

MARKER # 1 W90°38'22" N37°37'14"

Afternoon, Sept. 26:
The Fight for Ironton

1. Shortly afternoon, Price's advance attacks the Federal pickets encamped at the Ironton courthouse.
2. Federal reinforcements rush from Pilot Knob. They counterattack and drive the raiders three miles to Shut-In Gap.
3. Confederate columns continue arriving. The outnumbered Federals fight a delaying action but are pushed back to Arcadia by nightfall.
4. Under cover of a rainstorm, the Federals retire to Ironton. The valley below fills with enemy camp fires. Ewing is now convinced that he faces Price's entire army. He has only 1,500 men, but decides to hold out so that St. Louis can prepare.

MARKER # 2 W90°38'23" N37°37'14"

Morning, Sept. 27:
The Struggle for the Mountains

1. The Confederates attack at dawn. Outnumbered and outflanked, the Federals retire to the mountain slopes.
2. Federal infantry holds Shepherd's Mountain but are gradually forced back to avoid encirclement. By 10 a.m. they retire into the fort's rifle pits.
3. Dismounted Federal cavalry defend Pilot Knob Mountain. In a bitter close-range fight, they manage to hold their positions overlooking the fort.
4. The Confederates advanced into the gap but the fort's artillery drives them back. Confederate cannons on the heights could dominate the fort, but Price orders a direct assault.

MARKER #3: W90°38'25" N37°37'14"

Afternoon, Sept. 27:
The Doomed Assault

1. While the Confederates deploy they put two cannons and open fire. Accurate return fire puts both out of action.
 2. Marmaduke's Missouri division streams down Shepherd's Mountain. Rifle and artillery fire breaks its ranks. The men seek shelter in a creek bed.
 3. McCray's and Slemmon's brigades of Fagan's Arkansas division charge across Pilot Knob Mountain. They overwhelm the Federal cavalry then rush for the fort. They too are driven to shelter.
 4. Dobbins' mounted Confederate brigade threatens the fort from the rear. Federal from the north rifle pit charge out and drive them off.
 5. Cabell's brigade of Fagan's division advance up the gap. They reach the fort in spite of intense fire and enter the moat. Exploding hand grenades drive them out. Every attack fails. By night, some 1,000 Confederates lie dead or wounded. More than 200 Federals are casualties.
 6. After midnight, Ewing evacuates the fort. His men march north between sleeping Confederate camps. At 3:30 a.m. volunteers blow up the fort's powder magazine. Price does not investigate until daylight.
- (text area 20 1/2 inches high by 17 inches wide.)

MARKER #4 W90°38'24" N37°37'13"

The Moat

A dry moat surrounded Fort Davidson on all sides. During the third and final desperate Confederate assault, Arkansas troops of General William Cabell's brigade fought their way into the moat and prepared to climb the wall. Hand grenades were brought from the magazine to drive them out.

"... We rushed back to the banquettes with the grenades and passed them to the men in front, with orders to throw them into the ditch. Pandemonium instantly broke loose... Men were blown above the parapet and fell back

dead; the ditches were cleared as if by magic. It struck terror to the enemy's lines, and they fell back in disorder..."

Captain William J. Campbell
14th Iowa Volunteer Infantry

Confederate officers blamed the failure of the assault on the depth of the moat and the steepness of the fort walls.

[Picture: Ketchum Grenade with labels "Plunger" "Grenade Body" "Wooden Shaft" "Cardboard Fins"] Hand grenade used in 1864

MARKER #5 W90°38'25" N37°37'11"

The Powder Magazine

This crater marks the site of the powder magazine. The underground structure was forty feet long, twelve feet high, and twelve feet wide. It was covered with fifteen feet of earth to protect it from enemy fire. Some twenty tons of gunpowder and ammunition were stored here during the battle.

At midnight the defenders silently evacuated the fort. Equipment that could not be taken was piled against the magazine and the Union dead were laid nearby. An hour later a party of volunteers lit a fuse to the magazine and galloped for safety.

"...suddenly the heavens were lighted up by a grand column of fire ascending hundreds of feet... and making the whole region reverberate with a sound as though a mighty thunderbolt had riven Pilot Knob..."

Colonel Thomas C. Fletcher, 47th Missouri Volunteer Infantry

The startled Confederates did not realize that the fort had been evacuated. General Price presumed that an accident had ignited the magazine and that the fort would surrender in the morning.

[Picture of fort with labels on parts of it] The fort as it would have appeared as the time of the battle September 26-27 1864.