



SAVE THE FRANKLIN BATTLEFIELD

March 2002

www.franklin-stfb.org

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

Dear STFB Member--

Save The Franklin Battlefield applauds the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) for naming the Franklin Battlefield one of the ten most threatened Civil War sites in America today. As part of the CWPT's "America's Most Endangered Battlefields" report for 2002, the announcement came February 26th from the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., and again from a second press conference at The Carter House.

With over 32,000 members, the Civil War Preservation Trust is the largest nonprofit battlefield preservation organization in the United States. Over the years, the CWPT has helped preserve more than 60 sites in 16 states totaling nearly 16,000 acres.

The eyes of the national Civil War preservation community and their financial backers are on Franklin. The Williamson County Commission and the City of Franklin have the once-in-a-century chance to take the preservation steps that should have been made long ago. The 12 acre Battle Ground Academy (BGA) campus occupies the heartland of the Franklin Battlefield, where hundreds of brave Americans, both North and South, fell and died. A precious opportunity exists to keep the BGA campus as an open battlefield park, and to expand this very part core by adding other parcels to the park as they come available.

Save The Franklin Battlefield hopes that the Civil War Preservation Trust report will raise public awareness, both locally and nationally, of the final plight of the Franklin Battlefield. Seven generations after November 30, 1864, this battlefield is one of the few tangible links remaining to our tumultuous past.

Joe Smyth

Civil War Preservation Trust names Franklin One of America's Most Endangered Battlefields

At a news conference on February 26, 2002 from the National Press Club in Washington DC, the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) unveiled its annual report on the status of the nation's historic battlegrounds. The report, entitled "America's Most Endangered Battlefields," identifies the Franklin Battlefield as one of the ten most threatened Civil War sites in the United States. The battlefields identified in the report were chosen based on location, military significance, and the immediacy of current threats. The report is composed of two parts: the first section cites the 10 most endangered battlefields in the nation, with a brief description of their history and preservation status; the second section lists 15 additional "at risk" sites that round out the top 25 endangered battlefields in the country.

CWPT President James Lighthizer warned during the news conference, "Our Civil War battlefields are vanishing at an alarming pace. Once lost, these hallowed battlegrounds can never be replaced." Joining Lighthizer at the news conference was Civil War author and preservationist Brian Pohanka. In his remarks, Pohanka emphasized, "Real people risked their lives at these battlefields for ideals they cherished above life itself. Allowing these sites to fall prey to development dishonors the memory of their courage and sacrifice."

CWPT received many nominations for Franklin from around the country "because it's recognized that Franklin is constantly under threat," spokesperson Jim Campi said. The report states, "Today, the Franklin battlefield is all but gone. A few opportunities remain to save portions of the battle-

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News In Review by Sam Gant

Atlanta top endangered battlefield; Franklin fifth – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 2/26/02

FRANKLIN – A national preservation group has joined the local skirmish over Battle of Franklin land. The Civil War Preservation Trust today will name Franklin's battlefield the fifth most endangered Civil War battlefield in the country. Atlanta's battlefield land led the endangered list, and the Stones River battlefield, near Murfreesboro, was 10th. "Today, the Franklin battlefield is all but gone," said the report. "A few opportunities remain to save portions of the battlefield, but most involve reclamation rather than preservation. In July 2001, a chance to save battlefield land adjacent to the historic Harrison House was lost, despite substantial public support for protection of the property. A few months later another opportunity presented itself with the sale of the Battle Ground Academy, which is situated at the heart of the battlefield. However, local officials soon announced plans to build a public library there instead."

Reclaimed battlefield segment makes public debut – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 3/1/02

FRANKLIN – Collin Farm, which played a significant role in the Nov. 30, 1864, Civil War Battle of Franklin, will be open for its first public tour on Sunday (March 3). The property, purchased last summer by Save The Franklin Battlefield, Inc., was the site of particularly vicious fighting when Maj. Gen. W.W. Loring's division advanced under artillery fire through the farm and across the Nashville and Decatur Railroad tracks only to face Osage orange abatis and entrenched Union forces equipped with repeating rifles.

Preservation groups come together to save Franklin's battlefields – *The Review Appeal* – 3/6/02 **FRANKLIN** – At a news conference at historic Carter House's museum, the Save the Franklin Battlefield (STFB) group and the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) announced their support of preservation of the Battle Ground Academy site as a battlefield park. "Franklin needs to stop paving over its history," remarked CWPT President James Lighthizer. "Putting up a few historical markers is not enough. We must preserve the hallowed ground where the dead of Franklin fought and bled." "You don't have to do this because you care about the heritage or open space [in Franklin]," he said. "Do it for tourism. Tourism brings people and people bring money."

Trust leader urges preservationists toward ballot box – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 3/6/02

FRANKLIN – James Lighthizer, president of the Civil War Preservation Trust, was at historic Carter House yesterday to urge local elected official to preserve what is left of the Franklin battlefield. But no elected public officials attended the morning press conference. "Franklin is a poster child for how not to save a battlefield,"

Lighthizer said, explaining the Washington, D.C. group's choice of the town for inclusion last month among the top 10 endangered Civil War battlefields. "We're here to remind your elected officials of their duty to help with the preservation of what is left of this important moment in American history."

America's Most Endangered Civil War Battlefields: Franklin, Tennessee, *Hallowed Ground*– Civil War Preservation Trust, Vol 3, No. 1 – Spring 2002 Today, Franklin battlefield is all but gone. A few opportunities to save portions of the battlefield remain, but most of these are squandered by a shortsighted local administration. In July 2001, a chance to save battlefield land adjacent to the historic Harrison House was ignored, despite substantial public support for preservation of the property. A few months later, another opportunity presented itself with the sale of the Battle Ground Academy, which is situated at the core of the battlefield. However, rather than protect this hallowed ground, local officials announced plans to build a public library there instead.

Ben Stein lends name to preservation cause – *The Tennessean*, "Williamson A.M." – 3/19/02 **FRANKLIN**– TV personality Ben Stein, a self-described Civil War Buff, came to Carter House yesterday, to lend his support to preserving the Franklin Battlefield. "When I read that this site was in jeopardy, I was moved to make a contribution and come here," Stein explained. Stein received a personal tour yesterday of Carter House and McGavock Cemetery near Carnton Plantation. The actor also toured to old gin house site off Columbia Avenue where one of Stein's personal heroes, Confederate Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne, was killed. Joining Stein on Monday's tour were Rep. Steve McDaniel and Williamson County Executive Clint Callicott.

Annual meeting to be held at Franklin – Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association *Newsletter* – Vol 4, No. 2, March 2002– NASHVILLE– The Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association will hold its annual meeting at Franklin Historic Presbyterian Church, Franklin, on Saturday, April 13, 2002. In addition to the business meeting and election of board members, will hear a presentation of the preservation of Davis Bridge and have the opportunity to take a field trip of Franklin Civil War sites. The recent successes at Franklin by the Save the Franklin Battlefield are encouraging to the Civil War preservation community. The TCWPA will tour the Franklin sites beginning at 2:00 p.m.

*The Franklin Battlefield will
"Win Ben Stein's Money"*

On Monday, March 18, 2002, author, writer, and television and movie personality Ben Stein toured the Franklin, recently designated as one of the ten most endangered battlefields in the country by the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT).

The private tour began at the Carter House Museum where Mr. Stein was joined by Tennessee House Minority Leader Steve McDaniel, Williamson County Executive Clint Callicott, The Carter House's Thomas Cartwright, STFB President Joe Smyth, STFB Treasurer Sam Huffman, and various members of the print, radio, and television media. The tour continued on with Cartwright, McDaniel, Smyth, and Huffman escorting him to the Carter Gin House site, Winstead Hill, Collins' Farm, and the McGavock Confederate Cemetery.

Ben Stein is an attorney, writer, college instructor, in addition to being an actor with a long list of movie credits, including his role as the boring teacher in 1986's "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" and television's "The Wonder Years." He is currently the host of Comedy Central's "Win Ben Stein's Money."

In an essay he wrote last year for USA Today, Mr. Stein warned, "Places where the key battles of the Civil War were fought are either in jeopardy or going fast under the bulldozer's pitiless blade.... This is criminal. There is no more important preservation in America than saving this land consecrated, as Lincoln said, by American blood."

Mr. Stein is a longtime Civil War buff and has visited and studied many of America's Civil War battlefields. He announced during his visit that he would donate \$2,000 for preservation of the Franklin Battlefield, making his donation to the Civil War Preservation Trust, earmarked for Franklin. The story of his visit has been picked up by Associated Press and CNN News, in addition to the local media.

"This site is sacred," Stein said. "It is a symbol of great American courage. The bravery of so many men, North and South, black and white, is overwhelming. When one contemplates their heroism, the idea [is] that as much of it as can be preserved...should be preserved." We are indebted to Mr. Stein for helping to Save The Franklin Battlefield!



Thomas Cartwright, of the Carter House, Ben Stein, Stan Tyson, County Commissioner, and Joe Smyth, President of STFB.

New Library on the Battlefield Site Update

When the county announced plans last fall to build a new library on the BGA Campus, we posted a Petition on our web site for interested persons to download, sign, and send in. To date, over 1,700 Americans have signed it and sent it to the Williamson County Executive with copies to STFB and the local Review Appeal newspaper.

Ninety-two percent of the petitioners live outside Williamson County, yet 42% have visited Franklin one or more times. The petitioners all strongly feel that putting the new library on the Battle Ground Academy Campus does not protect this last open parcel of our battlefield, but rather destroys it.

You can still download and circulate the Petition from the STFB web site at www.franklin-stfb.org. The web pages have mailing instructions.

From the latest informal discussions, the Library Board and County Commission still intend to place the new library on the old BGA Campus. The Library Board meets Wednesday, April 3 and the Commission on Monday, April 8. In public statements, both bodies contend that by building the library on this last open part of the Franklin Battlefield, and then naming it the War Memorial Library, they are actually creating a battlefield park.

To date, none of the national, state, or local preservation groups have subscribed to this new, and very unique, battlefield preservation technique. None of them have endorsed placing the new library on the BGA Campus.

STFB maintains that the library should be built elsewhere - preferably downtown near the new city parking garage. By doing so, the county can save the BGA open space as a battlefield park and can avoid paving yet another 3 acres of very precious Franklin real estate.

And recent developments -- On March 20, the county revealed plans to widen Columbia Avenue to 3 lanes along the BGA property to Downs Blvd, and to 5 lanes from there to Mack Hatcher Parkway. All of the BGA widening (about 20 feet) will be done on the BGA side of the street.

STFB SPEAKER PROGRAM

The Retired Officers Association (TROA) of Nashville recently contacted STFB asking if we could provide a guest speaker for one of their monthly meetings. COL (Ret) Jim Elmer contacted me and asked if we could provide a speaker for their February 26 meeting. TROA's membership is composed of retired military members from all branches of service with members having served in World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War.

Responding to COL Elmer's request was David Fraley, STFB board member and Carter House Historian. David spoke to a group of about 75 officers and wives assembled to hear about the Battle of Franklin and Nashville as well as STFB's mission of preservation and education. The group was very receptive and knowledgeable of the subject matter.

STFB has developed a speakers program and is available to speak to social or civic group throughout Williamson County and the surrounding areas. Our intent is to raise awareness of the need to save the Franklin Battlefield and what can be done by anyone interested in helping preserve the battlefield. If any of our readers are in need of a speaker on the Battle of Franklin and the STFB preservation role please contact any member of STFB or call Dan Mora (615) 599-4415.

A year ago, the plan was to build the library in downtown Franklin on property between 1st and 2nd Avenues. This is across 2nd Avenue front the new city parking garage. That plan was abandoned when the decision to move the library to BGA was announced.

As part of the county's plan to expand the old courthouse downtown, there is a possibility that the county will buy this same 2nd Avenue property to be used as a parking lot. Reasonable people might wonder why parking arrangements to share the city-parking garage cannot be negotiated. That way, less of downtown would be paved, and the library could be built on 2nd Avenue.

field, but most involve reclamation rather than preservation. In July 2001, a chance to save battlefield land adjacent to the historic Harrison House was lost, despite substantial public support for protection of the property. A few months later, another opportunity presented itself with the sale of the Battle Ground Academy, which is situated at the heart of the battlefield. However, local officials soon announced plans to build a public library there instead.”

Because of the efforts of STFB members and many others to publicize the efforts, both failed and successful, at Franklin, the CWPT decided to come to the Franklin Battlefield to give its only other national press conference on the report. Additionally, CWPT created (working with research, information, and input from STFB) a full-color map of the Franklin Battlefield, which accompanies the report.

At The Carter House on March 5, 2002, James Lighthizer, president of the Civil War Preservation Trust, joined Thomas Cartwright and STFB’s Sam Huffman to address the media. “Franklin is a poster child for how not to save a battlefield,” Lighthizer said, explaining the Washington, D.C. group’s choice of Franklin for inclusion among the top ten endangered Civil War battlefields. “We’re here because the Battle of Franklin was an enormously significant battle in American history. It’s also on our list because of the tremendous amount of desecration here.... We’re here to remind your elected officials of their duty to help with the preservation of what is left of this important moment in American history.”

Thomas Cartwright, director of Carter House and STFB member, is thankful to see the CWPT officially recognize the Franklin Battlefield as hallowed ground. “It’s not only a Franklin treasure, a Williamson County treasure and a state treasure, it is a national treasure. I can’t say it any better than Washington Gardner, who was a congressman after the war and a member of the 2nd Michigan Cavalry that fought in the Battle of Franklin. Gardner wrote around the turn of the century, ‘To me, that field is holy ground. When I visit it, I feel like taking the shoes from off my feet and yet there is not a thing to mark it except the Carter House. One hundred years from now, intelligent young men and women who visit there will ask where is the field on which the battle was fought? Our children’s children for generations to come will go to these places where their ancestors fought, and many died, and they will be disappointed and grieved that the government has made absolutely no recognition of the field where they struggled and died for one cause or the other.’”

With 36,000 members, CWPT is the largest nonprofit battlefield preservation organization in the United States. Its mission is to preserve our nation’s endangered Civil War battlefields and to promote appreciation of these hallowed grounds. A copy of the report is available online at <http://www.civilwar.org/topten2002/introduction.htm>.

March is women's History Month

When I was asked to write an article for the March STFB newsletter, I decided to search out someone you may not know about, her name is Mrs. Felicia Grundy Porter.

"In the shadow of the Confederate Monument in the Mount Olivet Cemetery at Nashville, Tennessee lie the remains of Mrs. Porter, who gave her time, devotion, and heart both during and after the war to the physical relief of the boys in gray."

She was born in Nashville, June 26, 1820. She was twice widowed. Married first to William Eakin after seven years of marriage and the birth of two children Eakin died in 1849. She later married Dr. Robert Massengill Porter, one son was born to the couple. Dr. Porter died in 1856.

"When the war broke out she sat about establishing hospitals in Nashville for the wounded Confederate soldiers." She served as President of the Women's Relief Society, first of Tennessee and then of the entire Confederate States. She was able to collect as president of the Benevolent Society of Tennessee, through a series of concerts and tableaux in towns and cities, vast funds for humanitarian purposes one of which was to by artificial limbs for the disabled Confederate soldiers.

"In 1869, the Ladies Memorial Society of Nashville purchased a circular burial ground at the highest point in Mt. Olivet Cemetery as the final resting place for Confederate soldiers who had died in the battles around Nashville. The society, which included Mrs. John Overton, Mrs. James K. Polk, and Mrs. Felicia Grundy Porter, reserved a large section in the center, sixteen feet square, for an obelisk, which they hoped to build at a later date... Thirteen rows of graves encircle the square. The first six rows contain the graves of Confederate soldiers from outside Tennessee. The seventh row contains the graves of unknown while the outer rows contain the graves of Confederate soldiers from Tennessee. There are nearly 1,500 soldiers buried in confederate Circle."

Some of those buried here were first buried in Nashville's City Cemetery in shallow graves "marked with wooden headboards painted white with the name of the soldier and his command in black letters, the graves were a source of much anxiety for many supporters of the confederacy in Nashville who feared that the location of the graves would soon be hard to locate because the wooden headboards were quickly deteriorating..."

"The Union dead had been removed from the city cemetery and reburied at the new National Cemetery on the Gallatin Pike."

The Confederate bodies that had not been claimed by their family remained in those shallow graves buried in the Southwest corner of the City Cemetery near the railroad tracks. The Nashville newspapers reported in May 1868 that as many as 10,000 people had visited the cemetery for decoration of their graves. It was decided the Confederates were to be reburied at Mt. Olivet, this happened in 1869.

On May 9, 1887, the confederate Monument Association was organized consisting primarily of Nashville women, their purpose to raise money to erect a monument in Mt. Olivet to honor "the valor, devotion and sacrifice unto death of Confederate soldiers of Tennessee. The 45 foot high monument of Vermont granite in the center of Confederate Circle was unveiled on May 16, 1889 with it was reported, ten thousand people in attendance.

"Since about 1900 Confederate Circle has been owned by the United Daughters of the confederacy." "In November, 1974, nearly 400 Confederate grave markers quarried in Georgia were delivered to Mt. Olivet to mark identifiable graves in the circle."

I have read that Mrs. Porter "was escorted to her final resting place by Confederate soldiers who rode on each side of the hearse, with many more following in its train."

EJ Neeley, Historian and past president of 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	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	
	Save The Franklin Battlefield Bumpersticker	\$1.50	
	Eyewitnesses to the Battle of Franklin by D. Logsdon	\$12.00	
	Eyewitness to the Battle of Shiloh by D. Logsdon	\$12.00	
	Eyewitness to the Battle of Ft. Donelson by D. Logsdon	\$12.00	
	Nathan Bedford Forrest Print	\$30.00	
	Patrick Cleburne Print	\$30.00	
	Patrick Cleburne/Carter House Mug shipping is \$4.95 each	\$16.95	
		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	

Upcoming Events

April 6—Brentwood Historical Society
12:45 pm tour of Executive Mansion
Call Suzanne Burns at 373-1614 for
Reservations.

April 13—clean up day at Collins farm
10:00 am

April 21—tour of Collins farm rescheduled
2:00 pm

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