

The Battle of Prairie Grove Remembered - December 7, 1888

This battle (Prairie Grove) was fought twenty-six years ago today, on the 7th day of Dec. 1862.

It was on Sunday. That day was a cool, cloudy day, the wind from the north. Today at 12 o'clock a. m. slightly cloudy, the wind from the south, the mercury standing at 56 degrees above zero.

The first intimation of an approaching conflict at the place soon after daylight. Four horsemen rode hastily up to the residence of the late Andrew Buchanan, then occupied by his widow, Sinia Buchanan, halloed and asked a negro woman, Beck, who was standing on the steps in front of the house, if there were any federals about there. A few moments after several federal soldiers hastily came out of the house and ran west towards their encampment.

These horsemen, casting their eyes in that direction, saw the wagons and soldiers of the federals and at once wheeled their horses and rode back in the direction from whence they came in full speed..The federals taking the alarm, the noise, tumult and confusion of the day commenced. A little after sunrise the first gun was fired about 3/4 of a mile west of Prairie Grove on the Cane Hill Road, and the battle continued until nearly dark that evening.

Among the killed of the confederates on that day were Lieutenants Tell, Duke and Ben Boon, privates Henry Morrison, Cyrus Graham, James Greene, Reuben Armstrong, Len Gray, Bill Gray, Rod Mitchell, Irvin Blair and John Sharp.

John Sharp had a remarkable dream in which his death was foretold some ten or twelve days before the battle. This dream was related to me by Dick Barron, and prepared for the press but from some cause was never sent in for publication, and was about as follows: He dreamed that the army traveled for several days over a rough mountainous country and then descended into a valley, that they had marched very far in this valley until they met the enemy when a severe battle commenced, that during that battle his right hand man was shot through the head the ball entering just above the eye.

His friend fell to the ground, when he (Sharp) stooped to raise him up or to give him some assistance, looking him in the face he saw that it was himself. This dream was related next day but as the army was on no march nor any enemy approaching that they knew of, Sharp did not attach much importance to it. When they came in sight of this valley however, Sharp told his comrades that this was the valley, that he had often seen it before he saw it in his dream and expressed much concern.

Just before going into the battle he felt that his time had about come and said that if it was not for dishonor he would leave the company and fall back. He however went into the battle and fought bravely until one or two o'clock when he was shot through the head, the ball entering just above the eye as he had seen in his dream. He fell and died instantly.

The contrast between the fierce and deadly foes arrayed against each other in murderous battle on

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that memorable day and the friendly companionship now enjoyed by many of the opposing forces, as fellow citizens and neighbors, is a commentary on the inhumanity of war.

The hum of busy mill and shop, the buizz and stir of commerce and manufacture, the clang of church and school bells, and the prattle of innocent childhood is now heard in place of clashing arms and booming cannon. by J.P. Neal.

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