



July 2017

USCT License Plate to a Fortified City

Valor at Peach Orchard Hill



Battlefield preservation supporter and US Colored Troops reenactor visits Nashville's Fort Negley, the largest inland fort built during the Civil War. The star-shaped limestone structure was part of the Union's defense of Nashville, one of the most fortified cities in the country. During the December 15-16, 1864 Battle of Nashville, Fort Negley's artillery helped push back Confederate forces.



More than 2,700 African American conscripted laborers, contrabands, and freedmen labored to build the fort; many died while doing so.

During the Battle of Nashville, the USCT suffered more casualties at Peach Orchard Hill than any other Union troops. As part of the Federal assault on the Confederate's right line, the 13th USCT was the only Federal unit to reach the Confederate artillery atop the hill, suffering 229 casualties out of 556 men. While the Confederates held their ground at Peach Orchard Hill, the Federals eventually broke the line there and along Battery Lane and at Shy's Hill. Hood's army soon thereafter began their retreat. Sgt. Maj. Daniel Atwood (100th USCT) recalled, "*The blood of black and white men flowed freely together for one common cause....freedom and independence.*"



Peach Orchard Hill, also known as Overton Hill, is near the Intersection of Franklin Road and Harding Place Road just off I-65, exit 78.



"Field Where the Colored Troops Fell," ca.1884, original caption, (Army Historical Collection at Carlisle Barracks), believed to be Peach Orchard Hill.

What will become of the Fort Negley Park? Visit savenashvilleparks.org for more information.

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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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