

# July 27, 1864

From the time the Confederate forces abandoned Fort Smith in September of 1863, Rebel officers in the region wanted it back. By July 27, 1864 the time was right to make a bid for control of the important garrison on the Arkansas River.

Among the Federal troops stationed in Fort Smith, were a number of regiments from the State of Kansas, Companies B, D, E, and H of the 6th Kansas Cavalry had been given the task of caring for the regimental horses in a camp about 7 miles from the garrison.



At 6:00 a.m. on July 27th, a force of approximately 600 Confederates under the command of Col. S.M. Folsom, attacked the outpost seven miles from Fort Smith. The camp consisted of about 200 men of the Sixth Kansas, under command of Capt. Melford. The Confederates moved up in two



columns, one driving in the pickets and the other flanking them. Capt. Melford and his men fought bravely, but were soon overpowered, and he and 82 of his men were taken as prisoners. Total Federal losses were 10 men killed, 15 wounded, and 124 prisoners. Confederate losses included 7 killed, 26 wounded, and 1 missing.

The attack was part of a plan to lure Federal troops to the southwest part of Fort Smith where another Confederate force waited in ambush. Federal troops failed to pursue far enough much to the disappointment of the Rebel commanders. In turn, over the next 5 days, the Confederates harassed and probed the Federal lines and even fired on the garrison from across the Poteau River before retiring August 1.

## THE ACTION ON MASSARD PRAIRIE

34 274 1801 SAHARA MAP #60379



Tick-Hornum or Red Pine (William Cass) was the only casualty mentioned by name in the Official Records. He was Chaplain for the Choctaw Confederate Troops.

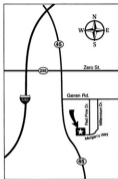
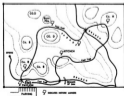


**P**reservation of the action at Massard Prairie has involved the work of many individuals, as well as corporations, city, state, and federal agencies.

The site was located by local historian Steve Cox in 1979. Justin Douglas contacted Mayor Ray Baier of Fort Smith when the site was about to be developed. The Mayor appointed a commission to discuss and take action to preserve the site. Negotiations with Stephens Production Company resulted in the generous donation of 5 acres of the site to the City of Fort Smith for a future park. November 7, 2000, the site was added to the Arkansas Register of Historic Places. The site remains today to honor the brave men on both sides who struggled here in 1864. Today, four major areas of the camp are preserved:

The Parade Ground  
Kitchen or Mess area

The camps of Companies "B" and "D"  
Each area is marked by a sign.



The park is located at the corner  
of Red Pine Drive  
and Morgan's Way in Fort Smith.

**PARKS  
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# Massard Prairie Battlefield Park



*"A brilliant and  
dashing affair"*

Brigadier General Douglas H. Cooper CSA  
describing the action at Massard Prairie

