



Nashville, Tennessee on the bluffs of the Cumberland River was the most cosmopolitan city west of the mountains, second only to New Orleans. In 1850, it hosted the convention on Southern secession. Ten years later, it was considered for the capital of the Confederacy. In early 1862, Nashville became the first Confederate state capital to fall to Union troops, surrendered without firing a shot. The pro-Confederate citizenry remained under tight Federal military rule until the end of the war more than three years later. During that time, the U.S. Army developed the city into a major transportation hub and supply depot to support the military campaigns against Chattanooga in 1863 and against Atlanta in 1864. In defense against numerous real and imagined Confederate cavalry and guerilla attacks, Nashville was transformed into the most heavily fortified city in North America, second only to Washington, D.C. From 1862-65, the population of Nashville increased threefold, and included a frightened yet defiant citizenry, an obsessed military governor, garrison soldiers and transient troops, merchants, teamsters, machinists, laborers, refugees, runaway slaves, hospital patients, prisoners of war, military police, doctors and nurses, prostitutes, pickpockets, smugglers, highwaymen, lawyers, agents of opportunity, sutlers, drunks, sailors, cavalrymen, spies, freedmen, and others. Late in the war, the weary Army of Tennessee marched north from Georgia to retake the capital of its namesake state, terrifying war officials in Washington, only to be crushed by an overwhelming hodgepodge of blueclad troops. Arguably the most decisive battle of the war, the Battle of Nashville ended major military activity in the Western Theater. Thusly, the Army of Northern Virginia could not be reinforced. In four months, the war was over. A civilian government was re-established at Nashville. A year after that, Tennessee became the first state to be re-admitted back into the Union.

### **How to Use The Tour Guide**

There is no battlefield park at Nashville. The field of battle, one of the largest of the war, was lost long ago to urban development. There are, however, several remnants which have been preserved. The driving tour consists of 25 sites on a 50-mile route which can be customized to suit each visitor's time considerations. The full route, including stops and guided tours, will consume a full day of activity.

The route will take you through the downtown area, commercial districts, low-income districts, and affluent neighborhoods. Please

pay attention to traffic and street signage and please respect the private property of others.

Maps of the driving tour can be found on pages 38-39, followed by driving instructions and the text of the Battle of Nashville historical markers. Due to various factors, many of these markers cannot be located or examined closely.

Also, please bear in mind that street routes and designations can change. Road construction may also affect the driving route. Please be alert to hazards and drive carefully!

Two National Historic Landmarks are included on the tour—the State Capitol and the Downtown Presbyterian Church. The State Museum is nearby and free for visitors. Brochures and other touring information can be obtained at the city's Visitors Center.

Those interested in antebellum homes will find three such house museums on the tour—Belmont, Travellers Rest, and Belle Meade—all of which feature guided tours. Three cemeteries are on the tour—National, City, and Mt. Olivet—each worth your time to explore (each features a separate map). Some sites are suitable solely for drive-bys as you read the information in the book. For example, Blockhouse Casino is now the site of the City Reservoir, which is closed to the public for security reasons. Some urbanized sites, such as Peach Orchard Hill, may require some imagination on your part.

### **Historic Preservation**

In 2003, the Civil War Preservation Trust listed Nashville as one of the Top Ten Endangered Battlefields in the nation. Significantly, the city government committed \$2 million to develop long-neglected Fort Negley into a heritage tourism site. The Battle of Nashville Preservation Society has helped save property at Shy's Hill, Redoubt No. 1, and Kelley's Point. The Sons of Confederate Veterans helped save Granbury's Lunette. Non-profit organizations maintain three antebellum house museums—Travellers Rest, Belmont Mansion, and Belle Meade Plantation. Three major historic cemeteries honor those whose fought on both sides. Churches which served as military hospitals have been preserved by their congregations. The majestic and unique State Capitol still houses the State Assembly and looks much as it did 150 years ago. Recently, the Battle of Nashville Monument was refurbished and relocated to a new park site. Much has been accomplished in recent years, but there is still much to be done. Please support local organizations dedicated to preserving the history of the United States of America.