



The COURIER



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TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

OCTOBER 2008

“...it has been a terrible fight. A more terrible fight than I fought in the war.”

THE YORK INSTITUTE—A LEGACY TO BE PRESERVED

By Michael E. Birdwell, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of History and Archivist of Alvin C. York's papers
Tennessee Technological University

Known as the greatest hero of World War I, Alvin C. York avoided profiting from his war record. Upon his return to the United States, York found himself wooed by Hollywood, Broadway, and various sponsors who clamored for his

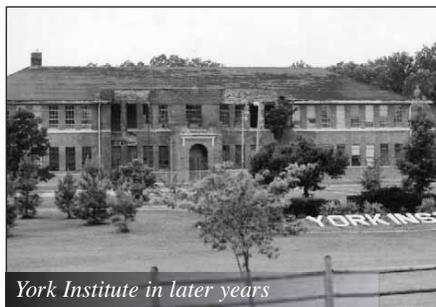


endorsement. York turned his back on quick and certain fortune in 1919 and went home to Tennessee to pursue a dream that consumed the rest of his life.

The story of York Institute is one of triumph and tragedy that deserves greater attention. When Alvin York responded to his draft notice, he typified the underprivileged, undereducated conscript who traveled to France to "keep the world safe for democracy." Possessing what he called a third grade education (a subscription school education which amounted to only nine months' total schooling over three years), York discovered a larger world beyond his imagination in the army and overseas. They introduced him to a mechanized, industrial world, and prolonged exposure made him realize the important contributions education could make for his friends and relatives at home. Literally a

stranger in a strange land, York recognized that he was ill-equipped to fully understand or appreciate his foreign surroundings. Initially, he immersed himself in the Bible, hoping that his religion would see him through, but by the war's end he longed for something more than simply faith.

Largely unknown to most Americans, and sadly, many Tennesseans, was the fact that York returned home with a single vision. He wanted a practical educational opportunity for the mountain children of Tennessee. Understanding that to prosper in the modern world, children needed an education, York was determined to make his dream a reality. The thought of this barely literate veteran launching a campaign for education was fraught with difficulty, for it struck most of Fentress county's



York Institute in later years

political and social leaders as ludicrous that York could build or administer a school. Possessing no background in education or administration, his intentions, though noble, struck them as absurd, because his ability to evaluate instructors, curricula, textbooks, and administration was virtually non-existent. While regarded as a hero across America, at home York was seen as an irritant. Celebrity made it possible for the sergeant to express his desire for education to the world at large but gave him little clout when dealing with the old guard Fentress County elite.

York embarked on a series of speaking tours on its behalf in 1920. Just as he had no experience as an educator or administrator, he had no background as a public speaker or in fund raising. Though both initially hampered his progress, York grew into a polished and effective speaker. He intended to provide the boys and girls of the Cumberland Plateau with "liberating influences and educational advantages which were denied me." His vision was not limited to the education of children; he wanted to include interested adults as well. He set a tremendous example, reminding audiences when he spoke of his own former limitations. By reading,

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The Tennessee Historical Commission will meet at Rugby, Friday, October 17, 2008, at 9 A.M. at the Rugby Community Building. The meeting is open to the public.

You can find this issue of The COURIER and back issues dating from October, 2003, at the Tennessee Historical Commission's web page at www.state.tn.us/environment/hist. Click on the State Programs Menu to find the newsletter. For information on the Civil War in the Volunteer State visit www.tennessee.civilwarsourcebook.com.



2008 "Ten in Tennessee" Endangered List

The Tennessee Preservation Trust annually seeks nominations from the public for the "Ten in Tennessee," a roster of some of the state's most endangered historic sites. Begun in 2001, this successful program highlights ten endangered places across the state to help garner support for saving threatened historic resources. Of the sites listed since the program began, only three have been lost. A committee from across the state meets to choose the list each spring. TPT has been the recipient of generous support from the public relations firm of McNeely, Pigott, and Fox, LLC. Richard Quin serves as the 2008 Ten in Tennessee Chair.



1) Clarksville Historic Districts Montgomery County

Properties in the Downtown, Dog Hill and Emerald Hill historic districts are threatened by the recent Downtown Redevelopment and Urban Renewal Plan, which would designate two square miles of the historic downtown as "blighted" and give the city power to use

eminent domain to condemn and demolish structures for redevelopment.

National Trust for Historic Preservation calls the situation "the most significant eminent domain threat to historic districts" "it has encountered.

2) Tipton-Rosemark Academy Shelby County

Built in 1912 as public school for the community of Rosemark, just north of Memphis, it became a private school in 1970.



The school has constructed a new high school next door, and the Academy has been vacated. Demolition was scheduled for June and July.



3) Fleming Hall, Battle Ground Academy Williamson County

Built in 1911 as the primary structure for a private school, Harpeth Academy dates to 1811. It was the largest educational building in Williamson County.

After it was abandoned for the construction of the new campus it was purchased by Williamson County. The county has not maintained the structure and it is deteriorating rapidly.

Community activists and school alumni hope the county will preserve structure and reuse it for offices.

4) Murfreesboro Old City Cemetery Rutherford County

The original cemetery when Murfreesboro was Tennessee's



state capital, the Old City Cemetery contains the archaeological remains of the original First Presbyterian Church.

The cemetery's significant architectural elements and tombs suffer from neglect and improper preservation.

A preservation plan and professional conservation of the tombs and elements are needed.

5) Kimsey Junior College Polk County

Kimsey was designed by architect Rueben Hunt and constructed 1932-33 as a junior college, but the state rejected its college application and so it became a vocational school and high school.



The structure is a rare example of rural collegiate public school architecture and the only architect-designed structure in the Copper Basin.

The structure is vacant and starting to deteriorate, yet the City of Ducktown hopes to acquire it for community use.



6) Shofner's Chapel Lutheran Church Bedford County

The congregation is the oldest Lutheran Congregation in Tennessee, and the oldest west of the Allegheny Mountains. The congregation celebrated its bicentennial recently.

The present church was built mid-19th century in Greek Revival style; little has changed.

Its landscape setting is threatened by widening of adjacent US Highway 41A. Congregation members want a context-sensitive design sympathetic with a nearby bridge and landscape changes.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation is working with the church to accommodate some of these issues.

7) John Geist Blacksmith Shop & Residences Davidson County

Part of Nashville's historic Germantown community, Geist & Sons was one of Nashville's oldest businesses when it closed doors in 2006.



The lot on Jefferson Street is extremely valuable for development, placing the buildings in danger, while the costs of rehabilitating the structures increase with time.

The property owner would like to see structures preserved

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The McNabb Mines Site - A Once Forgotten Coal Mining Community in Marion County

by Jaime Trotter, Architectural Historian

The McNabb Mines site is located on the northern bank of the Tennessee River in Marion County, Tennessee, along River Canyon Road and includes approximately 457 acres of land now owned by the state of Tennessee as part of Prentice Cooper State Forest. In 2007, Alexander Archaeological Consultants, Inc. conducted an archaeological pedestrian survey and documented 76 features at the McNabb Mines site. Presently, the site consists of the ruins of an elaborate system of railroad beds, roads and waterways, worker housing, commercial and social



Architectural remains of the general store building at the McNabb Coal Company Town.

establishments, industrial buildings, and mine entries, and is a significant late-nineteenth-century example of a company town associated with the bituminous coal mining industry in Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau region. The ruins of several buildings and structures constructed circa 1882 with cut and mortared native sandstone extend from the bank of the Tennessee River eastwardly across River Canyon Road and continue to the top of Hicks Mountain. The site includes two distinct groupings of features that both contain the ruins of residential and industrial buildings and structures linked by the railroad bed of the main incline. During its period of operation, mine workers probably cleared a large portion of the surrounding forest using the timber for various domestic and industrial purposes. Today, a dense forest envelops the McNabb Mines site and, in many cases, has contributed to the deterioration of buildings and structures. Despite the buildings' and structures' deterioration caused by neglect, weather patterns, and



Facade of the McNabb Coal Mining Village School/Church Building.

vandalism, the site's relative isolation and state ownership has helped to maintain its original location, design, and setting and, in turn, has preserved a significant level of the coal community's materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Thus, the McNabb Mines' site has integrity due to its ability to convey its importance as a unique collection of identifiable features associated with the nineteenth-century bituminous coal and coke industry in Tennessee. The McNabb Mines' Site was added to the National Register of Historic Places on March 26, 2008.

Ten in Tennessee...continued

but lack of the pecuniary means prevents such laudable endeavors. He may be forced to sell the property as his main retirement investment.



8) Beth Salem Presbyterian Church

McMinn County

The first African-American congregation in the three-county area of McMinn, Meigs and Polk counties, it was organized in 1866

just after Emancipation. The present structure, built in 1925, remained in use until 1950. Annual church reunions and services are still held. The largely vacant church has deteriorated and the foundation needs immediate attention. Descendants of founders, relatives, friends and local churches all want to preserve the structure and have started a restoration fund.

9) S. S. Eaves House

Meigs County

The terminal-Victorian era home was constructed in 1909 for Samuel S. Eaves, prominent



businessman who operated a mercantile store, a ferry and steamboat landing.

It is a rare surviving example of the "Steamboat Gothic" style of architecture in Tennessee.

The Eaves house has been vacant many years and has seriously declined. The City of Decatur has expressed interest in acquiring the Eaves house for public use or resale for private or commercial use.



10) Franklin P. Blue Municipal Building

Warren County

Originally built as a mansion in 1839, and was a showcase home with tennis courts, flower gardens and a grand ballroom.

Acquired by the Board of Education in 1915, it was converted to a public school and in 1977, was converted to a city municipal building.

The city has acquired new property for municipal offices and has not maintained the structure; demolition is possible. Community citizens have collected petitions with 2,000 signatures and hope to find an investor who will reuse the structure.



ACTION IN LEBANON MAY 5, 1862

by James B. Jones, Jr. DA
Public Historian

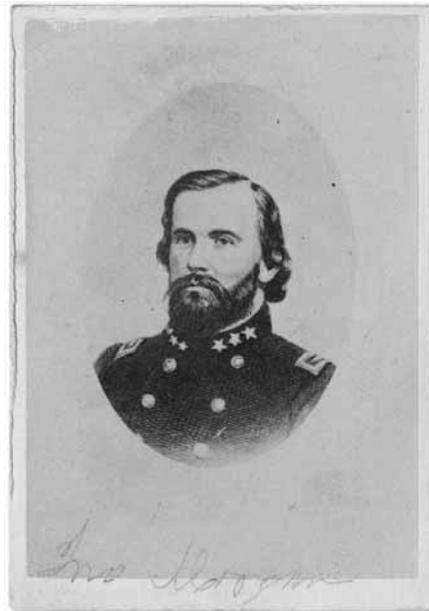
On May 6, 1862, despite his reputation as a fearsome warrior, John Hunt Morgan was utterly and irrevocably routed. He and the tattered remnants of his command hobbled into Sparta and managed to return to their lines despite a Federal expedition sent to incarcerate him. His expedition into Middle Tennessee, which augured such promise, was a total catastrophe.

By April 1862, the situation of the Confederacy in Tennessee was not fortuitous. The Confederate army had retreated into Mississippi after the fall of Fort Donelson, the battle of Shiloh, and the loss of Island No. 10, while Huntsville, and Alabama was under the control of Federal Major-General Ormsby Mitchell. Fort Pillow and Memphis were threatened by the Federal advance, while Confederate forces concentrated at Corinth, Mississippi. Colonel John Hunt Morgan, a reckless and dashing Kentucky cavalry commander, proposed an attack deep within Middle Tennessee to stall, even halt, the Federal thrust. His superior, Major-General P. G. T. Beauregard, approved of the "expedition beyond the Tennessee River" in late April. The raid itself was composed of some 325 cavalrymen, some of whom were assigned to tend pack mules, used in place of supply wagons to maximize speed, a tactical necessity central to the success of the raid.

The expedition left Mississippi passing through Alabama where it crossed the Tennessee River on April 27-29. The threat of being discovered by U. S. Navy gunboats hastened their crossing of the swollen Tennessee river, which took the larger part of two days. Soon they were on Tennessee soil, headed for Lawrenceburg where they were greeted warmly, receiving plenty of rations including whisky which they imbibed freely.

On May 1, the force left Lawrenceburg at dawn. As Morgan approached Pulaski he learned that a Federal telegraph repair team, about 15 men, were on the road. Taking the

offensive, Morgan headed northward and found the technicians engaged in stringing wire. Seeing Morgan's expeditionary force, the Federals rapidly improvised a defense using their wagons as cover. Elements of the Eighteenth Ohio Infantry arrived to reinforce the position. Running short of ammunition after a spirited fight of two and a half hours, they surrendered to the Confederate cavalry raiders. As he reached the next stop on his route, Pulaski, Morgan entered in the fashion of a triumphant Roman general, parading his prisoners to the delight of Pulaski's population. Morgan, according to one source, was "mounted on Black Bess, and the Colonel's mare almost stole the



Col. John Hunt Morgan

show." After hitching the horse, a group of women surrounded the mare to clip a souvenir from Bess's mane. Morgan placed his beloved charger in a stable.

After burning Federal wagons and railroad tracks, he went out by Lewisburg and Farmington in Marshall county. There he cut telegraph lines after sending a bogus message to Federal leaders in Nashville that his force was headed to Shelbyville to the south. The *ruse de guerre* did not, however, succeed. From Marshall he avoided the Federal garrison

at Murfreesboro, and by late afternoon crossed the railway 10 miles north of Murfreesboro, going between LaVergne and Smyrna, tearing up the track and burning the station house and a quantity of cotton stored there. He then crossed the Stones River, passing the Wilson county line and shortly thereafter, on the rainy night of May 4, entered Lebanon. Thus far Morgan had encountered no real resistance and he planned to attack north of Nashville and strike a blow at the Louisville & Nashville railroad. He ordered "boots and saddles" for 4 A.M.

Lebanon being a town of strong Confederate sympathies, he concluded he and his men, after riding hard for 170 miles had earned a momentary rest. It would soon prove to be a critical tactical error in Colonel Morgan's judgment.

The jubilant Confederate inhabitants of Lebanon extended their hospitality to the raiding force, cold and wet from the spring rainfall. The men were quartered in houses, at the small college, the local hotel and livery stables. Food and an abundant supply of whisky were provided to all, including those standing on picket in the heavy downpour. All seemed secure and out of harm's way on that rainy night, so officers neglected to stop the revelry complete with singing and joviality indoors stimulated by whisky. The upshot would parallel that of the Hessians at the battle of Trenton in 1776.

From the west, as yet unknown to the by now dull-witted Confederate pickets, came a superior force of sober Union cavalry, out of Nashville, under the command of Brigadier-General Ebenezer Dumont. Morgan's telegraphic deceptions had not duped Federal military authorities who had reckoned the whereabouts of the Confederate cavalry contingent. It was Private Pleasant Whitlow whose senses were not so dulled as his compatriots who first saw the Federal cavalry regiment headed for Lebanon. He shouted a warning, ran outside the house in which he and his fellows were quartered, found a horse and rode Gilpin-like toward town,

cont. next page

**Action in Lebanon...continued**

incredibly passing alongside the Yankee column. None of the Federal cavalymen paid any attention, assuming he was a courier from the rear. As Whitlow reached the outskirts of town, screaming at the top of his lungs, "The Feds! The Feds!" he



Col. Frank W. Wolford

was shot dead in the saddle.

The advance Federal regiment was led by Kentuckian Colonel Frank Wolford, providing an irony not expected. As Wolford's column continued up the pike, Morgan's men

swarmed out of the college buildings. No officer was present, but the sergeant ordered a volley to be fired into Wolford's force. Wolford wheeled his men in the direction of the fire and swarmed over the college grounds, forcing three companies of Rebels back into Lebanon. According to one source: "The din was terrible. Amid the crack of rifles, the reports of pistols, and the clatter of hoofs on the hard wet streets, could be heard hoarse shouts of fighting men, and...the shrieks of...women and children in the houses." Some of the Confederates regrouped in the town square preparing for battle.

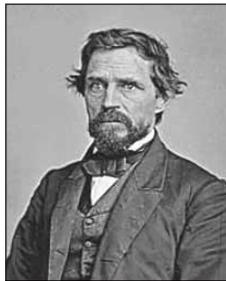
The rain had briefly stopped and dawn was breaking, creating a surrealistic hue as the frantic Confederates soldiers regrouped in the town square. Morgan's main force was quartered at the college buildings on the outskirts of the town. From that position the colonel tried to reach the livery stables, where his horse had been liveried, to saddle up. But he was overtaken by Federal cavalry and ensconced himself and men into the houses lining the street into Lebanon. From here Morgan's troopers maintained a heavy and well-sustained fire from the windows on each side of the street until he reached the livery stable. In the face of superior firepower, the raiders were driven into the town square in disorder. Hand to hand combat ensued in the square in which Colonel Wolford was wounded and captured. As a result the leaderless Federal cavalymen retreated. Wolford

stubbornly refused any aid from Morgan, saying his own men would rescue him.

Elements of the 7th Pennsylvania cavalry soon arrived, led by Brigadier General Dumont. Ascertaining the Confederate party was a large one he sent companies to seal off all roads leading from Lebanon, then dashed to the sounds of the guns with his main force.

The Confederate force managed to fend off the initial attack of the Pennsylvanians, who charged through the streets leading to the town square at Dumont's order. According to an official report of the action: "Without a moment's hesitation it was obeyed, and the three companies of the second battalion dashed through the leaden hail. The bullets actually rained upon them from both sides of the streets, but not a man faltered."

It was soon apparent to Morgan and his staff that they were outnumbered, outgunned and outmaneuvered. They could not remain in town much longer and the repugnant order to retreat was issued. Yet Dumont's forces



Brig. Gen. Ebenezer Dumont

hotly pursued the Confederate raiders on the Carthage road leading to Rome. A saber charge was made, throwing the Confederates into full flight. Morgan and his officers managed to cross the Cumberland River, while the majority of his men remained horseless, dead or captured. The road to Rome was littered with Confederate dead and wounded with many horses shot or dead from exhaustion. According to Dumont's official report: "On this running fight, which was nothing but a rapid retreat of the Rebels and as rapid a pursuit by our troops, many instances of individual daring were observed. Hand-to-hand the enemy was met, and in every instance either bit the dust or surrendered. The road was strewn with pistols, carbines, sabers, knives and blankets dropped by the fugitives, and almost every soldier has some trophy of the field."

Federal forces captured arms, horses and 150 prisoners (just over 46 per cent of

Morgan's force.) Some seventy were captured in Lebanon after threats from loyalist civilians to burn their sanctuary in the Odd Fellows' Hall. Dumont was of the opinion that the houses of the noncombatant citizens who harbored the Confederates, allowing them safe havens from which to fire at Federal soldiers, should be razed. But because of the proximity of those houses to loyal Union citizens' property, he abjured the notion for fear of destroying their property as well.

General Dumont summarized the fight writing: "...in this little affair intrepidity, personal daring, and heroic courage were conspicuous from the firing of the first to the last gun. Battles of more import, measured by the number of troops engaged or results, might afford less to commend than does the battle of Lebanon of May 5."

NATIONAL REGISTER NEWS

Since the last issue of *The Courier* (June 2008), there have been nine entries from the National Register of Historic Places. The properties are: Centennial Park, Davidson County; Fire Hall No. 1, Davidson County; First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, Gibson County; North Hills Historic District, Knox County; First United Presbyterian Church, McMinn County; Nelson's Greenbrier Distillery, Robertson County; Copperhill Historic District (boundary increase), Polk County; Temple B'Nai Israel, Madison County; and Noblit-Lytle House, Giles County.

Three properties were removed from the National Register because they no longer exist. They are: Home Infirmary, Montgomery County; Thomas J. Walker House, Knox County; and Ridley's Landing, Rutherford County.

There are now 2008 entries in the National Register for Tennessee including 267 districts, for a total of 40,976 resources listed.

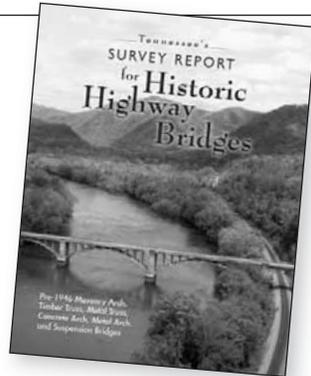


BOOK REVIEW

Tennessee's Survey Report For Historic Highway Bridges,
prepared by Martha Carver for the Tennessee Department of Transportation,
printed by Ambrose Printing Company, 2008, 643 pages.

by Joseph Y. Garrison, PhD, Section 106 Coordinator

Here at last is the long-anticipated historic (from the beginning of bridge building in Tennessee through the immediate post-World War II period) highway bridge survey volume for the state of Tennessee, and it proves to be very well worth the wait. Ms. Carver has painstakingly and diligently prepared a volume that rivals and often surpasses, similar works for other states. The leadoff section on the history of bridge building in Tennessee offers an insightful, in-depth contextual background against which the remainder of the book shines. The preparer then lists and discusses one-by-one the extant (at the time the survey was begun) historic bridges in Tennessee with detailed data and photographs culled from the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Historic Bridge Survey, data that she, along with numerous of her colleagues, has collected over the past nearly thirty years. The handy directory of Tennessee's historic bridges begins with an inventory of the extant products of each bridge company that operated in Tennessee, then moves smoothly to typological sections that discuss historical context by bridge type (masonry arch, timber truss, metal truss, concrete arch, metal arch, suspension) and National Register of Historic Places eligibility. The text is richly illustrated with grayscale photographs of bridges, maps, drawings and other useful images that supplement the detailed descriptive text. The reader will also find very useful a series of tables scattered throughout the text along with the illustrations. So that readers do not forget the overarching reason for the historic bridge survey, and the book that is its product, Ms. Carver completes the narrative with a discussion of various bridge preservation efforts in Tennessee, especially those of the Tennessee Department of Transportation. Ms. Carver's bibliography is extensive and thorough, and her glossary of terms is comprehensive and helpful to the



reader unfamiliar with the esoterica of historic bridges.

To say that this volume is useful is a singular understatement. Enthusiasts, highway project consultants, historians, professional surveyors, and the general public owe a great debt to Ms. Carver and her colleagues. This volume is a serious and comprehensive record of a typology of historic structure sadly neglected in the pantheon of scholarly historic preservation literature to date. It is also a reflection of the good results of the Section 106 review and compliance process that mandates that Federal agencies – in this case the Federal Highway Administration – and their applicants for Federal assistance – in this case the Tennessee Department of Transportation – identify, evaluate, and take into account historic properties that are National Register of Historic Places eligible. Ms. Carver accurately states that, of the historic bridges surveyed and discussed in this volume, only a few have been afforded the status of National Register eligibility. Even so, she lets us know for certain that, although numbers of the bridges contained in the survey book have been demolished over the years or abandoned to decay, historic bridges are still an important cultural resource worthy of note and recognition, especially by the communities they serve, who value them as important elements in local life.

PLEASE NOTE! TDOT has a very limited number of copies of the bridge survey book available to the public. To receive a copy, you may call 615.741.3655 or email the book's author Martha Carver at Martha.Carver@state.tn.us. Please provide her with a physical address (not a post office box) and tell her if this is a residence or business address.



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TENNESSEE TEENS IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Calvin Dickinson, PhD
Tennessee Historical Commissioner



Tennessee contributed 120,000 soldiers to the Confederate cause, and 31,000 fought with the Union army; Tennessee contributed more soldiers to the U. S. Army than any other southern state. Of these total numbers, a surprisingly large group of participants were very young. Both armies officially refused to accept any person younger than age eighteen within its fighting ranks. Only drummer boys and musicians could enroll at an earlier age, and there were 40,000 such positions in the U.S. Army. Drummers were an important part of communication on Civil War battlefields, issuing long-distance commands with their drumbeat rhythms. They were also important in the camps, carrying messages, cooking, and caring for horses and mules. Many young boys did enter as drummers or musicians, but in the midst of battles, some became soldiers because of the chaotic circumstances. After the battles they helped carry the wounded and bury the dead.

Other underage boys volunteered as soldiers by lying about their ages, and they might be enrolled even though it was obvious that they were younger than they claimed. In 1864 the U.S. Sanitary Commission looked at the records of more than one million soldiers in the Union army. The study concluded that 127 soldiers were thirteen, 330 were fourteen, 773 were fifteen, 2758 were sixteen, and 6425 were seventeen. Confederate records are inadequate, but a sample of 11,000 individuals showed that one person was thirteen, three were fourteen, 31 were fifteen, 200 were sixteen, and 366 were seventeen. I did find one boy who was discharged because he was "underage." L.B. Christian enlisted in the 16th Tennessee Infantry on May 21, 1861. On July 19, 1862 he was discharged as a "non-conscript."

Looking at enlistments from the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee, many underage boys joined the services

of both sides. Counting enlistments from Putnam County alone, I found almost one hundred names of soldiers who were born in 1844 or later. Of the 485 gravestones in the Tennessee Confederate Soldiers Home Cemetery at the Hermitage, 60 of the soldiers were born between 1844 and 1847. [The oldest was born in 1816.]

The youngest Tennessee recruit I found was James Prentice, born in 1852, who served in some capacity in the Confederate army. Henry P. Davis, born in 1844 in White County, joined Col. Sidney Stanton's 25th Tennessee Infantry. When his term expired he joined General Dibrell's 8th Cavalry. Joseph Dibrell of White County rode with his father, General George Dibrell of the 8th Tennessee Cavalry, at age 14. Arkley F. Christian of Hilham enlisted in the Confederate army at the age of 15, with the consent of his mother. He served in the 8th Tennessee Regiment of General George Dibrell and the cavalry brigade of General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Christian fought in the Tennessee battles at Triune, Humboldt, Trenton, and Parker's Cross Roads.

Bailey Key, born on December 27, 1848, was listed as a private in the 14th Tennessee Cavalry. He served as an orderly to CSA General Robert Vance and General Thompson. Bailey was captured at Carthage and served some time as a prisoner of war with General Thompson. Thomas J. Stowers, also born in 1848, was a private in the 199th Pennsylvania Regiment in 1864. He told the story that he intended to join his brother in the Confederate army, but was captured and conscripted into the Union army. After the Civil War, he fought with General Custer's 7th Cavalry, and he falsely claimed to be the sole survivor of the 1876 battle with the Sioux. Stowers is buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery near Baxter. Joseph Carr [or Kerr], born in 1849, was a private in the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (USA).

Many Tennesseans of all ages, some

quite young, joined the United States mounted infantry regiments toward the end of the war for various reasons. Some had even served in the Confederate army earlier in the war. Thomas Taylor Bradford of Putnam County joined the Tennessee Mounted Infantry (USA) at age 16, serving in Nashville during the last two years of the war. Two boys whom I assume were brothers, J.K.P. Brim (born 1848) and Ozias D.P. Brim (born 1850), also served in the Tennessee Mounted Infantry (USA). Some stories of very young soldiers are quite sad. T.W. Phillips, at age 17, enlisted in McMinnville in the 84th Tennessee Infantry Regiment of Colonel Sidney Stanton, then in the 28th Tennessee Infantry. In 1863 he was furloughed because of sickness. Returning to Putnam County, he and another man who had enlisted as a teenager, Uriah Gillihan, were murdered by Home Guard soldiers in 1865.

Alber Templeton, a boy soldier in the 9th Tennessee Regiment, was a native of White County. Killed in the battle of Franklin in 1864, his mother had the body embalmed and carried back to White County in a wagon. She placed the corpse in the attic of the Templeton home, where it stayed until she died. Then mother and son were buried in a cemetery.

Some young girls were involved in the Civil War. They were spies, information collectors, unofficial nurses, supply handlers, and killers; but that is another column.

Jennie Ivey and Calvin Dickinson will publish a book in 2009 called *Soldiers, Spys, and Spartans*. Ten stories about boys and girls involved in the Civil War make up this book. Most of the boys were soldiers. The girls were spies or were involved in killing soldiers. The Spartans were a group of girls in Rhea County who participated in the war.



HISTORICAL MARKERS

At its meeting on June 20, 2008, the Tennessee Historical Commission approved four historical markers: **Samuel Handly**, Franklin County; **Doe Creek School and Doe Creek Cemetery**, Henderson County; **Bristol Sessions**, Sullivan County; and **William Haskel Neal**, Wilson County.

Those interested in submitting proposed texts for markers are urged to contact Linda T. Wynn at the Tennessee Historical Commission, 2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, Tennessee 37243-0442, or call (615) 532-1550.

Since the launch of the historical markers program in the 1950s, the commission has placed roughly 1,600 markers across the state.

If you or your organizations are interested in financially sponsoring a missing or damaged marker(s) in your area or region, or wish to obtain copies of available marker texts, please contact Linda T. Wynn at the address or telephone number above. Your interest in and concern for the markers program is greatly appreciated!!!

Federal Historic Preservation Grants for 2009

The awarding of these Historic Preservation Grants for 2009 emphasizes conducting architectural, archaeological, and historic site surveys. Such activities are designed to identify and record historic districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects, which through a professional review process, are determined to possess sufficient significance in American history, architecture, archaeology and culture to warrant protection. Surveys may be for a specific geographic area or for sites associated with themes or events important in Tennessee's history, such as the development of railroads in the nineteenth century or the development of coal mining on the Cumberland Plateau. Priorities for funding survey projects take in historic resources and areas which are experiencing threats from rapid growth, areas where there are serious gaps in knowledge regarding cultural resources, and thematic surveys based upon existing historic study units produced by the SHPO. In addition to historic surveys, assistance is available for other types of historic preservation projects. These may include preservation planning studies for towns, neighborhoods, and historic districts, the preparation of nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, or planning or pre-development work of historic properties. The following are the grants made for 2008-2009:

ETDD: Funding for a preservation specialist on the development district staff, \$34,000.00. **GNRC:** Funding for a preservation specialist on the development district staff, \$25,000.00; **SETDD:** Funding for a preservation specialist on the development district staff; \$49,500.00; **SWTDD:** Funding for a preservation specialist on the development district staff, \$50,000.00; **UCDD:** Funding for a preservation specialist on the development of district staff, 50,000.00; **SCTDD:** Funding for a preservation specialist on the development district staff, \$45,000.00; **Tennessee Preservation Trust:** 2009 Workshops, \$15,000.00; **Tennessee Tech, Upper Cumberland Studies:** Survey Data Entry, \$15,000.00; **MTSU:** Department of Anthropology, Archaeology Awareness Week, \$4,000.00; **Memphis Division of Planning and Development:** Continued Historic and Architectural Survey in Memphis, \$42,500.00; **ETSU:** Department of Sociology and

Anthropology, assessment of the Pogue Creek Gorge State Natural Area and Forest, \$515,000; **Gainesboro Historic District Commission,** Preparation of Phase VI of the preservation plan for Gainesboro. This phase will undertake a survey and inventory of structures within the town limits of Gainesboro and some areas of Jackson County outside the city limits, McMinn County, \$7,000.00; **McMinn County:** This project is jointly sponsored by the SETDD and McMinn County and it is for the completion of the historic/architectural survey of McMinn County, \$12,000.00. **University of Tennessee:** Archaeological survey of the French Broad River Conservation Corridor, a 20 river-mile-long portion to the lower French Broad River Valley, \$11,000.00; **Shelbyville:** Travel of zoning commissioners and staff to the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions in July of 2008, \$2,900.00; **Memphis:** Travel for Memphis HZC and staff to the Forum of the members National Alliance of Preservation Commissions in New Orleans, July 27-28, 2008, \$2,900.00; **Memphis:** Hosting of an NAPC "Camp" Session to be held in Memphis in the spring of 2009, \$6,000.00; **City of Franklin:** Hosting of an NAPC "Camp" Session to be held in Franklin in the fall of 2008, \$4,000.00; **Bristol:** Nomination of the Fairmount Neighborhood to the National Register as a Historic District, \$7,000.00; **Rhea County:** The renovation and restoration of the Rhea County Courthouse to include masonry repair and repointing, roof repair, exterior painting, and repair to the windows and bell tower, \$35,000.00; **Heiskell:** Airplane Filling Station Preservation Association, Inc., Restoration of the Airplane Filling Station, \$9,000.00; **Westover Center for the Arts:** Continued restoration of the Westover School for use as a community arts center. The phase of work will include the installation of a new electrical system, \$20,000; **Coal Creek Watershed Foundation:** Phase II of the restoration of Briceville Community Church to include the replacement of wiring and plumbing and removal of damaged carpet and ceiling tiles which are holding moisture and mildew in the structure, \$20,000; **Fairview Historical Preservation Commission:** Preservation of the Triangle School. Preservation Assoc., Inc., Station, \$20,000.00; **Total:** \$521,800.00.



TENNESSEE SAMPLER SURVEY

by Jennifer C. Core and Janet S. Hasson

The Tennessee Sampler Survey, founded by Jennifer C. Core and Janet S. Hasson in 2004, is seeking to document needlework made in Tennessee prior to 1900. The non-profit, 501c3 organization's mission is to document, preserve, and present Tennessee's needlework heritage. Since its inception, the Tennessee Sampler Survey has researched over 200 samplers. Of these, approximately 85% can be proven to be from Tennessee.

As samplers and embroideries are brought to Core and Hasson's attention, they document them with a technical analysis and quality photography. Their research includes identifying the maker through family history and public documents.

Presentation of Tennessee samplers can be found on the Website: www.tennesseesamplers.com. This

website hosts an online gallery with images and a brief description of each piece. The Website will eventually be expanded to include their history and



Sarah Ann Brown, 1855, sample, wool and silk on linen, Cootonwood. Williamson Co. Tennessee State Museum.

tips on conservation and framing.

Core and Hasson anticipate curating an exhibit, hosting a symposium, and authoring a text. At the end of the survey, the records will be donated to the Tennessee State Library and Archives where they will be accessible to researchers.

Core holds degrees in folklore and education from Indiana University and the University of Tennessee. A member of the Embroiderers' Guild, she is accomplished at counted work and surface embroidery. Hasson has a degree in fashion design from Washington University in St. Louis and served as curator of Belle Meade Plantation for fourteen years.

If you know of a Tennessee sampler, please alert the Tennessee Sampler Survey: jen@tennesseesamplers.com or (615) 650-5797.

TENNESSEE WARS COMMISSION REPORT

by Fred Prouty
Director of Programs

Civil War Sesquicentennial License Plates Available. This new specialty license plate helps introduce Tennessee's celebration of the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War. It is sponsored by the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association, which needs the assistance of preservationists, educators, historians, and all those interested in heritage tourism across Tennessee. One thousand orders for the

new plate are required prior to production and distribution. Once in circulation, nearly \$16.00 of the \$35.00 specialty plate fee will go directly to preserving Tennessee's Civil War battlefields. Visit www.tcwpa.org to see a short video about the Civil War plate, get more information, and print your order form.

Proposed PBS Civil War Series.
The Renaissance Center Executive

Director Senator Doug Jackson of Dickson, Tennessee, and Tennessee Wars Commission director Fred Prouty recently met with the staff members of the Multimedia Department. The meeting centered around Jackson's desire to create a weekly PBS-television series addressing the state's historic Civil War resources.

Legacy of Stones River Symposium: Pathways to Freedom

The fifth Legacy of Stones River Symposium will take place in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, on Saturday, October 18, 2008, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Rutherford County Courthouse in

the morning and at Stones River National Battlefield in the afternoon. "Pathways to Freedom" will take a fresh look at wartime emancipation through the experiences of participants in the Civil War.

Barbara J. Fields will speak in morning. The afternoon's speakers will be William W. Freehling and Robert E. Hunt. Music will be provided by the

Nashville Old-Time String Band. Reenactors portraying the 13th U.S. Colored Infantry will drill, and a Cemetery community tour will be provided.

Registration is \$10. Visit <http://www.nps.gov/stri> or <http://histpres.mtsu.edu/tncivwar>, or call 615-893-9501 or 615-898-2947 for information.



P U B L I C A T I O N S T O N O T E

Louisiana State University Press, 3990 West Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808 has published the following:

Written by the late Comer Vann Woodward with a foreword by William E. Leuchtenburg, **The Burden of Southern History** continues to be one of the significant history texts in America. Originally published in 1960, Woodward speaks to matters of southern identity, uniqueness, and the strains of irony characterizing the region's historical experience. **The Burden of Southern History** was derived from his 1952 presidential address "The Irony of Southern History," to the Southern Historical Association in Knoxville, Tennessee. The 1960 edition featured the "Irony of Southern History" with seven additional essays. Eight years later, a second edition was published with two essays focused on the impact of the Civil Rights Movement and the war in Southeast Asia. In the third edition (1993) Woodward added tributes to Robert Penn Warren and William Faulkner, as well as an essay, "Look Away, Look Away" which counseled: "We should be alert to the dangers and abuses of irony." In the foreword, Leuchtenburg, reflects upon the place of **The Burden of Southern History**, and Woodward's place in the lessons of southern history. Paper, \$25.95

Publications of The University of Tennessee Press, 110 Conference Center, 110 Henley Street, Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-4108 included the following:

Robert Heller collaborated to produce **Living On: Portraits of Tennessee Survivors and Liberators**. Through the **Living On** project, the Tennessee Holocaust Commission created a traveling exhibition of photographs and stories that became the bedrock of this book. It is a documentary undertaking, incorporating portraits of survivors, liberators, United States Army witnesses, hidden children, refugees from the Holocaust living in Tennessee, their stories, faces, and voices reminding

us that the unimaginable happened and gives resonance to the phrase, "Never again."

Living On gives voice to chroniclers whose capacity to bear witness will soon vanish as a result of advanced seniority and infirmity. It gives readers an opportunity to meet fellow Tennesseans through of photographic portraits and biographical sketches *en lieu* of social encounters may prove impracticable.

Phillis Wheatley's Poetics of Liberation: Backgrounds and Contexts by *John C. Shields* is a new and innovative scholarly study of one of America's most important and most controversial writers. The first African-American and only the second women to publish a book in the new country, Wheatley, who was brought to America as a slave from her native land of Gambia at the age of seven, has always been seen as controversial. In the slim volume, Shields reveals that much of the adverse reaction to her writings has been rooted in myths about her and her work. By analyzing more than two-hundred years of complex and often misinformed research and interpretation, the author illustrates that Wheatley's writing was deeply imbedded in several literary traditions. Her work is the result of an African heritage, a complex Congregationalist religious heritage, and an intense involvement with classical literature. **Phillis Wheatley's Poetics of Liberation: Backgrounds and Contexts** should appeal to those interested in American literature, African American literature, women's literature, and multicultural literature. Cloth, \$37.95.

Another work published by the University of Tennessee Press is **The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decades of the 1890s and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks** by Timothy B. Smith. Smith, a former park ranger at the Shiloh National Military Park and now a professor at the University of Tennessee at Martin,

argues that the 1890s represented the climax of battlefield preservation in America. Five Civil War battlegrounds, Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Shiloh, Antietam, and Vicksburg, were all commemorated as national sites in the 1890s. Dr. Smith provides a commanding overview of the dynamics leading to the establishment of these five flagship parks, without overwhelming the reader with minutiae. The first work to comprehensively look at the process of battlefield preservation, the book demonstrates how each of these sites was established and the important individuals who served as catalysts for the parks' creation. **The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation** is about an essential period in the history of battlefield preservation. It should be of interest to anyone wishing to garner a better appreciation and understanding of the how and why these preservation efforts were set in motion. Cloth, \$38.95.

D. W. Reed, a veteran of the battle and the first official historian of the Shiloh National Military Park, wrote **The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged**, which was originally published in 1902 by the Government Printing Office. It was revised and reprinted in 1909 and 1913 respectively and was the official park commission history of important battles, and it continues to be a seminal work on the subject. Considered the underpinning of Shiloh historiography, it is frequently quoted by historians, yet the original edition is not widely available. To address this availability dilemma, Timothy B. Smith has penned an introduction to the 1913 edition and places the publication of this seminal book in historical context. The republication of **The Battle of Shiloh and the Organizations Engaged** makes this work accessible to scholars and those interested in the Battle of Shiloh. Reed's detailed maps and diagrams are accessible in an enclosed CD in PDF format. Cloth, \$33.00.

**Alvin C. York...continued**

thinking, and asking questions, York broadened his own understanding of the world. His private tutor, Arthur S. Bushing, played a crucial role in improving York's own education. A pamphlet issued in 1926 stated, "... it will be the aim of the Institute to afford an opportunity for mature men and women to get an education, regardless of how backward they may be, and also to send out only such graduates as are prepared to succeed in the work they have chosen to do."

As genuine as York's mission was to reporters of the New York Times and other media organs, in Fentress County he encountered raised eyebrows, guffaws, and outright hostility. Parents eking out a living in rural areas needed their children to work on the farms since few families could afford to hire labor. York's proposal for a mandatory eight-month school term angered a host of local farmers who perceived education as frivolous, impractical, and a waste of hard-earned money.

In 1925, at the behest of Ransom an educator who believed in York's dream, Isaiah Hutchings, the state legislature passed the first mandatory education bill. It stipulated that in order to teach in Tennessee public schools, teachers had to be certified and have degrees from one of the state's normal schools. No one in Fentress County qualified under the new rules, and the first teachers employed at York Institute came from outside the region, with degrees from Peabody Normal College in Nashville. Viewed with suspicion as outsiders, their presence added to the growing hostility against York and his dream.

Later that year, York and his supporters drafted plans and proposed a site for the school one mile north of

Jamestown near the newly constructed Highway 127. Taking the \$12,000 he had raised on speaking tours, York purchased 400 acres, including the County Poor House. York called a national press conference and held a ground breaking ceremony on May 8, 1925, before a crowd of 2,000. Classes began in the fall in the old Poor House, while construction on York Institute got underway.

Pursuing his goal never proved easy. York's enemies launched a counter-attack to his ground breaking event, intent on humiliating him. They alleged that by holding classes in the old Poor House, York was guilty of trespassing. Attorney L. A. Lion investigated classes being taught at the Poor House, deeming York's action as "unwarranted, unauthorized and illegal." The County Board of Education ordered York to vacate the premises by July 11, 1927, or "be forcibly evicted." At 5:15 on Saturday, July 9, 1927, York received the summons.

York referred the matter to his attorney and hit the road again. For the first time in his public speaking career, York discussed his war record. Encountering foreigners and people of other faiths for the first time in the military, York told audiences that his time in the service opened his eyes to an entirely new and exciting world. As he sailed to Europe, it occurred to him that he was beginning to understand fellow soldiers who were Greek, Italian and Jewish, who were "smart soldiers and pretty good pals too." As he concluded, York said he survived war and achieved fame because he had been chosen to perform a specific mission:

"When I went out into that big outside world I realized how uneducated I was and what a terrible handicap it was. I was called to lead my

people toward a sensible modern education. For years I have been planning and fighting to build the school. And it has been a terrible fight. A much more terrible fight than the one that I fought in the war. And so I head into the frontline and fight another fight. And I can't use the old rifle or Colt automatic this time. And it has been a long hard fight."

York, by this time, was an accomplished, entertaining speaker, and by finally giving the public what it wanted – exciting war stories – he filled auditoriums across the country. Though he thrilled audiences, retelling his role in the battle on October 8, 1918, he always ended with a plea for York Institute. Unfortunately, the speaking tour proved lucrative and costly at the same time. Though pledges came in supporting the mission, York's political capital at home plummeted. Local papers blistered York while praising his enemies. Articles argued that the children of Fentress County would be endangered by York's reckless and personal ambitions.

York continued his speaking tour throughout 1927 and 1928. New Englanders provided the majority of the financial commitment as well as the greatest interest in his endeavor. On Armistice Day, he addressed a full house at Carnegie Hall in New York about the importance of his work and the benighted souls who stood in his way back home, comparing the Fentress County elite to a pair of mules working against each other. His appeal to outsiders, especially northerners, unfortunately further alienated York's support at home.

After a protracted series of legal challenges, York opened the new school in the fall of 1929. The school's opening coincided with the onset of the Great Depression, and in 1931, the state ended all appropriations for bus transportation, effectively crippling the struggling Institute. The very nature of the school – a mountain school where children could come for a free education – required transportation. York went before the County Court and



Sgt. Alvin C. York on a speaking tour.

cont. next page

**Alvin C. York...continued**

asked for help; they refused.

On two occasions, first in 1931 and then later in 1935, York secured a mortgage on his farm from his political enemy and banker, W. L. Wright, to hire drivers, buy buses, and even pay teachers' salaries, something the county refused to do. This was true heroism, putting the fate of his family at risk, to ensure that the school stay in operation. As the Depression worsened, Wright badgered York, ultimately declaring him delinquent in his business transactions, and moved to foreclose on his farm. Had it not been for his longtime friend and neighbor, Susie Williams, York would have lost his farm, for she twice loaned him the money necessary to pay off his note.

Far from crediting York for his selfless efforts, the state never reimbursed York for his altruism. Rather, he was criticized for his behavior which led to a fact-finding investigation in 1933 that resulted in York's eventual removal from the school in 1937. The investigating committee recognized that York was the driving force behind the school and feared its demise if he were removed from the picture. They also acknowledged that if the school were turned over to Fentress County, the situation would be much worse. As a result the state of Tennessee assumed control of the school and operation of

York Institute. They removed York as the school's administrator, but named him *president emeritus*, because he did not have a college degree. The title recognized him as the school's founder but stripped him of any power.

In spite of his loss of position, York continued to promote York Institute, raising private donations for expansion of the school facilities and, when possible, contributing his own money. Legislation forced the state to have a vested interest in its success, and York's dream of free education for Tennessee's mountain children at last became a reality. He presided over every graduation ceremony until his debilitating stroke in 1954.

York fought valiantly in a war waged not on distant battlefields in France, but on his own doorstep. Because his tenure in the military made him painfully aware of his intellectual limitations, York dedicated the remainder of his life to the improvement of education, his own and his region's. York Agricultural and Industrial Institute, north of Jamestown, stands as a monument to his embattled dream. Yet the condition of the building that he helped build, digging its foundation by hand, and overseeing every aspect of its construction, now stands in near ruin. Though he lost control of the school in 1937, he continued to be its biggest booster and dedicated his life to its success. Because of his vision, thousands of

students have benefitted from his largesse. Eyes have been opened and imaginations given flight by his dream made reality. Thousands of York Institute graduates went on to become leaders of industry, bankers, lawyers, and educators.

The sorry state of York Institute's original building is shameful. The foundation he helped dig, and walls he helped build remain solid, though bricks are falling from its facade. Glass remains in few windows and birds nest in the building's rafters. Alvin York, when asked, "How do you want to be remembered?" always replied, "For improving education in Tennessee." The building which should be a monument to that achievement, now sits as a derelict shell.

The state of Tennessee, after months of battles reminiscent to those waged by York himself, has agreed to deed the historic York Institute building to the Sergeant York Patriotic Foundation and has committed \$500,000 to that end. The Foundation will be responsible for raising the remaining funds to get the building into a condition suitable for rehabilitation. The York family is committed to saving the building because it embodies the heart and soul of Sergeant York and his dream for a better Tennessee. Citizens throughout the country who value the legacy of Sergeant York should step up and help save the symbol of Tennessee's greatest 20th Century hero's life's work.

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