

Trenton

**tennessee
civil war
preservation
association**

NARRATIVE

As part of his West Tennessee “Christmas Raid,” Confederate Brig. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest attacked Trenton, Tennessee on December 20, 1862 and defeated the Union garrison commanded by Col. Jacob Fry. Forrest captured 400 federal soldiers, including Colonels Issac Fry and Jacob Hawkins, several field officers, 300 negroes, 1000 horses and mules, 13 wagons and ambulances, 7 caissons, 20,000 artillery rounds, 400,000 small-arms rounds, 100,000 rations of subsistence, large amounts of cavalry equipment, quartermaster stores, and soldier baggage, collectively valued at more than \$500,000.

HISTORICAL THEMES

Controlling Resources, Crucible for Leadership, Guerilla Warfare, Transformation in Warfare, Influence on Campaign

EXPLANATION OF ATTACHMENTS/VIDEO:

Map and reports from Official Records

LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

N/A

COUNTY:

Gibson

DATE:

12/20/1862

GEO COORDINATES:

35.9806° N,
88.9415° W

PRESERVATION

OPPORTUNITY INDEX:

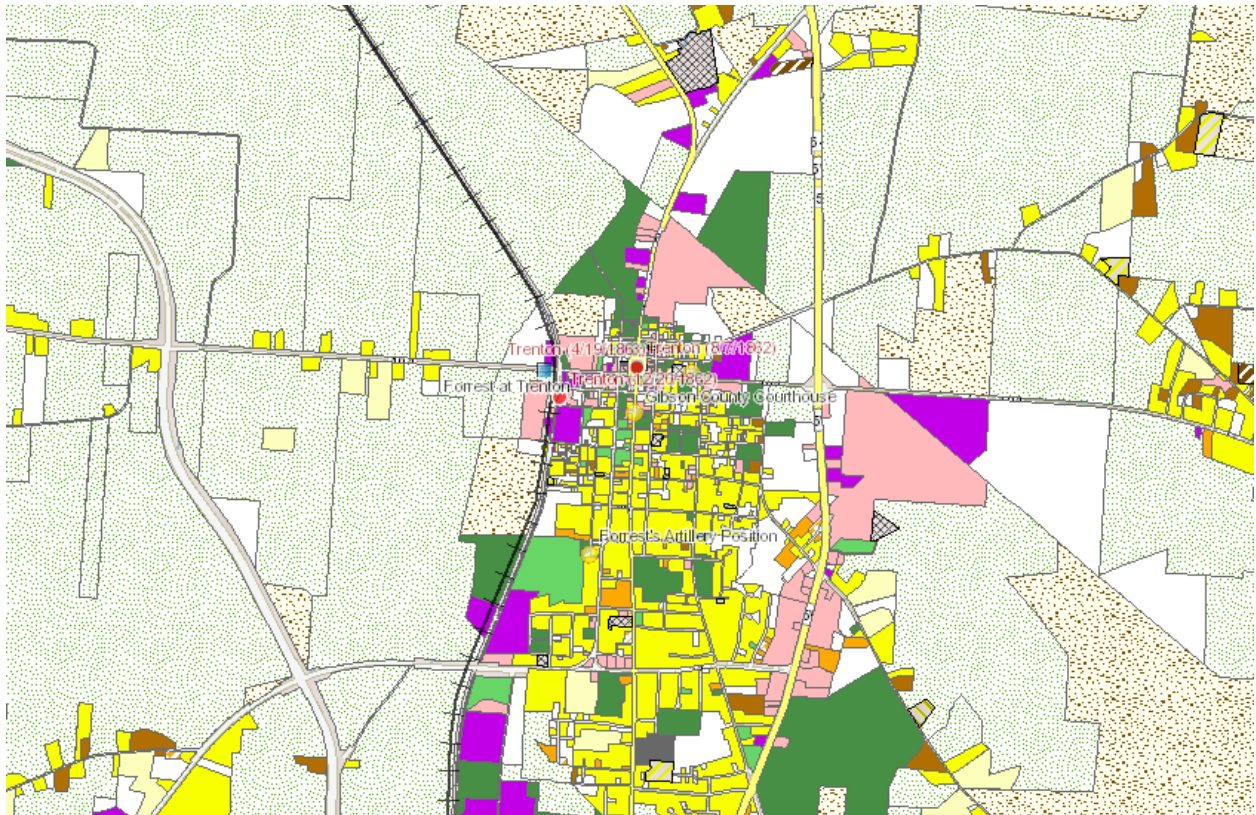
LOW

CONFEDERATE UNITS:

Brig. Gen. Nathan
Bedford Forrest
Forrest’s Exscort
10th Tennessee
Cavalry

UNION UNITS:

61st Illinois Infantry
7th Tennessee
Cavalry



December 22, 1862 - Federal situation report for West Tennessee relative to Forrest's Raid

COLUMBUS, KY., December 22, 1862—11 p. m.

(Received December 23, 4 p. m.)

Maj. Gen. H. W. HALLECK, Gen.-in-Chief, U. S. Army:

Your dispatch received. Things are still unsettled. I had communicated them to Gen. Hurlbut. No connection south. No intelligence south of Trenton. Gen. Sullivan has withdrawn force from Union City, Kenton, Trenton, &c., to Jackson. Trenton and the railroad to Union City in hands of the enemy. Troops at Trenton captured, say, 200; at Dyer, say, 50; at Rutherford, say, 50; and those at Kenton, say, 200; and at Union City, say, 60. By withdrawing them have sent a force, 1,500, to-day to Union City. Shall push down and repair railroad and fight. Ordered boats below Fort Henry to be taken out of the river to prevent rebels crossing. Heard from 700 of them near Dresden; presume they will try to cross near Paducah. Cannot judge of their force—estimated from 1,500 to 7,000; seven pieces of artillery. No gunboats at Cairo; all gone south. Col. Lowe, from Henry Heiman, and Donelson, in pursuit of enemy. Have taken every means to prevent their crossing Tennessee River. Think Columbus will be attacked, but am ready for any force they can bring. Public property here

estimated at \$13,000,000. Have sent couriers through to urge up the forces from south to join me. Think things will be right in a few days.
THOS. A. DAVIES. OR, Ser. I, Vol. 17, pt. II, pp. 453-454.

December 25, 1862 - Federal situation report, Forrest defeated at the Obion River and at Bolivar

JACKSON, December 25, 1862—4 p. m. Maj.-Gen. GRANT:

The road to Columbus is not so badly hurt as supposed. I hold Trenton. My forces whipped Forrest yesterday at Obion. Gen. Brayman beat him off at Bolivar. I think the road will be in running order by the first of next week. I will send a large force in that direction to protect Col. Webster and his repairs. I have secured Jackson in such a manner that all the rebels cannot take it. The surrender of Trenton mortifies me, but the damage to road is not worth grieving about.

JER. C. SULLIVAN, Brig.-Gen.

OR, Ser. I, Vol. 17, pt. II, p. 483.

December 25, 1862 - A citizen's cotton used in Federal breastworks burned by Forrest in Trenton

In 1862, some time in December, Mr. James Linsenby hauled some cotton to Trenton[,] Tennessee[,] and he said it belonged to Jasper Adams[.] I think there were four bales of cotton on the wagon. I don't know how much of the cotton belonged to the claimant. I don't know to my own knowledge that any of it belonged to the claimant[.] All I know about the cotton is what I have been told. Mr. Lisenby told me that some of the cotton belonged to Mr. Adams. . . I was at Trenton when this cotton arrived there. I saw his cotton when it was unloaded at the depot. It was thrown from the wagon on the platform at the railroad depot. I don't know what the claimant was disposed of. . . All the cotton which was there. . . was thrown up into breast works on and about the 20th or 21st of December 1862. All the cotton was captured by General Forrest on the 22d of Dec. 1862 and was burned on the 25th. I couldn't say it was all burned, but it and the Depot were set on fire and I saw it burning. . . The cotton was taken charge of and was put into breast works by order of Col. Fry [?], commander of the post. I heard him order it and helped him put some of the cotton there. I was a soldier in the 7th Tenn. Cavalry and was captured by the Reels.

Testimony of John McWhedy

Southern Claims Commission, Petition of Jasper Adams, Disallowed Claims, Report 5 Note 1 Note 1: RG 23, TSLA

LEGEND OF TERMS:

Historical themes: Topics and subject matter that characterize the battlefield including Control of Tennessee's Resources, Crucible for Leadership, Guerilla Warfare, Transformation in Warfare, Enslaved People, and Influence on Campaign. Sites are identified that exhibit themes at moderate to high levels, and some sites may contain one or more Historical Themes.

Preservation Opportunity Index (POI): A rating assigned for each battlefield to indicate relative opportunity and potential for successful site preservation. The Index is generated by a model that evaluates ratings assigned for site significance, condition, risk of loss, protection potential, and opportunities for interpretation. Based upon the POI values for each region in Tennessee (West, Middle, East), sites are indicated as having High, Medium, or Low opportunity.

Geo Coordinates: General/central location of the battlefield area per latitude and longitude coordinates utilized in Google Earth

DO YOU HAVE INFORMATION ON A BATTLE SITE?

Please email us at info@tcwpa.org and we will reach out to you soon. If you have copies of documents or photos to share, you can include those. If you want to discuss by phone, we will schedule that too.

HELP US COLLECT INFORMATION TO PRESERVE THESE BATTLEFIELDS

TCWPA's Statewide Preservation Plan team captains are recruiting volunteers to help gather information about many of the lesser-known sites with hopes of verifying the condition of each site and identifying opportunities for preservation and interpretation.

If you are interested in helping, please contact TCWPA at info@tcwpa.org.

TCWPA will not publish nor release any confidential information, or the name of the contributor, unless you request to be recognized.

Thank you!

The logo for the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association (TCWPA) is displayed in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. It is positioned in the lower-left corner of a dark blue banner that features a background image of a Civil War-era cannon.

Have Information on a Civil
War Battlesite?

Contact our team at info@tcwpa.org