

On April 12, 1861, at Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina, the Civil War began; however it can be argued that the Civil War in the West had started much earlier – in the 1850s which featured the first burning of Lawrence in 1856 and John Brown’s Pottawatomie Massacre. Despite the problems between Missouri and Kansas, Missourians remained divided over the war. This was demonstrated after the first shots were fired at Fort Sumter, in Missouri, when the state created a provisional government in Jefferson City under the direction of Hamilton Gamble, a Unionist, that was recognized by Abraham Lincoln. Pro-secessionist Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson fled Jefferson City and decided to support the Confederate States of America. The state saw some of the most violent clashes between family members and neighbors than any other state in the Union during the Civil War. Two of those clashes occurred in and around Independence, Missouri.

On August 11, 1862, organized units under Confederate command and irregular units under the direction of William Clarke Quantrill attacked the federals that were stationed in and around the Independence square in an attempt to capture weapons and munitions, This engagement, which resulted in a victory for the Confederates, came to known as the First Battle of Independence. Two years later, on October 21–22, 1864, another engagement, which featured a combined Union and Confederate forces of 15,000, occurred on about five miles to the East of Independence on the Little Blue River and later extended into the city of Independence. This engagement, sometimes referred to as the Battle of the Little Blue or the Second Battle of Independence was a Confederate victory; however, the battle served as a prelude to the last significant battle of the Civil War in Missouri – the Battle of Westport. At the Battle of Westport Confederate General Sterling Price was defeated, which brought to a close the significant hostilities of the war in Missouri.

Begin on the Independence Square and walk step by step through the Battle of Independence in 1862. Start your tour in eastern Jackson County by beginning with the Battle of the Little Blue in 1864.

# CIVIL WAR *sites of* INDEPENDENCE



For additional information about Civil War sites and additional tourism information contact the

**Independence Tourism Department**

800-748-7323 • [www.visitindependence.com](http://www.visitindependence.com)

Printed in 2011

## FIRST BATTLE OF INDEPENDENCE

August 11, 1862

As part of the Boston Mountain Incurtion of 1862, the First Battle of Independence was one of the earliest urban battles of the Civil War and marked the first time that William Clarke Quantrill and his band of guerrillas cooperated with organized units of the Confederate Army. Since June, Colonel John T. Hughes and Colonel Upton Hays had been in the Jackson County area on a recruiting mission for the Confederate Army. Gathering their 400 men on the Cowherd farm they planned the attack on Union Lt. Colonel James T. Buel's 500 men stationed in Independence.

### STOP 1 1859 JAIL & MARSHAL'S HOME 217 N. Main

Looking much like it did the morning of the battle, this building served as headquarters for the Union Provost Guard under the command of Lt. Charles Meryhew. As the rest of the Confederate command continued on to the Union Headquarters George Todd and his men stopped at the jail to attack the guard. Lt. Meryhew's men fired one volley and abandoned the jail. As Todd was freeing the prisoners he discovered Sheriff Jim Knowles incarcerated in his own jail on a murder charge. Todd promptly killed Knowles as revenge for the earlier ambush killing of Ed Koger and John Little.



### STOP 2 HEADQUARTERS GUARD BUILDING

Under the command of Captain W.H. Rodewald this is the site of the headquarters guard. Here in the early morning hours of August 11, 1862 the Confederate attack was first discovered. The Confederates, tying their horses around the Courthouse Square, began their advance on Buel's headquarters and the sleeping Union camp. Firing first from the second story, Rodewald led his men into the street where they fired into the rebels killing Confederate Kit Chiles. Rodewald held this intersection for two hours repulsing three attacks. Buel ordered him into the headquarters building across the street. In the last

attack Confederate Major John R. Hart of St. Joseph was mortally wounded.

### STOP 3 COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

#### The McCoy Bank Building

Inside the two story brick bank building LtC Buel made his stand. At approximately 6:30 a.m. when all of the Federals were inside the building Quantrill completed his encirclement. Firing was deadly



William Clarke Quantrill

to anyone showing himself to the enemy. At 7:30 a.m. Buel ordered that the headquarter's flag be raised to signal the camp. Discovering the flag was left in the guard room, 16 year old bugler William Bufoe volunteered to retrieve it and in a barrage of bullets he made a barefoot dash across the street returning with the flag. The fight continued for another hour and a half until Quantrill decided to smoke the Federals out. Setting fire to an adjacent wooden structure Quantrill waited. With his position untenable at 9 a.m. Buel surrendered and sent a messenger to the camp with orders to surrender.

### STOP 4 THE UNION ENCAMPMENT

#### Lexington & Pleasant

The Union camp — under the command of Captains Jacob Axline and Aaron Thomas — consisted of two companies of the 7th Missouri Cavalry and three companies of the 2nd Battalion Missouri Provisional Militia. It was located where the Shrine building sets today. The Confederates approached the camp from two directions, Colonel Hughes on Walnut Street and Colonel Thompson on Lexington Street. Taking positions at a board fence behind the houses on Pleasant Street, the Confederates fired a volley into the sleeping Federals. Pandemonium erupted. Captain Axline yelled

"Boys get your guns and rally behind the rock fence."

### STOP 5 UNION RALLYING POINT

Stretching for a mile the rock wall was located down the center of Walnut Street. At the Mormon Visitors Center a gully behind the wall became the Union rallying point. The Confederates charged from the west. Colonel Hughes was killed. Colonel Thompson took command ordering another charge. He fell wounded. Now in command, Colonel Hays ordered five charges against the wall. The Federal position held. Axline, forming his troops to go to the relief of Buel received the surrender order. The First Battle of Independence ended.

## AFTERMATH

### Union

26 dead; 74 wounded; 11 later died; 150 surrendered

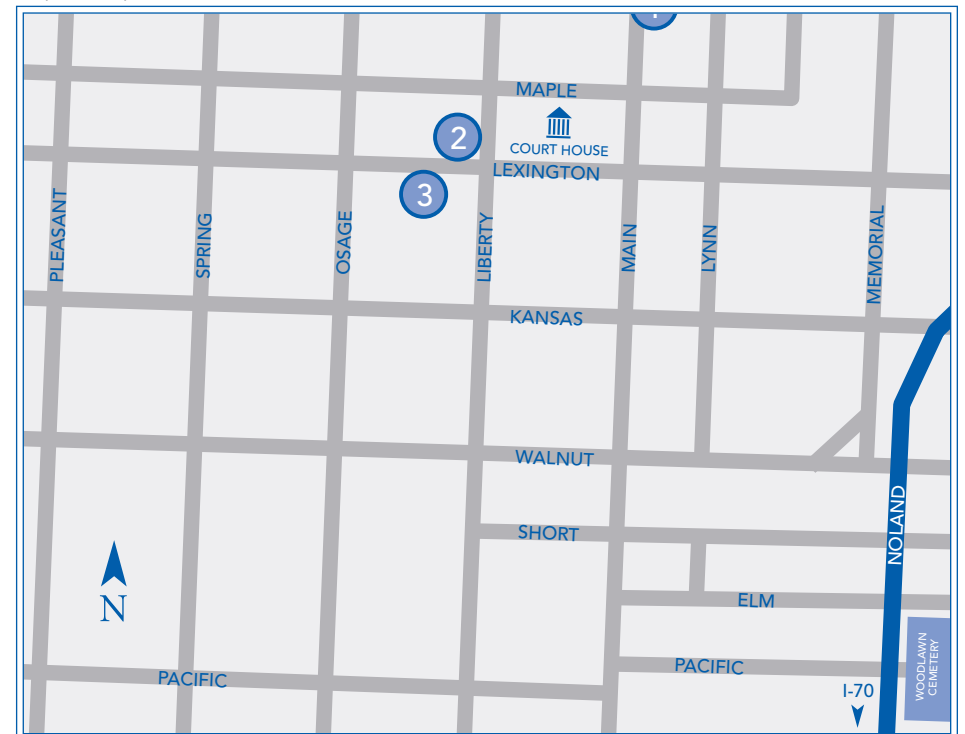
### Confederate

23 dead; which included 3 Colonels, 2 Majors, 3 Captains, 2 Lieutenants; 9 mortally wounded; 20 wagonloads of much needed supplies were captured

Colonels Hughes, Chiles and Boyd were all buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, Hughes and Boyd next to each other.



Hughes and Boyd Gravesites



## BATTLE OF THE LITTLE BLUE - 2nd Battle of Independence "They fought us on the blue grass ridges."

On October 21–22, 1864, some 15,000 Union and Confederate forces fought along the banks of the Little Blue River in eastern Independence. It was hoped by the Confederacy that this push by General Price into Missouri would take pressure off the Eastern Front. However, by virtue of its failure, Price's raid assisted in bringing closure to the Civil War by 1865. This two-day battle slowed the advances of the Confederates and served as a prelude to the Second Battle of Independence, Byram's Ford (Big Blue) and the Battle of Westport (the largest Civil War battle west of the Mississippi River). Let us not forget, "we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain."

### 1. COVERED BRIDGE Start of the Battle, Lexington Road at the Little Blue River

An old covered bridge once spanned the Little Blue River here on the Lexington Road. The morning of October 21, 1864, The Battle of the Little Blue began at this point. In this river and along its banks, men fought and men died. Confederate Generals Shelby, Marmaduke and Fagan initiated the battle from the east side of the river. Union pickets and artillery were positioned in the field and on a rocky ledge to the west. Here, "The hapless Captain Palmer" was sewing a rip in his only pair of pants when the battle began and he had to fight in his drawers.

### 2. FORT OSAGE HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT 24 Highway & 7 Highway

From this ridge in the morning darkness of October 21, 1864, Confederate forces could see the flickering of camp fires in

Union positions in the valley below. Soon, the calm stillness of the morning would end in a violent, chaotic battle. Evidenced from this view, indeed, "They fought us on the blue grass ridges." Looking west, the covered bridge on the Lexington Road was to the left; Jackman's artillery charge and the Lawson Moore Home, to the right. Straight ahead was Shelby's second charge, Jennison's battle line, the Salem Church and cemetery.

### 3. JACKMAN'S ARTILLERY CHARGE Blue Mills Road, west of the Little Blue River

After an argument with Jackman, Shelby sent him on a looping movement to investigate the Confederate's far right flank along Blue Mills Road. Jackman felt he was being punished for disagreeing with Shelby and sent on a wild goose chase. Within earshot of the fighting, Jackman stopped



Little Blue Bridge Site

his column and took a break. Later, Jackman remounted and continued west on Blue Mills Road. As he rounded the curve, his troops were unexpectedly fired upon by Federal artillery and infantry from a rocky ledge. Jackman was so sure Shelby sent him on a worthless mission, which he had, he did not bother to send scouts ahead.

### 4. LAWSON MOORE HOME Private Residence at 20309 E. Blue Mills Road

This antebellum home was vacated due to Order Number 11 in 1863. During the war the house was used as a field hospital and an upper room became the operating room. It also served as cover during



24 Highway & Blue Mills Road

the fighting and was damaged by minnie balls, cannon balls and an attempt to burn it to the ground. An account of the battle reports that soldiers used the stone fence by the road for breastworks. It still stands under a few feet of earth. Several officers are believed to be buried near the dairy barn and enlisted men in an area of the front yard.

### 5. SHELBY'S SECOND CHARGE / JENNISON'S BATTLE LINE

#### 24 Highway & Blue Mills Road

Behind and north of New Salem Baptist Church and cemetery, Shelby and Jackman charged Ford and Jennison in the final engagement of the battle. Reports state over 6,000 Union forces were in place in a line that stretched over a mile in length along this road. To the south, Marmaduke's Division moved against Blunt and Moonlight. Charge and counter-charge took place with hand-to-hand fighting. The Federals were forced to fall

back and did so in an orderly fashion. Between the Little Blue and the Independence Square, Confederates and Federals were "stubbornly contesting every inch of ground."

### 6. CABELL'S DEFENSIVE LINE Truman Road & Main Street, northwest corner

After heavy fighting at the Little Blue, Price's Confederate army forced Blunt's cavalry to retreat to the Big Blue River, leaving a rear guard in Independence. Shelby's Confederates reached town late in the afternoon on October 21, 1864. After a brisk fight here, Union troops were driven to the west end of town. Some of Price's army and wagon train then camped at this location. The next day, Pleasonton's Union cavalry, pursuing Price from the east, made a mounted charge through Independence, driving Price and Fagan's Confederate Division further west.

### 7. BINGHAM-



Bingham-Waggoner Estate

## WAGGONER ESTATE

### 313 W. Pacific

Mrs. Robert Hill observed the battle from an upper porch and wrote her observations: "From the balcony, which is very high, we had a clear view of the battle for more than a mile. We saw the Federals capture a battery in Noah Miller's field. It was magnificently defended and no less bravely attacked. We could see the far-off flash of red fire coming out of the guns and pistols and men fell by the dozens. It was one of the most sublimely thrilling sights that no one could imagine...What the issue of this tremendous battle will be, God alone knows."

## 8. CONFEDERATE LINE AT INDEPENDENCE

### River Blvd. & Walnut Street, southeast corner

Near this spot, Fagan's Division of Price's Confederate Army was defending against the advance of Union General Pleasonton. Two of Fagan's Brigades were driven from the Battle of the Little Blue to the

edge of town. The Union attack was made from the northeast with Phillips' Brigade and the 2nd Arkansas, both on foot. McNeil's mounted Brigade then charged through town. Cabell's Brigade came to stop the Union advances but was driven back and many of his men surrounded. Here, two of his large guns were captured with Cabell himself barely escaping.

## 9. UNFINISHED RAILROAD CUT

### Lexington & Crysler, south of bridge/west side

During the Battle of Independence this area was an unfinished railroad cut. As darkness approached the evening of October 21, 1864, the Confederate advance from the east stopped here for the night while Union troops withdrew to the Big Blue River. The Confederate divisions consisting of Marmaduke, Shelby and much of Price's wagon train advanced to Rock Creek and camped there. The next morning Pleasonton's

Union cavalry pursued the Confederates through town and were confronted by Marmaduke's division. Fierce hand-to-hand fighting continued as the Confederates withdrew to Byram's Ford.

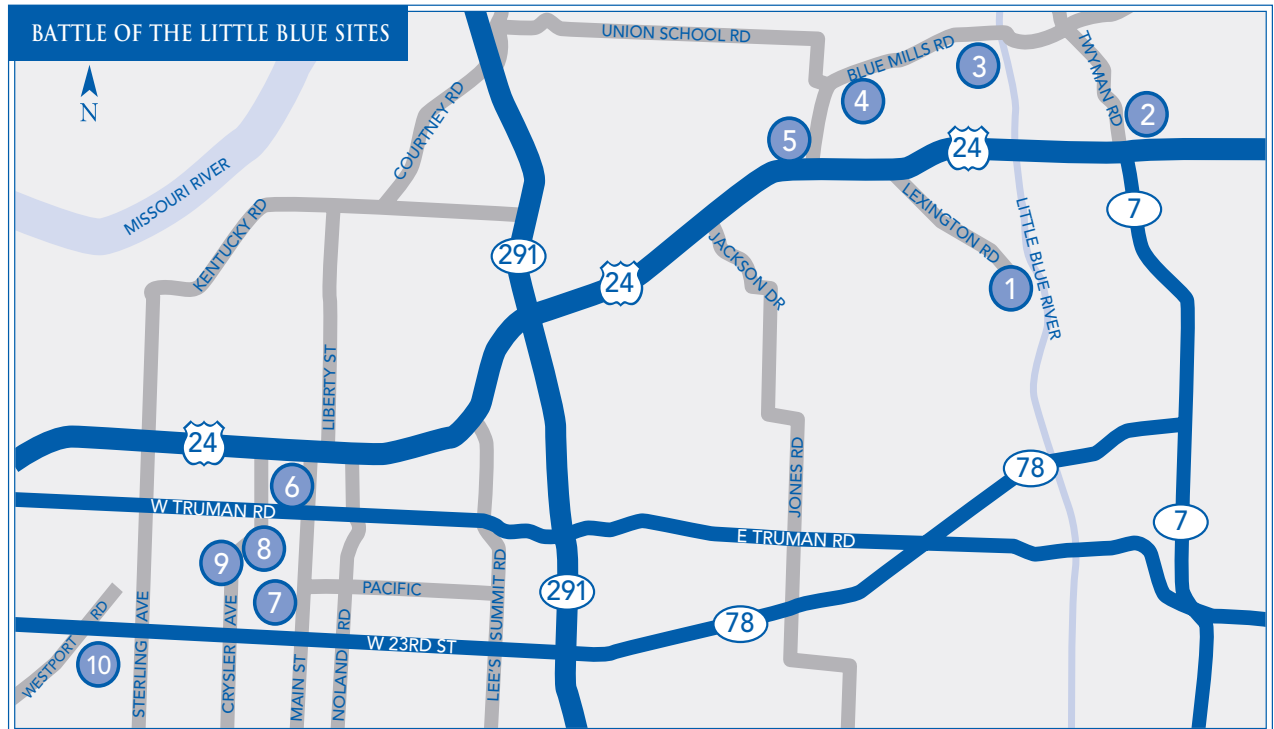
## 10. PRICE'S CAMP AT ROCK CREEK

### Rotary Park, Westport Road & 24th Street

Fighting around the Independence Square continued until evening. The Federals then fell back to the Big Blue

River in Kansas City as Price and his Confederate Army of 10 to 15 thousand men entered Independence. At Rock Creek, in the vicinity of Rotary Park, Price stopped and made camp for the night before taking up his march to meet the enemy

the next day, first at Byram's Ford at the Big Blue River and then the Battle of Westport. After Westport, Price fell back in full retreat to Mine Creek on October 25th and Newtonia on October 27th.



## TIMELINE

May 30, 1854  
Kansas-Nebraska Act

May 24 -25, 1856  
John Brown's Pottawatomie Massacre

January 29, 1861  
Kansas enters as a free state in the Union (34th).

July 21, 1861  
First Battle of Manassas (aka Bull Run), Manassas, Virginia. Confederate victory.

November 7, 1861  
Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant's first maneuver in Belmont, Missouri. Union victory.

August 11, 1862  
First Battle of Independence, Independence, Missouri. Confederate victory.

January 13, 1863  
The First Kansas Colored Infantry is mustered into Union service.

August 25, 1863  
Brigadier General Thomas Ewing's Order Number 11 issued.

September 27, 1864  
Battle of Pilot Knob (aka Fort Davidson). Union victory.

April 9, 1865  
Lee surrenders to Grant in Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia.

August 1, 1854  
Lawrence, Kansas founded by the anti-slavery Massachusetts Emigrant Aid Society.

October 16, 1859  
John Brown's Raid at Harper's Ferry, Virginia

April 12-13, 1861  
Conflict at Fort Sumter, Charleston, South Carolina. The American Civil War officially begins.

Sept. 13-20, 1861  
Battle of Lexington, Missouri. Confederate victory.

November 28, 1861  
Confederate Congress recognizes the State of Missouri as the 12th State of the Confederacy.

January 1, 1863  
The Emancipation Proclamation is issued by President Abraham Lincoln

August 21, 1863  
Quantrill's Lawrence Raid

November 19, 1863  
Gettysburg Address is given by President Abraham Lincoln.

October 21, 1864  
Battle of the Little Blue, Independence, Missouri. Confederate victory.

June 2, 1865  
Smith surrenders the Confederate Department of the Trans Mississippi to Canby.