

# NATIONAL ORGANIZATION SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

**Type of Memorial (check all applicable)**

Monument  with Sculpture  without Sculpture  with Cannon  standalone Cannon  
 Historical Marker  Plaque  Other ( flag pole, G.A.R. buildings, stained glass windows, etc.)

Note: try to record items separately. Cannons near monuments should be recorded & photographed separately, etc. Thank you.

**Affiliation**

GAR  MOLLUS  SUVCW  WRC  ASUVCW  
 LGAR  DUVCW  Other

If known, record name and number of post, camp, corps, auxiliary, tent, circle or appropriate information of other groups:  
 and local . Aug 22, 1904 lightning destroyed original.

**Original Dedication Date** Original 1901 New 1906 Please consult any/all newspaper archives for a local paper's article that would have information on the *first* dedication ceremony and/or other facts on the memorial. Please submit a copy of your findings with full identification of the paper & date of publication. Thank you.

**Location**

Knoxville National Cemetery

The Memorial is *currently* located at: The Tennessee Monument

Street/Road address or site location \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: 939 Tyson St GPS Coordinates N35°58'32.081" W83°55'34.049"

City/Village &/or Township Knoxville

County \_\_\_\_\_ State TN Zip Code 37917

The front of the Memorial faces:  North  South  East  West

**Government Body, Agency, or Individual Owner**

Name Veteran's Administration

Dept./Div. Knoxville National Cemetery

Street Address 939 Tyson St

City Knoxville State TN Zip Code 37917

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone ( 423 ) 855-6590 ext \_\_\_\_\_

Is Memorial on the National Register of Historic Places  Yes  No ID # if known 96000966

Entire Cemetery on NRHP

**For Monuments with/without sculpture:**

**Physical Details**

Material of Monument or base under a Sculpture or Cannon =  Stone  Concrete  Metal  Other

If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Material of the Sculpture  Stone  Concrete  Metal  Other Is it hollow or solid? \_\_\_\_\_

If known, name specific material (color of granite, marble, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

**For Historic Marker or Plaque:**

Material of Plaque or Historical Marker / Tablet = \_\_\_\_\_

**For Cannons with/without monument:**

Material of Cannon = \_\_\_\_\_ Bronze \_\_\_\_\_ Iron \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Cannon (if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Rifled \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Markings: Muzzle \_\_\_\_\_ Base Ring/Breech \_\_\_\_\_

Left Trunion \_\_\_\_\_ Right Trunion \_\_\_\_\_

Is inert ammunition a part of the Memorial? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

[For camp/department monuments officer's use: Cannon on list of known ordnance] \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**For Other Memorials:** (flag pole, G.A.R. buildings, stained glass windows, etc.)

What best describes the memorial

Materials of the Memorial

**Complete for All Memorials** In shape of medieval fortress, has small room in it

**Approximate Dimensions** (indicate unit of measure) - taken from tallest / widest points

60 feet \_\_\_\_\_ Height 20 feet \_\_\_\_\_ Width 20 feet \_\_\_\_\_ Depth or \_\_\_\_\_ Diameter

For Memorials with multiple Sculptures, please record this information on a separate sheet of paper for each statue (service, pose, etc) and attach to this form. Please describe the "pose" of each statue and any weapons/implements involved (in case your photos become separated from this form). Thank you!

**Markings/Inscriptions** (on stone-work / metal-work of monument, base, sculpture)

Maker or Fabricator mark / name? If so, give name & location found

Please attach legible photographs of all text &/or Record the text in the space below. Please use the addendum – narrative sheet if necessary.

See Photos and Accompanying Documents

**Environmental Setting**

(The general vicinity and immediate locale surrounding a memorial can play a major role in its overall condition.)

**Type of Location**

Cemetery  Park  Plaza/Courtyard  "Town Square"  Post Office  
 School  Municipal Building  State Capitol  Courthouse  College Campus  
 Traffic Circle  Library Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**General Vicinity**

Rural (low population, open land)  Suburban (residential, near city)  Town  Urban / Metropolitan

**Immediate Locale** (check as many as may apply)

Industrial  Commercial  Street/Roadside within 20 feet  Tree Covered (overhanging branches)  
 Protected from the elements (canopy or enclosure, indoors)  Protected from the public (fence or other barrier)

Any other significant environmental factor \_\_\_\_\_

[To detail the condition of a monument used the addendum form for *Monument's Condition*]

Submission of this form requires at least one type of identification so that you may be contacted regarding the information on this form. This information will most likely be in the public domain. Your name is required; please include one (or more) pieces of contact information.

1. If a member of an Allied Order, the name of your camp, auxiliary, tent, circle or corps; along with your department;
2. Physical Address;
3. Phone Number
4. E-Mail address.

By submitting this, you are allowing the posting of this information on the internet.

Inspector Identification \_\_\_\_\_ Date of On-site Survey 12/04/2025  
Your Name Walter E Busch, PDC & P-Commander Central Region Allied Orders Assoc  
Address 1240 Konert Valley Dr  
City Fenton State MO Zip Code 63026  
Telephone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail cwmemorials@suvcw.org

Are you a member of the Allied Orders of the G.A.R.? If so, which one?  
US Grant Camp 68 MO-SUVCW, Central Region Allied Orders of the GAR, MOLLUS, Logan Brigade

**Supplemental Background Information**

In addition to your on-site survey, any additional information you can provide on the described Memorial will be welcomed. Please label each account with its source (author, title, publisher, date, pages). Topics include any reference to the points listed on this questionnaire, plus any previous conservation treatments - or efforts to raise money for treatment. Photographs & GPS Co-ordinates are very much desired.

Pages 4 & 5 attached to this electronic file are the Monument's Condition and the Narrative forms. Only the Monument's Condition form is required if you are requesting grant money using form CWM-62 *SUVCW Memorial Grant Application Form and Instructions*.

**Please mail (or e-mail pdf, and picture files) to:**  
**Walt Busch, PDC, Chair, 1240 Konert Valley Dr., Fenton, MO 63026, cwmemorials@suvcw.org (314) 630-8407**

*Thank you for your help, and attention to detail.*

**Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War - Civil War Memorials Committee.**

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM
ADDENDUM – MONUMENT’S CONDITION

Completion of this form is required when requesting grant money using form CWM-62 SUVCW Memorial Grant Application Form and Instructions.

Condition Information

Structural Condition (check as many as may apply)

The following section applies to Monuments with Sculpture, and Monuments without Sculpture including the base for Monuments with Cannon. Instability in the sculpture and its base can be detected by a number of factors. Indicators may be obvious or subtle. Visually examine the sculpture and its base.

Table with 3 columns: Question, Sculpture, Base. Rows include: If hollow, is the internal support unstable/exposed?; Any evidence of structural instability?; Any broken or missing parts?; Any cracks, splits, breaks or holes?.

Surface Appearance (check as many as may apply)

Table with 3 columns: Question, Sculpture, Base. Rows include: Black crusting; White crusting; Etched, pitted, or otherwise corroded (on metal); Metallic staining (run-off from copper, iron, etc.); Organic growth (moss, algae, lichen or vines); Chalky or powdery stone; Granular eroding of stone; Spalling of stone (surface splitting off); Droppings (bird, animal, insect remains); Other (e.g., spray paint graffiti) - Please describe...

Does water collect in recessed areas of the Memorial? Yes No Unable to tell

Surface Coating

Does there appear to be a coating? Yes No Unable to determine
If known, identify type of coating.
Gilded Painted Varnished Waxed Unable to determine
Is the coating in good condition? Yes No Unable to determine

Basic Surface Condition Assessment (check one)

In your opinion, what is the general appearance or condition of the Memorial?
Well maintained Would benefit from treatment In urgent need of treatment Unable to determine

Briefly describe the Memorial (affiliation / overall condition & any concern not already touched on).

Perhaps some light treatment, but generally in very good condition. Couldn't gain access to interior to see if issues there.

Inspector's Name Walter E Busch Date 12/4/2025

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR  
CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL ASSESSMENT FORM  
ADDENDUM – NARRATIVE

[Generally used to record the text of monuments, but may be used for any other useful information, such as if the monument has been moved or if you have information about the day of dedication. May repeat use of page as often as necessary.]

The Memorial is *currently* located at: Knoxville National Cemetery

Street/Road address or site location The Tennessee Monument

Office Address: 939 Tyson St

GPS Coordinates N35°58'32.081" W83°55'34.049"

City/Village and/or Township Knoxville

County \_\_\_\_\_ State TN

Zip Code 37917

TEXT

Inspector's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

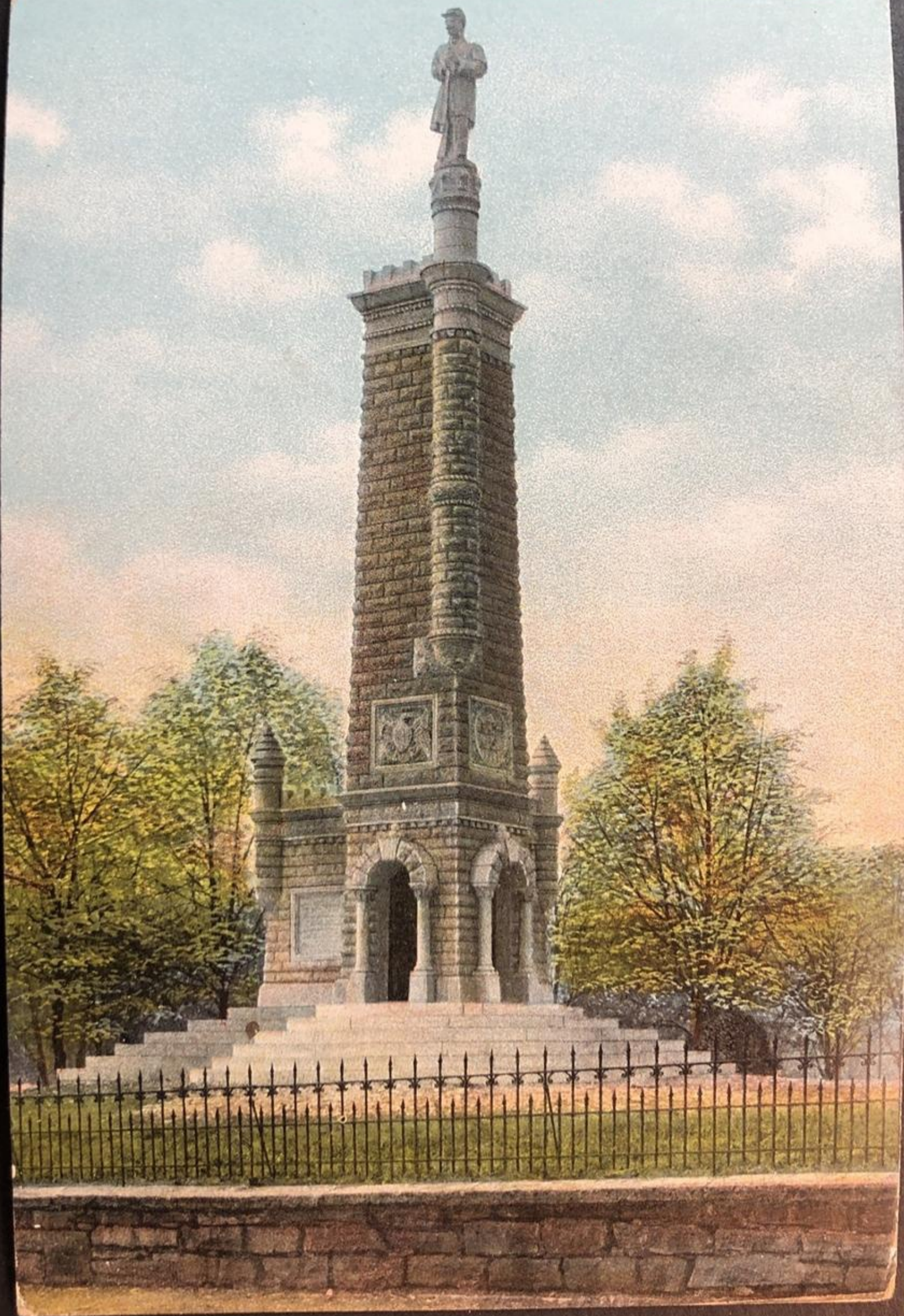
2-57



© 1941. UNION MONUMENT, KNOXVILLE, TENN.

DETROIT PHOTOGRAPHIC CO.

Soldiers Monument, National Cemetery, Knoxville, Tenn





LUTHER  
WILSON  
CLARK  
TENNESSEE  
COLONEL  
CONFEDERATE ARMY  
WORLD WAR I  
APRIL 23 1868  
MAY 19 1918

TO THE TENNESSEE MEN  
WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES A VOLUNTARY  
SACRIFICE ON  
FREEDOM'S ALTAR  
WHO ENDOURED WITH FORTITUDE TEMPORARY BANISH-  
MENT FROM THEIR MOUNTAIN HOMES, WHO FOLLOWED  
THE FLAG THEY LOVED  
ON SCORES OF BATTLE-FIELDS AND WHO FELL  
VALIANTLY CONTENDING FOR NATIONAL UNITY,  
THIS MONUMENT  
IS LOVINGLY ERECTED BY THEIR SURVIVING  
COMRADES AND FRIENDS.







1901



1896

THERE WERE AT LEAST 5000  
TENNESSEANS WHO ENLISTED  
IN OTHER STATE ORGANIZATIONS.





REST ON, EMBALMED AND SAINTED DEAD,  
DEAR AS THE BLOOD YE GAVE;  
NO LIMPID FOOTSTEP HERE SHALL TREAD  
THE HERBAGE OF YOUR GRAVE;  
NOR SHALL YOUR GLORY BE FORGOT  
WHILE FAME HER RECORD KEEPS,  
OR HONOR POINTS THE HALLOWED SPOT  
WHERE VALOR PROUDLY SLEEPS?

ESSEE FURNISHED FOR THE UNION ARMY 3105  
CASUALTIES 6776.

1861

1865

IN MEMORIAM  
UNION SOLDIERS  
OF  
TENNESSEE  
OCTOBER 15, 1890



THEY DIED FOR US AND BARRICADERS  
DIED IN THE GLORY OF WAR,  
NO MORE FORTRESS ARET SHALL TREAD  
THE MEMORIAL OF YOUR NAME,  
THE BATTLE FIGHT BURN AS FORTIFY  
IN THE TANKS AND RECORD KEEP,  
ON THESE POINTS THE BATTLE FIGHT  
WAS THE BATTLE FIGHT BURN

THESE ARE APPROVED FOR THE UNION ARMY 31092  
CASUALTIES 6776

1861

1865

IN MEMORIAM  
UNION SOLDIERS  
OF  
TENNESSEE  
OCTOBER 15 1866





65

IN MEMORIAM  
UNION SOLDIERS  
OF  
TENNESSEE  
OCTOBER 15, 1896.





REST ON, EMBALMED AND SAINTED DEAD,  
DEAR AS THE BLOOD YE GAVE,  
NO IMPIOUS FOOTSTEP HERE SHALL TREAD  
THE HERBAGE OF YOUR GRAVE;  
NOR SHALL YOUR GLORY BE FORGOT  
WHILE FAME HER RECORD KEEPS,  
OR HONOR POINTS THE HALLOWED SPOT  
WHERE VALOR PROUDLY SLEEPS?

TENNESSEE FURNISHED FOR THE UNION ARMY 31092 MEN.  
CASUALTIES 6776.

186

REST ON, EMBALMED AND SAINTED DEAD,  
DEAR AS THE BLOOD YE GAVE;  
NO IMPIOUS FOOTSTEP HERE SHALL TREAD  
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TENNESSEE FURNISHED FOR THE UNION ARMY 31092 MEN.  
CASUALTIES 6776.

REST ON, EMBALMED AND SAINTED DEAD,  
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NO IMPIOUS FOOTSTEP HERE SHALL TREAD  
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WHILE FAME HER RECORD KEEPS,  
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WHERE VALOR PROUDLY SLEEPS."

















*Original Article Edited for length by removing section about Spanish-American War*

**From:**

**<https://knoxvillehistoryproject.org/national-cemetery-part-iii/>**

## **National Cemetery Part III**



### **A SOLDIERS MEMORIAL**

Of all the National Cemetery's stories, that of the Union monument may be the strangest.

Perhaps wisely, neither Confederate or Union factions had ever had the temerity to erect a partisan monument in a high-traffic area of Knoxville—certainly not downtown, when arguments about the war sometimes led to street violence and even murder.

On the courthouse lawn, defended by no ornamental cannons, a memorial to Revolutionary-era pioneer John Sevier rose in the late 1880s, in the form of a tall marble obelisk. No one alive remembered Sevier, and as a gesture in stone, it was a safe one.

In postwar Knoxville, Unionists had been more numerous and generally more prosperous than their former opponents, but Knoxville-area Confederates became the first to erect a major statue as a memorial to their dead. It stood in the secluded, mostly unmarked Confederate cemetery on the east side of town. A marble shaft with a bold, defiant-looking rebel soldier on top, it went up over a mostly unmarked Confederate graveyard in May, 1892—leaving Union sympathizers wondering why they hadn't come up with something similar for their larger, more prominent cemetery.

According to Captain Rule, the monument effort began with a committee meeting in Athens, Tenn., including members from Nashville, Chattanooga, Greeneville, and other Tennessee cities. The proposal reportedly originated with Col. H.C. Whittaker of New Market. Rule was the only Knoxville in the group, and it may be a testament to his persuasion that the committee agreed that a state Union monument should be in Knoxville.

In Tennessee's state government, where the dominant Democrats had begun to romanticize the Confederacy, were unlikely to approve funding for a Union monument. Furthermore, the soldiers of the war were graying, many of them passing.

Union Generals Burnside, Sherman, Grant, and others who had led the East Tennessee campaigns of 1863 had already died, as had the intrepid Parson Brownlow. Even the brilliant young engineer of Knoxville's defense, Captain Orlando Poe, died in 1895.

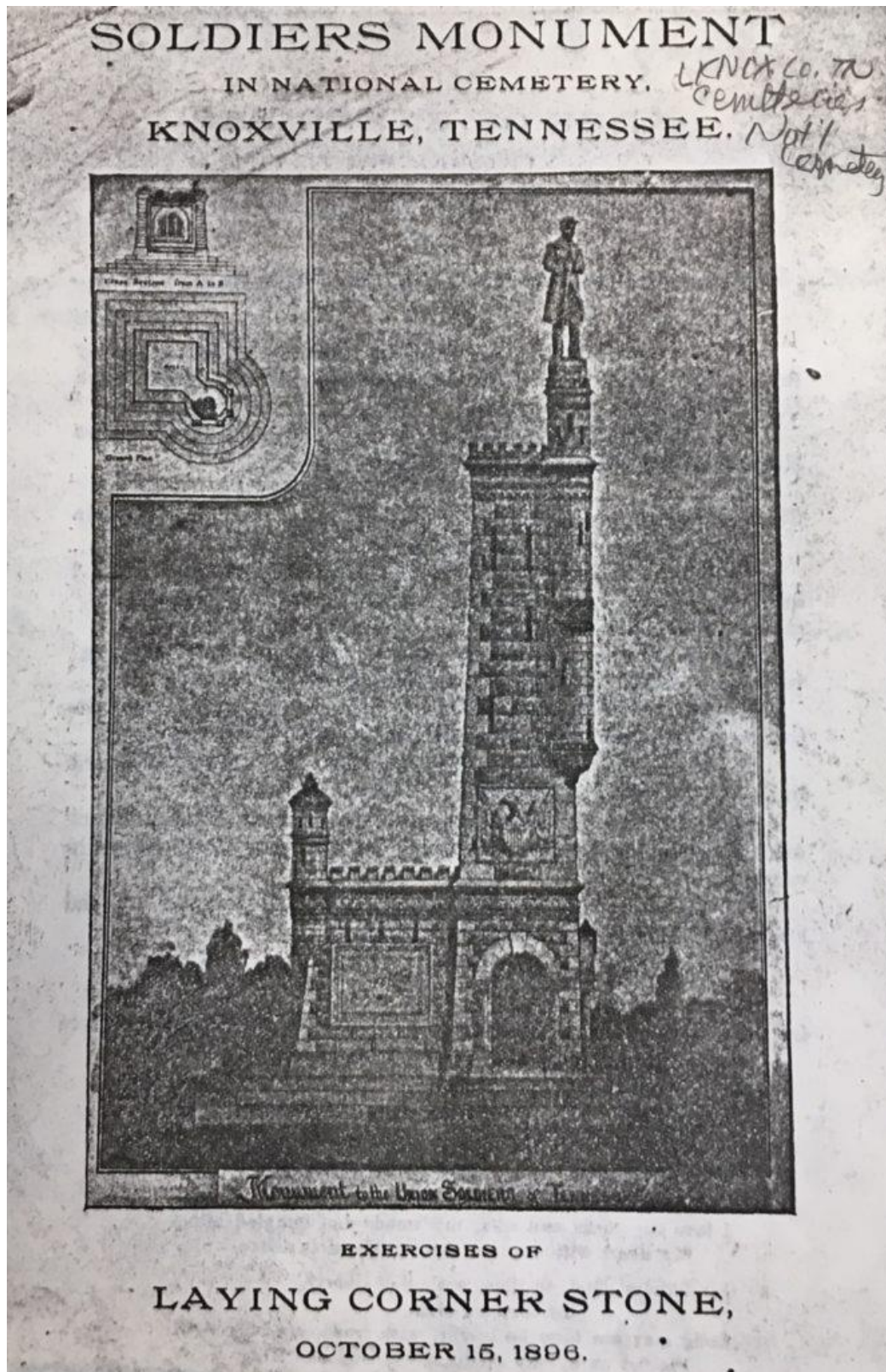
On July 4, 1893, the GAR announced an ambitious fundraising effort. It was slow going. They laid the cornerstone three years later, with an oration by Gen. Gates P. Thruston, Ohio-born veteran of Shiloh, Stones River, and Chickamauga—who had become noted after the war as a Nashville lawyer, and as an author on prehistoric Native American culture as interpreted from archaeology.

An 1896 *Knoxville Morning Tribune* story describes the cemetery as it was: “situated upon a swell of land, sloping from the center in all directions, but more sharply to the west...it is enclosed by a good rubble stone wall laid in mortar coped with slabs four inches thick, and is four feet, eight inches high.”

At the time, the main, formal entrance was at the bottom or the western slope, what was then Jacksboro Pike (now Cooper Street), which then connected cleanly to downtown. But there were also two entrances on Holston (now Tyson), one for horses and carriages, one for pedestrians.

A committee of Union stalwarts, among them Parson Brownlow's old associate in journalism, William Rule, himself a Union captain, tried to get something going.

Although it was in Knoxville, it was to be a statewide memorial. However, after a strong start, fundraising dwindled. A design for a castle-like monument with a Union soldier's statue on top was approved by the U.S. Quartermaster's Office in 1896—but with the disheartening proviso that no federal funds would go to support it.



**“How the Big Monument Looks”**  
An early promotional leaflet shows a memorial that was very slow to get off the ground after the laying of the cornerstone in 1896. This early sketch pictures a soldier on top, nothing like the monument as it was completed five years later—but very similar to how it was rebuilt in 1906. McClung Historical Collection.”

A grand laying of the cornerstone in 1896 was an occasion for speeches and patriotic

anthems, but little more than that. That cornerstone was a lonesome oddity for several years.

In 1897, the National Cemetery's neighborhood was annexed into the city, and drawing unaccustomed attention from municipal authorities. It was now, formally, in Knoxville proper. The same year, the GAR insisted that Tennessee's eight thousand Union pensioners should each donate at least one dollar to the effort. That turned out to make the bulk of the need.

It would be no ordinary monument, but reportedly "the only monument to the memory of Union soldiers in the entire South," except for those in military parks and one in a national cemetery in New Orleans.

Things had begun stirring in 1898, when an unexpected war captured the nation's attention.

[paragraphs edited out]

As the [Spanish-American] short war came to a close, America's national-cemetery system was generally still considered to be reserved for Union soldiers of the Civil War. In 1899, President William McKinley's Secretary of War Russell Alger, himself a Union veteran of Gettysburg and other battles, formally opened National Cemeteries to meet the demand for new burials associated with the Spanish-American War.

As a new century opened, the role of the Knoxville National Cemetery became almost the opposite of what it had been before. During the Civil War, it was the resting place of men mostly from far away who died in or near East Tennessee and were required by necessity to be buried here. Now it was to be the resting place of men from East Tennessee who died far away—and preferred to be buried here.

The National Cemetery was handsome and much-visited, and became positively attractive to the families of soldiers who had the means to be buried anywhere. For a time, there was little regulation on the installation of private monuments within the cemetery, as long as they were outside of the interior circles. Most of the large monuments date from the Spanish-American War and the subsequent Philippine insurrections, which became much more costly in American lives than the war itself. It was just during that patriotic fervor that the aging Unionists of Knoxville finally succeeded in raising the funds to address the long-nagging lack of a Union monument.

## **THE MONUMENT**

The unexpected war may have delayed progress on the monument. When it was over, beloved journalist and sometime Knoxville Mayor William Rule, now in his 60s, was still chairman of the monument effort. But also helping with the long-delayed project was the committee's most prominent veteran, Gen. John T. Wilder, leader of the legendary "Lightning Brigade" of Illinois regiments, and most famous for his valor at

Tullahoma and Chickamauga. He had settled in Knoxville as a businessman in 1897, when he accepted a federal appointment here with the McKinley administration. At the time of the monument project, Wilder was the city's most famous surviving Union-veteran celebrity.



**The original Monument. Library of Congress.**

**In Rule's own landmark history of Knoxville, completed in 1900 and still cited by historians today, the project gets a mention as "the incomplete monument standing in this national cemetery."**

Advocates argued about what the monument should depict. Each "camp" of the GAR had its own hero. One proposal was to honor Ed Maynard, a combat veteran who died young—albeit not in the Civil War; he had succumbed to a tropical fever during diplomatic service on Grand Turk Island. (He's buried at Old Gray under a symbolic broken column.) One leading proposal was to honor a Knox County native, Admiral David Glasgow Farragut, the Union's greatest naval commander, who was suddenly getting more attention in Knoxville, 30 years after his death, than he ever had before.

Admiral George Dewey himself, then famous as the hero of Manila Bay, visited Knoxville in May, 1900. Here, with much fanfare, and national headlines, he dedicated a small marker at the birthplace of his hero. It seemed to begin a cascade of local accolades for Farragut, who had never previously been honored with the name of a Knoxville-area community, school, or business.

One Frank Seaman, Union veteran and commander of the East Tennessee GAR, was also a romantic poet, and strongly supported the idea of Farragut as the symbol of Tennessee's Union dead, declaring Farragut the Union's "Thunderbolt-Stroke."

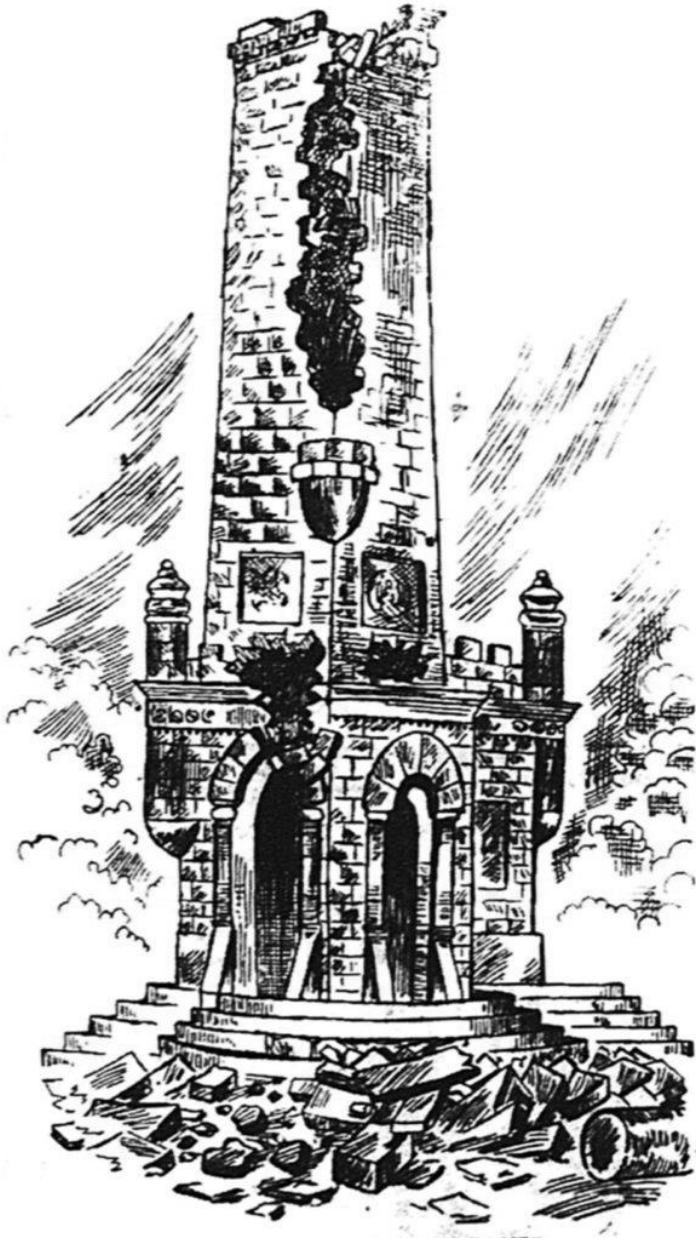
What was unveiled on October 24, 1901, was glorious, but different from anything discussed in the 1890s. There was no soldier on top, but, perched upon a large cannonball, a menacing bronze eagle with its wings spread wide.

The year 1901 would have been a signal year for the National Cemetery, anyway, because it was the year of the burial of Medal of Honor laureate Timothy Spillane. A native of County Kerry, Ireland, he was part of the wave of refugees from the Great Famine, and enlisted with the Union army in New York. In the final months of the Civil War around Petersburg, Virginia, at the

Battle of Hatcher's Run, Private Spillane showed extraordinary courage in attacks on the Confederates.

Even after being wounded twice, he refused to leave the field. He lived to receive the commendation in 1880. He died at age 59 on December 3, 1901, not long after the impressive new monument to his comrades had been dedicated.

The bronze-eagle Union monument stood for almost three years, visited by thousands of Tennesseans in the era of vaudeville and the first noisy automobiles. Many rode the electric streetcar to the site.



**“How the Big Monument Looks”**  
**This hasty drawing appeared in**  
**Capt. William Rule’s Knoxville**  
**Journal & Tribune only**  
**about 36 hours after a lightning**  
**bolt ruined the three-year-old**  
**monument in 1904.**  
**McClung Historical Collection.**

On the evening of August 22, 1904, a summer storm rumbled over Knoxville, and a bolt of lightning shocked the city with an explosion that emptied downtown's saloons. It was so loud that bystanders on Gay Street thought that it had hit the building next door. But the problem was at the National Cemetery, and as word got around, hundreds walked over to see the damage.

The castle-like foundation was a ruin; the blast had sent chunks of marble into the houses that stood across the street. The bronze eagle and its cannonball were missing from the monument's top. The eagle was found on the ground in four pieces, its head and wings severed, cut apart, remarked one observer, as cleanly as by a surgeon.

Those with engineering minds observed that it had been attached to the foundation with a long steel rod.

The lightning found that rod and blew everything around it apart.

Knoxville may have felt cursed. About one month after the bizarre blast in the National Cemetery, two trains collided on the Southern tracks just to the east of town; the New Market Train Wreck killed about 70, and is remembered as the region's worst transportation disaster in history. The most famous person killed in the wreck was beloved Rev. Isaac Emory, for whom Emory Park (later place) was then named. One of those injured in the wreck was a Union combat veteran named Henry Gibson, who also happened to be Knoxville's Republican U.S. Congressman. He recovered in time to sponsor a bill to provide substantial funding for a new Union soldiers' monument. Gibson then retired to his avocation, epic poetry.

Historians have tried and failed to find more about what prompted the design change, and why it trumped previous proposals depicting human figures. It may have been a compromise to avoid rival loyalties to specific personalities. But one leader of the monument effort, Judge Newton Hacker, hailed it, declaring, "there is no monument in all the broad land that marks a higher degree of patriotism.... May no vandal hands ever mar its beauty."

Securing the restoration of a Union monument in Knoxville was one of Gibson's last gestures in a long career in Congress. The government had decidedly declined funding for the monument eight years earlier, but this time the bill passed in April, 1905, the month after he left his seat. The quartermaster general remarked, "It does not appear that the Government has heretofore been called upon to take action in any case similar to the one presented in this bill." It was perhaps an understatement.

Baumann Brothers, Knoxville's best-known architectural firm at the time, supervised the reconstruction. As formally completed on October 15, 1906, it had a different design, less dramatic, and very similar to the original plan as revealed in 1896: an eight-foot-tall "soldier of the line," fashioned of marble, not bronze.

As art scholar Fred Moffatt later remarked, the soldier was unlike his older Confederate counterpart across town—less passionate looking, and more clean-cut, "a somewhat disinterested individual for whom personal honor and prerogatives of race are valued less than military department and obligations of service"—but, significantly, four feet higher.

In its early decades, it was almost always referred to simply as the Soldiers' Monument, the Union Monument, or occasionally as the Tennessee Monument. However, by the mid-Twentieth Century it was sometimes referred to as the Wilder Monument, in honor of its most famous veteran supporter. (There's another "Wilder Monument" at the Chickamauga Battlefield, named for the same man. It's larger than this one, a castellated tower with an interior staircase, but with no statue on top.)

From Wikipedia

From Wikipedia

## Union Soldier monument

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The Union Soldier monument, in the cemetery's eastern corner, was erected in the early 1900s. In 1892, Knoxville's Confederate veterans installed a 48-foot (15 m) monument topped by a statue of a Confederate soldier at the Confederate National Cemetery near the Mabry-Hazen House in East Knoxville. Not to be outdone, the local chapter of the Grand Army of the Republic formed a commission, headed by former Union Army officer and *Knoxville Journal* publisher William Rule (1839–1928), to raise money to build a monument of greater size at Knoxville National Cemetery.<sup>[1]</sup>

Completed in 1901, the monument initially stood 50 feet (15 m) – the height having been calculated to surpass that of the Confederates' monument – and was topped by a bronze eagle with wings spread.<sup>[1][2]</sup> On August 22, 1904, however, the eagle was shattered by a bolt of lightning, the sound of which rattled Knoxville and could be heard for miles all around.<sup>[1]</sup> Undaunted, the GAR commissioners planned immediate reconstruction, using federal funds secured by Congressman Henry R. Gibson. The new monument, designed by the local architectural firm Baumann Brothers, largely followed the original design, the exception being a marble statue of a Union soldier placed atop the monument rather than an eagle. The new monument was completed on October 15, 1906.<sup>[2]</sup>

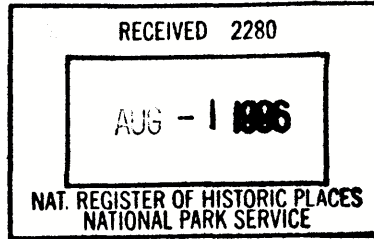
The monument, built of locally quarried marble, represents a medieval fortress, with stained glass



Early-1900s photograph of the monument, showing the bronze eagle shattered by lightning in 1904

windows and an inner room and staircase. The 8-foot (2.4 m) soldier statue stands at post atop the main tower. The monument is sometimes called the "Wilder Monument," as local legend suggests the soldier bears the likeness of Union general and East Tennessee businessman John T. Wilder.<sup>[2]</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Knoxville National Cemetery

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 939 Tyson Street, N.W.

not for publication N/A

city or town Knoxville

vicinity

state Tennessee

code TN

county Knox

code 093

zip code 37917

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination

request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property

meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant

nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Karen Rozme Dupak 3/26/96  
Signature of certifying official/Title Federal Preservation Officer Date

Department of Veterans Affairs  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Harper, DSHR 5/22/96  
Signature of commenting or other official/Title Date

Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, (explain:)

for Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Maq M. [Signature]

9/12/96

Knoxville National Cemetery  
Name of Property

Knox County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
2	0	structures
2	0	objects
4	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Civil War Era National Cemeteries

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: Cemetery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Funerary: Cemetery  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Asbestos  
other Metal: Iron; Stone: Marble, Stone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance****Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References****Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  
# \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Military

**Period of Significance**

1867-1905, 1936

**Significant Dates**

1867

1936

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

N/A

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository

Department of Veterans Affairs

Knoxville National Cemetery  
Name of Property

Knox County, Tennessee  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 9.8

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 

17	236020	3985000
Zone	Easting	Northing

  
2 

--	--	--

3 

Zone	Easting	Northing

  
4 

--	--	--

  
 See continuation sheet.

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Therese T. Sammartino, Staff Assistant, National Cemetery System

organization Department of Veterans Affairs date July 8, 1996

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone (202) 565-4895

city or town Washington, D.C. state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 20420

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of Veterans Affairs

street & number 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W. telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Washington, D.C. state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 20420

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**Knoxville National Cemetery**

**Knox County, Tennessee**

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION**

The Knoxville National Cemetery is located at 939 Tyson Street, N.W., within the city limits of Knoxville, Tennessee, in Knox County. The site is nearly square in shape, and the burial sections are arranged in the shape of a large circle, separated by conveniently arranged walks. Each section forms a quarter of the large circle, while the headstones at the graves form circles, all converging toward the intersection of two walks, where the flagpole is located. The grounds are enclosed by a stone wall, constructed in 1875, on the north side of which is an iron fence. The main entrance is situated at the center of the south side and is protected by a double iron gate. There are two additional entries to the cemetery that are no longer used. The Cooper Street entry in the rear of the cemetery is now closed by a stone wall, and a pedestrian entry near the northern corner of the cemetery is now closed by wrought-iron fencing. A service building containing an administrative office and public restroom, is located to the northwest of the main entrance.

The cemetery was established in September 1863. Graves were originally marked with painted and lettered headboards and by numbered stakes. These were later replaced with upright marble markers.. The cemetery was closed on May 1, 1973, but reopened on July 29, 1985, when part of the road system was removed to create additional grave space. The road that was removed extended from the cemetery entry to the former entry gate at Cooper Street. The cemetery remained open for five additional years and was officially closed in 1990. Interments of casketed remains in occupied graves and reserved graves, as well as interments of cremated remains, continue. As of May 31, 1996, there were 8, 012 graves used for the interment of 8,503 casketed remains and 154 sites used for the interment of 209 cremated remains. As of May 31, 1996, there were 125 gravesites available (121 reserved) for the interment of casketed remains and 108 sites available for the interment of cremated remains.

The original superintendent's lodge was constructed some time prior to 1868. According to the Report of Inspector of the National Cemeteries of the United States for 1869, "The lodge is very badly built. The plank was not seasoned, and the shingles were most inferior. The shrinkage has been very great, and every rain storm beats through the doors and casements of the windows, covering the floors with water. The roof leaks badly. The plastering was done in mid-winter. The mortar contains very little lime, and is constantly falling off." The same report for the years 1870 and 1871 states that the lodge is a small wooden cottage in poor condition. National Cemetery System records show that a two-story brick, stone, and concrete lodge with office building was constructed in 1907. The roof was slate. Cemetery superintendents or directors resided in the lodge until 1984. That same year, a decision was made to demolish the lodge. Compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act was begun. Subsequently, in 1990, a fire caused extensive damage to the structure. It was later demolished on September 28, 1993.

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

The brick service building was constructed in 1936. It originally contained two storage bays and two toilets. A brick addition and garage were constructed in 1949. The roof of the building is covered with asbestos shingles, and the garage area has a built-up flat roof. The interior and exterior of the original service building were renovated in 1987 to accommodate the administration office, since the lodge was going to be demolished, and to provide handicapped accessible restroom facilities. One of the public toilets was converted to an employee restroom. The total area of the building and garage is 1,578 square feet. There is also an enclosed fuel storage area adjacent to the service building.

A brick and concrete rectangular rostrum, 22 feet by 37 feet, with an asphalt shingle roof, was constructed in 1885. It was located near the northeast corner of the cemetery and was removed on September 30, 1960.

A monument, sixty feet in height, prominently displayed in the northeast corner of the national cemetery, was erected by members of the Department of Tennessee, Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.). Department Commander H. C. Whittaker first publicly outlined the plan on March 23, 1893, during the tenth annual G.A.R. encampment at Harriman. A memorial committee was chaired by William Rule, influential editor of the Knoxville *Daily Journal*, who later wrote that plans for the memorial were first presented at the Athens encampment in 1892. There was little hope that the state would sanction funding for a Union monument; this sadly was a burden each veteran and his friends would have to bear. After a promising beginning in 1893, the funding campaign became dismally inactive. Three years later, only \$1,300 had been collected. In the spring of 1896, the group forwarded, for the approval of the United States Quartermaster General, the chief supervising agency for all G.A.R. construction, a design for the monument. The structure was to be a fifty-foot Tennessee marble shaft, embellished with unidentified bronze figures on the corners, and a single statue at the summit. A design was agreed upon and, on May 8, 1896, approved by the United States Quartermaster's Office. Approval was conditioned by the proviso "that no part of the expense attending the work be made a charge against the United States." In the summer, the memorial committee signed a contract with William B. McMullen, president of the Tennessee Producers Marble Company and the Southern Monument Company, for material and construction, and with Colonel William A. Gage for engineering consultation. The design showed that flanking entrances were to lead, as if from drawbridges, into a small sanctuary dressed entirely with marble. In its west wall was to be an "art glass" window. The east wall would be hung with tablets detailing regimental histories. Close by the entrances would appear the national emblem and state hatchment, as well as an epitaph and dedication. The monument was a miniature medieval fortress complete with its unique inner room, stained glass window and mosaic star. David H. Geddes, chief carver and foreman at the Southern Monument Company, and his assistants apparently had admirably sculpted the crenelated

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

bastions, turrets, corbelled table, decorative frieze, round-arch openings, and rusticated wall surfaces. But, looking high over Holston Street to the central turret, one found not only a sentry peering steadfastly toward the southern horizon, but a ferocious bronze eagle with wings widely spread. The monument cost \$11,300 and was nearly paid for by soldier residents of the state. Of the estimated 7,000 donations, most came as one dollar offerings from dutiful pensioners. The monument was formally turned over to the Government and accepted by the Secretary of War on October 24, 1901.

On August 22, 1904, a powerful bolt of lightning struck the monument. Only the steps and part of the foundation remained, and these were scarred. The stones and eagle, its wings "closely cropped at its body as evenly as if the work had been done by an instrument," were flung to the ground and into the street. Lightning had apparently been attracted to a steel rod that anchored the eagle to the shaft; consequently, the sculpture had sustained a direct hit. Through the state department, the committee sponsored G.A.R. General Orders No 2, calling for immediate reconstruction. United States Representative Henry R. Gibson introduced before the House a bill calling for \$10,000 to secure the repairs. The bill passed on April 25, 1905, but the appropriation was for a maximum of \$5,000 or "so much thereof might be necessary to repair the monument." In November 1905, the committee retained Baumann Brothers, Incorporated, of Knoxville as the consulting architect. Reconstruction began the next May, following acceptance of a \$4,300 bid submitted by the Fenton Construction Company. The Baumann design must have closely duplicated the original plan. The bronze eagle was replaced with an eight-foot-tall soldier, taking his post on top of the castle's main turret. The coat of arms was left off, for fear it would draw more lightning. The project was completed on October 15, 1906. A fanciful local legend identified the soldier figure with General John T. Wilder, who was the only ranking general on the memorial committee. Union General Wilder first came to Tennessee in 1863, when he marched his Indiana brigade through what is now Rockwood to join the Union Army at Chattanooga. He took part in the Battle of Chickamauga and, on that battlefield, there is an imposing monument to him and his brigade. While camping in what is now Rockwood, General Wilder, a mineralogist and engineer, noticed signs of both coal and iron ore in close proximity. After the war, he came back to Knoxville, established the Roane Iron Company, and operated it for several years. During the McKinley Administration, he was appointed Federal pension agent and maintained an office in the old post office. Every three months, he issued pension checks to hundreds of Union veterans.

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Knoxville National Cemetery  
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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

The monument is inscribed as follows:

Northeast Opening

1861

1865

IN MEMORIAM  
UNION SOLDIERS  
OF  
TENNESSEE  
OCTOBER 15, 1896  
REST ON, EMBALMED AND SAINTED DEAD,  
DEAR AS THE BLOOD YE GAVE;  
NO IMPIOUS FOOTSTEP HERE SHALL TREAD  
THE HERBAGE OF YOUR GRAVE;  
NOR SHALL YOUR GLORY BE FORGOT  
WHILE FAME HER RECORD KEEPS, OR HONOR POINTS THE HALLOWED SPOT  
WHERE VALOR PROUDLY SLEEPS.  
TENNESSEE FURNISHED FOR THE UNION ARMY 31092 MEN.  
CASUALTIES 6776.

Northwest Wall

1896

1901

TO THE TENNESSEE MEN  
WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES A VOLUNTARY  
SACRIFICE ON  
FREEDOM'S ALTAR;  
WHO ENDURED WITH FORTITUDE A TEMPORARY BANISH-  
MENT FROM THEIR MOUNTAIN HOMES WHO FOLLOWED  
THE FLAG THEY LOVED;  
ON SCORGES OF BATTLE-FIELDS AND WHO FELL  
VALIANTLY FOR  
NATIONAL UNITY  
THIS MONUMENT  
IS LOVINGLY ERECTED BY THEIR SURVIVING  
COMRADES AND FRIENDS.

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

When looking through the wrought-iron gate on the northeast side of the monument, you can see the following inscribed on a slab forming a part of the interior wall:

Monument Committee

WILLIAM RULE

CHAIRMAN

W.R. CARTER

SECRETARY

W.J. RAMAGE

TREASURE

R.R. SAMUEL

H.C. WHITAKER

DIED SEPT. 29. 1898.

W.E.F. MILBURN

A.J. GAHAGAN

E.H. MATHEWS

FRANK WEISE

J.W. CARTER

G.W. PETERS

J. T. WILDER

D.M. COLDWELL

Farther inside the monument, inscribed on another wall, is the following:

ORGANIZATION OF TENNESSEE UNION TROOPS  
CAVALRY.

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

- 1ST. CAMP GARBER, KY., MAR., 1862.
- 2D. CUMBERLAND GAP, TENN., AUG. AND SEPT., 1862.
- 3D. CUMBERLAND GAP, TENN., AUG. AND SEPT. 1862.
- 4TH. CUMBERLAND GAP, TENN., AUG. AND SEPT., 1862.
- 5TH. NASHVILLE, TENN., JULY, 1862.
- 7TH. HUNTINGDON, TENN., NOV. 1862.
- 8TH. CAMP NELSON, KY., JUNE, 1863.
- 9TH. CAMP NELSON, KY., JUNE 1863.
- 10TH. NASHVILLE, TENN., OCT. 1863.
- 11TH. CAMP NELSON, KY., OCT., 1863
- 12TH. NASHVILLE, TENN., OCT., 1863.
- 13TH. STRAWBERRY PLAINS, TENN., SEPT., 1863.
- 14TH UNION CITY, TENN., DEC., 1863.

On the southeast elevation of the monument is a stained-glass window. Inside the monument to the left of this window, the following is inscribed:

INFANTRY

- 1ST. CAMP DICK ROBINSON, KY., AUG. 1861
- 2D. CAMP PICKETT ROBINSON, KY., SEPT. 1861
- 3D. FLAT LICK, KY., FEB. 1862
- 4TH LOUISVILLE, KY., MAR. 1863
- 5TH BARBOURVILLE, KY., MAR. 1862
- 6TH BARBOURVILLE, KY., MAR. 1862
- 7TH NEVER ORGANIZED MEN TRANSFERRED TO OTHER REGIMENTS
- 8TH LEXINGTON, KY., SEPT. 1862
- 9TH NEVER ORGANIZED MEN TRANSFERRED TO OTHER REGIMENTS
- 10TH NASHVILLE, TENN., MAY 1862

As you enter the cemetery, there is a dedicatory plaque that was placed there when the cemetery was reopened on July 29, 1985. It is inscribed as follows:

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY  
ESTABLISHED IN 1863  
IS THIS DAY REDEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF ALL THE  
PATRIOTIC MEN AND WOMEN  
WHO ANSWERED THEIR  
COUNTRY'S CALL TO SERVICE  
THEIR INSPIRING CONTRIBUTION  
WILL HELP PRESERVE IN THE  
HEARTS AND LIVES OF ALL  
AMERICANS THE SPIRIT OF  
PATRIOTISM THE LOVE OF  
COUNTRY AND THE WILLINGNESS  
TO SERVE AND SACRIFICE  
FOR THE COMMON GOOD

RONALD REAGAN  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES  
HARRY N. WALTERS  
ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
PAUL T. BANNAI  
CHIEF MEMORIAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR  
JULY 29, 1985

There are two known Medal of Honor recipients buried in the Knoxville National Cemetery:

**Troy A. McGill, Sergeant, U.S. Army, Troop G, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division - World War II** - For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action with the enemy at Los Negros Islands, Admiralty Group, on March 4, 1944. In the early morning hours Sergeant McGill, with a squad of eight men, occupied a revetment that bore the brunt of a furious attack by approximately 200 drink-crazed enemy troops. Although covered by crossfire from machine guns on the right and left flanks he could receive no support from the remainder of our troops stationed at his rear. All members of the squad were killed or wounded except Sergeant McGill and another man, whom he ordered to return to the next revetment. Courageously resolved to hold his position at all costs, he fired his weapon until it ceased to function. Then, with the enemy only five yards away, he charged from his foxhole in the face of certain death and clubbed the enemy with his

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**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (Continued)**

rifle in hand-to-hand combat until he was killed. At dawn, 105 enemy dead were found around his position. Sergeant McGill's intrepid stand was an inspiration to his comrades and a decisive factor in the defeat of a fanatical enemy. He is buried in Section B, Grave 6294.

**Timothy Spillane, Private, Company C, 16th Pennsylvania Cavalry, Civil War** - At Hatcher's Run, Virginia, on February 7, 1865, his gallantry and good conduct in action as well as his bravery in a charge and reluctance to leave the field after being twice wounded, earned him the Medal of Honor. He is buried in Section A, Grave 3319.

The numbers shown for contributing resources within the property reflect the following:

**Buildings:** Service building

**Sites:** Cemetery

**Structures:** Gate, perimeter wall

**Objects:** Flagpole, monument

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Knoxville National Cemetery is significant under Criterion A, and is an important component of the multiple property submission of Civil War Era National Cemeteries. It is significant under Criterion A because of its association with the Civil War.

To Abraham Lincoln, there was no question that East Tennessee and its people were his main source of strength in the South and, immediately after the disaster that befell his army at Bull Run, he ordered an all-out advance into East Tennessee from the Cincinnati base. There were both military and political reasons for his strategy. Union occupation of the territory would sever the vital railroad line connecting Virginia with the Mississippi Valley, and the area was ablaze with Unionists eager to join his legions. East Tennessee was even more important to the Confederate States. Even before Tennessee had broken from the Union, companies of rebel troops were recruited in Knoxville and nearby counties, mustered into service with state militia, and stationed at strategic points.

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

By the summer of 1861, the Confederate States of America had assumed all the characteristics of an independent nation. In early June, the city of Knoxville was still controlled by the Military League troops. Their primary function was to protect the manufacturing facilities and the railroads that were daily transporting soldiers from the Southwestern states through East Tennessee into Virginia. The continuous transit of troops was witnessed by people loyal to the Union with feelings of dissatisfaction, which sometimes grew into animated wrath. At Strawberry Plains, Tennessee, a regiment of southern troops being transported by train, fired on a mass meeting of Unionists as they passed, and the fire was returned. No lives were lost, but feelings of hatred were naturally intensified. To prevent further occurrences, President Jefferson Davis established the District of East Tennessee of the Confederate Armies, and Brigadier General Felix K. Zollicoffer was named first commander. He established his headquarters in Knoxville and chose General William R. Caswell as his aide and Major B.F. Fogg as his adjutant. Zollicoffer found himself surrounded by multiple pockets of resistance as the mountaineers gathered all available weapons and met in secret rendezvous to plan their own private revolution. They brazenly exercised their freedom at the ballot box in August by electing Union candidates overwhelmingly in the congressional districts around Knoxville.

The Confederate government was well aware that any Federal move into East Tennessee would have to come through southeastern Kentucky, following the route of the forbidding, ancient Wilderness Trail that passed through Cumberland Gap, a narrow and easily defended pass located sixty miles north of Knoxville. Charged with the defense of the Gap and the entire Western Territory was General Albert Sidney Johnston, a man President Davis considered the ablest soldier in the entire Confederacy. On his journey from Richmond to East Tennessee, he stopped in Knoxville to confer with General Zollicoffer. The two quickly agreed that the natural defense of East Tennessee began at Cumberland Gap, and Johnston ordered that it be occupied immediately. Opposing the Confederates forty miles north of the Gap at Camp Andrew Johnson, near Barbourville, Kentucky, was an unlikely group of refugees from East Tennessee, calling themselves the First and Second Tennessee volunteers, organized and commanded by Samuel P. Carter. President Davis ordered Zollicoffer to shift his troops from Knoxville to Cumberland Gap and seize Camp Johnson as well as Camp Robinson that was commanded by Lieutenant William Nelson. Zollicoffer took three regiments and established Camp Buckner at Cumberland Ford. He captured the salt works at Manchester, took the salt and wagons and sent them on to Knoxville. He left General William Churchwell in command at Cumberland Gap and went back to East Tennessee. Operating out of Knoxville, the Confederates then began a more potent campaign to wipe out resistance. Vigilance committees were dispersed all around East Tennessee with the authority to arrest persons on suspicion of hostility. Jefferson Davis and his War Department, for some time, had doubts about the military abilities of Zollicoffer. Consequently, they assigned Major General George B. Crittenden to take over the District

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

of East Tennessee. Zollicoffer was later killed at the Battle of Mill Springs in Kentucky. At Knoxville, the news of his death caused great consternation. He was the most popular Confederate leader in Tennessee and was the first Tennessee general killed in the Civil War.

The spring of 1862 witnessed a falling-off of acts of violence in East Tennessee. At Knoxville on March 8, 1862, Major General Edmund Kirby Smith succeeded General George B. Crittenden as Confederate commander of the District of East Tennessee, which was soon reorganized as the Department of East Tennessee, with headquarters at Knoxville. His first task was to muster sufficient forces for adequate defense of East Tennessee. By June 1862, his forces had swelled to 18,000. Confederates in East Tennessee were threatened by encirclement of Federal forces occupying Kentucky, western and central Tennessee, and northern Mississippi and Alabama. General Braxton Bragg assumed command in the West. A Confederate invasion of Kentucky took place and failed to turn the tide of the war in favor of the South. Bragg's and Smith's combined operations had produced some positive results for the South. East Tennessee and the valuable rail lines that ran through Knoxville were secured for the South for months to come.

In January 1863, General Ambrose Burnside was the new Federal Commander of the Army of the Ohio. In June, to pave the way for the invasion of East Tennessee, Burnside sent Colonel William P. Sanders to lead a cavalry raid on Confederate lines south of Cumberland Gap to tear up bridges and communications. The night of June 19, Colonel Sanders ran into the Confederate pickets outside Knoxville. On the 20th, he was moving toward the center of Knoxville on the Tazewell Road. War had come to Knoxville. The Confederates in Knoxville knew that a Union raid on the city was a certainty. The call went out for Knoxville citizens to help defend their city and brace the garrison. By nightfall, two hundred citizens and convalescent soldiers reported for duty, and the batteries were manned. Colonel Sanders and his raiders arrived in Knoxville after dark. The skirmish, mainly an artillery duel, lasted little more than an hour. Two Confederate officers and an enlisted man lost their lives. Their primary mission was to destroy communication lines. Sanders was later promoted to Brigadier General. On November 18, General Sanders and his aide, Major R.E. Lawder, were watching as the gray line swarmed up the hill against the Federal position on Kingston Pike in front of Fort Loudon. They saw Captain Winthrop, a lone Confederate horseman, charging directly into a murderous fire of rifles. They turned and began to retreat for cover behind the hill. Sanders was hit and Lawder caught the general in his arms and quickly collected a few men, who carried their bleeding commander to the Anderson House where they found an old ladder and used it as a stretcher to move Sanders to a room at the Lamar House, where he was examined by Dr. J.C. Hatchitt. A Minie ball had entered his left side and tore the spleen. Sanders, 28 years old, died the next morning, November 19. It was decided that, for the sake of the morale among the soldiers, General Sanders's

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

death would be concealed for the time being. The funeral with graveside service would be held at night, as silently as possible. He was buried in the graveyard next to the Second Presbyterian Church, and his remains were later moved to the Chattanooga National Cemetery, Chattanooga, Tennessee. He is buried in Section C, Grave 1601. Sanders was the only Southern-born Union general officer killed in the Civil War and was a cousin of Jefferson Davis. By command of General Burnside, Fort Loudon was renamed Fort Sanders in his honor.

Union commander General Burnside established his Knoxville headquarters in the home of John H. Crozier, which stood on the northeast corner of Gay Street and Clinch Avenue (site of the present-day Farragut Building). By early September, he had occupied Knoxville and closed the short interior lines of communication from Virginia to Tennessee.

General James Longstreet was Lee's most trusted corps commander. He urged President Davis and General Robert E. Lee to send him and his First Corps by rail from Virginia through Knoxville to join Bragg.

General Longstreet's mission was to destroy Burnside quickly at Knoxville and return to the assistance of Bragg who, for the moment, had Grant trapped in Chattanooga. Burnside, on the other hand, had to delay Longstreet in order to increase Grant's chances of defeating Bragg and breaking out of the trap.

From Campbell's Station on November 16, 1863, General Burnside had sent instructions to Captain Orlando Poe, chief engineer of the Army of the Ohio, at Knoxville, to prepare lines of defense for the town, employing the engineering battalion of the 23rd Corps and such civilians as he could impress into service.

The siege of Knoxville effectively began on November 17, 1863, when the Confederates surrounded Knoxville except where it was bounded on the south by the Tennessee River. The Union troops, ordered by Burnside to retreat no farther, to stand or die in Knoxville, now began to number the days of the siege. The third day, November 19, was memorable, for in the early morning hours the 79th New York Highlanders inside the earthwork fort erected their flag staff, and for the first time the Stars and Stripes flew over the red clay ramparts. For these three days, the Confederate force had ringed the town but had not made a serious demonstration at any point. On November 20, offensive lines began to appear as Longstreet ordered the construction of entrenchments. To strengthen their "diggings," the Union troops reinforced their lines with every material on hand.

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

Fort Sanders was the most heavily fortified emplacement. The west front of this fort was in the vicinity of 17th Street between Clinch and Laurel Avenues, with the northwest bastion near the present site of Fort Sanders Manor, an apartment building at the intersection of 17th and Laurel. Both sides knew that, although this fort was constructed according to classical engineering principles, with a profile of moat, embankment, and parapet, its northwest bastion, a prominent salient in the main Union line of defense, had been built upon a hill that fell off sharply to the northwest. Beneath the brow of this hill a large attacking force could approach within 100 yards without being exposed to view or to fire either from the fort or from the adjacent rifle pit.

By the night of November 20, the physical divisions of offensive and defensive lines were clearly drawn. On Saturday, November 21, the fifth day of the siege of Knoxville, there was no significant change in the positions of the lines. Longstreet's philosophy of attack was to move into enemy territory, select a defensive position, and entice the enemy into attacking from a disadvantageous angle. But Burnside, whose mission was defensive, had no intention of leaving his fortifications and attacking in open ground.

Sunday, the 22nd, there was less firing than usual, but several Union men were hit by Rebel snipers as the guard was changed in daylight hours at Fort Sanders. On the 23rd, Longstreet received word from Bragg that a large force was advancing from Kingston against the Confederates at Knoxville. Longstreet immediately withdrew most of Wheeler's cavalry from the line and sent them toward Kingston to block the progress of the unknown force pressing from the rear. Bragg, sensing an attack upon his own position at Missionary Ridge, decided to recall Longstreet from Knoxville. He dispatched Brigadier General Danville Leadbetter, his chief engineering officer, to Longstreet to personally urge either an immediate Confederate assault or a hasty withdrawal. The night of the 23rd, the Union picket lines between First and Second creeks were driven in, and it appeared that a general engagement would result. Burnside ordered his troops to set fire to the long line of buildings north of the railroad between the two armies. Flames lighted up the wintry sky and the whole town was illuminated by the blazing buildings.

Tuesday, November 24, there was very little picket firing. Most of the day, the Confederates were occupied in establishing their rifle guns on Cherokee Heights south of the river, from which they could enfilade the western side of Fort Sanders. The attack was ordered to commence at sunrise of the 25th. Before orders could be issued to the subordinate officers, Longstreet learned that the brigades of Generals Bushrod Johnson and Archibald Gracie, about 2,600 men, were on their way to reinforce him and would arrive the night of the 25th from Loudon. The attack was postponed once again. General Leadbetter arrived at Longstreet's headquarters after dark on the 25th with orders from Bragg to attack

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

and crush Burnside quickly. Longstreet suggested that with more reinforcements expected that evening and in the next few days, Union troops could be starved into surrender without the needless expense of Confederate lives in an assault that may not be successful. He added that if an assault must be made, it should be directed against the northwest bastion of Fort Sanders. Leadbetter agreed but requested that the final decision be delayed until he could make a thorough reconnaissance of the Federal lines and concluded that an attack upon Mabry's Hill was impossible. On Saturday, November 28, the siege of Knoxville went into its twelfth day and General Leadbetter delivered General Bragg's order to attack immediately. Longstreet ordered General McLaws to strike at Fort Sanders as soon as it became visible in the morning sun of the 28th, but it was extremely cold and foggy. Once more, Longstreet canceled the attack order. The attack was then to begin in the darkness of the 28th just before sunrise, preceded by only a few rounds of artillery fire to encourage the infantry, and the assault would be made by the infantry alone. As the Rebel sharpshooters advanced into position about eleven o'clock that evening, Burnside's entire command was alerted to the point of attack. During the cold night of November 28, the Union soldiers ate and slept fully armed. Just before dawn on November 29, the Confederate troops moved forward. The bloody fight lasted only twenty minutes. The confederates felt that without ladders they were not given a fair chance, and they wanted another crack at the fort. General Jenkins pleaded with Longstreet and finally obtained permission to renew the assault. While plans were being made, a courier suddenly arrived with a telegram which President Jefferson Davis sent to Major General Robert Ransom to relay to Longstreet. General Grant had driven Bragg's army from Missionary Ridge and Longstreet was ordered to join Bragg near Ringgold or Dalton, Georgia. As soon as it became evident to General Burnside that the assault was over, he ordered General Potter to arrange a thirty-minute truce with Colonel Sorrel of Longstreet's staff in order to care for the wounded and bury the dead. The attacking Confederate troops sustained 813 casualties--129 killed, 458 wounded, and 226 missing. Union losses in the fort were reported as 5 killed and 8 wounded. At 7 p.m. on November 29, a single cannon's roar marked the end of the truce. The victorious Union Army was once again besieged in Knoxville. The "defeated" Confederate army was still in a position to starve the Union army into surrender or to capture it by another assault. At midnight on December 4, 1863, as the men in Fort Sanders were standing to arms, something of an unusual nature was observed going on in the Confederate camps.

They made wild speculations. Some thought the Confederates were preparing for one final assault, others that they were retreating. At daylight, Captain Ames, Company B of the 36th Massachusetts, discovered that the Confederates were indeed gone. The siege of Knoxville was over.

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**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)**

The Knoxville National Cemetery was established in September 1863. Bodies were removed in Tennessee from Tazewell, Claiborne County, 15 miles north; from Concord, Knox County, 20 miles west; from Christianburg, Montgomery County, in Virginia, 200 miles east; from Asheville, Buncombe County, in North Carolina, 80 miles south, and from various places within those limits; and from the cemetery at Cumberland Gap, in Claiborne County, Tennessee.

The Knoxville National Cemetery consists of 9.8 acres. The property was formerly owned by John Damron, who on June 10, 1867, in accordance with an appraisalment made by a decree of the Court, conveyed the same to the United States, in fee simple, for the sum of \$5,000.

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA - VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying base map.

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**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The National Cemetery System has used the existing boundaries of the cemetery.

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KNOXVILLE NATIONAL CEMETERY  
City of Knoxville, Tennessee  
Armando A. Sammartino, photographer  
Dates of Photographs: November 12 and 13, 1995

All negatives are stored with Technical Support Service (401B), National Cemetery System, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20420

VIEW OF: Entrance gate, view looking southwest

NEG. NO. 49949-1  
PHOTO 1 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, northeast elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-6  
PHOTO 7 of 17

VIEW OF: Flagpole, view looking west

NEG. NO. 49949-11  
PHOTO 2 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, northwest elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-4  
PHOTO 8 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building (office portion), southeast elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-15  
PHOTO 3 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, southeast elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-8  
PHOTO 9 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building, southeast elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-14  
PHOTO 4 of 17

VIEW OF: Monument, southwest elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-9  
PHOTO 10 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building, southwest elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-16  
PHOTO 5 of 17

VIEW OF: Stained-glass window on southeast elevation of monument

NEG. NO. 49949-10  
PHOTO 11 of 17

VIEW OF: Service building, northwest elevation

NEG. NO. 49949-21  
PHOTO 6 of 17

VIEW OF: Rededication plaque at cemetery entrance

NEG. NO. 49949-3  
PHOTO 12 of 17

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VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking northwest

NEG. NO. 49949-23

PHOTO 13 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west

NEG. NO. 49949-22

PHOTO 14 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking west  
showing portion of perimeter wall

NEG. NO. 49949-17

PHOTO 15 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking southwest  
showing portion of perimeter wall

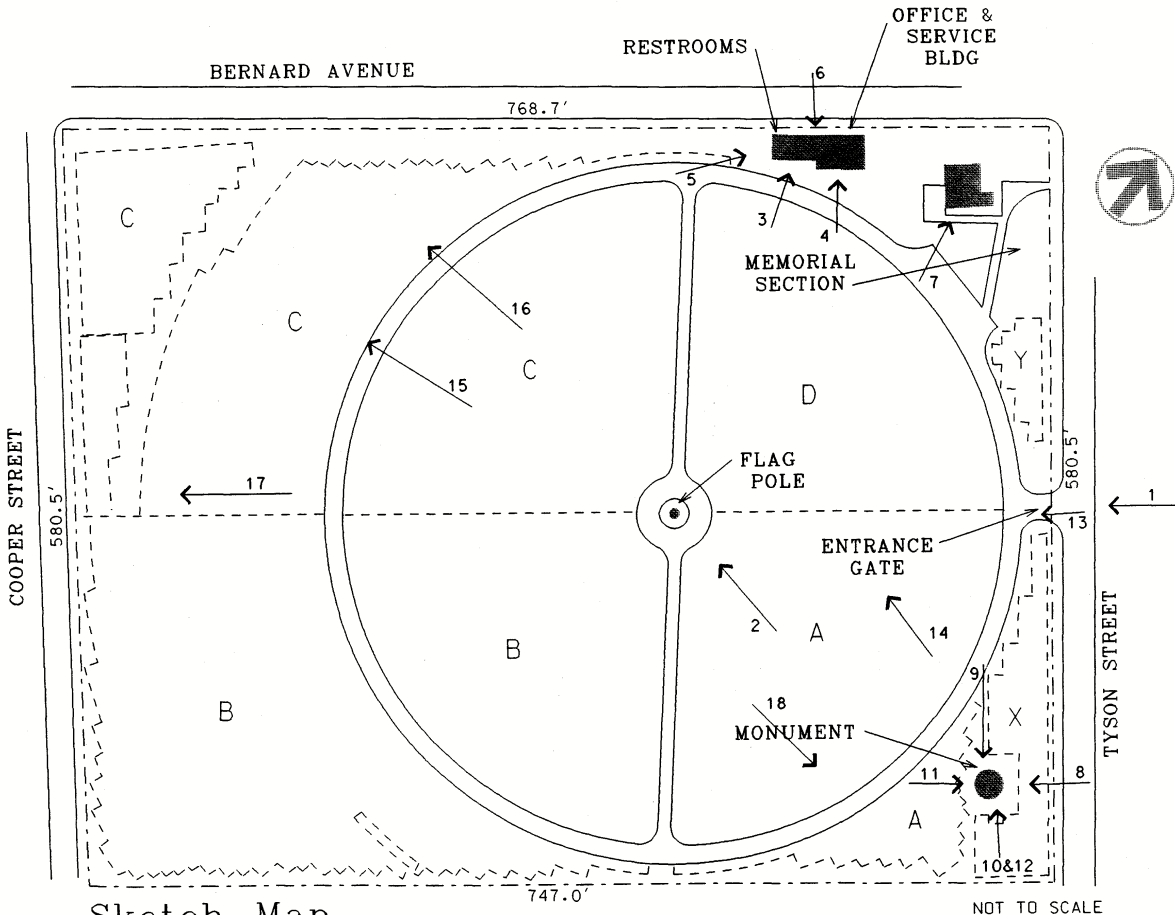
NEG. NO. 49949-18

PHOTO 16 of 17

VIEW OF: Cemetery, view looking east,  
showing several private monuments

NEG. NO. 49949-12

PHOTO 17 of 17



Sketch Map  
 Knoxville National Cemetery  
 Knox County, Tennessee

NOTE: Numbered arrows correspond to the views in the accompanying photographs.

NOT TO SCALE