



# WAR HERO

## GEORGE W. MOORE & WILLIS ADEN MOORE

### BATTLE OF PEA RIDGE, CIVIL WAR

MooreBrothers:GeorgeW.andWillisAdenMoorefightingontheConfederatesideofthewar.

When I was about 12 years old my family went to see my dad's roots in Prescott, Arkansas. It was hot and muggy. Fireflies at night. Lightening and thunder. We loved it while Dad took us around to see where his family lived. Cemeteries are where I took notes. We had to see his favorite place. Now we could see the stories he told us unfold before our eyes. Come to find out, he lived next door was his favorite grandparent, Grandpa James Wesley Andrews. Oh, the stories Dad had been telling us for years. While my siblings were busy, I talked to the elders of the family. I had just started doing genealogy when I was 10 years old. I remember going to Aunt Lillie Jewel Moore Beirne's old white house and the wonderful vegetable dinner she had fixed for us.

I was excited because she told me that she had the old Moore Family Bible. I couldn't wait. I had to piece it together because it was so old. I just couldn't believe my luck finding such a treasure. Aunt Lillie encouraged me to put the pieces together so I could make a record of the original Moore family who came to Prescott from Camden, Arkansas and before that, from Georgia. I had bought a stenographer notebook to take notes on my Arkansas trip. That notebook came in handy.

I wrote down the address of "Little Fate" that Aunt Lillie told me about. My whole family drove to Prescott's Cox's General Store where I'd been told I could find Little Fate. And there he was. He seemed so old, like out of a fairy tale. He told me that John Lafayette Moore, my 2nd great-grandfather was his grandfather. He told us about two of his grandfather's brothers who had served in the Civil War, George and Aden Moore. He had my interest. He was so elderly, older than anyone I'd ever met, with a very long beard and hat. As an aside, we also went to the county courthouse to look up birth, death and marriage records in Prescott. You won't believe it but when we heard a bunch of noise, we looked and there we saw the Freedom Riders Bus that one only reads about in books today.

I started to remember that I had written down some things while I was in Arkansas. So I looked in a file in my desk; to my great relief, I found it. That is when I read in my pencil notes that two brothers, George W. and Willis Aden Moore were in the Battle of Pea Ridge. (I think it was easy to remember because it was called "pea ridge".) There it was, written in my notebook. So today you will hear about the Battle



of Pea Ridge. Grandpa John Lafayette Moore and his brothers were also in the Battle at Poison Spring.

## **Battle of Pea Ridge: Bloody Turning Point West of the Mississippi. Also known as Elkhorn Tavern**

By the spring of 1862, Union forces had pushed Confederates south and west through Missouri into northwestern Arkansas. On the night of March 6, 1862, Confederate Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn and his 16,000-man Army of the West set out to counterattack the Union position near Pea Ridge. Hoping to move quickly, in a fateful decision, Van Dorn ordered the supply trains far to the rear. Learning of Van Dorn's approach, some 10,000 Federals in Brig. Gen. Samuel R. Curtis' Army of the Southwest marched to meet the Rebel advance the next day. The forces met near Elkhorn Tavern just three miles south of the Missouri border and fighting quickly ensued.

Two Confederate generals, Brig. Gens. Ben McCulloch and James McQueen McIntosh, were killed in the action, halting the Rebel momentum. By

nightfall, the Confederates controlled Elkhorn Tavern and Telegraph Road. Curtis consolidated his force during the night, and the next day, counterattacked near the tavern and by successfully employing his artillery, slowly forced the Rebels back. Running short of ammunition due to the absence of supply support, Van Dorn abandoned the battlefield, leaving Arkansas virtually defenseless. With the Confederate defeat, the Union controlled the border state of Missouri for the next two years.

Since then it has become memorialized as Pea Ridge National Military Park at the site of one of the most important battles in the trans-Mississippi theater. Fought over two days in March 1862, this pivotal battle decided the fate of Missouri. When the firing stopped, Curtis' Federals were in control of the field and Van Dorn's Confederates were headed east to cross the Mississippi River, never to return to Arkansas.

