



General Orders

Rains' Regiment

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Nov.
2010

www.houstoncivilwar.com

NOVEMBER 2010 MEETING
Thursday, November 18, 2010

The Briar Club
2603 Timmons Lane @ Westheimer
6:00 Cash Bar
7:00 Dinner & Meeting

E-Mail Reservation is Preferred;
at drzuckero@sbcglobal.net
or call Don Zuckero at (281) 479-1232
by 6 PM on Monday Nov. 15, 2010
Dinner \$33; Lecture Only \$5

Reservations are required for Lecture Only!

Background on The Battle of Pea Ridge

From the Jaws of Victory: The Confederate Defeat at the Battle of Pea Ridge will explore the Pea Ridge campaign from the perspective of the Confederate Army of the West. The Army of the West was one of the largest Confederate armies raised west of the Mississippi River yet during the battle of Pea Ridge a series of blunders and unfortunate events would ultimately lead to their defeat by the smaller Union Army of the Southwest. The Confederate loss helped secure the state of Missouri for the Union and freed up several thousand Union troops that could be utilized for other campaigns.

By late 1861 and early 1862, Federal forces in Missouri had pushed nearly all Confederate forces out of the state. When General Earl Van Dorn took command of the department, he had to react with his roughly 17,000 man, 60 gun Army of the West to events already underway. Van Dorn wanted to attack and destroy the Union forces, make his way into Missouri, and capture St. Louis, turning over control of this important state to the Confederacy. He met his now-concentrated force near Boston Mountains on March 3, and the army began moving north the next day.

In the spring of 1862, Union Brig. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis entered Arkansas and pursued the Confederates with his 10,500 strong Army of the Southwest. Curtis collected his four divisions and 50 artillery guns and moved into Benton County, Arkansas, following a stream called Sugar Creek. Along it on the northern side he found an excellent defensive position and began to fortify it, expecting an assault from the south. Van Dorn chose not to attack Curtis's entrenched position head on. Instead he split his force into two, one division led by Price and the other by McCulloch, and ordered them to march north, hoping to reunite in Curtis' rear. Van Dorn decided to leave behind his supply wagons in order to increase their moving speed, a decision that would prove critical. Several other factors caused the proposed junction to be delayed, such as the lack of

The HCWRT PRESENTS

Troy Banzhaf and "The Battle of Pea Ridge"

For our November 2010 meeting, the Houston Civil War Round Table is pleased to host Troy Banzhaf. He will enlighten us with a presentation on the Battle of Pea Ridge.

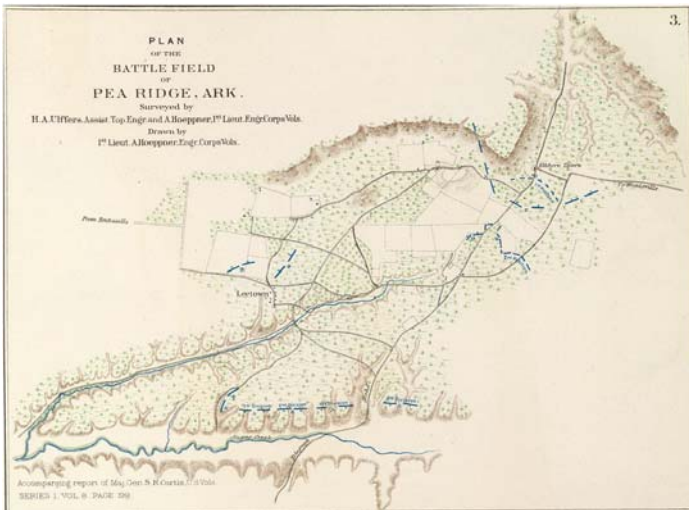


Troy Banzhaf

Troy Banzhaf is the current Chief of Interpretation at Pea Ridge National Military Park in Arkansas. Troy began working at Pea Ridge in 1990 as a living history volunteer providing living history programs for the public. After working as an NPS seasonal

employee, Troy got his permanent status at Pea Ridge in 2001 and graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2003 with a BA in History. Troy has written several articles for local papers and recently wrote the text for a booklet featuring the Pea Ridge artwork of artist Andy Thomas.

proper gear for the Confederates (some said to lack even shoes) for a forced march, felled trees placed across their path, their exhausted and hungry condition, and the late arrival of McCulloch's men. These delays allowed the Union commander to repositioned part of his army throughout March 6 and meet the unexpected attack from his rear, placing Curtis' forces between the two wings of the Confederate army. Plus when Van Dorn's advance guard accidentally ran into Union patrols near Elm Springs, the Federals were alerted to his approach.



Plan of the Battlefield of Pea Ridge

The Battle of Pea Ridge would be one of the few instances in the American Civil War where the Confederate forces outnumbered the Union forces. After waiting for McCulloch to join him, Van Dorn grew frustrated and decided to act with what he had on March 7. Around 9 a.m. he ordered Price to attack the Union position close to Elkhorn Tavern, and despite Price being wounded they had succeeded in pushing the Union forces back by nightfall, cutting Curtis' lines of communication. Meanwhile McCulloch, under orders from Van Dorn to take a different route and hurry his march, had engaged part of Curtis' defenses. Early on in the fighting McCulloch and Brig. Gen. James M. McIntosh were killed, leaving no commander there to organize an effective attack. When Van Dorn learned of the problems with his right wing, he renewed Price's attacks, saying "Then we must press them the harder." and the Confederates pushed Curtis back. That night the junction of Price and what remained of McCulloch's men was made, and Van Dorn pondered his next move. With his supplies and ammunition 15 miles away and the Union force between them, Van Dorn maintained his position.

The following day, March 8, showed Curtis and his command in an even stronger position, about a

mile back from where they were on March 7. Van Dorn had his men arranged defensively in front of Pea Ridge Mountain, and when it was light enough he ordered the last of his artillery's ammunition fired at the Union position, to see what the Federals would do. The Union artillery answered back and knocked out most of Van Dorn's guns. Curtis then counterattacked and routed the Confederates, mostly without actual contact between the opposing infantries. Van Dorn decided to withdraw south, retreating through sparse country for a week and his men living off what little they got from the few inhabitants of the region. The Army of the West finally reunited with their supplies south of the Boston Mountains. In his official report Van Dorn described his summary of the events at Pea Ridge:

I attempted first to beat the enemy at Elkhorn, but a series of accidents entirely unforeseen and not under my control and a badly disciplined army defeated my intentions. The death of McCulloch and McIntosh and the capture of Hebert left me without an officer to command the right wing, which was thrown into utter confusion, and the strong position of the enemy the second day left me no alternative but to retire from the contest.

Casualties from this battle have never been fully agreed upon. The figures given by most military historians are about 1,000 to 1,200 total Federal soldiers and around 2,000 Confederate. However Van Dorn estimated slightly different numbers in his official reports. He gives losses of about 800 killed with 1,000 to 1,200 wounded and 300 prisoners (about 2,300 total) for the Union, and only 800 to 1,000 killed and wounded and between 200 and 300 prisoners (about 1,300 total) from his army.

The Confederate defeat at this battle, coupled with Van Dorn's army being ordered across the Mississippi River to bolster the Army of Tennessee, enabled the Union to control the entire state of Missouri and threaten the heart of Arkansas, left virtually defenseless without Van Dorn's forces. Despite the loss at Pea Ridge, the Confederate Congress would vote its thanks "for their valor, skill, and good conduct in the battle of Elkhorn in the states of Arkansas" to Van Dorn and his men on April 21. In his report on March 18 to Judah P. Benjamin, then the Confederate Secretary of War, Van Dorn refuted suffering a loss, saying, "I was not defeated, but only foiled in my intentions. I am yet sanguine of success, and will not cease to repeat my blows whenever the opportunity is offered."

The preceding article can be found on the web at:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earl_Van_Dorn



NOVEMBER BOOK RAFFLE By Donnie Stowe

We had a great tour of the Seven Days Battle Campaign with Robert E. Lee.

Krick and I want to thank our own Tony Matt for making the great arraignments and schedules for this year's trip.

For our November meeting the book raffle begins with a book donated by Norm Lewis. It is **THE MARBLE MAN – Robert E. Lee and His Image in American Society** by Thomas L. Connelly. Next up is **THIS WAS ANDERSONVILLE** – Edited by Roy Merredith and donated by Ed Ekholm. Third in the raffle is **THE CIVIL WAR IN ART – a Visual Odyssey** by Doranne Jacobson. This volume focuses on some of the most significant pictorial representations of the Civil War by Doranne Jacobson; the donor is unknown. The final selection is the well-known **LEE'S LIEUTENANTS – A Study in Command** by Douglas Southall Freeman. James Godlove donated this book.

Members are always encouraged to donate some of their well-read books or a small monetary donation for purchase of books to continue this valuable support to the HCWRT Raffle.

HCWRT 2010-2011 SPEAKERS CAMPAIGN

Nov 18, 2010	Troy Banzhaf <i>Pea Ridge Battle</i>
Dec 16, 2010	Donald Jones <i>Irish Brigade</i>
Jan 21, 2011	Ed Bearss <i>Receding Tide: Vicksburg & Gettysburg</i>
Feb 17, 2011	Ed Bonekemper <i>Six Turning Points of War</i>
Mar 17, 2011	James Bevill <i>Confederate Money</i>
Apr 21, 2011	Don Frazier <i>To Be Announced</i>
May 19, 2011	Jack Waugh



Upshur County, East Texas DECEMBER 1 – 5, 2010

Deadline for Reservations
Saturday Nov. 20, 2010

THE ROAD TO SECESSION is one of the first national events of the American Civil War Sesquicentennial. It will be held in early December at Camp Gilmont, in northeast Upshur County, Texas. The event will feature both an academic symposium and a Living History event and will address the question: Why did the good and Christian people of the South choose Secession in 1860-61?

For More information please contact Mark Vogl at 903-725-3175 or Johnyreb43@Yahoo.com or go to:

<http://www.roadtosecession.com/>

NOVEMBER QUIZ By Jim Godlove



Sometimes called "The Gettysburg of the West", this battle in northwest Arkansas was fought in early March 1862

What are the two names given to this important Trans-Mississippian battle?

HOUSTON CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Houston Civil War Round Table is dedicated to the study of the civilian, military, and cultural aspects of United States history during the period of 1861 – 1865 and to the preservation of historical sites and artifacts.

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How did you learn about us? _____

Mail To: **Houston Civil War Round Table**
P. O. Box 4215
Houston, TX 77210-4215

NEW MEMBER

RENEWAL

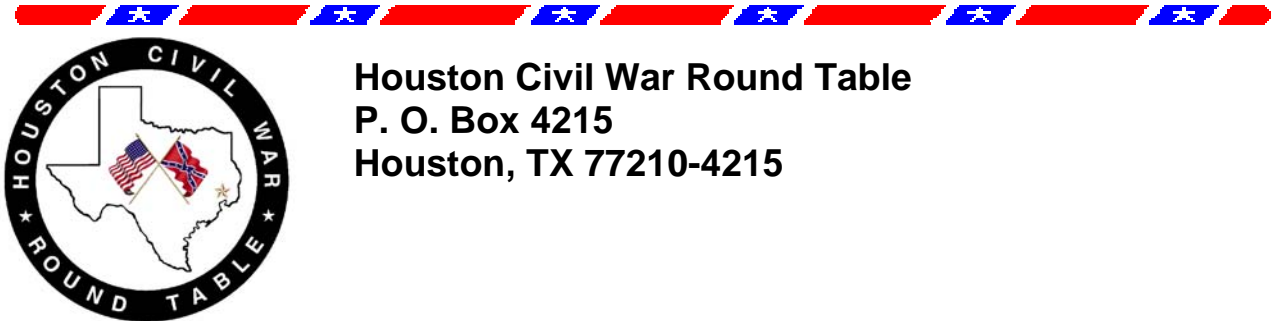
\$40 – Individual joining in Apr – Dec

\$20 – Individual Joining in Jan – Mar

\$45 – Family joining in Apr – Dec

\$22 – Family joining in Jan – Mar

\$15 – Student or Out-of-State



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