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Final Report

Stones River National Battlefield

Ethnographic Overview and Assessment

May 2016



The ethnographic study presented here exists in two formats. A printed version is available for study at the park, the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service, and at a variety of other repositories. For more widespread access, this historic resource study also exists in a web-based format through ParkNet, the website of the National Park Service. Please visit [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov) for more information.



**Cultural Resources Division Southeast Regional Office National Park Service**

**100 Alabama Street, SW Atlanta, GA 30303 404-562-3117**

Stones River National Battlefield 3501 Old Nashville Highway Mufreesboro, Tennessee 37129

<http://www.nps.gov/stri>

## RESEARCH TEAM

This work was a collaborative effort involving a number of individuals. William Leggett PhD performed ethnographic and archival research and served as the project manager. Ida Fadzillah PhD performed ethnographic research and oversaw the work of our student researchers. Rebecca Conard PhD was responsible for all research concerning historic Cemetery Community. Pat Cummins directed our research into Native American history as it relates to the landscape surrounding the battlefield and also is responsible for the section of the report related to the Cherokee Trail of Tears. Our undergraduate student researchers -- Kelsey Lamkin, Lauren Tootle, Michelle Pendergrass, and Skyla Roberts – were indispensable to the success of this project.

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## **FOREWARD**

Stones River National Battlefield commemorates a rich and complex period in the history of the United States. While this commemoration has historically focused on the specific period of the Battle of Stones River (referred to by the Confederate Army and by many Southerners still today as the Second Battle of Murfreesboro) which took place between December 31st 1862 and January 2nd 1863, recent years have seen the scope of the park's mission expand to include voices historically marginalized by a federally-mandated focus on the battle itself. For example, reclaiming the history of slavery and its impact on our citizens, the concerns of local land-owners – both black and white – in the region, as well as the presence of African Americans within the troops (both North and South), have all become integral parts of the park's educational mission. These changes in program goals reflect changes both within the National Park Service as well as changes in the demographics and values of the region within which the park resides.

Stones River Battlefield National Park is situated in the heart of Murfreesboro, Tennessee; a city of approximately 126,000 residents. The population, while not expansive, has grown faster than anyone had predicted or planned for this small southern city. The city housed barely over 68,000 people in the year 2000 (and around 1900 in the year 1850).

### **Historical Population Murfreesboro, Tennessee**

Census	Pop.	%±
1850	1,917	—
1860	2,861	49.2%
1870	3,502	22.4%
1880	3,800	8.5%
1890	3,739	-1.6%
1900	3,999	7.0%
1910	4,679	17.0%
1920	5,367	14.7%
1930	7,993	48.9%
1940	9,495	18.8%
1950	13,052	37.5%
1960	18,991	45.5%
1970	26,360	38.8%
1980	32,845	24.6%
1990	44,922	36.8%
2000	68,816	53.2%

—  
Source: U.S. Dicennial Census [census.gov](http://census.gov)

For those looking on from a distance, these numbers might appear inconsequential. But for the long-term residents of our region, this demographic expansion has clearly been something of a surprise. Regional city-planning experts had conservatively predicted a population of just over 100,000 in 2015 with Murfreesboro not reaching our present numbers before 2025. But from 2010 to 2013, the city's population grew by 7 percent (and continues to grow by 4.4% annually), while the national growth rate has remained steady at approximately 0.72 percent. Currently Murfreesboro is the fastest growing city in Tennessee and the 13<sup>th</sup> fastest growing in the United States (for cities with a population over 50,000).

Economic initiatives definitely played a part in this population explosion. The expansion of Nissan's automotive plant in Smyrna, just west of Murfreesboro; The growth of Amazon including a major distribution center within city limits; and the reemergence of GM's local automotive plant in Spring Hill, Tennessee (preciously manufacturing the now-defunct Saturn brand) all have brought an insurgence of various labor pools into our region.

According to Murfreesboro's 2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the top employers in Rutherford County:

#	Employer	# of Employees
1	Nissan	7,500
2	Rutherford County government and schools	6,073
3	Middle Tennessee State University	2,205
4	National Healthcare	2,071
5	City of Murfreesboro government and schools	1,912
6	State Farm Insurance	1,662
7	Ingram Content Group	1,500
8	Alvin C. York Veterans Administration Medical Center	1,461
9	Asurion	1,250
10	Amazon.com	1,200

Additionally, Middle Tennessee has become a “welcome” region for immigrants and refugees from around the world. Tennessee's foreign born population in 1990 was approximately 59,000. By 2006 that number had grown to over 267,000.

In short, despite administrative predictions and planning, nobody was fully prepared for the dramatic growth our city has experienced. More important for readers of this report -- those interested in the preservation and promotion of historical spaces of national interest – urban development requires us to address commercial and demographic expansion as it relates to National Park Service operations. Where once the Stones River National Battlefield was considered “out in the boondocks” as one of our informants put it, and “difficult to access”, as another noted, the national park and national cemetery are now encircled by a city growing faster and in more directions than any had ever predicted. To paraphrase Rebecca Conard's findings

later in this report, Stones River National Battlefield now sits like an island in the midst of unprecedented urban development.

### Stones River Battlefield National Park



The Photos Courtesy of Brice Robbins

social and cultural  
landscapes surrounding

Stones River National Battlefield are rich and diverse. This Ethnographic Overview and Assessment provides a general description of the social and cultural context of Stones River National Battlefield and discusses relevant user groups and their relation to the park. Specifically, this project includes an exhaustive overview of Cemetery Community led by Rebecca Conard with exceptional help from her students; a thorough discussion of the Trail of Tears and of the city of Old Jefferson by Patrick Cummins; an historical overview of Native American habitation of our region and participation in the culture and economy by Kelsey Lamkin with assistance from Patrick Cummins; an ethnographic study of land-owners adjacent to and/or previously inhabiting national park land, and an annotated bibliography highlighting the literature related to our region concerning such topics as a) Middle Tennessee Prehistory, b) Middle Tennessee History, c) The Civil War (as it relates to Middle Tennessee), d) African Americans in Middle Tennessee, e) Native Americans in Middle Tennessee, f) the Modern American South, and g) Theories of Space and. We feel this annotated bibliography will serve as a valuable resource to park personnel – both those new to the park and those whose specialization is limited to two or three of these realms of knowledge as presented. This annotated bibliography was compiled by a number of talented and industrious students (Kelsey Lamkin, Michelle Pendegrass, Skyla Roberts, and Lauren Tootle) and organized and edited by Ida Fadzillah.

By focusing on these population groups and these categories, we have prioritized those populations with specific geographic, historical, and cultural ties to the region. At the same time, unfortunately, other user groups remain largely absent from this report.

Conducting an Ethnographic Overview and Assessment of Stones River National Battlefield presented special problems as the park incorporates only a small portion of the original battlefield. Thus connections to the surrounding region were taken into account. Further, the park is incorporated within a Greenway system utilized daily by hikers, bikers, fishers, and nature enthusiasts. Our goal was to focus on groups well represented in the literature as well as those with vivid recollections concerning the park. As such, this Ethnographic Overview and Assessment is limited in scope but points to future areas of potential research.

This report provides a baseline for understanding the complex human environment of Stones River National Battlefield and the multiple communities that have a stake in the park. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the report provides but a starting point to scholarly and scientific writing on the many groups that give meaning to the ethnographic resources of the park. This work has been rewarding and eye opening. Our hope is that park personnel and park users find this document a useful “primer” on the ethnographic character of the park and its surrounding communities.

### **Brief Historical Overview of the Establishment and Growth of Stones River Battlefield National Park**

In 1927, the United States Congress authorized the War Department to acquire a portion of the site near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, where the Battle of Stones River, known locally as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Murfreesboro took place. It is worth noting that the north tended to name their battles by the local waterway (Stones River), the South by the closest city, town, or settlement (Murfreesboro). The First Battle of Murfreesboro was fought on July 13, 1862; five months before the Battle of Stones River. Troops under Confederate cavalry commander Brigadere General Nathan Bedford Forrest surprised and quickly overran a Federal hospital, the camps of several small Union units, and the jail and courthouse in Murfreesboro. The courthouse still displays the pockmarks of shot from the attack in its walls. All of the Union units surrendered to Forrest, and the Confederates destroyed much of the Union's supplies and destroyed railroad track in the area. The primary consequence of the raid was the diversion of Union forces from a drive on Chattanooga. Locally, the result of this Southern victory by a skilled Southern General is a still present sense of pride in the exploits of someone who went on to be a founding member of the Ku Klux Klan. Conflicting emotions toward General Forrest and his complicated history still inform perceptions of the war in the city.



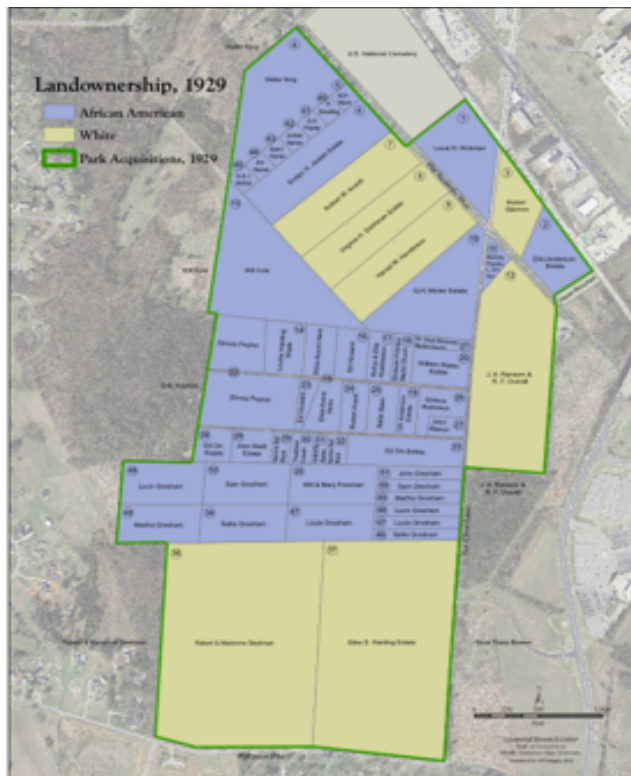
The 1927 Congressional legislation directed the War Department to “carefully study the available records and historical data with respect to the location and movement of all troops which engaged in the battle of Stones River (December 31, 1862–January 2, 1863) and the important events connected therewith, with a view of preserving and marking such field for historical and professional military study.”

A commission appointed to survey the battlefield area for a feasible site selected approximately 325 acres situated adjacent to the 20-acre Stones River National Cemetery, a logical choice because the enabling legislation provided for inclusion of the cemetery, established in 1865 as the final resting place for more than 6,000 Union soldiers, including US Colored Troops. Most of the Confederate dead were taken to their towns or to the nearest southern community. Some, however, were buried in a mass grave south of town and later reinterred in another mass grave, Confederate Circle in Evergreen Cemetery in Murfreesboro.





An important point to recognize is that, except for the national cemetery and three existing monuments, all of the land selected for park development was privately owned. Land condemnation and acquisition proceedings for the initial development of the park took place over a five-year period from 1929 through 1934 (Conard 2011:161).



**Figure 4.** Compiled from property research based on the Land Acquisition Map for Stones River National Military Park, U. S. War Department, 1929. The smaller parcels in the center, primarily owned by African Americans, contained most of the buildings in the Cedars. Cartographer: Zada Law, Geospatial Research Center, Department of Geosciences, Middle Tennessee State University.

Fast forward to the decade-long National Park Service capital improvement program known as Mission 66, which ran from 1956 to 1966. Stones River National Battlefield was among many national parks developed or redeveloped during this period. To lay the groundwork for park development and new interpretive programs, Chief Historian Edwin Bearss conducted extensive research to map the fields, fence lines, and structures present during the battle. Potential opportunities for expansion were mapped out during this period.





Edwin Bearss and J.C. Killian, Historical Fence and Ground Cover Map (portion), National Park Service, 1962. *Courtesy Stones River National Battlefield.*

Since the 1930s, the park has expanded to more than 600 acres (from the original 325) and now includes approximately 3,000 linear feet of earthen works associated with Fortress Rosecrans, a retained portion of a 200-acre enclosure where the Union Army decamped in 1863 to hold the Chattanooga and Nashville Railroad line, a major Union objective of the Battle of Stones River.

As Gib Backlund, Chief of Operations at Stones River National Battlefield noted,

When I first came here on the detail I learned about some of the resources that were here. And Fortress Rosecrans was basically impenetrable. I mean it was just a sea of privet and trees and it is was not visible from the road. It wasn't anything that was anything that got much attention from anybody in town. I mean the park, Old Fort Park had been named for it but there were no trails. There were no access points. There were illegal access motorcycle trails and that sort of thing but not many people really paid much attention to it. And so that was Bart's [Gordon] effort to really kind of bring it [Fortress Rosecrans] in. In fact I am not sure if in those days in the 80's maybe or even prior to that, that the parks service necessarily wanted it because they didn't, the park's staff and perhaps some of the folks in the regional [office] didn't recognize the value of and the integrity of the earthworks. And Ed Bearss, who was chief historian at the time, said that he after he saw it when we opened it he said yeah I think we made a mistake in opposing the acquisition of that.



The battlefield's authorized boundary experienced minor expansion again in 1987 and once more in 1991. At that time, 1991, the park was requested to update their General Management Plan by March of 1993. There was a feeling this would be a good time to preserve additional battlefield land. Therefore, more time was taken than expected to develop a General Management Plan with three alternatives (differing in scale of expansion) proposed around 1996 and eventually published in 1998. These initiatives are relevant to the ethnography later in this report.

In 2006, the park received a Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award for Excellence in Natural Heritage Conservation to recognize its native habitat restoration program. This award came shortly after the city of Murfreesboro completed construction of a four-lane parkway from Interstate 24 to create a new, luxuriously landscaped "gateway" into the city from Interstate 24.



On one side of the park now rises a sprawling medical complex; on the other, an upscale shopping complex, hotel, and conference center. New construction, including a Megachurch, strip malls, an apartment complex, and additional hotels, has consumed several hundred acres of land adjacent to the park (land that falls within the parameters of the original battlefield). In addition to closing off any opportunity for significant land acquisition to approximate the 4,000-acre battlefield area, a long-cherished dream of many park supporters, it is clear that the current 650 total acres of Stones River National Battlefield now sits as an island in the midst of urban development, which has disrupted habitats, generated more traffic and noise, and marred views from within the park.



New Vision Baptist Church





Photo Courtesy of Brice Robbins

At the same time, thanks to cooperation between city and state leaders and the National Parks Service, Stones River National Battlefield has worked to retain, where possible, and reimagine, where necessary, the “natural” habitat as it would have been experienced at the time of the battle. The fauna and flora make for a striking setting within which to imagine a past in which great violence upset a seemingly bucolic rural environment.











**HISTORIC CEMETERY COMMUNITY: THE CEDARS STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD.**  
**RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

Rebecca Conard, Ph.D.

Department of History

Middle Tennessee State University

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The focus of this study, historic Cemetery community in Rutherford County, was one of thousands of freedmen's communities that blanketed the South after the Civil War. More specifically, the focus is on one node of the community known as the Cedars, a cluster of about twenty households. Between 1929 and 1932, landowners in the Cedars were forced to sell their property to the U. S. government for the purpose of establishing Stones River National Military Park. This taking erased the Cedars as an African American neighborhood in order to commemorate the Civil War battle that had taken place on the same land from December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863. Some residents of the Cedars relocated within the larger community, which persisted at least for another generation.

At the time, the National Park Service did not acknowledge the historical association between Cemetery community and the purpose for which the park was created. Civil War battlefield parks initially were established to interpret the course of the war, not its causes and consequences. The park's legislative mandate to interpret a single battle of the war, coupled with the conventions of racial segregation, effectively suppressed the history of enslavement and emancipation and created an invisible wall between the park and the surrounding African American neighborhood. This, too, persisted until the 1990s when increasing scholarly interest in the history of slavery and intensifying pressure from civil rights advocates led to a major reassessment of interpretation at Civil War sites. This, in turn, began a lengthy process of expanding the Civil War story at national parks to interpret the institution of slavery as the major cause and, more recently, the complex history of Reconstruction and institutionalized segregation that followed the war. With this change, the history of Cemetery community now mattered.

Cemetery community takes its name from Stones River National Cemetery. Among the people who settled here were several African American men who had served in the U.S. Colored Troops during the Civil War and then transitioned to employees of the federal War Department to build and maintain the national cemetery. However, the majority of those who formed this community were freed men and women who chose to stay where they had lived before the war.

In 1868, the Tennessee Manual Labor University (TMLU), chartered by the State of Tennessee in 1866, acquired 307 acres surrounding Stones River National Cemetery. Directed by Peter Lowery of Nashville, a free black before the war who was educated at Franklin College, the TMLU was founded to provide practical education for African Americans. Although the school was short-lived, its location helped to establish this area as African American space. The 1870 census confirms that the inhabitants were primarily black although landownership, except for the TMLU property, remained in the hands of whites.

The first two black landowners in the Cedars represent the two strands of community formation. In 1872, Sam Grisham (also Gresham), a blacksmith, purchased 40 acres located north of Wilkinson Pike (now Manson Pike). His land was situated across the road from Asa Grisham's sizable farm, and Grisham had been a slaveholder before the war. 1875, L.S. Doolittle, the superintendent of Stones River National Cemetery, sold three acres adjacent to Hazen Brigade Monument to William Holland (also Harland, Harlan, and Harlin). Holland, who served with the 111<sup>th</sup> U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) in the war, may have been in the area as early as 1865, but the 1870 census places him in the household of cemetery superintendent Doolittle.

During the 1870s, Stones River Methodist Church was erected and Evergreen Graveyard was established. Both were located near the Nashville and Murfreesboro Pike (later known as the Dixie Highway and more recently as Old Nashville Highway) in another area of Cemetery community known as the Bottom (or Bottoms), where a one-room school also was built. Two more churches, Mt. Olivet (also Olive) Missionary Baptist Church and Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church were built in the 1880s. These two churches were located in the Cedars. By the mid 1880s, three churches, a burial ground, and a school signified the presence of an established community.

Black landownership in the Cedars increased gradually, and the community continued to grow in size up to about World War I. In 1910, approximately 80 people lived here in 17 separate households. Thirteen heads of household were farmers, and of them 12 owned property. Deeds and census data help to identify the families with the deepest roots in the Cedars. In addition to those of Sam Grisham and William Holland, they include the families of Andrew and Mary Avent, Ellis and Addie Anderson, Ed and Patsy Howard, George and Martha Hutchinson, John and Callie Mason, Ed and Josephine Orr, and William and Fannie Waller.

By 1920, the community had shrunk to about 65, a population decrease that correlates with the "great migration" of African Americans northward that began with World War I. In 1929, when the War Department began the process of land acquisition for the national park, the inventory of land and improvements in the Cedars listed 17 houses, three cabins, nine barns, one smokehouse, one chicken shed, 11 miscellaneous sheds, five wells, 730 fruit trees (identified as peach or pear in some instances), 1000 blackberry vines, 200 grape vines, two churches, and one store.



Many of those displaced for the national park moved into Murfreesboro or relocated elsewhere in Cemetery community. A few are believed to have left the area, continuing the outmigration that began with World War I. The two Baptist churches, Mt. Olivet and Ebenezer, were moved to new locations along Old Nashville Highway in the Bottom.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Scores of people have contributed to the research that informs this study, beginning with 18 graduate students enrolled in the Public History Seminar in Fall 2007, who undertook team-research studies that are collected under the title of “African Americans on the Land: Five Cultural Landscape Studies of Stones River NHB,” a copy of which is located at Stones River National Battlefield. Everything else has flowed from the initial investigations conducted by Megan Akerstrom, Virginia Arouh, Ray Barnett, Marie Bourassa, Dollie Boyd, Kristen Baldwin Deathridge, Elena DiGrado, Elizabeth Goetsch, Brad Mitchell, Katherine Merzbacher O’Bryan, Ashleigh Oatts, Carolyn Powell, Angela Smith, Elizabeth Smith Hobson, Stewart Southard, Richard White, Albert Whittenberg, and Mike Wright.

Although few documents in the vast records of the Bureau of Freedmen, Refugees, and Abandoned Lands contain information specifically related to the Cemetery community area, finding them required systematic, diligent searching. The Freedmen’s Bureau digital collection, housed at Walker Library, was initiated in Fall 2008, when another Public History Seminar class began the labor-intensive process of reading microfilm records frame by frame, digitizing those records pertaining to Rutherford County, and preparing metadata entries, indexed by personal and place name. The result is a more useable database that is available to all researchers. The initial work was accomplished by Garet Bleddynn, Layton Carr, Catherine Hawkins, Zada Law, Katherine Looney, Lauren Pate, Amy Rohmiller, Tyler Sanderlin, Lydia Simpson, and Virginia Wallace-Falck. Work continued in Fall 2011, when the following team of graduate students concentrated on the records of the Freedmen’s Bureau Superintendent of Education: Jaryn Abdallah, Lauren Baud, Cassie Bennett, Amber Clawson, Thomas Flagel, Abigail Gautreau, Sara Beth Gideon, Jessica Reeves, Amanda Schaffer, Angela Sirna, Rachel Smith, David Sprouse, Julie Warwick, Jessica White, Jerry Wooten, and Cyrana Wyker.

A second digital collection, Cemetery, a Freedmen’s Community, also at Walker Library, was born in Fall 2009, when a third class of students taking the Public History Seminar began transcribing, abstracting, and digitizing deeds, court documents, and other public records pertaining to the initial parcels of land acquired for Stones River National Military Park. This team included Matthew Bailey, Jane Davis, Rebecca Duke, Brigitte Eubank, Hallie Fieser, Rachael Finch, Natalie Goodwin, Cheri LaFlamme, Tyler Moore, Amanda Pitt, Katie Randall, Sara Rieger, and Kathryn Tate.

In summer 2011, the Public History Program partnered with Stones River National Battlefield and Bradley Academy Museum to conduct fieldwork on Cemetery community. This project resulted in additional oral history interviews, a reconnaissance survey of historic resources, and a community workshop. Field school participants included graduate students Mona Brittingham, Rebecca Duke, Elizabeth Goetsch, Hasan Karayam, Susan Knowles, Zada

Law, John Lynch, Lydia Simpson, Kimberly Tucker, and C. Sade Turnipseed; faculty members Martha Norkunas, C. Van West, and myself; community “scholars” Devora Butler, Anthony King, Leonora Washington, and Katie Wilson; and NPS staff members Gib Backlund, John George, Jim Lewis, and Stuart Johnson.

Over the past few years, many graduate students have utilized the research data to produce a variety of interpretive products as part of class assignments, including two finished works. In 2008, Elena DiGrado, Elizabeth Goetsch, and Carolyn Powell produced a design concept for an interpretive exhibit. A subsequent grant from the Tennessee Civil War Heritage Area enabled Elizabeth Goetsch, working with Stones River staff, to refine this concept into a portable exhibit, “Listening to the Landscape: The Stories of Stones River National Battlefield,” which has been displayed in many area locations since 2009. In 2011, Mona Brittingham, Meghan Fall, Zada Law, and John Lynch produced wayside exhibit design concepts, a project that provided another opportunity to work with community members who have a particular interest in local African American history. The NPS Interpretive Design Center at Harpers Ferry used their design concepts to create a wayside exhibit interpreting Cemetery community.

Lydia Simpson and Elizabeth Goetsch conducted in-depth research resulting in M.A. theses that have advanced our understanding of Cemetery community in different ways. Goetsch’s “All Could Not Help but Feel It: A Cultural Landscape Approach to History at Stones River National Battlefield (MTSU, 2011) focuses on environmental history as an interpretive pivot that helps tie the park’s primary theme, the Battle of Stones River, to post-war African American resettlement and community formation. Simpson’s “Settling In: Tracking the Formation of the Cemetery Community through Public Records” (MTSU 2011) represents the initial research into establishing the presence of USCT veterans among the earliest community settlers and uncovering the all-but-forgotten history of the Tennessee Manual Labor University.

In 2012-2013, Dallas Hanbury continued to comb microfilm looking for Freedmen’s Bureau records pertaining to Rutherford County. Cyrana Wyker, in addition to creating new metadata, applied her expertise in library science to edit this digital collection.

In 2015 Jenny Andrews took on the task of editing the Cemetery Community digital collection. She was joined by Tiffany Momon in Fall 2015, when the two of them began the process of following internal evidence in deeds and other public records to push the history of landownership and residence in Cemetery community back to the late 1860s. Their discoveries yielded key pieces of information that enabled a more complete understanding of the Cedars.

Zada Law, in her capacity as director of the MTSU Geospatial Research Center in the Department of Geosciences, has been a constant supporter of this endeavor, with contributions too numerous to list in their entirety. Among other things, Zada conducted GPS fieldwork to locate and map 88 unmarked graves in Evergreen Graveyard as part of a 2011 cemetery preservation workshop. Under her direction, a geo-referenced interpretive map of extant historic

resources associated with Cemetery community was produced in 2015. Building on research for the initial 2007 research report, she updated and refined the color-coded 1920 landownership map that appears on p. 19, one of three maps she produced for this report.

Thank you is not enough for these contributions. In the aggregate, they point to the tremendous effort that is sometimes needed to redress silences in the historical record. I am grateful to Will Leggett and Ida Fadzillah, co-principal investigators of the ethnographic overview, as well as Stones River National Battlefield for the opportunity to pull the pieces together in narrative format.

## **HISTORIC CEMETERY COMMUNITY: THE CEDARS STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD RUTHERFORD COUNTY, TENNESSEE**

### **Introduction**

In decisively ending the institution of chattel slavery, the Civil War forced a reordering of the South's economy and society. Despite the immensity of that reordering, the changes registered rather subtly on the agrarian landscape. For a time, the Freedmen's Bureau aided the establishment of schools and helped to negotiate labor contracts, both with mixed success. Freed men and women began new ways of life primarily by using the resources at hand, namely their physical labor and the creativity borne of necessity. Agriculture was still the economic base, and African Americans initially engaged in agriculture as share-cropping tenant farmers or hired hands. However, by 1870, black landownership was measurable (in Tennessee, one in 22 rural black households), and the percentage of landowning black farmers in the South steadily increased to a high of about 25 percent in 1910.<sup>1</sup> With this change, slave quarters were replaced by a more dispersed pattern of farms and farm dwellings and a network of loosely bounded black and white communities clustered around segregated churches and schools.

Cemetery community, a post-emancipation African American rural settlement situated northwest of Murfreesboro in Rutherford County, Tennessee, was one of thousands of such communities throughout the South.<sup>2</sup> In the aggregate, these rural communities represent a profoundly important chapter in the history of rebuilding the South after the Civil War. Although there was no meaningful land reform, agriculture nonetheless was the means by which many newly freed men and women managed to establish a stake in the American economy. Scholarly study of post-war African American landownership, farming, and rural community building is still emerging even though W.E.B. DuBois produced pathbreaking studies more than a century ago.<sup>3</sup> DuBois also was the first to reframe Reconstruction from a black perspective, and in Marxist terms, as a labor revolt that failed to overturn an exploitive agricultural economy but nonetheless brought some unexpected benefits such as publicly supported education. Influenced in part by DuBois, historians C. Vann Woodward, John Hope Franklin, and Kenneth Stampp began revising the history of Reconstruction to include the experiences and perspectives of the

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<sup>1</sup> Loren Schweninger, *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 153, 182-84.

<sup>2</sup> Stephen V. Ash argues that most blacks who had been enslaved on farms and plantations did not migrate to urban areas but, rather, to rural hamlets and villages; see Ash, *Middle Tennessee Transformed: 1860-1870: War and Peace in the Upper South* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006 [1988]), 213-15. Thad Sitton and James H. Conrad identified more than 500 freedmen's colonies, rural and urban, in Texas alone; see *Freedom Colonies: Independent Black Texans in the Time of Jim Crow* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005).

<sup>3</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, "The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia: A Social Study," U.S. Department of Labor Bulletin 3, no. 14 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1898): 1-38; "The Negro Landowner in Georgia," U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin 6, no. 25 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1901): 647-777; *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Co., 1903).

four million people who gained legal freedom and citizen status as a result of the Civil War.<sup>4</sup> Since the 1960s, African American historiography has developed its own subfields, and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War has renewed interest in the post-war period of Reconstruction.

In the historiography of Reconstruction, studies of rural communities, black landownership, and black farmers occupy a relatively small shelf. Among the earliest to appear were Nell Painter's 1977 *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* and Elizabeth Bethel's 1981 study of Promised Land, South Carolina, founded in 1870 by freedmen who purchased confiscated land from the South Carolina Land Commission. In 1991, Kenneth Marvin looked at the economic motives that drove the founders and developers of five small black towns established between 1877 and 1915—Nicodemus, Kansas, Mound Bayou, Mississippi, Langston City and Boley, Oklahoma, and Allensworth, California. Loren Schweninger's sweeping socio-economic history of *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915* built on Claude Oubre's 1978 study of the Freedmen's Bureau and black landownership. Schweninger provided the first comprehensive study of property ownership in the 15 states of the upper and lower South as well as the District of Columbia. More recently, Dylan Penningroth, in *The Claims of Kinfolk*, examined the interconnectedness of kinship, property acquisition, and community formation. In *Making Freedom Pay*, Sharon Ann Holt demonstrated the ways in which newly freed men and women combined home production with tenant farming to gradually accumulate enough wealth to found and sustain community institutions. More research resides in scholarly articles as well as unpublished theses, government reports, and special studies for limited audiences. Of special note are the essays collected in *Beyond Forty Acres and a Mule: African American Landowning Families since Reconstruction*, which address important themes that have emerged from recent scholarship, including the importance of family and kin networks, class differences among farm owners and renters, the role of rural cooperatives, and debates over the marginality thesis and black separatism.<sup>5</sup>

The current state of scholarship underscores the difficulty of amassing evidence for in-depth study of rural communities. As Schweninger has noted, "Only in places where military authorities or northern missionaries assisted freedmen or women, or in remote and infertile back-

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<sup>4</sup> W.E.B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935); C. Vann Woodward, *Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction* (Little, Brown, 1951) and *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (Oxford University Press, 1955); John Hope Franklin, *Reconstruction: after the Civil War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Kenneth Stampp, *The Era of Reconstruction, 1865-1877* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965).

<sup>5</sup> In addition to Schweninger, *Black Property Owners in the South, 1790-1915*, see Nell Irvin Painter, *Exodusters: Black Migration to Kansas after Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977); Elizabeth Rauh Bethel, *Promised Land: A Century of Life in a Negro Community* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981); Kenneth Marvin Hamilton, *Black Towns and Profit: Promotion and Development in the Trans-Appalachian West, 1877-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991); Claude F. Oubre, *Forty Acres and a Mule: The Freedmen's Bureau and Black Land Ownership* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978); Sharon Ann Holt, *Making Freedom Pay: North Carolina Freedpeople Working for Themselves, 1865-1900* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2000); Debra A. Reid and Evan P. Bennett, eds., *Beyond Forty Acres and a Mule: African American Landowning Families since Reconstruction* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012).

country regions, did significant numbers of former slaves acquire small tracts of land.”<sup>6</sup> Remote, unincorporated settlements do not generate an abundance of historical evidence. In the case of Cemetery community, one can piece together the outlines from census data, tax records, deeds, court proceedings, and other public records, occasional newspaper accounts, maps, and photographs, but huge silences in the historical record thwart even the most determined effort to portray the historical people who lived, worked, learned, played, prayed, raised families, and commemorated the dead in this place. The surviving evidence yields plausible suggestions but few solid clues about the actual lives of those who called this place home.

Still, the formation of rural black communities assumes greater significance locally, as well as more generally, if one considers Rutherford County’s status as a slave-holding area before the war. Jennifer Hudson’s analysis of property ownership in Rutherford County from 1865 to 1877 places Rutherford County as the sixth highest slave-holding county in Tennessee in 1850, with 11,978 enslaved people, 41 percent of a total population of 29,122. By 1860, the enslaved population numbered 12,984, or 46.5 percent of the county total.<sup>7</sup> The occupation of Murfreesboro by federal troops after the Battle of Stones River, which entailed the construction of extensive fortifications and lasted more than two years, served as a magnet that drew more even more blacks escaping bondage. Approximately 2,000 people are believed to have occupied a refugee, or contraband, camp near Murfreesboro.<sup>8</sup> This helped to push the county’s black population to 16,478 in 1870, 49.5 percent of the total population.

The establishment of Stones River National Cemetery in 1865 and the presence of a Freedmen’s Bureau subagency in Murfreesboro meant that federal officials were still a force to be reckoned with in local affairs after the war, at least for a time. Reports of field agents indicate that Klan intimidation and violence was directed at agency staff and teachers at freedmen’s schools in addition to African Americans in general. But behind their bravado and lawlessness, Klan members and their sympathizers felt threatened by the new regime the Freedmen’s Bureau signified. The years 1868-1869 were particularly unsettled locally, although Klan activity subsided by 1870. The Freedmen’s Bureau also was enfeebled by then, and defunct as of 1872, but the superintendent of the national cemetery, an employee of the War Department, still might have exerted a calming influence in the immediate surrounding area. Blacks, intent on establishing economic security and safe places to raise families, might have perceived some benefit from the federal presence represented by the national cemetery even if they overestimated the protections afforded by it. The national cemetery was of more importance as a source of employment. In any case, the seeds of Cemetery community’s formation are to be

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<sup>6</sup> Schweninger, 146.

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer Goodrum Hudson, “A Profile of Black Landownership in Rutherford County During Reconstruction” (Honor’s Thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 1989), 8-9, 39-41; see also John H. Lodl, “Building Viable Black Communities: The Transition from Slavery to Freedom in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, 1860-1880” (M.A. thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 2004), 27.

<sup>8</sup> John Cimprich, *Slavery’s End in Tennessee, 1861-1865* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1985), 50-58.

found both in the large number of blacks who were concentrated in Rutherford County for agricultural production and the construction of a national cemetery immediately after the war on battle-scarred land northwest of Murfreesboro in Civil District 9.

### **The Battlefield Area in the Late 1860s**

One of the earliest accounts to establish the presence of large numbers of African Americans around Stones River National Cemetery after the war comes from a lengthy travel piece, or “correspondence,” published by the *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune* in September 1869.<sup>9</sup> The article describes a day-long ramble the author, “Avery,” took on a hot August day, leaving from a hotel in downtown Murfreesboro (he was in town for the Tennessee Conference of the Methodist Church South) and walking the tracks of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad out to Hazen Brigade Monument and the national cemetery. Avery was particularly taken with Hazen Brigade Monument, the earthen fortifications, “among the most extensive to be found anywhere,” the national cemetery, and the scars of battle still evident in the remaining trees. Most of his article is devoted to describing these features. However, his descriptions of the landscape and people in the background, so to speak, provide valuable evidence about the area that would become known as Cemetery community.

When he reached the national cemetery, Avery observed a stone wall under construction, with “near a hundred yards built on one side.” From the cemetery, he walked some distance southeast of the railroad, which was under cultivation in fields of corn and cotton. He stopped to talk with an “old negro, who was picking cotton in a field where there must have been some very severe fighting from the looks of a few scattering trees.” The man told him that “every year he plowed up bullets, bones, cannon-balls and bayonets,” but that “every year they get less and less.” He and others were salvaging the lead and selling it, to the degree that “none of us people about here have bought any lead since the war, but we have sold a heap.”

Avery saw very few whites, but “met colored people several times.” Curious about the recent “trouble with the Ku Klux Klan,” he stopped one man to find out what he could. His unnamed informant acknowledged that the Klan had “acted awful bad” for a time:

They drove more than a hundred colored people away from their crops. It came hard on them, too; for they had worked all summer to get a little start, and now, just in the time when their crop needs gathering and seeing to, they have to leave. Some of them have come back, but a heap are afraid to.

The man went on to tie the reason for their fear to a specific incident, the brutal beating of another black man, which apparently caused many people to flee but prompted others to arm themselves in self-defense. More violence ensued, and blacks paid a price for this, too.

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<sup>9</sup> Avery [no other identifier given], “The Battle Field of Stone [sic] River,” *Cincinnati Commercial Tribune*, September 27, 1869.



They [Klansmen] beat Wash. Barrett nearly to death. Nobody knows what they did it for. They came to his cabin about midnight and called for him. His mother begged him not to go to the door, but them that was outside said that they just wanted to see him about some business, and would not hurt him. He went to the door, and they grabbed him and beat him till he was nearly dead. I saw him the other day, and his head is all covered with sores where they hit him with their pistols. After that the black people around here loaded up their old guns to defend themselves with. This made the Ku Klux madder than ever, and they rode out every night, doing all kinds of devilment. One night some colored men shot three shoots [sic] at them, and killed a fine horse that one of them was riding. The Sheriff or somebody arrested the black men that did the shooting, and put them in jail at Murfreesboro, where they are now.

Avery used this story as pretext for calling on the Southern Methodist Conference to focus its missionary efforts at home rather than places like the Fiji Islands. Then he went on to finish his account by describing the landscape he encountered on the other side of the railroad tracks, land lying to the southwest.

Here, as elsewhere, there was abundant evidence of terrible fighting. The ground is slightly rolling and most of it in cultivation, but wherever the timber is the footprints of battle are plainly discernible. In nearly all the cotton-fields negroes were engaged in picking the snowy material which enters so largely into the world [of] commerce.

Avery paints a picture of the former battlefield transitioning back to agricultural use and inhabited by a large number of African Americans working fields of cotton and corn. He also portrays the area as a place where blacks experienced constant intimidation and violence. Reports from field offices of the Freedmen's Bureau confirm the general state of lawlessness that prevailed in the late 1860s. One particularly forceful account comes from Lt. Col. Joseph Gelray, who was sent to Murfreesboro in June of 1868 to investigate a "Negro insurrection." He found a community in chaos. Instead of blacks as perpetrators, Gelray informed his superior that, "Threats are being daily made by the Ku Klux Klan in Murfreesboro, [sic] and vicinity to annihilate the negroes and union citizens, and the county Sheriff reports that he is entirely powerless to execute the law or prevent outrages by the Klan."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Lt. Col. Joseph W. Gelray to General Carlin, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, State of Tennessee, Assistant Commissioner's Office, Nashville, Tennessee, June 19, 1868, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, National Archives and Records Administration, Series T142, Records of Field Offices—Tennessee, MF reel 38 [hereafter cited as Freedmen's Bureau Records]. Records of the Freedmen's Bureau include several reports of Klan activity in and around Murfreesboro during 1868 and 1869. None of them sheds more light on the particular incident that Avery describes; however, many incidents probably went unreported.

In this state of disarray, freed men and women began piecing together a new way of living: in separate communities. Systematically denied economic, social, and, by 1869, political equality in the wider world, African Americans living in cities, towns, and the countryside “defined themselves,” as Stephen Ash asserts, “through their discrete black communities . . . disciplining the errant, caring for the helpless, gathering all within their custody, and sustaining them from the cradle to the grave.”<sup>11</sup> Whatever hardships and indignities they faced on a daily basis, freed men and women still celebrated emancipation with joy and thanksgiving. Likewise, as Ash also notes, they imbued their communities with a sense of optimism and a “progressive vision of the future.”<sup>12</sup>

### **Post-war Agriculture, African Americans, and Land Ownership**

Reconstruction failed to establish enough economic security for African Americans to gain equal footing in the nation’s political economy. However, Schweninger asserts that blacks made substantial economic progress through agriculture, particularly in the Upper South, where, “by 1910, nearly half the black agriculturists . . . had become landowners (compared with 19 percent in the Lower South.)” For Tennessee, his data show that in 1870, 1,301 black farmers statewide controlled \$1,010,200 of farm property, or \$776 per farm owner. By 1910, 10,698 black farmers owned farm property worth \$12,179,780, or \$1,139 per farm owner. Among black farmers in the Upper South, those in Tennessee were comparatively well off; only black farmers in Missouri were more prosperous.<sup>13</sup>

Prosperity was relative. Schweninger found that in the Upper South whites did not mount as much opposition to black landownership as they did in the Lower South. Additionally, “a continuing demand for unskilled workers in the countryside . . . gave former slaves better employment opportunities.” Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri were comparatively hospitable, a circumstance he attributes, in part, to the high numbers of African Americans who served in the U.S. Colored Troops during the war as well as the activities of northern missionary societies. Although many blacks owned only small farms and worked part-time as day laborers to supplement their earnings, “by 1870 freedmen and women in this section of the South were accumulating real estate at a much faster pace than rural blacks along the eastern seaboard in the Upper South; and they were nearly twice as likely to own land as their rural counterparts in the Lower South.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ash, 215.

<sup>12</sup> Ash, 209.

<sup>13</sup> Schweninger, 174-76, quote 176. The Upper South included Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

<sup>14</sup> Schweninger, 153-54, 157.

Schweninger's study provides both a methodological model and a useful analytical framework for localized studies, which are especially needed for inclusive interpretations of Reconstruction at Civil War historic sites. What was life like for those who stayed or resettled in Rutherford County? The Southern Homestead Act of 1866 did not affect Tennessee, and blacks in Tennessee did not benefit directly from the wartime Confiscation Acts. Freed men and women largely had to depend on their own abilities and resources to establish economic security. For most people, this meant agricultural work. John Lodi's study of black neighborhood formation in Murfreesboro, the county seat, puts the total number of town-dwelling blacks at 1,816 in 1870.<sup>15</sup> This means that the other 14,662 were located in the surrounding countryside.

The 16,478 African Americans living in Rutherford County in 1870 represented the high point in terms of demographics. Although the total county population did not change much until 1930, the number of blacks steadily declined. By 1930, the 7,741 African Americans enumerated in Rutherford County represented just 24.0 percent of the total population, less than half the percentage in 1870.<sup>16</sup> The long view thus establishes a general trend of continual outmigration, with World War I and a depressed agricultural economy beginning in the mid 1920s as major push factors. Hudson's study of 2,804 African American households listed in the 1870 census shows that 90 percent of them were headed by men, and within this percentage, 90 percent were either farmers or farm laborers. The ten percent of male heads of household who were not directly engaged in farming plied a number of trades but primarily blacksmithing. In addition to blacksmith, other occupations listed—such as “wagoner,” “carpenter,” “cabinet maker,” “grocery merchant,” and “sexton”—suggest nascent business or commercial activity among African Americans. But farming was the economic mainstay.<sup>17</sup>

Lydia Simpson's more detailed analysis of public records for District 9 during the 1870s provides additional clues that are pertinent to this study inasmuch as Cemetery community included a sizeable portion of this civil district. In 1870, more than 1,500 African Americans were enumerated in District 9, representing nearly ten percent of the county's rural black population, and “outnumber[ing] whites in the district three to one.”<sup>18</sup> A comparison of black surnames in 1870 with the surnames of slave owners in District 9 who held at least 15 enslaved people in 1860 reveals strong correlations for the names of Black, Coleman, Cowan, Davis, Gentry, Grism [Grishim/Grisham], Harden, Jenkins, Mitchell, Ross, and Wade.<sup>19</sup> These

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<sup>15</sup> Lodi, 35.

<sup>16</sup> Hudson, 39.

<sup>17</sup> Hudson, 9-10. The other 10 percent of households were headed by women, of whom 73 percent kept house or worked as domestic servants and another 23 percent worked as farm laborers.

<sup>18</sup> Lydia Simpson, “Settling In: Tracking the Formation of the Cemetery Community through Public Records” (M.A. Thesis, Middle Tennessee State University, 2011), 12-13.

<sup>19</sup> Lydia Simpson, research data spreadsheet prepared for “Settling In: Tracking the Formation of the Cemetery Community through Public Records” and shared with author. A “strong correlation” means matching surnames for 12 or more African Americans enumerated in District 9 in 1870.

surnames account for more than 300 African Americans enumerated in District 9, or about one-fifth of the district's black population in 1870. This gives us some indication of the degree to which previously enslaved people stayed put after emancipation. Very likely the percentage was much higher than one-fifth, but certainly not lower. Peter Kolchin among others has argued that newly freed slaves tested freedom through mobility.<sup>20</sup> The 1870 census reveals that some blacks in District 9 were born in Alabama, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, Mississippi, and other nearby states, but Tennessee was the native state of the vast majority, indicating that mobility had its limits. Age, family circumstances, and kinship ties, along with continuity of shared knowledge about place and working the land, would have exerted strong influences for making conservative decisions about how best to establish the sustaining elements of life in freedom.

Simpson also found that service in the U.S. Colored Troops was a factor conducive to settling in District 9, supporting Schweninger's analysis of statewide data for Tennessee, Kentucky, and Missouri. Her examination of public records reveals that, "former servicemen comprised at least one-third of African American landowners in the district by 1878." Most of them, about eight in number, had served in the 111<sup>th</sup> USCT, which, at war's end, was assigned to constructing the national cemetery. This included the grisly work of gathering corpses of Union soldiers scattered throughout middle Tennessee for reburial. Simpson additionally points out that military service provided USCT veterans with a "citizen identity" as well as greater financial resources for land acquisition, both contributing to community formation.<sup>21</sup> Stones River National Cemetery continued to be a source of employment for African Americans living in the vicinity of the national cemetery well into the twentieth century. Hudson's study of black landownership in Rutherford County generally corroborates Simpson's findings. She found that by 1877, the end of congressional Reconstruction, about five percent of black householders, countywide, had acquired land. Most of them either lived in Murfreesboro or were farming in one of four civil districts bordering the city: 9, 13, 18, and 21.<sup>22</sup>

Deed research and census data indicate, but do not establish conclusively, that six blacks owned land in District 9 by 1870. In 1868 Radford Mullins deeded 31 acres to Samuel Wade but reserved the "cedar timber on 4 acres laid off for use by Dr. W.P. Coleman."<sup>23</sup> The reference to Coleman suggests that Wade's 31-acre tract was located in the northeastern part of District 9, where Coleman owned land.<sup>24</sup> In 1870, a census enumerator listed Samuel Wade as a 50-year-

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<sup>20</sup> Peter Kolchin, *First Freedom: The Response of Alabama's Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972).

<sup>21</sup> Simpson, "Settling In," 14-15 (quote 15); Simpson, research datasheets.

<sup>22</sup> Hudson, 11, 15-16. She found 2 deeds for land purchases in 1866, 5 in 1867, and 7 in 1868. The number increased steadily each year to 1874, when she found 17 land purchases, then dropped sharply to 3 in 1875. Her figure seems consistent with Schweninger's calculations of black farm owners in the Tennessee in 1870 and 1890 and black homeowners for the same years; Schweninger, 174, 180.

<sup>23</sup> Rutherford County Deeds, Book 15:302.

<sup>24</sup> See the 1878 D. G. Beers map of Rutherford County.

old farmer with real property valued at \$1,000. A large household included his wife, Eliza, seven children, and a 31-year-old farm laborer. In 1869, a year after Wade acquired his farm, Mary Farris deeded 56 acres in District 9 to Nelson McDannill (McDaniel). McDaniel had served in the 111<sup>th</sup> USCT during the war.<sup>25</sup> He, too, also is listed as a farmer in the 1870 census, but the enumerator did not record any values for real or personal property, only that he lived with his wife, Jennie, who is further identified as age 40 and a “farm laborer,” and three young children with a different surname.

Deeds have not yet been located for the other four black farmers in District 9 who are listed as owning real property in the 1870 census: William Carden (age 25 with a household of 6), Phillip Drenn (age 74 with a household of 5), Lukins Louis (age 45 with a household of 7) and Henry Ridley (age 60, residing with his wife Leanna).<sup>26</sup>

Tax records for 1877 through 1880 provide a few clues about how well these six property owners fared over the next decade.<sup>27</sup> The names of William Carden, Phillip Drenn, Lukins Louis, Henry Ridley, and Samuel Wade do not appear on the tax rolls, suggesting that they moved out of the district, or perhaps died. But the picture is complicated. A William Creyton is listed on the 1880 census as a 38-year-old farmer with no real property. Is this the same person listed as William Carden in 1870? The ages given in each year suggest as much; and he is likely the same person listed William Crayton on the 1880 agriculture schedule. Creyton/Crayton [hereafter Crayton] owned eight acres of improved land and 20 acres of unimproved land in District 9, with improvements valued at \$500, farm implements at \$10, and livestock at \$75. Crayton also is listed as living near, perhaps adjacent to, Jennie McDaniel.

No one with the last name of Drenn appears on the tax rolls in the 1870s or the 1880 census, suggesting that the Drenn family actually had left the area by mid 1870, or that census enumerators missed this household. Likewise, Lukins Louis seems to have moved on. A person with a similar name, Lucas Lewis, paid taxes on 40 acres of land in 1877, but only seven acres in 1878 and 1879. His name does not show up at all on the 1880 tax roll, and neither Lukins Louis nor Lucas Lewis shows up on the 1880 census anywhere in Rutherford County. Did Louis/Lewis buy land on contract but lose it after failing to make payments? In 1880, Henry and Leanna (or Leannah) Ridley were recorded as living in District 6, although a Dick Ridley paid taxes on four acres of land in District 9 in 1877, 1878, and 1879. But no one named Dick Ridley shows up on

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<sup>25</sup> Rutherford County Deeds, Book 16:543; Simpson, “Settling In,” 20.

<sup>26</sup> It is difficult to know what to make of the discrepancy between census data and recorded deeds, but it does not seem likely that the census enumerator would have made that many errors, either in name spelling or the possession of assets. One possibility is that deeds for some land transactions had not yet been recorded, or were never recorded. Another possibility is the some African Americans were actually leasing land or buying land on contract but never managed to pay the full purchase price. Hudson notes that in 1870, B.L. Ridley, an attorney in Murfreesboro, leased a portion of his deceased wife’s estate to Henry Ridley; see Hudson, 18.

<sup>27</sup> Simpson, research datasheets; 1877 is the earliest date for which Rutherford County tax records exist.

either the 1870 or 1880 census anywhere in Rutherford County. Did Henry go by the nickname of Dick?

Samuel Wade and Nelson McDaniel present more substantive cases. Wade and his large family show up on the 1880 census in District 9 under the last name of McGregor, and the tax rolls show that he paid taxes as Samuel McGregor from 1877 through 1880. Moreover, by 1877 he had increased his landholdings from 31 to 109 acres to become the largest black landowner in District 9. As Samuel Wade, he shared the surname of prominent slaveholders in Rutherford County. As a landowner of increasing status, he clearly wanted to disassociate himself with the Wade name.<sup>28</sup> Nelson and Jennie McDaniel were able to enjoy a few years together in freedom on their own land. In 1870, the couple lived with three young children, all of whom had the surname of Puckett. Were they caring for grandchildren or the children of others? In any case, Nelson died sometime before 1877 because Jennie paid taxes on 59 acres (three more than the 56 acres purchased in 1869) for the period 1877-1880, and she appears on the 1880 census as widowed, still living in District 9 but with no children or young adults in the household. She also appears in the 1880 agriculture schedule as the owner of seven acres of improved land and 20 acres of unimproved land in District 9, with improvements valued at \$500, farm implements at \$8, and livestock at \$75. Were the unaccounted for 32 (or 29) acres listed in that census as property owned by William Crayton, who lived nearby? While the extent of her landholdings awaits further research, we know that Jennie lived a long life. She appears on the 1910 census as “Jane” McDaniel, age 100, living as a boarder in the home of James Williams, a farmer in District 9.

What are we to make of these bits of information? While they hint at the human drama, they also reveal the problems of reconciling information from disparate sources. In the aggregate, however, they point to the uncertainties and contingencies that African Americans faced in the post-emancipation decade. Of the six supposed black landowners in District 9 in 1870, only three, actually held on to their land: Samuel Wade/McGregor, Jennie McDaniel, and William Crayton. Even so, not even McGregor’s status as a landowner is acknowledged on the 1878 Beers map of Rutherford County, which identifies the location of many landowners at that time, presumably all of them white. Thus, it is difficult to fix black landowners at specific places on the land without intensive deed research.

By 1880, tax records show that a total of 33 African Americans, including McGregor and McDaniel, were paying taxes on land in District 9. Paying taxes does not prove landownership, but still signifies control over production. These 33 individuals controlled approximately 585 acres, so they represented a small minority of landowners in general, and a very small percentage of the black population in District 9. Only 13 property taxpayers controlled more than 20 acres, enough land to produce a surplus depending on the quality of the soil and growing conditions in

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<sup>28</sup> For further information on Wade/McGregor, see Simpson, “Settling In,” 18-19, especially fn. 45, which presents evidence that Wade, too, might have served in the USCT.

any given year. Two of them, like Nelson McDaniel, were USCT veterans: James Coleman, who served in the 17<sup>th</sup> USCT, and Jackson Butler, who served in the 111<sup>th</sup> USCT. Twenty individuals held small tracts of one to several acres.<sup>29</sup> Still, landownership represented an economic foothold and rootedness.

### **Cemetery Community: Geospatial References**

Linking evidence of early landownership in District 9 with the formation of Cemetery community is further complicated by the fact that the community appears to have straddled three districts. Neither the name nor the boundaries of Cemetery community appear on any map, but since the early 1900s the name has been associated with the large concentration of African Americans dwelling northwest of Murfreesboro. Contemporary knowledge among descendants indicates that historic Cemetery community encompassed the southwestern portion of District 9, the northerly section of District 13, and the eastern edge of District 7 (see Fig. 1). The name is obviously derived from Stones River National Cemetery, around which the community formed and which provided a source of employment for many African American men in the decades following the war, as documented in the records of the national cemetery. Three maps provide snapshots in time to help understand the community's spatial organization: the 1878 D. G. Beers map of Rutherford County, the 1899 Map of the Battlefield of Stones River, surveyed by Oscar Jones, and the 1916 geological survey map of Rutherford County, produced by the Tennessee Geological Survey and the University of Tennessee.

The 1878 Beers map identifies "Cemetery Sta" near the national cemetery, which refers to a Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis railroad flagstop placed there to accommodate cemetery visitors and promote railroad tourism (Fig. 1). The Beers map also identifies a "Col Ch" [colored church] northwest of the national cemetery in the vicinity of extant Stones River Methodist Church. From this church, a lane or pathway leads north to a small cemetery on the other side the railroad tracks. The established name for this cemetery is Evergreen Graveyard although it may have been known by another name in the nineteenth century. Van Cleve Lane also is depicted as an unimproved road with no associated landmarks. By studying the 1878 map in relation to present-day accounts of community geography, one can begin to imagine the boundaries. On the north and northeast, the Stones River, which winds in a northwesterly direction from Murfreesboro, would have formed a natural boundary. On the west, a stream running through District 7, identified as Armstrong Creek, is a physical feature that suggests a natural boundary. Wilkinson Pike, a major thoroughfare now known as Manson Pike, might have been the southern boundary.

Within these rough boundaries most of the land was in white ownership although, as Avery's 1869 account and the 1870 census substantiate, the inhabitants were primarily black. We know for certain that two people associated with Cemetery community purchased land in the 1870s. Sam Grisham purchased 40 acres from H. H. Kerr in 1872; this land was located north of Wilkinson Pike. William Holland (aka Harland, Harlan, and Harlin) became a landowner in November 1875, when L.S. Doolittle, superintendent of Stones River National Cemetery, sold

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<sup>29</sup> Simpson, "Settling In," 20; Simpson, research datasheets.

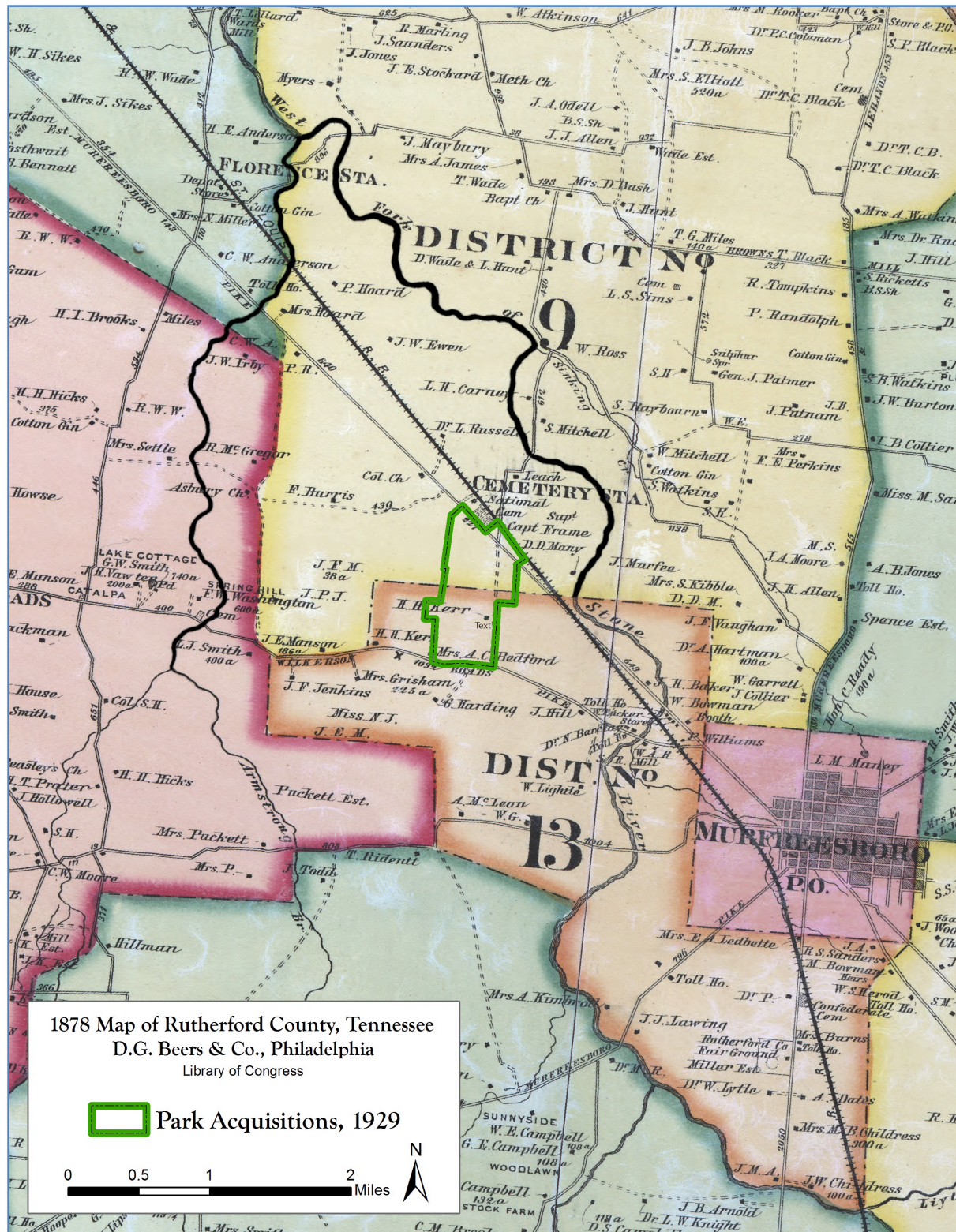
three acres to him for \$225.00.<sup>30</sup> Doolittle had purchased the land a few months earlier on behalf of the U.S. government in order to acquire Hazen Brigade Monument, which was located on private land owned by the heirs of Varner D. Cowan.<sup>31</sup> Holland's three-acre plot was adjacent to the monument along the Nashville and Murfreesboro Pike. Like Nelson McDaniel, James Coleman, and Jackson Butler, Holland had served in the USCT 111<sup>th</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Rutherford County Deeds, Book 21: 280-81; see also Book 21:277-78, which shows that Holland indentured himself to pay for the land.

<sup>31</sup> John Riley George, "Stones River: Creating a Battlefield Park, 1863-1932" (Ph.D. dissertation, Middle Tennessee State University, 2013), 36.





**Figure 1.** Courtesy Geospatial Research Center, Department of Geosciences, Middle Tennessee State University.

The 1899 Jones survey map, prepared to assist the citizen-led effort to establish a national military park commemorating the Battle of Stones River, provides good information about landownership in this area. The map covers 3,773 acres on both sides of the Stones River, encompassing all the important sites of the battle, and identifies most of the landowners who might have been affected by the creation of a military park. For the purposes of this study, the map identifies the boundaries of a 308-acre farm then owned by Mrs. W.T. Henderson (Fig. 2). This farm surrounded Stones River National Cemetery and Evergreen Graveyard (although it is not identified by name on the map), extended north and east to Stones River, and south across the Nashville and Murfreesboro Pike.

Deed research reveals the boundaries of Henderson's Farm to be the same as those of the Tennessee Manual Labor University (TMLU), directed by Peter Lowery of Nashville, a free black before the war who was educated at Franklin College. Chartered by the State of Tennessee in 1866 and with initial financial support from the American Christian Missionary Society, the TMLU was organized to provide freed people with practical instruction.<sup>32</sup> In 1868, Lowery and the TMLU trustees acquired 307 acres, purchased as four separate tracts from three different landowners.<sup>33</sup> Few documents shed light on school operations, but Freedmen's Bureau records indicate that the property came with "eight or ten huts for the use of the laborers" who worked at the national cemetery and that the bureau erected a school house, which operated under the supervision of the Freedmen Union Commission."<sup>34</sup>

Monthly teacher's reports filed by Sarah Greenbrier to the Freedmen's Bureau Superintendent of Education show that from January to June 1869 an average of 34 males and 36 females attended TMLU, and the school opened in August 1869 with 113 males and 72 females.<sup>35</sup> Monthly school reports end at this point, but the 1870 census shows that Samuel Lowery, Peter's son, identified as a school teacher, was living near the national cemetery with his wife Adora and their seven children, five of whom were "at school." Thus, the school was still open in 1870, but the Freedmen's Bureau was investigating charges of financial mismanagement, which ultimately resulted in withholding an additional appropriation of \$2,000.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> For more on the Tennessee Manual Labor University, Peter Lowery, and his son, Samuel, also associated with the school, see Simpson, "Settling In," 55-66.

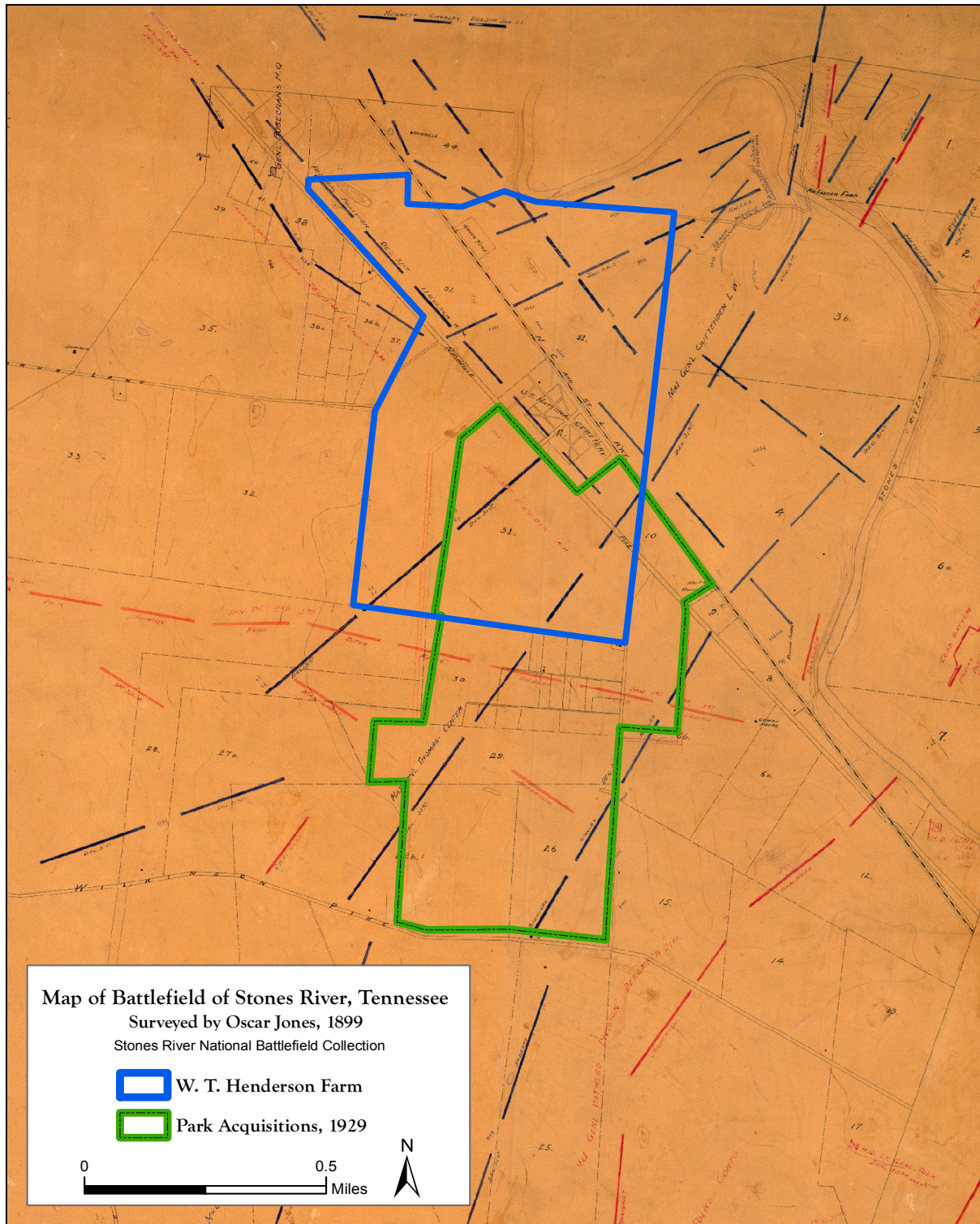
<sup>33</sup> The 1868 deeds and court decrees are referenced in the 1879 deed conveying the former TMLU land to William F. Cooper (fn 38).

<sup>34</sup> C. E. Compton, Superintendent of Education, Nashville, TN, to Oliver Otis Howard, December 27, 1869, hereafter Freedmen's Bureau Records, Series M1000, mf Reel 2.

<sup>35</sup> Teacher's Monthly School Reports for Tennessee Manual Labor University, Freedmen's Bureau Records, Series M1000, mf Reels 8, 9.

<sup>36</sup> Henry M. Whittlesey, Acting Assistant Adjutant General, to Brevet Lt. Col. C. E. Compton, Supt. of Education, Nashville, Tenn., July 10, 1869, Freedmen's Bureau Records, Series M1000, mf Reel No. 5.





**Figure 2.** Courtesy of Stones River National Battlefield and the Geospatial Research Center, Department of Geosciences, Middle Tennessee State University.

Unfortunately, the TMLU had a short existence. Bankruptcy forced Peter Lowery and the TMLU trustees to sell the land, the individual parcels of which were purchased in 1874 and 1876 by R.T. Tompkins, whose father had sold one of the parcels to Lowery in 1868.<sup>37</sup> The intent may have been for Tompkins to hold the land in order to give TMLU trustees time to reestablish financial soundness, but, if so, this did not come to pass. In 1879, Lowery and Tompkins sold the 307 acres to William F. Cooper.<sup>38</sup> Twelve years later, in 1891, Cooper, then residing in New York City, sold the land to W. T. Henderson.<sup>39</sup> Just as the Tompkins family appears to have played an instrumental role in establishing the TMLU, the Henderson family likewise figures in the history of Cemetery community, as will be discussed later.

The 1899 Jones survey map also depicts the location of Cemetery community's three churches. One of them is Stones River Methodist Church, located adjacent to the Nashville and Murfreesboro Pike, and also depicted on the 1878 Beers map. The other two are Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church and Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, both located near Van Cleve Lane, just south of the Henderson farm in an area that is divided into small plots. Both churches were established by 1884, when their respective congregants purchased land from H. H. Kerr, one time mayor of Murfreesboro.<sup>40</sup> The Jones map does not identify any individuals with the small plots in this area, but, as documented in Appendix B, all of them were African American landowners who acquired their property from H. H. Kerr or his widow, Elizabeth Kerr, or from other blacks who had purchased land from Kerr.

The 1916 geological survey map (Fig. 3) depicts a cluster of buildings along a short east-west lane branching from Van Cleve Lane, the area shown as divided into small plots on the 1899 survey map. The place name given is "Mt. Olive", undoubtedly taken from Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church. Approximately 15 dwellings are depicted in this area, a figure that correlates with property research data.

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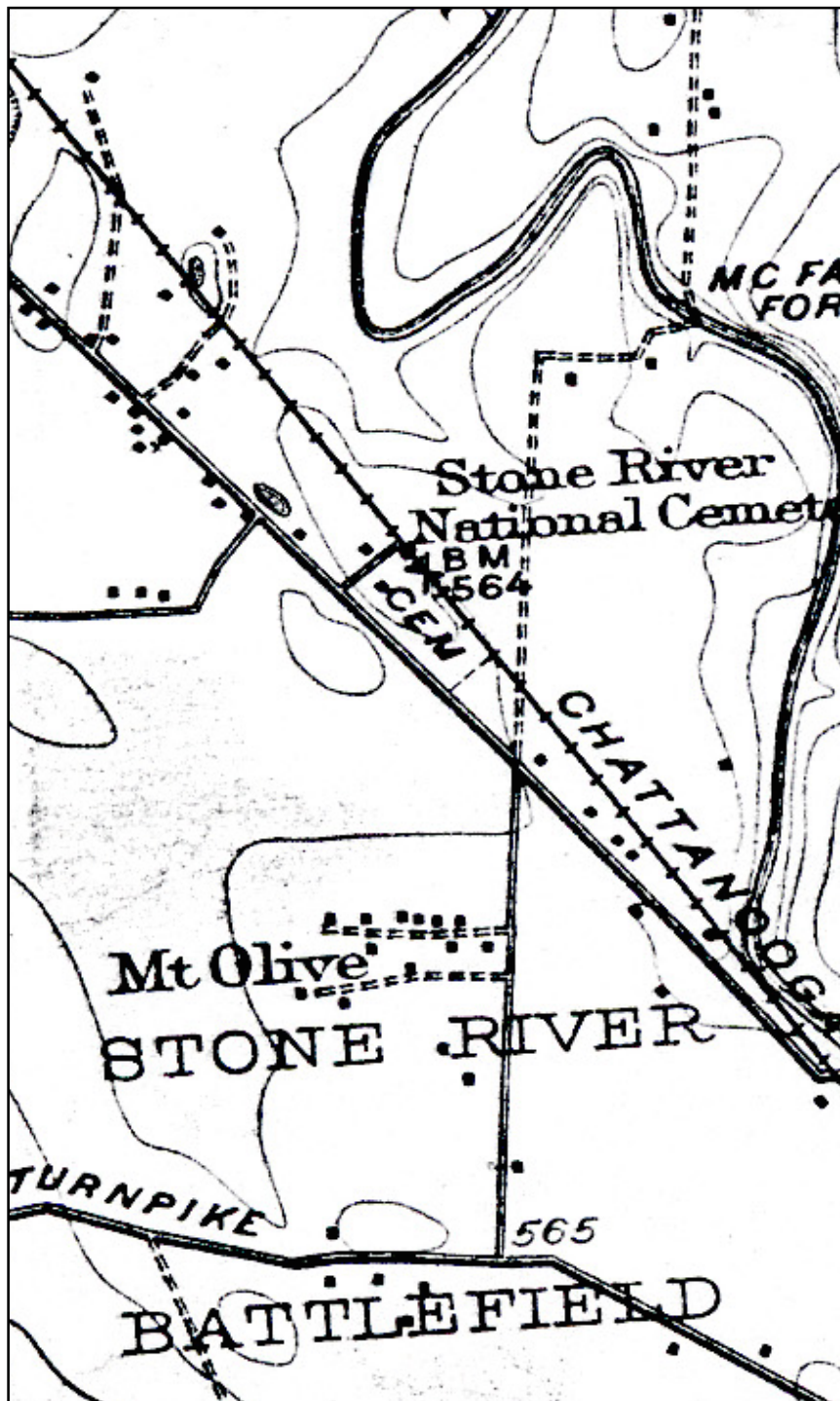
<sup>37</sup> Tennessee Manual Labor University to R.T. Tompkins, court decree of September 7, 1874, 192 and 6 acres in District 9, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 20:450; R. Ransom, sheriff of Rutherford County, to R.T. Tompkins, sheriff's deed, 57 2/3 acres, District 9, December 16, 1874, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 20:448; [R. Ransom], sheriff of Rutherford County, to R.T. Tompkins, sheriff's deed, 51 acres, District 9, March 4, 1876, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 21:472.

<sup>38</sup> R.T. Tompkins and Peter Lowery (as president of TMLU, with approval from TMLU in Nashville) to William F. Cooper, 4 tracts of land totaling 307 acres, April 30, 1879, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 24:391-93. This deed ties the 307 acres to the four parcels acquired for the TMLU in 1868. The one-acre difference can be accounted for by the fractional acres included in some of the four component parcels.

<sup>39</sup> W. F. Cooper to W. T. Henderson, January 1, 1891, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 35:179-82.

<sup>40</sup> H.H. Kerr to deacons and trustees of Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church, 1+ acres, July 23, 1884, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 27:378; H.H. Kerr to deacons of Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, 1 acre, November 1, 1884, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 27:458.





**Figure 3.** The Cedars (“Mt. Olive”), Rutherford County, Tennessee, State Geological Survey and the University of Tennessee, 1916.

Source: Tennessee State Library and Archives.

Available records provide few clues as to when Cemetery became the place name designating the African American community near Stones River National Cemetery, but beginning in 1907 the *Nashville Globe*, an African American newspaper, regularly published social news for many communities, including “Cemetery.” The name “Ebenezer” occurs in relation to the location of Tennessee Manual Labor University, suggesting that Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church existed as a congregation long before land for a church was purchased in 1884 or that Cemetery community was known as Ebenezer c. 1870. Be that as it may, people living in Cemetery community in the early twentieth century used additional names to distinguish specific areas within the larger community. “The Cedars” referred to a cluster settlement south of Old Nashville Highway along Van Cleve Lane, where the two Baptist churches were located. North of the Cedars about a half-mile on Old Nashville Highway was another cluster settlement called “the Bottom” or “the Bottoms” because it was prone to flooding in rainy weather. This settlement was closer to Stones River Methodist Church, Cemetery School, and Evergreen Graveyard.<sup>41</sup>

### **Landownership in the Cedars**

While the geographical extent of Cemetery community as a whole remains sketchy, research conducted since 2007 by MTUS public history graduate students has yielded more information about that portion of the community known as the Cedars, the area located on the initial tract of land acquired to establish the national park.

In 1927, when Congress authorized the creation of Stones River National Military Park, the War Department appointed a commission to survey the battlefield area for a feasible site. The commission selected approximately 325 acres of privately owned land situated adjacent to the 20-acre national cemetery (Fig. 4). Before land acquisition could begin, the commission also conducted an inventory to establish the value of 39 separate tracts of land, 24 of them containing improvements. Submitted in October 1929, the inventory, prepared by George M. Chandler, itemized each parcel by size, productive capacity, and improvements.<sup>42</sup> Chandler, an engineering officer with the U.S. Army, was sent to Murfreesboro as the officer in charge of land acquisition.<sup>43</sup>

Chandler’s report covered ten parcels owned by whites, totaling approximately 155 acres, and 29 parcels owned by blacks, totaling approximately 170 acres. From these simple figures one can tell that the average size of the white-owned parcels was larger, 15.5 acres compared to an

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<sup>41</sup> Leonora Washington, undated and unpublished account of Cemetery Community based on informal conversations with community elders. Ms. Washington has shared this information freely with the public.

<sup>42</sup> George Chandler, Officer in Charge, to Quartermaster General, memorandum re: “Purchase of Land QM 601.1 C-R,” October 22, 1929, File 601, Miscellaneous, Stones River National Military Park, RG 79, Records of the War Department Relating to National Parks, National Archives.

<sup>43</sup> See George, 195-212, for more information on Chandler and the land-acquisition process.



average of 5.86 acres for black-owned parcels. Average size is somewhat misleading, however, as the parcels varied in size from .5 acre to 43 acres. Even so, the productive quality of land also differed by race. Through the center of the 325-acre site runs a mix of clayey soil types marked by bare limestone outcrops, or “glades.” Such land obviously is poor for growing crops but will support hardier types of vegetation suitable for pasture. In Tennessee, “gladeville” soils often are associated with stands of cedar trees, which were once abundant in Rutherford County.<sup>44</sup> The commission determined that 107 acres, representing 69 percent of the land owned by whites, was “tillable.” The other 48 acres, or 31 percent, were characterized as “rough.” By comparison, 92 acres of land in black ownership, representing 54 percent, were considered “tillable.” The other 78 acres, or 46 percent, were “rough.” Thus, in terms of arability, land held by black owners was generally less valuable than land in white ownership. There are always exceptions to the rule, however. Two African American landowners held larger tracts of better quality land that extended beyond the boundaries established for parkland acquisition, suggesting that these tracts were in productive agricultural use. Nonetheless, the majority of black-owned parcels were more or less clustered in the center of the park site—small plots of rocky land shaded by cedars, situated along Van Cleve Lane and two dirt lanes branching from it. Although the soil quality was poor, the nature of land improvements indicates that people living in the Cedars were engaged in at least subsistence agriculture. Several properties contained some combination of fruit trees, blackberry and grape vines, barns, sheds, and, in one case, a smokehouse.

Land acquisition records provide the best starting point for documenting the Cedars settlement. Working back through deeds and associated court records, and comparing the information contained in these records with census data, maps, other public records, and oral history provides foundational information. From this evidence, one can begin to discern the broader historical patterns of the larger community that sprawled over three civil districts. It is important, however, to emphasize “foundational.” Although painstaking research by many individuals has yielded a rich collection of information, we still know little about the people of historic Cemetery community. Additional research in public records can add more bits of information, but oral history with descendants and archaeological research, especially in the area of small tracts along the two lanes branching from Van Cleve Lane, may yield information more useful for understanding and interpreting the community of people who lived here from the end of the war until 1930.

The methods by which the War Department acquired land left a legacy of bitterness that persists to this day in the descendant community. Although Chandler probably did the best he could to conduct land purchases fairly, he was hampered by widely varying land values established by land appraisers, the size of the congressional appropriation for land purchase, and

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<sup>44</sup> Zada Law, “Developing a Wayside Exhibit Design Concept for the Stones River National Battlefield on the Community of Cemetery,” Appendix A, “Soils in the Cemetery Community,” unpublished paper produced for History 7560, Cultural Resource Management [Dr. Rebecca Conard], Middle Tennessee State University, May 10, 2011.

**Landownership, 1929**

African American  
 White  
 Park Acquisitions, 1929

Map Labels:

- Walter King
- U.S. National Cemetery
- Louis H. Hickman
- Homer Gannon
- Ellis Anderson Estate
- Hazen Monument
- J. A. Ransom & R. F. Overall
- G.H. Minter Estate
- Harold M. Henderson
- Virginia H. Earhman Estate
- Robert W. Avenitt
- Evelyn H. Jordan Estate
- Will Cole
- G.N. Haynes
- Elnora Peyton
- Louise Harding Wade
- Eliza Avenitt Heirs
- Ed Howard
- Rufus & Ella Huddleston
- Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church
- Mt. Olivet Masonary Baptist Church
- William Waller Estate
- Colena Anderson
- John Mason
- I.W. Anderson Estate
- Sallie Bass
- Robert Avenitt
- Ed Howard
- Eliza Avenitt Heirs
- Ed Orr Estate
- Nannie Ball Black
- Thaddeus Cowan
- Isabella Burke
- Nannie Ball Black
- Ed Orr Estate
- John Swift Estate
- Nannie Ball Black
- Ed Orr Estate
- John Gresham
- Sam Gresham
- Will & Mary Freeman
- John Gresham
- Sam Gresham
- Martha Gresham
- Lucin Gresham
- Lizzie Gresham
- Sallie Gresham
- Martha Gresham
- Lucin Gresham
- Lizzie Gresham
- Sallie Gresham
- Robert & Marienne Steelman
- Giles S. Harding Estate
- Dora Tharp Bowen
- Wilkinson Pike
- Van Cleave Lane
- Old Nashville Hwy

Scale: 0, 250, 500, 1,000 Feet

Geospatial Research Center  
Dept. of Geography  
Middle Tennessee State University  
Rutherford Co. OIT Imagery, 2012

**Figure 4.** Compiled from property research based on the Land Acquisition Map for Stones River National Military Park, U. S. War Department, 1929. The smaller parcels in the center, primarily owned by African Americans, contained most of the buildings in the Cedars. Cartographer: Zada Law, Geospatial Research Center, Department of Geosciences, Middle Tennessee State University. The tract numbers are those assigned by the War Department for its record-keeping purposes.

Still, Chandler's report contains some evidence that white landowners held out for as much money as they could get. For instance, he noted that Tract No. 8, ten acres of low-lying land prone to flooding and with no improvements, was "a very difficult problem." It was owned by the heirs of Dr. Vernon and Virginia Earthman, a "leading" white family, who were not willing to sell for less than \$2,000. Chandler wrote that even "\$1,000 is more than it is worth," but he was willing to go higher if it meant avoiding court proceedings "for good will is a very great asset." His greater concern was that "if we pay the price demanded the land values are all upset and the next appropriation is cut in two in purchasing power."<sup>45</sup>

In preparing his report, Chandler stressed the dynamics of land acquisition to his superiors in Washington, DC, wondering what "sort of an idea" the inventory and valuations would "convey to anyone who has not been on the ground and lived in the community." He continued:

In many instances the assessed valuations bear little relation to the true values. The land may not have changed hands or been revalued for years. The owners' valuations bear slight relation to what his property would bring were he to sell it to a neighbor. The Commission was an able one and yet sometimes I wonder how their valuations were reached, and behind it all is the personal equation of the owner.<sup>46</sup>

Chandler also let his superiors know that "the negro holdings are a strange problem. The houses are in general worthless, and yet, they are the family's home and we are displacing the family which must find a new home some place, and into the negro holdings enter faulty titles, common law marriages, minor heirs etc." Although Chandler hints at frustration with the obstacles to establishing clear title for several parcels, he does not seem to have lost sight of the human tragedy.

By 1929, the Cedars had been home to a number of African American families for two or more generations, and not all of them relocated willingly. While some parcels were held by absentee owners and others posed complicated title issues that could overshadow the human dimension, the case of the Minter family exemplifies what displaced families were going

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<sup>45</sup> Chandler, 2, 7.

<sup>46</sup> Chandler, 7.

through. The late Percy Minter was born in 1914 in the house his parents owned, situated on an 11-acre tract that had enough arable land for the family to grow cotton. After his father George died in 1922, Percy and some of his six siblings worked the land along with their mother, Rowena.<sup>47</sup> According to Chandler's report, the G. H. Minter Estate, the ownership of which involved minor heirs, was improved with a four-room house, barn, smokehouse, two sheds, and 12 fruit trees, valued in total at \$775. The 11-acre tract consisted of seven tillable acres and four rough acres. The land value varied from \$750 (assessed valuation), \$3,000 (owner's valuation), and \$1,350 (commission's valuation). The third figure represented the base Chandler would have used for determining the initial purchase price offered to Rowena Minter. The second figure represented what she would have considered a fair price. The commission also had set the value of improvements at \$775.<sup>48</sup> Rowena proved to be as stubborn as the Henderson family, if not moreso. She refused to sell until forced to do so by court decree.<sup>49</sup> Percy Minter, in a 2007 interview, recalled that a trusted friend of the family told his mother:

‘Rowena, don’t go nowhere.’ He say, ‘we goin’ to get you more money.’ We had eleven acres. This white fellow [Homer Gannon], he had two acres there. They gave him more for them two acres than they wanted to give my mother for them eleven acres. We stayed there [until] 1932.<sup>50</sup>

Under court order, Rowena Minter finally accepted \$2,393.47 for the family's land and home, exactly \$268.47 more than the Commission's valuation of her land and improvements.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Percy Minter, Sr., interview with Elena DiGrado and others, November 1, 2007, Albert Gore Research Center, Middle Tennessee State University.

<sup>48</sup> Chandler, 2, and handwritten valuation table.

<sup>49</sup> Rowena Minter et al to U.S.A., Decree Deed, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 78, pp. 259-260, executed February 24, 1932, and recorded July 8, 1933.

<sup>50</sup> Minter interview.

<sup>51</sup> Rutherford County Deeds, Book 78, p. 259.





**Figure 5.** Stones River National Military Park Commission photograph, 1928. *Courtesy Stones River National Battlefield.* The caption with this photograph indicates that the building visible in the left background is a church. With this identification as a firm clue, the vantage point of the photographer can be established as facing southwest from the intersection of Old Nashville Highway and Van Cleve Lane. This indicates that the house and outbuildings on the right were situated on the Minter property, a triangular parcel bounded by both roads and shown as Tract 10 on the 1929 land acquisition map.

Homer Gannon, the “white fellow” Percy Minter referred to, actually owned five acres of land, not two, but he and his wife Flora did receive more for their property, \$3,000. The commission determined that all five acres were tillable, and the land was improved with a three-room house, barn, and shed. The Gannons also held a half interest in a well located on the parcel, and the sum value of improvements was placed at \$910. The land was valued at \$600 (assessed value), \$3,000 (owner’s valuation), and \$3,000 (commission’s valuation). The condition of the buildings is unknown, but Chandler was able to settle with the Gannons rather quickly, as the deed notes a purchase price of \$3,000 on May 8, 1929. Apparently, the Gannons were willing to accept an offer of \$3,000 for both the land and improvements.

In any case, Chandler’s handling of the Henderson, Gannon, and Minter sales, and perhaps others, led to a perception of unfairness in the land acquisition process that endures to the present. As sympathetic as he might have been to the plight of displaced families, Chandler was a government official charged with an unenviable task, which he carried out fully.

In all, land acquisition involved taking 17 houses, three cabins, nine barns, one smokehouse, one chicken shed, 11 miscellaneous sheds, five wells, 730 fruit trees (identified as

peach or pear in some instances), 1000 blackberry vines, 200 grape vines, two churches, and one store. The actual number of people displaced is harder to estimate because several parcels were owned by multiple heirs, and Chandler's report made no mention of the people occupying these houses and cabins.

The fate of the two church buildings provides evidence that ties the Cedars to the Bottom. Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church was purchased through condemnation, with the congregation receiving \$1,058.83. Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church sold its property in April 1930 for \$1,000.<sup>52</sup> Both congregations moved their church buildings approximately one-half mile northwest along Old Nashville Highway, near Stones River Methodist Church, Cemetery School, and Evergreen Graveyard.<sup>53</sup> According to information gathered by Leonora Washington, "members of the community with the assistance of Mr. Sam (Bud) Manson and his equipment (horse and wagon), relocated the churches to the 'Bottom' settlement."<sup>54</sup> Thus, the institutions that defined Cemetery Community—three churches, a one-room school, and a burial ground—were now situated together in the Bottom.

The store located in the land-acquisition area sat on a ten-acre parcel, all tillable land, owned by Robert W. Averitt, who was white. Chandler's 1929 report indicates that, in addition to the store, other improvements included a four-room house, barn, crib, well, 600 fruit trees valued at \$900, 100 fruit trees valued at \$100, blackberries, and grape vines that were staked. Averitt sold his property for \$4,000 in May 1929, rather early in the process.<sup>55</sup> Whether its loss had an economic affect on the community is hard to judge. Its location along Old Nashville Highway, by 1929 part of the well-traveled Dixie Highway, suggests that a portion of the trade came from highway traffic. In any case, another commercial establishment, a combination general store and gas station owned by Walter King, who was black, also was located along Old Nashville Highway but just outside the land-acquisition boundaries. Situated about half-way between the Cedars and the Bottom, this store most likely catered to the community.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church to U.S. government, 1.9 acres, final decree entered May 28, 1932, deed registered April 27, 1934, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 79:128; Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church to U.S. government, 1 acre, April 1, 1930, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 76:62. W.A. and Sallie Hopkins sold parcels of land to both churches for their relocation; Rutherford County Deeds, Book 76:163-64 (Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church, January 31, 1931) and Book 77:239-40 (Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, May 18, 1932).

<sup>53</sup> The extant church building of Stones River Methodist Church appears on the 1878 Beers map, so it is at least that old. However, oral tradition holds that an African American congregation organized as early as 1828; see (Leonora) Elaine Washington, "Stones River United Methodist Church: A Historical Perspective," an undated, unpublished account based on informal conversations with community elders that has been widely shared. Recorded burials in Evergreen Graveyard are all post-Civil War.

<sup>54</sup> Leonora Washington, undated and unpublished account of Cemetery Community.

<sup>55</sup> Chandler, "Purchase of Land," 2, and handwritten inventory; Robert W. Averitt and Ruby Irene Averitt, to U.S.A., May 13, 1929, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 75: 334-35.

<sup>56</sup> Visual confirmation of King's business comes from the Stones River National Military Park Commission Photographs (1928), Stones River National Battlefield Archives. This building now houses a commercial establishment, Yesteryear, which sells Civil War memorabilia.

Research on the African American landowners who lost property to the military park gives us a semblance of the settlement called the Cedars.<sup>57</sup> Property records reveal that most of the African American landowners living in the Cedars purchased parcels of land owned by the W. T. Henderson family or the H.H. Kerr family. The Henderson property is traceable back to farms that were once in the hands of two slaveholding landowners prior to the Civil War: W. McFadden and Varner D. Cowan.<sup>58</sup> The Kerr property is traceable to Hiram H. Jenkins, another slaveholder, who, along with his brother Nimrod, inherited 1,920 acres of land in Tennessee from their father, Aaron Jenkins, when the latter died in 1807.<sup>59</sup>

### *W. T. Henderson Farm*

W. T. Henderson, a Scottish immigrant, first shows up in the 1870 census, at which time he was living in Nashville in the household of H. and Lizzie Leftgood (or Leftgoody or Leftgoodi) and their three young children. Henderson, then 24, appears to have been one of three boarders, all men in their twenties. One of the other two men, William Henderson, age 27, most likely was a relative, either a brother or a cousin. Ten years later, the 1880 census shows W. T. Henderson living in District 7 of Rutherford County. At this time he gave his occupation as farmer, and he was married. The household included his wife, “Virginia A.” Henderson, and three children: Albert N. (11), Fannie Eveline (4) and Virginia May (1). It also included two young black males with the surname of Henderson: Henry(?) (14) and William (9). Their occupations are listed as “apprenticed.”

In 1891, W. T. Henderson purchased from W. F. Cooper approximately 308 acres in District 9, the same land acquired in 1868 for the Tennessee Manual Labor University (Fig. 2). Comparing the 1899 map with the 1962 Historic Fence and Ground Cover map by Edwin Bearss and J.C. Killian (Fig. 6) indicates that the Henderson/TMLU property included land owned by W. McFadden and Varner D. Cowan in 1861 on the eve of the war, although further deed research is necessary to establish the chain of title back that far.

H. H. Henderson died sometime between 1894 and 1899, and in 1912 his heirs subdivided the farm.<sup>60</sup> His widow, Virginia Henderson, received multiple lots, as did Virginia

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<sup>57</sup> Unless footnoted separately, the information on property owners comes from Chandler’s report as well as deeds and other records associated with land acquisition, manuscript census data, property tax rolls, poll tax rolls, death records, court records, records of Stones River National Cemetery, and miscellaneous sources of genealogical data compiled in “African Americans on the Land: Five Cultural Landscape Studies of Stones River National Battlefield,” prepared by students in HIST 6510/7510: Public History Seminar under the direction of Dr. Rebecca Conard, December 2007. Most, if not all, of the deeds also can be found in the Cemetery Community digital collection, Walker Library, Middle Tennessee State University.

<sup>58</sup> In 1860, McFadden owned 8 enslaved people, Cowan owned 44.

<sup>59</sup> Will of Aaron Jenkins, November 7, 1807, Green County, Ohio, Will Book A-B, p. 30 (available online, Ancestry.com). In 1860, Hiram H. Jenkins held 22 enslaved people.

<sup>60</sup> W. T. Henderson will, January 3, 1894, Rutherford County Wills, Book 1:320; W.T. Henderson heirs to Virginia Henderson et al, May 18, 1912, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 55:172-73.

Henderson Earthman, W.T. Henderson, and H.M. Henderson. Neither Albert nor Fannie is listed as an heir. W.T. and H.M. may have been the two African American boys, William and Henry(?), listed as apprentices in the Henderson household in 1880, but further research would be necessary to make this connection. In any case, three other individuals with the surname Henderson received one lot each: Katurah Henderson, M.W. Henderson, and Mrs. Evelyn Henderson Jordan. The 1929 land acquisition map shows the locations of lots then owned by Evelyn H. Jordan, the Virginia Earthman Estate, and Harold M. Henderson, and the 1929 inventory identifies Jordan as “colored” (see Appendix B, Tract 6). These bits of evidence indicate that white and black Hendersons were part of the same household. One can speculate about the nature of those relationships, but the record is silent.

### *The Jenkins-Kerr Land*

The Henderson farm adjoined land that was once part of a substantial land grant to Aaron Jenkins of Pennsylvania, a Revolutionary War veteran. Aaron Jenkins did not spend much time in Tennessee, but two of his sons, Nimrod and Hiram, settled on their father’s Rutherford County land around 1800 and inherited the land when Aaron died in 1807.<sup>61</sup> It is the Hiram Jenkins line that is of interest in connection with the Cedars.

In 1803, Hiram married Deborah Ellison.<sup>62</sup> Hiram and Deborah had six children: Aaron (b. 1808), Baldwin (b. 1808), Silas (b. 1812), Elizabeth (b. 1814), Hiram H. (b. 1816), and Nimrod (b. 1823). In 1836, Hiram paid taxes on 800 acres of land in Rutherford County, valued at \$12,000, making him one of the largest landowners in the county. His brother, Nimrod, paid taxes of 350 acres.<sup>63</sup> Both sons were well off, but Hiram clearly was more prosperous than his brother. The extent of his landholdings in Rutherford County, their location, and the size of his enslaved workforce are still to be determined. However, the 1840 census lists Hiram Jenkins, then 60, in a household that included one free white female between the ages of 30 and 39 (Deborah died in 1830, and Hiram remarried), one free white male between the ages of 15 and 19, two male slaves, one under the age of 24 and one between the ages of 24 and 35, and two female slaves under the age of ten.

An 1846 deed to settle a court-adjudicated land dispute between Hiram and the heirs of his brother Nimrod provides evidence as to where at least some of Hiram’s landholdings were located. The court awarded two tracts of land to Hiram, one of them containing 152.75 acres, the description of which correlates with a cluster of buildings south of Wilkinson Pike that is identified with “Jenkins” on the 1962 Historic Fence and Ground Cover map. The second tract contained 85 acres of “cedar land” abutting tracts owned by V.D. Cowan and Benjamin Blanton.

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<sup>61</sup> Will of Aaron Jenkins, November 7, 1807, Green County (Ohio) Wills, Book A-B; 30 [[accessed through Ancestry.com]].

<sup>62</sup> *Tennessee State Marriages, 1780-2002*, Tennessee State Library and Archives [accessed through Ancestry.com].

<sup>63</sup> *Tennessee, Early Tax List Records, 1783-1895*, Tennessee State Library and Archives [accessed through Ancestry.com].



This description, when compared to the 1962 Historic Fence and Ground Cover Map, would place the 85 acres of “cedar land” north of Wilkinson Pike and west of Van Cleve Lane, squarely in the vicinity of the Cedars (Fig. 6).<sup>64</sup>

The elder Hiram Jenkins died in 1857, and his son, Hiram H., came into possession of land that included the “cedar land.” The 1860 census shows that the younger Hiram, then 44, lived in District 12 of Rutherford County with his wife Nancy [Puckett] and five children: W[illiam] Jenkins (22), J[ames] Jenkins (21), C[harles] Jenkins (18), A[lice] Jenkins (13), and another son, age 9, who may be the child identified as Nimrod in subsequent records. Hiram H. listed his occupation as farmer with real estate valued at \$10,000 and personal property valued at \$35,000.

Daughter Alice Jenkins married H. H. Kerr sometime in the late 1860s; the 1870 census lists them together in District 9 as a separate household. H. H. was then 26, “Allie” was 23, and they had an eight-month-old son, “H. J.” The union may not have been entirely satisfactory to Alice’s parents, for in 1869 Hiram H. deeded a tract of 74 acres in District 9 to “his daughter Alice Kerr, wife of H.H. Kerr . . . for her separate use.” The deed further specified that this land was “to be free of the debts of her present or any future husband.” The same deed also transferred to Alice a one-third interest in 130 acres of land bounded on the north by the national cemetery, on the south by the “lands of Mr. Burton,” and on the east by “the land of V.D. Cowan (dec’d).” Hiram H. had inherited this tract from his father.<sup>65</sup> The description of the second tract correlates with the location of the Cedars and thus appears to have included the 85 acres of “cedar land” that the elder Hiram received title to when the 1846 land dispute was settled.

Alice’s untimely death on November 4, 1871, complicated the land ownership situation, and Hiram H. acted quickly to snatch Alice’s land from her husband. On November 23, 1871, he transferred the 74 acres and one-third interest in 130 acres that he had given to Alice to his son, James F. Jenkins. As part of this transaction, H. H. Kerr quitclaimed his “right, title, and interest in the land . . . being that he had the right under the last will and testament of his late wife Alice Kerr.”<sup>66</sup> Kerr was not giving up all of Alice’s land, however. His quitclaim was the first of a two-part transaction. On January 1, 1872, J[ames] F. Jenkins and C[harles] H. Jenkins reciprocally quitclaimed Alice’s one-third interest in the “130 acres of Cedar land” back to H. H. Kerr “as devised of his late wife Alice J.” This deed also created specific boundaries for the land (43.33 acres) that Kerr now owned.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Hiram Jenkins vs. Aaron Jenkins & other heirs & devoted heirs of Nimrod Jenkins, deceased, July 31, 1846, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 2:548-50.

<sup>65</sup> H. Jenkins and others to Alice Kerr, October 20, 1869, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 16:560.

<sup>66</sup> Hiram Jenkins to J. F. Jenkins, November 23, 1870, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 18:254.

<sup>67</sup> J. F. and C. H. Jenkins to H. H. Kerr, January 1, 1872, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 18:254.





H. H. Kerr did not continue to live on the tract of land he inherited from his first wife. Goodspeed's *History of Tennessee, Rutherford County*, indicates that in 1870 he was a grocer by occupation, when he and Alice were enumerated as living out of town in District 9. In any case, he became active in community affairs, serving as mayor of Murfreesboro in 1876 and at one time as commander of the Murfreesboro Commandery of the Knight Templars. During the mid 1880s his name was associated with one of several drug stores in Murfreesboro.<sup>68</sup> The 1899 property ownership map indicates that by this time, Kerr's landholdings in the Cedars had been whittled down to 32 acres, and his tract sat adjacent to several "small lots" that are not associated with any specific owners (see Fig 2).

Deed research indicates that Kerr somehow managed to acquire title to at least two thirds of the 130-acre tract in the Cedars because in 1872 he sold 40 acres of land to Sam Grisham. Thereafter, he periodically sold small tracts to other African Americans (the small lots not identified by owner on the 1899 map). In the aggregate, these small tracts totaled more than 40 acres. Furthermore, the evidence suggests that these small land sales were made to individuals who were already living on the land or were related to individuals living in the Cedars. Sales were legitimated with receipts, but no deeds were created to legalize the transactions; thus, before the U. S. government could purchase these parcels, it was necessary to clear title through Elizabeth Kerr, his second wife and heir.

### **The African American History of the Cedars**

Simpson has linked the history of Cemetery community to African American men who served in the U.S. Colored Troops, especially the 111<sup>th</sup>, and with employment available at Stones River National Cemetery. The story of William Holland, which is the African American story principally interpreted at Stones River National Battlefield, associates a historical person with the themes of military service and the continuing federal presence during Reconstruction. These are important aspects, but the history of the Cedars exposes links to, and possibly familial relationships with, white landowning families in this area, particularly those of W. T. Henderson, Hiram H. Jenkins, and Varner D. Cowan. Additional research is needed to establish how the black Samuel Grisham/Gresham family is tied to the white landowning family of Asa Grisham. Even so, the close proximity of whites and blacks who shared the surnames of Cowan, Grisham, and others cannot be coincidental. Further research may tease out more details that shed some light on the interracial dynamics at work. In any case, over time, individual African Americans gradually acquired, from white landowners, modest tracts and small plots of land in the Cedars.

Although there is still much we do not know, the 1870 census shows that William Holland was then living in the household of L.S. Doolittle, national cemetery superintendent, and

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<sup>68</sup> *History of Tennessee, Rutherford County, Part II* [biographical sketches and miscellaneous community data] (The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887), 810-840.

working as a “farm laborer.” Sam Grisham, age 52 and living in District 7 at the time, worked independently as a blacksmith; a son, Edward, lived in a separate household nearby and also worked as a blacksmith. Deed research establishes Grisham and Holland as the earliest landowners, 1872 and 1875 respectively, in what became the Cedars. The 1884 acquisition of land for two different Baptist churches in this area suggests the presence of an established community by then.

However, the period from 1870 to the end of the nineteenth century is hard to trace, in large part because the 1880 census is very difficult to read and the 1890 manuscript census is of course missing. Census data for the period 1900-1930 indicate that the community continued to grow in size up to 1910 (see Appendix A), with this enumeration yielding the clearest information about the black households that composed the Cedars. Still, census data, and public records in general, cannot be treated as definitive. There are too many gaps in the record to claim that this profile of the Cedars is complete or completely accurate. Just for the small area of the Cedars, comparing the data from one census to the next, along with evidence from other public records and the oral history of Percy Minter, who was born and raised in the Cedars, has exposed a number of errors and omissions. Additionally, most of the surnames associated with the Cedars recur elsewhere in District 9. Consanguinial and affinal kinship networks no doubt were complex, and it is likely that people whose names appear to be associated with the Cedars only briefly actually were part of the larger Cemetery community for much longer, perhaps their entire lifetimes.

Proceeding with these cautions, a comparison of the 1910 census with the landowner names on the 1929 land acquisition map yields a cluster of 17 black households that probably made up the Cedars in 1910. In these 17 households lived 79 people. Thirteen householders listed their occupation as farmer, and of them 12 owned property. Among the 20 adult women listed, most of them were caring for 26 children under the age of 15 as well as three elderly people identified as “boarders.” Three of the women also were heads of household, and another woman took in washing to support herself, her elderly husband, and a teen-aged grandson. Two men, George Hutchinson and Rufus Huddleston, were long-time employees of the national cemetery. Three others had been employed at the cemetery short-term in the previous decade. Only one family, that of William and Fannie Waller, definitely was not engaged in farming. William and two sons still living at home all worked as house carpenters.

Ten years later, when the 1920 census was taken, 16 black households and two white households appear to be clustered in the Cedars area, but the enumerator missed the George H. Minter household, which we know for certain was there (see Appendix B). Thus, the number of black households remained stable, but the number of people living in them (including the Minter household) appears to have decreased to about 65. Among black heads of household, four were women, and three of these women were widows. Among the 12 male heads of household, four were widowed. At the other end of the age spectrum, the number of children under age 15 had dropped slightly from 26 to about 22 (again, including the Minter household). These signs point

to a community that was aging, demographically, but farming was still the economic mainstay. Twelve black households were characterized as general farms, but only five of them were owner operated. The other seven were farmed by renters. Three men were employed at the national cemetery, including George Hutchinson and Rufus Huddleston, both of whom had worked there since 1903 according to park records. The other cemetery worker, Robert Avent, was a veteran of World War I.

Of the households identified in 1910 and 1920, eight of them also appear on the 1900 census for District 9, although it is not clear that they all lived in the Cedars at that time. Nonetheless, this information helps to identify the families who lived in the Cedars for the longest. These include the families of Andrew and Mary Avent, Ellis and Addie Anderson, William Holland, Ed and Patsy Howard, George and Martha Hutchinson, John and Callie Mason, Ed and Josephine Orr, and William and Fannie Waller.

Deeds and court records associated with the 1929 land acquisition confirm the outmigration that seems to have been underway when the 1920 census was taken. Several individuals holding undivided interests in land had by then moved to out-of-state locations. This should not be surprising, given the small size of African American landholdings and the marginal productivity of the land. Additionally, this outflow correlates with the larger pattern known as the “great migration” of African Americans northward that began with World War I.

By 1930, when the census enumerator identified “Cemetery Precinct” as a placename, only three households appear to have been intact in the Cedars. Rowena Minter, now widowed, lived there with four of her children and two grandchildren. Robert Avent, son of Andrew and Mary Avent, remained in the family home with his wife and three children. A veteran of World War I, Avent was still employed as a gardener at Stones River National Cemetery. Percy and Sallie Bass also were still living in the Cedars, but Sallie had purchased property in the Bottom in preparation for moving.

Appendix B presents the information that has so far been gathered for landowners identified on the 1929 land acquisition map. Keeping in mind that landownership does not signify place of residence, the individual property histories, in comparison with census data, indicate that the community of people displaced by land acquisition for the military park probably included five or six family units, perhaps as many as six single women, and a few unidentified tenants. Assuming that all of the houses were occupied, and assuming the property histories are reasonably accurate, then somewhere between 30 and 40 people had to find new homes.

Many of those displaced moved into Murfreesboro or relocated within the larger Cemetery community. Sallie Bass, for instance, bought an acre of land in the Bottom in 1930, and moved a short distance up Old Nashville Highway.<sup>69</sup> A few are believed to have left the

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<sup>69</sup> W.A. Hopkins and Sallie Hopkins to Sallie Bass, August 20, 1930, Rutherford County Deeds, Book 75:329.

area, continuing the outmigration that began with World War I. Land acquisition was not completely finished until 1933, but the War Department began developing the park in 1931. Rowena Minter and her family stayed as long as they could. Percy Minter's account of his family history provides a glimpse of life before and after the Cedars gave way to Stones River National Military Park.

### **Minter Family History**

Percy Minter was born in 1914 in a four-room house located on Tract 10, an 11-acre parcel that contained seven tillable acres.<sup>70</sup> Although large by community standards, the four-room house accommodated a large family. His parents, George H. Minter and Rowena Haynes were married in 1902. The 1910 census places them as living in District 9, probably in the Cedars, with four children: Roberta (5), Harry and Richard (3), and Maggie (5 months). Harry appears to have died as a child because Percy remembers growing up with six siblings: Roberta, Richard, Maggie, George, Mattie, and Anna Mary.

George Minter died on September 25, 1922, when Percy was seven and a half years old. He is buried in Evergreen Graveyard. Minter vividly recalled the outpouring of community support after his father died: "we had cotton, corn, hogs to kill, all that in the field. And he belonged to the Masonic lodge. . . . They gathered all his crop that fall, killed his hogs, and all that, cured the meat out, planted the crop for the next spring." This kind of community support was common. People congregated regularly at church and informally at an open space located northwest of the present-day intersection of NW Broad Street and Thompson Lane.

That is where we used to have picnic, from 7 o'clock in the morning until dark at night. People would play baseball, they killed billy goats, cooked that goat, go to the river and catch fish, cook that fish. People would stay there from 8 o'clock in the morning until dark at night.

Percy, like all the children in Cemetery community, attended Cemetery School, "an old frame building. It had two windows on this side, two on this side, just a front door. It had no back door. An old frame building." This would have been the second school building on the site. His teacher at Cemetery School was "Kitty Howse. She was my first one I went to in first grade until the eighth grade."

After finishing at Cemetery School, he attended Bradley Academy in town through the tenth grade. "The year I quit school was the year they had Holloway. That was in '30, the first graduation [from Holloway High School] was in '31. . . . Old Bradley was the only school they

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<sup>70</sup> The following account is taken from Percy Minter, Sr., Interview with Elena DiGrado and others, November 1, 2007, with supporting information from census and death records.

had there. That's the year I went for the tenth grade at Old Bradley. That's when I had to drop out." Thus, from 1922, when George Minter died, to 1930, when Percy dropped out of school, the Minter family struggled.

Percy's older brother Richard "didn't like farming, period. Leave old mule on the fence for half a day, he'd be somewhere, you wouldn't know where he's at." By the time Percy turned 14, Richard had left home, and Percy became the man of the house. "I didn't know about planting no cotton, planting no corn or nothing. My oldest sister's husband, he taught me how to plow and bale hay and everything like that." On the seven acres of tillable land, Percy learned to farm with a "mule and a horse, that is all you had to plow with."

He also tried to keep up with his schooling, but by 1930, he had to make a choice, and he chose to support his mother, who by then was fighting to keep the War Department from taking her property. At the same time, the effects of the Great Depression were rippling through rural Rutherford County. Percy associated dropping out of school with the economic depression, which started in the 1920s for farmers.

Yeah, and the Depression started 1927. Several people down the road from me, white and black, lost their farm. Because there wasn't nothing to depend on, just cotton. . . . She learned how to kill hogs, learn how to drop the lard, trimmed their meat off. I never cared too much about milking a cow. I could churn, I got to churn, we'd churn it and get the butter from milk. Didn't know about electricity to put it in. Ice box, that's where we kept stuff. We had a big old well, and we'd let the milk down in that old well and it would keep it cool. The well is still down there but I covered it up. That's how I grew up.

After the Minters sold their property under court order, Percy enrolled in the Civilian Conservation Corps, possibly assigned to the CCC camp in Murfreesboro.

I went to the CCC camp. You didn't have nothing to buy, a place to sleep, a place to eat and everything. You got five dollars a month and another 25 dollars you never did see. It came back home to my mother. That's what she survived on, taking in washing and ironing and stuff like that.

It is not clear how long Minter was enrolled in the CCC. But on December 14, 1936, he married Richie Cornelia Mason, who also grew up in Cemetery community, in the Bottom settlement. Her parents died of influenza when she was just five weeks old, and her grandmother raised her in the house where she was born. Her grandmother also gave the property to Percy and Richie when they married. Thus, Percy once again had a home in Cemetery community, a "one-room log house" on Asbury Lane.



It was built during the Civil War. It didn't have no electricity. You could look out the window and see the sun rise, moon rise and everything. It just had a fireplace, you had to stand right up in the fire to try to keep warm. My wife and I we fixed the house up, put sheet rock around it, put electricity and everything in it.

Percy and Richie raised their children in this house. Beginning in about 1942, Percy worked at [Henry] Corn Furniture on West Main St., which is where he was working when his mother died on February 28, 1946. He recalled sitting "with her that night, and she told me I had better go home. I had to go to work the next day."

The Minters weathered 63 years of marriage and lived the remainder of their lives in the house on Asbury Lane. Richie died in 2000, Percy in 2009.

## Summing Up

The Cedars was a black enclave, but it takes no more than a cursory reading of census schedules to see that blacks and whites lived side by side in the larger area of Cemetery community and the countryside around Murfreesboro in general. African Americans may have been the majority population in District 9 and other rural districts, at least until the early twentieth century, but they were minority landowners. Given the overall pattern of landownership, the formation of a separate black town would have been all but impossible. Rather, pockets of concentrated black settlement and landownership were the basis for creating community. But what did this mean for life on a daily basis? Did blacks perceive Cemetery community as a safe haven in a hostile world? Or a nurturing place to educate children, lean on neighbors, and care for elders? The proximity of blacks and whites who shared surnames indicates familial or historical relationships, but to what degree did whites and blacks in this rural area interact after the war, and on what terms? Did black and white farmers cooperate to any meaningful degree? As more blacks became landowners, with some of them acquiring sizable holdings, did class tensions develop within the black community? These are only some of the questions that the current state of research cannot answer.

Black landownership in the Cedars begins with Sam Grisham's 1872 purchase of 40 acres from H.H. Kerr and William Holland's 1875 purchase of three acres from cemetery superintendent L.S. Doolittle. But a community seems to have been emerging before then. Establishment of the Tennessee Manual Labor University in the late 1860s suggests that Peter Lowery and others saw this place as favorable for educating large numbers of African Americans. The 1870 census shows many blacks living in the vicinity of Stones River National Cemetery, although none of them owned land or personal property of value worth documenting. H. H. Kerr, in particular, facilitated land acquisition. After he sold 40 acres to Sam Grisham, he began selling smaller parcels to other blacks. The nature of these transactions—secured with only a receipt and not a recorded deed—indicates the precarious circumstances that attended

black landownership. Kerr's motives are unknowable, but we cannot assume they were benevolent. Considering that these parcels were situated on land of poor quality for cultivation, Kerr certainly had no economic reason not to sell. In any case, the core of the Cedars enclave emerged on land owned by Kerr and before him by the Hiram H. Jenkins family, one of many slaveholding landowners in this area before the war.

The short life of the Tennessee Manual Labor University probably affected the pattern of black landownership in ways we can never know, but land acquisition for two churches in 1884 signifies that the Cedars was perceived as an African American place by the mid 1880s. The depiction of Stones River Methodist Church and Evergreen Graveyard on the 1878 Beers map also indicates that the Bottom was perceived as African American space even earlier, and future research should focus on piecing together the landownership history of the Bottom. The 1912 subdivision of the Henderson farm, formerly the TMLU property, created opportunities for blacks to acquire land that lay between the Cedars and the Bottom, thus expanding the footprint of black landownership. Judging by census data, the period from 1910 to World War I seems to have been the high point of community cohesion in the Cedars. By 1920, the effects of outmigration were becoming evident.

There is still much to learn about Cemetery community's history. Percy Minter's family history demonstrates the possibilities for oral history to enrich our understanding of community life. Other people who grew up in Cemetery community or whose family histories connect to Cemetery community have similar contributions to make. Leonora Washington, for instance, was born and raised in the community and still lives there. She has vivid memories of her parents, who were both educators, as well as her aunts, of Cemetery School and Holloway High School, of Stones River Methodist Church, and of confronting segregation and racism outside the community.<sup>71</sup> Likewise, the family history of Anthony King adds to our understanding of the black farms and families in the further reaches of Cemetery community.<sup>72</sup> Fully documenting extant buildings and other features associated with Cemetery community outside park boundaries would facilitate mapping the geo-spatial extent of Cemetery community and also help preserve an important chapter in local as well as regional history.<sup>73</sup> Archaeological investigations within the bounds of Stones River National Battlefield could recover any surface or subsurface vestiges of the Cedars settlement.

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<sup>71</sup> Leonora "Boe" Washington, oral history interview with C. Sade Turnipseed, May 26, 2011, Albert Gore Research Center, MTSU.

<sup>72</sup> Anthony King, oral history interview with Carolyn Powell, November 14, 2007, Albert Gore Research Center, MTSU; Anthony King, interview with Devora Butler, May 23, 2011, Albert Gore Research Center.

<sup>73</sup> A draft National Register district nomination was prepared as part of the 2011 Public History Field School, undertaken in collaboration with Bradley Academy Museum and Stones River National Battlefield, which focused on documenting Cemetery community through oral history and surveying extant historic resources outside park boundaries.

## APPENDIX A

### CENSUS DATA, 1900-1930 THE CEDARS

Comparing census data from one decennial to the next requires some caveats. First, there is the standard warning that manuscript census data for 1890 were destroyed in a fire, which creates a major gap for the late-nineteenth century. Compounding this gap, the 1880 manuscript census for Rutherford County is of poor microfilm quality, and one must rely on the transcriptions of others to retrieve data. Working from property owners' names that appear on the 1929 land acquisition map and households that are identified as being located in "Cemetery Precinct" in the 1930 census, the households likely associated with the Cedars have been traced back to 1900. Listings in this appendix are abstracted from the Twelfth (1900), Thirteenth (1910), Fourteenth (1920), and Fifteenth (1930) U.S. Census, population schedules.

The Census Bureau collected more information over time, but the precise nature of that information varied slightly each time the census was taken. Nonetheless, from 1900 through 1930, census data provide enough information to develop an approximate picture of the number and composition of households in a given area, along with some information on occupation or employment, level of literacy, and nativity. Individuals always are identified by color or race, but the precise designation varies. In 1900, the enumerator used only "black" and "white." The 1910 enumerator recorded nearly all African Americans as "mulatto" with an occasional "B" which probably signified a person of very dark skin complexion. The 1920 enumerator recorded "black," "white," and "mulatto." In 1930, the enumerator used the terms "negro" and "white" exclusively.

In terms of economic data, the 1900 and 1910 censuses indicate whether the householder owned or rented, whether the property was free or mortgaged, and whether the property was a farm or a house. The 1920 census records less information: only whether the home was owned or rented and, if owned, whether mortgaged or free. In 1930, "home data" included whether the householder owned or rented; if owned, the value of the home; if rented, the monthly rental; whether the family lived on a farm; and whether the home included a radio set.

## **TWELFTH CENSUS OF THE U.S., 1900 Rutherford County, District 9**

### **W.W. Dismukes, enumerator**

The order in which households were enumerated in 1900 poses some problems inasmuch as surnames historically linked with the Cedars appear scattered throughout the manuscript schedule. Further clouding the picture, no locational information is given other than district number. It is therefore impossible to identify a cluster of surnames that are identifiable as the Cedars. This list of households includes African American families associated with the Cedars in 1929 and who show up on the 1910 census. Because these households do not appear consecutively in the schedule, they are listed alphabetically by family surname.

**Avent, Andrew**, head, 52, black, married 26 years, farmer, homeowner, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, L. Mary, wife, 51, black, married 26 years, 11 births, 8[?] living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, H. John, son, 16, black, single, farm laborer, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Thomas, son, 13, black, farm laborer, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, D. Willie, son, 10, black, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, T. Robert, son, 7, black

\_\_\_\_\_, A. Mary, daughter, 4, black

\_\_\_\_\_, Roeana, daughter, 1, black

**Anderson, Ellis**, head, 45, black, married 21 years, farmer, renter, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Addie, wife, age?, black, married 21 years, 11 births, 7 living children

\_\_\_\_\_, Ellis, son, 15, black, single, farm laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, L. Robert, son, 12, black, farm laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Addie, daughter, 11, black, at school

\_\_\_\_\_, Manney[?], daughter, 7, black

\_\_\_\_\_, Thomas, son, 3, black

\_\_\_\_\_, Berton, son, 1, black

**Harlin [Holland], William**, head, 78, black, widowed, farmer, homeowner, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Josephine, daughter, 27, black, single, day laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Williams, son, 25, black, single, day laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Della, daughter, 24, black, single, day laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, William, grandson, 8, black

\_\_\_\_\_, Joseph, grandson, 6, black

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary, granddaughter, 2, black

Beaman, James, servant, 20, black

**Howard, Ed**, head, 42, black, married 15 years, farmer, renter, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Patsy, wife, 40, black, married 15 years, 7 births, 5 living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Mattie, daughter, 12, black, at school

\_\_\_\_\_, T. Sam, son, 7, black, at school

**Hutchinson, George**, head, 57, black, married 5 years, day laborer, renter, not able to read or write [SRNB records show that he worked at the national cemetery from 1878-1920 and went on strike from June 24 – August 5, 1918]

\_\_\_\_\_, Martha, wife, 29, black, married 5 years, 1 birth, 1 living child, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Green, son, 8, black

**Mason, John**, head, 52, black, married 28 years, farmer, renter, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Callie, wife, 42, black, married 28 years, 4 births, 4 living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Ella, daughter, 20, black, single, day laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Willie, son, 16, black, single, farm laborer, able to read and write

**Orr, Ed**, head, 35, black, married 15 years, day laborer, renter, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Josie, wife, 33, black, married 15 years, 5 births, 3 living children, day laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Bessie, daughter, 12, black, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Harvey, son, 9, black

\_\_\_\_\_, Henry, son, 6, black

**Waller, William**, head, 49, black, married 30 years, day laborer, homeowner, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Fannie, wife, 49[?], black, married 30 years, 6 births, 6 living children, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Duncan, son, 17, black, single, farm laborer, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, L. Robert, son, 12, black, day laborer, not able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Porter, son, 8, black



**THIRTEENTH CENSUS OF THE U.S., 1910**

**Rutherford County, District 9**

**Erskin Lytle, enumerator**

**Fords Lane [Van Cleve Lane] from Manson Pike to Nashville Pike, in the order they appear**

**Malone, Allek** , head, 56, mulatto, marriage 2, married 5 years, able to read and write, farmer,  
farm rented

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary, wife, 34, mulatto, marriage 1, married 5 years, no births, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Roberta, daughter, 18, mulatto, single, able to read and write

**[Minter, George Henry]** *written as Henry, Minor*, head, 41, mulatto, married 9 years, able to  
read and write, farmer, farm rented

\_\_\_\_\_, Rowena, wife, 29, mulatto, married 9 years, 4 births, 4 living children, able to read and  
write

\_\_\_\_\_, Roberta, daughter, 5, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Harry, son, 3, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Richard, son, 3 mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Maggie, daughter, 5 mo., mulatto

**Mason, John**, head, 58, mulatto, marriage 1, widowed, able to read, not able to write, farmer,  
farm owner

\_\_\_\_\_, John Jr., son, 31, mulatto, single, able to read and write, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Addie, daughter, 30, mulatto, widowed, 4 births, 3 living children, able to read and  
write, laborer on home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Willie, son, 25, mulatto, widowed, able to read and write, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert W., grandson, 9, mulatto

Anderson, Mary, boarder, 72, mulatto, marriage 1, no occupation

**Orr, Edward**, head, 55, mulatto, married 33 years, not able to read or write, farmer, farm owner

\_\_\_\_\_, Josphine, wife, 55, mulatto, married 33 years, 5 births, 5 living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Charley W., son, 33, mulatto, single, able to read and write, laborer at lumberyard

\_\_\_\_\_, James, son, 23, mulatto, single, able to read and write, laborer at laundry

\_\_\_\_\_, Edith, daughter, 17, mulatto, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Josphine, daughter, 15, mulatto, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Henry, grandson, 3, mulatto

**Wade, John**, head, 72, mulatto, married 50 years, not able to read or write, no occupation, renter?

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary, wife, 63, mulatto, married 50 years, 4 births, 4 living children, note able to read or write, washerwoman at home

Anderson, Charley, grandson, 16, mulatto, single, able to read and write, no occupation

**Williams, Henry**, head, 47, mulatto, marriage 3, married 1 year, able to read, not able to write, farmer, home owned

\_\_\_\_\_, Kitty, wife, 36, mulatto, marriage 2, married 1 year, 1 birth, 1 living child, able to read and write

Sanford, Willie D., son-in-law, 12, mulatto, able to read and write

Rankins, Jim, boarder, 65, mulatto, widowed, not able to read or write, no occupation

**Hugenson [Hutchinson], George**, head, 68, mulatto, marriage 3, married 11 years, not able to read or write, laborer at cemetery, home owned [SRNB records show that he worked

at the national cemetery from 1878-1920 and went on strike from June 24 – August 5, 1918]

\_\_\_\_\_, Martha, wife, 38, mulatto, marriage 2, married 11 years, 1 birth, 1 living child, able to read, not able to write

**Cowan, Isaac**, head, 51, mulatto, marriage 2, able to read and write, farmer, home owned

Blackman, Annie, daughter, 40, mulatto, widowed, 2 births, 2 living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Ida Mai, granddaughter, 1yr. 10 mo., mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Franklin C., grandson, 4 mo., mulatto

**Swift, John**, head, 65, mulatto, marriage 2, married 3 years, able to read and write, farmer, home owned

\_\_\_\_\_, Annie, wife, 50, mulatto, marriage 1, married 3 years, 1 birth, no living children [error], able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Cleo T., son, 3, mulatto

**Harden, Lula**, head, 35, mulatto, single, 3 births, 3 living children, able to read and write, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Williams, son, 14, mulatto, able to read and write, no occupation

Lytle, Ida, daughter, 16, mulatto, widowed, 1 birth, 1 living child, able to read and write, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Theodosia, granddaughter, 1 yr. 2 mo., mulatto

**Howder [Howard], Ed**, head, 52, mulatto, married 30 years, able to read and write, farmer, home owned [SRNB records show that Ed Howard worked at the national cemetery from Apr. 1915 to at least 1920 and went on strike July 24 – August 5, 1918]

\_\_\_\_\_, Patsy, wife, 51, mulatto, married 30 years, 8 births, 4 living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Sam T., son, 16, mulatto, single, able to read and write, railroad laborer

**Avent, Mary E.**, head, 49, mulatto, widowed, 5 births, 4 living children, able to read and write, no occupation, shown as farm renter, but deeds establish land ownership]

\_\_\_\_\_, John H., son, 23, mulatto, single, able to read and write, farmer [SRNB records show that a J.H. Avant worked at the national cemetery, briefly, in Apr. 1904]

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert, son, 16, mulatto, single, able to read and write, laborer, home farm [SRNB records show that Robert worked at the national cemetery, briefly, in Apr. 1913]

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary A., daughter, 13, mulatto, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Roena, daughter, 11, mulatto, able to read and write

Miles, Harden, boarder, 68, black, widowed, not able to read or write, farm laborer

**Hudson [Huddleston], Rufus**, head, 51, mulatto, married 6 years, able to read, not able to write, farmer, home owned [SRNB records show that Rufus worked at the national cemetery from Apr. 1903 to October 1920 and went on strike July 24 – August 5, 1918]

\_\_\_\_\_, Ella, wife, 26, mulatto, married 6 years, 0 births[?], able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Susie A., daughter, 4, mulatto

**Waler [Waller], William**, head, 66, mulatto, married 40 years, able to read and write, house carpenter [property owner]

\_\_\_\_\_, Fannie, wife, 63, mulatto, married 40 years, 9 births, 5 living children, able to read, not able to write

\_\_\_\_\_, Leroy, son, 21, mulatto, single, able to read and write, house carpenter

\_\_\_\_\_, Porter, son, 17, mulatto, single, able to read and write, house carpenter

**Anderson, Golena**, head, 34, mulatto, widowed, 6 births, 6 living children, able to read and write, farmer, home owned

\_\_\_\_\_, Samuel, son, 16, mulatto, single, able to read and write, [SRNB records show that a Sam Anderson worked at the national cemetery, briefly, in Apr. 1913]

\_\_\_\_\_, Bob, son, 10, mulatto, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Fannie N., daughter, 8, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Golena, daughter, 6, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Bruce, son, 4, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Jinnie, son, 2, mulatto

### **Beginning Nashville Pike**

**Anderson, Ellis**, head, 50, mulatto, married 31 years, not able to read or write, farmer, farm owner

\_\_\_\_\_, Addie, wife, 46, mulatto, married 31 years, 15 births, 7 living children, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Ellis Jr., son, 22, mulatto, single, able to read and write, laborer at store

\_\_\_\_\_, Bob L., son, 19, mulatto, widowed, able to read and write, laborer on home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Everlina, daughter, 17, mulatto, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Bertin, son, 10, mulatto, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Sallie M., daughter, 8, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Alexander, son, 3, mulatto

**Hollands, William**, head, 36, mulatto, married 10 years, able to read and write, farmer, home owned [SRNB records show that William L. Holland worked at the national cemetery Apr. 1903 – Mar. 1906]

\_\_\_\_\_, Della, wife, 36, mulatto, married 10 years, 0 births, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Maria, niece, 11, mulatto, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Jennie, niece, 9, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Joe L., nephew, 17, mulatto, single, able to read and write, laborer on home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Will, nephew, 13, mulatto, able to read and write, laborer on home farm



**FOURTEENTH CENSUS OF THE U.S., 1920**

**Rutherford County, District 9**

**Mrs. Percy H. Jarrett, enumerator**

**Beginning at the Dixie Highway, in the order they appear**

**Anderson, Ellis**, head, 63, black, married, home owned, able to read and write, farmer

\_\_\_\_\_, Addie, wife, 56, mulatto, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Burton, son, 20, mulatto, able to read and write, farm laborer, home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Augusta Bell, daughter-in-law, 18, mulatto, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Maggie, granddaughter, 5 mo., mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Richard, son, 13, mulatto, attending school, able to read and write, farm laborer,  
home farm

Caldwell, Sally Mary, daughter, 18, mulatto, able to read and write, farm laborer, home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Evalina, granddaughter, 8 mo., mulatto

Quarles, Houston, cousin, 8, black, not able to read or write

**Gannon, Homer**, head, 33, white, married, able to read and write, home owned, farmer, general  
farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Flora S., wife, 26 white, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Homer Jr., son, 2 & 8 mo., white

**Huddleston, Rufus**, head, 51, homeowner, black, married, no education, farmer, general farm

[SRNB records show that Rufus worked at the national cemetery from Apr.  
1903 to October 1920 and went on strike July 24 – August 5, 1918]

\_\_\_\_\_, Ella, wife, 36, black, no education

\_\_\_\_\_, Susanna, daughter, 13, black, attending school

**Howard, Edward**, head, 50, homeowner, black, married, able to read and write, laborer at the national cemetery [SRNB records show that Ed Howard worked at the national cemetery from Apr. 1915 to at least 1920 and went on strike July 24 – August 5, 1918]

\_\_\_\_\_, Patsy, wife, 50, black, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Martha, mother, 90, black, widowed

**Hutchinson, George**, head 65, homeowner, black, widowed, able to read and write, laborer at national cemetery [SRNB records show that he worked at the national cemetery from 1878-1920 and went on strike from July 24 – August 5, 1918]

**Tillage, Bracy**, head, 27, renter, black, married, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Bertha, wife, 29, black, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Sam B., son, 6, black, not attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Preston L., son, newborn, black

**Smith, Albert**, head, 25, homeowner, black, married, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary, wife, 23, mulatto, able to read and write [daughter of Andrew and Mary Avent]

\_\_\_\_\_, Joe W., son, 5, mulatto, not attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Cassie, daughter, 4, mulatto

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert, son, 1 year, mulatto

Avent, Robert, brother-in-law, 25, mulatto, single, able to read and write, laborer at national cemetery [son of Andrew and Mary Avent]

\_\_\_\_\_, Rowena, sister-in-law, 20, black, single, able to read and write, farm laborer on home farm [daughter of Andrew and Mary Avent]

**Malone, Alex**, head, 60, renter, black, widowed, no education, farmer, general farm

**Williams, Kitty**, head, 40, homeowner, black, married, no education, farm laborer, working out for wages

Rankin, Jim, uncle, 70, black, widowed, no education, no occupation

**Bass, Percy**, head, 43, renter [enumerator error], black, married, able to read and write, laborer at lumberyard

\_\_\_\_\_, Sallie, wife, 44, black, able to read and write, washerwoman at home

Wade, Mary, mother, 65, black, widowed, no education, cook for private family

**Harvey, Cetan**, head, 50, renter, black, widowed, no education, farmer, general farm

Johnson, Addie, niece, 39, black, widowed, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

~~Smith~~, Nellie, daughter, 11, black, attending school

**Anderson, Golena**, head, 45, homeowner, black, widowed, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Sam, son, 25, black, single, able to read and write, porter at a grocery store

\_\_\_\_\_, Fanny M., daughter, 17, black, single, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Golena, daughter, 15, black, single, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Bruce, son, 13, black, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Duncan, son, 11, black, attending school

**Mason, John**, head, 69, renter, black, widowed, no education, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert, grandson, 18, black, married, able to read and write, farm laborer, home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Aline, granddaughter-in-law, 17, black, married, able to read and write

**Hollins, Sallie**, head, 38, renter, black, widowed, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Meredith, son, 18, black, single, able to read and write, farm laborer, home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Bud, son, 16, black, single, able to read and write, farm laborer, home farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Sis, daughter, 14, black, attending school

**Slaughter, Albert**, head, 39, renter, black, married, no education, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Alice, wife, 36, black, able to read and write,

\_\_\_\_\_, Willie B., daughter, 14, black, attending school

**Keele, J.O.**, head, 36, homeowner, white, married, able to read and write, oil well driller

\_\_\_\_\_, Minnie, wife, 40, white, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Everett, son, 14, white, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Beatrice, daughter, 11, white, attending school

**Henderson, Jim**, head, 38, renter, black, married, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Mamie, wife, 28, black, able to read and write,

\_\_\_\_\_, Jimmie, daughter, 3, black

Murray, Arthur, brother-in-law, 26, black, single, no education, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Elizabeth, sister-in-law, 7, black, attending school

**Orr, Josephine**, head, 64, homeowner, black, widowed, no education, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Charles, son, 39, black, married, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Susie, daughter-in-law, 30, black, able to read and write, cook for private family

\_\_\_\_, Henry, grandson, 12, black, attending school

**Thomas, John H.**, head, 73, renter, white, widowed, able to read and write, superintendent of national cemetery

#### **FIFTEENTH CENSUS OF THE U.S., 1930**

#### **Rutherford County, District 9, Cemetery Precinct**

#### **Mrs. Mavis Adams, enumerator**

Entries on two pages of the 1930 census locate these households specifically in “Cemetery Precinct” in District 9. Altogether, 24 African American households are listed here, with a total of 84 people. Some households are further associated with the Dixie Highway; others with Asbury Lane. Comparing names of property owners on the 1929 map with the surnames of households enumerated in 1930 suggests that only three families (14 people) remained in their homes in the Cedars. The other 21 households were located in the larger area of Cemetery community surrounding the Cedars to the north and west.

#### **CEMETERY PRECINCT / THE CEDARS**

**Minter, Rowena**, head, 44, widow, negro, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Maggie, daughter, 20, single, negro, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Mattie, daughter, 18, single, negro, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Percy, son, 16, single, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Anna Mary, daughter, 14, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Willie, grandson, 2, negro

Manson, Ella Belle, granddaughter, 3, negro

**Bass, Percy**, head, 50, married, negro, renting home/farm, able to read and write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Sallie, wife, 53, negro, able to read and write [deed records Sallie Bass as property owner]

**Avent, Robert**, head, 33, married, negro, owned home valued at \$1,000, able to read and write,  
gardener, national cemetery, military veteran WWI

\_\_\_\_\_, Maidie [Mary], wife, 30, negro, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary Belle, daughter, 9, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Arthur, son, 6, negro

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert, son, 3, negro

#### **OTHER HOUSEHOLDS IN CEMETERY PRECINCT**

##### **DIXIE HIGHWAY**

**Howland, Hobert**, head, 28, negro, married, renting home (\$5/mo), able to read and write,  
highway laborer

\_\_\_\_\_, Alice, wife, 25, negro, able to read and write

**Rucker, Robert**, head, 45, white, married, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Lizzie, wife, 42, white, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Lola, daughter, 14, white, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Bliss, daughter, 12, white, attending school

**Malone, Sam**, head, 50, negro, married, owned home (value \$200), able to read and write,  
painter at factory

\_\_\_\_\_, Linda, wife, 45, negro, not able to read or write

**Malone, Sam B.**, head, 26, negro, married, renting home/farm (\$3), able to read and write,  
farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Florence, wife, 18, negro, able to read and write



\_\_\_\_\_, James, son, 2, negro

**Avent, John H.**, head, 50, negro, married, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Polly, 42, negro, able to read and write

**Wade, Jerry**, head, 50, negro, married, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Annie, wife, 37, negro, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Francis, daughter, 8, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Edna, daughter, 5, negro, not attending school

**Murrah, Jennie**, head, 57, negro, widowed, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

**Marable, Robert**, head, 60, negro, widowed, rented home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Walter, son, 20, negro, single, able to read and write, farm laborer

\_\_\_\_\_, Katie Mai, daughter, 16, negro, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Henry, son, 15, negro, able to read and write

**Batey, Larkin**, head, 37, negro, married, lived on farm (owned or rented unknown), not able to  
read or write, farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Ella, wife, 31, negro, able to read and write

Lytle, Robert, cousin, 56, negro, widowed, not able to read or write, farm laborer

**Bond, Cloe**, head, 49, white, married, rented home/farm (\$15), able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Neva, wife, 42, white, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Sadie Mai, daughter, 11, white, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Bessie M., daughter, 7, white, attending school

**Davis, Jack**, head, 69, white, married, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer, general  
farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Dixie, wife, 66, white, able to read and write

Yeargin, Ray, grandson, 7, white, attending school

**Bradford, Jack**, head, 50, white, married, rented home/farm (\$4), able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Rosie, wife, 51, white, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Tom, son, 21, white, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Edna, daughter, 19, white, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Robert, son, 16, white, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Nell, daughter, 10, white, attending school

**Haney, Ab**, head, 39, white, married, rented home/farm (\$2), note able to read or write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Luey, wife, 26, white, not able to read or write

**King, Walter**, head, 52, negro, married, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

Turrentine, Christine, cousin, 10, negro, attending school

**Haney, Priscilla**, head, 77, negro, widowed, homeowner, not able to read or write, farmer,  
general farming

Turrentine, Beulah, niece, 12, negro, attending school

**Clark, Joe**, head, 63, negro, married, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer, general  
farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Nora, wife, 56, negro, able to read or write

\_\_\_\_\_, Richard, son, 21, negro, single, able to read or write

Winum[?], Jack, grandson, 16, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Anthony Jr., grandson, 15, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Byrns, grandson, 15, negro, attending school

#### **ASBURY LANE**

**Haynes, Felix**, head, 49, married, negro, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, wife, 49, negro, able to read and write, practical nurse

\_\_\_\_\_, Dewitt, son, 19, negro, single, able to read and write, farm laborer

\_\_\_\_\_, Frank, son, 16, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Jack, son, 14, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, George, son, 13, negro, attending school

\_\_\_\_\_, Charles, son, 11, negro, attending school

**Cole, Will**, head, 50, married, negro, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer, general  
farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Mary, wife, 51, negro, not able to read or write

Mason, Cornelia, granddaughter, 13, negro, attending school

**Crutcher, Isabella**, head, 69, widowed, negro, owned home/farm, able to read and write, farmer,  
general farm

Mason, Eugene, grandson, 29, single, negro, able to read and write, farm laborer

\_\_\_\_\_, Oscar, great-grandson, 12, negro, attending school

**Harding, Celia**, head, 50, divorced, negro, rented home/farm, not able to read or write, farmer,  
general farm

Batey, Andrew, nephew, 12, negro, not attending school, not able to read or write, no occupation

\_\_\_\_\_, Tessie Lee, niece, 21, single, negro, able to read and write, no occupation

Hicks, Nellie, daughter, 20, married, negro, able to read and write, cook, [private?] home

Lillard, Jack, nephew, 9, negro, not attending school

Hicks, Cellie, granddaughter, 4, negro

**Williams, Norman**, head, 56, white, married, rented home/farm (\$15), able to read and write,  
farmer, general farm

\_\_\_\_\_, Maggie, wife, 42, white, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, George, son, 26, white, married, able to read and write, farm laborer

\_\_\_\_\_, Jim, son, 21, white, single, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, Louise, daughter-in-law, white, able to read and write

\_\_\_\_\_, George, grandson, white, 1

\_\_\_\_\_, Peggy, granddaughter, white, 2 mo.

## APPENDIX B

### STONES RIVER NATIONAL MILITARY PARK: HISTORY OF INDIVIDUAL TRACTS TO 1929

By the late 1920s, much of the land in the Cedars was in the hands of African American landowners, either through legally recorded deeds or through extra-legal transactions. The following property histories of tracts the U. S. government purchased from African Americans provide substantial evidence that they acquired small parcels of land primarily through transactional processes related to three farms: the Henderson, Jenkins, and Cowan farms. Nine tracts are associated with the 1912 subdivision of the W.T. Henderson farm, property that was the location of the short-lived Tennessee Manual Labor University. Twenty-five tracts represent

the gradual piecing off of “cedar land” once owned by Hiram H. Jenkins, a messy process that began in 1872. Four tracts are subdivisions of land once owned by Varner D. Cowan.

Information is listed by tract number as these appear on the annotated 1929 land acquisition map (Fig. 4). Tracts are further grouped according to the larger units from which they were subdivided. Thus, Tracts 1, 4-10, and 13 represent subdivisions of the W.T. Henderson farm. Tracts 2, 3, 11, and 12 are located on land once owned by Varner D. Cowan. Tracts 14-37 and 39 are situated on land acquired from H.H. or Elizabeth Kerr and traceable back to Hiram H. Jenkins. The number of acres, quality of the soil, improvements (if any), purchase price, and date of purchase come from the 1929 land-acquisition inventory and recorded deeds. Information regarding the owners comes from a variety of public records, including the 1899 Jones survey map; other deeds or court records; the manuscript population schedules of the U.S. census; birth, marriage, and death records; wills; poll (voting) tax rolls; and property tax records. District Court Minute Books, wills, loose deeds, poll tax rolls, and property tax records are located at the Rutherford County Archives. Birth, marriage, and death records were obtained through Ancestry.com. Information on the Minter family comes from a 2007 oral history interview Percy Minter. (Some of these sources also are gathered in the land acquisition files of Stones River National Battlefield.)

### **W. T. Henderson Farm**

Tract 1: Louis Hickman, 8.2 acres, all tillable, no improvements, purchased for \$2,000, April 24, 1929 (Deed Book 75:83). The 1899 Jones survey map shows that at that time, the property was part of the 308-acre farm owned by Mrs. W. T. Henderson. Hickman purchased the property from Nathan and Isabella Mason in 1917 (Deed Book 59:445). The Masons had previously purchased the land from Virginia A. Henderson in 1909 as a subdivided lot of the W. T. Henderson Farm (Deed Book 57:448).

Tract 4: Walter and Tempie (or Temple) King, 11.9 acres, all tillable, no improvements, \$2,400, purchased April 25, 1929 (Deed Book 75:157-58). The Kings purchased this property from James H. Reed in 1919 as part of a larger tract of 25 acres that Reed purchased from Dr. L. C. Tate (Deed Book 60:607). The 1899 Jones survey map identifies this piece of land as being part of the W. T. Henderson farm, but the chain of title between Tate and Henderson has not yet been established.

Walter and Tempie King had two children: Richard and Walter Jr. King owned and operated a gas station and store on Old Nashville Highway; this business was located outside the boundaries of land acquired for the military park. Census records for 1920 indicate that Walter and Tempie were living in this location at that time. Sometime before 1930, Tempie died, but Walter was still at this location in 1930. His mother, Pricella, lived nearby, probably in a separate dwelling on the property. Walter King’s second marriage to Glee Marable produced three more children: James, Desinda, and Anthony.

King also owned a farm of approximately 150 acres along Asbury Lane in District 7, which he inherited from his father, Andrew (also Andy) King.

Tract 5: Martha Harlan Ward, widow, 5 acres, tillable; improved with a two-room house, chicken shed, well, and 20 fruit trees; sold for \$1,338.00 in divided interests by Martha Harlan Ward and 7 other individuals: George Harlan (Detroit, MI), Jordan Harlan (Tucson, AZ), Joseph Harlan (Chicago, IL), Samuel Harlan (Nogales, AZ), Ethel Thornton (Nashville, TN) Pauline Smalling (Chattanooga, TN), and John Harlan (Nashville, TN) (Deed Book 78:255-58, 260-64). These 8 people were the children and grandchildren of George Harlan (or Harlin) who acquired the 5-acre parcel in 1914 from the Union Trust & Realty Company, at which time it was identified as a subdivision of the W.T. Henderson Farm (Deed Book 57:138-39). Chandler's 1929 report identifies Jordan Harlan as a sergeant with the 25<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry and Samuel Harlan as being with the "Cavalry Det. West Point."

Land acquisition records for the military park indicate that Martha Harlan Ward, George Harlan's daughter and executrix of his estate, held a life interest in his 5-acre estate. George Harlan's [sic] 1916 will divided this tract among his heirs in undivided interests, but Martha received "a lot with a house and all the farm implements" (Will Book 2:398). Neither Martha Harlan Ward's name nor those of the 7 other heirs appear on the 1920 census in the vicinity of the Cedars, suggesting that their property was rented.

Tract 6: Estate of Evelyn H. [Henderson] Jordan, 9.8 acres, all tillable, no improvements, acquired through condemnation, 1932, \$2,174.00 (District Court Minutes, Book W:620; Deed Book 79:127-28). When the W.T. Henderson farm was subdivided in 1912 (Deed Book 55:172-73), Mrs. Evelyn Henderson Jordan was one of 3 individuals who received one lot each. Although it is possible that "Evelyn" is the same person who appears on the 1880 census as "Fannie Eveline", daughter of W.T. and Virginia, a 4-year-old child at the time, it is more likely that "Evelyn" and "Fannie Eveline" were two different people inasmuch as "Fannie Eveline" is identified as white on the 1880 census and "Evelyn H. Jordan" is identified as "colored" in the 1929 land acquisition inventory. Her name does not appear on the 1920 census in the vicinity of the Cedars, suggesting that the land probably was rented for cultivation.

Tract 7: Robert W. and Ruby Irene Averitt, 9.8 acres, improved with 4-room house, store, barn, well, 600 fruits trees, 1000 blackberry vines, 200 grape vines, land all tillable; purchased May 13, 1929, for \$4,000 (Deed Book 75:334-35). The deed refers to the tract as "tract No 4 of the W.T. Henderson Division." The Averitts acquired the property from J.H. Reed, but the chain of title back to Henderson has not yet been established.

Robert Averitt's name does not show up on the 1900, 1910, or 1920 in the vicinity of the Cedars, suggesting that the property was either rented to or managed by someone else. More research is necessary to figure out the history of this property.



Tract 8: Harold L. Earthman (Virginia [Henderson] Earthman Estate), 9.8 acres, low-lying land under water at times, no improvements; acquired through condemnation in 1932 for \$1,588.25 (District Court Minute Book W:673). Virginia Henderson Earthman, daughter of W.T. and Virginia Henderson, received this land in 1912 when the farm was subdivided (Deed Book 55:172-73).

Tract 9: Harold M. Henderson and Mattie Henderson (wife), 9.8 acres, two-thirds tillable, no improvements; purchased May 2, 1929 for \$2,000 (Deed Book 75:331). A person identified as H.M. Henderson received this land when the W.T. Henderson farm was subdivided in 1912 (Deed Book 55:172-73). Additional research is needed to determine if he as the same person identified on the 1880 census as Henry Henderson, a black apprentice to W.T. Henderson. Neither Harold M. nor Mattie Henderson appears on the 1920 census in the vicinity of the Cedars.

Tract 10: Estate of George H. Minter, 11.0 acres with 7 acres tillable; improved with a 4-room house, barn, smoke house, 2 sheds, and 12 fruit trees; property sold through condemnation for \$2,393.47 in 1932 (District Court Minute Book W:665; Deed Book 78:259-60).

Minter purchased the property in 1917 from W. T. Henderson as a lot partitioned from the 308-acre W. T. Henderson Farm (Deed Book 53:204).

The 1910 census places the Minter family in the vicinity of the Cedars, but the enumerator wrote his name as “Henry Minor” with “Henry” as the surname. The names of the rest of the family members, however, substantiate that this is actually George H. Minter (41), who resided with his wife, Rowena (29), and three children: Roberta (5), Harry (3), Richard (3), and Maggie (5 months).

In 1920, the enumerator missed the Minter household, but a 2007 oral history with Percy Minter verifies that the family was living on this property at that time.

The 1930 census shows that Rowena Minter, his widow, was still living on this property with five of her children and one grandchild.

Tract 13: William and Mary Cole, 17.17 acres, all tillable, no improvements, \$1,050, sold April 26, 1929 (Deed Book 75:98-99). The 1930 census shows Will and Mary Cole living on Asbury Lane; thus, although the Coles lived in Cemetery community, their house was not located on the parcel of land acquired for the park. The 1899 Jones survey map shows this parcel as being part of the W.T. Henderson property; however, the chain of title from Henderson to Cole has yet to be established.

### **Varner D. Cowan Land**

Tract 2: Heirs of Ellis Anderson, 5.5 acres, all tillable; improved with a 3-room house, shed, 32 fruits trees, and a half interest in a well; sold in 1932 for \$2,387.38 (Middle Tennessee District Court, Nashville, Minute Book W:725, Rutherford Co. Deed Book 78:253).

In October 18, 1902, Ellis Anderson and Quil Wade, relationship unknown, purchased a tract of “the Nelson Cowan land” at a court-ordered sale (Rutherford Co. Chancery Court, Minute Book X:553). Nelson Cowan, black, is believed to have been enslaved by Varner D. Cowan prior to the Civil War (see George, “Stones River: Creating a Battlefield Park,” 36). Anderson is first recorded as paying property taxes on this land in 1908. In about 1915, he and Wade divided the land into two nearly equal parcels (see Tract 3).

Ellis was living in District 9 as early as 1880, when he appears on the census listed as age 20 with an estimated birth year of 1860. He was working as a farm laborer and married to Adline [Mitchell], age 18, and they had a son, Frank, age 2. In the 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses the couple and several children are listed in the vicinity of the Cedars. Ellis paid poll taxes between 1885 and 1900 and then again in the 1920s.

Sometime before 1900, he and Addie established a home in the Cedars with their family. The 1900 and 1910 censuses list them with 6 children, but the names listed vary. No occupation is listed for Ellis in 1910. By 1920, the household was still large, 9 people in all, but the composition had changed considerably. Living with Ellis and Addie were 3 of their children: a son, Burton, age 20; a daughter, Sallie Mary, age 18; and another son, Richard, age 13. Burton appears to have been married to an 18-year-old female named Augusta Bell; Maggie (5 months) probably was their daughter. Sally Mary, daughter, is listed with the surname Coldwell, followed by an infant girl Evalina Coldwell (8 months). No other person with the surname Coldwell is listed as living with Ellis and Addie, but another child, Huston Quarles (8), a cousin, rounded out the household. Thus, in 1920, it appears as though Ellis and Addie’s three-room house was filled with children and grandchildren. Addie died in 1924; Ellis in 1928. No one with the surname Anderson shows up on the 1930 census in Cemetery Precinct, indicating that the family had moved by then.

Tract 3: Homer Gannon and Flora S. Gannon, 5 acres, all tillable; improved with 3-room house, barn, shed, half interest in well; purchased May 8, 1929, \$3,000 (Deed Book 75:32). The circumstances by which Gannon acquired the property are a bit clouded, but a 1929 affidavit of J.M. Cantrell states that this parcel was “part of Tract No. 1 of the Nelson Cowan land, which was sold to Ellis Anderson and Quil Wade, October 18, 1902 by the Chancery Court” and recorded in Minute Book X:553 [also written as Book R: 553]. The affidavit also states that Homer Gannon had been in possession of the land “for more than 25 years” (Deed Book 75:31). A deposition taken in 1932 sheds more light on Wade’s ownership (USA v Burton Anderson, et. al., No. 2110 Law, U. S. District Court, Middle Tennessee, Nashville Division, February 12, 1932). William Harlan testified that, at some undisclosed date, he “helped them [Ellis Anderson and Quil Wade] run the line and Wade had just a little bit more than Anderson because he said that he ought to have a little more on account of the graveyard being on his part of the land. . . . I remember that

the line run right across an old well and out to the railroad.” This court document also indicates that Ellis transferred title to 5 acres to Wade on February 25, 1915, and that Wade later sold the land to “a Mr. Leach who afterwards sold the same to Homer Gannon.”

Gannon and his wife are not listed on the 1930 census in Cemetery Precinct, having sold their property in 1929. However, the 1920 census shows the Gannons located on the Dixie Highway in the vicinity of the Cedars. Homer was then 33, and he and his wife had a 3-year-old son, also named Homer J. The 1900 census lists Homer, then 13, as the son of J. Andrew and M. Fannie “Gammon” living in District 9.

Tract 11: Working Peoples Aid & Labor Society, 1.0 acre, tillable, no improvements, purchased for \$208.73 (District Court of Middle Tennessee, Minute Book Z:472).

Depositions taken in 1933 to establish clear title indicate that J. H. Reed, president of the Nashville, Murfreesboro and Shelbyville Turnpike Company, sold the land to Working Peoples Aid & Labor Society in about 1908, but a deed was never recorded (U.S.A. vs Working Peoples Labor Aid Society, No. 2173, LAW, U.S. District Court, Nashville Division, Filed November 21, 1933). Presumably as part of clearing title, J.H. Reed also sold the same property to the Working Peoples Aid & Labor Society on March 12, 1929, for \$100.00 (Deed Book 74:176). This deed lists Aleck Malone and Will King as presidents of the society, and Rowena Hunter and Rowena Minter as trustees.

Tract 12: J.A. Ransom & R. F. Overall, 25.9 acres, three-quarters tillable, no improvements; sold for \$3,600 in 1931 (Deed Book 76:316).

### **H.H. Kerr Land, Inherited from Alice Jenkins Kerr**

Tract 14: Louise Harding Wade, 3.6 acres, half tillable; improved with a 3-room house; sold for \$800.00, November 12, 1930 (Book 76:136). Louise Harding Wade is identified as a widow. Elizabeth Kerr and H.H. Kerr’s other heirs had previously conveyed the land to Wade on November 21, 1929 (Book 74:463), most likely to clear title. No one by the name of Louise Harding Wade appears on the 1910, 1920, or 1930 census living in the vicinity of the Cedars, thus this property may have been rented.

Tracts 15, 24: Robert (and Madie) Avent.

Tract 15, 4.5 acres, half tillable, improved with a 3-room house; sold for \$800.00 on June 25, 1929, by Robert Avent and other heirs of the Eliza Avent and Andrew Avent Estate (Deed Book 75:155-56). In 1915, Elizabeth Kerr conveyed 2 1/3 acres, a portion of this tract, to Eliza Avent (Book 57:448), quitclaimed by H.H. Kerr’s heirs in 1930 to clear title (Book 75:153-54).

Tract 24, 1.9 acres, all tillable, improved with a 4-room house was sold by Robert and Madie Avent, husband and wife, for \$1,045.50 through condemnation (U.S. District Court, Middle Tennessee, Minute Book W:675).

Robert Avent first appears in District 9 on the 1900 census as one of 6 children living with Andrew and Eliza Avent; he was age 5 at that time. The 1910 census lists him as one of 4 children living with his mother, then widowed. His occupation is given as farm laborer working on the home farm. The 1920 census lists him as age 25, single, and living in the household of Albert Smith, also 25, and identified as Smith's brother-in-law. Albert was married to Robert's sister, Mary, and they had 3 young children. Another sister, Roewena Avent, age 20, also lived with Albert and Mary. The location of this household may have been on Tract 15, where the 3-room house sat; evidence for this speculation comes from the handwritten inventory accompanying Chandler's 1929 report, which identifies Tract 15 as belonging to Mary Avent Heirs. Supporting evidence comes from ownership of Tract 24, which was sold by Robert and his wife Madie, or Maidie, as she is identified in the 1930 census. This sale did not involve any other Avent heirs. It thus seems likely that Robert and Madie lived in the 4-room house on Tract 24. The 1930 census lists them in District 9 with 3 young children.

Andrew Avent, Robert's father (c.1848-[before 1910]), married Mary Eliza Smith on December 26, 1874. He might be the same Andrew Avent who worked at Stones River National Cemetery from 1878 to 1885. The 1900 census lists Andrew (52) and L. Mary (51) living in the vicinity of the Cedars with 6 children. His occupation is listed as farmer, and he owned his home. In 1901, H. H. Kerr sold 3 acres of land to Andrew, Mariah Slaughter, and Patsey Howard (husband, Ed Howard), the children of George Avent (Deed Book 46:76-77). According to this deed, George Avent had entered into an agreement with Kerr, date undetermined, to purchase the land over time. By the time of his death, in 1898, George Avent had paid Kerr \$50.00. In 1915, Eliza Avent, Andrew's wife, purchased 2 1/3 acres of land from Elizabeth W. Kerr, widow and executrix of H. H. Kerr's estate (Deed Book 57:448). Also in 1915, H.H. Kerr's heirs quitclaimed any interest in the property conveyed to Eliza Avent (Deed Book 75:153-54).

A George Avent, then age 55, is listed in the 1880 census, population schedule, as living in the vicinity of Stones River National Cemetery; the 1880 agriculture schedule also lists him as owning 4 acres in this vicinity, improved and in farm use. However, age discrepancies make it difficult to state with certainty that this person was Andrew's father. The 1880 population schedule is difficult to read, but, as transcribed, George Avent was a farmer and living with his wife, Ann, age 45, and three children: Patsy (20), Mary (5), and Andrew (1 month), possibly Patsy's son, but more research is necessary to establish lineage. In any case, if the ages given are correct, this Andrew Avent would have been only 20 years old in 1900. Still, the names Patsy and Mary indicate that they are two of the three children of George Avent to whom H.H. Kerr sold 3 acres in 1901

(Patsey and Mariah). It is possible that George Avent had an older child also named Andrew, the one who married Mary Eliza in 1874, but further research is necessary to sort out the lineage. (Complicating the picture, the 1870 census lists a George Avant, spelled with an “a”, age 21, a farm laborer, living in the vicinity of Stones River National Cemetery with Susey, age 22, presumably his wife. Since no children are listed with this couple, and the ages do not match up, it is logical to conclude that George Avent and George Avant were different people.)

Tracts 16, 23: Ed Howard. Tract 16 contained 1.9 acres, one-quarter tillable, no improvements; sold June 18, 1930, for \$150.00. Tract 23 contained 1.0 acre, all tillable and improved with a 3-room house, shed and 25 peach trees; also sold June 18, 1930, for \$750.00 (both deeds in Deed Book 76:7-9).

Ed Howard (1858-after 1940) married Patsy Avent in 1885. His occupation is listed as farmer on rented land. In 1905, the Howards purchased 1 acre of land, Tract 23, from Andrew and Eliza Avent (Book 46:77). On some undetermined date, Howard purchased the 1.9 acre parcel (Tract 16) from H.H. Kerr for \$25. No deed was ever created. To clear title in 1930, Elizabeth Kerr, et al, deeded this parcel to Ed Howard for the sum of \$1.00 to each (Deed Book 76:16-17).

The 1900 and 1910 censuses show Ed and Patsy living in the Cedars vicinity. Records of Stones River National Cemetery show that Ed worked there from 1915 to 1920. Patsy died in 1922. The 1930 census identifies Ed (or Edd) Howard, age 65, living in District 9 but not in Cemetery Precinct. The household included a family of 4 with the surname Tillage: Bracy, 36; Bertha, 38; Sammie, 16; and Preston, 10. Ed is further identified as father-in-law, indicating that he lived with his daughter, Bertha, married to Bracy Tillage, and their 2 children. In 1940, Ed, then 82, was still living with Bracy and Bertha Tillage on property located on Manson Pike.

Tract 17: Rufus and Ella Huddleston, husband and wife, 1.5 acres, half tillable, improved with a 2-room house, barn, and 14 peach trees; purchased for \$650.00 on June 18, 1929 (Book 75:91; see also quitclaim deed conveying title from the heirs of H. H. Kerr to Rufus and Ella Huddleston, Book 75:90). The Huddlestons acquired the property from Andy and Delia Johnson in 1918 (Book 60:612), and the Johnsons acquired the property from Elizabeth Kerr in 1909 (Book 60:593).

Rufus and Ella Huddleston (last name miswritten as Hudson) are listed on the 1910 census, living in the Cedars vicinity with their daughter, Susie, age 4. His occupation is listed as farmer, but records of Stones River National Cemetery indicate that he also worked there from April 1903 to October 1920. The 1920 census lists Ed, Ella, and Susanna still living in the Cedars, and his occupation as farmer. He also is identified as a homeowner. In 1930, Rufus and Ella were still living in District 9, but not in Cemetery Precinct. Rather, their location is listed as Cemetery Lane, suggesting that after selling their land in the Cedars they moved to a place near Greenland Graveyard. The 1940

census indicates that by then they had moved into Murfreesboro and were renting a home on South Walnut Street.

Tract 18: Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church, 1.9 acres, purchased for \$1,058.83 through condemnation (Book 79:128). In 1884, Samuel Grisham (Gresham) and John Clayton, deacons of Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church purchased this parcel from H. H. Kerr for \$25.00 (Book 27:458).

Tracts 19, 20, 26: Golena Anderson. Tract 19 contained 1.0 acre, improved with a 2-room house described as “worthless”; purchased for \$424.27 through condemnation. Tract 20 (aka William Waller Estate) contained 1.0 acre, partly tillable and improved with a 3-room house and 1 pear tree; purchased for \$672.40 through condemnation (Book 78:252). Tract 26 contained 2.3 acres, all tillable and improved with a 4-room house, a 2-room house, barn, shed, and well; purchased for \$1,100 on June 5, 1929 (Book 75:85-86). (See also Tract 27, John Mason.)

Census data indicate that Golena (also spelled Galena, Galana, and Dolena) was born between 1875 and 1879; her parents were William Waller and Fanny Rankins. She married Isaac W. Anderson around 1895. Isaac was born c. 1866. The 1880 census places him in District 9; at that time, he was 14 years old and living with his parents, Samuel, (41) and Mary (40), and a younger brother, William B. (12). In 1880, he was working as a farm laborer.

In 1898, Golena purchased 2.5 acres (Tract 26) from H. H. Kerr and his wife Lizzie (Book 39:397-98). In 1903, I[saac].W. Anderson separately purchased 1 acre (Tract 19) from E.P. and Lutie Leach (Book 73:492; see also Book 78:254-255). Isaac and Golena had 6 children; however, Isaac died young, probably between 1908 and 1909, leaving Golena to raise their family as a single parent. In 1910, Golena, by then a widow, was working as a farmer, and living with her 6 children, ages 2 to 16, in the Cedars vicinity. In 1920, 5 children, ages 11-25, were living with her. Golena paid taxes on her property in the Cedars from 1910 on.

Beginning in about 1913, Golena also paid taxes on Tract 20, the William Waller Estate. Property tax records show that William Waller, her father, regularly paid taxes on the land from 1898 through 1910. The 1900 census shows that William and Fannie (Rankins) Waller were living in the Cedars vicinity with 3 children: Duncan (17), L. Robert (12), and Porter (8). Waller is identified as owning his home and working as a day laborer. In 1910, William, Fannie, and 2 sons are still listed in the Cedars, living next to Golena Anderson and her family. Waller and his sons all listed their occupations as house carpenter.

In 1920, Elizabeth W. Kerr deeded Tract 20 to Golena Anderson and her siblings (Elnora Peyton, Leroy Waller, and Porter Waller), noting that she (Kerr) had receipts to verify that William Waller had paid H. H. Kerr \$75.00 for the land in about 1881 (Book 63:323; see also Book 78:252-53). Golena’s will, filed in 1930, states that she had “paid taxes on

this land for 17 years” (which property tax records more or less confirm) and was leaving it to her sons Sam and J.D. Anderson. Golena Anderson died on April 14, 1930.

A so-far-unexplained relationship associated with the Golena Anderson properties involves a woman named Katie (or Kitty) Williams, who is listed with Tract 19 on the handwritten inventory accompanying Chandler’s 1929 report. It is possible that she was living in the 2-room house described as “worthless.” Chandler’s 1929 report identifies this tract as the I.W. Anderson Estate (see above). The 1910 census lists a Kitty Wilson living in the Cedars with her husband Henry, a son-in-law, Willie D., and a boarder, Jim Rankins, 65 and widowed. In 1920, Kitty was still in the Cedars, listed as head of a household that also contained Jim Rankin, 70, identified as her uncle. Since Fannie Waller’s maiden name was Rankins, Kitty probably was related to Golena Anderson through her mother, but further research is necessary to sort out the lineage. Also complicating the picture, a Kittie Williams, identified as the wife of Hance Williams, sold a half-acre parcel to the U.S. government for \$150 on March 29, 1930 (Book 76:137). This deed indicates that Elizabeth Kerr conveyed the land to Williams in 1912 by a deed recorded in Book 54:604, and H.H. Kerr’s heirs quitclaimed the same property to Williams in 1929 (Book 74:529). It appears as though E.P. Leach and Elizabeth Kerr respectively sold the same land to I.W. Anderson and Kittie Williams at different times.

Tract 21: Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church, 1.0 acre, purchased for \$1,000 on April 1, 1930 (Book 76:62-63). John Swift, George Hutchinson, Henry Dickeson, Henry Blackman, and William Greer, deacons and trustees of Mt. Olivet Church, purchased this parcel from H. H. Kerr in 1884 (Book 27:378).

Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church purchased land from W.A. Hopkins in March 1931 (Book 76:163-64) to relocate the church building to a location in the Bottom.

Tract 22: Elnora Peyton [sister Golena Anderson], 12.1 acres, all rough, no improvements, purchased for \$1,283.40 through condemnation (Book 79:126). In 1911, Elnora purchased 8 acres from Elizabeth Kerr for the sum of \$35 (Book 69:183). In 1921, she purchased an additional 4.1 acres from Elizabeth Kerr for \$25.00 (book and page number missing).

Census data indicate that Elnora Peyton was born about 1872 to William Waller and Fanny Rankins Waller. She married Captain Ralph Peyton (1872-1922), and they had 7 children. In 1900 the family was living in Nashville, Ward 2. By 1920, Captain and Elnora had moved to Chicago, and their 4 youngest children were living at home. In 1930, Elnora was still living in Chicago, where she died on June 22, 1946.

Tract 25: Sallie Bass and Husband Percy Bass, 3.0 acres, half tillable, improved with a cabin and shed; sold for \$800.00 on May 8, 1929 (Book 75:88-89). The deed of sale appears with a quitclaim deed whereby Elizabeth Kerr, Harry H. Kerr, Jr., and Katherine Kerr Riggs, as the “remaindermen under the will of H. H. Kerr, deceased, of record in Will

Book 2, page 60,” conveyed title to Sallie Bass. Why a quitclaim deed was required is puzzling because an earlier deed (Book 62:460) indicates that Elizabeth Kerr conveyed the 3.0 acres to Sallie Bass on March 14, 1919.

Death records indicate that Sallie Bass was born January 3, 1880, to John Wade and Mary Wade. The 1910 census lists John (72) and Mary (63) Wade living in the vicinity of the Cedars with a grandson, age 16. At that time, Mary worked at home as a washerwoman. In 1920, Sallie and Percy Bass are listed as living in the Cedars with Sallie’s mother, Mary. Even though Sallie had purchased the property in 1919, they are listed as renters. At that time, Percy was working at a lumberyard, Sallie was taking in washing at home, and Mary cooked for a private family. In 1930, Sallie and Percy were still living in the Cedars, although they had sold their property in 1929. In any case, at around the same time, Sallie purchased land on Nashville Highway from W.A. Hopkins next door to Ebenezer Primitive Baptist Church at its new location in the Bottom (Book 75:329). Percy died February 11, 1936; Sallie died March 31, 1945.

Tract 27: John Mason, 1.0 acre, half tillable and improved with a shed; purchased for \$194.40 through condemnation; see U.S.A. vs. Golena Anderson, et al, No. 2108 LAW, U.S. District Court, Nashville Division, October 18, 1932 (Minute Book X:722).

In the condemnation suit to establish ownership of this one-acre plot, John Mason testified that, “In the year of the big flood, in 1902, I went onto this place . . . and took possession of it.” He further stated that, “Right after I went there in 1902, I began to get up rocks off of the place, and I took these rocks and built a fence all around it. It took me two or three years, working at odd times, to build this fence.” Mason also stated that his house burned down in about 1929. Will Harding, identified as living at “the Cemetery,” vouched for Mason, stating that Mason claimed the property “right after the flood in 1902. About the first of April.” Harding further divulged that a Margaret Lillard and her two oldest children “used to live on that place, but they left there before he [Mason] moved onto it. They have not been seen or heard from since, that I know of, any how they have never been back to the Cemetery.” There being no recorded deed conveying the property from Lillard to Mason, the District Court accepted the depositions of Mason and Harding as sufficient proof that Mason’s claim of ownership was valid. The court further found that H.H. Kerr had deeded this plot to Margaret Lillard sometime prior to 1902, but the deed was never recorded, and concluded that Margaret Lillard had given the land to Mason. (U.S.A. vs. Golena Anderson, et al, No. 2108 Law, U.S. District Court, Nashville Division, October 18, 1932). John Mason also appears to have paid property taxes on this tract in 1909 and from 1920 through 1926. Chain of title back to Kerr not yet established, although the condemnation lawsuit indicates that Golena Anderson also claimed ownership of this tract.

John Mason is listed on the 1910 and 1920 censuses as living in the Cedars. In 1910, he was 52, widowed, and listed his occupation as farmer. His household included two sons,



a daughter, a grandson, and a boarder by the name of Mary Anderson, age 72. In 1920, his age is given as 69 and he is identified as widowed and farming rented land. His household included the same grandson and a granddaughter-in-law. His name does not appear on the 1930 census in Cemetery Precinct.

Tract 28: John Swift Estate, 3.0 acres, all tillable; improved with a cabin, shed, and 6 fruit trees; no purchase or deed information conveying the property to the U.S. government has been discovered to date. On the handwritten inventory accompanying Chandler's 1929 report, the name Frank Swift is associated with this parcel. In 1908 John and Annie Swift purchased 2 acres of land from H.P. and Hattie Rodgers (Book 49:194-95). This is the same property that Hattie Rodgers ("col.") purchased from H. H. and Lizzie W. Kerr on June 21, 1899 (Book 40:62). How the Swifts obtained the other acre is unknown.

A John Swift is named as a trustee on the 1884 deed conveying land to Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church (Book 27:378). The 1910 census lists John Swift, age 65, as living in the Cedars with his wife, Annie (50) and a son (3). His occupation is listed as farmer. His name does not appear on the 1900, 1920, or 1930 census in this vicinity.

Tracts 29, 32: Nannie Bell Black (nee Cowan). Tract 29, 1.0 acre, tillable, improved with a 2-room house, and Tract 32, 1.0 acre, tillable, no improvements, both purchased for \$450.00 on April 29, 1929 (Book 75:156-57). Black acquired both parcels from her father, Isaac Cowan, who acquired the land from Josephine Orr as evidenced by a 1920 quitclaim deed wherein James E. Orr conveyed title to Black (Book 65:191). The chain of title from Orr to Kerr has not been established, but it could be part of the 12.25 acres that Ed Orr purchased from H.H. Kerr (see Tracts 33, 39).

Nannie Bell Black appears to be the same person listed on the 1910 census as Annie Blackman, age 40, widowed with 2 young children; she is further identified as the daughter of and living with Isaac Cowan, 51, farmer. Because Black's 2 tracts bookend Tracts 30 and 31, owned by Thaddeus Cowan and Isabella Burke, who were brother and sister, there is a presumed relationship, but further research is necessary to establish kinship.

Tract 30: Thaddeus Cowan, 1.0 acre, tillable, no improvements; sold for \$80.00 on April 25, 1929 (Book 75:84). The deed indicates that Thaddeus purchased this acre of land from "Ed Orr and wife, and H.H. Kerr" with a deed recorded in Book 30:88.

Thaddeus and Isabella Cowan are listed on the 1870 census, ages 6 and 8 respectively, living in District 9 with Eliza Cowan, age 35 and head of household, who worked as a farm laborer. "Thaddeious" also appears on the 1880 census, age 14, living at home in District 9. He is identified racially as mulatto, and despite his young age listed as head of household, single, and working as a farm laborer. Others living in the household included his mother, Elizabeth (or Eliza), age 40, sister Isabella, age 16, and a 3-year-old girl named Louisa Cowan. Thaddeus and Isabella also appear in the same household in 1920.

At this point, the household consisted of four people: Thaddeus (58), Isabella Burke (60), Florence Tilford (28), and Lewis Burke (21).

Tract 31: Isabella Burke, .5 acre, tillable, no improvements; sold for \$40.00 on June 11, 1929 (Book 75:87-88); see Tract 30. The deed further identifies Isabella as the widow of Thomas Burke, who acquired the half acre from Edd Orr and wife Josephine on April 8, 1888, with the deed recorded in Book 30:90. To clear title, the heirs of H.H. Kerr also conveyed, by quitclaim deed, to Isabella Burke, Lewis Burke, Florence Smith, and the remaining heirs of Thomas Burke any remaining interest they legally held to this property (Book 75:86-87).

Tracts 33, 39: Ed[win] Orr Estate, 5.5 and 1.6 acres, mostly rough, no improvements; both tracts sold for \$625.00 on April 16, 1930 (Book 76:5-7). The deed of sale lists the heirs as Charles Orr (w/Susie), Edith Orr James (h/Wash), Josie Orr Coleman (h/Eugene), and James E. Orr. In 1913, Elizabeth Kerr, widow of and executrix for the H. H. Kerr Estate, deeded 12.25 acres to Ed Orr “in consideration of Fifty dollars paid to H. H. Kerr in his life time, evidenced by receipts held” by Orr (Book 63:431).

Ed Orr, born 1854 in Alabama, died on July 24, 1918. He is the same Edwin Orr who married Josephine Cowan in 1875. On the 1870 census for District 9, he is listed as Edward Orr, Jr., age 15, the eldest of four children living in the household of Edward (56) and Rachael (30?) Orr. Edward Sr. was born in North Carolina, Rachael in Alabama, as were all of their children. At that time, Edward, Rachael, Edward Jr., and 2 other sons, ages 13 and 9, were working as farm laborers.

The households of Edwin and Edwin J. are listed consecutively in District 9 on the 1880 census. At that time, Edwin, age given as 62, and Rachel, age given as 44, were living in one household with their youngest daughter, Harriett Wade (17) and a 1-year-old child, Mattie Wade. His occupation is listed as farmer. Edwin Jr., then 24, also a farmer, and, Josephine, 22, lived next door with a son, Charley, age 2. The 1880 agriculture schedule lists Edwin Orr (father or son not disclosed) as owning 2 acres of land (1 acre woodland) with \$500 of improvements and livestock valued at \$35.

Ed (35) and Josie (33) Orr appear on the 1900 census living in District 9 with 3 children: Bessie (12), Harvey (9), and Henry (6). Both Ed and Josie are identified as day laborers and renting property, although it seems likely that they actually owned land by then. In 1910, Edward and Josephine Orr are listed as living in the Cedars vicinity with 2 sons, 2 daughters, and 1 grandson. Edward is identified as a farmer; both sons were working outside the home as laborers. In 1920, Josephine, age 64, is listed as widowed and head of a household that included her eldest son, Charles (39), his wife Susie (30), and a grandson, Henry (12). Charles is identified as a farmer, Susie as a cook for a private family. The Orrs do not appear on the 1930 census as living in Cemetery Precinct.

Tract 34: Heirs of Samuel Gresham, also spelled Grisham, 34.0 acres, some tillable; improved with a 4-room house and barn; purchased for \$3,696.85. Land acquisition

involved establishing divided interests among 4 living children: Lucy Gresham Fowler, Sallie Gresham Harlan, Elizabeth Gresham Woodson, and Samuel Gresham (see Book 78:249-52 and Book 79:129-30, 131-32). The handwritten inventory accompanying Chandler's 1929 report identifies the 34-acre tract with one of the children, Sallie Gresham Harlan, suggesting that she lived here, which the 1920 census supports. In 1872, H.H. Kerr sold 40 acres, being this tract and Tract 35, to Sam Grisham for \$1,000 (Book 18:273-74).

The 1870 census lists Sam Grisham, then age 52, as living in District 7 with a household that included 9 other people: Amanda, 26, presumably his wife, and 5 children ages 2-10. Another family of three—Edward Grisham (25), Susie (22), and Alice (6 mo.) also were part of the household. Edward may have been a son by a former marriage. Both Sam and Edward worked as blacksmiths. Amanda's occupation is listed as "farmhand."

The 1880 census lists Samuel Gresham, age 60, and his wife, Martha?, age 39 as living in District 9 with 9 or 10 children: John (19), ~~Daniel (18)~~ [lined out], Rufus (14), Rebecca (13), Lucy (10), Lizzie (9), Mary (7), Martha (4), Sallie (2) and Samuel A. (10 months). Samuel's occupation is listed as blacksmith. The 1880 census, agricultural schedule, lists Samuel Gresham as owning 25 acres of land in the vicinity of Stones River National Cemetery, with improvements valued at \$400, farming implements at \$25, and livestock at \$150.

The 1899 property ownership map identifies Samuel Gresham as the owner of this tract, which then was 39.87 acres in size. He paid property taxes on the land from 1885 through 1899, and thereafter property taxes were paid by his estate through 1928, suggesting that Samuel died in about 1900.

The 1900 and 1910 censuses do not list anyone with the surname of Gresham living in this vicinity. However, the 1920 census lists a Sallie Hollins, age 38 and widowed, living in the Cedars. The age correlates with daughter Sallie, age 2, listed on the 1880s census. Her occupation is listed as farmer on rented land. Listed with her are 2 sons, ages 18 and 16, listed a farm laborers on the home farm and a daughter, age 14, attending school. Neither the names of Gresham, Hollins, or Harlan appear in Cemetery Precinct in 1930.

Tract 35: Will and Mary Freeman, 5.1 acres, part tillable, improved with a 4-room house, barn, and shed; sold for \$800.00 on June 25, 1929 (Book 75:29-30). The handwritten inventory accompanying Chandler's 1929 report associates a Polly Smith with this tract. However, Will and Mary Freeman's names are listed on the deed of sale, as they are in Chandler's 1929 report. Given the location of this tract, part of the Samuel Gresham tract on the 1899 property ownership map, it is possible that Mary Freeman was the married name of Mary Gresham, one of the Gresham children listed on the 1880 census. However, an affidavit of A. Everett dated October 25, 1929, states that Will and Mary Freeman obtained the property from Azariah Johnson and had been in possession of the property for more than 50 years (Book 75:28).

The surname Freeman does not appear on the 1900, 1910, or 1920 censuses in this vicinity. In the 1930 census, Will and Mary Freeman appear in District 7, and Polly Smith, identified as Will's mother, is listed as living with them. Up until that time she may have lived in the house on Tract 35, but her name does not appear on the 1910 or 1920 census in this vicinity.

Tract 36: Robert Steelman, 49.8 acres, half tillable, improved with barn, cabin, and shed; sold for \$5000.00 (Book 75:85).

Tract 37: M.R. Harding et al. (Giles S. Harding Estate), 43 acres, half tillable, improved with 2-room house, barn; purchased for \$4,294.00 on November 25, 1929 (Book 76:61). G.S. Harding purchased this 43-acre parcel from Hardy and Annie G. Selph in 1901 (Book 42:194).

### **Other Families Identified with the Cedars**

William Holland (aka Harlan, Harland). In November 1875 William Holland indentured himself to purchase a 3-acre parcel from L.S. Doolittle, superintendent of Stones River National Cemetery (Book 21:277-78, 280-81). This parcel was not included in the initial acreage acquired for the park, but Holland and his family were part of the Cedars.

Holland served in the 111<sup>th</sup> USCT during the Civil War, and the of records of Stones River National Cemetery indicate that he worked there from 1878 to 1908 under the name of William Harland.

The 1870 census lists a William Harlan, age 40, as part of Doolittle's household and working as a farm laborer. Other members of Doolittle's household included his wife Anna and daughter Edith; W.B. Doolittle (24), identified as a farmer; David Harlan (35), farm laborer; Solon Russel (33), sawyer; and Mariah Posey (85), "at home." The household was unusually diverse: L.S. and W.B. Doolittle, both white, were born in Pennsylvania; Anna was born in Scotland; daughter Edith was born in Indiana; William and David Harlan, both black, were born in Kentucky; Solon Russel, white, also was born in Kentucky; and Mariah Posey was born in Africa. The household of Green Posey, presumably her son, appears to have been adjacent to the Doolittle household.

Interestingly, Holland/Harland/Harlan does not appear on the 1880 census, population schedule in the vicinity of Stones River National Cemetery, nor does his name appear on the 1880 agriculture census. However, property tax records indicate that he paid taxes on his 3 acres in 1878, 1879, and 1880.

In 1900, William Harlin, age 78, widowed, is listed as a householder in District 9 in the vicinity of Stones River National Cemetery. His occupation is listed as farmer, and he owned his home. Listed as living with him are: daughter Josephine (27), son William (25), daughter [daughter-in-law] Della (24), two grandsons, one granddaughter, and

James Beaman (20), who is identified as a servant. Josephine, Della, and Williams all worked as day laborers.

William Holland died in 1909. The 1910 census lists his son William as a householder on Nashville Pike in the vicinity of Van Cleve Lane. Then age 36, William is further identified as a farmer and married for 10 years to Della, 36, with no children. Two nieces, ages 9 and 11, and two nephews, ages 13 and 17, also are listed in the household. Both nephews are further identified as laborers on the home farm. Records of Stones River National Cemetery indicate that a W.L. Harland worked there from April 1903 to March 1906.

The 1920 census does not list anyone with the surname of Holland, Harland, or Harlan living in the Cedars. Nor do these names show up on the 1930 census in Cemetery Precinct.

The park interprets Holland's life through a wayside exhibit, ranger-guided tours, and an online web exhibit. In 2001, the park purchased the Holland land from his descendants. William Holland and William Harlan, his grandson, a veteran of World War I, are buried on this tract.

George Hutchinson. Hutchinson does not appear as a landowner on the 1929 land acquisition map, but in 1905, Andrew Avent and Ed and Patsy Howard sold 1 acre of land to him for \$25.00 (Book 46:79). The deed indicates that this parcel was subdivided from land conveyed to Andrew and Patsy by H.H. Kerr in 1901.

A George Hutcherson appears on the 1870 census, age 26, a farmer, living in the household of Demo\_\_? Overall, a 45-year-old woman. Lucy Hutcherson, age 22, also lived in this household. In 1880, George (33) and Lucy (30) Hutchinson are listed in their own household. George's occupation is listed as government employee, and records of Stones River National Battlefield indicate that he worked there from 1878 to 1920. Hutchinson also is named as a trustee on the 1884 deed conveying land to Mt. Olivet Missionary Baptist Church (Book 27:378).

The 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses also place George Hutchinson in the vicinity of the Cedars. In 1900, his age is given at 57; he worked as day laborer and rented. His wife's name is listed as Martha, age 29, and they had been married about 5 years. The 1910 census shows George (68) and Martha (38) (last name miswritten as "Hugenson") still living in the Cedars. His occupation is listed as "laborer at cemetery." The 1910 census also indicates that this was George's third marriage, Martha's second. In 1920, George, age 65, is listed as widowed and still working as a laborer at the national cemetery. It is likely that he died before 1930 and that the 1 acre sold to him by Andrew Avent and Ed and Patsy Howard was recombined with their property.

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## **OVERVIEW OF NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY AND PREHISTORY IN AND AROUND STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD**

Kelsey Lamkin

Stones River National Battlefield is a memorial honoring the rich history of the landscape on which it is found. While this has been primarily through the memorialization of the Civil War, recent years have seen the area expand to include voices that have historically been marginalized from the conversation of the landscape's significance. For example, slavery and its importance in the Civil War, as well as the presence of African Americans in the troops, have been adopted into the discourse. However, one area of interest that still needs attention is the importance of the area to Native Americans and to the park visitor's understanding of Native American history in the area. The use of the landscape for hunting grounds, the Trail of Tears detachment through the area, and the Native Americans' presence in the Civil War have largely been absent from the Battlefield's narrative. By incorporating the history of Native Americans in the Middle Tennessee area, the Battlefield will become an arena to learn much more about the history of our region and, in the process, become more likely to attract a more inclusive audience and create a deeper and more compelling retelling of the history of the area.

## Importance of Studying Connection between People and Landscape

Anthropologists have long understood the important connection between peoples and their landscapes. In *Senses of Place*, contributing anthropologists illuminate the fluidity of perceptions regarding places and homes. A more evolved perspective of landscapes realizes them as “cultural [processes] that [are] dynamic, multi-sensual, and constantly oscillating between a ‘foreground’ of everyday lived emplacement and a ‘background’ of social potential.”<sup>74</sup> A group’s perception of “the landscape unfolds in language, names, stories, myths, and rituals,” which are then transformed “into shared symbols and ultimately link people to a sense of common history and individual identity.”<sup>75</sup> One passage in particular encapsulates the exact purpose of researching the Stones River National Battlefield:

Places capture the complex emotional, behavioral, and moral relationships between people and their territory. They represent people, their actions, and their interactions and as such become malleable memorials for negotiating and renegotiating human relationships...Talking about place becomes a euphemistic way of communicating important messages, such as reminders of social obligations that have gone unfulfilled or of moral responsibilities to feed and care for kin.<sup>76</sup>

The goal of this research is to shed light on the ways in which Stones River Battlefield is understood and thought of by people of various backgrounds, and the following evidence will reveal the significance of Middle Tennessee to Native Americans.

## Traditional Dialogue of Stones River National Battlefield

The Stones River National Battlefield has historically revolved around the Civil War. Elizabeth Goetsch discusses the traditional single-mindedness of the park in her thesis “All Could Not Help But Feel It: A Cultural Landscape Approach to History at Stones River National Battlefield.” In her thesis, Goetsch reveals that early interpretation of the site was a direct result of the park’s federal mandate. “After acquiring the land in 1927, the War Department developed the place as a site for remembering the events that took place on December 31, 1862 to January 2, 1863.”<sup>77</sup> The park was modeled on other Civil War parks, such as the Shiloh National Military Park and the Chattanooga National Military Park, and often used the plans and photographs from sites such as these extensively in the formation of the Stones River Park. The park strove to focus on the history of the battle of Stones River rather than be a recreational attraction. Stones River

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<sup>74</sup> Feld, Steven & Keith H. Basso (Eds). (1996). *Senses of Place*. Ed. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press. 6.

<sup>75</sup> Feld and Basso 168.

<sup>76</sup> Feld and Basso 168.

<sup>77</sup> Goetsch, Elizabeth K. (2011). “All Could Not Help But Feel It: A Cultural Landscape Approach to History at Stones River National Battlefield.” Master’s thesis, Middle Tennessee State University. 52.

National Battlefield reached out to the community through radio and programs in an effort to bring visitors in, but such efforts were largely aimed at the white middle class.<sup>78</sup>

It was not until the 1950s that the Stones River National Battlefield underwent significant modifications. During this period, Stones River began implementing “the National Park Service’s ‘Mission 66,’ an initiative designed to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service. The Mission 66 work coincided with the centennial anniversary of the Civil War as well as the Civil Rights Movement.”<sup>79</sup> However, the park neglected to incorporate the Civil Rights Movement into the dialogue. For decades, the park focused solely on the battle and paid no significant attention to the African American soldiers who served, or the over 4 million African American slaves who were freed, nor to slavery’s connection with the Civil War.<sup>80</sup> Regarding these omissions, park managers made it clear that they “did not see the battlefield as a place to discuss civil rights, the causes or effects of the Civil War, or even the racial nature of the landscape surrounding the battlefield.”<sup>81</sup> Stones River National Battlefield was not unique in its exclusion of race and slavery. Goetsch reveals that scholarship of the 1950s and 1960s, including Ann Wilson Willet’s 1958 work “A History of Stones River National Military Park,” completely disregarded the racial significance of the landscape.<sup>82</sup> It was not until the twenty-first century that the park began to shift its focus from patriotism and the Stones River battle and began to incorporate the causes of the Civil War, allowing for the consideration of the war’s relation to slavery.<sup>83</sup>

As the Stones River National Battlefield made efforts to be more inclusive of the different histories and stories associated with the landscape, it still falls short regarding Native American history. Its current exhibits offer almost no information on the history of Native Americans in Murfreesboro and Rutherford County, except for a way-side memorializing the detachment of the Trail of Tears that went through the area. Recent administrations have worked to amend this historical oversight.

### **Middle Tennessee Archaeological Finds**

Many people are unaware that the Middle Tennessee area has a long history of Native American activity. Clovis points have been discovered in Tennessee which date to the Pleistocene period around 10,000 to 9,000 B.C.<sup>84</sup> The Nashville Basin is also considered to have possibly been

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<sup>78</sup> Goetsch 56.

<sup>79</sup> Goetsch 57.

<sup>80</sup> Goetsch 59.

<sup>81</sup> Goetsch 58.

<sup>82</sup> Goetsch 58.

<sup>83</sup> Goetsch 62-63.

<sup>84</sup> Walthall, John A. *Prehistoric Indians of the Southeast: Archaeology of Alabama and the Middle South* (1980). Alabama: University of Alabama Press 30.

along the “route of diffusion of [brushed limestone-tempered] pottery types into the Copena territory.”<sup>85</sup> Excavations at sites such as Bledsoe station and Old Stone Fort in Tennessee also link the Middle Tennessee area to Native American history. Joseph Jones tells of his findings at Old Stone Fort in his work *The Aboriginal Mound Builders of Tennessee* (1869). Jones writes that the

walls of the fort have been formed of loose rocks and stones gathered from the bed of the river. The gateway of the fort, which opens toward the neck of land between the two branches of the river, is carefully protected by an inner line of works, so constructed that the enemy entering the fort would be received in a blind pouch or bag. Directly in front of the gateway of the fort, and about half a mile distant, stands a remarkable mound, the structure of which is similar to that of the walls of the fort, being composed of rocks, none of which exceed a foot and a half in diameter. This oblong mound is 600 feet in circumference and forty feet in height, and the labor of collecting and depositing the loose rocks by hand must have been considerable.<sup>86</sup>

Jones writes in awe of how,

[the] ancient inhabitants of Tennessee also left singular paintings upon the rocks, representing the sun and moon. These paintings occupy the face of perpendicular cliffs on the Harpeth, Tennessee, French Broad, Duck and Cumberland Rivers. The paintings are executed with red ochre, upon high, inaccessible walls of rock overhanging the water, and were, without doubt, devoted to sacred purposes, and were emblematic of the sun, the god of the aborigines. The paintings of the sun on the rocks on Big Harpeth River, about three miles below the road which crosses this stream from Nashville to Charlotte, can be seen for a distance of four miles, and it is probable that the worshippers of the sun assembled before this high place for the performance of their sacred rights. At Buffalo Gap, on the same stream, where the ancient trail of the buffalo is still distinct, a line of buffaloes is painted upon the cliff rock which overhangs from above, and is capable of sheltering a thousand men.<sup>87</sup>

Joseph Jones discovered another mound “about one hundred feet in diameter and about ten feet high, on the eastern bank of the Cumberland River, opposite the city of Nashville, and just across from the mouth of Lick Branch,” in which “a large sacrificial vase, or altar, forty-three inches in diameter, composed of a mixture of clay and river shells” was found.<sup>88</sup>

Old Stone Fort, near Manchester, Tennessee was investigated again in 1966 and is thought to have been “constructed over a period of several centuries, dating from A.D. 30 to A.D. 430.

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<sup>85</sup> Walthall 128.

<sup>86</sup> Jones, Joseph. (Apr., 1869). “The Aboriginal Mound Builders of Tennessee.” *The American Naturalist* Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 57-73. Published by: The University of Chicago Press for The American Society of Naturalists 59.

<sup>87</sup> Jones 60.

<sup>88</sup> Jones 68.

These dates indicate that Old Stone Fort was built by local late middle Woodland peoples closely related to Copena and other neighboring cultures.”<sup>89</sup> Old Stone Fort near Manchester, Tennessee was “discovered” in 1966 by Charles Faulkner. Faulkner, of the University of Tennessee, surmised that “the primary use of [stone and earth wall enclosures] appears to have been to form a barrier across the open end of a horseshoe-shaped area bounded by the step gorges of small streams.”<sup>90</sup> “Radiocarbon dates on charcoal samples from the fill of some of the walls suggest that the Old Stone Fort was constructed over a period of several centuries, dating from A.D. 30 to A.D. 430. These dates indicate that Old Stone Fort was built by local late middle Woodland peoples closely related to Copena and other neighboring cultures.”<sup>91</sup>

In their work *Gordontown: Salvage Archaeology at a Mississippian Town in Davidson County, Tennessee*, Michael C. Moore and Emanuel Breitburg cite William Edward Myer’s work with Gordontown. According to Moore and Breitburg, Myer uncovered floors, fire-bowls, utensils, and many stone-box graves in his excavations.<sup>92</sup> Artifacts were found in some of these graves, including “a wide range of ceramic vessels, along with a few lithic and bone items.”<sup>93</sup> Negative painted plates were discovered at Gordontown which were concluded to be inspired by Angel Negative Painted plates. The site’s “ceramic assemblage is comparable to ceramics from other later Mississippian sites in the Nashville area.”<sup>94</sup>

Michael C. Moore, Emily Breitburg, K. E. Smith, and M. B. Trubitt expand further on the archaeological findings at Gordontown to make the case that Gordontown’s mounds and residences render the site an example of Mississippian variation. In addition to being a recognizable Mississippian town, “Gordontown exemplifies this relationship as a town established on fertile upland soils where residents could successfully grow maize (and other crops) within or adjacent to the immediate site area.”<sup>95</sup> It is thought that “Gordontown’s occupation dates to the Thruston regional period (A.D. 1250-1450), a time when populations at this and other sites in the middle Cumberland River Valley were stressed and social conflict was a factor.”<sup>96</sup> Archaeological evidence reveal that “[the] Gordontown population was vulnerable to

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<sup>89</sup> Walthall 146.

<sup>90</sup> Walthall 145.

<sup>91</sup> Walthall 146.

<sup>92</sup> Moore, Michael C., and Emanuel Breitburg. (1998). *Gordontown: Salvage Archaeology at a Mississippian Town in Davidson County, Tennessee*. Ed. Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Division of Archaeology Research Series No. 11 6.

<sup>93</sup> Moore and Breitburg 45.

<sup>94</sup> Moore and Breitburg 127.

<sup>95</sup> Moore, M. C., Beitburg, E., Smith, K. E., & Trubitt, M. B. (2006). “One Hundred Years of Archaeology at Gordontown: A Fortified Mississipiann Town in Middle Tennessee.” *Southeastern Archaeology*, 25(1) 106.

<sup>96</sup> Moore, Breitburg, Smith, & Trubitt 89.

various types of trauma including accidental fractures or the death of individuals as a result of violence that may have included scalping, decapitation, or disarticulation.”<sup>97</sup>

There are several other sites which provide evidence of Native Americans’ long history in Middle Tennessee. In 1997, the city of Brentwood identified evidence of Native Americans at the construction site of the new Brentwood Library in Williamson County, including “intact stone-box graves, probable domestic structures, refuse-filled pits, and (at least two) palisade lines”...”confirm[ing] that the city of Brentwood had begun erecting their new library on top of a substantial Mississippian period town.”<sup>98</sup> “In 1997, after

four months of salvage excavations, the Division of Archaeology had recorded complete or partial post patterns for 67 structures ... These [included human remains which] were removed by the consultant and transferred to the Division of Archaeology for analysis. Upon completion of the analysis, the Division held these remains for reburial in consultation with the Chickasaw Nation. On June 11, 2004, representatives from the Chickasaw Nation reburied the removed individuals on the Brentwood Library grounds.”<sup>99</sup>

**The Brentwood Library** site is regarded as an example of a typical Mississippian town of the period. The evidence reveals that the town was

established on a low ridge toe and broad terrace overlooking the Little Harpeth River. This town was occupied over an approximate 150-year period during the 14th and mid-15th centuries. Substantial cemeteries were established along the ridge toe, with domestic dwellings built along the ridge and terrace settings. The vast number of structures uncovered across the library construction zone illustrates an active settlement with (at least several) hundreds of residents. The residents were protected by a palisade wall that enclosed the primary habitation zone. Such walls, assumed to be defensive in nature, are evident at virtually all other Thruston phase mound centers and towns across the Middle Cumberland study area ... The presence of these various sites substantiates the Little Harpeth River valley as a locus of Mississippian period activity.<sup>100</sup>

Michelle Willard’s article “Eagleville Site Dates Back 5,000 Years” discusses another Native American archaeological site in Middle Tennessee. The article reveals Magnolia Valley, an equestrian farm in Eagleville, was the site of a temporary Native American camp. Dr. Peres and her team of students discovered an earth oven “located next to what Dr. Peres thinks was a dugout,” which “was about two feet across and filled with charcoal and other debris left by the

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<sup>97</sup> Moore, Breitburg, Smith, & Trubitt 99.

<sup>98</sup> Moore, Michael C. (2005). “The Brentwood Library Site: A Mississippian Town on the Little Harpeth River, Williamson County, Tennessee.” Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Archaeology, Research Series No. 15 1.

<sup>99</sup> Moore 35.

<sup>100</sup> Moore 279-280.

cooking process.”<sup>101</sup> The article reports that “Peres said evidence from the two features was dated to 5,300 years ago, placing them squarely in the Archaic period.”<sup>102</sup> Dr. Peres believes her findings indicates the presence of Native Americans as late as AD 1200, but further “investigation is needed to figure out how extensive the occupation was.”<sup>103</sup> The article further reports that Mary Tune, the owner of the land, “did some digging in 2008 and found artifacts that suggested humans lived on the farm in the Paleo Era, which dates roughly from 10,000 to 20,000 years ago, to the Archaic Era, which dates roughly from 3,000 to 10,000 years ago.”<sup>104</sup>

Beahm and Smith provide more archaeological evidence in their article “Negative Painted Plates and Bowls from the MiddleCumberland Region of Tennessee.” The Tennessee-Cumberland region is notable for the presence of negative painted ceramics. As of 2013,

twenty-three Angel Negative Painted sherds or vessels have been identified from at least four and possibly as many as six Mississippian sites in the Nashville Basin. With the exception of Travellers’ Rest and Inglehame, each of the sites are large towns with one or more platform mounds.<sup>105</sup>

Of these artifacts, “over half of the known examples derive from excavation at the Castalian Springs Mounds located northeast of Nashville in Sumner County, Tennessee.”<sup>106</sup> Brick Church Pike Mounds, located in Davidson County, Tennessee, is one of the numerous sites of Angel Negative Painted plates in the Nashville area. During a 1997 excavation, “a single rim sherd was recovered ... at Travellers’ Rest, a large probably palisaded town site in Davidson County.”<sup>107</sup> The article highlights the importance of this area by reminding that

[while] the Angel site clearly remains the preeminent center of production for negative painted plates in the Mississippian world, the geographic distribution of negative painted plates also clearly includes a significant representation in the Middle Cumberland region between about A.D. 1250-1350 --and potentially in the Tennessee River valley as well on a similar timeframe.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Willard, Michelle. (March 13, 2015). “Eagleville Site Dates Back 5,000 Years.” *Daily News Journal. Rutherford County Tennessee Historical Society*.

<sup>102</sup> Willard.

<sup>103</sup> Willard.

<sup>104</sup> Willard.

<sup>105</sup> Beahm, Emily L. and Kevin E. Smith. (2013). “Negative Painted Plates and Bowls from the MiddleCumberland Region of Tennessee.” *Tennessee Archaeology* 7(1) 86.

<sup>106</sup> Beahm and Smith 86.

<sup>107</sup> Beahm and Smith 86.

<sup>108</sup> Beahm and Smith 98.

Additional research from Smith, along with J. V. Miller, asserts that Nashville, Tennessee has been home to numerous discoveries of large stone effigies. Such effigies have also been found in such notable places as Cahokia, Illinois, and Natchez, Mississippi.<sup>109</sup> Smith and Miller write that

[the] Beasley Mounds site and its vicinity have produced more stone statuary than any other area of comparable size in Tennessee. Unfortunately, Beasley Mounds is also one of the most poorly documented Mississippian mound centers in the Middle Cumberland region. Located near the western boundary of Smith County on a triangular projection of land at the confluence of Dixon Creek and the Cumberland River, the area has produced many intriguing but poorly documented artifacts since the late eighteenth century.<sup>110</sup>

**Castalian Springs** is another intriguing example of Native American archaeological discovery in Middle Tennessee. Evidence suggests that

Castalian Springs was a large and complex Mississippian mound center with fortifications enclosing approximately 16 acres... Within the earthworks was a large platform mound (200 ft in length by 11 ft in height) with flat-topped conical addition (22 ft in height and 90 ft in diameter). To the south and slightly west of the principal mound, the (probable) plaza was flanked on the west by another large platform mound (Mound 3—90 ft in diameter and 7 ft in height). A large burial mound (120 ft in diameter and 8 ft in height) bounded the eastern edge of the presumed plaza. Outside the earthworks to the south and southwest were a series of mineral springs and an additional stone mound (Mound 4—60 ft in diameter and 5.5 ft in height) on the bank of Lick Creek. The hillsides surrounding the palisaded enclosure included several presumably associated stone box grave cemeteries and a small (possible) mortuary cave. Adjacent creek drainages have also yielded evidence of scattered stone box cemeteries, mortuary caves, and other features that may be contemporaneous with occupation of the Castalian Springs site.<sup>111</sup>

Sellars, located “4 miles south east of the modern city of Lebanon, Tennessee, on the rim of an old terrace in a prominent bend of Spring Creek, ... is unusual in that it is the only major Mississippian site in the Nashville area located in the cedar glades of the inner basin.”<sup>112</sup> The text continues to say that

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<sup>109</sup> Smith, K. E., and Miller, J. V. (2009). *Speaking with the Ancestors*. [electronic resource]: Mississippian stone statuary of the Tennessee-Cumberland Region. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press 14.

<sup>110</sup> Smith and Miller 53.

<sup>111</sup> Smith and Miller 68-71.

<sup>112</sup> Smith and Miller 39.



[outside] of what we have called the Heartland triangle encompassing the Sellars, Beasley Mounds, and Castalian Springs sites, at least ten and possibly as many as fifteen statues have been documented from sites within the Cumberland River drainage on the eastern periphery of the Nashville Basin. Most of these statues are apparently from sites in the Caney Fork River drainage, a major tributary of the Cumberland River draining the southern portion of the Cumberland Plateau, with only two possible outliers on the far eastern portion of the Cumberland River drainage in Tennessee.<sup>113</sup>

John Haywood captures the vastness of Native American evidence in Middle Tennessee by describing the multitude of mounds. He writes that

[they] are numerous upon the rivers which empty into the Mississippi, running from the dividing ridge between that river and Tennessee. They are found upon Duck River, the Cumberland, upon the Little Tennessee and its waters, and upon the big Tennessee, upon French Broad and upon Elk River. The trees are of more recent growth which are upon the mounds that are found in the last settlements of the Natchez; for instance, near the town of Natchez and on the waters of the Mississippi within the present limits of Tennessee, than those are which grow upon the mounds in other parts of the country: a circumstance which furnishes the presumption that the ancient builders of the latter were expelled from the other parts of Tennessee at a period corresponding with the ages of the trees which the whites found growing upon them.<sup>114</sup>

The record of artifacts found in the Nashville area is also included in this work.<sup>115</sup>

Newspapers were also intrigued by the archaeological treasures of Middle Tennessee. In 1883, the *Clarksville Weekly Chronicle* reported that human remains were found in a cave near Lascassas, Tennessee. In addition to the bones, the article continues that “large numbers of Indian arrow [were found] ... and it is thought that at an early day a battle must have been fought near this cave by the Indians, and that it was used by them for burying the dead.”<sup>116</sup> These discoveries provide important context for merging Native American history with Tennessee history and also capture the public’s fascination with such history.

## **Native Americans in Middle Tennessee**

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<sup>113</sup> Smith and Miller 112.

<sup>114</sup> Haywood, John. (1823). *The Natural and Aboriginal History of Tennessee, up to the First Settlements Therein by the White People, in the Year 1768*. Nashville, TN: G. Wilson 113.

<sup>115</sup> Haywood 140-141.

<sup>116</sup> *Clarksville Weekly Chronicle*. (Clarksville, Tenn.), 02 June 1883. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

Haywood reveals a history of a particular tribe apparently told to General Robertson that recounts Native American presence in Middle Tennessee. According to Haywood,

[the] Savanners, or the Shawanese, or Shawanoes, or Chauvanons, so called from living on the Savannah or South River, must have received the name from those who lived in the north, not from those who lived in the east or west, for then it would have been called west or east river. This is another indication that it was settled by persons from the north. General Robertson stated in his lifetime, in relation to the Shawanese, what he had learned of it from the Indians. They say, that about a century and a half ago, the Shawanese were settled in this country, and were scattered over it, from the Tennessee to the spot where Nashville now is, and even considerably north of the Cumberland. A little more than a century ago, or about the year 1700, they left this country and went to the northern tribes, and were received by the Six Nations as a wandering tribe, but were not allowed to have any claim to the soil, further than to obtain temporary subsistence at the discretion of the Six Nations.<sup>117</sup>

An article, “First People of Tennessee and the American Southeast,” retrieved from *TNGenWebProject*, discusses the occupation of Native Americans in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The article reveals that

[during] the federal period of Indian land cessions in the American Southeast (1785-1835), only these First People ceded land to the United States[:] Appalachian, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, and Seminole. Of course, there were earlier pre-federal cessions and accommodations, those made to the British colonial governments, and potentially, colonial Spanish and French colonial governments.<sup>118</sup>

During the years of 1714 and 1715, “[the] Shawnee were driven from the Cumberland River basin to north of the Ohio River by a temporary confederation of the Cherokee and Chickasaw.”<sup>119</sup> Due to conflict between tribes, and later settlers, “[many] tribes were later absorbed by other tribes, becoming totally assimilated. Others joined other tribes[.] The Yuchi were driven from the Great Valley of the Tennessee by the Cherokee. They affiliated with the Creek Nation and so, the Yuchi became silent party to Creek cessions.”<sup>120</sup> The article explains that much Native American ancestry is derived from the fact that

[some] First People ‘intermarried with the white traders, trappers, and packmen, who joined their tribes. Some of these men even had white wives back in the colonial settlements but they also had their Indian families back in the frontiers. There are few true southerners who do not have

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<sup>117</sup> Haywood 206.

<sup>118</sup> “First People of Tennessee and the American Southeast.” *TNGenWebProject*. Last updated Monday, January 20, 2014.

<sup>119</sup> “First People of Tennessee and the American Southeast.”

<sup>120</sup> “First People of Tennessee and the American Southeast.”

traces of Indian blood in their veins though many are not aware of it as our ancestors did not want people to know there was Indian blood.<sup>121</sup>

An 1854 article from *Nashville Union and American* provides a story of a particular Native American who was born of a white settler and Native American who abandoned his tribe and married a white settler.

There was living at this time at Nashville a half-breed named Fenelstone, who had deserted from the Indians a short time before the attack upon Buchanan's Station, in 1792, and came to Nashville, and informed the whites of the contemplated attack upon that place. During his residence in Nashville he married a white woman.<sup>122</sup>

An article in the *Clarksville Weekly Chronicle* from 1885 recounts a story from Captain Mat. Carkuff which states

that in early times a tribe of Indians, living some distance south of Nashville, had been paid a large amount of gold, about \$50,000, by the government for their lands. Shortly after receiving this gold, they went on the war-path and attacked the fort at Nashville. They were repulsed and the settlers pursued them in the direction of Clarksville. Being hard pressed they buried their gold under what is known as King and Queen's bluff, about a mile and a half from Seven Mile Ferry. After making the [interment] they kept on down the river and while crossing on the reef at Ferrell's Landing, were overtaking and fired upon by the [pursuing] settlers.<sup>123</sup>

The 1974 Indian Claims Commission provides historical background of Native American presence by accumulating court documents pertaining to court cases regarding Native Americans. One such document asserts that prior to 1540, Cherokee, Shawnee, and Chickasaw tribes are thought to have used the land for hunting.<sup>124</sup> The Chickasaw "claimed a large area [north] of the Tennessee [River] to the ridge between Duck [River] and [south] to Chickasaw Old Fields on the Tennessee, thence along an indeterminate [southeast] line to the Mississippi."<sup>125</sup> The research of the Indian Claims Commission suggests that from 1714-1782,

the Shawnee seem to have had major settlements on the big bend of the Cumberland in the vicinity of the present Nashville. French agents were there and it is probable that they had a fortified trading post at Nashville. The Chickasaw ever after claimed the major credit for

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<sup>121</sup> "First People of Tennessee and the American Southeast."

<sup>122</sup> *Nashville Union and American*. (Nashville, Tenn.), 04 Oct. 1854. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>123</sup> *Clarksville Weekly Chronicle*. (Clarksville, Tenn.), 24 Oct. 1885. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>124</sup> Goff, John H., Charles H. Fairbanks, Indian Claims Commission. (1974). *Cherokee and Creek Indians. Ethnographic Report Royce Area 79: Chickasaw, Cherokee, Creek* 29.

<sup>125</sup> Goff and Fairbanks 29.

expelling the Shawnee but in later times some credit is also given to the Cherokee. This concert between Chickasaw and Cherokee evidently reflects their demands for the hunting grounds being exploited by the Shawnee in Middle Tennessee.<sup>126</sup>

In 1784, John Donelson and Joseph Martin met with the Chickasaw at Nashville on behalf of Virginia to purchase Muscle Shoals area from them. The Chickasaw, Creek, and Chickamauga were also involved in the purchase. Governor William "Blount held a congress at Nashville in 1792 with the Chickasaw and Choctaw to discuss various matters," including boundaries and hunting lands.<sup>127</sup> The Territory of Mississippi was established in 1798 to meet the need for a land route between Nashville and Natchez. The document asserts that "The Natchez Trace had been an Indian trail from Nashville to the Chickasaw country in Lee and Pontotoc counties, Mississippi. It crossed the Tennessee at the mouth of Bear Creek."<sup>128</sup>

The text cites Article IV of the Treaty of Hopewell, November 28, 1785, which recognizes the boundaries of the land belonging to the Cherokee

for their hunting grounds...Beginning at the mouth of Duck river, on the Tennessee; thence running north-east to the ridge dividing the waters running into Cumberland from those running into the Tennessee; thence eastwardly along the said ridge to a north-east line to be run, which shall strike the river Cumberland forty miles above Nashville; thence long the said line to the river; thence up the said river to the ford where the Kentucky road crosses the river; thence to Campbell's line, near Cumberland gap; thence to the mouth of Claud's [sic] creek on Holstein [sic]; thence to the Chimney-top mountain; thence to Camp-creek, near the mouth of Big Limestone, on Nolichucky; thence a southerly course six miles to a mountain; thence south to the North-Carolina line; thence to the South-Carolina Indian boundary, and along the same south-west over the top of the Oconee mountain till it shall strike Tugaloo river; thence a direct line to the top of the Currohee [sic] mountain; thence to the head of the south fork of Oconee river.<sup>129</sup>

C.C. Henderson, in his book *The Story of Murfreesboro*, relates that "[prior] to 1780 the Indians were in complete possession of all the territory comprising Rutherford and contiguous counties."<sup>130</sup> Although it was not home to permanent settlements of Native Americans, the area was the communal hunting ground of several tribes, including the Cherokee, Choctaw, and Chickasaw, among others.<sup>131</sup> Henderson related that "Indians would make unexpected forays

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<sup>126</sup> Goff and Fairbanks 97.

<sup>127</sup> Goff and Fairbanks 180.

<sup>128</sup> Goff and Fairbanks 191-192.

<sup>129</sup> Goff and Fairbanks 318.

<sup>130</sup> Henderson, C. C. (1929). *The Story of Murfreesboro*. Murfreesboro, TN: News-Banner Publishing Company 6.

<sup>131</sup> Henderson 10.

along the trails that led from Nashville to Chattanooga, which trace traversed what is now Rutherford County.”<sup>132</sup> The Wartrace Trail, Nickajack Trail, and the Black Fox Trail are supposed to have been originally trails made by Native Americans.<sup>133</sup>

V. H. Jernigan’s article in the *Tennessee Quarterly* (1970) reveals that

[at] the Tellico Treaty the Cherokee ceded ‘all lands North of the line beginning at the mouth of Duck River, running thence up the stream of the same to the main fork at the head of which Fort Nash stood, thence in a direct course to a point on the bank of the Tennessee River opposite the mouth of the Hiwassee River’.<sup>134</sup>

James Mooney, notable for his extensive work regarding Native Americans, discusses the history of Cherokee, claiming that they were

the mountaineers of the South, holding the entire Allegheny region from the interlocking head-streams of the Kanawha and the Tennessee southward almost to the site of Atlanta, and from the Blue ridge on the east to the Cumberland range on the west, a territory comprising an area of about 40,000 square miles, now included in the states of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. Their principal towns were upon the headwaters of the Savannah, Hiwassee, and Tuckasegee, and along the whole length of the Little Tennessee to its junction with the main stream. Itsâtī, or Echota, on the south bank of the Little Tennessee, a few miles above the mouth of Tellico river, in Tennessee, was commonly considered the capital of the nation. As the advancing whites pressed upon them from the east and northeast the more exposed towns were destroyed or abandoned and new settlements were formed lower down the Tennessee and on the upper branches of the Chattahoochee and the Coosa.<sup>135</sup>

Mooney’s text states the theory that,

the invading Cherokee had overrun and exterminated the earlier inhabitants, ... the newcomers found no Indians upon the waters of the Tennessee, with the exception of some Creeks living upon [The Tennessee River], near the mouth of the Hiwassee, the main body of that tribe being established upon and claiming all the streams to the southward. There is considerable evidence that the Creeks preceded the Cherokee, and within the last century they still claimed the Tennessee, or at least the Tennessee watershed, for their northern boundary.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Henderson 8.

<sup>133</sup> Pittard, Mabel. (1984). Rutherford County. *Tennessee County History Series*. Memphis State University Press 7.

<sup>134</sup> Jernigan, V. H. (Summer 1970). “Fort Nash—Outposts of the 1790’s.” *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 29, No. 2 134.

<sup>135</sup> Mooney, J., and Mooney, J. (1982). *Myths of the Cherokee; and, Sacred formulas of the Cherokees*. Nashville, Tenn.: Charles and Randy Elder-Booksellers 14.

<sup>136</sup> Mooney and Mooney 22.

*Myths of the Cherokee* continues to explain that

[an] arrangement had been made with the Chickasaw, in 1783, by which they surrendered to the Cumberland settlement their own claim to the lands from the Cumberland river south to the dividing ridge of Duck river. It was not, however, until the treaty of Hopewell, two years later, that the Cherokee surrendered their claim to the same region, and even then the Chickamauga warriors, with their allies, the hostile Creeks and Shawano, refused to acknowledge the cession and continued their attacks, with the avowed purpose of destroying the new settlements. Until the final running of the boundary line, in 1797, Spain claimed all the territory west of the mountains and south of Cumberland river, and her agents were accused of stirring up the Indians against the Americans, even to the extent of offering rewards for American scalps.<sup>137</sup>

### **Native American Trails in Middle Tennessee**

In his work, *Indian Trails of the Southeast*, William E. Myers reveals that “[hundreds] of ... references to the joint use of trails by man and beast are scattered throughout the records of the early settlers” of Middle Tennessee.<sup>138</sup> He continues to explain that “[few] Indian name of trails have been preserved, such as we now possess being, for the most part, those given by the early whites, and usually of local origin.”<sup>139</sup>

For example, the ancient trace leading from Middle Tennessee, via the junction of Big Bear Creek and Tennessee River, on to the Chickasaw towns in Mississippi, was by the early settlers in Middle Tennessee called, for obvious reasons, ‘The Chickasaw Trail,’ while the trail leading into the same towns from what is now Memphis, via Bolivar, was so called by early West Tennesseans.<sup>140</sup>

**The Chickasaw Trail**, later known as the Natchez Trace,

was the logical one for movements between large and important sections in the central United States. Over it, ... parties of Chickasaw, Choctaw, Natchez, and other southern tribes on their way to middle Tennessee, Kentucky, and the territory of our present North Central States, while the many unknown peoples who preceded them must also have traveled it. Its key situation forced its use, and it played a vital part in the life of the region, both in war and in peace. The

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<sup>137</sup> Mooney and Mooney 66.

<sup>138</sup> Myer, William E. *Indian Trails of the Southeast*. (1971). Blue & Gray Press: Nashville, TN 7.

<sup>139</sup> Myer 10.

<sup>140</sup> Myer 10.

forced trek of the Shawnee from Alabama into middle Tennessee in the eighteenth century was along this trace.<sup>141</sup>

Edward C. Annable Jr. provides an abundance of information regarding Native American trails in Middle Tennessee.

The ‘Great South Trail,’ which ran southward from the Great Salt Lick in the vicinity of Nashville and through Williamson County, entered Rutherford County west of Eagleville. It proceeded in an eastern and southeastern direction to the head of Wartrace Creek. From there it ran to the present city of Tullahoma and south to the Indian settlements in Alabama and Mississippi.<sup>142</sup>

**The Great South Trail** was a “...broad beaten path made by the buffalo which came from the South to the French Lick (Salt Lick at Nashville’s Sulphur Springs Bottom)...It was worn into the earth one or two feet or more in many places. In some places it was three or four feet wide.”<sup>143</sup>

Walthall discusses the Great South Trail as well. His text states that the

Great South Trail, a major aboriginal artery leading northward into the Nashville Basin where it connects with a series of trails running farther north into the Ohio Valley, converges with the Tennessee Valley near the mouth of the Flint River. This trail may have been the route of diffusion of [brushed limestone-tempered] pottery types into the Copena territory. Their absence or rarity in the western Copena region (Wheeler and Pickwick basin areas), and the late Woodland division of pottery industries in the middle Tennessee Valley—clay-tempered ware in the western region and limestone-tempered in the eastern—suggest that Copena may have been composed of two autonomous yet related segmentary tribes.<sup>144</sup>

**The Nickajack Trail** is another important Native American trail, and was also known as the “Cisca” or “St. Augustine Trail.”

It was called the ‘Nickajack Trail’ by the settlers of Middle Tennessee. The portion of the trail in Rutherford County was part of a longer trail network that ran from Nashville by the Stones Fort, possibly Cisca, in Coffee County, Tennessee, to St. Augustine, Florida. From the Old Stone Fort

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<sup>141</sup> Myer 77.

<sup>142</sup> Annable, Edward C. Jr. (1982) *Rutherford County Historical Society* (20). A History of the Roads of Rutherford County, 1804-1878: Historic Road Research, and its Applications for Historic Resource Surveys and Local History. Middle Tennessee State University.

<sup>143</sup> Annable 5.

<sup>144</sup> Walthall 128.

the trail crossed the Garrison Fork near Fort Nash, not far from the present town of Beech Grove and into the county. The trail passed by Black Fox Spring and through the Murfreesboro area to Nashville.<sup>145</sup>

Annable continues that the

**‘Black Fox Trail,’** last of the Indian trails known to have passed through the county, was part of a longer trail known as the ‘Saline River Trail.’ The Saline River Trail began at the Cherokee settlements on the Hiwassee River in East Tennessee. It crossed the Ohio River at Golconda, Illinois, and the Mississippi River at Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and extended into Missouri and Oklahoma. The Rutherford County portion of the route, or Black Fox Trail, ran from Woodbury in Cannon County west across the county line near Readyville and intersected the Nickajack Trail at Black Fox Spring. From there it split into two trails, one following the Nickajack Trail and the other branch entering Nashville along the Murfreesboro and Nashville Turnpike.<sup>146</sup>

### **Skirmishes between Native Americans and White Settlers**

Mike West’s article in the *Murfreesboro Post* reveals that “Murfree Spring was one of the earliest settlements in what later became Rutherford County, but Indian ‘troubles’ predated it.”<sup>147</sup> Before the arrival of white settlers, “two massive springs were often the campground of Native Americans who hunted in the area, including the Overhill Cherokees and Chickamaugas. After white settlers moved into the Cumberland River area, the springs were used as a staging area for Indian raids.”<sup>148</sup>

It is significant to note that the attributes which made the land desirable to Native Americans also attracted white settlers. The Cherokees, who were the regarded as the most notable Native American tribe in the area, regarded the flux of white settlers as threats to their “traditional channels of status and authority”, and “abandon[ed] established patterns of interaction with Euro-American traders and led others to capture slaves, horses, livestock, and, occasionally, white settlers.”<sup>149</sup> John Carr’s 1857 work *Early Times in Middle Tennessee* recounts some experiences of the first settlers of the region. The settlers with Col. Donelson were located “in the heart of the Indian country, several hundred miles from any assistance, and much farther

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<sup>145</sup> Annable 5.

<sup>146</sup> Annable 5-6.

<sup>147</sup> West, Mike. (Nov. 15, 2009). “Does the Name Murfrees Spring Ring a Bell?” Murfreesboro Post. *Rutherford County Tennessee Historical Society*.

<sup>148</sup> West.

<sup>149</sup> Ray, Kristofer. (2007). *Middle Tennessee, 1775-1825: Progress and Popular Democracy on the Southwestern Frontier*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press 1.



from the seat of government. ... The Indians soon found out the settlers, and commenced hostilities against them. In the spring the first man was killed by them.”<sup>150</sup>

After several attacks, “the settlers became so frightened that they broke up and went to Mansker’s Station. Thus the Indians extended their hostilities to all the forts in the country, except Mansker’s Station, the situation of which it seemed they were later in finding out than that of any of the other forts.”<sup>151</sup> Hostilities had become so violent that

[at] the close of the year 1780, the distressed colony was reduced to three or four forts. In the spring of 1781, the Indians again commenced hostilities. In the month of April, a large force of Cherokees advanced with the determination, doubtless, of driving the whole body of the settlers from the country. During the previous year they had been so successful in breaking up and burning the forts, that they could not bear the idea of yielding their favorite hunting-ground without a deadly struggle.<sup>152</sup>

Carr goes on to reveal that the settlers had all but decided to leave the country before Captain Robertson pleaded with them to give the area more time.

West’s article also provides documentation of skirmishes between settlers and the Native population. He asserts that

[in] September 1794, settlers began to end the Indian threat by sending the ‘Ore Expedition’ to raid Chickamauga villages along the Tennessee River. On Sept. 12, 1794, a Southwest Territory militia unit under Major James Ore and led by former prisoner Joseph Brown wiped out Nickajack and Running Water. By the end of the year the remaining Chickamaugas had joined the Overhill Cherokees to make treaties with the white Tennesseans. On Sept. 7, 1794, Ore and his men surprised Cherokee Chief Black Fox Inali at the spring that now bears his name.<sup>153</sup>

This raid is the source of an infamous legend which will be explained further in another section.

An article from *Nashville Union and American*, published in 1854, includes a portion of *Early History of the South West—Narrative of Captain Macklin Cross, of Jackson county, Ala.* which discusses aspects of Middle Tennessee history. The article presents an account of Captain Cross’s about an Indian chief in Nashville and the subsequent attack on a fort.

I saw Watts, the Cherokee chief, in Nashville, who commanded the Indians in the attack upon Buchanan’s Station. It was after the peace of 1796, that he visited Nashville. There was one man

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<sup>150</sup> Carr, John. (1857). *Early Times in Middle Tennessee*. Retyped for the page by Diane Payne, 2001 & 2002. The USGenWeb Project. Ancestry.com.

<sup>151</sup> Carr.

<sup>152</sup> Carr.

<sup>153</sup> West.

by the name of David Hood, who was scalped twice by the Indians the same day. I think this transpired near the Sulphur spring at Nashville.<sup>154</sup>

Captain Cross's narrative goes on to discuss his encounter with George Fields, a "half-breed" who claimed to be

one of Watts' Spies, who deceived the white sentinels near Nashville. He said, they were dressed like the whites, and could talk English; and that it was by that means, that they deceived the whites. He seemed to be excusing himself for acting as a spy against the whites; but said, that Watts told him, 'that he must do his best, as he was to take Buchanan's Station.'<sup>155</sup>

Jernigan's article discusses the violent history between the white settlers and Native American population at Fort Nash in the last decade of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Fort Nash

is a tribute to the resourcefulness of the early settlers of Tennessee in protecting themselves from Indian attacks. The location divides the headwaters of three different streams: the Barren Fork and Garrison Fork of Duck River, the Brawley's Fork of Stone's River, and the Barren Fork of Collins River.<sup>156</sup>

The stress of conflict between the settlers and Native Americans is evidenced by,

numerous letters passed back and forth between Governor Blount and Secretary of War Henry Knox, stressing the necessity of blockhouses, forts, arms, and militia for patrolling the frontier and protecting the settlers who pushed constantly south and west from the Nashville area, encroaching on the Cherokee hunting grounds. The Cherokee complained at one time that more than five hundred families were living on their side of the treaty boundary and they vented their resentment by raiding and burning settlements and killing the settlers wherever they found them.<sup>157</sup>

Major Ore's raid took his group past a number of familiar Middle Tennessee attractions.

In September, 1794, Major James Ore with 550 mounted militia departed Nashville on Taylor's Trace, which later became known as Nickajack Trace or Trail, on his well-publicized expedition against the Cherokee towns on the Tennessee River. The trail passed Captain Lytle's (Murfreesboro), Black Fox Camp, through Fort Nash (where the militia camped one night on the return trip) [John Drake's Survey Notes and Map of the Nickajack Trace (1807)], then on by Pond Springs (Hillsboro), Fennison's Springs, and crossed the Elk River at Caldwell's Creek

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<sup>154</sup> *Nashville Union and American*. (Nashville, Tenn.), 06 Oct. 1854. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>155</sup> *Nashville Union and American*, 06 Oct. 1854.

<sup>156</sup> Jernigan 130.

<sup>157</sup> Jernigan 134.

‘where the first creek empties into the Elk below the great crossing of Indians, where Indians, Sanders and others crossed,’ over the Cumberland mountains and down Battle Creek to the Tennessee River.<sup>158</sup>

Major Ore’ “route was surveyed by John Drake in 1806 or before, and Drake’s notes contain the only sketch of Fort Nash that has been found. This survey located the Fort at approximately forty-two miles from Nashville and shows it on Tennessee Ridge.”<sup>159</sup>

Drake’s survey began at the Nashville Courthouse and followed the Nickajack Trace, crossing Brown’s Creek, the Ford of Mill Creek, then to a mill, to a bridge and again to Mill Creek and across a branch of Mill Creek. Crossings of Dry Fork, Stewart’s Creek, Overall Creek, and the West Fork of Stone’s River were shown before reaching Captain Lytle’s. Still heading southeast, reference points shown were a large spring, a large sinking spring, Black Fox Camp, a branch, a small spring, a spring in the cedars, foot of Tennessee Ridge, and into Fort Nash.<sup>160</sup>

In 1775 the Transylvania Company, organized by Richard Henderson, purchased twenty-seven-thousand square miles in central Kentucky and Tennessee from Cherokee elders. Although no Indians specifically lived on this land, the white settlement that resulted threatened to devastate available game by allowing free ranging livestock to reduce canebrakes and grasses that indigenous animals used for shelter. There was also the Indian assertion that the land sale was fraudulent. Cherokee chief Old Tassel told federal commissioners in 1785 that Henderson was a ‘liar’ and had forged names on the deeds. When combined with the steady stream of white settlers, and the collapse of British authority on the frontier, Henderson’s ‘purchase’ provided too serious a threat to Cherokee autonomy and economy.<sup>161</sup>

### **Significance of Middle Tennessee Landscape**

Features of the Middle Tennessee landscape have historically been very important to Native Americans. In their book *Voices of the Winds: Native American Legends*, Margot Edmonds and Ella Clark reveal that

North American Indians believed that spirit life dwelled in all of nature. So very much of the North American Indian’s way of life was related to their spiritual beliefs and to the rituals of

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<sup>158</sup> Jernigan 136.

<sup>159</sup> Jernigan 136.

<sup>160</sup> Jernigan 136.

<sup>161</sup> Ray 4.

daily life for each tribe. They believed that everything in nature possessed a life or spirit within, even the sky, earth, mountains, trees, waters, animals, birds—and man.<sup>162</sup>

Native Americans looked at the Middle Tennessee area and “saw vastness and bountiful resources, enough for all if shared together. Little wonder they generally accepted the sojourns of the traders (both Native American and Euro-American) and hunters, but reacted with anger and violence to colonization of the Cumberland Valley.”<sup>163</sup> Native Americans further believed that “these spirits of nature controlled nature itself,” and thus were responsible for the landscape and game which sustained them.<sup>164</sup> Mississippian “subsistence activities followed an annual cycle based upon seasonal availability of both cultigens and native food sources.”<sup>165</sup> Researchers hypothesize that hunters probably aimed to gain as much food while exerting as little effort as possible, thus the importance of the seasons.

The rivers in Middle Tennessee were also a significant factor in the hunting patterns of Native Americans as “[these] locations were chosen, at least in part, to exploit the well-drained, moist, fertile, and easily cultivated alluvial soils.”<sup>166</sup> Streams were full of fish, providing a variety of sustenance options. The “diverse native floral and faunal resources were of equal importance” in choosing the Middle Tennessee region.<sup>167</sup> Mammals indigenous to the area included

white-tail deer, elk, black bear, mountain lion, gray wolf, raccoon, bobcat, fox, mink, otter, skunk, weasel, muskrat, woodchuck, squirrel, cottontail rabbit, and opossum. Eagle, hawk, owl, turkey, quail, passenger pigeon, goose, duck, mallard, and teal were important bird resources for prehistoric residents of the study area. A large number and variety of snakes, frogs, turtles, fish, and mollusks also occur within this province.<sup>168</sup>

The Middle Tennessee region supports “upland climax communities of oak, hickory, tulip tree, beech, and chestnut. Hickory, winged elm, hackberry, and blue ash were among the species that covered the lower hills and flats. Cedar glades were (and continue to be) abundant in the inner basin” of the Central Basin area of Davidson County.<sup>169</sup> The Rutherford County area possessed virtually all of the qualities needed by Native Americans to subsist.

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<sup>162</sup>Edmonds, Margot and Ella Clark. (1989). *Voices of the Winds: Native American Legends*. New York: *Facts on File* xiv.

<sup>163</sup> Smith 176.

<sup>164</sup> Edmonds and Clark xv.

<sup>165</sup> Walthall 191.

<sup>166</sup> Walthall 191.

<sup>167</sup> Walthall 191.

<sup>168</sup> Breitburg, Smith, and Trubitt 10-11.

<sup>169</sup> Breitburg, Smith, and Trubitt 10.

West remarks that “the grasslands of the Cumberland basin covered highly fertile soil, which made commercial agriculture a lucrative enterprise. The Cumberland River abetted development by serving as a route for regional commodities to reach markets via the Mississippi and Ohio rivers.”<sup>170</sup> Because of the region’s supply of “plentiful, fresh water, both Black Fox Spring and Murfree Spring became the site of early settlements in Rutherford County and both settlements were considered in 1811 when the state Legislature was considering a new county seat.”<sup>171</sup> Henderson also remarks that there was a Native American camping ground about 2 miles away from Murfreesboro, which was “an ideal location for the purpose, being a scope of land sparsely timbered, but affording a luxuriant pasture consisting of wild grasses.”<sup>172</sup> This camp saw tribal ceremonies by the Native Americans, such as green corn and war dances.

Many Native American trails were initially used to track herds of animals, but other uses eventually resulted, such as allowing commerce between tribes.<sup>173</sup> Ray continues that

[prior] to the 1760s, Tennessee was part of a wider transatlantic market that brought nations such as the Chickasaws in the West and Cherokees in the East together with white traders in such a way that they interacted with European empires without falling under their influence. This ‘middle ground’ gradually created an Indian dependence upon European goods and eventually forced the Indians south of the Ohio River to confront economic and political change. For Cherokees, the nation with perhaps the greatest presence in Tennessee, their traditional notions of economy, manhood, and order were embedded in rites of hunting and thus to the large range of land that made up North Carolina’s Western District. They also disdained individual accumulation of wealth and understood the right to this land in terms of usufruct. That is to say, they owned the product of the land rather than the land itself, with various people having different yet legitimate claims to hunt and fish in defined places.<sup>174</sup>

## **Legends of Middle Tennessee**

Various Native American legends give traditional significance to Middle Tennessee. Various myths reveal the origin of people, earth, and even disease and death. James Mooney collected many legends, passed down through generations of Cherokee members, which account for the origin of many plants, animals, and crops indigenous to the area. Legends are also meaningful for the means in which Native Americans gained sustenance on the land. Various Cherokee myths reveal the origins of the deer, strawberries, tobacco, medicine, and countless others which

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<sup>170</sup> West.

<sup>171</sup> West.

<sup>172</sup> Henderson 9.

<sup>173</sup> Walthall 4.

<sup>174</sup> Ray 3.

helped their existence prosper. The cedar tree, in particular, occupied a special place in Native American spirituality. Osage beliefs reveals that red cedar trees are “one of the four trees that the Dhegihans associated with the forces of life” ... “This cedar tree also represents a branched stream signifying the ‘journey through seven bends of the stream or path of life’ and is thus connected to the general Osage wish to live a long life.”<sup>175</sup> Nashville’s name also has Native American origins. “The Cherokee name is Dăgû’năwelâ’hī, ‘Mussel-liver place,’ which would seem to have originated in some now forgotten legend.”<sup>176</sup>

At least one legend of Cherokee settlement (given to a General S. K. Rayburn) relates that many thousand moons before, [Cherokee] people had occupied all the country westward to Bear Creek and Duck River, but that on account of constant warfare with the Chickasaws, they had sought quiet by withdrawing into the eastern mountains, though they never renounced their title to the country.<sup>177</sup>

There are even legends that the Chickasaw "claimed a large area [north] of the Tennessee [River] to the ridge between Duck [River] and [south] to Chickasaw Old Fields on the Tennessee, thence along an indeterminate [southeast] line to the Mississippi.”<sup>178</sup>

A legend regarding volatile relations between the Shawnee and the Chickasaw and the apparent defeat of the Shawnee is purported to have taken place in Middle Tennessee. After a conflict between the two groups,

some of the Shawnee began to move back northward, stopping among some of the French traders at French Lick, now Nashville, Tenn. There they were attacked by the Chickasaw and soundly beaten....This movement of Shawnee to Alabama and then back to Nashville is apparently the movement which served as the basis of the legend of the defeat of the Shawnee by the Chickasaw. ...<sup>179</sup>

**Black Fox Spring** also has its Native American origin legend.

An interesting Rutherford County legend relates that while Black Fox and his followers were camped at the springs in 1794 they were attacked by General Ore and his expedition which had been sent by Gen. James Robertson from the Cumberland settlement. Black Fox was said to have

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<sup>175</sup> Lankford, G. E., Reilly, F. K., and Garber, J. (2010). *Visualizing the Sacred: Cosmic Visions, Regionalism, and the Art of the Mississippian World*. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press 21-22.

<sup>176</sup> Mooney and Mooney 414.

<sup>177</sup> Groff 56.

<sup>178</sup> Groff 29.

<sup>179</sup> Groff 108.

been surrounded by his enemies and all of his followers were slain. Since the body of Black Fox could not be found among the dead, legend has it that the Cherokee Indian chief jumped into the spring and disappeared. The waters of Black Fox Spring enter the ground and later emerge at Murfree Spring. Bones, later found in the Murfree Spring, were thought to have been those of the great chief, Black Fox.<sup>180</sup>

A historic marker, found on U.S. 41, Manchester Road, at Red Mile Road still memorializes this event.<sup>181</sup>

## Trail of Tears

Middle Tennessee is also relevant to another, more tragic aspect of Native American history. As thousands of Native Americans were rounded up and relocated in 1838 and 1839 so that white settlers could take their land, a northern detachment of the Trail of Tears actually passed through the Middle Tennessee area. “The only diaries known to exist for the portion of the trip between McMinnville and Nashville indicate that Murfreesborough was an intermediate stop.”<sup>182</sup> The journal of Rev. Daniel S. Butrick gives some information about the detachment as it passed through the Middle Tennessee area in 1838. His journal reveals that the detachment he accompanied came upon the city of Woodbury on November 18<sup>th</sup> and passed through Murphy’s borough (Murfreesboro) on the 19<sup>th</sup> on the way to the city of Nashville.<sup>183</sup>

The journal of Lieutenant Charles Fenton Mercer Nolan also provides an insight into the trek through Murfreesboro and Middle Tennessee as he accompanied a detachment of the Removal effort. His journal reveals that on November 8<sup>th</sup> in 1834, he “[l]eft Nashville by Stage Coach [and] reached Murfreesboro same day.”<sup>184</sup> Lieutenant Nolan writes that they left Murfreesboro the next day and headed to McMinnville.<sup>185</sup>

A letter to Mr. Henry Wray from a Houston Bragg states that Bragg read Wray’s article “seeking information about ‘The Trail of Tears’ that appeared in the Daily News Journal.” Bragg claims to

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<sup>180</sup> Pittard 8.

<sup>181</sup> West.

<sup>182</sup> King, Duane. (2008). *The Cherokee Trail of Tears*. Graphic Arts Books 94.

<sup>183</sup> The Trail of Tears Association, Oklahoma Chapter, ed. *The Journal of Rev. Daniel S. Butrick, May 19, 1838-April 1, 1839* (Park Hill: The Trail of Tears Association, Oklahoma Chapter, 1998) 46.

<sup>184</sup> . *Noland’s Cherokee Diary: A U.S. Soldier’s Story from inside the Cherokee Nation*. Ed. By Mildred E. Whitmire (1990). Spartanburg: The Reprint Company 2.

<sup>185</sup> Whitmire 3.

possess no knowledge of the Trail's passage through Murfreesboro but "[has] read of one group that did pass [through] Woodbury and were camped for several days..."<sup>186</sup>

An unidentified letter from the Albert Gore Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University provides some insight into the passage of the Trail of Tears through Middle Tennessee. An excerpt from the letter reads

In early June of 1838 some 5000 were transported down the Tennessee River to the Ohio, thence to the Mississippi disembarking on the west bank and continuing overland to the Indian Territory. The mortality in this group was so great that General Scott was persuaded by Chief Ross and others to permit the remaining to remove themselves in the fall by an overland route. Their route in general followed 'The Black Fox Trail' crossing the Tennessee River a short distance above the Hiwassee. Thence westward to just south of Pikeville continuing on to Woodbury. The State of Tennessee has an historical marker on U. S. 70 S about 100 yards east of junction with Route 53 ... which states: In the valley to the south, that part of the Cherokee Nation which took part in the enforced overland migration to Indian Territory rested for about three weeks in 1839. About 15,000 persons of various ages took part in the march. Several who died while here were buried in this area.<sup>187</sup>

The letter continues to say that,

[after] the stay in Woodbury, the march continued along the trail approximating the Woodbury-Murfreesboro turnpike to 'Black Fox Spring' in Rutherford County. On leaving 'Black Fox Springs' they passed through five turnpike gates on their way toward Nashville. They crossed the Cumberland on the toll bridge. They rested at Nashville and then traversed the State of Kentucky, by way of Hopkinsville, to a crossing of the Ohio River, known as Berry's Ferry at the mouth of the Cumberland.<sup>188</sup>

The unidentified letter also revealed an eyewitness account of the passage of the Trail of Tears through Middle Tennessee.

The march along this part of the trail was witnessed by an elderly negro woman 'Auntt' Puss Wiley of Readyville among others. 'Aunt' Puss died at an age approximately 106 years. She told Miss Mary Hall in the 1920's, "I remember, I was a slip of a girl when I saw them Indians being driven by the soldiers like cattle. The soldiers were on horses and with big whips they beat the

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<sup>186</sup> Letter from Houston Bragg to Henry Wray. June 9, 1979. RCHS Collection. Subject Files: TN/Nashville; Trail of Tears; 1970s. Folder 8.

<sup>187</sup> Unidentified Letter titled "The Trail of Tears." RCHS Collection. Subject Files: TN/Nashville; Trail of Tears; 1970s. Folder 8. Albert Gore Research Center.

<sup>188</sup> Unidentified Letter titled "The Trail of Tears."



Indians. The women were carrying babies on their backs and some in their arms. It was a terrible sight.”<sup>189</sup>

The transcript between Jane Rust and Thea Prince regarding the Readyville Mill also reveals that the Trail of Tears passed by the Mill during the Removal.<sup>190</sup>

Duane King provides more evidence of the Trail of Tears in the Middle Tennessee area. In his book, he reveals that B.B. Cannon wrote that on October 25, 1837, his detachment “passed through Murfreesborough and halted at Overall’s Creek.”<sup>191</sup> The route through Murfreesboro was beneficial to those leading the detachments because it enabled them to avoid high tolls that were along the way of other routes. King writes that The Murfreesborough Turnpike was considered to be one of the best roads in Tennessee at the time, but avoiding the sometimes costly tolls led some detachments to travel on different roads.<sup>192</sup> One such path involved “taking the Stones River Road through Old Jefferson.”<sup>193</sup> King goes on to say that

Reverend Evan Jones complained to John Ross about the high costs of tolls in a letter from the camp of Situwakee’s detachment one mile east of McMinnville on October 27, 1838: ‘We paid Forty dollars at the Walerns [sic] Ridge gate, and the man agreed to let the other detachments pass at price 37 for four wheeled Carriages and 6 ¼ for a horse. On the Cumberland Mountain they fleeced us: 75 cents a wagon and 12 Cents a horse without the least abatement or thanks. We will avoid several gates on the road to Nashville.’<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Unidentified Letter titled “The Trail of Tears.”

<sup>190</sup> “Preserve the Area’s Rural Qualities (PARQ).” Oral History Interview with Jane Rust and Thea Prince. May 8, 2012. Readyville, Tennessee. Interviewer, Transcriber, and Editor: Lauren Baud. Under the direction of Dr. Martha Norkunas. Albert Gore Research Center.

<sup>191</sup> King 94.

<sup>192</sup> King 95.

<sup>193</sup> King 91-92.

<sup>194</sup> King 95.



One of John Ross's assistants, Captain H. B. Henegar, wrote an article describing the route taken by most of the detachments: "The Indians all went the same route. We crossed the Tennessee at the mouth of the Hiwasee, at Blythe's Ferry, went across Walden's Ridge to Pikeville, thence to McMinnville, thence over to Nashville..."<sup>195</sup> However,

the detachments under Ross's management did not all go the same route. Henegar served as wagon master for the Richard Taylor detachment, which crossed the Tennessee River at Vann's Town (near what is now Harrison, Tennessee) and made its way across the Cumberland Plateau through McMinnville, then joined what is called the northern route. The James Brown/Lewis Hilderbrand detachment had left earlier and followed approximately the same route. Most of the Ross-managed detachments that departed in the fall crossed the Tennessee River at Blythe's Ferry, crossed Walden's Ridge and the Cumberland Plateau, made their way to Nashville, then joined the northern route. From Tennessee, the northern route went north through Kentucky, southern Illinois, Missouri, and the eastern corner of Arkansas and into Indian territory.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Rozema, Vicki (2003). *Voices from the Trail of Tears*. Third Printing Press 32.

<sup>196</sup> Rozema 32-33.

## Native Americans and the Civil War

In addition to history preceding the Civil War, there is also a place for Native Americans in the telling of Civil War history. Many Native Americans, predominantly Cherokee, served during the Civil War under Confederate Colonel William Thomas, known as Thomas's Legion.<sup>197</sup> E. Stanly Godbold's work examining the life of William Holland Thomas, the leader of Thomas's Legion, reveals that "[on] April 9, 1862, Thomas and his company of one hundred Cherokees and twelve white men entered the Confederate Army."<sup>198</sup> This was apparently a great source of pride for many Cherokee as many "participated in Confederate reunions well into the 20th century."<sup>199</sup>

Stories circulated of ferocity by the Native Americans in battle perhaps caused the "the Indians an undeserved reputation for cruelty."<sup>200</sup> The result of such stories was that "Cherokees under Thomas's command became increasingly feared by enemies due to their "skill and persistence in tracking escapees and bushwhackers."<sup>201</sup> Although "[proud] of the distinctiveness and prowess of his warriors, Thomas did not want his Indians to be known as savages. Indeed, he had spent half of his life arguing in the halls of government that they were civilized people deserving all the rights and privileges of citizenship."<sup>202</sup> Regardless of the stories of such activities, there seems to be little proof of such events. Godbold's work reports that "[the] general character of Thomas and his officers, the lack of reference to scalping in the memoirs of Northern soldiers, and the rare and minor participation of Cherokees in battles suggest that the Indians in warfare were little different from their white counterparts."<sup>203</sup>

Stand Watie, a leader of the Cherokee Nation, was an important figure in Civil War history as he became a brigadier general of the Confederate Army. In 1861, Watie "began enlisting recruits in the 1st Cherokee Mounted Rifles, a Southern cavalry battalion."<sup>204</sup> He was also involved in one of the most famous Confederate victories in what was considered Indian Territory in 1864, known as the Second Battle of Cabin Creek.<sup>205</sup> Some of Stand Watie's practices included

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<sup>197</sup> *Civil War Journal: Thomas's Legion*. National Park Service.

<sup>198</sup> Godbold, E. Stanly. (1990). *Confederate Colonel and Cherokee Chief: the Life of William Holland Thomas*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press. 100.

<sup>199</sup> *Civil War Journal: Thomas's Legion*.

<sup>200</sup> Godbold 105.

<sup>201</sup> *Civil War Journal: Thomas's Legion*.

<sup>202</sup> Godbold 107.

<sup>203</sup> Godbold 107.

<sup>204</sup> Perdue, Theda. (2015). Stand Watie's War. (Cover story). *American History*, 50(1) 35.

<sup>205</sup> Perdue 39.

[fanning] anti-Union sentiment by spreading unfounded rumors—such as the imminent replacement of Southern, pro-slavery Indian agents with abolitionist supporters of the new Republican Party—and organized the pro-Confederate Knights of the Golden Circle. Most of his followers were slaveholders, but many nonslaveholders sided with the Confederacy because of their memories of the removal conflict and resentment of [John] Ross’ power as principal chief. One Watie supporter wrote that the secession crisis provided his allies with an opportunity to defeat ‘this old Dominant Party that for years has had its foot upon our necks’.<sup>206</sup>

John Ross, Cherokee chief in 1827, was considered to be Stand Watie’s political nemesis. Chief John Ross was the leader of those in the Cherokee Nation who opposed Removal and the Treaty of New Echota in 1835, known as the National Party.<sup>207</sup> Ross advocated for neutrality at the beginning of the Civil War, but eventually was pressed to favor the Confederacy as many Cherokee were beginning to take sides. He entered into an alliance with the Confederate States America in 1861.<sup>208</sup> Ross commissioned a Cherokee, John Drew, “to raise a regiment—separate from Watie’s battalion but also named the 1st Cherokee Mounted Rifles—to defend the Cherokee Nation and serve the Confederacy.”<sup>209</sup> The article states that Ross’s primary concern was always the Cherokee Nation, and security of the Nation is what caused him to change his position from “Unionist to neutrality to Confederate ally.”<sup>210</sup>

Perhaps the most relevant Native American Civil War figure is Private Martin Wiggins. According to the webpage regarding Wiggins’ service, “Wiggins fought and died in the Civil War, enlisting at Oshkosh, Wisconsin on Sept. 5, 1862, at the age 32. He mustered into service Sept. 28, 1862 in Company E, the 21st Regiment of the Wisconsin Volunteers.”<sup>211</sup> *FindaGrave* goes on to say that “Private Wiggins fought in the battle of Perryville, Ky and the Battle of Stones River in Murfreesboro, Tennessee where he died [of] typhoid. His remains were removed from the battlefield by the Office of Quartermaster General to the National Cemetery, Grave #5521, Stones River, Tennessee.”<sup>212</sup>

Martin Wiggins (1James), born in 1791, lived at Brothertown, N. Y. He is believed to have been the father of David and Ezekiel. The former married Louisa Hammar and they lived at Brothertown, Wis. Their son Leander married Henrietta Brushel, was in Co. E, 21st Wis. Vols., and died at Chaplin Hills, Oct. 8, 1862. Another son was in Co. A, 2nd Wis. Cav., and died in the

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<sup>206</sup> Perdue 35.

<sup>207</sup> Moulton, Gary E. (1973). “Chief John Ross During the Civil War.” Moulton, Gary E. *Civil War History* (19) Kent State University Press 315.

<sup>208</sup> Perdue 35.

<sup>209</sup> Perdue 35.

<sup>210</sup> Moulton 318.

<sup>211</sup> “Pvt Martin Wiggins.” *FindaGrave.com*. Page sponsored by Marilyn Johnson.

<sup>212</sup> “Pvt Martin Wiggins.”

service. Ezekiel Wiggins married Elizabeth, daughter of Samson Paul, and they removed to Wisconsin. Their son Martin married Mary Ann Denny, an Oneida Indian, and they had a son Martin in Co. E., 21st Wis. Vols., who died Nov. 30, 1862.<sup>213</sup>

Wiggins, along with Thomas's Legion, Stand Watie, John Drew, and John Ross, are important figures and would make an important contribution to American and Civil War history and should be celebrated as such in spaces dedicated to memorializing this history.

### **Native Americans in Middle Tennessee Today**

Although Native Americans are still largely invisible to the majority of Tennesseans, their presence is slowly moving to the forefront of the public's conversation. Several groups are active in spreading awareness about their Native American heritage. *Native History Association*, run by Patrick Cummins, is an organization which provides free public services to educate the public about Native American culture and history. The website provides an immense amount of information regarding Native American history, including important sites, events, and news to help facilitate a greater understanding of this history.

The Native American Indian Association of Tennessee is also active in educating the public. The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Festival Tennessee State Pow Wow is being held in Nashville in October of 2015. Their website include information regarding ongoing efforts to educate the Middle Tennessee community.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness is involved in an effort called Mending the Hoop which lists active organizations in Tennessee which aim to reach out to the community for educational purposes. Some of these organizations include Advisory Council on Tennessee Indian Affairs, Alliance for Native American Indian Rights, and Native American Educational Association of Tennessee, which is located on the Middle Tennessee State University campus. These are only a few of the active organizations of Middle Tennessee.

### **Suggestions for Stones River National Battlefield**

As Stones River National Battlefield has made efforts in recent history to be more inclusive of other groups in its telling of Tennessee and U.S. history, it is unfortunate that Native Americans have largely been excluded from this discourse. An abundance of sources document that Murfreesboro and Middle Tennessee is an area rich in Native American history. The rich landscape and plethora of plants and game made the area an important hunting ground for many tribes. Legends, pertaining to the origin of various plants and animals found in the area, as well as legends regarding features of the Middle Tennessee area, are extremely important to Native

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<sup>213</sup> Love, W. D. (1899). *Samson Occom, and the Christian Indians of New England*. [electronic resource]. Boston ; Chicago : Pilgrim Press 366-367.

American history. The integration of some of these myths, such as the legend of the Black Fox Spring, would make for excellent additions to the Stones River Battlefield exhibits.

The presence of Native Americans passing through the area during the Trail of Tears is also deserving of more attention. It would be beneficial if the Battlefield were to incorporate the background and policies which led to the forced removal of Native Americans in the area, much as the background of slavery has been added to the discourse of the Civil War.

The figures of Stand Watie, John Ross, and John Drew and their efforts to the Civil War would also provide significant information regarding the Native American contribution to the Civil War. It is my opinion that Wiggins would be the most significant contribution. Although documentation regarding his time in the military is sparse, some information about his background is available.

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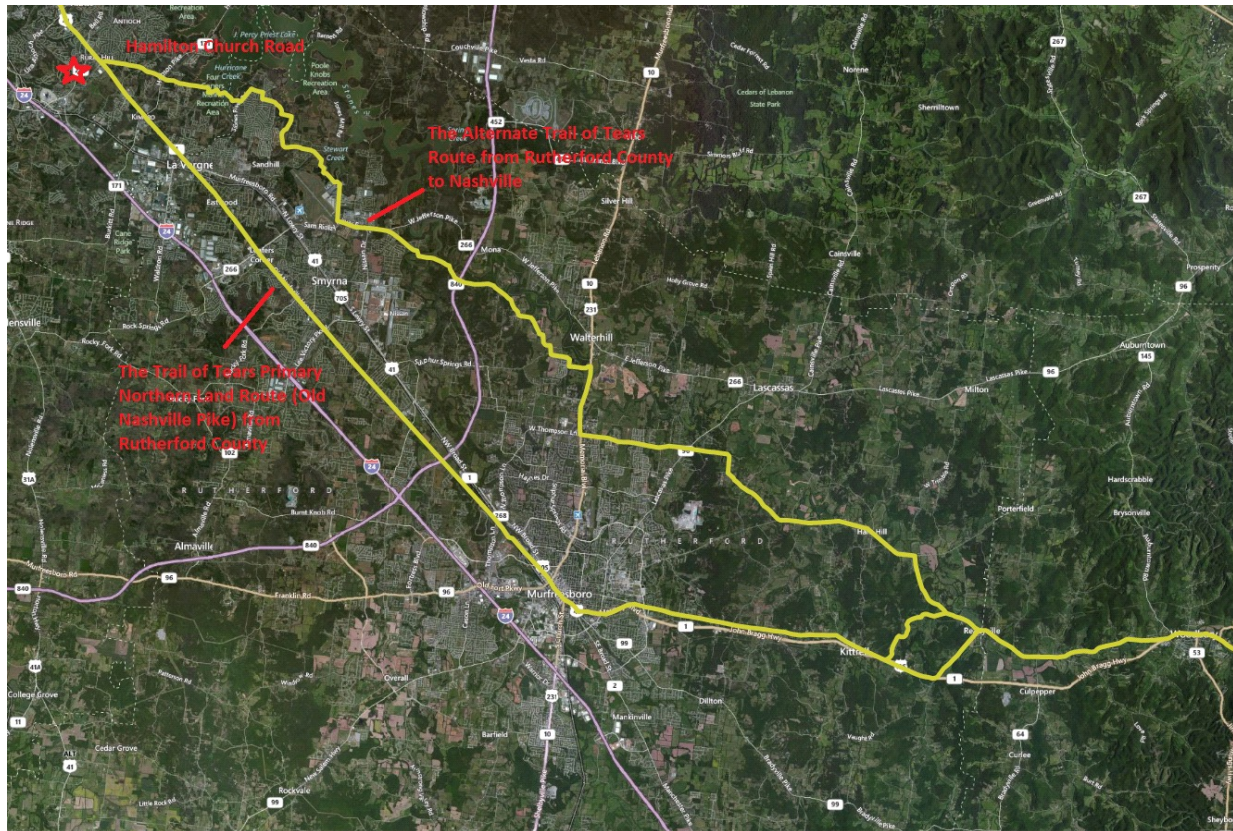
## **From The 1838 Cherokee Trail of Tears, through the Civil War Era, in Northern Rutherford County, Tennessee**

### **Pat Cummins**

This documentation will not elaborate on the political background that began with Andrew Jackson’s Indian Removal Act of 1830, or the attempts by the Cherokee to fight the legality of the Indian Removal Act as it pertained to their rights, as I feel that there are sufficient resources available elsewhere for the study of the policies and events that led up to the forced immigration of the southeastern Native American tribes by the United States Government.

I will however, focus on the routes traveled by the Cherokee detachments of the northern land route that passed through Rutherford County into Davidson County, or Nashville Tennessee between October 1837, and December of 1838 on two routes known as the “primary” northern land route, and the lesser known “alternate” northern land route that bypassed Murfreesboro Tennessee to avoid the potential of paying additional or high toll booth fees.

**Image 1, Rutherford County Trail of Tears Routes (Photo: Patrick Cummins)**

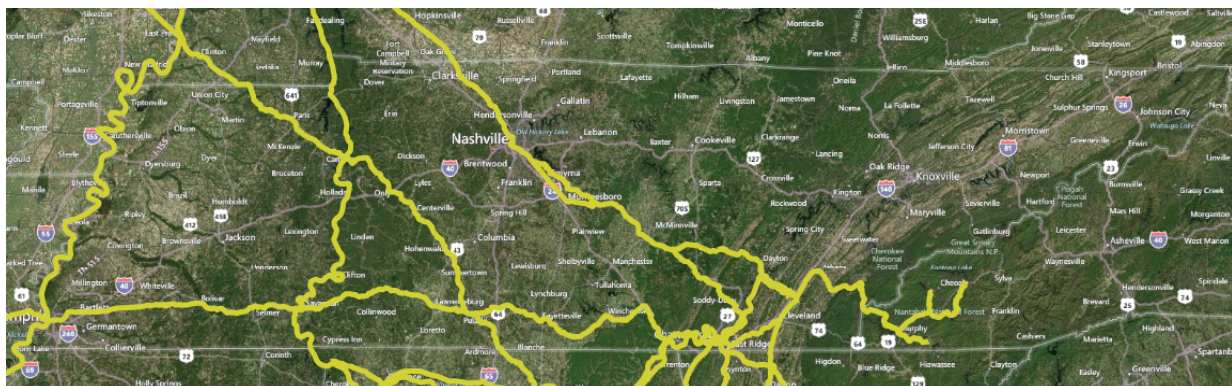


Beginning with the first Cherokee detachment to utilize the northern land route through Middle Tennessee, these were pro-treaty Cherokee who agreed to immigrate under the terms of the 1830 Indian Removal Act, and willfully forfeited their rights to their traditional homelands in exchange for lands west of the Mississippi in modern day Oklahoma. They were led by detachment leader B.B. Cannon and left southeastern Tennessee beginning in October of 1837. Cannon's detachment utilized the primary northern route through the town of Murfreesboro and from here, traveled northwest toward Nashville on the Old Nashville Pike. It is documented that members of this detachment detoured slightly from the main route long enough to visit the Hermitage, (Home of President Andrew Jackson) while passing through the vicinity of Nashville as well.

By October 1<sup>st</sup> of 1838 the official removal of the approximate 16,000 remaining Cherokee who had been held for several months in detainment camps in the southeastern United States was begun. The northern route had its beginnings in the area of Charleston TN and along the banks of the Tennessee River in Chattanooga, TN. Traveling steadily toward the northwest and into

Middle Tennessee by way of McMinnville, TN in Cannon County. By the time the route reached Rutherford County, it was described as having been plagued by numerous challenges including the cold, rain, and deep muddy ruts in the road, which made travel very slow and cumbersome for those traveling into Rutherford County at Reedyville Tennessee. It is also worth mentioning that one detachment leader had died by the time they reached Woodbury, TN. The other routes utilized by the detachments, are the Bell and Benge routes that passed much further to the south through Winchester Tennessee, onto Fayetteville, into Pulaski and then to Lawrence County, with the Bell detachment passing straight to the west to Memphis, while the Benge detachment turned to the northwest and in the general direction toward the Mississippi River and Cape Girardeau Missouri. The Tennessee River served additionally as a water route to the west originating at Chattanooga, TN

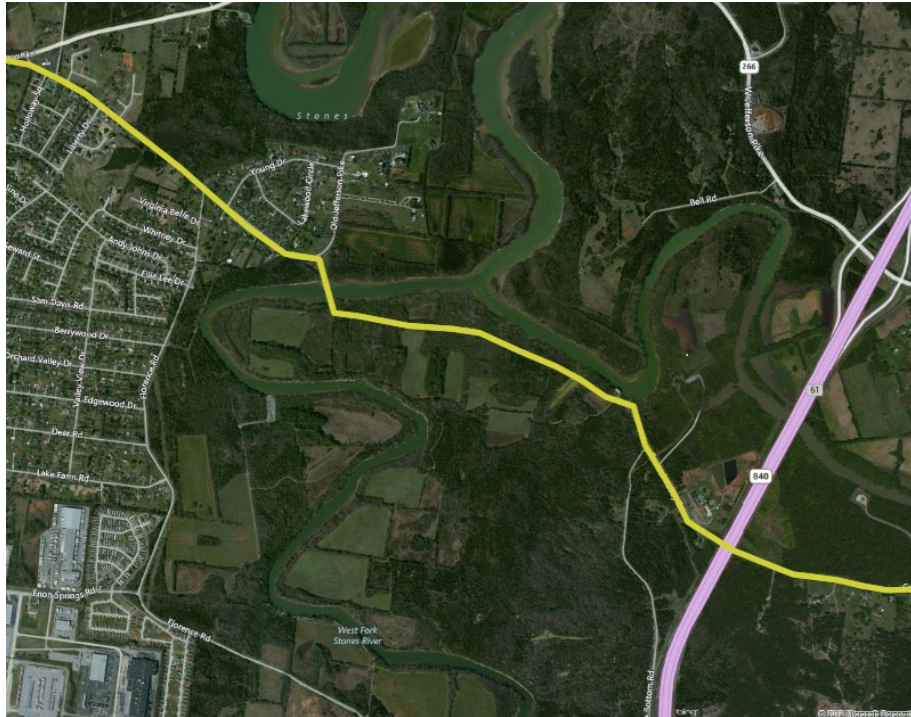
**Image 2, Trail of Tear's routes across Tennessee (Photo: Patrick Cummins)**



Of the twelve Cherokee detachments that utilized the northern land route into Rutherford County, the vast majority of people (approximately some 11,000 Cherokee) traveled the primary route westward along Woodbury Pike which becomes East Main Street into modern Murfreesboro. From here, the route extends to the northeast along the Old Nashville Pike through the Stones River National Battlefield and beyond to Nashville. Yet according to information contained in the diary accounts of Cherokee detachment leader Rev. Evan Jones, his detachment, # 5, and three additional detachments totaling approximately 4000 persons, led by Rev. Jessy Bushyhead, of detachment # 3, Capt. Old Fields, # 6, and Moses Daniel, # 7, utilized the lesser known alternate route that followed the East Fork of the Stones River to the original County Seat of Rutherford County, known as Jefferson, thus purposely bypassing Murfreesboro TN all together.

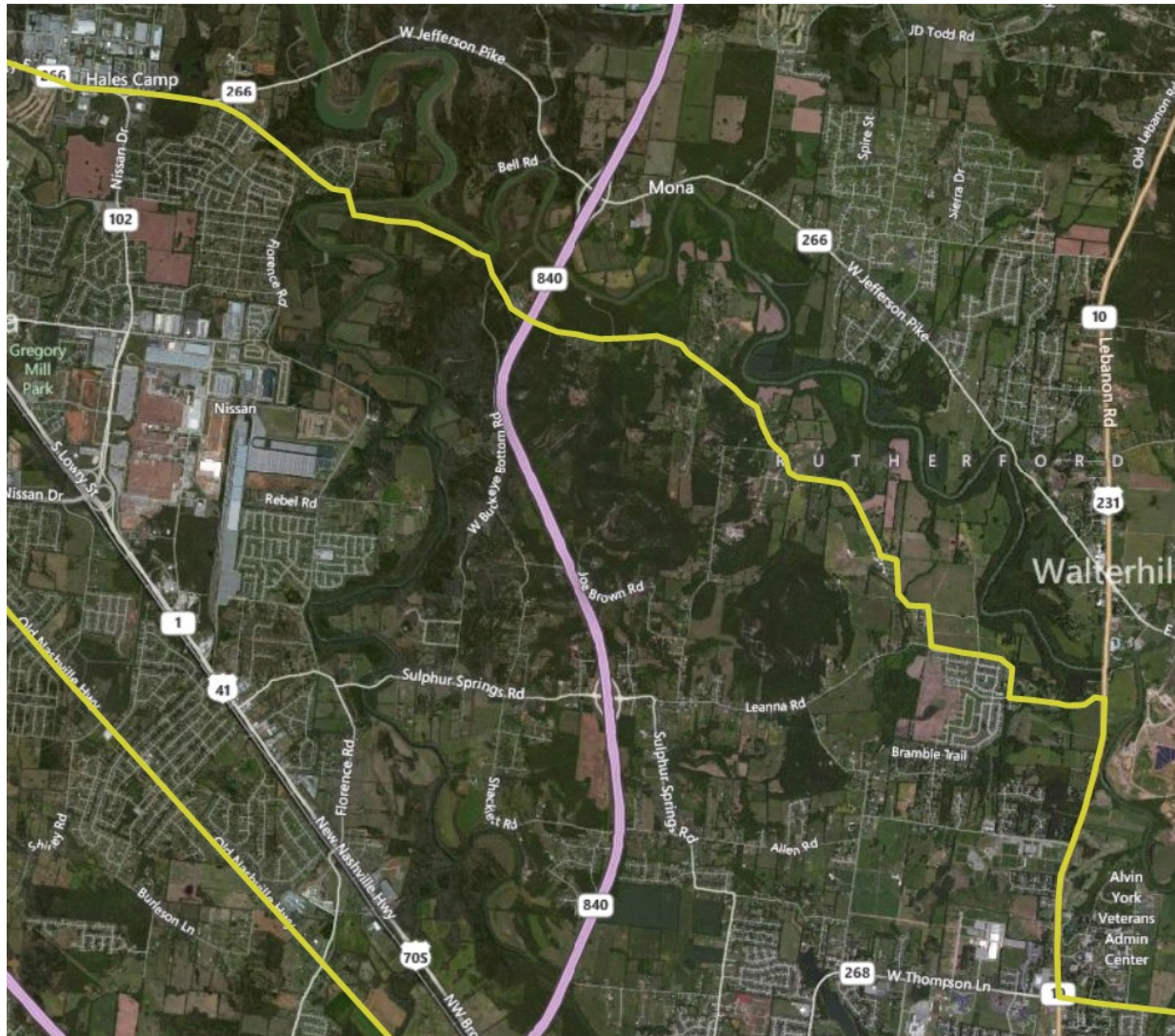


**Image 3. The Rutherford County (Alternate) Trail of Tears Route through Jefferson, passing over the West Fork of the Stones River Into modern day Smyrna TN. (Photo: Patrick Cummins)**



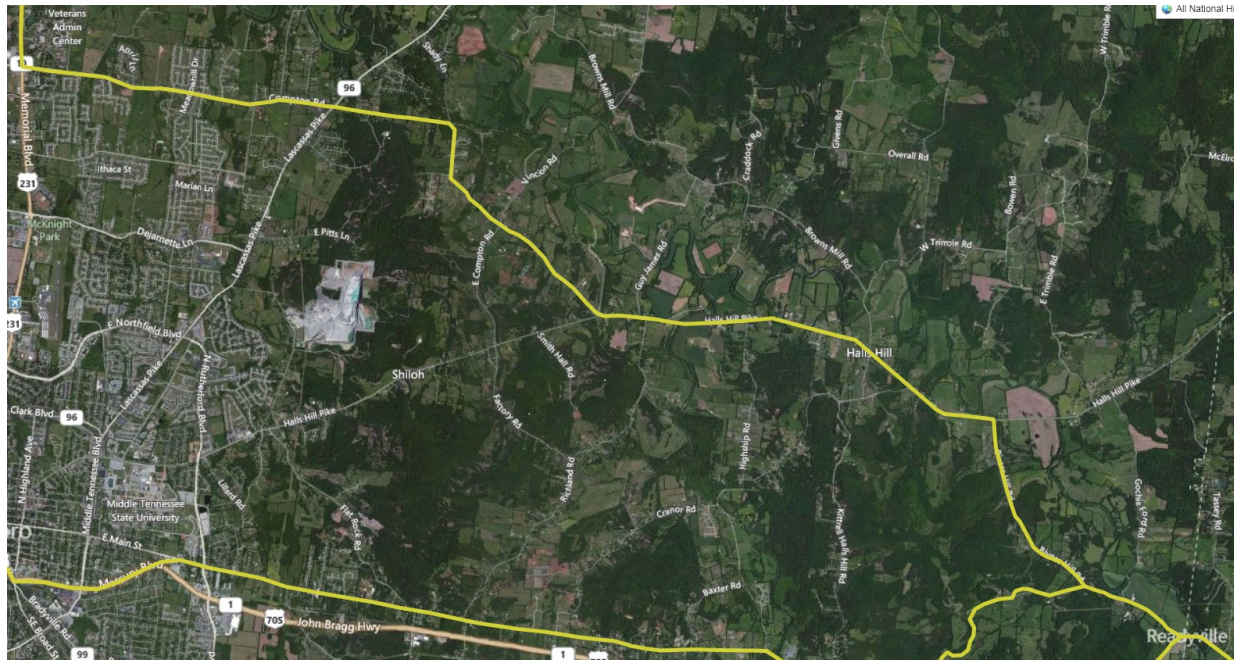
Based on existing the alignment as documented in the National Park Service's 1992 Comprehensive Management and Use Plan for Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, this route left the Readyville & Woodbury Tennessee area on Blevins Hill Road passing onto Halls Hill Road which eventually becomes Sharpesville Road. Sharpesville leads to Compton Road, which is also known as Veterans Hospital Road. By the time it reaches Highway 231, the alternate route turns north, at the Murfreesboro Veterans Hospital and proceeds to just south the Walter Hill community, and turns left to the northeast on Central Valley Road to Jefferson.

**Image 4. Alternate Trail of Tears Route from the Alvin C. York / Murfreesboro VA Hospital to Jefferson, showing the relationship of this route to the primary Old Nashville Pike route at the lower left of the image. (Photo: Patrick Cummins)**





**The Rutherford County Alternate Trail of Tears route from Readyville, Tennessee to the Murfreesboro VA Hospital, with the primary northern route into Murfreesboro visible to the south (Photo: Patrick Cummins)**



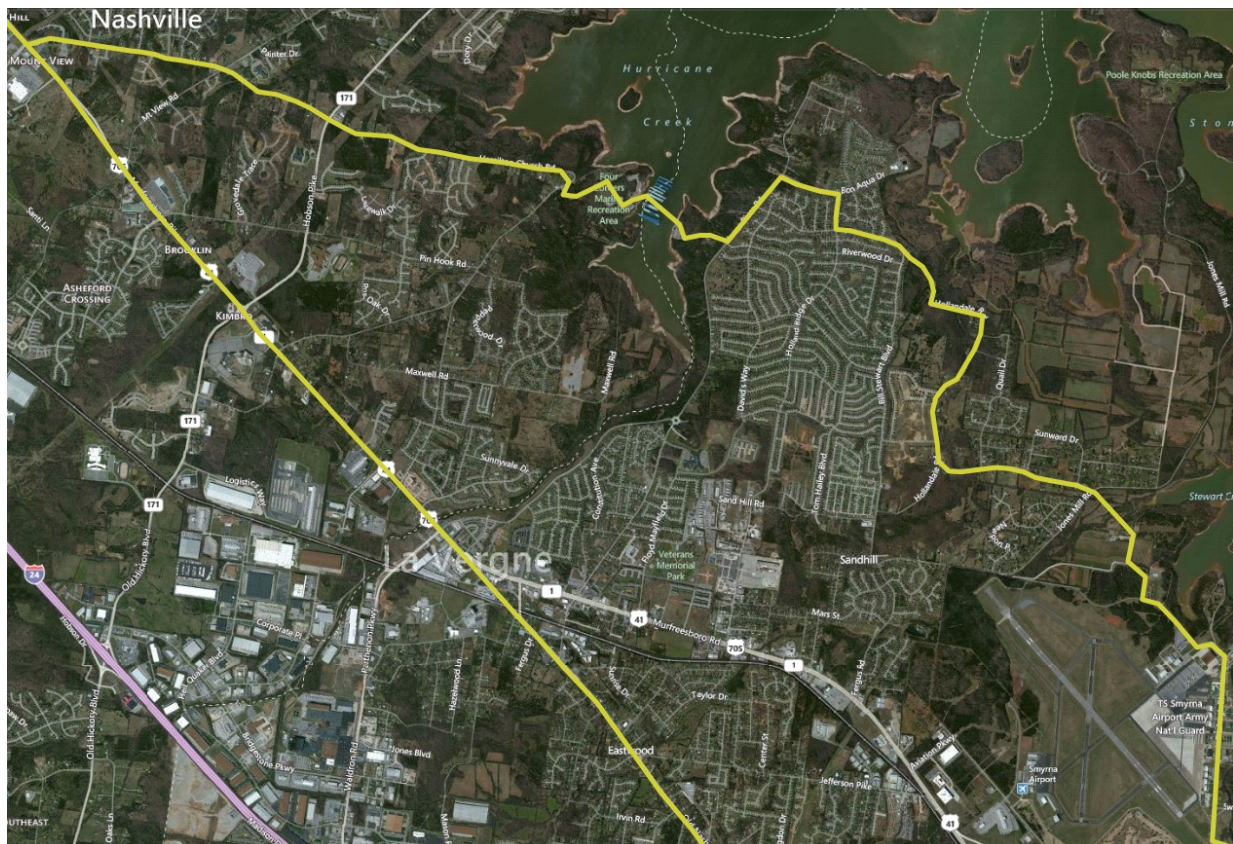
As previously mentioned, and according to the published accounts by Archaeologist, Mr. Ben Nance, of the Tennessee Division of Archaeology in his 2001 report on the Trail of Tears, (page 23, “these four detachments were reported spread along the route from the town of Jefferson to a point approximately 4 miles to the east of Jefferson, during the last week of October of 1838.”

The Trail crossed the West Fork of the Stones River at Jefferson to the northwest following an abandoned but clearly identifiable road segment that is still indirectly linked to what is now Old Jefferson Pike in the Smyrna, TN. From this location the route traveled along the modern day Jefferson Pike west to Sam Ridley Parkway across Stewarts Creek and the Smyrna Greenway. The trail then turned northward along the main drive into the Smyrna Airfield. From the area of the airfield, the route crossed current TWRA property just east of La Vergne, to Morningside Drive, onto Hollandale Road, and through a modern day subdivision to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Hurricane Creek boat ramp, immediately across from Four Corners Marina at J. Percy Priest Lake. The Trail of Tears Alternate route then leaves Rutherford County at the Davidson county line here, and traverses the Four Corners Marina property where it joins Hamilton Church Road in Davidson County TN. The National Historic Trail then follows this

road for approximately 3 miles to the northwest until rejoining the main northern land route at Murfreesboro Pike and Hamilton Church Road in Antioch, TN.

**Source: The Trail of Tears in Tennessee: by Benjamin Nance. Published by the Tennessee Division of Archaeology, 2001.**

**Image 5, the Trail of Tears Alternate Route from the Smyrna Airfield to the northern terminus at Murfreesboro Pike & Hamilton Church Road in Antioch, Tennessee, Davidson County. (Photo: Native History Association)**



### **The Rutherford County Trail of Tears National Historic Trail (Alternate Route)**

The National Park Service's National Historic Trails Intermountain Region office based in Santa Fe, New Mexico, has since worked with the U.S. Army Corps. Of Engineers Nashville District Office to install officially mandated NPS signage to commemorate the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail at the J. Percy Priest / East Fork Recreation Area property. According to Ben Nances Tennessee Trail of Tears Report - Detachment leaders were hand picked by Cherokee Nation Principal Chief John Ross. We know from a letter written to John Ross by detachment



leader and Baptist Minister - Evan Jones, that he along with the following individuals led approximately 4000 persons through the settlement of Jefferson during the last week of October 1838. 1. Rev. Jesse Bushyhead - 950, 2. Rev. Evan Jones - 1,250, 3. Moses Daniel - 1,035 & 4. Capt. Old Field - 983. (King & Evans 1978: 186-187; 1991:81)

**Image 6, The Trail of Tears entry sign at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers East Fork Recreation Area in northern Rutherford County Tennessee**

**(Photo: Patrick Cummins)**





It is worth further mention for the purpose of historic documentation, that the former location of Jefferson (40RD224) is also likely eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) based on the origins of the settlement as Rutherford County's first seat of Government in 1804, until 1811. In addition, due to its relation to certain historical figures, and the potential for the archaeological resources to yield additional information about the site.

The documented Civil War history of this federally owned, and managed National Historic Trail component warrants additional measures to disseminate and further interpret the history for the benefit of the general public. Important historical military engagements occurred on the property involving both Union and Confederate commands within days of the outbreak of the Battle of Stones River on December 31, 1862.

Confederate Calvary General Joseph Wheeler, and approximately 3000 troops under his command attacked Starkweather's Union brigade of Rousseau's division, and thus destroyed a large Supply Train at Jefferson on December 30, 1862," with over 100 Union casualty's, including those missing and wounded" yet no mention of this altercations or skirmishes leading up to the Stones River Battle is currently being discussed to my knowledge at Stones River National Battlefield?

**Source: "Tennessee's Civil War Battlefields – A Guide to their History and Preservation" Page 168, Randy Bishop, Pelican Publishing Company Inc. Gretna, LA 2008.**

In addition to the afore mentioned resources, the region within 6 miles of Stones River National Battlefield continues to yield very important data, and surviving Historic Trail of Tears & Civil War heritage resources.

"One of Rutherford Counties 8 surviving Trail of Tear's witness structures is located at 845 Old Jefferson Pike, and is known as the Johns-King House which in fact witnessed the Cherokee detachments of approximately 4000 persons pass along Old Jefferson Pike during the 1838 Trail of Tears. This home was constructed in 1807 by prominent early Middle Tennessee Politician, Surveyor, Revolutionary War Veteran, and Jefferson Co-founder, Col. Robert Weakley. The historic cedar log, double pen two story dog trot home is currently in private hands, and is in dire need of restoration before it is lost to neglect and natural deterioration. Confederate Calvary General Joseph Wheeler's 1862 Raid on Jefferson unfolded in front of this important remnant structure, and on the grounds surrounding it. Wounded Confederate Soldiers were even treated within its walls after General Wheelers Raid on the region".

**Sources: "Preliminary Historic Assessment of the Johns-King Home 845 Old Jefferson Pike, in Smyrna Tennessee" by, Dr. Carroll Van West, Unpublished Report, October 2014. January 25, 1863 – Capture of wagon train, Antioch by Joseph Wheeler, Major-General. Tennessee Civil War Sourcebook, Edited by James B. Jones, Jr.**

<http://tennessee.civilwarsourcebook.com>. Tennessee Historical Commission, Tennessee Wars Commission, Department of Environment and Conservation.

Image 7, An 1890 photo of the circa 1807 Johns-King House on Old Jefferson Pike in Smyrna, Tennessee

(Photo Courtesy Of Mr. Ernest K. Johns of Smyrna, TN)





**Image 8, C S A Gen. Joseph Wheeler**

**(Photo: Tennessee State Library & Archives)**

The settlement of Jefferson played an important role in Tennessee's African American history as well. Approximately 1 mile to the west of the Fairmont Plantation, the Walter Keeble Plantation was the birthplace of Tennessee's first African American State Senator, Sampson W. Keeble, who was born at Jefferson in 1833.

In addition to the afore mentioned information, please see attached the 19 page type written paper entitled: "The Mistress of Stony Lonesome" by Mary Ann Burkholder, October 1981. A collection of Civil War era communications originally written by Mrs. Fannie Keeble of the Keeble Plantation at Jefferson, to her Confederate soldier husband and wealthy Plantation owner Walter Keeble Jr. while he was away fighting for the Confederacy. Mrs. Keeble describes life on the Plantation in detail during the Federal occupation of Rutherford County and the hardships brought about by the ever present Union Soldiers and the "apparent audacity of the servants" of the Plantation under Union occupation.



Online website, accessed November 2012. <http://tn.gov/tsla/exhibits/blackhistory/>  
Personal Interview: Mr. Toby Francis, Board Member – Rutherford County Historical Society, March 2013.

**Image 9, the Walter Keeble Sr. Plantation House: circa 1810 – 1966.**

**(Photo Courtesy of Mr. Toby Francis, Rutherford County Historical Society)**



Although the most intense days of engagement from Dec. 31, 1862 to January 3, 1863 between the two Armies took place at the main area of the National Battlefield today, the Civil war itself effected far more people in the surrounding countryside (within 5 to 6 miles) than we are led to believe by the modern interpretation at Stones River National Battlefield today.

In addition to previously mentioned accounts, a number of homes and other buildings in northern Rutherford County, were burned by General William Roscrans advancing Union troops as they proceeded toward Murfreesboro from Nashville beginning on December 26<sup>th</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup> of 1862. In route toward Murfreesboro, Union forces, (including this Authors Great, Great, Grandfather - Private John G. Cummins of the Union 3rd KY. Volunteer Infantry) were ordered to secure the Stewarts Creek bridge location on what was then, Jefferson Pike (in modern day Smyrna Tennessee, and now renamed as Sam Ridley Parkway) after intense artillery and small arms fire, they seized control of the Stewart's Creek Timber Bridge on the Jefferson Pike from Confederate troops who had been intent on its destruction in order to block the Union advances to Murfreesboro.

**Source: “December 27, 1862 – Skirmish, Stewarts Creek Bridge on the Jefferson Pike. Report of Capt. Frank W. Mix, Fourth Michigan Calvary, of skirmish at Stewarts Creek Bridge, December 27. Tennessee Civil War Sourcebook, Edited by James B. Jones Jr. <http://tennessee.civilwarsourcesourcebook.com> Tennessee Historical Commission, Tennessee Wars Commission, Department of Environment and Conservation.**

**Image 10. Stewarts Creek Bridge site – Smyrna TN. (Photo by: Patrick Cummins)**



Several large Plantations, and a number of private homes and small farms were also burned and otherwise destroyed by Union forces in the area as well. One account of such activity written by Mrs. Elizabeth (Betty) Ridley Blackmore, the Daughter of Judge Bromfield Ridley, was published following her death in 1864, in the Murfreesboro Monitor Newspaper in 1864. According to Mrs. Blackmore's article, she wrote that her Father, "the owner of over 100 slaves at Jefferson also had 5 Sons and three Nephews by the last name of Crosthwaite, all either serving in the Confederate Army or who had already perished in the war". According to her

account, “A group of Union soldiers on February 11<sup>th</sup> 1863, made good on their weeks of taunts and threats to burn her Father’s home and plantation out of spite and because of their dislike for the Confederate Ridley family.” Her brother C.S.A. Capt. B.L. Ridley Jr. who served as Aide de Camp, to C.S.A. General A.P. Stewart, also published his own accounts of this particular action, and the Civil War in Rutherford County and elsewhere in his book, entitled “Battles and Sketches of the Army of Tennessee” that he published in 1906. **Source: “The Burning of Fairmont” by Elizabeth Ridley Blackmore. Published by the Murfreesboro Monitor Newspaper, 1867. (See attached copy of the original story accessed online: 01/15/ 2015.**

**Image 11, Elizabeth (Betty) Ridley Blackmore, and daughter of Judge Bromfield L. and Rebecca Crosthwaite Ridley, & the sister of C S A Capt. B.L. Ridley Jr.**

**(Photo Courtesy of Rutherford County Archives)**



*Elizabeth Ridley Blackmore (1834–1864) was a daughter of Bromfield and Rebecca Crosthwaite Ridley. She married William Blackmore of Wilson County. She was a sister of Bromfield Lewis Ridley Jr., pictured later.*

**Image 12, C.S.A. Captain Bromfield Lewis Ridley Jr.**

**(Photo Courtesy Of Rutherford County Archives)**

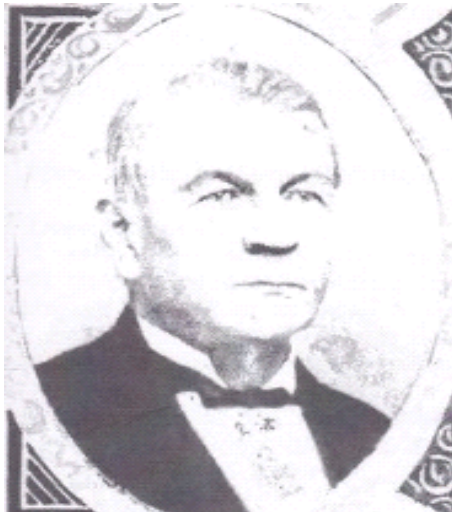


Based on the writings of Betty R. Blackmore, “The Ridley women awoke late at night on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 1863, to find the house engulfed in flames and although they escaped the flames, the house was a total loss.” The location of the former house and plantation is publicly accessible, and still visible today on U.S. Army Corps. Of Engineers property at the East Fork Recreation Area in northern Rutherford County. The result of this devastation was the economic ruin of Judge B.L. Ridley Sr. and he was never able to completely recover. He died in tremendous debt in 1869, and his land was sold at auction to cover his debts by his surviving family members by the early 1870’s.

**Source: “The Burning of Fairmont” By Elizabeth (Betty) Ridley Blackmore. Originally Published by the Murfreesboro Monitor Newspaper, 1867. Original manuscripts re-published by the Tennessee Historical Society in 1950.**



**Image 13, Rutherford County Chancellor, Bromfield Lewis Ridley: 1804 – 1869**



**(Photo Courtesy Of the Rutherford County Archives)**

A Similar scenario of arson was the situation for early Jefferson Tavern owner John Nash Read, and his son who owned adjoining large Plantations Templeton Grove, and Ingleside Plantation, where the modern Nissan Motors Plant is in Smyrna, TN today. On December 30<sup>th</sup> of 1862, the two massive Plantation homes were set ablaze by the Union Army as they advanced toward the Confederate Forces waiting to the south at Murfreesboro Tennessee. The burnings proceeded the outbreak of the Battle of Stones River by just one day, and therefore might well be considered to be the real beginnings of the Battle of Stones River.

**Online Resource:** <http://rutherfordtnhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Invitation-to-Templeton-Grove-Cemetery-Event.pdf> accessed, February, 2015

**Personal Interview:** Mr. Toby Francis, Board Member – Rutherford County Historical Society, March, 2013.

**Image 14, 1878 DeBeers Map of Rutherford County TN, showing the site of Ingleside Plantation near the numeral #6 on the map below.**

**(Photo: Rutherford County Archives)**

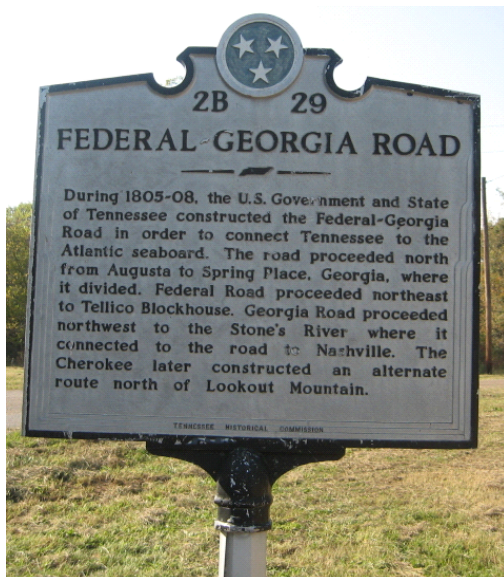




across the southeast United States. However, The Tennessee route through Rutherford County is one of the more accessible segments by car still in existence today.

**Image 15, a Federal-Georgia Road Tennessee State Historical Marker near Chattanooga, TN.**

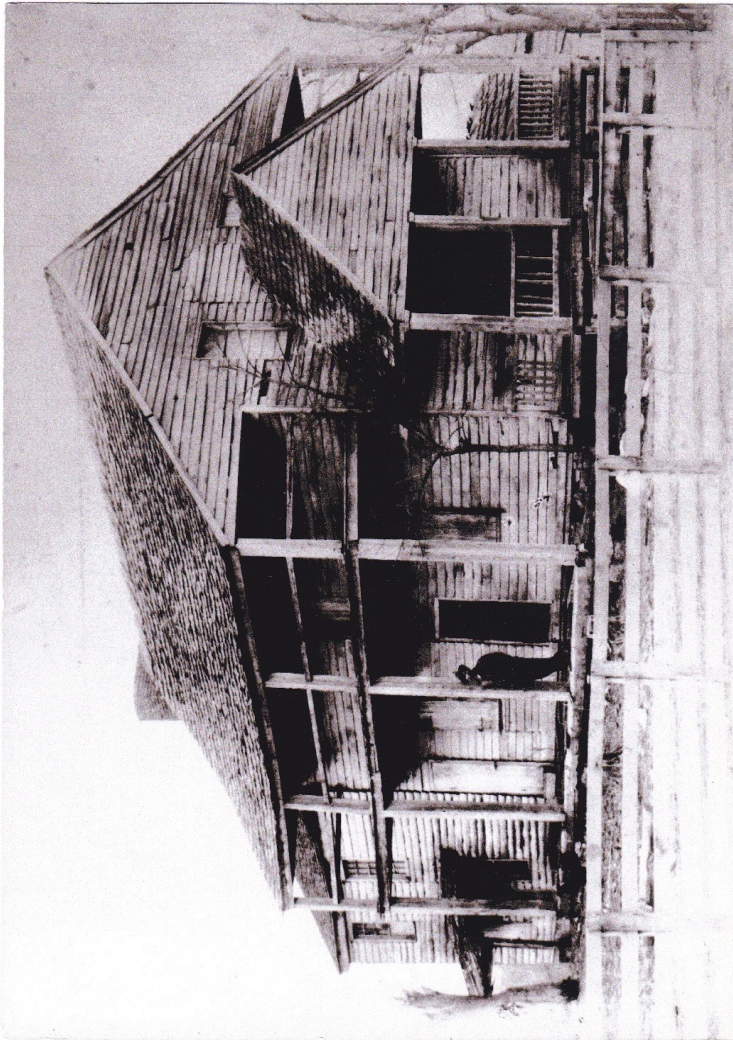
**Photo: Tennessee State Historical Commission**



**Image 16, The Reed Tavern at Jefferson's Town Square: circa 1803 to 1902. A notable Stagecoach stop on the Georgia Road at Jefferson. (Photo Courtesy Of Mr. Toby Francis,**



Rutherford County Historical Society)



**Additional Resources:**

**The Book: "From Tennessee To Oz, The Amazing Saga of Judy Garland's Family History Part 1" by Michelle Russell. Published 2009, by Catsong Publishing HC 1 Box 23Z-31, White Haven, PA 18661.**

**Online Publication: "Forgotten Footsteps" - the Cherokee Trail of Tears National Historic Trail at Old Jefferson, Rutherford County Tennessee by: Pat Cummins, Published online in August of 2014.**

**<http://www.sitemason.com/files/iJ0tDa/Trail%20of%20Tears%20Article.pdf>**

**Online Website:**

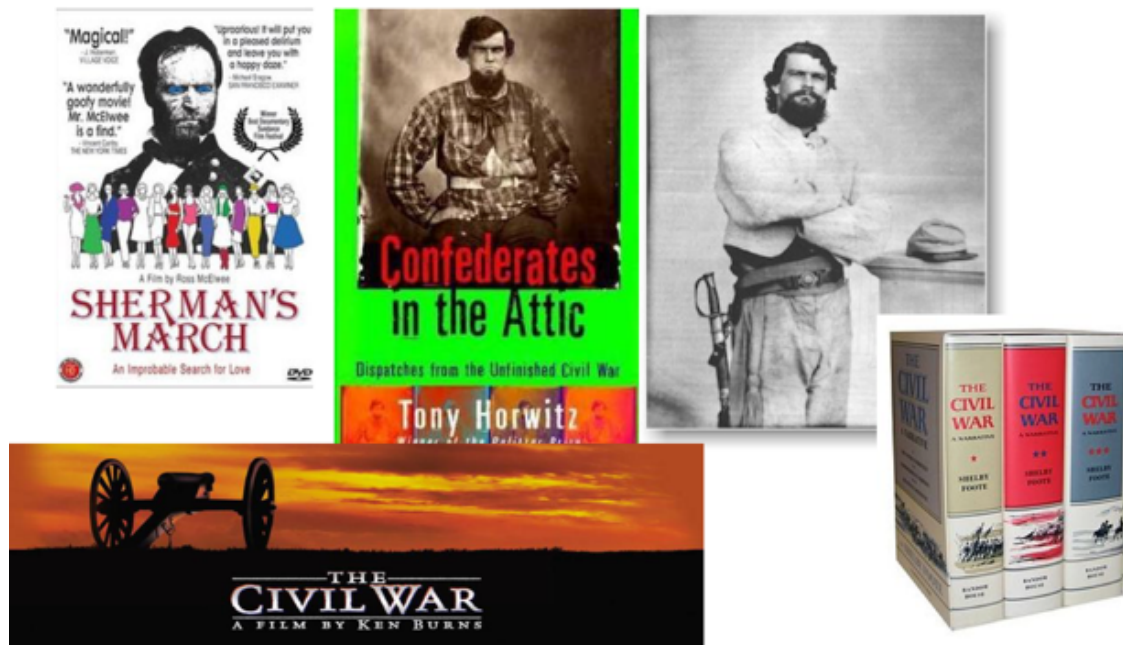
[http://www.nativehistoryassociation.org/old\\_jefferson.php](http://www.nativehistoryassociation.org/old_jefferson.php)

**The Trail of Tears in Tennessee: A Study of the Routes Used During the Cherokee Removal of 1838, by Benjamin Nance. Published by the Tennessee Division of Archaeology, 2001.**

[http://tn.gov/assets/entities/environment/attachments/arch\\_roi15\\_trail\\_of\\_tears\\_2001.pdf](http://tn.gov/assets/entities/environment/attachments/arch_roi15_trail_of_tears_2001.pdf)

**ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW**

When I was brought on to lead an ethnographic overview of Stones River Battlefield, I had mixed feelings. As a seasoned ethnographer I was relieved to know this project would require no language learning; no need to prepare myself for cold showers and squat toilets; no travel on the back of a motorcycle or in a non-air-conditioned bus. I soon realized, however, I was still very much a fish out of water (a familiar state of being for most anthropologists engaging a new project). Further, I certainly do not consider myself to be an expert on the Civil War. My understanding of the war, prior to my involvement in this project, was limited to a very few experiences: Ross McElwee's *Sherman's March* (not the history of, but a strange and humorous, if somewhat long, 1986 documentary film made by a struggling professor who begins the film tracing the impact of Sherman's March through the South but ends up tracing his failed relationships with girlfriends (through the South)); Tony Horwitz's 1998, Pulitzer Prize-winning *Confederates in the Attic* (a book that honestly and sympathetically documents the practices and lifestyles of those involved in Civil War Reenactments, or Living History as the park service prefers to call them. There was also Ken Burn's Documentary series on PBS – which was mentioned by many of those I interviewed. And, of course, there was Shelby Foote's trilogy on the Civil War (published between 1958 and 1974) which I read passionately as a teenager (the three volumes barely give a mention to the Battle of Stones River). Given this literary and filmic history, one might say I have a more general knowledge of the Civil War than someone who was not born and raised in the South. Still, I cannot say I was in any way an insider or expert when it comes to the region and its battles. I mention all this to point out that, as an ethnographer, my bias was undoubtedly to address more current history when speaking to interview subjects. In short, there is little discussion of the Battle of Stones River or the Civil War itself in this ethnographic account.



There are a variety of issues that can come to bear when “studying your own”. A couple worth mentioning here: when interviewing those with whom you are familiar, there may be a tendency to think you know what they mean, even finish their sentences, when in discussion. I found, during this work, that such premonition could be a problem. First, there are distinct differences in class that must be accounted for. Talking to people who own or have owned large swaths of land in and around Murfreesboro does not have a correspondent in my own background. The way certain individuals speak of land and livestock and private school and travel do not correspond to my own background in a way I can comprehend, much less second-guess. If a sentence was left hanging and I tried to fill in the silence with my own suggestion, I was inevitably headed in the wrong direction.

Second, there exists a deep sense of place, generationally deep, for many we interviewed. I, as an anthropology professor with what now appears to be a short 14 years’ experience in Murfreesboro, did not fully appreciate this sense of place as this work began. I try here to be sensitive to their deep-seeded perspectives, and the longevity of the family experiences described, while also recognizing the needs and wants of a national park service attempting to address national and, at times, global needs.

In order to create a dialogue of sorts between the people of the town and the personnel of the park, I began looking for salient moments in the park’s history when and where I was able to find voices expressing perspectives, opinions, beliefs from multiple directions. For expediency, I focused on those moments when the park was most in dialogue with its surroundings. What this meant was looking for moments when the newspapers became aware of and reported on the park

and when locals spoke about their own ideas in relation to the park. And, most importantly, when these voices were documented.

For this Ethnographic Overview the moment most rich in archival data was the expansion of the park that began in the late 1990's and continues, in part, to this day following a General Management Plan published in 1998.

While our ethnographic interviews were limited by time and opportunity, several points of interests emerged from discussions about the park's expansion that we include below. Specifically, respondents articulated attitudes towards the following:

- The changing landscape brought on by urban development
- Ill-feelings toward the park and National Park Service by local land-owners
- Concerns with safety when it comes to outdoor recreation

I attempt to address each of these issues consecutively. However, the reader should be aware of some overlap of topics as individuals discuss the issues at hand.

A few words concerning the presentation of ethnographic data in this report.

Given the heated nature of responses concerning the 1998 expansion plans of the STRI I have chosen to provide a limited set of truncated and anonymous responses from responders. All words presented throughout this report come from individuals who have signed written consent forms -- with the not insignificant exclusion of those who responded to the query "Murfreestown is..." -- to include their words in ethnographic research. And if one was very much interested, they could request permission to enter the NPS archives and examine the fuller texts as well as discover the identity of the speakers. However, given this is a public document, and we all live in this community together, I have chosen to provide what you see below, in a bullet-point form that benefits park personnel using this report as a training tool while also protecting the anonymity of those willing to provide their voice to this project.

Additionally, regarding the presentation of ethnographic interviews, I have chosen, against my better academic instincts, to present this material relatively free of theoretical analysis. I believe the dialogue presented here represents something indicative of the community. It has value in its own right. It is succinct and clear enough to be understood by someone considering the attitudes of those who do or do not utilize the park. My analysis is short and, hopefully, clear. There is more that can be said on these issues and I do plan on exploring them further in a more academic context. At the time this analysis is complete, I will instantly pass this information on to the NPS for their own utility.

## **Murfreesboro is...**

As discussed in the FORWARD to this report, Murfreesboro has experienced unprecedented growth over the past two decades. Because the city is now such an integral and unavoidable part of the park experience, before getting into the heart of the ethnography I'd like to present some responses received to the question, "What is Murfreesboro?"

Murfreesboro is...

- A town growing faster than just about any other in the United States;
- A town that receives inspiration from and contributes to the musical genius of "Nashville";
- A city with a college that educates the first members of families from around here, and immigrants, and refugees, and exchange students from around the world;
- A town with a landscape pockmarked with history;
- A town with a lot of pride and a willful amnesia;
- A city full of bad drivers;
- Quiet, too quiet;
- A city whose streets and bridges and buildings and the city itself are all named after families still alive-and-well within the community;
- A town dealing with the last vestiges of the "good-ol'-boy" network but also actively participating in the reinvigoration of the "good-ol'-boy" network;
- A city in dire need of good restaurants, groceries, museums, and other spaces;
- A city full of rednecks and Republicans;
- A land-locked town with a less-than-stellar landscape cursed with a history of tornados.
- A city blessed with a mild "Southern" climate;
- A place in which friends are hard to come by but, once landed, are loyal and accepting of personal flaws;
- A relatively cheap place to live;
- A city with easy access to interstates and an international airport
- The center of Tennessee
- The center of the universe
- A city with a Civil War history and a National Park that commemorates the North's Victory in the heart of the South;
- A town scared of change but changing nonetheless.

I start with these comments to demonstrate some of the varied opinions people have of the city in which they live. Further, I believe these responses demonstrate the centrality of a "Southern" heritage and of the Civil War to our understanding of the region. Some responses speak to a pride in this history and cultural identity. Others are ambivalent, at best. Finally, we include

these responses as something of a “jumping-off” point to our discussion of how people perceive the changing landscape that now surrounds Stones River National Battlefield.

What I present here is qualitative data taken from in depth interviews. I have selected comments that help me tell a story; a story of conflict and misunderstanding between the park and local landowners.

Why I chose this moment in the park’s history is that I believe it reveals some interesting points of miscommunication or misunderstanding between the park and local residents. There is potential in this research to look for alternative ways of speaking and acting that might benefit both the National Park Service and Murfreesboro residents as they learn to live side by side.

What the evidence shows is that the negotiations between the park service and Murfreesboro land-owners during the expansion of the late-1990s too easily fit into one of two distinct but overlapping frameworks: North vs. South, and/or Big government vs. local families/landowners. I will try to demonstrate how these two narrative frames came to be attached to the negotiations and colored them unfavorably by looking at 1) how the park system approached the proposed expansion, 2) how local residents reacted, and 3) how the local papers reported on the expansion process. This sounds a little more academic than I intend. What I will actually be showing you is some voices of Murfreesboro landowners, some voices of Park personnel, and, briefly, some local newspaper headlines. My goal is to share with you all a window into our collective research and some idea of what might be going on.

And essentially what is going on is that landowners saw the park as imposing its will – bringing what they saw as the full brunt of the federal government to play in taking over their land. From the park perspective we see a relatively slow-moving bureaucratic entity attempting to cope with all the demands of negotiating an expansion. That meant dealing with city, county, state, and federal administrations and administrators as well as designated interest groups from preservationists to city councils, to churches, to local industries, to water and sewage and electric concerns, to civil war enthusiasts and individual land owners. There were a lot of balls in the air, as it were, for a fairly small park staff to juggle. And, if at times, interactions with local landowners took a back seat, or were handled with less than the desired level of sensitivity during the proposed expansion of 1998, I think we can recognize, in the sheer abundance of work and relationships to maintain, just why that might be.

### **Changing Landscape**

- I think it’s changed how, in the early days, when the actual surrounding area was part of the battlefield experience because it was like going from a rural atmosphere into the park, and it sort of was an easy co-existing thing with what was around it.
- Some of the things that actually are vividly in sight like the big white Thompson Lane



bridge, that couldn't help but influence your experience visiting a historic site when it's obviously a huge thing that wasn't historically there.

- It's building up just lickety-split, and it's going to be soon like just driving through city until you get to a stop light and then you're at the park
- They remember the park as actually being a much bigger park than it is because they're remembering the rural landscape approaching the park as being like part of the park when it really wasn't. The park was a little park. But, the rural approach was part of their experience where now, you know, they'll ask questions like, "Did they sell some of the park, or?"

And people were not unsympathetic to the park and what it represented.

You know, when you are trying to interpret a hundred percent with twelve percent, that's a pretty tough chore because ninety percent of the property involved is off of what you have any control over. So, I'm not sure that they're not doing as about as well....

I don't think its a bad thing to have Battlefields or national or natural landmarks and I think it's fabulous. I'm delighted that there are now non profit trust organizations who are gathering land to keep it as green space.

## **The Newspapers**

Headlines in local newspapers expressed a degree of antagonism between local landowners and the Stones River National Battlefield as early as 1991:

Stones River again focus of a battle – Daily News Journal 12/1/91

Battlefield Exclusion Fight Brews – Daily News Journal 11/25/91

War rages over battlefield expansion – The Tennessean 8/3/97

Stones River Needs a Truce before it's too late – The Tennessean 8/3/97

“Almost 129 years after one of the bloodiest battles of the War Between the States was fought there, Stones River National Battlefield is again becoming the focus of a fight” (*Daily News Journal Sunday, December 1, 1991:3*)

From this sampling of headlines one might see how easy it is to frame the interactions between

the park and land owners in a confrontational language. And, given that we are dealing with a Civil War battlefield, we can also see that the language evokes War; particularly the war between the states. How much this media presentation of the conflict reflected and/or informed attitudes is beyond the scope of this research. Nonetheless, such headlines clearly demonstrate a dominant North-South reading of the relationship between local land owners and the battlefield.

### **How it Was**

The people with whom I spoke all, without exception, held very fond memories of the park; particularly from their childhood. People described the adventure of exploring the park. One described the park as a good neighbor for her parents. Interestingly, also the surroundings of the park came up more than once.

- We used the park everyday. We would hike through the park everyday. My 6<sup>th</sup> birthday party was a hiking party through the park with bandanas and we came home to the farm and had hotdogs and all those kinds of things. People thought that I lived in the absolute boondocks.
- I probably biked the park from the time I was 8 yrs. old until the time I went to college at age 18, an average of 4 days a week.
- All I had to do was go down my driveway turn right on Manson Pike turn left on Van Cleve Lane which is closed now. It doesn't even exist and then there was the Old Nashville Highway which nobody ever used and you would go up the Old Nashville Highway and you would be at the park. I mean it was a cinch. It was a great place to be.
- My parents biked it a lot with me.
- My parents walked it a lot together it was a wonderful; they considered it a wonderful neighbor.

But when it came to the proposed expansion of the park, people's attitudes to the park clearly changed.

### **The Overlay**

A couple of powerful words appear over and over in the interviews. Overlay and Condemnation.

Overlay zoning is a regulatory tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over an existing base zone or zones, which identifies special provisions in addition to those in the underlying zone. Regulations or incentives are attached to the overlay district to protect a specific resource

or guide development within a special area. Overlay zones may be applied to protect historical areas or encourage or discourage specific types of development. Land within the historic overlay district may be subject to requirements that protect the historical nature of the area.

Condemnation is a process by which private property is taken for the purpose of public use. Prior to the taking, the property is said to be “condemned property”, meaning that it has been marked for destruction or modification in order that the plot of land can be redesignated for public use.

Through these rules the government is permitted to take private property for the purpose of public use. However, the government must reimburse the property owner with “just compensation” for their subsequent loss of property.

These two words, overlay and condemnation, were not spoken with sympathy when said by land-owners who felt threatened by the proposed expansion of the park. Here is a portion of an interview with one couple, both long-term residences of our area, both of whom have family ties to the region running generations deep.

- But we talk about the overlay. I remember that was the term they used and I remember specifically that the tenor of the land owners being that if they came in and with a legitimate fair market value the conversation would have been very different. But the park system’s history is replete with these overlay situations with no funding. The land owner is stuck with the land for all perpetuity which is not bad unless ever you need to move
- WL: So it means you can’t sell the land?
- It means you can’t sell the land!
- You can sell the land. You can sell!
- But you can’t sell it for fair market value?!
- WL: You have to reveal to the buyer that that this is....
- Of course it’s a cloud on your title!
- It’s akin to a lien
- If I can only sell it to you -- if you are willing to buy it -- secure in the knowledge that one day you might not be able to stay on it.
- And secure in the knowledge that you may... you’ll be involved in a condemnation suit.
- And I have been involved in several condemnation suits and I have never received fair market value for that land. Never. And I have gone to court on those and I have certainly been compensated but never fairly.

While one cannot help but detect anger and frustration in these comments, what was interesting to me was the way their words became connected to others that evoke a North-South dichotomy and perceived slights of Southerners. The word “enemy” came up more than once. And, in this particular instance, a stereotype of the Southerner.

- It was like the enemy was its like you’re your older brother had suddenly turned on you and was your enemy. I mean my father just felt so utterly betrayed!
- It was clear that we must be uneducated barefoot southerners who clearly had no clue what might be best for everyone.

These attitudes have so colored the experience of the park for some that they “cringe” when seeing a national park sign.

- I have to say that I cringe when I see that National Park symbol...
- I have never been to the park since.

At times it is hard not to see something of a conspiracy theory in the words of those interviewed...

- The park instead of being viewed as an asset and a cooperative neighbor got a view of the federal government and big brother going to push you around and do what they want to do like or not.
- I'm not sure if Thompson Lane would have had to be located right where it is. Only because, you know, you're [Stones River National Battlefield] not on the best terms with the local political structure do you get a Thompson Lane through the middle of you. That's the kind of thing that happens when you're not in a cooperative arrangement with the local. That's just my opinion.



Julius Wade Monument at corner of  
New Vision Baptist Church

It is important to point out that many I spoke to never did sell their land, at least not to the park. Others have more recently sold to developers that now surround the park. Many credit the city and Bart Gordon, a former Democratic representative of our district in Congress, for stepping in to negotiate with the park on their behalf.

Bart Gordon: I remember I was not in Congress and younger. I remember that there was a plan to pretty extensively expand the Battlefield but it didn't go through because there wasn't a push from the Congressman at that time and some of the community folks here were afraid it was going to get their land and they didn't want that so it didn't go anywhere. But I remembered that and then I wanted to learn more about it. So I went over to see Henry Huddleston who has an engineering company to see what he remembered about it. And he just happened to have had that original plan (for the park). I think it was a 1980 plan. So really that was sort of an epiphany in a couple of ways. One we could better visualize what we could do for the Battlefield and the second thing is that in it it had a Greenway that was projected to go from [Fortress] Rosecrans.

Many I spoke with credit Bart Gordon with being a timely mediator in the dispute and helping everyone get at least some of the things they wanted.

- The city stepped in because the city could see that the park's argument was, "We needed to quit being so personal and self-serving. You need to think about the greater good."
- And then the city stepped in and said "Hmm hmm I think the greater good probably is to keep this available so other people can have jobs." And I think that helped a great deal and Bart Gordon got involved.

A distinction worth mentioning here is that throughout interviews, "the park" tended to become an entity unto itself, animated and, at times, malicious in "its" actions and attitudes. Conversely, those who worked for the city, or represented the land-owning constituency within city, state, or federal government, were presented as individuals (Bart Gordon, for example) as were those perceived to be "victims" of the park's actions. This ability to anthropomorphize "the park" while, simultaneously erasing particular individuals from the park service, facilitated, I believe, the interview respondents' in their negative depiction of actions taken on behalf of Stones River National Battlefield.

Of course individuals were involved in the process of proposed expansion. And, based on personal conversations, it is clear that individuals like Bart Gordon worked diligently both with and on behalf of the park service. Gordon's ability to remain on good terms with both local land-owners and the National Parks Service during this tenuous period certainly speaks both to his political abilities as well as his vision for Murfreesboro.

### **The Park Perspective**

The first thing to note is that when the current administration arrived in Murfreesboro the park was perceived, at least by the park service, as a relatively minor part of their administration. A back-water as one said.

- The park was difficult to get to unless you knew the area. Our primary complaint from visitors for years had been they couldn't find the place. The signage was not very good and so it was sort of a back water even within the parks service culture, the regional offices in Atlanta.
- Stones River was a quiet little park -- 350 acres up until 1987 and not a lot going on, not a lot of money flowing in those days.
- We had a staff of I think 8 people and we had a bookstore manager and we hired a couple maintenance seasonals and maybe one interpreter, maybe 2 if we were lucky. And that was it.
- There was no natural resource staff, no culture resource staff

And as part of the “Cannonball Circuit”, which may not be the most ideal assignment for someone who has devoted their life to park service, there are other concerns.

- And so I did apply [for a position at Stones River] having been exposed to the park but prior to that you know my friends and I having worked in, you know, natural areas, bigger natural parks for the most part, Cape Hatteras [Cape Hatteras National Seashore] and Mammoth Cave [National Park] where I had spent most of my career, we all sort of looked at as a place at Civil War sites; referring to them as the “Cannonball Circuit” because they had the reputation that once you worked in a cannonball park that’s the only place you would ever work. And people would move around within that cannonball circuit but that would be a limiting factor in their career choices.
- WL: That would be like Gettysburg and Appomattox?
- Yeah Civil War sites. You know, any place that has pyramids of cannon balls floating around and so we would joke about that and particularly a friend of mine that was at Hatteras at the time, we had always joked which of us would end up staying at Hatteras the longest and he said, “Oh you are going to be here longer than me” and as it turns out I went to his retirement party from Hatteras about the end of February. So he actually stayed at Hatteras that whole time and I moved here and then I never left the cannon ball circuit once I got here. So he never left the beach I never left the cannon ball circuit but I found that really the work in parks is similar in all parks.
- WL: Yeah
- The biggest variable I think is in some ways the actual size of the park. So if you work in a big park chances are that your job will be more specialized. Whereas in a small park, like Stones River, where you have a very limited staff, you end having to do a lot of different kinds of things that relate to say cultural resources, or historic structures, or landscapes, or interpretations, or law enforcement, or special use permits, or any number of things.

The issue of the size of the park is a concern for park personnel just as it is for visitors to the park who have noticed the urbanization of the park's surroundings. However, in this case at least, the issues have more to do with the expanded roles and responsibilities for park personnel. These responsibilities obviously overlap with the issues of those visitors hoping to have a fulfilling park experience. But clearly the criteria include much more than simply the environmental context of the park.

In this next extended piece of text, what I wish to highlight is that one goal of the park personnel and the NPS was to restore the landscape to something indicative of the landscape at the time of the battle. This inevitably meant eliminating everything that had been built since the time of the battle and planting grasses and trees (particularly, cedars) known to be a native part of the horticultural environment at that time.

- One thing that we have done when we've purchased property and it's been done since the beginning of the park is that we obliterate whatever was there before, we take it away, we remove it. And we've sold houses, torn them down, moved them away, and then planted grass or trees or whatever in those places that we hope mimics what was here at the time of the Battle and can be used to tell the story of the history of the Battle. Which is just really a three-day event, where, as the people who inhabited these places lived there for 60 years or more. But the Battle story is in our consciousness and has acquired more importance than the lives of individual farmers who scraped out a living on a little tract of land where you had 80,000 soldiers here 23,000 of whom died in a couple of days. That story has taken on a greater significance in our national consciousness.

Here the interview subject makes explicit a distinction between the local and the national consciousness. A three-day event resonates across the nation whereas the local history, more mundane from a national perspective, continues to resonate in the consciousness of local land owners and their families.

It is also important to note what is largely absent from my interviews with park personnel. Never, unless prompted, did a park employee use the words "overlay" or "condemnation" when discussing the process of park expansion. Much more common were words like "preservation" and "restoration".

The park's mission is undoubtedly a benevolent one. And it is unfortunate that these good intentions came into conflict with the needs and desires of members of the community surrounding the park.

- We are a part of a bigger system we're not just a Civil War park but we are a part of a national system of parks and in fact international. Worldwide there are parks where



these kinds of scientific inventories and monitoring take place and so we contribute to the overall health of the planet in those ways.

In a sense what we have is a miscommunication not based necessarily on the frameworks originally mentioned at the beginning of this paper: North-South or Federal government versus local landowner. Instead we have a miscommunication based on different temporal frameworks. The park is operating in such a way to as much as possible evoke those bloody days at the end of 1862 and the beginning of 1863. To bring history to life within their small island surrounded by urban development.

Land owners, on the other hand, are trying to hang on to memories that are a generation or two distant but also thinking about the future and the potential of their family's investment in the land. It is a conflict between the historic past, on the one hand, and a genealogical past, present, and future on the other.

Recognizing the presence of this temporal disparity and the ease with which discussions can be colored by the conflict between the North and the South can be a useful first step for this park and others (at least those operating in the South) as they negotiate future projects intended to restore park territory to landscapes that evoke and preserve the past.

At the same time it is true that the park is attempting to address concerns that are national, even global in scope. It can be difficult when these national concerns come up against local issues.

## **Safety**

In our discussions with individuals who were hesitant to use the park land for either educational or recreational purposes, the issue of safety came up on more than one occasion. These concerns tended to revolve around two key issues: 1) a fear of crime and 2) perceptions of the park as a space for those who revere the Confederate flag and, this fear implies, a belief that individuals who display the Confederate flag may hold racist beliefs. Whether or not these concerns were unfounded, personal observations demonstrated a significant Confederate flag presence on the grounds of Stones River National Battlefield on several occasions. Further, the presence of homeless camps within walking distance to the Greenway and Fortress Rosecrans also might be perceived by some as indicative of an unsafe environment. Additionally, it is true that there have been crimes reported along Murfreesboro's Greenway system. On December 14, 2015, The Daily News Journal, a Murfreesboro newspaper, reported that

A man walking down the greenway toward Old Fort Parkway just before midnight Friday was mugged and left unconscious and unclothed near the Molloy and Bridge Street intersection, according to Murfreesboro police.

According to the police report provided to The Daily News Journal, Ryan Browner of Nashville was taking a walk when he was struck from behind. He told police he woke up in the bushes of the greenway near Molloy Street, and his red shirt, red Nike shoes, black jeans, ring and pendant

were missing.

He was taken to Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital to have the abrasions on his head and arms tended to. Browner told officers he did not know who hit him and did not know of anyone who would want to.

One thing is clear, as expansion plans moved forward in the early 1990s, park personnel understood there were safety concerns being voiced by potential users that needed to be addressed. Particularly when it came to the development of the Greenway which would help connect the disparate parts of the Battlefield then coming under national park control. For the park personnel, overcoming these obstacles meant negotiating with representatives from the city and county, holding public forums, selling the utility of the project for the community.

- People were afraid that the Greenway would be a hot bed of crime. And so a lot of residents were afraid and I think the City Council was sensing that but I am not sure what pushed it over and helped it pass. The mayor was in favor of it. The mayor was Joe Jackson. All that all that was going on in the early '90s.

While not all interview participants spoke of these issues of safety and danger, several issues did emerge when discussing recreational and educational spaces with members of Middle Tennessee's immigrant and refugee populations. The most prominent concerns were:

- Distance to the site (be it Patterson Park, Discovery Center, Stones River, Old Fort Park (the playground).
- Cost of admission
- The safety of the space
- And, less explicitly, the ability to encounter people from a similar background.

Maria Martinez, an immigrant from Mexico, compares her time in Middle Tennessee to that with her extended family back home.

- I mean, we have a big family so they have a lot of good friends. They can go play somewhere.
- Q: So they are outside the house running around, then?
- Yes. There are no dangers. There, it is like everybody knows everybody. So there's no danger. Kids, they can be outside of the house and you don't watch them because there is not too many dangers like here. Here it is different.
- Q: Do they play outside here or is it dangerous here?
- No, they do not go outside.
- Q: Even in your backyard?
- Sometimes. Over here, we go outside with them [gesturing to the neighbor's house with a fenced-in backyard]. We have two years in this house, but we don't feel like they can

be outside. I like to take them to Patterson Park, we walk there, and to the Discovery Center.

- My friends go to Cedars of Lebanon on Saturday morning
- Q: where in Lebanon?
- It is a park. They sell chicken and vegetables

Maria speaks of a general mistrust of her new home-city. She does not let her children play outside, except on those occasions when she believes them to be safe within her neighbor's fenced-in yard. Additionally, her last comments indicate the presence of a communal gathering of like-minded people taking place at Cedars of Lebanon. Stones River National Battlefield never came up in our discussion of public spaces. From personal conversations with park personnel, it is clear that these are issues they are thinking about. I was present for discussions of proposed various get-togethers -- some involving music, some food, some educational projects -- designed to create communal experiences within the park's ground that would encourage a more diverse user group to engage with and enjoy Stones River National Battlefield.

Discussing the concerns of travel to and from public spaces like Stones River National Battlefield, Emigda Gonzales, also from Mexico, highlights the difference between Murfreesboro and her former home when it comes to transportation. Emigda has been in the United States for 14 years.

- No. I think that is very important, I never wanted to buy a car in Mexico, I love to walk, that is what I tell my girls all the time. It's very important. Here, you need a car. When you don't have a car, you have to go and walk and buy your groceries and do everything by foot. Here the only distance that we walk is from the front of the door to the car door. I try to take them to the park in our free time, but they are mostly here. I try to take them out as much as possible.
- Q: Do they participate in any sports after school or while at school?
- Well see, that's something that I am very concerned about. See sometimes they don't offer sports while in school. Or sometimes we can't pay for it. It's too expensive. But my middle child is a little bit more active. She has played more sports like basket ball.

In these comments, Emigda highlights two commonly expressed concerns: travel and money. Emigda is a parent concerned about the physical health of her children. She wants to "lead by example" and demonstrate what a healthy life can look like. Unfortunately, living in a city so spread out, and isolated from people she knows and trusts and who speak her language, car travel becomes, for her, a necessary evil. While Stones River can do little to accommodate the travel concerns of local populations interested in taking advantage of what it has to offer, Emigda's second concern, money, is something the park might consider as an opportunity. There is a growing immigrant population in Murfreesboro, interested in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, yet, due to financial concerns, these individuals are often cut off from physical-fitness opportunities.

Promoting the open, beautiful, healthy, and safe spaces of the park might benefit the park in terms of increased diversity within the visiting population.

That being said, there are safety concerns, some more perception than reality, some legitimate, that Stones River National Battlefield might consider addressing in order to attract a larger pool of park users.

### **Homeless Camps**

As mentioned earlier, there is evidence of homeless camps adjacent to the Greenway that runs through Fortress Rosecrans. The picture below were taken in early 2015. While this camp appeared abandoned, further down the trail I encountered two other camps that appeared to still be in use. It is unclear whether park users would often stray off the paved surfaces to explore these areas but, if so, they might be surprised by what they encounter. Further research is needed in considering how best to address this predicament in a way that assists park users in feeling safe while not further disenfranchising those who have been relegated to these marginal camps in the woods.



### **Confederate Flag**

- I was talking to my older sibling and he remarked that he is so offended that anyone would glorify this fabulous Southern because you know it was so unjustifiable and, you know the quote, “gallant guys and gallant boys in grey” and that’s just so inappropriate. I was like, actually I haven’t been to the Battlefield since the 1990’s but maybe three times. I have had to go each time. But each time I have been struck by its very Federalist telling.
- WL: hmm hmm
- Its very pro federal. Whatever it’s their land, their money. But when I said that to him he said, “Huh I guess I would never walk on that land anyway to find out” (laughs). But but he said, “ok I thought it was very pro pro south.” I said, “Oh no it is not pro south.”

When it comes to issues of Southern heritage, Stones River National Battlefield is caught somewhat between a rock and a hard place. Being located in the heart of the South but established as a cemetery for Union soldiers, the park’s mission is often misinterpreted; particularly (as noted above) by those who have never set foot in the park.

The assumption that the park is a refuge for individuals and groups who wish to honor the South (while, perhaps, denying the role of slavery in the Confederate mission) keeps many local residents away. At the same time, there is a definite and significant Confederate presence, at least periodically, around the park.

First and foremost, across from one entrance onto the Greenway, the General Bragg Trailhead, not far from the spot that marks General Bragg’s headquarters, is a private home that continues to fly the Confederate flag from atop a tall flagpole. While no visitors to the park were willing to discuss the presence of this symbol, the more important issue is the absence of visitors who might be turned away from this sight.

Additionally, current political events have brought a resurgence of Confederate flags within the national park’s borders. Specifically, when South Carolina’s governor decided it was time to remove the Confederate flag from the state capital, protesters of the move became more explicit and more prolific in their display of the flag. South Carolina held a ceremony to remove the flag on July 10, 2015. As a visitor to Stones River National Battlefield on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015 I was struck by the sight of a parking lot three-quarters full with motorcycles and pick-up trucks all bearing versions of the Confederate symbol. Two gentlemen stood near the entrance to the Visitors Center with a large Confederate flag stretched between them. As I stood and watched for approximately fifteen minutes, I counted approximately eight automobiles enter the parking lot, circle through, and exit.

While no malevolence was perceived in the actions of those individuals wishing to honor the flag, perceptions of such might very well have played a roll in the quick entry and exit of these eight automobiles.

## **Conclusion**

The ethnographic research in this report, though limited in scope and depth points to several areas of interest to those wishing to preserve and potentially expand the mission and geographic footprint of Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

First, taking action related to park expansion will never be easy. It may not be too much of an overstep to say that nobody enjoys interactions with large bureaucratic entities; particularly when these entities are perceived to be infringing on your rights or land. That being said, there is perhaps a lesson to be learned from the attitudes of land owners concerning the methods of the National Parks Service when it comes to land ownership. There may be opportunities to better strategize approaches to land owners before the park moves forward on a similar path in the future.

Second, while nothing can be done about the urban sprawl that now abuts park land, park personnel have clearly been engaged in strategies to obstruct sight-lines in which this urbanization is most obvious. There may be opportunities in the future to work with the city to expand the native vegetation into areas now owned by personal businesses or other entities such as the church located across Thompson Lane. Perhaps even the highway itself could be landscaped in such a way that the divide between public park and private land is not so stark.

Third, park personnel demonstrated themselves to long be aware of the safety concerns raised by certain individuals in relation to the park, and more specifically, the greenway system that connects the various environments that are now part of the Stones River National Battlefield. This will most likely be a long term process of education and vigilance on the part of the park as well as for city policing institutions.

