

SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

December 1998

www.franklin-stfb.org

Dedicated to the Preservation, Protection, and Promotion of Civil War Sites in Williamson County, Tennessee

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Your Board met on Monday evening, December 14,, 1998 to discuss plans for 1999. If we are to continue to grow, as we have over the last year, we are going to need volunteers.

We want to again conduct tours and we want membership to become involved. Please call me at 368-7246 or the STFB office at 591-1774.

If you have suggestions for a special project, give us a call. We need your help!

The Board also voted on December 14 to give special recognition to Mr. Peter Schofield. He has informed us he will be moving to Ohio next spring and can no longer serve on your board.

Peter has served as one of your Co-Vice Presidents and has taken care of most of the press releases for the projects Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc has undertaken over the last two years.

It is rare today to have someone move into a community, become interested in it's history and work so hard toward preserving that history. All of Williamson County needs to be very grateful that Peter chose to live and work among us.

Thank you Mr. Schofield, you will be missed!

It is my wish for you and your loved ones to have the best of Holidays and a most successful 1999.

E. J. Neeley

Historic Marker Dedicated at Carter Cotton Gin Site

On Sunday, December 20, at 2:00 PM, representatives from several local historical groups at the Carter Cotton Gin site at 109 Cleburne Street in Franklin to dedicate a new roadside historical marker. On November 30, 1864, the Battle of Franklin swirled around this cotton gin and the family's home, the Carter House, just across the pike.

Several onlookers joined the representatives of Save The Franklin Battlefield, The Heritage Foundation, the Carter House, the Williamson County Historical Society and Stones River National Battlefield Park to unveil the new marker after a short dedication ceremony. The house on the gin site was purchased in 1997 by the Heritage Foundation. The long range goal is to one day incorporate the site into a Battlefield Park.

In opening remarks, Heritage Foundation President, Ernie Bacon, said that the marker is one more step toward reclaiming a portion of the Franklin Battlefield. "Other land acquisition projects are in the works," he predicted, "but it is far too

early to say exactly when and how they might occur."

Thomas Cartwright, Executive Director at the Carter House, then recounted some of the battle's events near the gin house site. "It has been a long time coming," reflected Cartwright, "but it is very, very gratifying to finally see a marker on this important place on the battlefield." Cartwright then named the regiments of both sides that fought and bled in the vicinity of the gin house and its new marker.

Stones River Battlefield Park Superintendent, Mary Ann Peckham, praised the cooperative working arrangements of the any historical groups in Williamson County. "As we try to deal with further encroachment on Stones River Park in Murfreesboro," she said, "we need to emulate the working environment that you have created among these organizations."

Funds for the marker were donated by Save the Franklin Battlefield, Inc according to STFB President EJ Neeley, the

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The News In Review by Peter Schofield

Highlights from print media articles of interest to the battlefield community

The Mayor wore blue (Sharber plays Yankee camp surgeon in Incident at Fort Granger) – The Tennessean – 10/23/98 – His back stiff as a ramrod, Franklin Mayor Jerry Sharber turned to his boss and gestured emphatically, his face working with emotion. “Let me put it to you this way, sir,” he said with real passion. “Would you ride between here and Murfreesboro without at least a dozen armed men?” Though his tone was convincing, His Honor wasn’t talking about a highway crime wave, or commenting on his political popularity. Dressed in the blue jacket of a Union army soldier during the Civil War, he was rehearsing his part in Franklin’s bicentennial celebration. Southern drawl and all, he played the role of Yankee camp surgeon William Crawford in a recent world-premiere production of *An Incident at Fort Granger*. As Capt. Crawford, Sharber helped illuminate one of the strangest, and saddest, stories in Franklin’s past. In June of 1863, two young men purporting to be on a military inspection mission with the Union Army presented themselves to Col. J. P. Baird, the federal commander at Franklin. After offering the pair his hospitality, he sent them on their way, but later he and several members of his staff had misgivings about their visitors. Apprehended on their way out of town they turned out to be Confederate soldiers claiming to be bored and out on a lark. But, after a hasty trial, despite grave misgivings by Baird, Col. William Orton Williams and Lt. Walter G. Peter were hanged as spies from a tree some say still stands on Liberty Pike. Sharber’s performance, as one of the garrison who early on had doubted the authenticity of Williams and Peter, may owe a little something – besides his military bearing and snappy salute – to his years as a military police officer in the Army Reserve. As for playing a Yankee, the Nashville native says wryly, “It’s just a part.”

Carnton Mansion mentioned in ‘Forbes’ and featured in C-SPAN –

The Tennessean – 10/26/98 – Historic Carnton Plantation, which generally goes about its business with little fanfare, is in the national media spotlight these days. In the October *Forbes* magazine both the museum and nearby McGavock Cemetery are mentioned prominently in an article about Carnton supporter J. Roderick Heller, III. The C-SPAN cable network will also feature Carnton in its educational “School Bus” series on December 4. “We are always flattered to receive media attention,” said Angela Calhoun, Carnton executive director, “especially when it comes in conjunction with the founder of the Civil War Trust, Mr. Heller, and highlights our expanding educational programs. Heller is a direct descendant of John and Carrie McGavock, who lived in Carnton during the Civil War and opened their home to wounded Confederate soldiers after the Battle of Franklin. A longtime preservationist, he was formerly vice chairman of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, before founding the Civil War Trust in 1991, a private foundation that seeks to preserve battlefields and historic sites. For additional information about Carnton Plantation, call 615/794-0903

Main Street Association gets grant for video – The Tennessean – 10/29/98 – The Tennessee Main Street Association has been awarded a \$1,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation to research, develop and produce an educational video. The grant must be matched dollar for dollar with public or private funds. “With these startup dollars, the Tennessee Main Street Association joins communities nationwide committed to preserving and promoting our country’s architectural and cultural heritage,” Nancy Tinker, field representative for the National trust said. “By creating this educational video for Tennessee downtowns, the Tennessee Main Street Association

will also be creating more livable communities throughout the state.” For more information about the Tennessee Main Street Association, contact Cate Hamilton or Fay Fisher Jones at 615/591-9091.

Account of Crockett’s death on the block – The Tennessean 11/18/98 – The hand-written memoir of a Mexican officer, whose eyewitness account of David Crockett’s death challenges the time-honored, but romanticized, version of the Alamo’s capture, will be sold to the highest bidder. An auction catalogue values the manuscript and associated documents – about 700 pages in all – at \$200,000 to \$300,000, but a spokesman for the Butterfield & Butterfield auction house described that range as conservative. In the book, *With Santa Anna in Texas: A Personal Narrative of the Revolution*, Jose Enrique de la Pena, a junior officer in the Mexican army, reported that Crockett was among seven Alamo defenders executed after the fortress was stormed March 6, 1836. The book’s authenticity has been challenged by historians and others who believe Crockett fought to the death in the 13-day siege, wielding his long-rifle, Betsy, like a bloody club. Much of the work was written while de la Pena was imprisoned for opposing the Mexican government in the late 1830s. It first was published in Spanish in 1955 and in English 20 years later. Greg Shaw, the auction company’s vice president and director of books and manuscripts, said scrutiny of watermarks on the manuscript’s pages indicates the paper was manufactured in Portugal during the early 19th century. That finding, he said, lends credence to historians who argue the work is not a 20th-century forgery. Since the late 1970s the manuscript has been on loan to the University of Texas in San Antonio, where it has been the centerpiece of the Peace Collection which consists of some 900 books and 500 documents detailing almost 300 years of Texas history.

Letter From Franklin

The following is an excerpt of a letter written by Col. Emerson Opdycke two days after the Battle of Franklin.

"After darkness shadowed the awful scene, the blazing guns seemed to be millions; finally the enemy yielded and ceased firing. I stepped over the front of our works to see the effect. I never saw their dead and wounded lie so thickly heaped one upon another; the carnage was awful.

I saw Gen. Cox during the battle with his hat off, rallying the stragglers under a terrific fire, and I never worked so hard since I was born, as I did trying to force the stampeded men (from the overrun advanced line: ed) back to the works, to help my own invincible brigade. I broke my pistol, using it as a club, and then got off my horse, took a musket, and absolutely drove them.

One of the rebel sharpshooters, who is now a prisoner, says he took deliberate aim at me six times. He enquired my name after he was taken."

NOTES: Col. Emerson Opdycke commanded the reserve Federal brigade just north of the Carter House that drove forward to contain the Confederate breach of the Union trench line. The brigade included Opdycke's old regiment, the 125th OVI, nicknamed Opdycke's Tigers.

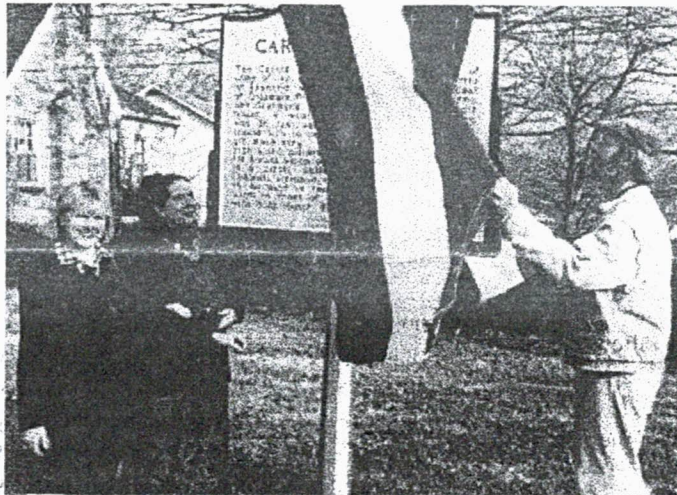
This letter is provided by Nelson C Haldane who comments that the broken pistol account is somewhat at variance with Wiley Sword's description in 'Embrace An Angry Wind', that contends Opdycke broke his pistol swinging it at the enemy. This theme was subsequently portrayed by Don Troiani in his painting 'Opdycke's Tigers'.

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funds were raised by the group's membership and supporters earlier this year with plans to dedicate the marker on the battle's anniversary in November 30.

But spring floods at the foundry site caused the marker manufacturer to fall several months behind schedule. With yeoman effort, the workmen shipped the marker in early December.

Historians at the Letz House and Carter House Museums provided research for the marker's text. The Williamson County Historical Society coordinated the design and style of the marker to be uniform with existing historical markers in the county.



The Heritage Foundation's Mary Pearce, STFB president, E.J. Neeley, and the Carter House's Thomas Cartwright unveil the new Cotton Gin Marker on Sunday, December 20.

SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

Save The Franklin Battlefield Membership/Renewal/Order Form

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____ E-Mail Address _____

Mail To: Save The Franklin Battlefield~P.O. Box 851~Franklin, TN 37065-0851
Membership is annual, donations are tax deductible.

Quantity	Description Annual Membership (Choose One)	Price Each	Total
	1999 STFB Day by Day Bicentennial Calendar	\$12.00	
	"Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville" Book Reprint	\$20.00	
	1989 Commerative Belt Buckle	\$10.00	
	1989 Commerative Paperweight	\$10.00	
	1997 Self-Guided Driving Tour Map	\$3.00	
	Save The Franklin Battlefield Bumperstiicker	\$1.50	
		Order Sub-Total	
		Shipping/Handling under \$10 \$0.75 \$10 - \$24.99 \$2.95 \$25 and up \$4.50	
	-Individual	\$12.00	
	-Family	\$15.00	
	-Corporate	\$25.00	
		Order Total	