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Keeping A Town Alive?: The Civil War Re-enactment of the Battle of Pilot Knob

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SENIOR THESIS APPROVAL

This Honors thesis entitled

**Keeping A Town Alive?:
The Civil War Re-enactment of the Battle of Pilot Knob**

written by

Laura Marie Gentry

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for completion of the
Carl Goodson Honors Program
meets the criteria for acceptance
and has been approved by the undersigned readers.

Dr. Trey Berry, thesis director

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There is a place surrounded by thousands of acres of natural forests encircled by seven beautiful state parks nestled between the highest peaks in Missouri with rich Ozark history. Imagine three small towns situated in a valley of the Ozarks Mountains surrounded by breathtaking scenery, a perfect retreat from busyness of the city and the working world. Would you be interested in escaping here for a weekend or possibly for the rest of your life?

If you even entertained the idea, local Chamber of Commerce officials succeeded in making you believe that Arcadia Valley or the towns of Ironton, Arcadia, and Pilot Knob was a great place to visit. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow substantiated the claim when he wrote in the 19th century, "There is a charming portion of our country, dainty and lovely as a dimple in the cheek of nature and yet comparatively unknown to residents in the East. It is the valley of Arcadia."¹ However, most people refuse to pack their suitcases and head off to some place advertised as beautiful and scenic unless it has been highlighted as a featured destination on the Travel Channel. Taking this opinion into account, Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce hosts a tri-annual event to draw thousands of visitors into the area with the hopes of generating tourism revenue as well as making them want to return to the Arcadia Valley again and again. This event capitalizes on local history along with appealing to many Americans' fascination with the Civil War- the re-enactment of the Civil War Battle of Pilot Knob.

The Arcadia Valley has sought to capitalize on the Civil War's tourism drawing power by highlighting the Battle of Pilot Knob with the hopes of saving a community that lacks an industrial base. Most people have never heard of the Battle of Pilot Knob and would not be able to find the location of the battle on a map of Missouri. This unfamiliar battle occurred on September 26-27, 1864, and was part of Confederate General Sterling Price's Missouri

¹ Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce, "About Arcadia Valley," <http://www.arcadiavalley.biz/aboutarcadiavalley.html>, (accessed October 30, 2005).

Expedition Campaign. What made the Battle of Pilot Knob important, and what actually happened at the battle? It was important because of its location and was part of the Trans-Mississippi Theater of the Civil War. Missouri remained in the Union throughout the Civil War, but it earned the classification as a border state. In January 1861, Claiborne Fox Jackson, the governor of Missouri, organized a convention to decide whether Missouri's loyalty laid with the Union or whether the state should secede. Although this move was three months before the Civil War actually started, Claiborne Fox Jackson and the state legislature firmly believed secession would occur since a majority of its citizens had moved to Missouri from the South and had ties to the region. Much to the chagrin of the secessionists, the convention decided that Missouri would not secede.²

Outraged, Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson launched a plot to seize weapons from the Federal arsenal in St. Louis and established Camp Jackson to house his militia while he waited for arms from the Confederate high command. The commander of the arsenal, Captain Nathaniel Lyon discovered Jackson's plans and sent the majority of the weapons across the Mississippi River to Illinois. On May 10, 1861, Lyon led 3,000 Union troops and attacked Camp Jackson, which resulted in a quick surrender by pro-Confederate militia. Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson countered by having the pro-Confederate legislature grant him emergency powers, which he used to organize the state into nine military districts comprised of 50,000 militia. The Missouri State Guard was the name of the militia, and the overall commander was Sterling Price. Meanwhile, citizen supporters of the Confederacy rioted across the state. Lyon quashed the

²Bryce Suderow, *Thunder in the Valley*, (Cape Girardeau, MO: The Center for Regional History and Culture, Southeast Missouri State University, 1986), 7.

riots, drove Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson and his supporters out of the capital, and forced the militia to retreat to southwest Missouri.³

On August 10, 1861, the Battle of Wilson's Creek ended Lyon's streak of victories. Confederate forces outnumbered Lyon's Union soldiers by a ratio of two to one. Price planned to pursue the Union Army, but his fellow commanders refused to follow his lead. He hoped to reclaim the state with a band of 6,000 troops and anxiously waited for volunteers to join his cause. While Price fought valiantly, Missouri Unionists assembled a new convention and elected a new governor and legislature. The mood had changed in the state, and most Missourians viewed Sterling Price as an invader as well as exiled Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson as an imposter. By 1862, Price and all Confederate forces retreated to Arkansas while the Union army continued to press South.⁴

Over the next two years, Missouri remained under Union control, but guerilla warfare plagued the state. In 1864, the North needed cotton and decided to march towards Shreveport, Louisiana, and eventually occupy Texas. Union Major Generals Frederick Steele and Nathaniel Banks spearheaded the Red River Campaign, but they failed to meet their objective of Louisiana and Texas. After several defeats, Banks' troops were transferred to fight in the East, and Steele retreated to Little Rock. As a result, the Confederates felt ready to mount a massive offensive and had gained enough supplies to make it possible. The Confederate leadership decided to retake Missouri with the hopes of diverting Union troops and relieve pressure on General Robert E. Lee at Petersburg and General John Bell Hood at Atlanta. Lieutenant General Kirby Smith, the commander of the Trans-Mississippi Department, had between 30,000 to 40,000 infantry and

³ United States War Department, *The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series I, Volume III, Serial I, 4-5, 14, (Hereinafter cited as OR); Suderow, 9.

⁴OR, Volume III, Serial I, 10, 94.

cavalry units available for the offensive. However, Smith decided to send only 12,000 cavalry, and chose Major General Sterling Price to lead these men.⁵

The Confederates dreamed that the cavalry would easily gain recruits from sympathetic Missouri citizens, and then Price's forces would march on Jefferson City and St. Louis. Union Major General William Rosecrans wrote in a report, "Women's fingers were busy making clothes for the rebel soldiers out of goods plundered by the guerillas; women's tongues were busy telling Union neighbors 'their time was now coming'."⁶ Price's instructions from Kirby Smith were to

Rally the loyal men of Missouri, and remember our great want is men, and that your object should be, if you cannot maintain yourself in that country, to bring as large an accession as possible to our force. . . . Make St. Louis the objective point of your movement, which if rapidly made, will put you in possession of that place, its supplies, and military stores, and which will do more towards rallying Missouri to your standard than the possession of any other point.⁷

In mid-September 1864 at Pocahontas, Arkansas, Price divided his men into his three divisions under the command of Generals James Fagan, John Marmaduke, and Joseph Shelby and began his campaign in Missouri.⁸ As the Confederates began their march north, they met resistance near the town of Doniphan, Missouri. Shelby's men quickly defeated the Third Missouri State Militia Cavalry in a brief skirmish. However, this encounter alerted Union forces to the Confederate presence in Missouri.⁹ Price's soldiers continued to march further north pausing briefly at Fredericktown, which was where Price learned that General A.J. "Whiskey" Smith commanded the Union regiment at St. Louis. Smith had a reputation of being a strong

⁵ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 1027-1028; Suderow, 19.

⁶ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 308-309.

⁷ OR, Volume XLI, Part II, Serial 84, 1040.

⁸ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 643.

⁹ OR, Volume XLI, Part III, Serial 85, 945-948; Suderow, 36-38.

commander.¹⁰ His men were battle-hardened and would most likely defeat Price's straggly band of recruits if they met on the battlefield. General Sterling Price decided to shift his objective to capturing the town of Pilot Knob.

Price believed that Pilot Knob would be an easy victory, which would rally Confederate sympathizers to their cause and make them take up arms against their Missouri neighbors. In addition to garnering support, Pilot Knob was of strategic importance. The Iron Mountain Railroad ended its route at Pilot Knob and served as a supply line for the surrounding Union outposts of Farmington, Fredericktown, Centerville, and Patterson. In addition, this railroad transported iron from the mines at Ironton, Irondale, and Pilot Knob further north to be used for weapons and other industries in St. Louis. The only obstacle to Price's plans was Fort Davidson. This fort protected Union interests in the area and sought to keep this strategic location from falling into Confederate hands.¹¹

On September 25, 1864, Fort Davidson received a new commander, Brigadier General Thomas Ewing, Jr. from his former post as commander of the District of St. Louis. On his trip south to Pilot Knob from St. Louis with a brigade of men, he left 1,500 men at the town of Desoto in order to further protect St. Louis as well as fortifying positions in towns lining the railroad.¹² In Ewing's own words, Fort Davidson was "a hexagonal work, mounting four 32-pounder siege guns and three 24-howitzers en barbette. It [laid] about 300 yards from the base of the knob and 1,000 from the gap."¹³

Under his command at Fort Davidson, Ewing had a total of 1,447 men, but many of them were inexperienced. In order to better ascertain Confederate threat in the area, Ewing dispatched

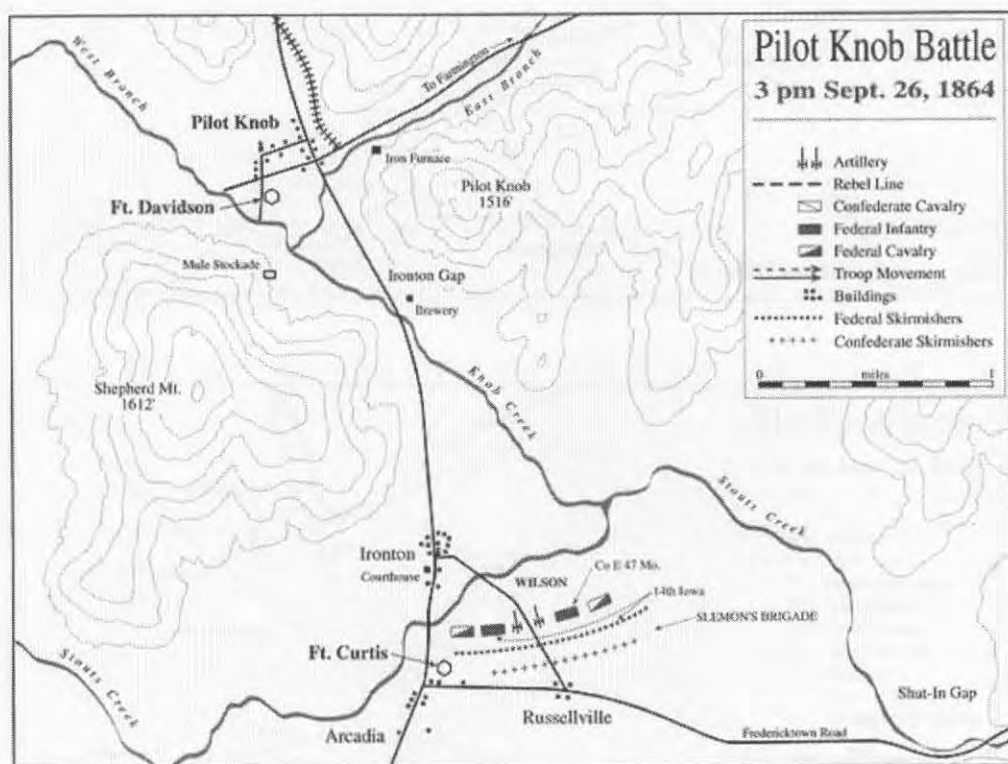
¹⁰ Mark Mayo Boatner, III, *The Civil War Dictionary*, (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1959), 768.

¹¹ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 446; David Roggensees, "The Battle of Pilot Knob", *Welcome to the Battle of Pilot Knob 140th Anniversary Re-enactment Magazine*, A Publication of *The Mountain Echo*, 5-7.

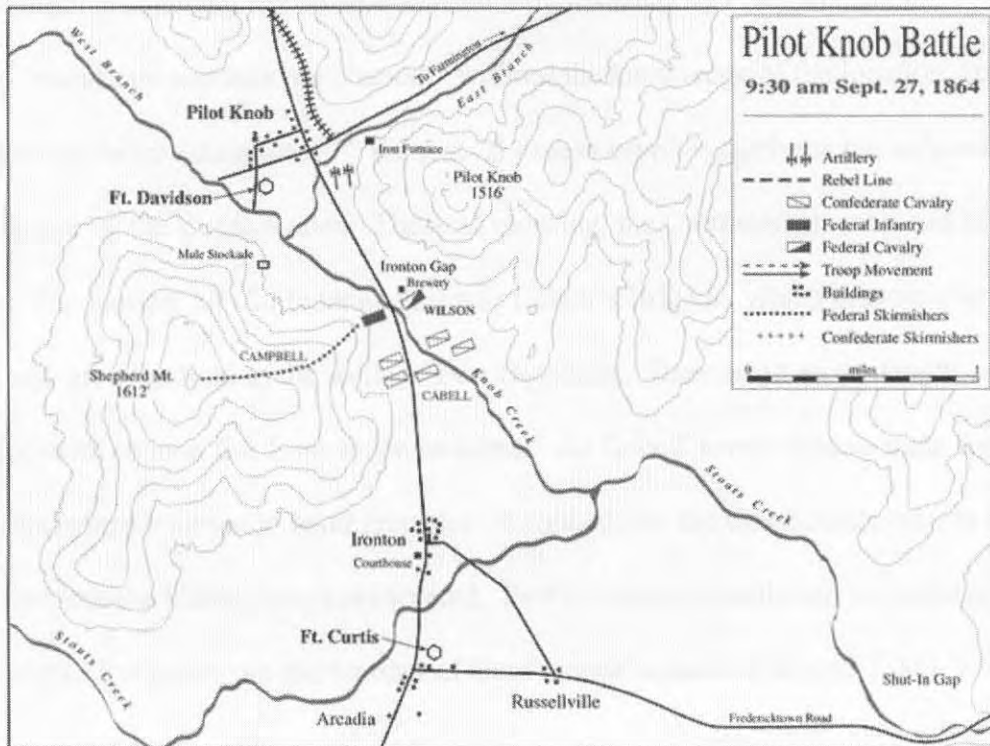
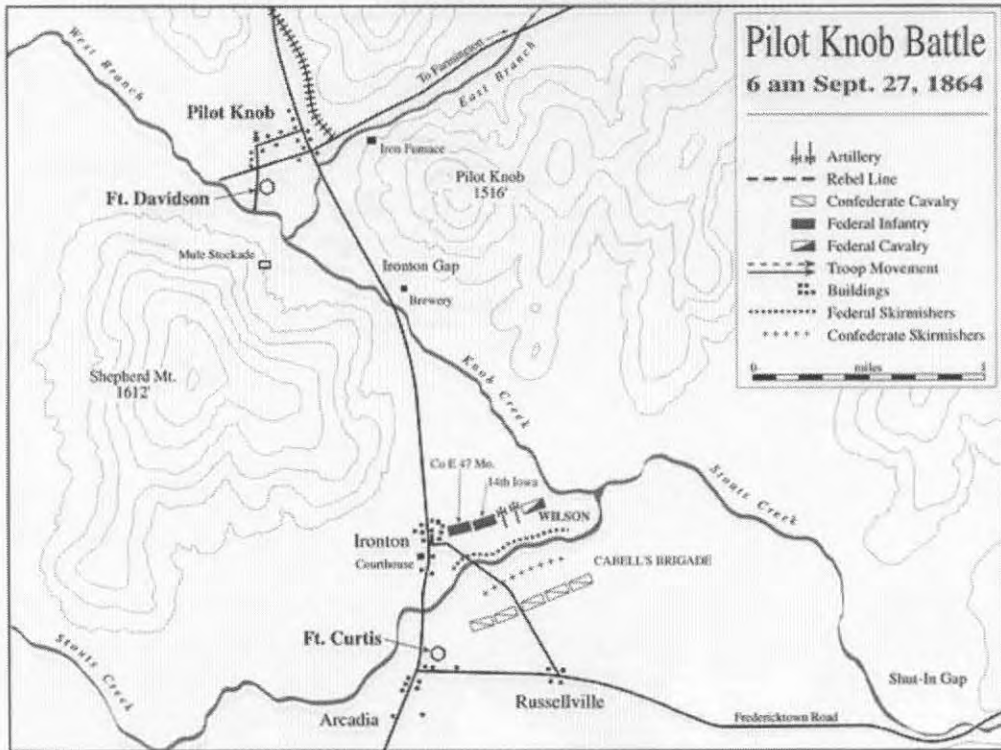
¹² OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 445.

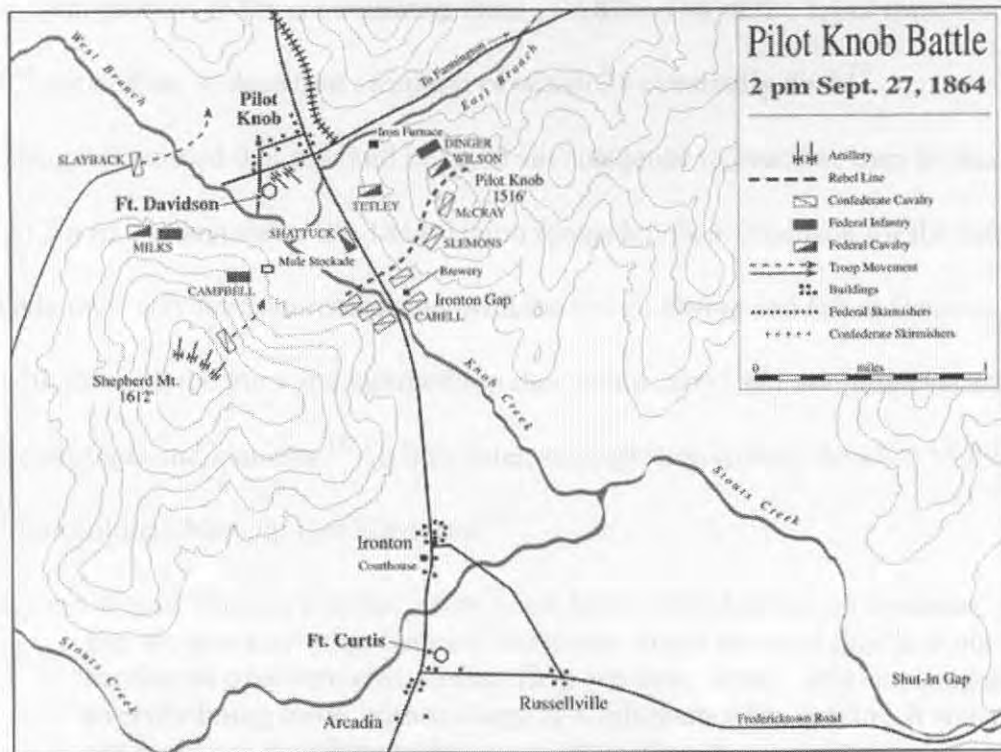
¹³ *Ibid.*, 446.

two scouting parties, who encountered Confederates on the outskirts of Ironton, just a few miles away from Fort Davidson on September 26, 1864. Both sides fired shots until the Union forces retreated to the courthouse to make a defensive stand. Reinforcements arrived for the Union side, and they drove the Confederates back to Shut-In Gap on Stout's Creek. As the day progressed, Price's troops continued to arrive from Fredericktown, and the Union retreated to Ironton.¹⁴



¹⁴ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 446-447; Roggensees, 6, 8-9.





As night fell, Ewing feared an overwhelming invasion by Price’s entire force, but he decided to “stand fast and take my chances” without the knowledge of the location, strength, and commanders of the invading force.¹⁵ He sent all excess supplies north via the railroad in order to prevent capture by the Confederates. The next morning, the Confederates marched towards Fort Davidson. The hardest hit Confederate unit was Cabell’s Brigade, which bravely charged 1,200 yards through an open field to the walls of Fort Davidson. They faced an onslaught of musket fire coupled with cannon fire from seven cannons¹⁶ As Cabell’s men tried to scale the Fort’s walls, Union troops resorted to hand grenades. It looked like the Confederates might be able to seize the fort, but the Union troops persevered. Fort Davidson’s walls and its soldiers repulsed 6,000 invaders. Estimates put the number of Confederate casualties around 1,000, which

¹⁵ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 448.

¹⁶ Ibid., 448.

equaled sixteen percent of Price's attacking force of 8,825. Out of the 1,447 men, Ewing lost a total of 200 men either to desertion or injury, of which 28 eventually died.¹⁷

Ewing determined that it would be more advantageous to evacuate than to face another assault. At 2 a.m. on September 28, 1864, Union forces left Fort Davidson for the last time and quietly made their way north to rendezvous with the troops Ewing had left at Desoto. They brought with them all the guns and ammunition they could carry, and minimized noise by marching over tents and blankets.¹⁸ An hour later, an explosion rocked the town of Pilot Knob as twenty Union soldiers blew up Fort Davidson.¹⁹

Union Colonel Thomas Fletcher wrote years later of the decision to evacuate, But we also knew that General Rosecrans would not send Smith to our assistance for fear of uncovering St. Louis. Here we were, completely surrounded with an overwhelming force, without hope of reinforcement or succor. It was plain that we could not stay there and very nearly as plain that we could not get away. Our only course that was conceded to be that we must make the effort to escape and take the chances. All around us were the camp-fires of the enemy; our sole chance was to cut our way through his lines.²⁰

Confederate forces believed the explosion was accidental, and therefore, they did not pursue. Private J.W. Nations of the 50th Missouri Infantry reminisced about abandoning Fort Davidson by saying, "Fort Davidson had served a good purpose: its walls had stood as a barrier between us and the enemy; it had enabled a few men to successfully ward off and repulse an army whose numbers were several times greater than the garrison making the defense. And yet, speaking for myself, there was a feeling of relief on leaving the inside of that fortification."²¹ Ewing continued to march until he encountered General Joseph Shelby's division outside of Caledonia. Shelby planned to stay to fight while Ewing decided to sidestep Shelby and move towards

¹⁷ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 451.

¹⁸ Ibid., 450.

¹⁹ Ibid., 449; Roggensees, 10, 26-30.

²⁰ Cyrus Peterson and Joseph Hanson, *Pilot Knob: The Thermopylae of the West*, (Independence, MO: Two Trails Publishing, 1914, 175-176.

²¹ Library of Congress, Ewing Papers, J.W. Nations, "Battle of Pilot Knob and the Subsequent Retreat to Leasburg and Rolla, Mo. Recollections of J.W. Nations," 5.

General McNeil's base in Rolla. In his report to his superior officers, General Thomas Ewing wrote,

Retreated and stubborn efforts were made to bring us to a stand; and could they have forced a halt of an hour they would have enveloped and taken us, but our halts, though frequent, were brief, and were only to unlimber the artillery, stagger the pursuers with a few rounds, and move on. We reached Harrison²² just after dark, having made the march of sixty-six miles in just thirty-nine hours.²³

Since Shelby mobilized his men instead of engaging in pursuit, Union forces had a sizable lead that eventually enabled them to engage the enemy at the location of their choice: Leasburg.

As the Union troops secretly slipped past Confederate lines, the Confederates mistook them for movements of their own soldiers. When Price discovered Ewing's escape, he dispatched Generals Marmaduke and Shelby, and a skirmish ensued at Leasburg, which was a small town about thirty-five miles from Rolla. The Rebels lost the battle when a Union relief column arrived in Leasburg on October 1, 1864.²⁴ Due to this encounter and the slow pursuit of the Union soldiers formerly stationed at Fort Davidson, General Rosecrans had enough time to reinforce Jefferson City and began the campaign to drive Price from Missouri.

The failure of the campaign to reclaim Missouri greatly hurt the morale of the Confederates, and many Rebel supporters directly blamed General Sterling Price and his decisions. People criticized him because he lost sight of the primary goal of seizing St. Louis and took a detour to attack a small fort that did not distract Union forces enough to send reinforcements and weaken their strength in the eastern front. Price acted hastily in drawing up his battle plans and failed to consider an option to use several cannons to fire on Fort Davidson from Shepherd Mountain. He failed to obtain information about the size of the Union presence within the fort as well as understand the limitations of his own troops. Many of Price's invading

²² Harrison was also known as Leasburg during the Civil War.

²³ OR, Volume XLI, Part I, Serial 83, 450.

²⁴ Ibid., 326-327.

band were fresh recruits or conscripts, and they lacked the training and experience to launch a coordinated, sustained attack on the fortification. Nevertheless, if Price had won the Battle of Pilot Knob, he most likely would have been able to seize Jefferson City, which would have caused Union leaders to recall some eastern troops to quash Price's Missouri Expedition. Historians speculated that this deployment might have prolonged the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi West Theater for several months.²⁵

The battle played a key role in keeping Confederates from taking principal cities in Missouri such as Jefferson City and St. Louis. Both sides recognized the importance of Pilot Knob, Arcadia, and Ironton as early as 1861 with the nearby battle of Fredericktown. Confederate forces intended to use the Iron Mountain Railroad as a base of operations to launch further invasions within the state.²⁶ A few years later, Price's Missouri Expedition echoed similar plans for the invasion of Missouri and led to the battle of Pilot Knob. A majority of the fighting of this battle occurred at Fort Davidson, which has been turned into a state historic site and museum in the town of Pilot Knob. Besides the actual battlefield and earthen mounds of Fort Davidson, the Arcadia Valley has several other claims to Civil War history. First, Ulysses S. Grant received his appointment as a brigadier general while stationed in Ironton, and his widow, Julia, erected a statue to his memory on the grounds of Ste. Marie du Lac Catholic Church. Second, the 1860 Iron County Courthouse served as a venue for fighting during Price's march through the valley and still bears the scar of a cannonball, which damaged the eastern side of the building. Third, the Immanuel Lutheran Church played a role as the headquarters of the Union

²⁵ Suderow, 120.

²⁶ OR, Volume III, Serial III, 204-209, 224-226.

army as well as serving as hospital that cared for the wounded and casualties of the Battle of Pilot Knob.²⁷

The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce decided to utilize its Civil War ties to host a re-enactment of its local battle, which was a staged fight between people dressed as Confederate and Union soldiers with the hopes of portraying history as it actually happened. How did re-enacting originate? The Civil War has captivated Americans for years, and many people immerse themselves in learning everything about the history, culture, and people of the era. Gertrude Stein once wrote, “There will never be anything more interesting in America than that Civil War never.”²⁸ It was a war that almost led to the demise of our country when states thought the national government was abusing its sovereignty and taking away state rights. Although the Civil War put an end to slavery, African-Americans endured second class citizenship for years to come while whites voiced a desire to return to the good old days. For many Southerners, they were determined to keep the memory of the past and the Civil War alive and created monuments and museums to preserve it for generations to come.

Like Arcadia Valley, some entrepreneurs saw this fascination as a business opportunity and worked to create tourist attractions out of battlefields and periodically held re-enactments of the battle. Although considered by some to be located in the North, Missouri had its own share of action during the Civil War with major battles such as Wilson’s Creek. It ranked third among states with the most battles and engagements fought within its borders.²⁹ Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Civil War veterans of the Battle of Pilot Knob came together for reunions and reminisced about their wartime experiences. As the years passed, the

²⁷ Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce, “Historical Places,” <http://www.arcadiavalley.biz/historicalplaces.html>, (accessed October 30, 2005).

²⁸ Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic*, (New York: Vintage Departures, 1998), 1.

²⁹ Carolyn Bartels, *The Civil War in Missouri Day by Day 1861-1865*, (Independence, MO: Two Trails Publishing, 1992), 1.

veterans slowly died, but interest in the Civil War continued to survive both locally and nationally.

In May 1950, two five-man teams armed with .58 caliber rifles marched through the town of Muirkirk, Maryland. These men wore Civil War period uniforms and fired live volleys at balloon targets. This simple exercise gave birth to an interest in re-enacting the Civil War and led to the formation of the North-South Skirmish Association. Members of the North-Skirmish Association utilized this association to organize target contests using Civil War weapons and to find other people with similar interests. With the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Manassas or Bull Run in 1961, the North-South Skirmish Association partnered with the National Park Service to organize a massive re-enactment. Over 2,000 participated in the re-enactment, and it caused many visitors to investigate this new hobby of living history.³⁰

What makes someone decide to become a re-enactor? For many hobbyists, they had at least one ancestor that served on either the Confederate or Union side during the Civil War. Many of them never realized they had relatives that fought in the war until they became interested in tracing their family tree. Gary Gilbert participated in re-enacting to have “a chance to experience how my great grandfather lived, dressed, ate, and slept.”³¹

A common element among participants of this hobby was an interest in history. Many participants majored in history or a related social science field in college and have pursued a career in research, teaching, museum curators, and historic interpreters. For some, it was an interest in the military history and getting to re-create the decisive battles of war that almost split the United States apart. The opportunity to fire antique weapons attracted gun hobbyists and some hunters. However, numerous participants served in the military and saw re-enactments as

³⁰ William Davis, ed., *The Civil War Reenactors' Encyclopedia*. (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2002), 19.

³¹ “Re-enactors and Their Histories,” *Welcome to The Battle of Pilot Knob 137th Anniversary Re-enactment*, A Publication of *The Mountain Echo*, 2001, 14.

an opportunity to relive the feeling of being in the armed forces by being part of a unit, marching in formation, and fellowship among the men. Others saw Civil War re-enactments as one aspect of re-creating history in a variety of settings. There has been a trend for Civil War enthusiasts to participate in other events portraying battles from the War of Independence, French and Indian War, Spanish-American War, and both world wars.³²

Many people attended a re-enactment as a visitor and became enthralled while watching the battle and touring the camp sites. At a Battle of Pilot Knob event, Sandy Walther and Emilie Aubuchon tripped over a re-enactor squatting to build a campfire by using flint, and they innocently asked why he was not using matches. The man responded in first person or as if he were living in the 1860s and stated he was saving his Lucifers or box matches since they were only issued once a month. This man's impression of a Civil War soldier captivated these women, and they picked up the hobby of re-enacting.³³

Even though there were historic examples of women fighting in battle, re-enactment leaders discouraged women from assuming the role of a female soldier. In 1989, the National Park Service expelled a female participant for impersonating a male soldier at an event when a park official caught her coming out of the women's bathroom. The woman successfully sued in order to pave the way for other women.³⁴ Several members of Turner's Brigade discussed how one woman of their company dressed up as a Confederate soldier on occasion, but she must keep her identity concealed from other re-enactors along with the general public. Even though she was a woman, she had a reputation for authenticity and often engaged in first person role playing.³⁵

³² Tim Miller, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

³³ "Re-enactors and Their Histories," 14.

³⁴ Horwitz, 134.

³⁵ Theresa Campbell, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

Some re-enactors used their hobby to escape from the rush of everyday life. Deb Guard explained that she loved getting away from modern technologies and having the opportunity to be alone. She said her greatest pleasure was being unattached from her cell phone and having the opportunity to talk face to face.³⁶ Conversations have become a dying art that these men and women strive to keep alive. Although the re-enactors came from a variety of backgrounds, they always found something to discuss whether it is something out of the Civil War era or about their current lives. Sometimes, these living historians become so wrapped up in their portrayal that they experience a “period rush” when they return to contemporary society. Travelers often experienced a similar phenomenon called culture shock when traveling.

Other re-enactors pointed out that another family member got them interested in re-enacting. It may have been an uncle, brother, mother, daughter, or any other family member. Re-enacting had become a family affair because it allowed families to spend time together without being distracted by the busyness of everyday life. Many parents brought their children to participate alongside them, and most of the children enjoyed the opportunity to dress up in period clothing and camp outside. These children made friends with other re-enactors’ children and often look forward to seeing them at the next re-enactment event. When asked about how their classmates at school viewed their participation in re-enactments, many children expressed how their friends thought it was cool. Teenagers, Angela Diestelkamp and Rebecca Campbell, stated re-enactments introduced them to their current boyfriends.³⁷

Surprisingly, children often draw their parents and siblings into the hobby. Sharon Wonderlake has only been re-enacting for one year, but she became interested through her son. Her son attended an event with his friends at the age of fifteen and became enthralled with re-

³⁶ Deb Guard, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

³⁷ Rebecca Campbell, Angela Diestelkamp, and Gabriel Wheat, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

enacting. He started as a drummer boy and moved up to an officer of the 11th Mississippi Confederate unit at the age of twenty-one years old.³⁸ In the past, Tim Miller portrayed a Confederate soldier at numerous events each year, but he decided to take a break from his hobby to focus more attention on his family and his law practice. However, his six year old son, Dillon, found his uniform and musket in their house and started asking questions about his father's former hobby. Dillon became captivated with the Civil War and begged his father to take him to a re-enactment. Returning to the soldiers' camps and seeing a battle unfold before his eyes proved to be too much for Tim Miller when visiting an event not far from their house. He returned to re-enacting, but this time, his son, Dillon, was by his side.³⁹

Although re-enacting may seem to be a hobby that allowed grown men and women to dress up for weekend and engage in a pseudo-battle, an authentic impression of the Civil War period actually takes a lot of time and money to create. Some people strived for complete authenticity in order to receive the title of "hardcore" while others have more of a lackadaisical approach when it comes to their impression of a Civil War soldier. For example, the Southern Guard formed an "authenticity committee" to make sure its living historians presented an accurate depiction from the buttons on their underwear to the dye used on their coats. Realism was the objective of a hardcore re-enactor. The greatest compliment was to be called super hardcore while being called a "farb" represented the greatest insult. This word, farb, was short for "far-be-it-from-authentic", which describe violations such as wearing a wristwatch or using fake blood, and it can be used as an adjective (farby), a verb (as in, "don't farb out on me"), an

³⁸ Sharon Wonderlake, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

³⁹ Tim and Dillon Miller, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

adverb (farbily), and a heretical school of thought (Farbism or Farbiness).⁴⁰ Joel Boehy said of his passion for re-enacting, “I tell women, I don’t do drugs, I do the Civil War. Problem is, the Civil War’s more addictive than crack, and almost as expensive.”⁴¹ In order to achieve the gaunt look especially when portraying a Confederate soldier, hardcores often attempt to lose weight.⁴² Hardcores had mixed feelings about battle re-enactments because most re-enactors engaged in farbiness, and they also felt that spectators infringed on an authentic combat experience.⁴³

To the casual observer, battle re-enactments may appear to be unorganized, but the actual battle has been carefully scripted. Months in advance, the lead unit planned the battle. At the Battle of Pilot Knob re-enactment, Turner’s Brigade acted as host and planned the attacks for each unit participating⁴⁴ Each person on the field has an assigned role to play even as to when a person should die. Some commanders gave out death rounds, which were cartridges that released a different color upon firing that symbolized death. Other commanders used birthdays in order to decide as who will die in a particular campaign or battle.⁴⁵ One of the problems facing re-enactors’ associations was an overabundance of Confederate soldiers when compared to those soldiers representing the Union especially when battle re-creations occurred in the South. To combat this problem, some re-enactors came to the events with a uniform from each side, and they participated in “galvanizing”, which was historic term for soldiers who switched sides during the conflict.⁴⁶

In the same way, preparation and research of the Civil War for a re-enactment required a lot of time for those participating. The most popular magazines subscriptions were *Blue and the*

⁴⁰ Horwitz, 11.

⁴¹ Ibid., 14.

⁴² Ibid., 12.

⁴³ Ibid., 126.

⁴⁴ Theresa Campbell, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

⁴⁵ Horwitz, 131.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 135.

*Gray, Civil War Illustrated, Camp Chase Gazette, Civil War News, Civil War Times, and Citizens' Companion.*⁴⁷ These magazines provided information on upcoming events, historic information about battles, and a venue for sutlers to advertise their merchandise. *The Civil War News'* medium was a newspaper in order to allow re-enactors to read it at events without breaking from their Civil War period portrayal of soldiers. For those more technologically savvy, the Internet offered discussion boards and chat rooms for re-enactors as well as providing an easy means of researching the Civil War. Most re-enactors preferred to stick with printed materials, but the Internet community has continued to grow in recent years.

In order to prepare their portrayal as a person from the Civil War era, re-enactors sought suppliers of period clothing, weapons, and other materials. Drawing from Civil War vocabulary, sutlers were the merchants that provisioned army.⁴⁸ Several entrepreneurs capitalized on the opportunity to cater to re-enactors by selling authentic or a re-creation of period equipment. Depending on the level of authenticity, it cost about \$1,500 to outfit and arm an infantryman. For women, one outfit cost approximately \$300 when including items such as petticoats, corsets, and gloves.⁴⁹ Because re-enactors do not take the time to make their own equipment, they were often stuck with paying high prices. For example, one pair of men's woolen underwear cost \$20 while a petticoat cost \$65. To get basic shelter, a re-enactor had to shell out \$41 to buy a canvas tent. A simple luxury such as toothbrush sold for \$6 while a sewing machine went for \$450.⁵⁰ According to Patricia Mullenix, the owner of the Ladies' Parlor, her website was the third sutler site for women's apparel in 1997, and her business has grown astronomically over the last few years. At each re-enactment event, her stock dwindled by the end of a weekend, and her website

⁴⁷ Tim Miller, and Sharon Wonderlake, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

⁴⁸ Horwitz, 126.

⁴⁹ Deb Guard, and Michael Zimmer, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

⁵⁰ Prices from the following sutlers: Ladies' Parlor, James County Merchandise, and Crane's Post.

received hundreds of hits a day. Mullenix worked fervently between re-enactments to stockpile supplies and fill around one hundred mail orders a week. When asked about her profits, she refused to comment, but Mullenix mentioned how the sutler industry has continued to grow in recent years to serve an estimated one million re-enactors.⁵¹

Even though these living history participants can be sticklers for authenticity, they realized their need for an audience or “students” to teach about the battles and the life of a soldier during this time period. However, re-enactors have to be somewhat selective in which battles they choose to re-create. Otherwise, every town in the United States would attempt to host their own event concerning a brief skirmish instead of a significant battle. The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce had to convince the Missouri Re-enactors’ Association that the Battle of Pilot Knob was significant enough to portray as a living history exhibition.

The Arcadia Valley had commemorated the battle by hosting smaller scale re-enactments starting in the mid-1960s. Likewise, towns across America looked for ways to commemorate the anniversaries of the Civil War. The town of Pilot Knob honored the memory of the Civil War by hosting a centennial celebration at the former site of Fort Davidson on September 26-27, 1964. Colonel Arthur Jacobs, commander of the 307th Civil Affairs Army Reserve Unit, originated this idea when he realized the centennial of the Battle of Pilot Knob was drawing near. Since he was from Salem, Missouri, he contacted local officials about his idea. Arcadia Valley officials reactivated the Iron County Centennial Association, which had worked in previous years to celebrate that anniversary. Passionate about this centennial celebration, Jacobs received special permission from the Army’s Department of Defense and national Civil War Centennial Commission to have his military unit personally organize the event. His men constructed two miniature tabletop representations of the battle of Pilot Knob depicting the terrain and Fort

⁵¹ Patricia Mullenix, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

Davidson and spent over nine hundred hours working on this exhibit. To ensure authenticity, these soldiers researched the Battle of Pilot Knob and consulted a geological survey map of the region in order to ensure accuracy.⁵²

During the centennial celebration weekend, Jacobs' men served as guest lecturers for visitors touring the exhibit and visiting the battlefield. To honor the memory of thousands of Confederate and Union soldiers who lost their lives during the Battle of Pilot Knob, Jacobs requested that Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish Army chaplains each conduct a religious service simultaneously on the former battlefield. In addition, his soldiers fired two cannons from Shepherd Mountain and Pilot Knob Mountain as part of a gun salute, and flowers were scattered across the mass grave of casualties of the battle. Pilot Knob's gymnasium hosted a display of Civil War relics that were donated by local citizens. In the gymnasium, event leaders set up visitor information booths to provide information on local landmarks and businesses. Arcadia Valley prepared for the event by picking up litter in Ironton, Arcadia, and Pilot Knob as part of a massive cleaning campaign.⁵³

As an Army band played, some of Jacobs' soldiers staged a retreat formation while an American flag was lowered from a flag pole. Although there was not any formalized staged battle, this was the beginning of Arcadia Valley honoring the memory of the Battle of Pilot Knob and its festivities were a forerunner of the re-enactment.⁵⁴ Estimates put the number of people attending the Battle of Pilot Knob Centennial at 17,000. With this response, many citizens

⁵² "Centennial Celebration at Fort Davidson," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 24, 1964.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

expressed interest in the construction of a museum in order to better preserve their local history along with having some event similar to the centennial.⁵⁵

The forerunner of the Chamber of Commerce, the Arcadia Valley Community Betterment Association partially responded four years later in 1968 by hosting a three-day fall festival that concluded with a Civil War historic pageant.⁵⁶ The fall festival also included a barbeque, flower show, geological display, food and craft booths, and square dancing.⁵⁷ Missouri's Department of Tourism collaborated with town leaders in staging a re-creation of the battle and filmed it to use as an advertisement for the area. Several re-enactors groups including the Union Army of Commemoration, Confederate High Command, Sons of Union Veterans Reserve, Sons of Confederate Veterans, and the Order of Stars and Bars participated in the battle.⁵⁸ One local resident of Pilot Knob, John Wagner, found a six-pounder cannon that was used by Confederate forces during the battle and restored it for use by the re-enactors.⁵⁹ On September 28, 1968, Will Davis, head of Missouri's Department of Tourism, dedicated a historic marker to commemorate the sacrifice made at Fort Davidson by both Union and Confederate soldiers.⁶⁰ Mrs. Bea Lacy, the head of the Betterment Association, estimated the 4,000 attended the fall festival, and its success "proved Arcadia Valley's tremendous drawing power as a tourist attraction."⁶¹

Fall Festival continued the following year with even more activities such as an art exhibit and variety show sponsored by the Arcadia Valley Retail Merchants Association.⁶² St. Louis re-

⁵⁵ Dorothy Reese, "Estimate 17,000 Attended Pilot Knob Centennial," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), October 15, 1964.

⁵⁶ "Pilot Knob Battle to Draw Hundreds From 5 States," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 15, 1968.

⁵⁷ "Pilot Knob Armies to Clash Saturday As Civil War Lives Again," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 26, 1968.

⁵⁸ "Pilot Knob Battle to Draw Hundreds From 5 States," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 15, 1968.

⁵⁹ "Cannon restored for Battle Re-enactment," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 15, 1968.

⁶⁰ "State Tourism Head Will Davis Dedicates Pilot Knob Marker," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), October 10, 1968.

⁶¹ "Pictures from Re-enactment," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), October 8, 1968.

⁶² "125 Re-enactors Expected," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 18, 1969.

enactor, John Zaharias, organized the battle by initiating a three stage attack battle plan. First, Confederate forces opened fire on Union troops at the Iron County Courthouse and then retreated down Main Street until they crossed Knob Creek before heading to Fort Davidson. Second, re-enactors staged Confederate General J.F. Fagan's charge against entrenched Union forces at Fort Davidson. Third, Union troops routed Confederates during the charge. In addition, local sponsors instructed spectators to avoid visiting re-enactors' camps and to obey new rules such as staying off the battlefield.⁶³

By 1969, the re-enactment culture began to visibly emerge to the public. For the first time, the hobbyists brought their wives for company. One wife, Christy Shreffer, said of her husband and his fellow comrades, "These men are always reading about the Civil War and doing research on the subject. They make their uniforms as authentic as possible and will go to all sorts of trouble to get a piece of original equipment."⁶⁴ The oldest re-enactor was seventy-four years old while the youngest participant was thirteen. Estimates suggested that seventy-five percent of the re-enactors' guns were actually used during the Civil War, and many of the re-enactors inherited them from a relative that served in the war.

By 1970, the re-enactment, under the umbrella of Fall Festival, seemed to be gaining momentum. Re-enactors' wives began to participate by assuming the role of nurses.⁶⁵ The Arcadia Valley gymnasium played host to the Blue and Gray Ball, which featured period dances and costumes. Local sponsors advertised the event with flyers, brochures, and television spots. Zaharias continued to lead the troop campaign of two hundred re-enactors.⁶⁶ United States Senator Stuart Symington gave the keynote address and remarked, "This re-enactment of the

⁶³ "Johnny Reb to Attack Fort Davidson Saturday at 2 p.m.," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 25, 1969.

⁶⁴ "Pilot Knob Battle Draws Hundreds of Visitors," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), October 2, 1969.

⁶⁵ "Weather Dampens Battle Re-enactment," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), October 1, 1970.

⁶⁶ "Fall Festival Expected to Draw 200 Troops," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 10, 1970.

Battle of Pilot Knob calls to mind not only the Civil War as a whole, but especially the heroism and suffering that it caused in our great state of Missouri; a state which in 1861 was deeply divided, with allegiance uncertain.”⁶⁷ A year later, the local newspaper, *The Mountain Echo*, simply printed a picture of the festivities. By 1972, the re-enactment part of Fall Festival ceased to exist. Local citizens do not remember the reasons why this event stopped, but most likely, organizers grew tired of not having volunteers to help organize the weekend. For the next few years, *The Mountain Echo* filled its pages each September with brief histories of the battle and a poem entitled, “I Was at Fort Davidson.”⁶⁸ During the 1960s and 1970s, local officials saw the re-enactment as a way to celebrate Arcadia Valley’s past and community, but they did not use the re-enactment as part of a larger tourism strategy.

That all changed in the 1980s. The earlier successful events plus the elevation of the Battle of Pilot Knob as an important battle was enough to convince Missouri Re-enactors’ Association to partner with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce in hosting this event starting in 1980. That year signaled the re-birth of the re-enactment with its sponsors including the Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the newly-formed Missouri Civil War Re-enactors’ Association. These two organizations brought rules and regulations to help preserve the battlefield along with making the event more tourist friendly. Camps were now open to the public, and visitors were encouraged to step back into time with authentic period camp life.⁶⁹ Arcadia Valley’s townspeople joined together to help the re-enactors by baking pies, bringing bags of apples, or other food to the soldiers camped out at Fort Davidson’s battlefield. On the grounds of the Iron County

⁶⁷ “Weather Dampens Battle Re-enactment,” *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), October 1, 1970.

⁶⁸ “Lest We Forgot,” *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 21, 1972.

⁶⁹ “Battle Civil War Re-enactors Will Re-create Historic Bloody Crash,” *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 10, 1980.

Courthouse, local citizens and visitors enjoyed a greased pig and hog calling contest. A parade filled with covered wagons, horseback riders, antique cars, and other floats meandered throughout the downtown area.⁷⁰ A former Civil War hospital, Immanuel Lutheran Church opened its doors for tours as well as hosted a church service for all those people attending the re-enactment.⁷¹ Historic hayride tours circled the battleground and the town of Pilot Knob.⁷²

This re-enactment proved to be a success, but visitors to the Arcadia Valley had to wait three years to once again experience the thrill of men locked in the heat of a staged battle. The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce hoped that making this event every three years instead of every year would keep its image as something special and might encourage more people to volunteer to help with this massive undertaking. Although the 1983 re-creation of the Battle of Pilot Knob experienced rain, two hundred fifty Confederate soldiers, one hundred forty Union troops, and fifty cavalry entertained 12,000 spectators in living history.⁷³ The 1986 event grew to 800 re-enactors. *The Mountain Echo* issued a fake 1864 paper. High school students across the state designed an original poster to commemorate the event.⁷⁴ The 125th Anniversary of the Battle of Pilot Knob arrived in 1989, and over 800 re-enactors came from twenty-two states to commemorate the event. Along with the infantry re-enactors, there was a cavalry force of 140 horses and fifteen cannons. To feed this force of soldiers and horses, it took over 600 pounds of oats, 250 bales of hay, and 5 cords of wood.

Local organizations used the re-enactment as a fundraiser. For example, the Arcadia Valley Parent and Teacher Organization held a battle of the beards and charged a penny a vote.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ "Battle Weekend Filled with Activities," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 24, 1980.

⁷¹ "Church Service Will Begin Sunday's 'Battle' Weekend," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 17, 1980.

⁷² "Hayride Tours to Be Held During the 'Battle' Weekend," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 17, 1980.

⁷³ "Re-enactment termed a success," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 28, 1983.

⁷⁴ "800 re-enactors expected for battle," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 24, 1986.

⁷⁵ "North, South to battle," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 20, 1989.

The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce helped defer their costs of hosting the event by selling bronze belt buckles, which has remained a staple souvenir at future re-enactments.⁷⁶ By the end of the 1980s, the industrial base that supported the Arcadia Valley had begun to disintegrate as several factories relocated and several mines shut down. At the same time, re-enacting began to form its own identity and culture as its popularity skyrocketed.

As the tri-annual Battle of Pilot Knob celebration entered another decade, the 1990s, the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce added a shuttle from the parking lot to the battlefield.⁷⁷ Since 1992 was not an anniversary year, the number of re-enactors decreased to 500 participants, but the crowds increased to 25,000 spectators. When questioned about some of the reasons re-enactors flock to re-create the Battle of Pilot Knob, former Chamber of Commerce President, Bill Sheehy, told of a conversation he had, “One of the re-enactors took great pains to tell me how good it felt to fight on the actual ground where the actual battle was fought.”⁷⁸

Many other battlefields host re-enactments on nearby land because of various regulations forbidding it on the actual battle site. It also helped the battle campaign organizers achieve more historical accuracy. Although Battle of Pilot Knob may be an obscure battle from the Civil War, many re-enactors claim it as their favorite re-enactment in which they participate. Several re-enactors stated that the community support and friendliness of Arcadia Valley residents as reason for their continual return to the re-enactment. Many suggested that the beauty of the mountains and fields keeps them coming back.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ “Bronze buckle for sale,” *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 7, 1989.

⁷⁷ “Re-enactment to be held this weekend,” *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 23, 1992.

⁷⁸ “Re-enactment off with a bang,” *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 23, 1992.

⁷⁹ Neil, Sikeston, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 25-26, 2004, Pilot Knob, MO.

The next re-enactment in 1995 boasted the same amount of spectators, but the number of re-enactors increased to 700 participants.⁸⁰ The Mina Sauk Club, a local women's service organization, oversaw the food distribution to the camp sites. They distributed 385 pounds of potatoes, 84 pounds of onions, 70 pounds of carrots, and 140 pounds of coffee. Bonne Terre Orchards donated 144 dozen apples, and Wal-mart gave the re-enactors 280 dozen eggs.⁸¹ In addition, the Arcadia Valley put twelve red granite battlefield markers around the three towns in order to assist visitors follow the battle's progression.⁸² With each successive re-enactment, the number of re-enactors steadily increased to 1,200 in 1998, but the crowds remained around 25,000.⁸³

However, the 2001 re-enactment changed the attendance pattern with over 30,000 people attending the weekend festivities, but only 900 of the 1,100 registered re-enactors attended. Many of the re-enactors also served in military reserve or National Guard units, which had been alerted due to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In addition to the usual events, there was a 1860s fashion shows and first person contest, which was when a re-enactor takes on the identity of a certain Civil War soldier or civilian.⁸⁴ According to Diane Dinkins, the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce Executive Director, many people were leery of being in a crowded public place especially with the firing of guns and cannons. There was a heaviness and sadness that descended on the visitors of the battlefield.⁸⁵

At the re-enactment, the Chamber of Commerce had its own booth to serve as a help desk for visitors, re-enactors, and vendors while promoting the Arcadia Valley. This organization's

⁸⁰ "131st Anniversary of the Battle of Pilot Knob Held," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 27, 1995.

⁸¹ "Food needed for the re-enactment," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 19, 1998.

⁸² "Battlefield markers set," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 20, 1995.

⁸³ "Re-enactment draws rave reviews," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 30, 1998.

⁸⁴ "Over 30,000 attend re-enactment," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), September 26, 2001.

⁸⁵ Diane Dinkins, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August 16, 2005, Ironton, MO.

official task was to serve as a welcome wagon for visitors and re-enactors. In addition to providing information, the Chamber of Commerce sold commemorative belt buckles and served as the official seller of the Battle of Pilot Knob re-enactment videotapes and DVDs. Directing parking also fell under the Chamber's responsibilities. Prior to that weekend, the Chamber of Commerce organized a committee to begin preparations for the event usually a year in advance. They fervently worked throughout the year to advertise and publicize the re-enactment by contacting newspapers across the state, tour guides, and local businesses. This organization sold raffle tickets on several Civil War era rifles and pistols, a homemade quilt, a chanticleer pottery rooster at numerous businesses located throughout the Arcadia Valley.

Diane Dinkins, the current Executive Director of the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce and former chairwoman of the battle re-enactment committee, stated their organization had great difficulty in recruiting volunteers to assist in the planning and staff the event. Due to not enough people volunteering to help, the other volunteers had to pick up the slack by working long hours and taking care of numerous jobs. Thus, this led to significant burnout, and many volunteers failed to return to help with successive re-enactments. When asked about her favorite memory of the re-enactment, Dinkins remarked that she does not even have a favorite memory of the re-enactment, but she only can remember cold mornings, sore muscles, and being tired.⁸⁶ With the Chamber of Commerce's extensive preparation for the event, the Missouri Re-enactors' Association and Missouri Department of Natural Resources carefully coordinated their efforts to make sure every aspect ranging from cutting the grass to roping off spectator areas on the battlefield was ready and prepared for an onslaught of people.

During the 2004 Battle of Pilot Knob Re-enactment, the army camps were open to the public, and throughout the day, re-enactors entertained visitors with Civil War era scenes and

⁸⁶Diane Dinkins, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August 16, 2005, Ironton, MO.

stories in the camps with more formalized tableaux and period entertainment on stage. After a staged attack on Fort Davidson, a surgeon demonstrated how to amputate a limb as well as explain the level of care most soldiers received during the Civil War. Ironically, nurses often used corn husks as bandages. The Fort Davidson State Historic Site Museum hosted various speakers who lectured on the Battle of Pilot Knob and its leaders. At night, the battlefield filled with candles to honor the dead before the re-creation of the blowing up of Fort Davidson. Music filled the air as the re-enactors gave a Civil War concert and ball. They taught period dances. On Sunday, a chaplain re-enactor conducted a worship service for the public and the re-enactors. Hal McNeal, a former history teacher and current pastor at First Baptist Church, Prairie Home, Missouri, participated in re-enactments as the B.G. Cooper, a period preacher that refused to take a loyalty oath and ended up imprisoned. He held religious services on the battlefield for both re-enactors and the public. To keep authenticity, McNeal used a reprint of 1861 New Testament, The Star Book for Ministers, and the Book of Common Prayers. At re-enactments, many husband and wives renewed their wedding vows or even got married for the first time. These weddings allowed re-enactors to don their finest attire and celebrate. At weddings, some period drama can be interjected by having weddings between Confederate and Union families. Although pre-arranged, McNeal pulled out a rifle from his coat and fired into the air to calm feuding families of the bride and groom.⁸⁷

Besides arranging entertainment and events through out the weekend, the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce organized the food and craft vendors to cater to the physical and material needs of the thousands of people attending the re-enactment. Craft and food vendors do not have any difficulty in finding an audience to hock their wares. The Chamber of Commerce designated a ten by ten foot space for craft vendors and information booths for a fee of \$50. Due to food

⁸⁷ Vicki Brown, "Period Preacher," *Word and Way*, (Missouri), September 22, 2005.

vendors needing more space as well as electricity, these vendors paid \$100 and received a fifteen by fifteen foot space. At the 2004 re-enactment, there were eighteen food vendors, and sixty-one craft and information vendors. Of these vendors, twenty-seven responded to a satisfaction survey. Only one respondent failed to make a profit and planned not to return for the next re-enactment. Many of these vendors tried to capitalize on the Civil War by marketing books, memorabilia, and souvenirs associated with the Battle of Pilot Knob. Nevertheless, some booths set up to advertise their business or organization. For example, First Baptist Church Ironton saw the re-enactment as a great witnessing field and an opportunity to share information about the church with the community. They provided free water, gave out balloon animals, and had several craft projects for young visitors.⁸⁸

One of the biggest complaints by craft vendors involved the selling of manufactured or commercially made products. Another complaint included the small size of the space for its value as well as some of the visitors looking unkempt. One vendor, Douglas Gifford, expressed his feelings about the re-enactment as a historic teaching tool. He said,

Re-enactments are good ways to show soldier camp life, uniforms, etc. I was disappointed in the lack of real interest in the historical aspects of the battle. Most people I had contact with were there to shop, and because it was something to do. The people at the re-enactment who really love history and want to learn from a living history event were few and far between.⁸⁹

Many of the survey respondents felt that the re-enactment was an economic asset to the Arcadia Valley. Carol Kelsheimer, secretary of the Kiwanis Club, remarked, "The re-enactment brings lots of tourists to our community, therefore brings business and money."⁹⁰ Although no one can be absolutely certain the number of people that attend the re-enactment, attendance figures at Fort Davidson State Historic Site demonstrated the importance of the re-enactment.

⁸⁸ Diane Dinkins, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August 16, 2005, Ironton, MO.

⁸⁹ Results from re-enactment vendor survey.

⁹⁰ Results from re-enactment vendor survey.

This historic site built a museum in 1994, which created a year-round tourism opportunity for the town. However, the year of the re-enactment showed a significant spike in the number of visitors and effectively illustrated the potential to draw people into the area.⁹¹

Fort Davidson State Historic Site

Year	Total Number of Visitors	Previous Year's Visitors	Percent of Change
1994	86,113	Not available	-----
1995	93,292	86,113	+8.3%
1996	77,240	93,292	-17.2%
1997	75,816	77,240	-1.8%
1998	87,564	75,816	+15.5%
1999	72,320	87,564	-17.4%
2000	69,094	72,320	-4.7%
2001	99,221	69,094	+43.6%
2002	65,771	99,221	-33.7%
2003	73,424	65,771	+11.6%
2004	99,942	73,424	+36.1%

* **Bold indicates year of the re-enactment**

The state of Missouri adapted a funding formula known as the Tourism Supplemental Revenue to fund its Division of Tourism in 1994, which took the growth percentage of revenue generated from the seventeen tourism-related Standard Industry Codes (SIC)⁹², which are the industries that service travelers such as lodging and food while factoring in a three percent rate of inflation.⁹³ Based on the following figures, the re-enactment brought a slight increase in sales tax revenue in 1998 and 2004 for Iron County, which contains the towns of Ironton, Arcadia, and

⁹¹ Attendance Statistics from Sue Holst at the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

⁹² These are categories of the seventeen Standard Industry Classification Codes (SIC): Eating Places Only, Eating and Drinking Places, Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages, Hotels, Motels and Tourist Courts, Rooming and Boarding Houses, Camps and Trailing Parks, Trailing Parks and Camp Sites, Organization Hotels and Lodging House, Producers, Orchestras, Entertainers, Commercial Sports, Misc. Amusement and Recreation, Boat and Canoe Rentals, Public Golf Courses and Swimming Pool, Amusement Parks, Tourist Attraction, Amusement NEC, Botanical and Zoological Gardens.

⁹³ Missouri Department of Tourism, "Missouri's Funding for Tourism Promotion," <http://www.visitmo.com/pdf/HBHistoryReport.pdf>, (accessed October 30, 2005).

Pilot Knob. However, 2001 showed a decrease, which may be on account of people not traveling immediately after the September 11th terrorist attacks and canceling vacation plans. Even though the re-enactment has been around for many more years, the current funding formula was not in place, and therefore, the statistics only go back to 1996.⁹⁴

Tourism Spending and County Revenue for Iron County

Year	Total Expenditures on the 17 Tourism- related SIC codes
1996	\$3,280,896
1997	\$3,701,010
1998	\$4,021,655
1999	\$4,159,882
2000	\$4,226,621
2001	\$4,022,410
2002	\$4,058,405
2003	\$3,974,570
2004	\$4,272,277

***Bold denotes a re-enactment year**

The same pattern of sale tax decreases continued when looking at the total Iron County sales tax figures by the year and the month.⁹⁵ One of the problems with these statistics was that some businesses paid their sales tax semi-annually, quarterly, or monthly, which made it nearly impossible to tell what one re-enactment weekend contributed to the overall health of the economy. The vendors often do not report sales tax and ascribe to a cash and carry economic policy on site. However, the reason for inclusion of the following sales tax statistics showed the difficulty in getting people off site and into the neighboring towns to spend their money.

⁹⁴ Statistics from Lorinda Foster and Dee Ann McKinney at the Missouri Department of Tourism.

⁹⁵ Jack Adams, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August and November 2005, Ironton, MO.

Iron Country Sales Tax by Year and Month

Year	September	October	November	December	January
1997	\$27,394.13	\$17,285.95	\$33,152.94	\$26,514.18	\$13,489.79
1998	\$26,383.09	\$16,883.29	\$30,376.61	\$24,461.24	\$12,612.29
1999	\$24,212.79	\$18,255.69	\$27,726.22	\$24,825.35	\$21,461.24
2000	\$25,565.15	\$12,371.51	\$33,222.52	\$24,756.47	\$17,453.05
2001	\$24,512.29	\$19,077.94	\$31,190.89	\$27,933.97	\$19,176.15
2002	\$25,359.51	\$25,797.46	\$28,575.09	\$18,182.73	\$19,512.04
2003	\$28,504.80	\$19,507.64	\$33,821.73	\$24,167.48	\$18,330.87
2004	\$26,462.37	\$19,023.77	\$35,487.20	\$26,585.04	\$24,700.75
2005	\$37,614.74	\$21,413.30	-----	-----	-----

***Bold denotes a re-enactment year**

However, the food and lodging industry profits the most from the re-enactment. Pilot Knob and Ironton have two motels, Fort Davidson Motel and Shepherd Mountain Inn, while the rest of the Arcadia Valley has several bed and breakfast establishments. During that September weekend, most of the rooms fill up with guests who visited the area for the primary purpose of attending the re-enactment.⁹⁶ Located across the street from the battlefield, Fort Davidson Restaurant embraced its proximity to the battlefield by having a mural painted depicting Fort Davidson and naming menu items such as the Cannon Burger after the Civil War engagement. Some re-enactors frequent this restaurant, but they were not overly concerned with strict authenticity. Fast food chains such as Subway and McDonald's saw increased traffic and customers due to many visitors wanting food from a familiar venue and their location just minutes from Fort Davidson State Historic Site. Many of these businesses were not willing to

⁹⁶ Diane Dinkins, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August 16, 2005, Ironton, MO.

reveal statistics about their profit caused by the re-enactment, but long lines proved increased business.

Although the re-enactment brings thousands of visitors into the sleepy towns of Ironton, Pilot Knob, and Arcadia, local businesses had great difficulty getting visitors to frequent their establishments off-site. The downtown area of Ironton, which centers around Main Street, offered many antique stores and quaint shops designed to cater to tourists and out of town visitors. Sandy Brown, the owner of Stout's Creek Trading Company, claimed that eighty percent of her sales were to people outside of the Arcadia Valley. To help solve this problem, the Arcadia Valley Antique District decided to sponsor a shuttle to the downtown area. The Arcadia Valley Antique District was comprised of a nine businesses: Plunder Palace, Stout's Creek Trading Company, Glory Days, Taum Sauk Traders, Bert's Corner, Shepherd Mountain Gallery, Hen House Antiques, Nostalgic Place, and Arcadia Academy. These businesses divided the cost of the vehicle and shuttle between them, and the van drivers volunteered their time with the hopes of bringing customers into their respective stores. Even so, many of the businesses failed to see a sizeable increase in the number of customers. However, Sandy Brown believed that the idea has possibilities, but it may be slow to catch on.⁹⁷

The re-enactment brought thousands of people into the Arcadia Valley, but it failed to have an economic impact on the town as a whole. Certain industries such as food and lodging profited the most from the event. One organization continued to support the re-enactment claiming how much it helped the towns. Although it will not release exact figures, the Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce made a profit by hosting the re-enactment. In recent years, local officials wanted a Chamber of Commerce office on Main Street in downtown Ironton. The Chamber of Commerce purchased a building in 1999 with funds raised from the previous year's

⁹⁷ Sandy Brown, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 16, 2005, Arcadia, MO.

festivals and events including the 1998 re-enactment. The building needed renovation on both the exterior and interior, which was estimated to cost around \$20,000, which the Chamber of Commerce financed in early 2001 through a mortgage.⁹⁸ However, this organization was able to pay off the mortgage with the funds raised at the 2001 re-enactment. In the months after the 2004 re-enactment, the Chamber of Commerce began to consider the idea of a visitor's center along Highway 21, which makes one speculate as to where they earned the money to back such an idea.⁹⁹ Sandy Brown, the owner of Stout's Creek Trading Company, said of Arcadia Valley's future,

The potential is here, and opportunity is great. But it also requires progressive city governments willing and eager to work alongside new and old businesses and civic groups to improve the 'quality of life' for current residents, and make it ever more appealing to prospective new residents and businesses, as well as a place that the first time tourist wants to come back to again—and—again.¹⁰⁰

Should the Chamber of Commerce continue to pursue of tourism strategy as a means of keeping the Arcadia Valley alive? That dream of having visitors return again and again to the Arcadia Valley does have validity, and the Chamber of Commerce made a smart decision in marketing the area as a great place to visit. Nature favored the Arcadia Valley by putting several natural wonders so close together such as Elephant Rocks State Park, Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park, St. Joe State Park, and Taum Sauk Mountain State Park. It campaigned to the Missouri State Legislature to designate the Arcadia Valley as a recreational area on the state highway map and eventually succeeded in its efforts. The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce used the re-enactment as a way to draw people into the area and tried to entice them back with state parks claiming it a perfect spot for a vacation. Some families returned to climb gigantic rocks that

⁹⁸ "Opening of the Chamber Office," *The Mountain Echo*, (Missouri), May 9, 2001

⁹⁹ Diane Dinkins, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August 16, 2005, Ironton, MO.

¹⁰⁰ Sandy Brown, interviewed by Laura Gentry, September 16, 2005, Arcadia, MO.

were shaped like elephants at Elephant Rocks State Park or to enjoy the waterfalls and rapids of Johnson's Shut-Ins State Park. However, the same problem existed at these sites as well as the re-enactment-- getting people to leave the site and spend money at local businesses and attractions.

The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce has been pushing tourism for over a decade and has used the re-enactment as the hallmark of its strategy, but it has failed to see great results. The re-enactment Diane Dinkins, current Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, has started to suggest to local officials change tactics to make the Arcadia Valley into the perfect bedroom community by highlighting the good schools, quiet streets, friendly neighbors, and a sense of community.¹⁰¹ If this new strategy takes root, the re-enactment would continue to serve its purpose as a way to draw people into the community, thus keeping the towns' hopes alive for revitalization. Local officials would change their message from visit to stay.

The Arcadia Valley Chamber of Commerce incorporated the Battle of Pilot Knob re-enactment into its larger strategy of tourism with the hopes of keeping three small towns alive. The Civil War fascinated numerous Americans, and Missouri's role as a border state and part of the Trans-Mississippi Theater made the Battle of Pilot Knob important. Local officials utilized their local history and sense of community to market themselves as an excellent candidate to host a re-enactment. Visitors flocked to the Arcadia Valley to witness such an event because of the unique culture intertwined within re-creating a battle from the Civil War. Thus, the re-enactment brought in tourism and money. However, its economic impact cannot be felt by all citizens of the Ironton, Arcadia, and Pilot Knob. The re-enactment has kept the hope alive of those who truly care about the future of the Arcadia Valley to continue in their efforts to make these three communities a better place to live.

¹⁰¹ Diane Dinkins, interviewed by Laura Gentry, August 16, 2005, Ironton, MO.

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