot from Du Bois' Battery on Bloody Hill struck the Ray chicken house. After that, the soldiers displayed a yellow hospital flag, and the firers shifted to other targets.

Colonel Richard Weightman of the Missouri State Guard died in the west bedroom near the end of the battle. Confederates also brought General Lyon's body here on the afternoon of the battle to be examined and prepared for return to the Union lines near Springfield. The Confederates buried some of their dead in the yard south of the house.

Teaching Points: Effect of battle on civilians, using civilian facilities to support military operations, and care of the dead and wounded.

Vignette: John Ray came to Missouri from Tennessee in the late 1840s. He was a widower with one daughter, Elizabeth. He courted and married Roxanna Grizzard Steele in 1849. She had been married to

William Steele, who owned this property and had died in 1848. The Ray family was composed of eleven children. The Rays also owned two slaves, Wiley and his wife Rhoda, who had four children. This group worked the 420-acre Ray farm in the 1850s and 1860s.

The Rays built their house in 1851, constructing the two rear rooms first, occuping them, and then finishing the front rooms later. The Rays built the fireplaces of native stone quarried in the area. The original cellar under the house was much smaller than the house and was entered by a trap door in the middle room. William Steele or John Ray built the springhouse in the valley opposite the house. The springhouse was later enlarged in the 1930s. Other outbuildings existed at the time of the battle, including a large stock and hay barn southeast of the house; slave quarters for Wiley, Rhoda, and their children; a chicken house west of the house; and a smokehouse in the southwest corner of the yard. The Rays were grain farmers who produced corn and wheat for the market, but they also kept bees and fruit trees and bred and raised horses, cows, hogs, and sheep.

The Telegraph Road between Springfield and Fort Smith, Arkansas, ran in front of the Ray's house. Telegraph wire ran through the trees along the road and was strung in April 1860. The U.S. Mail established the Wilson's Creek Post Office at the Ray's place in 1858, with John Ray as postmaster. Julius Short, a postman who worked for Ray in the venture, was present on the day of the battle.

The Rays continued to live on their farm after the war, John dying in 1875 and Roxanna in 1876. Since that time, the house has had several owners and remained occupied until the late 1960s, when the Park Service took over maintenance of the house and grounds. Restoration of the house began in 1984. (Information on the Rays is from August K. Klapp, *The Ray House* [Springfield, MO: Wilson's Creek Battlefield Foundation, 1987].)

Route to Stand 9: If moving by foot or vehicles, follow the Ring Road south to the vicinity of the bridge crossing over Wilson's Creek. Then, move by foot, following a Park Service bridle path along the eastern bank of the creek for about 1,450 meters to the vicinity of grid 645036. Along the way, you will notice the steep rock ledge on your left and Wilson's Creek on your right. The Missouri Pacific Railroad once had a line that ran along here. You will see the concrete pylons where it crossed Wilson's Creek near grid 640041.

You will find Sigel's crossing site to be a modern concrete-based ford over which automobiles now carefully cross Wilson's Creek. If you wish, try to find the place where Sigel placed Backoff's Battery in

position to support his attack on the Confederate camps in Sharp's cornfield (at grid 646042). It is hard to find, but you will be rewarded if you try. Climb the hill east of the ford. When you get to the top, turn north cross-country until you come out into a field. Look to the northwest toward Bloody Hill. This view is difficult when the trees are green with leaves, but you might catch a glimpse of the large field where most of the Confederate cavalry camped. This is one of those views of the whole enemy camp that commanders hope for but rarely get in battle.

Stand 9

(Sigel's crossing, grid 644037)

Situation: Sigel's 2d Brigade left Springfield at 1830 on the 9th. He had 2 regiments of Missouri volunteer infantry, a battery of 6 guns (Backoff's), and 2 companies of cavalry for a total of about 1,200 soldiers, plus 5 civilian guides. It rained briefly on the brigade at about 2100. At 2300, the column halted and rested until daybreak. At about 0500, Sigel reached the high ground east of the crossing site. From there, he had a commanding view of the Confederate camps in Sharp's field. Sigel remained there with four of his guns, while the rest of his force continued. This force crossed Wilson's Creek, either at the current ford or farther downstream, and continued past the Dixon farm to cross Terrell Creek.

Teaching Points: How to conduct detached operations in coordination with another force; navigation and the use of guides; and resting, security, and surprise.

Vignettes: Sigel's report details the action at this point:

> It was now 5:30 a.m. At this moment some musket-firing was heard from the north-west, announcing the approach of General Lyon's troops; I therefore ordered the four pieces to open fire against the camp, which had a "stirring" effect on the enemy, who were preparing breakfast. The surprise was complete, except that one of the enemy's cavalrymen made good his escape . . . and took the news of our advance to . . . General Pearce's headquarters . . . believing that no time should be lost to lend assistance to our friends, we crossed Wilson's Creek, took down the fences at Dixon's farm, passed through it and crossed Terrell Creek. (*O.R.*, 304.)

Sigel's cavalrymen were busy. Captain Eugene A. Carr, in his account, writes:

> Colonel Sigel directed me to take the right flank, and then proceeded into the valley below the camp and opened fire of cannon upon it. I, in the meantime, moved to the edge of the bluff and opened fire with my carbines, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the enemy, being at too great

> a distance to do much execution. A few minutes before Colonel Sigel opened fire, I heard firing at the opposite end of the camp and sent word to him that General Lyon was engaged. This was a little after 6 a.m. The enemy ran out of their camp, which was of cavalry.... (*O.R.*, 89.)

Second Lieutenant Charles E. Farrand writes:

> Nothing of importance occurred on the march until about 4:30 in the morning, when several prisoners were turned over to the guard. One of these stated to me that their army was expecting reinforcements from Louisiana, and that they had mistaken us for their reinforcements. We were now very near the enemy's camp, and continued to take prisoners in small numbers, most of whom said they were out in search of something to eat. (*O.R.*, 91.)

Dr. Samuel H. Melcher was assistant surgeon in Colonel Salomon's 5th Missouri. He reports:

> General [Colonel] Sigel soon gave the order to fire, which was responded to with rapidity, but our guns being on an elevation, and the Confederates being in a field which sloped toward the creek, the shots passed over their heads, creating a stampede but doing little, if any, damage to life or limb. In vain I and others urged the artillerymen to depress the guns. Either from inability to understand English, or, in the excitement, thinking it was only necessary to load and fire, they kept banging away till the whole camp was deserted.... (Holcombe and Adams, 46.)

Route to Stand 10: If moving by vehicles, begin by walking back along the eastern bank of Wilson's Creek to the bridge. Then, cross the bridge, and move by vehicle southwest cross-country about 500 meters to the vicinity of grid 635046. If moving by foot, either cross Wilson's Creek here and follow Sigel's advance across Terrell Creek at the vicinity of grid 638041 or retrace your steps to the current bridge over Wilson's Creek and then proceed to grid 635046.

If you are prepared to ford both Wilson's and Terrell Creeks, you can gain valuable insights by following Sigel's exact route. This, however, requires coordination with Mr. Hancock, who lives on the farm at grid 637037. Beware of his dogs. Ask if you may cross the field just east of the Hale Cemetery (grid 638037). Then, cross the field due north to Terrell Creek. Sigel's column crossed Terrell Creek where a huge sycamore tree stands (in 1990). This tree is considerably larger than any other trees along this stretch of Terrel Creek and makes a good landmark to guide your movements.

Cross the creek at the huge sycamore tree, and continue across the old railroad grade northward until you come out at the south end of a huge field. This, in 1861, was Sharp's cornfield. The Park Service has marked the western edge of the cornfield with a snake rail fence. In 1861, a road followed the western edge of the field all the way to the

Sharp house near the Telegraph Road. Sigel used this route to move his infantry and artillery.

Stand 10

(Sigel's attack, grid 635047)

Situation: The Confederates camped much of their cavalry in this field—about 2,400 men. Sigel's bombardment took them by surprise, and for the most part, they fled. Sigel followed his advantage and continued his movement up from Terrell Creek and onto the southern end of this huge cornfield. He now moved along a road that bounded the western edge of this field and discovered a force of Southern cavalry attempting to form near Sharp's house. In response, he ordered the four guns and crews that had been left across Wilson's Creek to rejoin the brigade. Then, he deployed his infantry and artillery into the field. After briefly shelling the Confederate cavalry, they withdrew. Sigel re-formed his brigade, returned to the road along the edge of the field, and moved to his final position blocking the Telegraph Road.

Teaching Points: Exploitation, surprise, and principle of the objective. Imagine the elation and high spirits of Sigel's men, especially in light of what soon happened to them.

Vignettes: Sigel's report states:

> [We] continued our march until we reached the south side of the valley, which extends northward to Sharp's house, about 3000 paces, and from west to east about 1000. We took the road on the west side of the valley, along the margin of the woods, and within a fence running nearly parallel with the open fields. During this time a large body of the enemy's cavalry, about 2500 strong, was forming across the valley, not far distant from its northern extremity; I therefore halted the column on the road, sent for the four pieces left on the other side of the creek, and, as soon as their approach was reported to me, I directed the head of our column to the right, left the road, and formed the troops in line of battle, between the road and the enemy's deserted camp—the infantry on the left, the artillery on the right, and the cavalry on the extreme right, toward Wilson's Creek. A lively cannonade was opened against the dense masses of the hostile cavalry, which lasted about twenty minutes, and forced the enemy to retire in disorder toward the north and into the woods. We now turned back into the road, and advancing, made our way through a number of cattle near Sharp's house, and suddenly struck the Fayetteville Road [Telegraph Road] leading north to that part of the battlefield which General Lyon's troops were engaged. . . .(Franz Sigel, "The Flanking Column at Wilson's Creek," *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, edited by Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, vol. 1 [New York: The Century Co., 1882], 304.)

Lieutenant Farrand, who led part of Sigel's cavalry, describes the campsite:

> . . . as we passed through it I saw many dead bodies and quantities of arms of all descriptions lying on the ground. Many of the latter I caused my men to destroy. There were in their camp a wagon load of Maynard rifles, one of regular rifled muskets, and several boxes of United States regulation sabers, all new. (*O.R.*, 91.)

Dr. S. H. Melcher had something else in mind:

> While the command was taking position, I with my orderly, Frank Ackoff, 5th Missouri, went into the abandoned Arkansas camp where I found a good breakfast of coffee, biscuit, and fried green corn. . . . Most of the tents were open—a musket with fixed bayonet being forced into the ground, butt up, and the flap of the tent held open by being caught in the flint lock. (Holcombe and Adams, 46.)

Colonel T. J. Churchill commanded the 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles. In his report, written later that same day, he writes:

> General: I have the honor to report that about breakfast the enemy opened one of their batteries upon my camp. Being in an open field and exposed to raking fire of grape and shell, and not supported by any of our own batteries, I fell back to the woods, and there formed my regiment. I then moved down the road in the direction of Springfield . . . . (*O.R.*, 109–10.)

Greer commanded the South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment camped at the northern end of the field. His unit had the most time to react and was out of the line of fire initially. He reports:

> The different companies of the regiment formed as rapidly as possible. I immediately determined to cross the ford . . . and charge the battery of the enemy on the hill [Backoff or Totten]. About half of the companies had marched out of the field . . . when I found that the other companies did not move out. I sent the adjutant back to where they were, with orders to have them join the other portion of the command. By this time the enemy had appeared in the field, had planted several pieces of artillery, and had opened fire on my remaining companies. They were formed under command of Major [R. H.] Chilton. . . . (*O.R.*, 118.)

Route to Stand 11: Now, move along the western edge of Sharp's cornfield to its northwestern corner. From here, move west about 100 meters to the Telegraph Road, close to the place where the road disappears over the hill to the southwest. This is stand 11 (grid 636054). It gives a good view of Sigel's situation. Along the way, reinforce the fact that Sigel's men were successful to this point and were shortly to become a routed mob.

Stand 11

(Sigel's defeat, grid 635054)

Situation: Sigel captured about 100 prisoners at Sharp's farm and concluded that Lyon was attacking successfully and that his force was in the perfect position to block the Confederates' escape route and bag several thousand rebels. The Union 3d Missouri formed on the right (east), the 5th Missouri on the left (west), and Backoff's artillery unlimbered in the center, with two guns in reserve. Captain Eugene A. Carr's troopers watched the left flank and Second Lieutenant Charles E. Farrand's troopers the right. This was a classic blocking position.

For the next thirty minutes, Sigel's guns lobbed shells to the north across Skegg's Branch into the Confederates opposing Lyon's advance. At about 0830, the firing on Bloody Hill stopped. There was a lull in the battle there as both sides made adjustments. Through the smoke, Sigel could see large numbers of men moving on the northern side of Skegg's Branch. He concluded that the Confederates were withdrawing. He was ready to capture them.

The Confederates began to get things sorted out by this time, although their troop movements continued to be disrupted by bands of horsemen roaming around the battlefield. McCulloch personally took charge of 300 men from the 3d Louisiana (the regiment that helped defeat Plummer in Ray's cornfield and then displayed the yellow hospital flag near Ray's house). He led them south across the Wilson's Creek ford to Skegg's Branch and deployed into line of battle across the Telegraph Road. Reid's Battery (four guns) deployed on the high ground just east of the junction of Skegg's Branch and Wilson's Creek. Bledsoe's Battery (three guns, including Old Sacramento) supported the attack from north of Skegg's Branch.

The Louisianans advanced. This confused Sigel's men, who expected to see fleeing rebels, not formed troops. At first, they mistook the gray-clad Louisianans for the 1st Iowa—also dressed in gray. McCulloch's men closed to forty yards before Sigel realized his mistake and ordered his men and guns to fire. But it was too late; Reid's and Bledsoe's Batteries opened fire, and the Confederate infantry raked the Union position. Other Confederates who had been hiding in the adjacent woods joined in the attack. Sigel's infantry did not even fire in response; they ran. Within minutes, Sigel's command had disintegrated. Some retreated back the way they had come; others took the Telegraph Road south (see map 6).

Sigel's command lost 5 of its 6 guns, and his 2 infantry regiments lost 35 killed, 132 wounded, and 126 missing out of 990 engaged. His cavalry reported 4 men missing out of 125 engaged.

Teaching Points: Fog of battle, quickly changing situations, loss of initiative, unity of command, simplicity of plan, recognition of friend and foe, and holding a reserve.

Vignettes: Sigel describes his defeat:

> All of these circumstances—the cessation of the firing in Lyon's front, the appearance of the enemy's deserters, and the movement of . . . artillery and cavalry toward the south—led us into the belief that the enemy's forces were retreating. . . . So uncertain was I in regard to the character of the approaching troops . . . that I . . . sent Corporal Tod, of the 3d Missouri, forward to challenge them. He challenged as ordered but was immediately shot and killed. I instantly ordered the artillery and infantry to fire. But it was too late—the artillery fired one or two shots but the infantry, as though paralyzed, did not fire . . . the horses and drivers of three guns suddenly left their position and, in their tumultuous flight carrying panic into the ranks of the infantry, which turned back in disorder. . . . (Sigel, 305.)

Lieutenant Colonel S. M. Hyams Jr. was the officer in command of the 300 soldiers from the 3d Louisiana. He reports:

> We were conducted by the gallant Colonel McIntosh across the ford to the valley in front of Sigel's battery, when, having deployed in line, the charge was ordered . . . and arriving on the brow of the hill, Lieutenant Lacey, of the Shreveport Rangers, sprang on a log, waved his sword, and called, "Come on, Caddo!" [the parish from which they were recruited]. The whole command rushed forward, carried the guns, rushed to the fence, and drove the enemy off. (*O.R.*, 115.)

Captain John P. Vigilini of the 3d Louisiana was at the point of the attack. He states:

> We started with about 300 men. . . . The Pelican Rifles and the Iberville Greys, under my command, were on the right and thus marched until we were within thirty or forty yards of the battery, which was on a steep hill . . . a man [Corporal Tod] appeared on the edge of the hill. The general then ordered us to halt and asked the man whose forces those were. He replied, "Sigel's regiment," at the same time raising a rifle to shoot, but ere he had time to execute his design the sharp crack of a Mississippi rifle carried a messenger of death to him, and thus to Corporal Henry Gentles, of my company, belongs the honor of having saved the general's life. The general then turned to me and said, "Captain, take your company up and give them hell." (*O.R.*, 117.)

The ever-present Dr. Melcher describes the scene:

> It was smokey and objects at a distance could not be seen very distinctly. Being at some distance in front of the command, I saw a body of men moving down the valley toward us [3d Louisiana], from the direction we

> last heard General Lyon's guns. I rode back, and reported to Colonel Sigel that troops were coming. . . . Not seeing their colors, I suggested to Sigel that he had better show his. . . . A battery we could not see opened with grape, making a great deal of noise as the shot struck the fence and trees, but not doing much damage . . . except to scare the men, who hunted for cover like a flock of young partridges. . . . The impression seemed to be that Totten was firing into us. . . . Colonel Sigel now evidently thought of retreat, as the only words I heard from him were, "Where's my guides?" . . . (Holcombe and Adams, 46–47.)

Not all of the 3d Louisiana got into the battle against Sigel. Major W. F. Tunnard commanded the group that had taken refuge near Ray's house and had displayed the yellow hospital flag in order to discourage Du Bois' Battery. His report is somewhat subdued:

> In marching to join the right wing near the ford in the road, we were again fired on, wounding several and shooting my horse, and I then accompanied the regiment on foot. Nothing more occurred . . . worthy of notice except the wounding of three of our men by the accidental discharge of a musket by one of the Morehouse Fencibles. (*O.R.*, 117.)

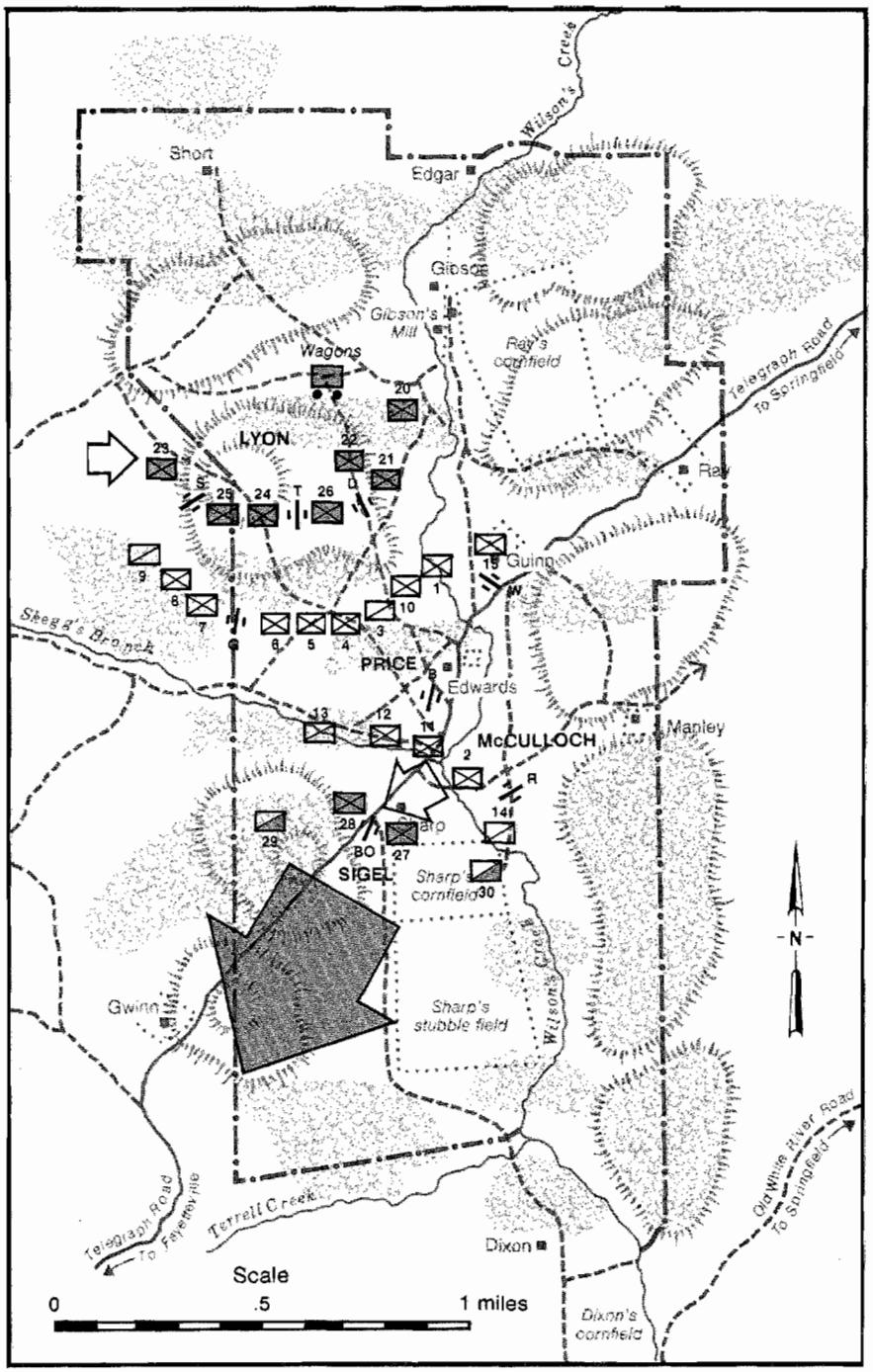
Route to Stand 12: Follow the Telegraph Road northward about 600 meters to the site of Edwards' cabin (grid 638058). As you proceed, notice the elevation change at Skegg 's Branch. Try to get a feeling for the distance from here to Bloody Hill. Visualize hundreds of men, horses, mules, and wagons running around in a panic. At some point, turn around and view Sigel's position from the Confederate perspective.

Stand 12

(Price's headquarters, grid 638058)

Situation: More than 3,000 men of General Price's Missouri State Guard camped in this meadow. Many of these men were unarmed, and most of the others carried shotguns, pistols, squirrel rifles, and other private weapons. Most of General McCulloch's Arkansas, Texas, and Louisiana troops camped on the eastern side of Wilson's Creek opposite this site. This is the center of Confederate command and control at the beginning of the battle.

The Confederate command was bitterly divided between Generals Price and McCulloch. Price was a major general and commander of the Missouri State Guard (militia). He had fought with distinction in the Mexican War, had been governor of Missouri, and was intimately familiar with the campaign to this date. McCulloch was a brigadier general commissioned by the Confederacy and acting under orders from General Leonidas Polk in Memphis. McCulloch was a tough, able commander. His men represented the quality of this Confederate force.



Map 6. The Battle of Wilson's Creek, 0800–1000

Chronology of Events

- Price holds Lyon and begins to extend the Confederate line to the west.
- McCulloch routs Sigel.
- Greer's cavalry unsuccessfully attacks Lyon's flank and rear.
- Both sides pause to regroup.
- McCulloch realigns his forces to support Price.

Confederate and Federal Forces

Confederate

W	Woodruff	7	1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles
R	Reid	8	McBride
B	Bledsoe	9	1st Arkansas Cavalry
G	Guibor	10	Foster
1	2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles	11	4th Missouri State Guard
2	3d Louisiana Infantry	13	1st Missouri State Guard
3	Cawthorn	12	Greer
4	Weightman	14	Brown
5	Slack	15	1st Missouri
6	Clark		

Federal

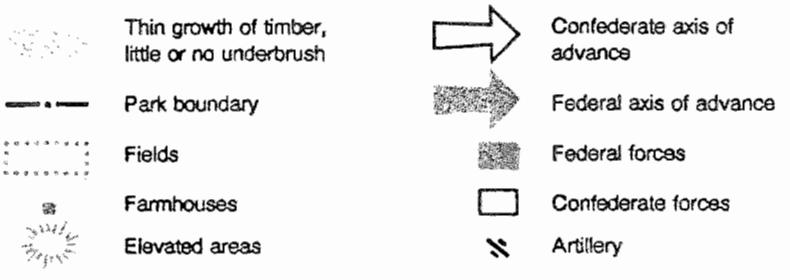
T	Totten	24	1st Iowa
D	Du'Bois	25	2d Kansas
S	Sokalski	26	Steele
BO	Backoff	27	3d Missouri
20	Plummer	28	5th Missouri
21	Osterhaus	29	Carr
22	1st Missouri	30	Farrand
23	1st Kansas		

Not shown:

Many stragglers in and around the Confederate camps.

Company D, 1st U.S. Cavalry and Home Guards deployed near the wagons.

Legend



He had a distinctly low regard for Price's militiamen, and he was not politically adroit.

Teaching Points: Unity of command, objective, and campsite selection.

Vignettes: One week before, when the army had camped farther south, Price confronted McCulloch over the issue of command:

> I am an older man than you . . . and I am not only your senior in rank now, but I was a brigadier general in the Mexican War . . . when you were only a captain; I have fought and won more battles than you have ever witnessed; my force is twice as great as yours; some of my officers rank you and have seen more service than you; and we are also upon the soil of our own state; but if you will consent to help us whip Lyon and to repossess Missouri, I will put myself and all my forces under your command and we will obey you as faithfully as the humblest of your own men. . . . All we want is to regain our homes and to establish the independence of Missouri and the South. If you refuse to accept this offer, I will move with the Missourians alone, against Lyon. . . . You must either fight beside us, or look on at a safe distance, and see us fight all alone the army which you dare not attack even with our aid. . . . (Edwin C. Bearss, *The Battle of Wilson's Creek*, 2d edition [Bozeman, MT: Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation, 1985], 31.)

McCulloch agreed to these conditions, and the army moved to its campsite at Wilson's Creek, where it sat for several days. Price again challenged McCulloch to attack, and on the 9th, McCulloch issued orders for a night march on Springfield and an attack on the 10th. This order threw the Confederate camps into turmoil. Brigadier General N. B. Pearce recalls:

> The question of ammunition was one of the most important and serious . . . and the men scattered about in groups, to improvise . . . ammunition for bullets . . . dividing percussion caps . . . fitting new flints in their old muskets. They had little thought then of the inequalities between the discipline, arms, and accoutrements of the regular United States troops they were soon to engage in battle. . . . (N. B. Pearce, "Arkansas Troops in the Battle of Wilson's Creek," *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*, edited by Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, vol. 1 [New York: The Century Co., 1884], 299.)

About 2100, just as the Confederate army was ready to move, it began to rain. It was not a downpour but significant enough to cause McCulloch to cancel the movement order. All agreed that this was the best course of action. The Confederates' greatest concern was for their limited supply of ammunition and their belief that their supply of powder would be ruined by a march in the rain.

This brings us to one of the great questions concerning this campaign. What if the Confederates had moved as planned? Would the armies have met in the dark somewhere between Wilson's Creek and

Springfield? Would Lyon have found an empty camp, while Price and McCulloch seized Springfield?

About dawn, General McCulloch came to have breakfast with General Price, and they were here when General Lyon attacked. About 0530, messengers began arriving from Cawthorn, who was then under attack. McCulloch did not believe the reports, but he saw panic-stricken soldiers moving south across Bloody Hill—fugitives from Cawthorn's command. Then, in quick succession, came the sound of artillery to the north (probably Totten's) and from the south (Backoff's). The Federals were attacking from two directions.

There is no record of what Price and McCulloch said to each other or if they had a cogent plan from this point. All we really know is that Price gave instructions for his men to move up Bloody Hill to fight Lyon, and McCulloch rode off to his headquarters to get his force into action.

From here, the tour can go to several points of interest. The Wilson's Creek ford, which was used so extensively in the battle, is adjacent to the small bridge just north of the Edwards' cabin site. Discuss the characteristics that made a usable ford in Civil War days. Discuss also the effects of several thousand men using this creek as a water supply.

Next, Price went galloping off to rally Cawthorn's troops and take charge of the battle. He directed his counterattack, which developed slowly, almost due north from the Edwards' cabin. As troops became available, they followed him, but because of the restricted space, they were forced to shift westward in order to find a place in the battle line. This gradual extension of the Confederate line to the west is a fundamental element in understanding how the battle for Bloody Hill developed. Eventually, the Confederates began to overlap Lyon's force on the western slope of Bloody Hill.

Route to Stand 13: To get an accurate feeling for how most of the Confederate troops made their way into this battle, the group should follow the northern bank of Skegg's Branch to a point about 200 meters south of stand 13 and then move north. This route gave some protection for the Confederates from artillery and small-arms fire from the Union positions on Bloody Hill. Visualize bodies of men moving farther and farther westward until they could find a place in the line to fight and using this route to get there.

As an alternative, the group can move due west about 700 meters from the Edwards' cabin site to the vicinity of grid 633059, the position

of Guibor's Battery. The site is marked with a cannon. This route is difficult and may expose the group to chiggers, ticks, and snakes.

A third alternative is to go back south along the Telegraph Road to the paved Ring Road, then along it to National Park Service stop number 6. You are at the position of Guibor's Battery, which is also stand 13.

Stand 13

(Guibor's Battery, grid 633059)

(NOTE: Ideally, the group should use the defilade of Skegg 's Branch to move from stand 12 to stand 13. This route was safely out of the line of fire from Bloody Hill. Students can get an idea of the distance involved and the command and control required to conduct such a movement. Another route takes the group directly west from the Edwards' cabin across the prairie to stand 13. This route has the advantage of exposing students to an ever-changing view of Bloody Hill to the north, Sigel's final position to the south, and the Confederate positions on the east side of Wilson's Creek. Depending on the weather, this route could expose the group to chiggers, poison ivy, ticks, and snakes.)

Situation: The Confederates established their battle lines by 0630, and Captain H. Guibor's Battery (four guns) was here. To his left (west) was Brigadier General J. H. McBride's infantry. To his right (east) were Brigadier General Monroe M. Parson's infantry, Brigadier General John B. Clark's mixed force, Brigadier General William Y. Slack's mixed force, Colonel Richard H. Weightman's infantry, and Cawthorn's cavalry (now rallied and positioned closest to the creek).

The battle for Bloody Hill was one of charge and countercharge. For the Confederates, the problem was one of topography and technology. While they greatly outnumbered Lyon's force, they were positioned down the hill and held inferior weapons. As they proceeded, they moved forward trying to get within range to shoot their shotguns and muskets. In response, the Federals would drive them back with artillery, small-arms fire, and short counterattacks. As the Confederate line extended to the west, Lyon adjusted his line correspondingly. Eventually, all of Lyon's force was engaged except his reserve, the 2d Kansas Infantry.

About 0830, the fighting died out all along the line as both sides repositioned and recuperated. During the lull, McCulloch routed Sigel and then redirected his available forces to come to the aid of Price's Missourians. Consequently, the 3d Arkansas, parts of the 3d Louisiana, the 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles, and the South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment converged here. This fresh force brought great pressure onto the western end of Lyon's battle line.

Vignette: Churchill and his 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles had been routed out of Sharp's cornfield during Sigel's attack. Later, Churchill recovered control of most of his force and moved to this position to continue the fight against Lyon's main line on Bloody Hill. Churchill describes the scene:

> I was met by an aide of General Price, asking for a reenforcement to come to the support of General Slack. I instantly moved up my regiment to his aid amid a shower of grape and musketry, and took my position on his left, and ordered my men to commence firing. We disputed the ground there with the enemy inch by inch, for about three or four hours, amidst a most terrific fire from their battery [Totten's], posted on the hill, and continued volleys of musketry. I there encountered the forces commanded by General Lyon in person, mostly all regulars, with a regiment of Iowa troops. The battle raged fiercely, and the firing scarcely ceased for a moment. The contest seemed doubtful. At times we would drive them up the hill, and in turn they would rally and cause us to fall back. At length we shouted and made a gallant charge and drove them over the hill. (*O.R.*, 110.)

Teaching Points: Maneuver, offensive, technology, and the reaction of green troops in their first battle. Discuss the actions of General McCulloch, whose men defeated Plummer, then Sigel, then came here to fight Lyon.

Route to Stand 14: Use the Ring Road in walking north about 600 meters to the Bloody Hill parking area. Stand 14 is adjacent to the parking area and marked with a cannon. At some point along the way, your group will leave the Confederate battle line and enter the Union line. Note that the route is uphill practically the entire way.

Stand 14

(Sokalski's section, grid 631066)

(NOTE: The position of Sokalski's section is marked by a single gun located close to the parking area for Bloody Hill.)

Situation: Totten's battery fire dominated the battle here. Almost all accounts credit his guns with anchoring this part of the Union line. As the Confederates extended their line westward, Totten dispatched Sokalski's two-gun section to this point. The Federals' 1st Missouri and two companies of the 2d Missouri formed this part of the line and were as far west as the Union line extended. In the meantime, Major Steele's battalion of Regulars supported Totten's artillery.

The battle renewed about 0900, and by 1000, the Confederates were having some success. About that time, Greer's South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment made its attack from the west into the rear

of Lyon's battle line. Fire from Sokalski's guns drove them off, but they diverted Lyon's attention from the main battle.

Teaching Points: Maneuver, position, deep battle, and combined arms.

Vignettes: Greer's command numbered 800, but not all of them were present when the South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment attacked. Greer writes:

> I . . . received orders from General McCulloch to flank the enemy on their right [west]. . . . When I thought the five companies I had with me of my command had moved sufficiently far, I ordered a charge upon the enemy. This was done, with a shout for Texas. The enemy was thrown into considerable confusion. Some of them left without firing their guns, others stood still until we had nearly rode upon them, then fired and fled; others concealed themselves in the bushes and shot at us as we passed. Several of my men were killed and wounded in this charge. I would have attempted to charge the main body of the enemy's forces still farther to our right, but for the fact that we would have been exposed to the fire not only of the enemy, but of our own guns. . . . At this time the firing seemed considerably to abate on both sides. Here [where?] I remained for some time watching the movements of the enemy. Being entirely separated from the rest of our army, I then moved my companies back, so as to support our infantry. (*O.R.*, 118–19.)

After its attack, Greer's force chased Sigel's fugitives, finding them to be easier targets than Lyon's main line. Several of the Union reports mention this attack. Captain Totten's report is one of the least complimentary:

> General Lyon sent me an order to support the . . . regiments on the extreme right [west] who were then being closely pressed by the enemy. I ordered Lieutenant Sokalski to move forward with his section immediately, which he did . . . relieving and saving the . . . regiments from being overthrown and driven back. After this the enemy tried to overwhelm us by an attack of some 800 cavalry, which, unobserved, had formed below the crests of the hills to our right and rear. Fortunately, some of our infantry companies and a few pieces of artillery from my battery were in position to meet this demonstration, and drove off their cavalry with ease. This was the only demonstration made by their cavalry, and it was so effete and ineffectual in its force and character as to deserve only the appellation of child's play. Their cavalry is utterly worthless on the battlefield. (*O.R.*, 74.)

Route to Stand 15: The National Park Service maintains a walking route that circles Bloody Hill. Follow it in reverse. En route to the sinkhole, the group will pass a cannon marking Totten's battery position. Along the way, try to keep bearings on Ray's house, Sigel's position, and the main Confederate camp near Edwards' cabin.

Stand 15

(The sinkhole, grid 633065)

Situation: This position is one of historical interest because of what happened here after the battle. The Confederates were in possession of the battlefield with most of the dead and many of the wounded to tend. The weather was hot. Putrefaction soon set in, and there was a scarcity of coffins and coffin makers. Burials, therefore, were imperfect.

Teaching Points: Dealing with the dead and wounded and cultural and psychological issues. Later in this tour, we will talk about what happened to General Lyon's body.

Vignette: In 1867, when the National Cemetery at Springfield was established, the contractor for the removal of the dead bodies of the Union soldiers on the battleground took 183 bodies off the field: 34 came from the sinkhole, 14 from an old well, and 135 from other parts of the battlefield. What became of the the Confederate dead?

Route to Stand 16: Continue along the Bloody Hill trail in reverse. At its southernmost point, the trail overlooks the prairie stretching southward toward Skegg's Branch. Pause here; this point provides a good view toward the south, including Sigel's final position and the main Confederate campsite at Edwards' cabin. From this point, the group can visualize what the battlefield may have looked like on 10 August 1861. At that time, Confederates advanced uphill in charge after charge. The prairie grass was tall enough to hide the soldiers, and scattered trees and bushes helped the advancing men gauge distances.

As you continue to follow the Bloody Hill trail in reverse, remember that the foliage was not so dense at the time of the battle. Bloody Hill's real name is Oak Hill, and oak trees at the time of the battle were in abundance. The underbrush, however, was not so thick, and there was sufficient room to maneuver troops and artillery between the trees.

Route to Stand 16: Continue along the Bloody Hill trail in reverse. Move along the trail to stand 16, where a granite monument marks the site of General Lyon's death.

Stand 16

(Lyon's death marker, grid 635064)

Situation: Confused fighting took place at this point, and clearly, neither side held a marked advantage. The Confederates outnumbered

the Federals, but Union troops held a better position and had superior weapons. About 1000, the Confederates killed General Lyon's horse and wounded the general in the head and leg. Lyon then walked a short distance to the rear and had his head wound bound. The general was depressed and considered that the battle was lost, but his subordinates encouraged him to keep up the fight. He got another horse, rallied some troops, and was leading them forward when he was shot through the heart and died immediately. He was the first Union general officer killed in battle in the war (for the disposition of the battlefield, see map 7).

That Lyon's death had so little effect on the battle may demonstrate how little control he had over the whole line. The command now devolved upon Major Sturgis, who consulted with the other commanders. Since the commanders had lost hope for a linkup with Sigel's command, they decided to withdraw. It was about 1130.

Teaching Points: Effect on morale of leader's death, chain of command, and lack of maneuver options.

Vignette: The story of what happened to General Lyon's body is one of those interesting sidelights in history. His aide carried his body to the rear and placed it in the shade of a tree. Major Sturgis, Major Schofield, Surgeon Cornyn, Captain Granger, and some other officers examined the body. Thereupon, Sturgis ordered the body carried to the field hospital and evacuated to Springfield. Soldiers put the body in an army wagon being used as an ambulance belonging to B Company, 1st U.S. Cavalry. As the wagon was about to leave for the hospital, however, a sergeant came along and ordered the body removed from the wagon (to be placed in an ambulance once it arrived).

The ambulance never came, and Lyon's body was left unattended. About an hour later, some Arkansas soldiers came upon the body and spread the word about Lyon's death. Placing the body in a small covered wagon, they took it to General Price's headquarters, where Price and other officers viewed the corpse. Dr. Melcher (the same one who was with Sigel's command) had remained on the field to help with the wounded, and he volunteered to take charge of the body. Melcher then took the body to Ray's house and did a detailed examination. Melcher describes the body:

> There was a wound on the right side of the head, another in the right leg below the knee, and another, which caused his death, was by a small rifle ball, which entered about the fourth rib on the left side, passing entirely through the body, making its exit from the right side, evidently passing

> through both lungs and heart.... At this time he had on a dark blue, single breasted captain's coat, with the buttons used by the regular army of the United States. It was the same uniform coat I had frequently seen him wear in the arsenal at St. Louis, and was considerably worn and faded. (Holcombe and Adams, 99.)

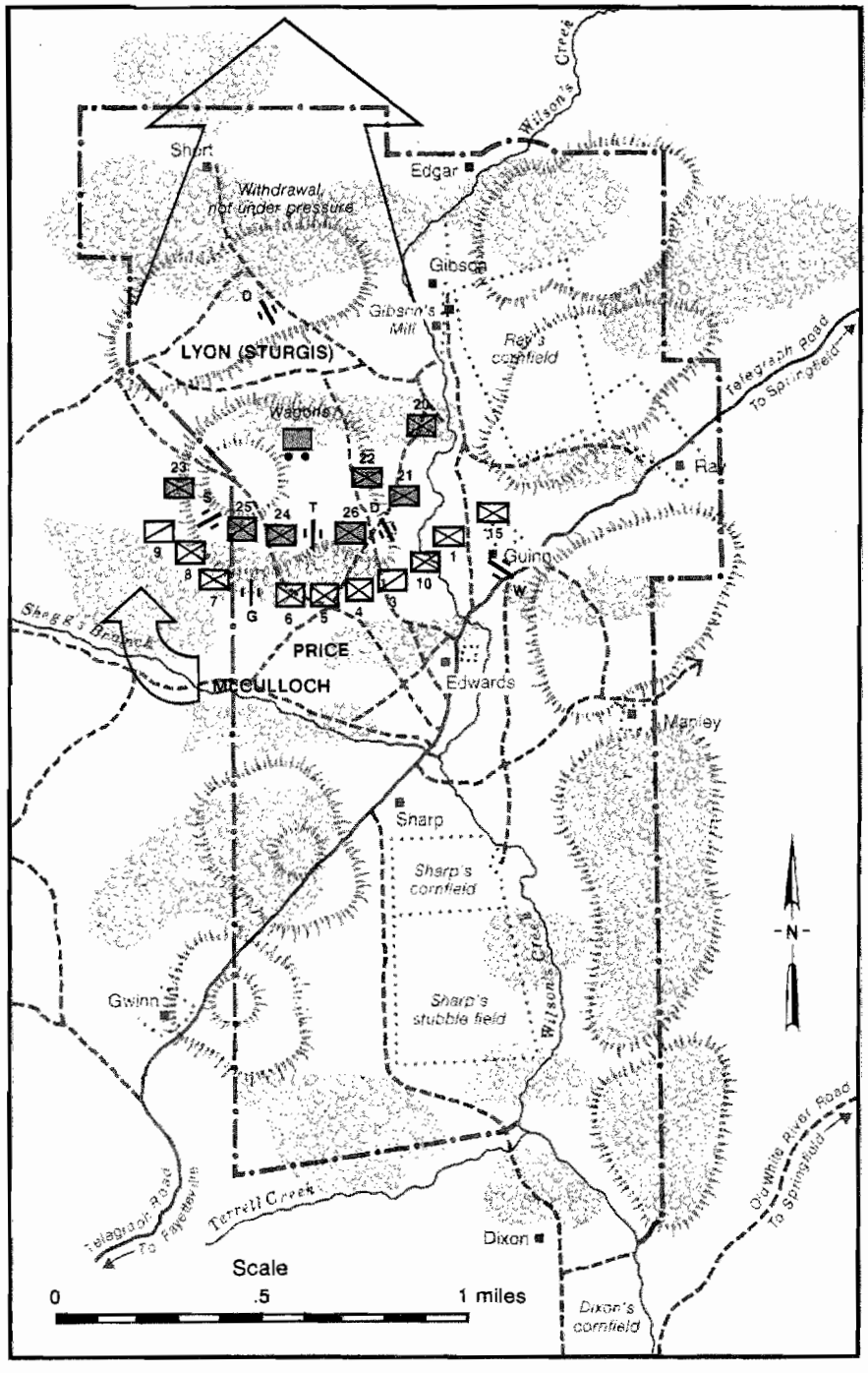
Five soldiers volunteered to escort the body to Springfield. Carrying a note endorsed by General Rains, Melcher and the soldiers arrived in Springfield later that evening, and the body was placed in Lyon's former headquarters. The Unionists determined to take the body with the retreating army to Rolla, and since there was no metal coffin available, the body had to be embalmed. Chief Surgeon Dr. E. C. Franklin was summoned and ordered to embalm the body. He prepared the fluid and began injecting the body, but the chest wound prevented thorough circulation. Dr. Franklin was then told to dispose of the body in the best possible manner.

Franklin ordered a coffin and arranged for the body to be washed and prepared for burial. Lyon had been dead twenty-four hours, and in the very hot weather, the body was rapidly deteriorating. Franklin sprinkled the body with bay rum and alcohol, and it was taken to the farmhouse of Congressman John S. Phelps, whose wife, Mary, had helped prepare the body. But it was not buried immediately. The understanding was that it would be sent for soon. Meanwhile, a local tin shop was ordered to make a zinc case for the coffin to assist in the preservation of the body, which was kept in an outdoor cellar until the 14th when George Phelps' slave dug a grave in the garden and buried Lyon.

On 22 August, a 300-pound metal coffin arrived from Rolla with a note from General Frémont requesting Lyon's body. The grave was opened and the body disinterred and loaded into the metal coffin. It arrived in St. Louis on the 26th. From there, it made its way east to the family home in Eastford, Connecticut, where it was finally buried on 5 September.

Lyon was born on 14 July 1818. He graduated from West Point in 1841, eleventh in a class of fifty. He later served in Florida, Mexico (under Taylor and Scott), California, and on the frontier from 1850 to 1861.

Route to Stand 17: Follow the Bloody Hill trail northward, and then move to the vicinity of grid 632066. The exact spot is hard to find, but the intent is to place the group in a position to see the Union withdrawal routes to the north.



Map 7. The Battle of Wilson's Creek, 1000–1130

Chronology of Events

- Lyon dies leading the Federal attack.
- McCulloch comes to Price's aid, and they attack the Federals together. The Federals hold.
- Sturgis, now in command, decides to withdraw.
- The Confederates are too tired and disorganized to pursue the Federals.

Confederate and Federal Forces

Confederate

W Woodruff
R Reid
B Bledsoe
G Guibor
1 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles
3 Cawthorn
4 Weightman
5 Slack
6 Clark
7 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles
8 McBride
9 1st Arkansas Cavalry
10 Foster
15 1st Missouri State Guard

Federal

T Totten
D Du Bois
S Sokalski
20 Plummer
21 Osterhaus
22 1st Missouri
23 1st Kansas
24 1st Iowa
25 2d Kansas
26 Steele

Legend

Thin growth of timber, little or no underbrush

Park boundary

Fields

Farmhouses

Elevated areas

Federal forces

Confederate forces

Confederate axis of advance

Artillery

Stand 17

(Federal withdrawal, grid 632066)

(NOTE: This stand is located near stand 4. From here, students can see the route by which Lyon's army advanced and retreated.)

Situation: After Lyon's death, it took about thirty minutes to determine who was in charge since all of the regimental commanders had been wounded. Finally, Major Sturgis was found to be the senior officer fit for duty. At the time, the battlefield was calm, similar to the earlier lull at 0830. Taking advantage of the respite, Sturgis called for a council of war. Some troops thought to be Sigel's were seen in the distance. On arriving at the scene, they were encouraged and decided to fight on with Sturgis' force. Sturgis reorganized his line before the next rebel attack, which he described in his report as "the fiercest and most bloody engagement of the day." Again, however, the Confederate attack waned, and at about 1130, Sturgis met with his commanders again. Since they were short of ammunition and had lost hope of a linkup with Sigel, Sturgis gave the order to withdraw.

Du Bois' Battery moved to the next hill north and deployed to cover the army's withdrawal. First, the wounded were evacuated, and then, the rest of the units marched away in good order. The Confederates did not pursue. The Union army halted about two miles north, and the men were allowed to eat and rest. Even at this late juncture, Sturgis was hoping that Sigel would intervene. Finally, a messenger brought the news of Sigel's disaster. The march to Springfield continued, and the army arrived at 1700 in good order.

The Confederates probably did not pursue because they had just about all the fight they wanted for one day. But what if the rebels had made good their great advantage in mounted men and pressed the Union withdrawal? Speculate on this posibility.

Teaching Points: The conduct of a withdrawal, pursuit, and the problems in dealing with a battlefield when it is left in one's possession.

Vignettes: Three days after the battle, General Frémont, in St. Louis, sent this dispatch to Washington:

> General Lyon, in three columns, under himself, Sigel, and Sturgis, attacked the enemy at 6:30 o'clock on the morning of the 10th, 9 miles southeast of Springfield. Engagement severe. Our loss about 800 killed and wounded. General Lyon killed in charge at head of his column. Our force 8,000, including 2,000 Home Guards. Muster roll reported taken from the enemy 23,000, including regiments from Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, with Texan Rangers and Cherokee half-breeds. This statement corroborated by

> prisoners. Their loss reported heavy, including Generals McCulloch and Price. Their tents and wagons destroyed in the action. Sigel left one gun on the field and returned to Springfield, whence, at 3 o'clock in the morning of the 11th, continued his retreat upon Rolla, bringing off his baggage trains and $250,000 in specie from Springfield Bank. I am doing what is possible to support him, but need aid of some organized force to repel the enemy, reported advancing on other points in considerable strength. (*O.R.*, 54.)

Pearce, whose Arkansas troops had contributed greatly in the defeat of Sigel and the later attacks on Bloody Hill, sums it up:

> General McCulloch, myself, and our staff officers now grouped ourselves together upon the center of [Bloody Hill]. Woodruff's battery was again placed in position and, Totten [Du Bois], who was covering the retreat of Sturgis . . . received the benefit of his parting shots. We watched the retreating enemy through our field-glasses, and were glad to see him go. Our ammunition was exhausted, our men undisciplined, and we feared to risk pursuit.... (Pearce, 303.)

The losses at Wilson's Creek were:

- *Union*—5,400 engaged: 258 killed (5 percent), 873 wounded (16 percent), and 186 missing (3 percent). Total casualties were 1,317 (24 percent).

- *Confederate*—10,200 engaged: 279 killed (3 percent) and 951 wounded (9 percent). Total casualties were 1,230 (12 percent).

Route from Stand 17: You can return to the Bloody Hill parking lot or follow the Union withdrawal route northward and rejoin the Ring Road in the vicinity of grid 627071.

This concludes the walking tour of the Battle of Wilson's Creek.

APPENDIX A
Characters for Role Playing

To implement a successful staff ride that addresses the important events of the battle and their significance, participants of the staff ride can be assigned characters to play (important commanders in the conflict). Assuming the role of these characters at a significant point in the battle, the staff ride participant will explain why his or her character acted the way he did and the impact of those actions on the outcome of the battle. These presentations can occur at a stand that illuminates the action that took place there more than a century ago.

The Battle of Wilson's Creek has a sufficient number and diversity of characters involved in its action to satisfy almost any staff ride requirement. The following are some of the characters that most easily lend themselves to role playing because of the parts they played in the battle and the availability of their recorded actions.

Union

Lieutenant Colonel Charles W. Blair, commander, 2d Kansas Infantry, was born in Ohio. After joining the Army, he transferred to the 2d Kansas Cavalry and later to the 14th Kansas Infantry. He was promoted to colonel in November 1863 and brevetted a brigadier general, U.S. Volunteers (USV), in February 1865. He died in 1899.

Captain Eugene A. Carr, commander, Company I, 1st U.S. Cavalry, was born in New York in 1830. He attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1850 and later served on the frontier (where he was nicknamed "War Eagle"). Carr was commissioned a colonel of the 3d Illinois Cavalry on 16 August 1861 and fought at Pea Ridge, where he was wounded three times and received the Medal of Honor. He was promoted to brigadier general in March 1862 and commanded a division in the second Vicksburg campaign and the Mobile campaign in 1865. Later, Carr fought Indians on the frontier. He once said that he "would rather be a colonel of cavalry than Czar of Russia." He retired a brigadier general in February 1893, died in Washington, D.C., in December 1910, and is buried at West Point.

Captain Powell Clayton, commander, Company E, 1st Kansas Infantry, was born in 1833 and educated at a Pennsylvania military academy and Delaware engineering school. He was a professional civil engineer. Carr was commissioned a captain on 29 May 1861, then a colonel of the 5th Kansas Cavalry, and promoted to brigadier general, USV, on 1 August 1864. He commanded the 2d Brigade, Cavalry Division of East Arkansas. Clayton commanded at Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where Marmaduke's force was repulsed. After mustering out on 24 August 1865, he settled on a cotton plantation near Pine Bluff. Clayton was Republican governor of Arkansas in 1868 and a lifelong Republican boss in that state. He was impeached by the House of Representatives in 1871, but charges were dropped. Clayton was next elected a U.S. Senator in 1871. He was subsequently indicted for faulty election procedures, but charges were dropped. Clayton was active in building the town of Eureka Springs, Arkansas, and in railroading. He served as ambassador to Mexico from 1897 to 1905. He died in 1914 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Lieutenant Joseph S. Conrad, an aide to General Lyon, attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1857. He was wounded early in the Battle of Wilson's Creek and later commanded Regulars at Ream's Station near Petersburg, Virginia.

Colonel George W. Deitzler, commander, 1st Kansas Infantry, was born in Pennsylvania in 1826. A Kansas farmer and real estate agent when that territory was becoming a state, he was active as a Free Soiler, involved in the "Beecher's Bibles" incident, and fought in the Kansas wars. He was once arrested for treason but was released. After holding several public offices, he was commissioned a colonel of the 1st Kansas Infantry on 5 June 1861. Wounded at Wilson's Creek, he later commanded the 1st Brigade, 6th Division, Army of the Tennessee. Deitzler was promoted to brigadier general, USV, in November 1862. He resigned for bad health in August 1863 but came back to command the Kansas State Militia during Price's Missouri expedition in the fall of 1864. After the war, he promoted the town site of Emporia, Kansas. In 1872, he moved to San Francisco with his family and died in 1884 in Tuscon, Arizona, in a buggy accident. He is buried in Oak Hill Cemetery, Lawrence, Kansas.

Second Lieutenant John V. Du Bois, Regiment Mounted Rifles, was commander of the Du Bois Battery at Wilson's Creek. Before the war, he had attended the U.S. Military Academy (in 1855). After the Battle of Wilson's Creek, he commanded a brigade at Corinth, Mississippi.

Second Lieutenant Charles E. Farrand, 1st U.S. Infantry, was commander, Company C, 2d U.S. Dragoons. He attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1855 and remained a captain throughout the Civil War. He later commanded cavalry at Fort Donelson.

Major General John C. Frémont, commander, Western Department, was born in Georgia in 1813. One of the first four major generals appointed by Abraham Lincoln in May 1861, he was given command of the Western Department with headquarters in St. Louis. After the battles of the summer of 1861 and the Emancipation Proclamation, he was relieved. Later, Frémont unsuccessfully participated in the Valley campaigns. After the war, he served as territorial governor of Arizona and died in New York in July 1890.

Captain Charles C. Gilbert, commander, Company B, 1st U.S. Infantry (Plummer's battalion), was born in Ohio in March 1822. He attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1846 and served in the Mexican War and on the frontier. He was wounded at Wilson's Creek, fought at Shiloh and Richmond, Kentucky, and commanded a corps at Perryville. Gilbert was brevetted a brigadier general in September 1862 but never confirmed. At Perryville, he was charged with mishandling troops. Later, he wrote portions of *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (see bibliography). Gilbert finished the war as a major in the 19th Infantry and retired in March 1886. He died in Maryland in January 1903.

Captain Gordon Granger, Regiment Mounted Rifles, was acting assistant adjutant general to General Lyon. He was born in New York in November 1822 and attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1845. He later served in the Mexican War and on the frontier. Granger fought at Dug Springs and Wilson's Creek. Promoted to brigadier general in March 1862, he commanded a brigade at New Madrid, Island Number 10, and Corinth, Mississippi. He was promoted to major general in September 1862 and fought in the Battle of Chickamauga, commanding the Reserve Corps. Later, Granger commanded IV Corps at Chattanooga, helped raise the siege of Knoxville, and captured the forts at the entrance to Mobile Bay. He was in poor health after the war and died in New Mexico

in January 1876. Granger believed that "The race is neither to the swift nor to the strong but to him that holds on to the end."

Brigadier General William S. Harney, commander, Department of the West, was born on 27 August 1800 in Haysboro, Tennessee (not far from Nashville). He attended a local academy and was commissioned in 1818 as a second lieutenant in the infantry. Afterward, he distinguished himself in campaigns against the Creeks and Seminoles. In 1836, Harney was a lieutenant colonel of the 2d Dragoons and became colonel in 1846. Earlier, he had been a senior cavalry officer under General Winfield Scott in the advance on Mexico City in the Mexican War.

Captain Francis ("Frank") J. Herron, 1st Iowa Infantry, was born in Pennsylvania in February 1837. In his later life, he operated a banking business in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Dubuque, Iowa. During the Civil War, he raised a militia company and fought at Wilson's Creek, Prairie Grove, Pea Ridge (where he received a Medal of Honor), and Vicksburg. Herron was captured at the Battle of Pea Ridge. Afterward, he became a brigadier general (in July 1862) and subsequently led one of the greatest marches in the war—from Wilson's Creek to Prairie Grove (150 miles) in 4 days. He became a major general in November 1862 and finished the war as a corps commander and Indian treaty commissioner in Brownsville, Texas. Later, he served as an attorney, U.S. marshal, and acting secretary of state in Louisiana. Herron died a pauper in New York in January 1902.

Captain Daniel Huston Jr., 1st U.S. Infantry, attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1848. Later, he helped organize the Home Guards of Kansas City, Missouri, and commanded cavalry at Prairie Grove, Arkansas.

Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon, commander, Army of the West, was born in Connecticut in July 1818. After attending the U.S. Military Academy in 1841, he participated in the Seminole and Mexican Wars and served on the frontier. Lyon became a Republican during the "Bleeding Kansas" period. Promoted from captain to brigadier general in May 1861, he led the Army of the West in the Wilson's Creek campaign. Lyon was killed in battle at Wilson's Creek.

Lieutenant Colonel William H. Merritt, 1st Iowa Infantry, commanded a regiment at Wilson's Creek (as Colonel Bates was sick in Springfield).

Colonel Robert B. Mitchell, commander, 2d Kansas Infantry, was born in Mansfield, Ohio, on 4 April 1823. He graduated from Kenyon College in Ohio (or Washington College in Pennsylvania) and studied law in Mount Vernon. Later, he practiced law in Mansfield, served in the Mexican War as a lieutenant in the 2d Ohio Infantry, and was elected mayor of Mount Gilead, Ohio (in 1855). Mitchell moved to Kansas in 1856, espousing the Free State cause (although he was a Democrat). He served in the territorial legislature, was treasurer of the territory, and later a delegate to the National Democratic Convention in 1860. Mitchell was commissioned a colonel of the 2d Kansas Infantry and was badly wounded at Wilson's Creek. Appointed a brigadier general in April 1862, he commanded a mixed brigade at Fort Riley, the 9th Division of Gilbert's Corps at Perryville, and was chief of Cavalry of the Army of the Cumberland at Chattanooga. In the fall of 1863, he was ordered to Washington for court-martial duty. In 1864 and 1865, he commanded the District of Nebraska (then north Kansas), mustering out in January 1866. Mitchell was appointed governor of New Mexico Territory in June 1866 but failed to take the job seriously and resigned in 1869 to return to Kansas. He lost

a bid for Congress in 1872 and then moved to Washington, where he died in January 1882 and was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Major Peter J. Osterhaus, commander, 2d Missouri Infantry Battalion, was born in Coblenz, Prussia, in January 1823. He received his military schooling in Berlin and emigrated to the United States during the Revolution of 1848. He organized the 12th Missouri, transferred to the 2d Missouri, and was promoted to major in April 1861. Osterhaus fought at Pea Ridge and was promoted to brigadier general in June 1862, commanding a division. Later, he fought at Champion's Hill and was wounded at Big Black River. Afterward, Osterhaus led the attack from Lookout Mountain to Missionary Ridge. Next, he commanded the XV Corps in the Atlanta campaign and became a major general in July 1864. Subsequently, he was with Sherman in the Carolinas and later was transferred to the west and received the surrender of Kirby Smith's command. After the war, he was appointed U.S. consul to France for eleven years and then deputy consul to Germany. He was appointed a brigadier general in the Regular Army in March 1905. Osterhaus died in January 1917 in Duisburg, Germany, and was buried in Coblenz.

Colonel John S. Phelps, commander, Home Guard Regiment, was not present at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. A member of Congress from Springfield, he organized the Home Guard Regiment. He carried a dispatch from Lyon to Frémont on 27 July while en route to Washington. Lyon's body was temporarily buried in Phelps' garden.

Captain Joseph B. Plummer, commander, 1st U.S. Infantry, was born in Barre, Massachusetts, in November 1816. He attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1841 and later served on garrison duty. He missed the first year of the Mexican War due to sickness and did quartermaster duty on the Texas frontier from 1848 to 1861. He was promoted captain in the 1st U.S. Infantry in 1852 and major of the 8th U.S. Infantry in April 1862. Plummer was wounded at Wilson's Creek while commanding a battalion of Regulars. Commissioned a colonel of the 11th Missouri Volunteers in September 1861, he commanded the post at Cape Girardeau, Missouri, until March 1862. He was then appointed brigadier general, USV. Later, he commanded the 5th Division of Pope's army at New Madrid and the Island Number 10 campaign. He subsequently commanded a brigade of Stanley's division at Corinth and died in camp at Corinth on 9 August 1862 (365 days after Wilson's Creek) of wounds and exposure in the field. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Colonel Charles E. Salomon, commander, 5th Missouri Infantry, was born in Prussia (one of three Salomon brothers who served in the Civil War). Salomon fled Germany after serving in the Revolution of 1848. Appointed a colonel of the 5th Missouri in May 1861, he commanded a regiment at Wilson's Creek. While his regiment behaved well at the outset of the action, it was routed from the field at a critical moment in the battle. Salomon was mustered out in August 1861. In September 1861, he was appointed colonel of the 9th Wisconsin. Thereafter, he commanded brigades in the 1st and 3d Divisions of the U.S. VII Corps. He was appointed a brevet brigadier general and mustered out of the Union Army in December 1864.

Major John M. Schofield, adjutant to General Lyon, attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1853. His classmates included Sheridan and Hood, and his roommate was McPherson. While at the academy, Schofield taught philosophy. Later, he helped organize the 1st Missouri Volunteers. Before the Battle of Wilson's Creek, Schofield counseled Lyon to retreat. Made a brigadier general in November 1861, Schofield remained on the frontier and in the district of Southwest Missouri, where he directed operations against guerrillas. Appointed a major general in May 1863, he commanded

the Army of the Ohio in Sherman's Atlanta campaign. Afterwards, he defeated John Bell Hood at Franklin, Tennessee, and cooperated with Sherman in his final campaigns in the Carolinas. After the war, he negotiated the withdrawal of French troops from Mexico. Briefly secretary of war in Andrew Johnson's administration (1868–69), he later became superintendent of West Point (1876–81). Ultimately, he succeeded Sheridan as general in chief, U.S. Army, in 1888. Schofield retired as a lieutenant general in 1895 and died in Florida in 1906. In 1861, he had earned the Medal of Honor for leading the charge in which Lyon was killed.

Major Isaac F. Shepard, aide to General Lyon, was born in Natick, Massachusetts, in July 1816. He was a graduate of the Harvard class of 1842 and principal of Bost Grammar School from 1844 to 1857. Shepard was an editor of the Boston *Daily Bee* in 1846–48 and a member of the Massachusetts legislature in 1859–60. He moved to St. Louis in 1861 and was an abolitionist and Unionist. Shepard became a principal aide to General Lyon and assistant adjutant general of the Missouri State Militia. He became a lieutenant colonel of the 19th Missouri Infantry and colonel of the 3d Missouri Infantry when those regiments were consolidated in January 1862. Shepard was commended for his conduct in the capture of Arkansas Post. He was zealous in the cause of Negro rights and appointed colonel of the 51st U.S. Colored Infantry in May 1863 (used primarily for garrison and fortification duty). Shepard was promoted to brigadier general, USV, in November 1863; however, the nomination failed to secure Senate approval. Shepard subsequently became adjutant general of Missouri; U.S. consul in Swatow and Hankow, China; chairman of the Republican State Committee; department commander of the Grand Army of the Republic; and editor of the Missouri *Democrat* and *Missouri State Atlas*. He moved to Bellingham, Massachusetts, in 1886 and died there in August 1889. He is buried in Ashland Cemetery, Middlesex County, Massachusetts.

Colonel Franz Sigel, commander, 2d Brigade, was born in Baden, Germany, in November 1824. Graduated from Karlsruhe Military Academy, he retired from the German Army in 1847. He was minister of war during an unsuccessful revolution against Prussia in 1847, whereupon he fled Germany to the United States, settled in St. Louis, and taught school there until 1861. He was commissioned a brigadier general in August 1861 and a major general in March 1862. Sigel commanded a flanking column at Wilson's Creek. Later, he fought well at Pea Ridge, Arkansas. Subsequently, he served in the Shenandoah Valley against Jackson and commanded the I Corps in the Army of Virginia at the Second Manassas. He briefly commanded the XI Corps in the Army of the Potomac. Sigel was defeated at New Market, Virginia (the VMI cadets' attack), relieved of command, and resigned in May 1865. He died in New York in 1902.

Lieutenant George O. Sokalski, section leader of Totten's battery, graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1861. Later, he was aboard the U.S.S. *Cincinnati* when it was sunk near Vicksburg.

Captain David S. Stanley, 1st Cavalry, was born in Ohio in June 1828. Ninth in his class at West Point in 1852, he later served on the frontier, refused a commission in the Confederate Army, and fought at Wilson's Creek. He subsequently served under Frémont and was commissioned a brigadier general in September 1861. Later, he fought at New Madrid, Missouri; Island Number 10; and Corinth, Mississippi. A chief of Cavalry in the Army of the Cumberland in November 1862, he did much to improve that arm. He later left the cavalry to command a division in IV Corps and, subsequently, the corps itself during the Atlanta campaign. Stanley also fought at Spring Hill and was wounded at Franklin. After the war, he commanded the 22d Infantry, led the

Yellowstone campaign in 1873, and retired in June 1892. He was governor of the soldiers' home in Washington and died there in March 1902.

Captain Frederick Steele, commander of Steele's battalion, attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1843. Ulysses S. Grant was his classmate and close companion. Steele fought in five battles in Mexico and was brevetted twice for gallantry. In 1861, he was stationed at Fort Leavenworth. At Wilson's Creek, three of Steele's companies were commanded by sergeants. Appointed a brigadier general in January 1862, he commanded the district of Southwest Missouri and participated in the Helena, Arkansas, campaign. Later, he commanded a division in Sherman's corps during the Vicksburg campaign and fought at Chickasaw Bluffs and Arkansas Post. Appointed a major general in March 1863, he commanded the Department of Arkansas and the VII Corps. In April 1864, he was defeated at Jenkins' Ferry. From February 1865, he led a division in the Mobile campaign. After the war, he commanded the Department of Columbia. In January 1888, he died from accidental causes in California.

Major Samuel D. Sturgis, commander, 1st Brigade, Army of the West, was born in Pennsylvania in June 1822. He attended the U.S. Military Academy in 1846 and had Thomas J. ("Stonewall") Jackson, McClellan, and Pickett for classmates. Sturgis fought in Mexico with the 2d Dragoons and was promoted to major in the 1st Cavalry (commanded by Robert E. Lee). He was in command at Fort Smith when the war began, and many of his officers left him to join the Confederacy. Sturgis assumed command after Lyon's death at Wilson's Creek. Appointed a brigadier general in March 1862, his promotion dated from the Battle of Wilson's Creek. Sturgis later commanded a division in the Second Manassas campaign. He once said, "I don't care for John Pope one pinch of owl dung!" He fought at South Mountain and later at Antietam, where he led two regiments of his division to capture Burnside's bridge. Afterward, he fought at Fredericksburg, was transferred with IX Corps to the west, and made chief of cavalry in July 1863. He was badly beaten by Nathan Bedford Forrest at Brice's Crossroads and spent the rest of the war awaiting new orders. After fighting Indians on the frontier, he commanded the 7th Cavalry, was reassigned in 1886, and died in St. Paul, Minnesota, in September 1889.

Brigadier General Thomas W. Sweeny was born in Cork, Ireland, in December 1820. He emigrated to the United States in 1832, settling in New York, where he worked for a law publisher. Later, Sweeny fought in Mexico as a lieutenant in the New York 2d Volunteers and was wounded at Churubusco, where he lost his right arm. Sweeny fought the Indians until the outbreak of the Civil War, when he accepted a brigadier general's commission in the Missouri Volunteers. Sweeny expressed his motto as: "Let us eat the last bit of mule flesh and fire the last cartridge before we think of retreating." Sweeny was wounded about the time Lyon was killed. Later, he led the 52d Illinois at Fort Donelson, commanded a brigade at Shiloh (where he was wounded again), and fought at Corinth. Appointed a brigadier general in March 1863, he led a division of the XVI Corps in the Atlanta campaign. After feuding with his commander, Grenville Dodge, and another division commander, John Fuller, Sweeny was court-martialed and acquitted in January 1865. He stayed on active duty until May 1870. He was subsequently involved in the controversial Fenian movement, and in the summer of 1866, he led a force of Irish-Americans in an effort to capture Canada from the British. After being arrested, he was later released. Sweeney died at Long Island, New York, in 1892.

Captain James Totten, commander, Company F, 2d U.S. Artillery, graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1841. In command of the Little Rock Arsenal at the start of the war, he had drilled Woodruff and his gunners. Later, he became chief of

artillery and ordnance, Army of West Mississippi, and commanded the siege train during the Mobile campaign.

Lieutenant William M. Wherry, aide to General Lyon, was appointed a lieutenant in the 3d Missouri Infantry in May 1861 and lieutenant in the 13th U.S. Infantry in October 1861. Wherry served as an assistant to General Lyon and then General Schofield until September 1862. He was promoted to major in May 1864 and later brevetted a brigadier general, USV. He was later the bearer of the rolls and terms of surrender of Johnston's army to Washington in 1865. Wherry was a St. Louis merchant before the war and joined the Regular Army afterward. After the war, he served as a lieutenant colonel and military secretary to General Schofield (in 1895). He was promoted to brigadier general, USV, during the Spanish-American War and retired in 1899. Wherry wrote "Wilson's Creek and the Death of Lyon" in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (see bibliography).

Confederate

Colonel Thomas J. Churchill, commander, 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles, was born in Kentucky in March 1824. He studied law at Transylvania College and served as a lieutenant in the Mexican War, during which he was captured. He later settled in Little Rock, Arkansas, and farmed. Elected a colonel at the start of the war and a brigadier general in March 1862, he fought at the Battle of Pea Ridge and later at Richmond, Kentucky. He commanded the Arkansas Post and was taken prisoner in January 1863. After being exchanged, Churchill commanded a division in the Red River campaign and at Blair's Landing and Jenkins' Ferry. Made a major general in March 1865, he went to Mexico with Kirby Smith but soon returned to Arkansas. A state treasurer after the war, he died in Little Rock in May 1905.

Major John B. Clark Jr., subunit commander in his father's division of the Missouri State Guard, was born in Fayette, Missouri, on 14 January 1831. After attending the Fayette Academy and the University of Missouri, he spent two years in California. In 1854, he graduated from Harvard Law School and subsequently practiced law in Fayette until 1861. As the war developed, he entered the Missouri State Guard as a lieutenant and was promoted to captain in the 6th Missouri Infantry. He was a major at the Battles of Carthage and Wilson's Creek. He was later promoted to colonel and commanded a brigade at the Battle of Pea Ridge. Afterward, he served under General Hindman until he was commissioned a brigadier general, ranking from March 1864. He then served with Marmaduke and Shelby in the trans-Mississippi. After the war, he resumed a law practice in Fayette, was elected to Congress in 1873 (serving until 1883), and then elected clerk of the House of Representatives. Clark practiced law in Washington from 1889 until his death in September 1903. He is buried in Washington.

Colonel Tom P. Dockery, commander, 5th Arkansas Infantry, Pearce's Brigade, was born in North Carolina in December 1833. He commanded Arkansas troops in the trans-Mississippi throughout the war, fighting at Corinth and leading a brigade in Bowen's Division during the Vicksburg campaign. Afterward, he was captured, paroled, and promoted to brigadier general in August 1863. Dockery subsequently led a brigade in the Camden expedition and fought at Marks' Mills and Jenkins' Ferry. A civil engineer after the war in Houston, Texas, he died in New York in February 1898.

Colonel Elkanah Greer, commander, South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment, was born in Tennessee in October 1825. He fought in the 1st Mississippi Rifles under Jefferson Davis in the Mexican War. He was elected a grand commander of the secret

proslavery Knights of the Golden Circle. Greer was wounded at Pea Ridge and made a brigadier general in October 1862. Afterward, he was appointed Conscription Bureau chief for the Trans-Mississippi Department and commanded the reserve forces in the trans-Mississippi. Greer lived in Marshall, Texas, until he died in March 1877.

Colonel Louis Hébert, commander, 3d Louisiana Infantry, was born in Louisiana in 1820. Third in his class at the U.S. Military Academy, class of 1845, he resigned in 1846 to become a militia officer, state senator, and chief engineer of Louisiana. Hébert was captured at Pea Ridge but later promoted to brigadier general in May 1862. He subsequently commanded a brigade in Little's Division of Price's Army of the West; fought at Iuka and Corinth; and was captured at Vicksburg. After being exchanged and transferred east, he commanded heavy artillery around Fort Fisher, North Carolina. After the war, he edited a newspaper in Louisiana and taught at a private school. Hébert died in Louisiana in January 1901.

Lieutenant Colonel J. P. Major, commander, Major's Cavalry, 3d Division, Missouri State Guard, was born in Fayette, Missouri, in May 1836. Twenty-third in the U.S. Military Academy class of 1852, he later joined the 2d Cavalry on the Texas frontier. At the outset of the Civil War, he joined the Confederacy and became chief of artillery to Earl Van Dorn at Vicksburg in 1862. He subsequently fought with the Texas cavalry along the Teche River. Promoted to brigadier general in July 1863, he fought in the Red River campaign and the Battles of Mansfield and Pleasant Hill and commanded a cavalry brigade in Major General Wharton's command. Major was paroled in June 1865 and lived for a time in France, later becoming a planter in Louisiana and Texas. He died in May 1877 in Austin, Texas.

Brigadier General Ben McCulloch, commander of the Southern army at Wilson's Creek, was born in Tennessee in November 1811. His younger brother was Confederate Brigadier General Henry E. McCulloch. Ben McCulloch fought at the Battle of San Jacinto and was a leader in the Texas Rangers. Appointed a brigadier general in May 1861 and placed in command of the Indian Territory, he obtained the Cherokees' promise to fight for the Confederacy. McCulloch authorized Stand Watie to organize the Cherokees into Confederate units. McCulloch led part of the Confederate force at Pea Ridge and was killed by rifle fire leading a charge in that battle.

Colonel James McIntosh, commander, 2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles, was born in Florida in 1828. The son of a career soldier killed in the Mexican War, he also had a brother who was a brigadier general in the Union Army. Although he was last in his class at the U.S. Military Academy in 1845, he became a brigadier general in the Confederate Provisional Army in January 1862. McIntosh took over when McCulloch was killed at Pea Ridge and was shot through the heart while leading a cavalry charge.

Lieutenant Colonel Dandridge McRae, commander, Arkansas Infantry (McCulloch's Brigade), was born in Alabama in October 1829. He graduated from South Carolina College and settled in Searcy, Arkansas. Later, he was a lawyer and clerk of the courts. McRae entered the Confederate service as a major in the 3d Battalion, Arkansas Infantry, and fought at Pea Ridge. He had little regard for military protocol, and his troops described him as "a crude mass of undisciplined material." McRae was charged with misbehavior in front of the enemy during the attack on Helena, Arkansas, during the attempt to relieve Vicksburg and subsequently served in the Red River campaign and fought at Marks' Mill and Jenkins' Ferry. McRae resigned his commission in 1864, returned to law practice in Searcy, and was elected deputy secretary of Arkansas in 1881. He died in April 1899.

Brigadier General Mosby M. Parsons, commander, 6th Division, Missouri State Guard, was born in Charlottesville, Virginia, on 21 May 1822. Later, he moved to Cole County, Missouri, studied law, and was admitted to the bar. Afterward, he commanded a company of mounted volunteers in the Mexican War. From 1853 to 1857, Parsons was attorney general of Missouri and later was elected to the state senate. Immediately before the Civil War, he actively allied himself with Governor Claiborne Jackson in an effort to get Missouri into the Confederacy. At the outbreak of war, he commanded the 6th Division of the Missouri State Guard until he was commissioned a brigadier general in the army of the Confederate States of America in November 1862. In the Civil War, he fought at Carthage, Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and in the Arkansas campaigns of 1862 and 1863. He also reinforced Richard Taylor during the Red River campaign and was present at the Battles of Pleasant Hill and Marks' Mills and at Jenkins' Ferry against Steele. Parsons was assigned duty as a major general in April 1864 by Kirby Smith but was never officially appointed by President Jefferson Davis or confirmed by the Confederate Senate. Parsons accompanied Price in the Missouri expedition in 1864 and after the war went to Mexico. His death is a mystery, but he may have attached himself to the forces of Maximilian and been killed by republican irregulars in August 1865 near China on the San Juan River in the Mexican state of Nuevo León. He is supposedly buried near that site.

Brigadier General N. Bart Pearce, commander, Pearce's Brigade of McCulloch's command, was born about 1816 in Kentucky. Twenty-sixth of forty-four cadets in the U.S. Military Academy class of 1850, he was later commissioned in the Infantry, serving on the frontier and in the Utah expedition before he resigned in 1858 to be a farmer and merchant. In May 1861, he raised troops for the Arkansas State Militia and fought at Wilson's Creek. Pearce was named chief commissary of the Indian Territory in December 1861 with the rank of major general, Confederate States of America, and chief commissary of Texas in June 1863. At the time, he was accused of improper dealing with speculators. Pearce served out the war with Kirby Smith.

Major General Sterling Price, commander, Missouri State Guard, was second in command of the Southern army at Wilson's Creek. Born 20 September 1809 in Prince Edward County, Virginia, he was educated at Hampden-Sydney College and later studied law. He moved to Missouri about 1831 with his parents and purchased a farm in Chariton County. He later served six years in the legislature and was speaker of the state house. Price was elected to Congress from 1844 to 1846 but resigned to take part in the Mexican War as a colonel of the 2d Missouri Infantry and, later, brigadier general of Volunteers. He was subsequently military governor of New Mexico, governor of Missouri from 1853 to 1857, and president of the state convention in 1861. Price opposed secession but accepted a commission in the Missouri State Militia in May 1861 and combined his force with General McCulloch prior to Wilson's Creek. Afterward, he retook Springfield and captured Lexington, Missouri, but retreated to Arkansas in the late fall of 1861. Price commanded part of the Confederate force at Pea Ridge and was later commissioned a major general, Confederate States of America, on 6 March 1862. He commanded at Iuka and Corinth, Mississippi, in October 1862 and at Helena, Arkansas, in 1863. He aided Kirby Smith in repulsing Steele's Camden expedition in early 1864. Afterward, he commanded an expedition into Missouri in the fall of 1864. In Texas at the end of the war, he fled to Mexico with many of his followers, returning to Missouri in 1866. He died in St. Louis in September 1867 and is buried in the Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis.

Brigadier General William Y. Slack, commander, 4th Division, Missouri State Guard, was born in Mason County, Kentucky, on 1 August 1816. He moved to Boone County, Missouri, in 1819 and settled near Columbia. After studying law, he moved to

Chillicothe, Missouri, and began his practice. Slack served as captain of the 2d Missouri Volunteers under Sterling Price in the Mexican War, then returned to law practice. He was appointed brigadier general in the Missouri State Guard in 1861 and fought at Carthage and Wilson's Creek, where he was wounded in the hip. After recovering, he fought at Pea Ridge, where he was again wounded in the hip. Slack lingered until 21 March 1862 then died and was buried in the yard at his home in Moore's Mill, Arkansas. He was later reinterred in the Confederate Cemetery, Fayetteville, Arkansas, in 1880.

APPENDIX B

Medal of Honor Recipients at Wilson's Creek, 10 August 1861

Nicholas Bouquet, private, Company D, 1st Iowa Infantry, was born on 14 November 1842 in Germany and entered the service in Burlington, Iowa. His medal was issued 16 February 1897.

Citation: Bouquet voluntarily left the line of battle and exposed himself to imminent danger from a heavy fire of the enemy in assisting in the capture of a riderless horse, at large between the lines, and hitching him to a disabled gun, thus saving the gun from capture.

In 1862, Bouquet joined the 25th Iowa Infantry and served with this unit through the rest of the war. Promoted to sergeant in Company E, Sergeant Bouquet fought in the siege of Vicksburg; the Battles of Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain, and Missionary Ridge; the Atlanta campaign; Kennesaw Mountain; the "March to the Sea"; and the Carolinas campaign.

Lorenzo D. Immell, corporal, Company F, 2d U.S. Artillery, was born in Ross, Ohio. His medal was issued on 19 July 1890.

Citation: Immell was cited for bravery in action.

Immell was discharged from the 2d U.S. Artillery in 1862 and accepted a commission as a second lieutenant in Battery G, 1st Missouri Light Artillery. Promoted to first lieutenant during the war, Immell commanded Battery G, 1st Missouri Light; the 12th Wisconsin Battery; and the 6th Ohio Battery (which were part of the IV Corps, Army of the Cumberland). At various times, Lieutenant Immell also served as the acting assistant adjutant general of the artillery brigade, IV Corps, and as acting inspector of artillery for the IV Corps. He is buried in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery near St. Louis, Missouri.

John M. Schofield, major, 1st Missouri Infantry, was born on 29 September 1831 in Gerry, New York. He entered the service at St. Louis, Missouri, and was issued his medal on 2 July 1892.

Citation: Schofield was conspicuously gallant in leading a regiment in a successful charge against the enemy.

A career Army officer, Schofield graduated from West Point in 1853 and served as General Nathaniel Lyon's chief of staff at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. He later served in the Western theater as a major general and was the commander of the Federal army that defeated John Bell Hood at Franklin, Tennessee. After the war, Schofield served briefly as secretary of war and superintendent of West Point (1876–81). In February 1888, he became commanding general of the U.S. Army and was promoted to lieutenant general in February 1895. He retired on 29 September 1895 at the age of sixty-four after forty-six years in the Army. Schofield died in 1906 and is buried in the Arlington National Cemetery.

William M. Wherry, first lieutenant, Company D, 3d U.S. Reserve Missouri Infantry, was born on 13 September 1836 in St. Louis, Missouri. He entered the service at St. Louis, Missouri, and his medal was issued on 30 October 1895.

Citation: Wherry displayed conspicuous coolness and heroism in rallying troops that were recoiling under heavy fire.

Wherry served on General Lyon's staff at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. He served throughout the Civil War and participated in the Battles of Atlanta, Franklin, and Nashville. He continued in the Army after the war and served as a brigadier general of Volunteers during the Spanish-American War. Wherry retired in 1899 after thirty-eight years of service and is buried in the Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis, Missouri.

Henry Clay Wood, first lieutenant, 11th U.S. Infantry, was born in Winthrop, Maine. He entered the service in Winthrop and received his medal on 28 October 1893.

Citation: Wood was cited for distinguished gallantry.

Wood retired in 1904 with the rank of brigadier general after fifty years of active duty. He was an 1854 graduate of Bowdoin College in Augusta, Maine. Wood is buried in the Arlington National Cemetery.

APPENDIX C
Families on the Wilson's Creek Battlefield

John M. Gibson was a farmer and miller by trade and operated a mill along the east bank of Wilson's Creek. During the battle, the Gibsons took refuge in the cellar of their house.

Joseph Sharp was a farmer and owned the large cornfields in which most of the Southern cavalry camped. The family took refuge in its cellar during the battle. The Sharp's farm and home suffered some damage during the battle. Later in the war, the house burned, and the family abandoned the farm.

E. B. Short operated a farm near the site of the present-day Visitor's Center. Lyon's Army of the West surprised the Short family during breakfast on the morning of the battle. General Lyon posted his wagon park near the Short's springhouse.

Larkin D. Winn owned the farm near the Pulaski Artillery Battery's position. After the battle, the Winns left Missouri and moved to Arkansas.

C. B. Manley owned a farm on the eastern side of Wilson's Creek in which elements of the Missouri State Guard and Arkansas troops camped. After the battle, the family cemetery was a temporary resting place for the Confederate dead.

T. B. Manley was C. B. Manley's brother and farmed the south slope of what is now called Bloody Hill. The Glidewell family, direct descendants of the Manleys, sold the farm to the state of Missouri in the 1960s as part of the battlefield development.

Susanna Edgar owned a small farm on the north edge of the battlefield. The park maintains the family cemetery.

William Edwards was a Union man and accompanied Lyon's Army of the West to Springfield after the skirmish at Dug Springs. After the battle, Edwards moved about five miles away and built another cabin, which has been preserved and moved to Wilson's Creek at the site of Confederate General Price's headquarters.

APPENDIX D
Order of Battle, Wilson's Creek, 10 August 1861

UNION ARMY (5,600)*
Brig. Gen. Nathaniel Lyon

1st Brigade (884)
Maj. Samuel D. Sturgis

1st U.S. Infantry, Capt. Joseph B. Plummer (4 companies, 300 men)
2d Missouri Infantry Battalion, Maj. Peter J. Osterhaus (150)
Company I, 2d Kansas Mounted Infantry, and
Company D, 1st U.S. Cavalry (350)
Company F, 2d U.S. Artillery, Capt. James Totten (6 guns, 84 men)

2d Brigade (1,200)
Col. Franz Sigel

3d Missouri Infantry, Lt. Col. Anselm Albert, and
5th Missouri Infantry, Col. Charles E. Salomon (990)
Company I, 1st U.S. Cavalry, Capt. Eugene A. Carr (65)
Company C, 2d U.S. Dragoons, 2d Lt. Charles E. Farrand (60)
Backoff's Battery, Lieutenants Edward Schuetzenbach and Frederick Schaeffer (6 guns, 85 men)

3d Brigade (1,116)
Lt. Col. George L. Andrews

1st Missouri Infantry, Lt. Col. George L. Andrews (775)
2d U.S. Infantry, Capt. Frederick Steele (4 companies, 275 men)
Du Bois' Battery, 2d Lt. John V. Du Bois (4 guns, 66 men)

4th Brigade (2,400)
Col. George W. Deitzler

1st Kansas Infantry, Col. George W. Deitzler (800)
2d Kansas Infantry, Lt. Col. Charles W. Blair (600)
1st Iowa Infantry, Col. John F. Bates (800)
Home Guards, Capt. Clark Wright (200)

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* All numbers inside parentheses indicate unit strengths.

CONFEDERATE ARMY (10,175)
Brig. Gen. Ben McCulloch

Pearce's Brigade (2,234)
Brig. Gen. N. Bart Pearce

1st Arkansas Cavalry, Col. De Rosey Carroll (350)
Carroll's Cavalry, Capt. Charles A. Carroll (40)
3d Arkansas Infantry, Col. John R. Gratiot (500)
4th Arkansas Infantry, Col. J. D. Walker (550)
5th Arkansas Infantry, Col. Tom P. Dockery (650)
Woodruff's Battery, Capt. W. E. Woodruff Jr. (4 guns, 71 men)
Reid's Battery, Capt. J. G. Reid (4 guns, 73 men)

McCulloch's Brigade (2,720)
Brig. Gen. Ben McCulloch

3d Louisiana Infantry, Col. Louis Hébert (700)
Arkansas Infantry, Lt. Col. D. McRae (220)
1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles, Col. T. J. Churchill (600)
2d Arkansas Mounted Rifles, Col. James McIntosh (400)
South Kansas-Texas Mounted Regiment, Col. Elkanah Greer (800)

MISSOURI STATE GUARD (5,221)
Maj. Gen. Sterling Price

2d Division (2,526)
Brig. Gen. James S. Rains

Infantry Brigade (1,250)
Col. Richard H. Weightman

1st Missouri State Guard Infantry
2d Missouri State Guard Infantry
3d Missouri State Guard Infantry
4th Missouri State Guard Infantry

Cavalry Brigade (1,210)
Col. Cawthorn

Peyton's Cavalry
McCowan's Cavalry
Hunter's Cavalry

Bledsoe's Battery (3 guns, 66 men)

3d Division (573)
Brig. Gen. Charles Clark
Burbridge's Infantry, Col. J. Q. Burbridge (273)
Major's Cavalry, Lt. Col. J. P. Major (300)

4th Division (934)
Brig. Gen. William Y. Slack
Hughes Infantry, Col. John T. Hughes and
Thornton's Infantry, Maj. C. C. Thornton (650)
Rives' Cavalry, Col. B. A. Rives (234)

6th Division (601)
Brig. Gen. Monroe M. Parsons
Kelly's Infantry, Col. Kelly (195)
Brown's Cavalry, Col. Brown (406)
Guibor's Battery, Capt. H. Guibor (4 guns, 61 men)

7th Division (645)
Brig. Gen. J. H. McBride
Wingo's Infantry, Col. Wingo (300)
Foster's Infantry, Col. Foster (305)
Campbell's Cavalry, Capt. Campbell (40)

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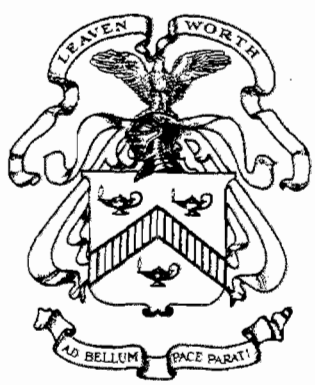
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