



SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

April 2001

www.franklin-stfb.org

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

From the President

The Battle of Franklin and the plight of its battlefield are becoming better known with each passing day. We had James Lighthizer, the president of the Civil War Preservation Trust (formerly the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites and the Civil War Trust), in Franklin for a visit and to share our concerns. STFB also was well-represented at the annual meeting of the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association (see elsewhere in this newsletter). We continue to promote our cause at the state and national levels.

We hope to have exciting news on our Hyssop Hill land acquisition in next month's newsletter. We appreciate all of you who have pledged donations to Save The Franklin Battlefield!

Joe Smyth

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 5-6

HERITAGE FOUNDATION TOUR OF HOMES, FEATURING DOWNTOWN FRANKLIN AND NOLLENSVILLE.

MAY 10

MIDDLE TENNESSEE CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE. BRENTWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (BACK ENTRANCE).

MAY 12

STFB BOOTH AT THE THOMPSON'S STATION ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL

MAY 17

BATTLE OF NASHVILLE PRESERVATION SOCIETY TOUR OF DOWNTOWN NASHVILLE CIVIL WAR SITES BY JIM HUBLER FOLLOWED BY SOCIAL HOUR AT PRIME CUT. VISITORS WELCOME.

Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association Annual Meeting

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association was held April 14, 2001, at Cloverbottom Mansion, the headquarters of The Tennessee Historical Commission. Stuart Moore, the outgoing president of TCWPA, served as coordinator of the meeting. The keynote speaker was Jim Lighthizer, President, Civil War Preservation Trust. Accompanying him was Noah Mehrkam, Civil War Sites Coordinator, Civil War Preservation Trust.

The mission of TCWPA is to help hold Tennessee's "Hallowed Ground" by raising funds for acquisitions statewide. In the meeting, representatives from the various Civil War organizations were invited to describe their activities and goals. The organizations represented included Friends of Stones River, Tennessee Backroads, Rose Center/Friends of Bethesda Church, Davis Bridge, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Tennessee Civil Wars Committee, Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area, National Park Service, Civil War Roundtable, Williamson County Heritage Association, and Save the Franklin Battlefield.

Sam Huffman represented STFB in presenting the mission of the organization, past activities, and goals which have been set. He also was elected to the TCWPA. Board of Directors.

News In Review by Sam Gant

Board backs off of second high school site - *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." - 4/18/01 FRANKLIN – School board members hope to avoid condemnation as owner resists sale of land for southern high school. The board faced another setback Monday night when their plans to buy 80 acres near the Goose Creek Bypass fell through. They're hoping to avoid condemning land as they did for a new southern elementary school on Highway 31. The Highway 31 entrance to Franklin is one of the few not already consumed by or planned for development and growth opponents fear the location of new schools on that highway will spark a multitude of new commercial buildings. The board felt forced to condemn land for an elementary school across from the historic Harrison House on Highway 31 because the owner was unwilling to sell. Pamela Lewis, who owns the Harrison House, argued that a new school across the street will ruin the "view shed" from her home. Several preservationists, Civil War buffs and neighbors showed up at the board's February meeting to support her. As of late last week, however, the school system officially had taken possession of the property.

Crucial Civil War site to be sold - *The Tennessean*, 4/25/01 SPRING HILL – An important piece of this town's history is for sale, and preservationists are concerned its surrounding plantation land may give way to development. Oaklawn, also known as the Absalom Thompson house, is the mansion in which Confederate General John Bell Hood slept on the night he let the Yankee army slip past him on Nov. 29, 1864. Now the home and its 237 acres will go to the highest bidder May 12 because the owners are moving out of state. Unfortunately, state and federal historic preservation groups have no provisions for purchasing expensive properties such as Oaklawn.

Huntsville, Alabama -- Jan. 20-- 1865

My Dear Father:

Letter From Franklin

In the whirl of military affairs, battles, and victories, I have almost forgotten the debt and credit of our correspondence. But if I owe you, this will pay it; and if you owe me, then this will add to that debt! I have not heard from you for a very long time, longer than I hope you will permit to intervene again. You have seen in the papers that we have fought Hood three days -- one at Franklin and two at Nashville. He was awfully whipped each day. I never saw such utter rout and demoralization. The paper accounts are not exaggerations. My brigade had the honor of saving the day at Franklin. This was asserted by Cox, Wagner, Stanley and Schofield and the immortal Thomas. The paper accounts of it in relation to me were all incorrect. I made that fortunate charge without orders from anyone and purely upon my own judgement and responsibility and I received no orders from the beginning of the battle until it's close - when the Generals congratulated me for "saving the army." I have written Henry a full account of it and sent him a little map that I made of it. He will be with you soon I presume and I would like you to read and see it. Our fighting at Nashville was easy. My brigade stormed the enemies works, took 3 cannon, 1 battleflag, and over 300 prisoners. The enemy never recovered from the bloody battle at Franklin, and never will. The news of the fall of Fort Fisher has just reached us and we all rejoice over the first great triumph of arms in 1865. We feel that this year must put a period to the bloody strife. Our Corps is here in splendid winter quarters. My brigade has the finest I ever saw - so says the Corps Commander. This is a charming place but the people are mostly secesh - and I don't like such one bit. J. Clennens of the old congress lives here - a thorough Unionist. My headquarters are in his house. I had his nephew - a secessionist - arrested the other day for shooting a negro. He is a youngish southern fire-eater - was brought in under guard after night and put in a darkie's kitchen for a prison overnight. He wished to be brought before me in the morning when he complained "that he was not used to such quarters and such treatment." I replied that "it was much better than you deserve." "What was I arrested for?" (he asked) I answered "for shooting with intent to kill a man." "Your civilization teaches you to stab and shoot whenever you think yourself offended, but ours teaches us that such practices are barbarous - that negroes have just as many rights as you have, and that your practices of negro concubinage are wicked, corrupt, and abominable - practiced only by Southern Chivalry." "You ought to be hung and I hope you will be. Guard, take him out!" He seemed sorry that he had made my acquaintance!

We are all well (and) getting ready for future operations. 'Had a letter from Henry yesterday of Dec. 30th. He was all right, expecting soon to be a citizen. Good night.

Your own son, E. Opdyke

(Courtesy of Mr. Henry Peltz, great-grandson of Col. Emerson Opdyke)

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
	2000 STFB Day by Day in Middle Tenn. Calendar	\$5.00	
	1999 STFB Day by Day Bicentennial Calendar	\$5.00	
	Both Calendars 1999 and 2000—different pictures in each!	\$10.00	
	"Retreat from Pulaski to Nashville" Book Reprint	\$20.00	
	1989 Commemorative Belt Buckle	\$10.00	
	1989 Commemorative Paperweight	\$10.00	
	1997 Self-Guided Driving Tour Map	\$3.00	
	Save The Franklin Battlefield Bumpersticker	\$1.50	
	Eyewitnesses to the Battle of Franklin by David Logsdon	\$12.00	
		Order Sub-Total	
		Shipping/Handling under \$10 \$0.75 \$10 - \$24.99 \$2.95 \$25 and up \$4.50	
	-Individual	\$20.00	
	-Family	\$30.00	
	-Corporate	\$50.00	
	Donation—Marker Fund		
	Donation—Land Purchase		
		Order Total	

Please note that the commemorative items listed above for sale can be viewed on the STFB website at:

More Logsdon Books Available From STFB

Save the Franklin Battlefield now offers Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Fort Donelson and Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Shiloh, companion volumes to the first book in the series, Eyewitnesses at the Battle of Franklin. These illustrated paperbacks take a different approach to familiar Civil War battles through the exclusive use of first-person accounts. Excerpts from scores of letters, diaries and memoirs are blended to present each battle, from beginning to end, from the point of view of men and women who were there.

Fort Donelson, 128 pages, draws on almost 90 eyewitness accounts; Shiloh, 112 pages, uses more than 100 first-person sources. Fort Donelson focuses on the gunboats' charge on the fort, the Confederate surprise attack, the charge of the Second Iowa, the Confederate commanders' collapse, surrender of the fort, burying the dead, and nursing the wounded and dying.

Shiloh focuses on the Confederate attack against Prentiss' Division, fighting at Shiloh Church, the Hornets' Nest, Grant's last-ditch stand, the Confederate retreat, descriptions of the battlefield, tending the wounded, and burying the dead.

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Save The Franklin Battlefield
PO Box 851
Franklin, TN 37065-0851
615-500-6612
www.franklin-stfb.org