

1864 Tennessee Campaign

Mt. Pleasant to Nashville & more

Rattle and Snap:

Rattle and Snap was named thus by William Polk after winning the 5,000 acres this home is built on in a dice-like game called Rattle and Snap. William Polk deeded his land to his four sons, George Polk being the son who built this mansion in 1845.

Rattle and Snap was the home of one of the Confederacy's well known generals for a short time, General Leonidas Polk, also known as "The Fighting Bishop." During Hood's Tennessee Campaign, many soldiers noted the grandness of this home -- one of Cleburne's men commenting, "the prettiest place I have ever seen in my life."

Rattle and Snap was restored recently and is now open to the public for viewing. It is furnished with many original pieces, and furnishings belonging to Lucius Polk, brother of George Polk.

* Note of Interest: General Leonidas Polk's home was "Ashwood Hall," which burned in a fire after the war.

St. John's Episcopal Church:

Located at the intersection of Mt. Zion and Columbia Pike, this church was built by the Polk family in the 1840's. It is at this church that General Cleburne, on his way past it in 1864, commented to his officer, "It is almost worth dying to be buried in such a beautiful spot." How poignant that less than a week later his remains should be interred here following the Battle of Franklin. Generals Granbury and Strahl, along with Colonel Beckham (S.D.Lee's Chief of artillery) were buried here as well. Granbury, Strahl and Cleburne were removed in later years.

* Note of Interest: General Carter (also killed at Franklin) is still buried in the Rosehill Cemetery in Columbia.

Zion Presbyterian:

If you turn left at the intersection of Zion Road, you will come across the oldest church in Maury County and the Zion Cemetery. This site is of interest in that Sam Watkins of Co. is buried here.

Hamilton Place:

Traveling towards Columbia, a short distance past St. John's Church, on the left, is Hamilton Place. This was the home of General Lucius J. Polk, brother of the recently deceased Leonidas Polk. It was here, on November 26th and 27th, that the local citizens entertained officers of the Confederate Army, including Hood, Cheatham, Bate, Brown and Walthall.

* Note of Interest: Used as a Hospital after the Battle of Franklin. Brig. General Arthur Middleton Manigault (Manigault Brigade - Edward Johnson Division) Was Cared for here after being wounded in the head At Franklin. As well as Major Thomas McCarroll Price Jr. of the 22nd Alabama Infantry.

Details: Hamilton Place is a private residence and not open to the public.

The Athenaeum:

Located in town (Columbia), a short distance from President Polk's home, this house was built in 1852 for his nephew. It was used throughout the Civil War by Union officers who occupied Columbia, as well as serving as General Schofield's HQ in November of 1864.

Citizens tell how Loring's Confederate troops rushed into Columbia on the morning of November 28th, smashing and looting the Athenaeum. It was here that General Cheatham is said to have found a map that Schofield inadvertently left behind.

Note Of Interest:

Off of the town square in Columbia, there stands an old bank building on the corner of Hwy 31 and Columbia Pike. General Earl Van Dorn's body was placed in the vault of this bank building overnight, awaiting funeral services. On the opposite corner, which a flower shop now occupies, is the building in which General Forrest was stabbed by one of his own men.

Elm Springs:

While traveling on Columbia Pike, coming from Mt. Pleasant, if you were to continue your drive onto Hwy 50 to Mooresville Pike (about 200 yards from intersection), you will find Elm Springs. This mansion was restored and is now used as the National Headquarters for the Sons of the Confederate Veterans. The home was built in 1837. During the war, it was the home of Abram Looney, who served as the Colonel of Company H, First Tennessee Infantry. He was an outspoken Southerner and this almost resulted in the loss of Elm Springs. In November, 1864, the Federal Army, which had occupied Maury County for several months, was preparing defensive positions ahead of the oncoming Confederate troops under Gen. John B. Hood. Their line of defense extended from the Mooresville Pike to the Mt. Pleasant Pike. One of the defensive tactics used was the destruction of important buildings along the line. Elm Springs anchored the

eastern flank of their line. Many houses were burned during those days and Elm Springs was slated to be destroyed too. Fires were started that might have burned the house except for the opportune arrival of Confederate troops who extinguished the flames. You will still find the scorch marks in the hall closet.

Greenwood Cemetery:

Turning left on Hwy. 31 from Columbia Pike, you'll find a cemetery on your left. This cemetery was established in 1809, overlooking the Duck River. If you'll wander among the headstones, you'll see the damage caused to them by Cox's men, who from across the river, fired upon Stephenson's sharpshooters in an attempt to stop S.D. Lee's men from crossing the river. Looking down the steep embankment to the river, behind the cemetery, you'll wonder how Lee managed to get his pontoons into the water to cross the Duck here.

Spring Hill

After your stop at Greenwood, continue following Highway 31, and Schofield's harrowing night march route to Spring Hill. Located 12 miles south of Franklin, Tennessee, Spring Hill has been nothing more than a paragraph in our history books and a small town the armies marched through during Hood's 1864 Tennessee Campaign. But with the publication of Wiley Sword's: "Embrace An Angry Wind," the controversial events that took place in Spring Hill have sparked a renewed interest among historians and preservationists.

On November 29th, 1864, General John Bell Hood's Army of Tennessee attempted to flank a portion of General George Thomas's Union army, The Army of The Tennessee, in Spring Hill. A Confederate division under command of General Patrick R. Cleburne, along with General Forrest's cavalry, attacked the Federals here in the late afternoon and routed a part of the Federal forces. But due to a puzzling and controversial chain of events, General John M. Schofield and his 23,000 Union soldiers managed to squeeze through the trap that Hood had set, and had retreated to Franklin on the morning of November 30th, where a costly battle was fought between the two armies. For over 100 years it was believed that nothing more than a skirmish took place here, with virtually no casualties. But with the publication of Alethea Sayer's book: "The Sound of Brown's Guns; The Battle of Spring Hill," facts indicate that the numbers involved in this battle exceeded over 10,000 with combined casualties of 850. In 1995, The Spring Hill Battlefield Preservation Council, with financial aid from the APCWS and CWT, was able to acquire the 110-acre site of the battlefield here. It has remained farmland since the Civil War, as pristine as it was when the battle was fought. Now, there's much more to see in Spring Hill since Maury County and the automaker giant, The Saturn Corporation (located just south of town), teamed up to double the efforts of local historic preservation.

Even before Hood's 1864 Campaign, Spring Hill was known as the place where Confederate General Earl Van Dorn was murdered in 1863. Below, check out sites

to see in this small southern town that will definitely make your visit here worthwhile.

Spring Hill Battlefield:

A 110-acre battlefield site, located off of Highway 51 and Saturn Parkway on Kedron Road, where General Cleburne commanded the last battle he was to survive. It was here that Union General Luther P. Bradley's Brigade was routed and suffered 350 casualties in their attempt to keep Hood's army from capturing the town and the Union's 800 wagons.

Rippavilla Mansion:

A restored mansion, formerly the home of Confederate Major Nathaniel Cheairs, which now houses the "Armies of Tennessee Museum." Major Cheairs was taken prisoner during the capture of Fort Donelson, where he personally was ordered to hand the surrender flag to General Grant. Upon his release, Nathaniel Cheairs returned to his plantation in Spring Hill to find General Forrest and his men camped in his fields in 1863. Though he had taken the oath not to serve against the Union, Nathaniel joined his son, who had been serving on the General's staff, for the remainder of the war.

The Martin Cheairs Home:

This home is where Confederate General Earl Van Dorn was murdered by a jealous husband, Dr. George Peters, while he was headquartered there in the spring of 1863. The home was built by Martin Cheairs, brother to Nathaniel Cheairs. It is now privately owned by the Tennessee State Orphanage and is located on Highway 51.

Oaklawn Mansion:

Used as General Hood's headquarters, and the boyhood home of his Colonel Thompson (Chief Surgeon for The Army of Tennessee), this home has been restored and furnished to the Civil War era. It is located off of Kedron Road on Denning Lane.

The Ewell Farm:

The restored home of General Richard S. Ewell and his wife, the Widow Brown, from 1865 until the general's death. It is now privately owned but may be viewed from the drive-way off of depot street.

WhiteHall Mansion:

WhiteHall is presently being restored by its current owners and may soon be open to the public. It was here that General Earl Van Dorn made his headquarters just prior to moving to The Martin Cheairs home. General Forrest was said to be a frequent visitor. During the Civil War it was the home of Dr. White and it was where some of the casualties of Franklin were brought after the battle. It is located off Mt. Carmel Road, which is off Main Street.

The McKissack Home:

The girlhood home of the infamous Jessie McKissack Peters, who was said to have been the woman responsible for General Van Dorn's death. This was also the home in which Union General Thomas Schofield discussed the surrender of his army to General Hood on November 29th 1864. It is located on Highway 31.

The Spring Hill Cemetery:

There is a stone erected here by the local UDC chapter, which is dedicated to ten unknown soldiers of the Battle of Franklin. Recent research indicates that it could also contain some of the unknown casualties of the Battle of Spring Hill.

Leaving Spring Hill, following both armies on their trek northward, you'll be on Highway 31 North, or the Columbia-to-Franklin Pike. The first place of note you'll see is Homestead Manor in Thompson's Station.

On March 5 1863 during the battle of Thompsons Station young Alice Thompson was watching the Battle from the basement of "Homestead Manor" and saw the color bearer of the 3rd Arkansas Infantry fall to the ground. Alice sprang from the cellar, caught up the flag and waved it over her head. Colonel Samuel G. Earle, of the Third Arkansas Regiment, saw her and shouted, "Boys a woman has your flag". Upon seeing this heroic action from one of their women, the Rebels raised a great battle cry and drove the Yankees back. While Alice held the flag, a bombshell fell within a few feet, throwing dirt all over her. Fortunately, the shell did not explode. One of the soldiers pushed her back into the cellar. The house also served as a hospital during the battle.

Details: Homestead Manor is a private residence and not open to the public.

Thompson's Station:

Thompson's Station was the scene of a battle on March 5, 1863. The principal commanders were: US Col. John Coburn and CS Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn. During the period of inactivity following the Battle of Stones River, Coburn's forces left Franklin to reconnoiter south towards Columbia. Coburn attacked what he presumed to be two Confederate regiments. Van Dorn seized the initiative, sending Brig. Gen. W. H. "Red" Jackson's dismounted to make a frontal attack while Nathan B. Forrest's Division swept around Coburn's flanks. Jackson carried Coburn's hilltop position and Forrest captured Coburn's wagons as well as blocking the road to Columbia in his rear. Coburn was forced to surrender, resulting in 1,906 Union casualties (most captured) and 300 Confederate casualties. Much of the hard fighting took place around the brick residence of Homestead Manor, and casualties were buried on the property. Thompson's Station is also where

Ross's Texas Brigade attempted to halt Schofield's wagon train on November 30, 1864, by attacking and burning some of the wagons before being repulsed by Union artillery

Continuing north, From Thompson Station you'll see the antebellum home of Laurel Hill. Hood's officers stopped here briefly on their way to Franklin on November 30, 1864.

Laurel Hill

Laurel grew on the lawn and nearby woods. The house was erected in the early 1800s, additions were made as late as 1854. It has thick floors of ash, walnut, and poplar. The front door is solid walnut and the mantels are handcarved. The outstanding feature is the sweeping staircase.

Details: Laurel Hill is a private residence and not open to the public.

Harrison Home:

Harrison Home is a short distance north of Laurel Hill, and two miles south of the Carter House. This home served as Hood's headquarters during the Battle of Franklin on November 30, 1864. Here is where Hood held council with his subordinates; officers Forrest, Cleburne and Cheatham argued against the attack. General John C. Carter was brought here after suffering a mortal wound at Franklin, where he lingered for three days before his death.

Winstead Hill:

Winstead Hill: From this vantage point (looking northward from Winstead Hill toward the village of Franklin), Hood studied the Union lines and their fortifications with his field glasses. With the bareness of the trees from the season, the Carter house was plainly visible, and the late afternoon sun glinted off the weapons of the entrenched Federals. Turning to Generals Cleburne, Brown and other officers present, he then outlined his battle plan, instructing them where to place their divisions.

Here on the northern face of Winstead Hill, you will find "Brigadiers' Walk," where markers commemorate the five brigadier generals who died at Franklin; Hiram Granbury, States Rights Gist, Otho F. Strahl, John C. Carter (mortally wounded), and John Adams. Most recently, a special monument was erected to honor Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne.

Carnton (the McGavock Mansion):

Located on Lewisburg Pike, which runs into Franklin parallel with Columbia Pike, this fine home was once owned by former Nashville Mayor John McGavock. The McGavock home is also the setting used for a new best selling Civil War fiction "The Black Flower." It is operated as a museum and open to the public. It is said three of the five Confederate generals killed in battle, Cleburne, Adams and Granbury, were brought here to the rear gallery at Carnton and laid out side by side.

Caught up in the path of Gen. A. P. Stewart's advancing columns during the battle, Elizabeth McGavock opened her home to hundreds of wounded and dying Rebels. They filled every room and closet of the home, spilling out into the yard, while surgeons worked feverishly in one of the upstairs bedrooms.

The Confederate Cemetery at Carnton:

This is the largest private Confederate cemetery in the country. In 1866, the McGavocks designated two acres of their land for the reinterment of 1,500 Southern soldiers killed at Franklin. The graves are laid out by state, with separate areas for unknown. General Johnson K. Duncan, who died of fever in Knoxville, TN in 1862, while serving as Bragg's chief of staff is also buried here.

Lotz House:

The Lotz House is located directly across the street from the Carter House, and is now a museum featuring an extensive collection of War Between the States and Old West artifacts. The house was built in 1858 by a German immigrant, Johann Lotz. During the Battle of Franklin, the Lotz House represented the center of the Union's entrenched line, dividing part of Col. Emerson Opdyke's brigade as it made the famous counter charge that stemmed the Confederate breakthrough along the Columbia Pike. After the battle, the house was used as a hospital, treating wounded men from both armies.

The Carter House:

Located on Columbia Pike, this home was built by Fountain Branch Carter in 1830 and sat on the southern edge of the town surrounded by farming fields in 1864. From Winstead Hill to the Carter House represented two miles of open ground that the Army of Tennessee would have to advance across to reach the Federal lines.

The Carter House served as a Federal Command Post while the family hid in the cellar during the hours of battle. Some of the bloodiest hand-to-hand fighting took place in the garden and yard of the home. A smoke house and the small building used as an office by Mr. Carter, are riddled with bullet holes and still stand today -- a testament to what took place there on November 30th, 1864. The Carter House and grounds are open for public tours. Scarcely had the terrible din of battle subsided when the sad tidings were that Capt. "Tod" Carter lay wounded on the field. By the light of a lantern, he was found mortally wounded by his father and sisters only a few hundred yards from the house. He was then carried gently to his home, his sisters whispering: "Brother's come home at last." Though receiving medical attention, young "Tod" died 36 hours after he was brought home. "It is something which is not always given a soldier," wrote Rev. Henry M. Field, "to draw his last breath under his father's roof, and to be laid in his last sleep beside the dust of his kindred.

Fort Granger:

Fort Granger is located off of Highway 96, behind the park. It is necessary to park your car and follow a trail to the earthworks, but worth the trip. Fort Granger, a Union earthen fortification on the Harpeth River near Franklin, was built shortly after middle Tennessee was captured from the Confederacy in early 1862. Named for Gen. Gordon Granger, Union commander in Franklin in 1863, the fort was constructed in March-May of that year by laborers working 24 hours a day. The fort encompasses 11.76 acres, containing two fortified fronts on the northern and eastern sides. By April 1863, Fort Granger held 18 field guns and two 30-pound siege cannons. The artillery fired through embrasures (openings in the parapet walls). At full capacity, the fort housed 5,194 infantry, 2,728 cavalry, and 24 artillery pieces.

It played an important role in the first Battle of Franklin in May of 1863, which involved General Earl Van Dorn's forces against General Gordon Granger's Union forces that occupied Franklin. Ironically, the same Union General David S. Stanley, who played a vital role in the 1864 Battle of Franklin, would fall upon Van Dorn's flanks and thwart his attempt to take Franklin in 1863.

During the battle on November 30th, 1864, the fort served as a headquarters for General Schofield and held 8,500 soldiers along with 24 guns. Some of the shells from the fort landed on the houses in the town during the battle. Long neglected after the Civil War, the fort was purchased by the City of Franklin in the 1970's but unfortunately, none of the original wooden works survived.

For more info on sites to see in Franklin, Visit Save The Franklin Battlefield website:
<http://www.franklin-stfb.org/>