

## Sample Script

The Director's Copy explained that the play script consists of 4 Acts, 2 Scenes each. Scene 1 is the Testimony of the Witnesses and Scene 2 is the Commentary of Writers reading directly from their Books. Below is a sample of the play script taken from Act 3 Scene 1 and Act 3 Scene 2.

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**Act 3:**                   **Scene 1: Witnesses**  
**Black**                    • **Sgt. Benjamin Robinson**  
**Soldiers**               • **Pvt. Daniel Tyler**  
                           • **Pvt. Manuel Nichols**  
                           • **Pvt. George Shaw**  
                           • **Pvt. Major Williams**  
                           • **Jacob Thompson (civilian)**

CHARACTER	LINES	SEQ	ID
<b>NARRATOR</b>	The Congressional Report contained this Note: "The committee then proceeded to the various wards and took the testimony of such of the wounded as were able to bear the examination. The testimony of the colored men is written out exactly as given, except that it is rendered in a grammatical form, instead of the broken language some of them used." End quote.	110A	N01
<b>NARRATOR</b> (continued)	Chairman B.F. Wade and Committee Member Mr. D.W. Gooch conducted the interviews of the colored men.	110B	N01
<b>NARRATOR</b> (continued)	Sergeant Benjamin Robinson, (colored,) company D, 6th United States heavy artillery, sworn and examined by Mr. Gooch in the Mound City Hospital, Illinois on April 22, 1864.	117A	N01
<b>INVESTIGATOR</b> <b>Mr. Gooch</b>	Were you at Fort Pillow in the fight there?	117B	I02
<b>BLACK SOLDIER</b> <b>Sgt. Benjamin</b> <b>Robinson</b>	Yes, sir.	117C	W06
<b>INVESTIGATOR</b>	What did you see there?	117D	I02

**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** I saw them shoot two white men right by the 117E W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin** side of me after they had laid their guns  
**Robinson** down. They shot a black man clear over into  
the river. Then they halloood to me to come  
up the hill, and I came up. They said,  
"Give me your money, you damned nigger." I  
told them I did not have any." Give me your  
money, or I will blow your brains out."  
Then they told me to lie down, and I laid  
down, and they stripped everything off me.

**INVESTIGATOR** This was the day of the fight? 117F I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** Yes, sir. 117G W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin**  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** Go on. Did they shoot you? 117H I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** Yes, sir. After they stripped me and took 117I W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin** my money away from me they dragged me up  
**Robinson** the hill a little piece, and laid me down  
flat on my stomach; I laid there till  
night, and they took me down to an old  
house, and said they would kill me the next  
morning. I got up and commenced crawling  
down the hill; I could not walk.

**INVESTIGATOR** When were you shot? 117J I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** About 3 o'clock. 117K W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin**  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** Before they stripped you? 11KL I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** Yes, sir. They shot me before they said, 117M W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin** "come up."  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** After you had surrendered? 117N I02

**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** Yes, sir; they shot pretty nearly all of 117O W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin** them after they surrendered.  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** Did you see anything of the burning of the 117P I02  
**Mr. Gooch** men?

**BLACK SOLDIER** No, sir. 117Q W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin**  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** Did you see them bury anybody? 117R I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** Yes, sir. 117S W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin**  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** Did they bury anybody who was not dead? 117T I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

**BLACK SOLDIER** I saw one of them working his hand after he 117U W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin** was buried; he was a black man. They had  
**Robinson** about a hundred in there, black and white.  
The major was buried on the bank, right  
side of me. They took his clothes all off  
but his drawers; I was lying right there  
looking at them. They had my captain's  
coat, too; they did not kill my captain; a  
lieutenant told him to give him his coat,  
and then they told him to go down and pick  
up those old rags and put them on.

**INVESTIGATOR** Did you see anybody shot the day after the 117V I02  
**Mr. Gooch** battle?

**BLACK SOLDIER** No, sir. 117W W06  
**Sgt. Benjamin**  
**Robinson**

**INVESTIGATOR** How did you get away? 117X I02  
**Mr. Gooch**

<b>BLACK SOLDIER Sgt. Benjamin Robinson</b>	A few men came up from Memphis, and got a piece of plank and put me on it, and took me down to the boat.	117Y	W06
<b>INVESTIGATOR Mr. Gooch</b>	Were any rebel officers around when the rebels were killing our men?	118A	I02
<b>BLACK SOLDIER Sgt. Benjamin Robinson</b>	Yes, sir: lots of them.	118B	W06
<b>INVESTIGATOR Mr. Gooch</b>	Did they try to keep their men from killing our men?	118C	I02
<b>BLACK SOLDIER Sgt. Benjamin Robinson</b>	I never heard them say so. I know General Forrest rode his horse over me three or four times. I did not know him until I heard his men call his name. He said to some negro men there that he knew them; that they had been in a big nigger yard in Memphis, he said he was not worth five dollars when he started, and had got rich trading in negroes.	118D	W06
<b>INVESTIGATOR Mr. Gooch</b>	Where were you from?	118E	I02
<b>BLACK SOLDIER Sgt. Benjamin Robinson</b>	I came from South Carolina.	118F	W06
<b>INVESTIGATOR Mr. Gooch</b>	Have you been a slave?	118G	I02
<b>BLACK SOLDIER Sgt. Benjamin Robinson</b>	Yes, sir.	118H	W06
<b>NARRATOR</b>	Daniel Tyler, (colored,) private, company B, 6th United States heavy artillery, sworn and examined by Mr. Gooch in the Mound City Hospital, Illinois on April 22, 1864.		
<b>INVESTIGATOR Mr. Gooch</b>	Where were you raised?		
<b>BLACK SOLDIER</b>	In Mississippi.		

Pvt. Daniel  
Tyler

INVESTIGATOR     Have you been a slave?  
Mr. Gooch

BLACK SOLDIER    Yes, sir.  
Pvt. Daniel  
Tyler

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Act 3:                    Scene 2: Writers  
Black Soldiers   • Curt Anders  
                          • Brian Steel Wills  
                          • Harry Turtledove  
                          • Andrew Ward  
                          • John Allan Wyeth

CHARACTER                LINES

MODERATOR                Our next guest is Curt Anders, author of 'Hearts  
in Conflict: a One-Volume History of the Civil  
War.' Tell us, Mr. Andres, what actually happened  
that April afternoon 150 years ago. Please feel  
free to read directly from your book.

WRITER - Curt            It began in an ordinary way, with skirmishing.  
Anders                    Forrest placed troopers on both flanks of the  
                          fort, where they could fire into its defenders if  
                          they tried to flee down ravines to the landing.

WRITER - Curt            There the survivors might be rescued by a Union  
Anders (continued)       gunboat standing by close to the dock. For about  
                          five hours Forrest's guns shelled the fort, and  
                          the gunboat fire back. By three o'clock that  
                          afternoon the "Wizard of the Saddle" had had three  
                          horses shot from under him and wanted the fight  
                          ended.

WRITER - Curt            To do that, he got a party ready to deliver an  
Anders (continued)       ultimatum:

"As your gallant defense of the fort has entitled you to the treatment of brave men, I now demand an unconditional surrender of your force, at the same time assuring you that they will be treated as prisoners of war. I have received a fresh supply of ammunition and can easily take your fort."

**WRITER - Curt**  
**Anders** (continued) Before the officers left, there was some discussion as to whether the former slaves would be treated in the same manner as the whites. Yes, said Forrest.

**WRITER - Curt**  
**Anders** (continued) No confederate knew it, but Major Booth had been killed six hours before. Another officer signed Booth's name in the reply, which was a request for an hours in which to confer with the gunboat's captain. While Forrest was thinking about that, two facts emerged: Inside the fort, whiskey barrels were open, and the troops where showing the effects of it; and several transports were coming upriver bringing artillery as well as infantry reinforcements.

**WRITER - Curt**  
**Anders** (continued) General Forrest gave the federal commander twenty minutes. He added that so great was the hatred existing between the West Tennesseans in both commands, he could not be responsible for the consequences if he were obliged to storm the fort.

Back came a refusal.

**WRITER - Curt**  
**Anders** (continued) Forrest ordered a charge. Soon the federals were running down the ravine, peppered by rebel sharpshooters on its banks, rushing toward a gunboat that not only was not at the landing but was not firing.

**WRITER - Curt**  
**Anders** (continued) The acting commander had left the flag flying over the fort; he had not surrendered, nor did he after the dash down the gully began.

**WRITER - Curt**  
**Anders** (continued) It appeared to the Confederates that the Yankees, still carrying their weapons and some firing back as they fled, were merely transferring the fight from one place to another.

**WRITER - Curt Anders** (continued) The battle went on until individual bluecoats threw up their hands. Yet this battle would be known ever afterward by the misleading name Union newspapers promptly gave it: the "Fort Pillow Massacre."

**WRITER - Curt Anders** (continued) Later, it would be reckoned that out of 557 federals in the fort's garrison, 221 had been killed, and among the 336 taken prisoner, 226 were wounded.

**WRITER - Curt Anders** (continued) What infuriated Northern readers of "atrocities" stories, of course, were the numbers regarding the 262 Negro Union troops. Of them, 204 were killed or wounded, 58 were able to walk into Confederate captivity, along with 168 of the 293 whites.

**WRITER - Curt Anders** (continued) But amid near-hysterical allegations, the facts got lost or were ignored.

In Nathan Bedford Forrest the North had a made-to-order villain, beginning with the fact that before the war he had been a trader in slaves.

**WRITER - Curt Anders** (continued) Forrest was a natural soldier, one far removed from the cesspools of politics, and he dealt with Fort Pillow as a military objective and nothing more. But the Union Congress's Committee on the Conduct of the War and the rest of the vote cravers in the North (for 1864 was an election year) went into a frenzy.

**MODERATOR** Thank you, Mr. Anders.

Our next guest is Brian Steel Wills who wrote "The Confederacy's Greatest Cavalryman: Nathan Bedford Forrest". It's been called the best ever biography on Forrest.

**MODERATOR** (continued) Mr. Wills, you've heard the testimony of the witnesses and you've heard Mr. Andre's comments. We'd like you to read selected excerpts for your book to give your perspective as a Forrest biographer.

**WRITER - Brian Steel Wills** Although some evidence has pointed to Bedford Forrest as the perpetrator of the systematic

massacre of the garrison of Fort Pillow, it was  
circumstantial of questionable.

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