



TENNESSEE WARS COMMISSION

2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

(615) 770-1095

Email: Nina.Scall@tn.gov

The Tennessee Wars Commission continues in its mission to preserve Tennessee's military history by coordinating the planning, preservation, and promotion of structures, sites, and battlefields in Tennessee; and by acquiring or providing funds for the acquisition of battlegrounds, cemeteries, and other historic properties associated with the French and Indian War (1754-1763), Revolutionary War (1775-1783), War of 1812 (1812-1815), Mexican-American War (1846-1848), and the Civil War (1861-1865). This mission is realized by funding grants for a variety of projects, through civic and governmental engagement, and with interpretation and education efforts.

Grant Funding

The Tennessee Wars Commission administers two grant funds, the Wars Commission Grant Fund (WCGF) and the Civil War Sites Preservation Grant Fund (CWSPF), to further preservation efforts of Tennessee's military heritage. Since 1994, the Wars Commission Grant Fund has funded over one hundred different projects preserving, protecting, and interpreting the military history of Tennessee. The WCGF can fund a wide variety of projects within Tennessee's diverse communities relating to the Wars. Any individual, museum, educational institution, private organization, or local government body can apply. This grant fund awarded 115,610.00 dollars to four successful applicants during the 2019 fiscal year (FY). The successful applicants and their projects are as follows:

1. Alvin C. York State Historic Park was awarded \$1,810.00 dollars in grant funds to expand the current narrative at the State Park to include the interpretation of Camp McGinnis, an early Confederate training camp. Funds will be used for park staff to pursue living history projects within the park, in local schools, and on other off-site properties. Additionally, grant funds were allocated to design, purchase, and install an interpretive panel in the park illustrating the role that Camp McGinnis played in training Confederate soldiers and the impact that these Confederates had on the citizens of the Wolf River Valley, of which Alvin York's grandparents were two.

2. Parkers Crossroads Battlefield was awarded \$48,800.00 dollars in grant funds to purchase a replica Civil War artillery caisson, limber with munitions box, and wayside signage. The addition of this replica weaponry will help to interpret the crucial role that artillery played

on the battlefield. By providing a more detailed interpretation of the logistical support, visitor's will gain an expanded understanding of the use of cannons that proved so instrumental in General Nathan Bedford Forrest's battlefield strategy at Parkers Crossroads. Furthermore, this interpretation is a rarity in battlefield parks and will have a positive impact on the visitor's experience and understanding of 19th-century weapons and battlefield strategy.

3. Battle of Franklin Trust was awarded \$50,000.00 dollars in grant funds to assist in the purchase of interpretative panels and graphic displays for the new Carter House State Historic Site Visitor Center, a Tennessee Historical Commission capital project slated for construction in 2019/2020. These panels will interpret the broader context of America's history from its founding through the Civil War and its aftermath. Issues and themes will be addressed on a national, regional, and local level. The political and societal impacts of slavery will be a central theme. The role of Tennessee will be highlighted through members of the Carter family, such as Moscow Carter, who fought in the Mexican-American War and Civil War, and men like Fountain Branch Carter, the grandson of a Revolutionary War soldier, and who lived through the War of 1812, Mexican-American War, and Civil War. Through interpretative displays and interactive elements, visitors will learn about how men and women from Tennessee were involved in politics, legislation, and military actions.

4. Johnsonville State Historic Park was awarded \$15,000.00 dollars for the purchase of a reproduction aluminum carriage for one of their field artillery pieces. Johnsonville's current artillery carriages are surplus National Park Service pieces from the 1930s, and have begun to deteriorate and are currently considered potentially hazardous to visitor safety. This grant facilitates the continued use of their artillery piece for interpretive purposes.

The Civil War Sites Preservation Fund Grant provides matching funds for the acquisition and preservation of Civil War battlefields. Properties must be associated with the 38 most significant Civil War sites in Tennessee. Additionally, funds can assist in the acquisition and protection of Underground Railroad sites eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or eligible for designation as a National Historic Landmark. Applicants must be a 501(c)(3). Since its conception in 2013, this fund has preserved over 800-acres of battlefields. In the 2019-FY, this grant fund awarded 3,057,837 dollars for the acquisition of five tracts of land. This year's projects include:

1. The O'Reilly Tract located in Murfreesboro, Rutherford County, was preserved with the help of the American Battlefield Trust (ABT). Located along State Highway One, this 42-acre parcel lies adjacent to the Stone's River National Battlefield, a National Park Service owned site, and near land already preserved by ABT. This battlefield property encompasses the land where Major General William Rosecrans (Union) and General Braxton Bragg (Confederate) faced off. This tract is the location of George Wagner's troop position during the Battle of Stone's River, December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863. The grant contribution totaled \$1,827,502.38 from the Wars Commission.

2. The Brown Tract located in Shiloh, Hardin County, was preserved with the help of the ABT. The Battle of Shiloh was the location of the confrontation by Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston and Union commanders Major General Ulysses S. Grant and Major General Don Carlos Buell. The Brown Tract, an eight-acre parcel located along the east side of Gladden Road, at the southern portion of the core battlefield, marks the location of Confederate

Brigadier General Adley H. Gladden's battle line during the initial phase of the first day of the battle on April 8, 1862. Gladden's men suffered heavy casualties, including Gladden himself, who was mortally wounded by shrapnel. This Tract is adjacent to land already under conservation easement by the Tennessee Historical Commission, expanding the historic viewshed. The Wars Commission granted \$23,260.00 dollars.

3. The Yarbro Farms Tract located in the City of Jackson, Madison County, was preserved with the help of the ABT. The 120-acre parcel, located along Cotton Grove Road, surrounds the Salem Cemetery on three sides and is partially within the Jackson Battlefield boundaries. On December 18, 1862, Colonel Nathan Bedford Forest's confederate forces attacked Colonel Adolph Englemenn at the Salem Cemetery, creating a diversion, so Forest and a few men could destroy Union rail lines. Having accomplished his mission, Forest and his men withdrew. The Wars Commission granted \$345,336.95 in funds.

4. The Chapin Tract located in Chattanooga, Hamilton County, was preserved with the help of the ABT. Located along Browns Ferry Road, the approximately nine-acre tract lies in the core area of the Chattanooga and Wauhatchie Battlefields. This parcel contains the historic Brown's Tavern, a 212-year-old log home. This structure would have likely been conscripted into service as a shelter and meeting point during Major General Joseph Hooker's winter encampment in 1863/1864. Additionally, this Tract holds historical significance regarding the Trail of Tears and the Cherokee removal from Chattanooga in 1838. The Wars Commission granted \$231,737.63 in funds.

5. The Spivey Tract located in Franklin, Williamson County, was preserved with the help of Franklin's Charge Inc. and the ABT. The approximately .72-acre tract lies along Columbia Avenue and is across from an already preserved portion of battlefield. This tract is roughly 150 feet south of the main Federal defensive line that was manned by General Thomas Ruger's Division who faced off with Confederate troops led by General States Rights Gist and General George Gordon. Union lines fell apart twice but were ultimately successful in holding Confederate troops back, owing their success to Colonel Emerson Opdycke's reinforcements. This was a particularly bloody battle, taking the lives of six Confederate generals. Additionally, this parcel was owned by the Carter family, a founding Franklin family, since 1829 and was used as farm land. The Wars Commission granted \$630,000.00 in funds for the acquisition of this land.

Civic and Governmental Engagement

The Tennessee Wars Commission's mission is furthered through government and civic engagement. As a part of the Wars Commission's duties, an annual report is submitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House every January. Additionally, the Program Director acts as a historic preservation advocate to city, county, and local governments as well as to various nonprofit historical associations throughout Tennessee. The Program Director also serves as a board member and consultant in an advisory capacity to several boards and organizations.

Interpretation and Education

Interpretation and education efforts help to advance the Wars Commission's mission. Upcoming work includes reviewing currently held conservation easements and the creation of a strategy for site visits. These visits will help to ensure easement compliance and to document the current conditions of the sites. Interpretive metal signage will then be designed and installed, designating the properties as protected under easement by the State and the THC.

The Wars Commission continues to act in an advisory and oversight capacity for Camp Blount, a Tennessee Historical Commission-owned property administered by the City of Fayetteville, supporting their endeavors to open the site to the public. A recent site visit by the Wars Commission helped to illuminate the construction plans for phased development and interpretation of this War of 1812 campsite.

The Wars Commission is an advocate for the preservation and protection of Fort Negley, and to consult on future plans for the stabilization and interpretation of both the 1860s fort and the later work done by the WPA in the 1930s.

The Program Director continues to formulate new and to strengthen existing relationships with preservation-minded sites, societies, and heritage groups, furthering historic preservation efforts in Tennessee.