



April 2020

License Plate to Grant's Headquarters Cherry Mansion, Savannah



This battlefield preservation supporter stopped by Cherry Mansion, overlooking the Tennessee River, in Savannah. During the Civil War, the home was owned by William H. and Annie Irwin Cherry; William being a loyalist and Annie and her family, pro-southern. The home served as Ulysses S. Grant's HQ until the morning of April 6th, when he first heard sounds of the Battle of Shiloh.

The home was built using slave labor in 1830 by Cherry's father-in-law, David Robinson, with an 1840 addition of two rooms. The 18-inch thick walls were made with bricks formed on the banks of

the river. A portion of the property sits atop a prehistoric Indian mound, first archaeologically excavated in 1870. Today the home is privately owned.



This post-Civil War illustration depicts the Cherry Mansion on the right, above the old boat landing at Savannah. From Battles and Leaders of the Civil War.

In early March 1862, an amphibious Union expedition ascended the Tennessee River on a mission to cut western Confederate rail communications. The Expedition occupied Savannah and nearby Crump's landing. On March 17th, Gen. U.S. Grant reached Savannah by steamboat and accepted Unionist William Cherry's invitation to set up his HQ in a tent outside his home. Grant slept nightly in the house and ate meals with the Cherry family.

At dawn on April 6th the Battle of Shiloh began with Confederate Gen. Albert Sidney Johnson's attack on Grant's main force encamped at Pittsburg Landing. Grant later recalled "While I was at breakfast, heavy firing was heard in the direction of Pittsburg Landing and I hastened to send a hurried note to Buell informing him of the reason I could not meet him in Savannah." Grant then boarded his headquarters boat, the *Tigress*, tied up below the house at the Savannah landing, and proceeded upriver, about 9 miles, towards Pittsburg Landing.

After the battle two prominent senior army officers were hospitalized and died at the Cherry home. Gen. William H. L. Wallace, who had been mortally wounded during the battle's first day, was transported to the Cherry home where he soon died on April 10th. Later that month, on April 24th, Gen. Charles F. Smith likewise died in the house, after being confined there due to complications of a leg injury he suffered on March 12th.

Today, Cherry Mansion, as it is known locally and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is a "witness to history" in the unique role it briefly played as one of the most momentous events of the Civil War unfolded in 1862.

Stay Safe and Healthy

As we monitor federal, state, and local health guidelines we will stay “on the online road” with our monthly “Save Our Battlefields” License plate stories. Our inventory of license plate photos taken at Civil War sites is *running low* so we might change the format until folks are out visiting Civil War sites again - especially those sites that many might not know about. If you have any photos taken earlier of your license plate at a battlefield or Civil War site, please send to us at info@tcwpa.org. Thank you!

Be Seen. Be Heard.

When you **RENEW** your “Save Our Battlefields” license plate you stay connected to more than 1100 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.

Note: Please contact your County Clerk’s office for current information about office hours, renewals, availability of new plates, etc.



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.

Become a member: tcwpa.org/join **Make a donation:** tcwpa.org/donate [Purchase a license plate](http://tcwpa.org/license-plate)

