



DAVIS BRIDGE

BATTLEFIELD

THE GHOSTS OF DAVIS BRIDGE

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I. THE VISION

Imagine stepping back in time to a single moment frozen in history. Here's your chance. The time is 9:20 A.M., October 5th, 1862, and you find yourself standing in the middle of a Civil War battlefield with Union and Confederate soldiers in the thousands engaged in the opening movements of a huge battle.

Here you are surrounded by over 5,000 ghost-like soldiers frozen forever in white limestone, accented by splashes of color in the form of their regimental battle flags marking the direction of the wind.

Looking up, along the ridge to your left, you discover that you are overwhelmed by a huge line of Union soldiers, caught mid-stride, as they are charging downhill on your position. To your right, a thousand Confederate soldiers are in a line formed on the edge of the woods, shouldering their weapons preparing to repulse this Union attack.

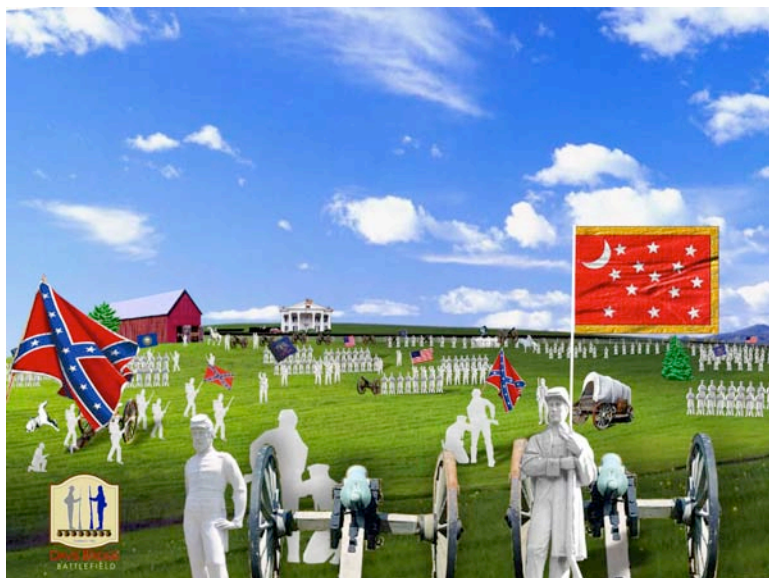
Within the Union line, three batteries of ghostly Federal artillery pieces, ten in all, are bombarding the Southern position below. Behind the Confederate line, several horse-drawn cannons are sculpted in full gallop as they seemingly race to the front. Close by, an officer on horseback, saber in air, his frozen face captured in the passion of the moment, commands his men forward.

On the front line of both armies, a number of soldiers are on their knees reeling in pain after having been hit by grapeshot. And still others, lying on the ground motionless and contorted, are the first to have made the ultimate sacrifice anointing this truly hallowed ground.

Standing within the Union ranks your pulse begins to quicken as you see the formidable task of what it would have been like to charge the Confederate line. And, standing just

behind a Confederate officer, you now know what he saw ... for the first time, you can experience exactly what he must have felt.

Each of us carries a very small handful of memories which we call life-changing experiences. As you walk or let your eyes wander through this battlefield and scan each of the troop movements and skirmish points, you start to realize for the first time what the Civil War was actually like! You begin to grasp the true scope and magnitude of the war. As you drive or hike down the old road through the woods and spot old Davis Bridge crossing at the Hatchie River, you are captured by the ghost-like statues of Confederate and Union troops behind the trees, on the banks and in the swampy brush, caught in the final act and total mayhem of battle as they fight out the end of the encounter on both sides of the river. You are now overwhelmed by the emotion and revelation of the true experience of war ... its confusion, its pain, its death. As you leave the Ghosts of Davis Bridge behind, you are caught in a place and moment in time you will never ever forget ... a truly life-changing experience.



Welcome to the site of The Ghosts of Davis Bridge, located in Hardeman County, Tennessee. You are surrounded by the most incredible Civil War battlefield ever presented to the public ... an immense and truly unforgettable life experience.

Every figure on the battlefield is to be constructed on a one-to-one scale, made of concrete coat with a patented white epoxy based paint that has the feel, appearance, and durability of limestone. Everything on the battlefield including the horses, cannons, wagons, and caissons, down to the canteens on the ground is to have this same ghost-like limestone ambience, lending itself to the name, The Ghosts of Davis Bridge.



Each limestone figure is to stand foot to ground, staring back at you eye to eye. Their facial expression makes them appear real, so much so that you have to reach out and touch one to see if they are alive. And most importantly, every detail is to be historically accurate from the button on their uniforms to the scars on their faces.

The sheer spectacle of thousands of soldiers will evoke emotions so powerful that you will find yourself speaking in whispering tones.

These frozen-in-time ghost-like figures will give a three-dimensional understanding of the battle like no other battlefield in the world. The impact will be colossal.

Imagine thousands of ghost soldiers highlighted with hundreds of historically accurate regimental flags, a testament to who was there and who was where. Now imagine them in different weather and light conditions. Picture them at dawn or silhouetted at sunset. Picture the landscape as far as you can see, these figures casting long shadows across the battlefield in the late afternoon sun.



Now picture them at night by the light of the moon. Do you have the courage to walk among these ghosts at night? Imagine how they would look in the rain, the snow or in the fog. Each of these settings lends itself to speculations of what it must have been like for every soldier engaged in the Civil War under similar conditions. A different personality immerses with each different lighting condition. All will be described as breathtaking and moving at the same time.



Part of this vision will include a visitor's center, perhaps a large plantation home of the era (possibly similar to Woodlawn in LaGrange). The house will in reality be a shell

that will accommodate all the necessary functions of a full service visitor's center.

Upon entering the room, one will walk up to the main reception area. On the wall directly above it will be a 48' x 14' wall mural depicting the battle. This will be a blow-up of a commissioned painting done by a famous Civil War artist. Posters of the painting will also be sold in the gift shop. The mural will be made of the same material and size as an advertising billboard; therefore, we will have the flexibility of easily changing the artwork.

Looking around the room one will see the book store/gift shop plus a library which will house the Davis Bridge collection and double as a research library for Civil War scholars. The collection will include books and articles written on the Battle of Davis Bridge, along with any related letters that can be secured. Another area will be an exhibit of weapons and artifacts of the era, along with any artifacts actually used in the Battle. The space will also include the director's office, a limited menu dining facility, and restrooms.



Another critical component to running and maintaining the park will be a maintenance building, disguised as a vintage barn, where production of additional statues and repair of existing statues will take place. It will also house any equipment such as lawnmowers, duplicate flags, paint sprayers, etc.

Security will be provided by security guards on a 24-hour a day basis and fencing the entire battlefield.

This historic memorial will be unrivaled by any other Civil War battlefield in the Country and it will become a national and international attraction enticing visitors to Hardeman County by the thousands.

PHASE I & II

We envision the development of this project in two phases. There is a natural, or should we say an unnatural, line that divides the battlefield into two sections. Essary Springs Road runs through the center of the battlefield. The west side of the road will be Phase I, the beginning of the Battle, and the east side of the road will be Phase II, concentrated around Davis Bridge itself, depicting the end of the Battle. This demarcation will facilitate an understanding of this engagement.

PHASE I – The Opening of the Battle - Metamora Ridge

The battle started from the top of Metamora Ridge at approximately 9:00 a.m., with a 15-minute Union cannon barrage. Five minutes later . . . precisely 9:20 a.m. . . . is where we freeze that instant in time.

The Union line is formed on Metamora Ridge. On the right we see four cannons belonging to the 7th Ohio Battery and another two artillery pieces further down belonging to the 7th Ohio Battery. Another four guns are directly blocking the State Line Road which leads to Davis Bridge across the Hatchie River, the road on which the Confederate Army is approaching.

Along the Union line, we see the men and colors of the 12th Michigan, the 68th Ohio, the 14th, 15th, and 46th Illinois and the 25th and 53rd Indiana. Flanking either side of the line stands the 5th Ohio Calvary.

On the top of the ridge the Union commanding General Ord sweeps the battlefield with his field glasses.

At the bottom of the hill, we would see the Confederate line formed on the edge of the trees along Burr's Branch. The 1st Texas Legion is backed up by four guns from Dawson's St. Louis Battery on the left side of State Line Road. Moore's Brigade led by Brigadier

General John C. Moore consisting of the 42nd Alabama, 15th Arkansas, 23rd Arkansas, 35th Mississippi, 2nd Texas, and Bledsoe's Missouri Battery is on the right side of the road.

Throughout the battlefield there are dozens of mule and horse-drawn supply wagons, cannons, caissons, officers on horseback, men marching in formation, and others in a line of battle firing in various positions. Some soldiers are running, some lay wounded, and still others are attending the wounded and dead. Leading down from the ridge of Metamora Hill, the reestablished road leads to the bridge itself.

All the general officers' uniforms and facial features would be instantly recognizable. The battlefield would be pocked with numerous blackened craters depicting the aftermath of a shell explosion. An exhaustive research would be conducted and the battlefield would be configured as closely as possible to our historical understanding of the battle.

Though as many as 20,000 soldiers participated in the battle, from the vantage point of Metamora Hill, only an estimated 5,000 would be in view at any particular time. The trees would obscure the rest. We would continually add additional statues over a number of years until we reach our established goal.

PHASE II – Closing of the battle around Davis Bridge.

Phase II will be built at a later date. It would depict the ending of the battle close to the



bridge site. It would call for building a replica of the bridge across the Hatchie River. On the east side of the river, the Confederates held a defensive position on a ridge. Many of the blue coats were ordered across the bridge in pursuit of the Southern retreat. This is where most of the Union casualties took place, including General Ord, who was wounded crossing

the bridge.

II OTHER BATTLEFIELDS

Most of the battlefields fall under the National Park Service which is under the United States Department of the Interior.

Places like Shiloh, Chickamauga, and Gettysburg were established in the late 1800's. One of the Park Service's missions has been the acquisition, preservation, and management of many of these historic sites. For this our nation should be forever in debt to those who had the foresight to set this aside for future generations; however, the presentation of the history of the battles at these and other sites has followed a familiar template.

Each subscribes to the dedication of restoring the battlefield to the way it was at the time of the battle. Yet the cemetery-like appearance created by the fields of monuments and markers acts to alter the very landscape the park seeks to preserve. Moreover, the "story" of the entire battle is difficult to comprehend when a visitor looks only at single points of reference and then must piece them all together to understand the subtleties of troop movement, skirmish lines, and flanking maneuvers that, taken together, altered the outcomes of battles that set the course of our nation's history.

The statues of generals on horseback are very impressive, but are far removed from the positional context that renders them historically significant. It is almost impossible to truly picture the scope of these battles by reading these plaques of who was here, when. It may be helpful to some, but it lacks the impact of what really happened. One leaves the battlefield not really understanding what went on. And trying to form a mental image is almost impossible.

As our society grows more visually-oriented, it is essential to alter our "battlefield memorial template" by combining this predilection to "see what happened" with the commensurate

need for solemnity appropriate to a place where hundreds or thousands of young men lost their lives.

I believe the Ghosts of Davis Bridge is that better way.

III

THE BATTLE of DAVIS BRIDGE

In the early morning hours of October 3rd, under the leadership of Confederate Major General Earl Van Dorn and Major General Stirling Price, approximately 22,000 men marched to Corinth with the intention of overtaking the Federally-occupied town and thus gaining control of the Mobile & Ohio and Memphis & Charleston Railroads. This was a prelude to their ultimate goal, an invasion of Tennessee.

In route to Corinth coming north from Ripley, MS, Van Dorn had planned to cross the 60-foot wide Hatchie River at Davis Bridge. Union Brigadier General William Rosecrans, commander at Corinth, had ordered Davis Bridge to be burned on the night of September 30th, but cavalymen assigned with the task succeeded in burning only the floor planking. Van Dorn, staying at the Davis House on the night of the 2nd, and having learned of the bridge's condition, ordered his men to immediately start work on repairing the bridge. They worked through the night and were able to complete the task by 4:00 a.m. the following morning. The division took to the road immediately with its destination, Chewella, Tennessee, just north of Corinth.

Staying behind at Davis Bridge, Van Dorn ordered the bridge defended by cavalry under Colonel Wirt Adams, and the 1st Texas Legion under the command of Colonel E. R. Hawkins, with two artillery batteries in order to keep open a route back to Ripley in case a retreat was necessary.

Two days of savage fighting ensued in what would be known as the second battle of Corinth. There were significant casualties on both sides. Federal dead and wounded numbered nearly 2,500. Confederate losses were similar with 2,470 dead or wounded and an additional 1,763 missing.

The Confederate force was compelled to withdraw, and by noon on the 4th, they were headed in retreat northwest along the road back towards Chewalla and Davis Bridge.

General Grant at the time in Jackson, Tennessee, gave General Stephen A. Hurlbut in Bolivar, orders he received on the 4th at 3:00 a.m. "to head for Davis Bridge and to destroy the bridge and contest their crossing of the Hatchie River." Hurlbut immediately set out with 5,000 men in a forced march of some 23 miles. The advancing force encountered a body of 60 to 70 Confederate Cavalry outside Middleton, Tennessee, and opened fire. The cavalry unit scattered in the woods. On the State Line Road, Hurlbut confronted Southern pickets and pushed them back into the woods as well. A brisk skirmish left four dead and another two wounded.

From there the Union force advanced rapidly to the small village of Metamora, situated on the river above Davis' Bridge, where the advance guard came upon a heavy cavalry driving them into a corn field of the left. They had encountered Confederate troops under the command of Wirt Adams whom Van Dorn had left behind in route to Corinth to guard the bridge as a precaution in case of retreat. Later that day, Adam's men drove the Federals off of Metamora Ridge back towards Muddy Creek. That night the Union forces under Hurlbut camped there, three miles west of Davis Bridge.

Also on the night of October 4th, Union Major General Edward O.C. Ord, commanding a detachment of the Army of West Tennessee, camped near Pocahontas five miles away from Hurlbut. At 7:30 a.m. the next morning, his force encountered Hurlbut's 4th Brigade. As he was senior to Hurlbut, Ord took command of the now combined Union forces.

Before dawn on the 5th, Van Dorn learned from couriers that Wirt Adams had clashed with Federal cavalry six miles west of Davis Bridge the day before. Van Dorn had not counted on this and assigned his strongest division, Lovell's, to rear-guard duty and placed his most depleted command, Brigadier General Maury's, in the lead. "Maury, you are in for it again today," said Van Dorn. "Push forward as rapidly as you can and occupy the heights beyond the river before the enemy can get them."

He directed Lt. Colonel Edwin Hawkins, whose First Texas Legion guarded the supply train two miles east of Davis Bridge, to join Wirt Adams on the Hatchie River. Together they were to delay any Federal crossing until the main body came up. Van Dorn counted on them to hold off the Federal troops until the Confederates could cross the Hatchie River at Crumm's Mill.

The army marched at sunrise. Van Dorn and his staff rode with the vanguard.

At 7:30 a.m., Hurlbut met up with Major General Edward O.C. Ord and 3,000 men. Ord being the senior officer took command.

The Confederates under Hawkins, established a defensive position to the west of the bridge at 8:30 a.m. on October 5th. His line was established approximately 150 yards west of the Davis House, at a small tributary of the Hatchie River called Burr's Branch.

The Confederates deployed the 3rd Mississippi, the 42nd Alabama, and the 15th and 23rd Arkansas Infantry Regiments of Brigadier General John C. Moore's brigade, north of the 1st Texas. Four 12-pound howitzers belonging to Captain William E. Dawson's Saint Louis Battery supported this line. Maury had approximately 1,000 infantrymen west of Davis Bridge.

Discovering the Confederate defensive position, Ord and Hurlbut began deploying their command on a ridge 300 yards to the west of the Confederate's position, at the intersection of State Line Road and Ripley Pocahontas Road. The four James rifles of Battery L, 2nd Illinois Light Artillery, set up at the road junction. Four guns of the 7th Ohio Battery established their positions south of the Illinois gunners. The 15th and 14th Illinois formed to the north of the road junction, while the 25th, 46th, and 53rd Indiana, the 12th Michigan, and the 68th Ohio formed to the south.

The Federal artillery occupied superior firing positions with more guns, and Private Lucius Barber of the 15th Illinois Infantry described the ensuing artillery action:

...planted their artillery on the crest of the hill and its hoarse notes replied to the rebel thunder. For fifteen minutes a furious cannonading was kept up. With rapid precision and deadly aim, our well trained battery men poured in their death-dealing charges upon the enemy. Gradually their fire slackened as one after another of their guns were dismounted and most of their horses slain.

When Ord's advance began, probably the 14th Illinois Infantry succeeded in outflanking the Confederate right (north) flank. The results were inevitable. Barber, with one of the regiments, remembered:

...the second brigade was ordered forward, marching in echelon, with the 14th Illinois in advance. We swept across the field toward the river. This was a thrilling military sight...With colors flying, with well-dressed ranks and measured tread our gallant lines moved on...Our firm, undaunted bearing struck terror to the hearts of the enemy. After a few irregular volleys they broke and ran. We poured in our fire at short range and with fierce yell rushed forward to the charge.

Outnumbered, outflanked, and with their artillery knocked out of the fight, the Confederate line broke. The Confederate defenders fled to the east, where they poured back across the bridge in a tidal wave. Seeing the initial defense crushed, Confederate commanders established a new defensive line on a ridge east of the Hatchie River. This was an admirable defensive position, and it was well occupied by the survivors of Hawkin's and Moore's command, Brigadier General C. W. Phifer's Texas and Arkansas brigade, Brigadier General William S. Cabell's Arkansas brigade, and at least four batteries of artillery. General Ord, thrilled at this relatively easy victory, became caught up in the excitement of the moment and ordered Generals Veatch and Lauman to cross the bridge and pursue the Confederates. However, the high bluff of the east bank gave the Confederates a distinct advantage and made the Federals open targets. Generals Veatch, Lauman, and Hurlbut

argued with Ord, but his decision remained firm. As a result, the 53rd Indiana and the 14th and 15th Illinois regiments absorbed heavy Confederate fire as they crossed Davis Bridge. Many would be caught in a western bend of the river, and the Confederate defensive position swept this ground with a deadly fire. Other regiments followed, and rather than recall troops, Ord headed across the bridge himself in hopes of rallying the men. As he crossed, Ord was severely wounded in his leg by a canister ball, and Hurlbut resumed command.

A dispatch from Ord sent to Grant from a hospital near Pocahontas, indicated. "We took two batteries and have them, and at the river captured between 200 and 300 prisoners, among whom are (several) field officers and an aide-de-camp to General Van Dorn." He went on to say, "On account of the fact that we had frequently to attack across the open fields and up hills, while the enemy were under dense cover, we have lost quite a number of officers and men, and have several hundred wounded, probably a greater number than the enemy. General Veatch was very badly contused by a spent ball striking him in the side. The troops in their charge over the miserable bridge at Davis' Creek and up the steep beyond, exposed to a murderous fire of shell and grape and canister, with three of their batteries playing upon them at canister-range, however, proved that wherever their officers dare to lead them the men will go."

"General Hurlbut has reported to me that he has gathered about 900 arms already, thrown away by the enemy in their retreat and expects to collect a large number tomorrow. "

Although Ord's initial thrust across the Hatchie had been contained, Van Dorn and General Sterling Price were in a challenging situation, with their retreat route blocked, and their army exhausted and bloodied after two days of heavy fighting at Corinth and the morning's struggle at Davis Bridge. Fortunately for the Confederate cause, the Federal pursuit from Corinth had been dilatory, and had not even commenced until dawn on October 5th. Further confusion would result seven miles outside of Corinth when the pursuing Union columns converged unexpectedly upon a single avenue of advance. As a result, the Confederate rear was temporarily secure.

However, despite the Federal order of battle, a crossing at Davis Bridge was no longer viable, so scouts were dispatched to locate another crossing location. One was found at Crumb's Mill, six miles south on Boneyard Road at the Hatchie River. Van Dorn accordingly dispatched his wagons and artillery south on the Boneyard Road, while continuing the holding action at Davis Bridge.

Private Barber described the ensuing conflict east of the river:

We now had a very difficult and dangerous task to accomplish. On one narrow bridge, in face of a terrible fire of grape and canister with which the rebels were raking it, our troops were to cross and form on the other side.... At this point the river makes an abrupt bend and the regiments were ordered to cross and form on each side of the road, but the bend in the river prevented them forming on the right. The enemy's shots were mowing down our men with fearful rapidity...The grape shot and canister were tearing up the ground in front and around us, making a general havoc amongst us... At or near the bridge, one hundred and fifty of our boys lay weltering in our blood... The rebels...poured in withering volleys... The bullets pelted against the log like hailstones.

Hurlbut crossed artillery, and began to extend his line to the north, where the Federal soldiers had more freedom of movement. Eventually the Federal artillery began to restore the situation, at approximately the same time as most of van Dorn's army had continued its march past the holding action to cross at Crumm's Mill. The Confederate defensive line accordingly withdrew to the next ridge east approximately 3:30 p.m..

Hurlbut's men cautiously continued the advance, but both they and the Confederates were low on ammunition, and had been continuously engaged for five hours. The fighting settled down to a desultory artillery duel and after dark the Confederate rear guard withdrew to continue the retreat.

General Ord had deployed approximately 8,000 men and suffered 560 casualties, or approximately 7%. The number of Confederates engaged is uncertain. Confederate figures are incomplete and included with casualties at Corinth; this number includes large numbers of stragglers or deserters from the retreat. Federal sources note that they buried 32 Confederates west of the Hatchie River, where the heaviest Confederate casualties occurred. General Hurlbut also reported capturing 420 prisoners and four bronze 12-pound howitzers, all on the western bank of the river. The 28th Illinois Infantry reported capturing a Confederate battery of six guns, caissons and one flag.

IV
ORDER OF BATTLE
U.S.A

Major General Edward O.C. Ord

4th Division – Brig. General Stephen A. Hurlbut

1st Brigade – Brig. General Jacob G. Lauman

28th Illinois Infantry

32nd Illinois Infantry

41st Illinois Infantry

3rd Iowa Infantry

53rd Illinois Infantry

1st Missouri Light Artillery (Mann's Battery C)

15th Ohio Battery

5th Ohio Cavalry (1st & 2nd Battalions)

2nd Brigade – Brig General James C. Veatch

14th Illinois Infantry

15th Illinois Infantry

46th Illinois Infantry

25th Indiana Infantry

53rd Indiana Infantry

2nd Illinois Light artillery (Battery L)

7th Ohio Battery

Provisional Brigade – Colonel Robert K. Scott

12th Michigan Infantry

68th Ohio Infantry

Escort company A – 2nd Illinois Cavalry

V

ORDER OF BATTLE
C.S.A.

Major General Earl Van Dorn

Maury's Division – Brig. General Dabney H. Maury

Moore's Brigade – Brig. General John C. Moore

42nd Alabama Infantry

15th Arkansas Infantry

23rd Arkansas Infantry

35th Mississippi Infantry

2nd Texas Infantry

Bledsoe's Missouri Battery

Cabell's Brigade – Brig. General William L. Cabell

18th Arkansas Infantry

19th Arkansas Infantry

20th Arkansas Infantry

21st Arkansas Infantry

Arkansas Battery (Rapley's Sharpshooters

Appeal Battery

Phifer's Brigade – Colonel Lawrence S. Ross

3rd Arkansas Calvary (dismounted)

6th Texas Calvary (dismounted)

9th Texas Calvary (dismounted)

Stirman Sharpshooters

McNally's Arkansas Battery

Wirt Adams Mississippi Regiment Calvary

Dawson's St. Louis Battery

Hebert's Division – Brig. General Martin E. Green

1st Brigade – Colonel Elijah Gates

16th Arkansas

2nd Missouri – Colonel Francis M. Cockrell

3rd Missouri - Colonel James A. Prichard

5th Missouri

1st Missouri Calvary (dismounted) – Lt. Colonel W.D. Maupin

Missouri Battery – Captain William Wade

2nd Brigade – Colonel W. Bruce Colbert

14th Arkansas

17th Arkansas – Lt. Colonel John Griffith

3rd Louisiana

40th Mississippi

1st Texas Legion – Lt. Colonel E.R. Hawkins

3rd Texas Calvary (dismounted)

Clark's Missouri Battery – Lt. J.L. Faris

St. Louis Missouri Battery – Captain William E. Dawson

3rd Brigade

7th Mississippi Battalion – Lt. Colonel J. S. Terral

43rd Mississippi

4th Missouri – Colonel A. MacFarlane

6th Missouri – Colonel Eugene Erwin

3rd Missouri Calvary (dismounted)

Missouri Battery – Captain Henry Guibor

Missouri Battery – Captain John C. Landis

4th Brigade – Colonel Robert McLain

37th Alabama

36th Mississippi – Colonel W. W. Witherspoon

37th Mississippi – Colonel Robert McLain

38th Mississippi – Colonel F.W. Adams (Battery attached to this brigade not identified)

VI THE DAVIS BRIDGE BATTLEFIELD TODAY

Through the efforts of Herbert Wood and Rex Brotherton, both residents of Hardeman County, a substantial part of the battlefield has been saved. Over the past 15 years, they have been instrumental in acquiring close to 200 acres of the battlefield for its preservation. In the process, they have cultivated the support of many government officials. Their efforts to acquire more of the battlefield continue today. Much is owed to their efforts.

VII HARDEMAN COUNTY



What Hardeman County has lacked from the beginning is what we have often referred to as “the draw card.” Developing this draw card is an important prerequisite for the county’s growth. There are four potential “cards” which offer the most promise to attract tourists, new residents and job opportunities to Hardeman County: (1) The renovation and revitalization of Bolivar’s Downtown Square, (2) The Hatchie River, (3) The Hardeman County Lake Silerton project, and (4) The Davis Bridge Battlefield.

One thing we have learned - all four of these potential attractions are inseparably linked in terms of promoting tourism and growth within Hardeman County. What is good for one impacts the others.

Pursuant to this, the Downtown Bolivar Renovation Project is well underway, having hired Looney, Ricks, and Kiss (LRK), one of the leading urban development companies in the United States. Under the leadership of Bolivar’s Mayor Sain and Downtown Board Chairman Scott Ledbetter, excitement of what is to come is being felt all over the county. Supporting their efforts are Rob Jensik, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, and Calvin Howell and Jac Belet, both successful Hardeman County businessmen. In addition, city, county, state and United States government officials are actively involved in the process.



Already behind us is the successful effort to get an ordinance passed allowing liquor-by-the-drink in Bolivar. The city has recently acquired a state grant estimated at over \$6,000,000 earmarked for the restoration of downtown. In addition, two prestigious anchor tenants are close to relocating in the courthouse square area. Downtown Bolivar is on its way and is our “first ace.”

Ace Two - - The Hatchie River, the county's greatest asset according to the Nature Conservancy, is now getting the attention it deserves. Armed with the understanding that outdoor recreation is key to future development, plans are underway to create public recreational areas on the Hatchie while preserving its unique ecosystem and appearance.

Ace Three - - The Hardeman County Lake Project, the development of a large man-made lake in northeast Hardeman County, is also being vigorously pursued. Such an outdoor recreation aspect offers endless possibilities.

Ace Four - - The Davis Bridge Battlefield

The Davis Bridge Battlefield (also known as the Battle on the Hatchie or the Battle of Metamora Ridge) located in southeast Hardeman County surrounds a historical event that happened in 1862. Confederate and Union forces consisting of over 20,000 men clashed in the second largest battle in West Tennessee (next to Shiloh). This battle, not commonly known except to avid Civil War historians, is often referred to as the forgotten battle.

VIII

TOURISM IMPACT FOR HARDEMAN COUNTY

The American Civil War, more than any single event in American history, has had the most profound impact on the character of the American people. It is one of the most defining events in our nation's history. The war claimed the lives of 623,000 soldiers and 50,000 civilians. 500,000 soldiers returned home wounded or crippled. Four million slaves gained their freedom, and civil rights became an item on the national agenda due to the conflict.

Civil War Battlefields generate income through tourism. As an example in 1991, visitors to the Pea Ridge National Military Park in Arkansas spent over \$10-million in the immediate vicinity. This money is multiplied when these local businesses buy goods and services from other local firms. Local governments benefit further with revenue generated through sales tax. They also become a permanent industry that won't go out of business or leave the community.

There are approximately 300 million visitors annually to National Parks in the United States. There are about 9 million annual visitors to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and estimates place the traffic count at Shiloh at over 400,000 (paid attendance is 70,000 to 90,000 on an annual basis). The Davis Bridge site is proximate to such well-traveled roads as U.S. Highway 72 in northern Mississippi and U.S. Highway 64 in southern Tennessee.

Corinth has 30,000 visitors a year. If we could attract half of the visitors from Shiloh and Corinth alone, attendance would be in excess of 55,000 annually, and given the unique manner of memorializing a battlefield offered by the Ghosts of Davis Bridge, the number would likely be much higher. The immediate impact on the county's tax base would be geometric. The impact on the county's citizens and small businesses, languishing for years, would be incalculable. By cross-promoting downtown Bolivar, it would impact the business bottom lines of every restaurant and retailer in the county seat.

IX EDUCATION

The approach we have taken would maximize the educational aspect of a battlefield for future generations. When The Ghosts of Davis Bridge becomes a reality, students and parents alike would then truly understand the scope of a Civil War battle.

This moment frozen in time clearly shows the disposition of troops and what each individual would have seen at the time. The various plaques and monuments on conventional battlefields do little to convey real understanding of what happened here some 145 years ago.

The phase one and phase two presentation shows clearly the opening of the battle and its conclusion, giving the viewer a unique understanding of a real Civil War engagement.

School kids on class trips from Huntsville, Memphis, Little Rock, Jackson, Somerville, Bolivar, Corinth, Nashville, and points beyond would frequent the Battlefield.

School buses and tour buses by the hundreds would arrive from points across the United States, taking back with them an unsurpassed understanding of what happened and what it was truly like at the Battle of Davis Bridge in October of 1862.

X CONTROVERSY

A project of this size and subject matter would no doubt stir some controversy. The use of the Confederate flag would no doubt be at the forefront of this debate.

If done as we envision, the strict adherence to the historical perspective should neutralize most objections. Like the axis insignia shown in World War II portrayals, the presence of Confederate colors is neither an endorsement nor a condemnation; it is strictly a statement of their presence during this moment in our nation's history.

Striving to depict the events of October 5th, 1862, in as historically-correct a manner as possible, the images of the battlefield become focal points for discussion and understanding of this tectonic event in our history we call "the Civil War." As such, while we understand the potential for controversy, we believe the overriding consideration of historical context will nullify concerns about the presence of symbols some might find offensive.

XI FINANCING THE PROJECT

We estimate the project to cost approximately \$8 to \$12-million dollars.

There are numerous ways to finance this project including Federal Government grants, State grants, foundation grants, and private donations. We believe a donation of \$1,000 per statue is easily attainable. In return for this donation, the donor's name could be permanently etched into the base of the statue. And for that \$1,000 contribution, they would have a slice of immortality.

A thousand dollars for each statue alone would amount to \$5,000,000. Add to that the gate receipts, gift sales, food sales, etc. and it is evident that the revenues generated by The Ghost of Davis Bridge will have a profound impact on the community economy.

As in most projects of this scale and uniqueness, this attraction would garner national attention and visitors from across the United States. Publicity for and awareness of the exhibition is guaranteed to spread as leading national publications learn about what's happening at Davis Bridge in Hardeman County, Tennessee.

XII ORGANIZATION

We need to establish a governing board to make the necessary decisions about the future direction and operations of the battlefield. Each member should be task-oriented, possessing a particular expertise vital to building and maintaining the park.

Board Members would be:

- **Chairman** – coordinates all the efforts of the board.
- **Historical Director** – researches and familiarizes themselves with every aspect of this battle to insure historical integrity is maintained at every turn.
- **Curator Director** –acquires as many historical artifacts of the era, and, in particular, any items connected to the battle itself. Before any construction begins, ground penetrating radar should explore every quadrant of the battlefield.
- **Political Financing Director** - seeks out and acquires various grants available from the state and federal government.
- **Foundation Financing Director** –approaches foundations for support.
- **Sponsorship Financing Director** – approaches the corporate and private sector for sponsorship and donations.
- **Land Acquisition Director** – coordinates the effort of acquiring additional lands within the boundary of the battlefield.
- **Building Director** - oversees the design and building of “the park.”
- **Legal Director** – creates the non-profit organization and monitors any legal implications throughout the project.
- **Research Director** - creates the Davis Bridge library. Acquires any books, articles, or related letters mentioning the Davis Bridge Battle so they become part of the Davis Bridge Collection.
- **Retail Director** – creates the Davis Bridge book and gift store.
- **Accounting Director** – manages all financial concerns of the project.

Preliminary Planning for The Ghost of Davis Bridge:

The early development of the project should remain as a Hardeman County or state project rather than turn the battlefield over to the National Park Service.

The Metamora Hill area should be developed as the official visitor's center and museum.

Land directly across the road from the battlefield should be acquired to insure a place for the future expansion of exhibits and ample parking for visitors.

A fence erected around the entire battlefield would be crucial to the security of the park project.

The Hardeman County Chamber of Commerce should promote an annual Davis Bridge Festival in or around October 5th, the date of the battle. What a better time to be in Hardeman County!