

ARKANSAS IN THE SECOND YEAR OF THE CIVIL WAR

On May 26, 1862, Major General Thomas C. Hindman was placed in charge of the Trans-Mississippi District. This district included Missouri, Arkansas, that part of Louisiana north of the Red River, and the Indian Territory. At the time of his appointment he was commanding a division in Bragg's Corps at Corinth.¹

Hindman arrived at Little Rock on May 30, and the next day assumed command of the district.² On June 19, 1862, he filed a report with the Adjutant and Inspector General at Richmond covering his activities to November 3, 1862.³ This report gives a gloomy picture of conditions as Hindman found them upon his arrival. The following account is from his report:

"The state of affairs in the Trans-Mississippi District was extremely discouraging. Prior to the Elkhorn disaster the reverse had been the case. At that time the enemy indeed occupied all of Missouri, but the spirit of resistance was unquenched, and might at any moment blaze into formidable rebellion. Van Dorn, Price, and McCulloch, with the best army we had yet put into the field in that region, were in Northwestern Arkansas, securing it against invasion. Brigadier-General Pike held a corresponding line in the Indian country, where the Confederate supremacy was undisputed.

"The battle of Elkhorn was fought in March, 1862. Our forces were defeated and compelled to retreat to the Arkansas River. Soon after, in anticipation of a grand contest near Corinth, they were moved east of the Mississippi, by order of General Albert Sidney Johnston, then commanding the Western Department. They took with them from Arkansas all material of war and public property of every description. Immediately afterward Brigadier-General Pike retreated southward to the vicinity of Red River. Thus Missouri was left hopeless of early succor, Arkansas without a soldier, and the Indian country undefended except by its own inhabitants. Availing himself of these advantages, the Federal General Curtis marched from Elkhorn along White River into Northeastern Arkansas, and halted at Batesville, 90 miles from Little Rock, to get supplies for an advance on that place.

"A Federal force of 5,000 strong was organized at Fort Scott, under the name of the Indian Expedition, and with the avowed intention to invade the Indian Country and wrest it from our control. Hostile Indians began collecting on the border and Federal emissaries were busy among the Cherokees and Creeks inciting disaffection. Detachments of Federal cavalry penetrated at will into various parts of the upper half of Arkansas, plundering and burning houses, stealing horses and slaves, destroying farming utensils, murdering loyal men or carrying them into captivity, forcing the oath of allegiance on the timid, and disseminating disloyal sentiments among the ignorant. A regiment of Federal Arkansans was organized at Batesville, another commenced in Northwestern Arkansas, and the work of recruiting for the Federal service went on prosperously. Tory bands were organized or in the process of organization in many counties, not only in upper but in the lower half of the State likewise, and depredations and outrages upon loyal citizens were of constant occurrence. Straggling soldiers belonging to distant commands traversed the country, armed and lawless, robbing the people of their property under pretense of impressing it for the Confederate service. The Governor and other executive officers fled from