



May 2020

Guerilla Warfare Along the Turnpike License Plate to Sumner County



This battlefield preservation supporter visited the post-Civil War community of White House in Sumner County along the historic turnpike from Kentucky to Nashville and near the site of the historic Tyree Springs hotel – an area where in 1862 troops from both North and South were stationed and conducted raids and guerilla activity. (“New Map of Tennessee,” 1865, Michler, Library of Congress)

Three miles south of White House on the original route of the Nashville and Louisville Turnpike (present day US HWY 31W) is the site of the **Tyree Springs hotel**. For years prior to the Civil War the popular resort offered mineral springs to Nashvillians escaping summer heat and was also the short-term site of the Western Military Institute (WMI) under the supervision of future Confederate General Bushrod Johnson.



An artist's rendering of Tyree's Mineral Springs Resort

Drawing of building at Tyree Springs by local resident and artist J.T. Albert. The drawing, ca. 1977, was based on Albert's recollections of the building before it was torn down in the 1940s. The wood building likely resembles the original hotel.

Following Union occupation of Nashville, the **Tyree Springs hotel** “hosted” Yankee cavalry stationed there to control guerrilla activity and partisan raids along the nearby L&N railroad. One such raider was **Brig. General John Hunt Morgan** who ambushed a Union wagon train on the turnpike near Tyree Springs on November 7, 1862. On returning to Gallatin with captured prisoners, Morgan accidentally encountered Union troops. Explaining that he was in fact a “Federal Colonel” merely rounding up stragglers, the ruse worked long enough for Morgan to leap a fence and gallop back to his command—much to the amusement of his former prisoners.

On December 23, 1862, a Union diarist travelling south on the turnpike noted that the Tyree Springs hotel had burned that evening. Local history blamed the burning on the **Anderson Troop** (a detachment of the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry). Perhaps retribution directed at Bushrod Johnson and/or the WMI, the origin of the fire is still debated. The Anderson Troop would later stage a mutiny and initially refuse orders to advance to Murfreesboro (Battle of Stones River).

Now a secluded site near US Highway 31W, Tyree Springs is a silent sentinel to guerilla warfare and perhaps disgruntled soldiers that once frequented the area.

Back on the Road?
Stay Safe and Healthy

YES, we are still “on the online road” with our monthly “Save Our Battlefields” License plate stories...but we have noticed a few more folks on the backroads checking out Tennessee’s Civil War sites. How ‘bout a look around your county.... Is there a Civil War site many might not know about? Or perhaps a little-known area of a better-known battlefield? In any case....please send a photo of your “Save Our Battlefields” license plate at the site to info@tcwpa.org . We will do the rest. Thank you!

Be Seen. Be Heard.

When you **RENEW** your “Save Our Battlefields” license plate you stay connected to more than 1200 Tennesseans who proudly display their license plate – the same folks who can be heard throughout the state, voicing their support for and working to save battlefields in their communities, their region, or across the nation. Be Seen. Be Heard - when you **renew** you’re helping Save Our Battlefields. Thank you.



You can purchase the license plate at your County Clerk's office for \$36.00 plus your regular registration fees. Proceeds from the sale of the plate will help protect and interpret important battlefields in Tennessee.

For more information, visit: tcwpa.org/license-plate

The Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association preserves and interprets Tennessee's Civil War Battlefields and their contributing landscapes for present and future generations.

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