



August 2019

License Plate Climbs Bluff Overlooking an Occupied Town



*This battlefield preservation supporter visited **Fort Granger in Franklin**. The City of Franklin's Parks Department preserves and interprets this largely intact earthen fort atop Figuers Bluff, overlooking the Harpeth River. The Fort is located within Pinkerton Park and off Eddy Lane.*

Built in 1863, Fort Granger was the largest fortification in a network of earthworks surrounding Franklin. During Federal occupation of Franklin, hundreds of enslaved African Americans fled to Federal camps – many helped build and maintain the Fort. They helped carve the deep moat surrounding the fort and dig ditches containing 3-foot long, sharpened stakes to stop any attack. Just

outside the fort, encampments including a refugee camp for African Americans, field artillery positions, storage buildings, and drill fields dotted the landscape – supporting as many as 7,900 Union soldiers and 2,700 cavalry.

Fort Granger with its commanding view of Franklin controlled the transportation corridors, including the railroad and critical railroad bridge just below Figuers bluff. Artillery inside the fort fired against Confederate cavalry forces in 1863 and again during the Battle of Franklin in November 1864.

In August 1863 a “**Great Mass Meeting for Union and Restoration**” convened in the Union occupied but divided town of Franklin. Citizens crowded the courthouse to hear Military Governor Johnson and others military leaders speak for the Union. After the meeting, General Gordon Granger led a large delegation to Fort Granger, “one of the strongest and finest fortifications in the department of the Cumberland.” Granger fired two shots from a "monster Parrott gun, at a target over a mile distant.” *The Nashville Daily Union, August 23, 1863.*

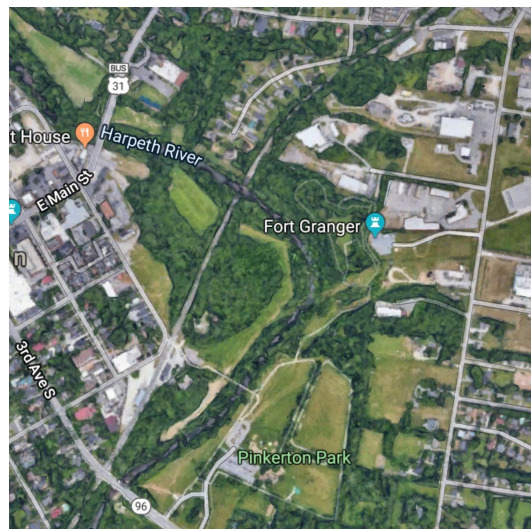
Years Later and Today

Eighty-five years after the Fort was abandoned the earthworks appear largely intact with agricultural fields surrounding the fort.

(1949 Photo: Courtesy of the Heritage Foundation of Williamson County)



Today urban development edges the north and east side of the fort. The active railroad and bridge over the Harpeth River near the earthworks are in their original location.



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For those of you who purchased a “Save Our Battlefields” specialty license plate, you are eligible to receive a 1-year complimentary membership in the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association. Visit tcwpa.org/license-plate for more detail.



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.

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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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Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association
P.O. Box 148535
Nashville, TN 37214

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