



THE CHATTANOOGA COUNTRY: GATEWAY TO HISTORY

In 1860, Chattanooga census takers reported 2,545 persons residing in the town less than 25 years old. In that short time it had changed from a river landing to a major railroad junction in a region where the cotton and corn countries met. Life constantly took on new dimensions as rapid rail and telegraph expansion and technological advances were made at a time when the explosive birth of the Civil War occurred. The small town found itself engulfed in the nation's greatest emotional era.

The railroads, agents of accommodation, emerged as major tools of war. Locally, they represented a corridor into the deep South to be defended or attacked, depending on the military strategy of the contesting parties. Chattanooga soon became a prize target, then a supply depot and launching pad for the Atlantic campaign.

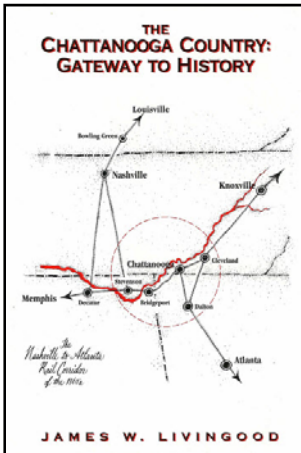
The wide hinterland surrounding the town emerged and remained an area of divided loyalties, long suffering the wrath of guerilla warfare. The trains brought refugees, sick and wounded soldiers. Local citizens scattered; business virtually ceased. Professional armies overran the region. Two horrific days at Chickamauga, the siege of a major force within the town limits, and the battles on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge echoed and re-echoed the cruelty of war.

For more than two years the city government was suspended. The railroads were rebuilt and managed as the United States Military Railroad. The signs of war were everywhere: government warehouses were constructed, forts erected, sawmills and campfires devoured local forests. Refugees arrived from all corners of the land, and nearby residents sought military rations. The Federal Army introduced a program of price control.

Following Appomattox, the Chattanooga region attracted a growing population, including returning citizens, freedmen, families from former Confederate states, and ex-Federals who brought their families. A newly emerging economy based on diversification, along with a spirit of reunion, gave purpose to post-war days. Residents' hopes climaxed one hundred years ago with dedication of the first and largest military park in the U. S., Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

Chattanooga Country: Gateway to History is an outstanding source of Civil War history for the general reader, scholars, researchers and Civil War buffs and was published by the Chattanooga Area Historical Association to honor the Bicentennial Anniversary of the founding of the State of Tennessee, 1796.

James W. Livingood came South from Princeton University in 1937 to teach at the University of Chattanooga. His enthusiasm and knowledge enriched both his students and the literary and academic world of the Chattanooga area. He retired from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga as Guerry Professor of History, the school's highest academic honor. During his academic career, Dr. Livingood served as Chairman of the History Department, Dean of the College of Arts and Science and Dean of the University of Chattanooga. He was Hamilton County's Historian 1976-1989.



Chattanooga Area Historical
Association
P. O. Box 8755
Chattanooga TN 37414
www.chattahistoricalassoc.org

Copies are \$15

