

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

Traveling Trunk Program

We at Wilson's Creek are pleased to offer a Traveling Trunk program that focuses on the participants in the second major battle of the Civil War. Not only were both armies ill prepared for battle, but the inclusion of a predominately civilian volunteer militia, and, the involvement of the civilian population of the Wilson Creek area made this a unique battle for the time.

Wilson's Creek has 5 traveling education trunks that can be used for hands-on activities. Four of these trunks deal with the military aspect of the Park, and one the civilian population at the time of the battle. At this time, teachers must call to reserve a trunk, pick up and return it to the Park themselves. There is no charge. However, a plan is in development which would allow teachers from districts further away to have the trunks shipped UPS for a fee. They include:

1st Iowa Infantry (Federal)

3rd Louisiana Infantry (Confederate)

Missouri State Guard (Confederate)

U.S. Regular (Federal)

Civilians at Wilson's Creek (*Under development - check for availability*)

These trunks can be used in a variety of ways to expand and enhance the study of the Battle of Wilson's Creek. They can be used for pre-visit activities so that students have an idea of what they will learn at the battlefield. Items in the trunks are hands-on and may be used in an appropriate manner, which might be dressing a student in the clothing, then describing other items and their uses as they are taken from the trunk. Post-visit use as a reinforcement or evaluation tool might include asking students to explain what different items in the trunk were used for in a written assignment or as an oral presentation.

1st Iowa Infantry

The 1st Iowa was formed shortly after the firing on Ft. Sumter in April, 1861. The unit was known as the Governor's Grays and included men from the German states, Ireland, England, Sweden, France and other European countries who had settled in the farm lands of Iowa. They joined General Nathaniel Lyon in Booneville, then forced marched to Springfield where they would distinguish themselves at the Battle of Wilson's Creek. It is important to note that their uniforms were gray although they were Union soldiers.

3rd Louisiana Infantry

The 3rd Louisiana like the 1st Iowa was a melting pot of men from many different countries. They had rushed to join up as soon as Louisiana seceded from the Union in January, 1861. They trained in New Orleans until May 20, 1861 when they marched to join General Ben McCulloch in Ft. Smith, Arkansas. In late July the Confederate army and the Missouri State Guard joined forces and on August 6, went into camp on the banks of Wilson's Creek where they would do battle with the Federal force on August 10. That morning they were mistaken for the 1st Iowa causing confusion which led the Federal forces under Colonel Franz Sigel to retreat.

Missouri State Guard

The Missouri State Guard was formed basically to protect the State of Missouri from invasion from both sides. Most had been loyal to the Union and wanted both sides to leave them alone. They were formed under the leadership of former Missouri Governor, General Sterling Price, "Old Pap". Price's troops consisted of farm men and boys who would have worn civilian clothes, often were equipped with old muskets or hunting rifles, or more commonly, only hunting knives and frequently very little food. The State Guard fought well and suffered many casualties at Wilson's Creek. They would continue on with Price for the rest of 1861 and most of 1862 and eventually join with the Confederate Army.

US Regular

The United States Regular Army was composed of soldiers who in many cases were career soldiers and who had enlisted for at least 5 years. Many had served during the Mexican War. Most had been stationed at army posts in Indian Territory, Kansas and Nebraska. These soldiers were highly disciplined and trained distinguishing themselves in battle and sustaining heavy casualties. Many of these soldiers would go on to fight in other battles of during the Civil War.

Civilians at Wilson's Creek - *currently under development – check for availability*

This is a new trunk that features aspects of life as a civilian dealing with the battle and its aftermath near Wilson's Creek. This trunk also features information concerning slave life in Southwest Missouri and how it differed from plantation life further south.

All trunks include clothing appropriate to the individual trunk. Personal items such as soap, tobacco, letter writing materials, military equipment, etc. are part of the military trunks. The civilian trunks include everyday items that would have been on a working farm, plus, children's clothing and toys.