

# Prairie Grove Battle Reenactment

## General Information

Prairie Grove Battlefield Historic State Park welcomes all invited units and their members to this year's event. Individual registration begins at Noon, Friday, December 2 and continues through Midnight at the Latta Barn. Participants will need to pay their \$3.00 fee at that time. (Please bring small bills.) Late arrivals will need to register in Hindman Hall Saturday morning before Noon. This fee will help the park provide straw, portable toilets, wood, and black powder for artillery during the event. All registered participants will get an identification which will allow them to obtain straw, wood, and to take part in the battle demonstrations. No one will be allowed to take part without the proper identification.

Straw will be issued at about 1/3 of a bale for each person. Firewood will be conveniently located near each camp. Please only take what you need and do not hoard it. Please do not dig any fire pits (ring your fire with extra wood). Water will be readily available at all three camps. While the park will not provide any food, there will be a powder ration for artillery.

Uniforms and accouterments must be authentic in style and material. Weapons should be accurate with infantry carrying military issue black powder rifles or muskets; cavalry armed with carbines, shotguns, and/or revolvers. Artillery will be full-scale reproductions only. Swords and sabers will be carried by officers, NCOs, and mounted cavalry only.

All camps will remain authentic throughout the event, including after dark. No radios, telephones, televisions, tape or cd players will be allowed in camp without permission. All modern objects will be hidden from the view of the public and their fellow campers. All vehicles should be unpacked and parked in the designated parking area by 8 a.m. Saturday morning. No vehicles are allowed in the camps until after the battle demonstration Sunday afternoon without permission from the park staff.

### Safety

Officers will be responsible for inspecting all weapons and cartridges before each battle demonstration and will make sure everyone is properly registered for the event. Any material with the potential of becoming a projectile will not be used. Weapons not passing inspection will not be allowed on the field. Bayonets and ramrods will be carried, but not drawn during the battle demonstrations. Safe distances between the lines of fire will be maintained at all times, with a minimum of fifty (50) yards from artillery and small arms. Artillery pieces will fire only once every three minutes and powder charges will not contain flour or other foreign materials. Horses will be ridden safely and stay off the pavement as much as possible.

If any problems arise, contact the Park Interpreter or other staff person who will be on duty throughout the event.



# **Prairie Grove Battle Reenactment**

## **Participant Schedule of Events**

### **December 2 & 3, 2006**

#### ***Saturday, December 2***

8:30 a.m.	Officers meeting in the Latta Barn
9 a.m. – Noon	All camps open to the public
1 p.m.	Battle demonstration near the Borden House
2 p.m. – 5 p.m.	All camps open to the public
7 p.m.	Dance at the Latta Barn

#### ***Sunday, December 3***

8:30 a.m.	Officers meeting in the Latta Barn if necessary
9 a.m. – Noon	All camps open to the public
10 a.m.	Church service at log church and near Borden House
1 p.m.	Battle demonstration near the Borden House

#### ***Both Days***

8 a.m. – 5 p.m.	Hindman Hall open with exhibits, video programs, a diorama, a gift shop, & a book store
All Day	Sutlers row open along the historic stone wall. Food concessions will also be open.



## **The Battle of Prairie Grove December 7, 1862**

The Battle of Prairie Grove was the last time two armies of almost equal strength faced each other for supremacy in northwest Arkansas. When the Confederate Army withdrew from the bloody battlefield at Prairie Grove on the night of December 7<sup>th</sup>, it appeared that Missouri and northwest Arkansas would remain in Federal hands.

Major General Thomas C. Hindman's Confederate Army of the Trans-Mississippi attacked the Union Army of the Frontier under the command of Brigadier Generals James G. Blunt and Francis J. Herron about ten miles southwest of Fayetteville, Arkansas near the Prairie Grove Church, for which the battle was named. There were about twelve thousand Southern troops from Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, as well as the Cherokee and Creek Nations. The Federal force had about ten thousand soldiers from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Wisconsin, Missouri, Arkansas, as well as from the Cherokee and Creek Nations.

The fighting began at dawn on a beautiful, mild Sunday morning when Confederate cavalry routed the forward cavalry regiments of General Herron's command about one mile south of the Prairie Grove Church. The Federals retreated towards Herron's main force coming from Fayetteville with the Southerners in pursuit. After a short skirmish near Walnut Grove, the Confederate cavalry fell back to the Prairie Grove ridge.

Hindman's Confederate infantry and artillery heard the fighting in the distance and formed a line of battle on the wooded ridge northeast of the church overlooking the Illinois River valley. Herron's troops crossed the river under artillery fire; positioned their cannons; then returned fire at about 10 a.m. The superior rifled artillery in the Union Army silenced the Southern batteries. Federal infantry charged up the ridge near the home of Archibald Borden at about Noon only to be driven back by the Confederates who counterattacked into the open farm fields where Union canister shot forced them to fall back into the woods. Another Union charge and Southern counterattack followed, adding to the heavy casualties in both armies.

The arrival of General Blunt's Kansas Division at about 3 p.m. extended the line of battle the entire length of the Prairie Grove ridge, about two miles. The heaviest fighting shifted to the vicinity of the William Morton house where four families hid in the cellar. A final Confederate charge near sundown faced the wrath of all forty-four Union cannons and suffered heavy casualties. Darkness ended the struggle with the Federal Army sleeping on the grounds without campfires and very few tents or blankets despite freezing temperatures that night. A shortage of ammunition and food caused General Hindman to retreat southward during the night. The Confederate Army lost 164 killed, 817 wounded, and 336 missing in action. The Union Army lost 175 killed, 813 wounded, and 263 missing. While the battle was a tactical draw, it was a strategic Union victory.

# **Area Motels**

## ***Prairie Grove***

**Colonial Motel - (479) 846-2150**

## ***Fayetteville***

**Best Western Windsor Suites - (479) 587-1400**

**Clarion Inn - (479) 521-1166**

**Comfort Inn - (479) 695-2121**

**Days Inn - (479) 443-4323**

**Hampton Inn - (800) 426-7866 or (479) 587-8300**

**Holiday Inn Express - (800) HOLIDAY or (479) 444-6006**

**Motel 6 - (800) 466-8956 or (479) 443-4351**

**Quality Inn - (479) 444-9800**

**Radisson Hotel - (479) 442-5555**

**Ramada Inn - (800) 228-2828 or (479) 443-3431**

**Red Roof Inns - (800) 733-7663 or (479) 442-3041**

**Super 8 Motel (479) 521-8866**

# Prairie Grove Battle Reenactment Map

