The Civil War in Knoxville

Grade Level: 5th & 8th Grade

Standards/Unit:

5th Grade
Unit 1: The Civil War & Reconstruction (1850-1877)

Local I.D. #5.1.05: Describe the role of Tennessee in the Civil War

8th Grade
Era 5: Civil War & Reconstruction (1850-1877)

Local I.D. #5.3: Identify persons that made important contributions both in Tennessee and nationally during the Civil War. 8.5.20: Identify Tennessee's role within the Civil War.

Lesson Time: One class period

Objective/Purpose: Students will analyze the local historic significance of the Civil War in Knoxville and be able to locate historic structures and places that were associated with the Civil War in Knoxville.

Materials: PowerPoint

Strategies/Procedures: Teachers will present the PowerPoint and then engage the students in a discussion using the following question(s). If time allows you may use one question or all.

1. Why do you think Knoxville was such an important area for the Union and Confederate armies to control?

2. In the end the Confederate Siege of Knoxville failed and the Union continued their control over Knoxville. If the Confederate’s had taken control what kind of city would Knoxville be today?

3. What motive was there to keep Union General Sander’s death a secret from the general public and the Confederate army?
4. Both the Union and Confederate armies used private homes around Knoxville for their headquarters during the Siege of Knoxville. If you were a homeowner during this time and army forces wanted to use your home what choice would you have made and why?

Activities: if time permits teachers can assign in-class enrichment projects for extra credit.

1. Make a timeline of the events leading up to the Siege of Knoxville.

2. Make a T-chart: What are the advantages of Union and Confederate forces taking control over Knoxville during the Civil War?

3. Writing prompt: using the map on slide 14 – Why do you think only two defenses are south of the river? What are the advantages of placing the defenses on the outskirts of the Knoxville city limits?

Assessment/Evaluation: The teacher will evaluate the student’s discussion and level of interest and participation.
The Civil War in Knoxville
Teacher Resource Guide

The Civil War – General Information

The American Civil War (1861–1865), also known as the War Between the States, was a civil war in the United States of America. Eleven Southern slave states declared their secession from the United States and formed the Confederate States of America, also known as “the Confederacy”. Led by Jefferson Davis, they fought against the United States (the Union), which was supported by all the free states and the five border slave states.

In the presidential election of 1860, the Republican Party, led by Abraham Lincoln, had campaigned against the expansion of slavery beyond the states in which it already existed. The Republican victory in that election resulted in seven Southern states declaring their secession from the Union even before Lincoln took office on March 4, 1861. Both the outgoing administration of President James Buchanan and Lincoln's incoming administration rejected the legality of secession, considering it rebellion.

Hostilities began on April 12, 1861, when Confederate forces attacked a US military installation at Fort Sumter in South Carolina. Lincoln responded by calling for a volunteer army from each state, leading to declarations of secession by four more Southern slave states. Both sides raised armies as the Union assumed control of the Border States early in the war and established a naval blockade. In September 1862, Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation made ending slavery in the South a war goal, and dissuaded the British from intervening.

The Confederacy

Seven Deep South cotton states seceded by February 1861, starting with South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas. These seven states formed the Confederate States of America (February 4, 1861), with Jefferson Davis as president, and a governmental structure closely modeled on the U.S. Constitution. Following the attack on Fort Sumter, President Lincoln called for a volunteer army from each state.

Within two months, four more Southern slave states declared their secession and joined the Confederacy: Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina and Tennessee. The northwestern portion of Virginia subsequently seceded from Virginia, joining the Union as the new state of West Virginia on June 20, 1863. By the end of 1861, Missouri and Kentucky were effectively under Union control, with Confederate state governments in exile.

The Union States

Twenty-three states remained loyal to the Union: California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin. During the war, Nevada and West Virginia joined as new states of the Union. Tennessee and Louisiana were returned to Union military control early in the war.
The territories of Colorado, Dakota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Washington fought on the Union side. Several slave-holding Native American tribes supported the Confederacy, giving the Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) a small, bloody civil war.

**Border States**

The border states in the Union were West Virginia (which was separated from Virginia and became a new state), and four of the five northernmost slave states (Maryland, Delaware, Missouri, and Kentucky).

**Tennessee during the Civil War**

To a large extent, the American Civil War was fought in cities and farms of Tennessee; only Virginia saw more battles. Tennessee was the last of the Southern states to declare secession from the Union, but saw more than its share of the devastation resulting from years of armies criss-crossing the state. Rivers in Tennessee were key arteries to the Deep South, and, from the early days of the war, Union efforts focused on securing control of those water routes, as well as major roads and mountain passes such as the Cumberland Gap.

A large number of important battles occurred in Tennessee, including the Battle of Shiloh, which at the time was the deadliest battle in American history (it was later surpassed by a number of other engagements). Other large battles in Tennessee included Stones River, Chattanooga, Nashville, Franklin and Knoxville.

Although the state became a part of the Confederacy, pockets of strong pro-Union sentiments remained throughout the war, particularly in the mountains in East Tennessee. The Vice President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, was a loyalist, as were a number of congressmen and state politicians. On the Confederate side, significant leaders included noted cavalryman Nathan B. Forrest and corps commanders Leonidas Polk and Benjamin F. Cheatham, as well as Governor Isham Harris.

**Troops move toward Knoxville**

The Confederacy had never had effective control of large areas of East Tennessee. There had been little slavery practiced in East Tennessee, because of moral opposition to the practice and the fact that little of the land was suitable to plantation agriculture; pro-Union and Republican sentiment ran high and most East Tennesseans had not been in favor of secession. Therefore, Union forces had little trouble from the local populace when Burnside occupied Knoxville in September 1863.

Knoxville played a significant role in the Union victory in the Civil War. The Confederate Army fought and drove the Union Army into Chattanooga, Tennessee. After the battle of Chattanooga, General Braxton Bragg split his army, sending part of his troops and General James Longstreet to Knoxville to run the Union Army out of occupied Knoxville.

**The Battle of Campbell’s Station**

The Battle of Campbell’s Station was a battle of the Knoxville Campaign and occurred on November 16, 1863, at Campbell's Station, (now Farragut), Knox County, Tennessee.
In early November 1863, Lt. General James Longstreet, with two divisions and about 5,000 cavalry, was detached from the Confederate Army of Tennessee near Chattanooga, Tennessee, to attack Maj. General Ambrose E. Burnside's Union Department of the Ohio troops at Knoxville. Following parallel routes, Longstreet and Burnside raced for Campbell's Station, a hamlet where the Concord Road, from the south, intersected the Kingston Road (now called Kingston Pike) to Knoxville. Burnside hoped to reach the crossroads first and continue on to safety in Knoxville. Longstreet planned to reach the crossroads and hold it, which would prevent Burnside from gaining Knoxville and force him to fight outside his earthworks.

By forced marching, on a rainy November 16, Major General Ambrose E. Burnside's advance reached the vital intersection of Concord Road and Kingston Road (now Kingston Pike) and deployed first. The main column arrived at noon with the baggage train just behind. Scarcely 15 minutes later, Longstreet's Confederates solders approached. Longstreet attempted a double envelopment: attacks timed to strike both Union flanks simultaneously. Major General Lafayette McLaws's Confederate division struck with such force that the Union right had to redeploy, but held. Brig. General Micah Jenkins's Confederate division maneuvered ineffectively as it advanced and was unable to turn the Union left. Burnside ordered his two divisions astride the Kingston Road (now Kingston Pike) to withdraw three-quarters of a mile to a ridge in their rear. This was accomplished without confusion. The Confederates suspended their attack while Burnside continued movement to Knoxville. Estimated casualties for the battle were 400 for the Union and 570 for the Confederates.

**Fort Sanders fortification earthwork**

Union engineers commanded by Captain Orlando M. Poe built several fortifications in the form of bastioned earthworks near Knoxville. One was Fort Sanders, just west of downtown Knoxville across a creek valley. It was named for Brig. Gen. William P. Sanders, mortally wounded in a skirmish outside Knoxville on November 18, 1863. The fort, a salient in the line of earthworks that surrounded three sides of the city, rose 70 feet above the surrounding plateau and was protected by a ditch 12 feet wide and 8 feet deep. An almost vertical wall rose 15 feet above the ditch. Inside the fort were 12 cannons and 440 men of the 79th New York Infantry.

**Battle of Fort Sanders**

The Battle of Fort Sanders was the decisive engagement of the Knoxville Campaign fought in Knoxville, Tennessee, on November 29, 1863. Assaults by Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet failed to break through the defensive lines of Union Major General Ambrose Burnside, resulting in lopsided casualties, and the Siege of Knoxville entered its final days.

As a Confederate army under General Braxton Bragg besieged Union forces at Chattanooga, Tennessee, a detachment under the command of Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, a trusted subordinate of Robert E. Lee, was sent to Knoxville to prevent Burnside's Army of the Ohio from moving in support of Chattanooga. After Burnside escaped a trap at the Battle of Campbell's Station, his men took up defensive positions around Knoxville and the Siege of Knoxville began on November 17, 1863. Longstreet determined that Fort Sanders was the most appropriate place to attempt a breakthrough of the Union defenses. He initially planned an assault on November 20, but chose to delay while he received reinforcements. His eventual assault was conducted by three infantry brigades, under Brig. General Benjamin G. Humphreys, Brig. General Goode Bryan, and Col. Solon Z. Ruff.
On November 23, 1863, Longstreet's forces seized Cherokee Heights, a tall bluff south of the Holston River (now called the Tennessee River) from Knoxville, only about 2400 yards from Fort Sanders. Longstreet's original intent was to use artillery to "soften up" Fort Sanders in preparation for a frontal assault; however, at virtually the last minute, he changed the plan to a surprise infantry assault at dawn, hoping that the benefits of surprise would outweigh those of a cannonade. Inexplicably, he squandered the element of surprise by deploying skirmishers forward hours before the assault. Although this movement placed them in good positions for sharpshooting, it clearly revealed his plans to the enemy.

The assault, conducted on November 29, 1863, was poorly planned and executed. Longstreet discounted the difficulties of the physical obstacles his men would face. He had witnessed, through field glasses, a Union soldier walking across the ditch in the fortification and, not realizing that the man had crossed on a plank, believed that the ditch was very shallow. He also believed that the steep walls could be negotiated by digging footholds, rather than requiring scaling ladders.

The Confederates moved within 120-150 yards of the salient during the night of freezing rain and snow and waited for the order to attack. Their attack at dawn has been described as "cruel and gruesome by 19th century standards." They were initially confronted by telegraph wire that had been strung between tree stumps at knee height, possibly the first use of such wire entanglements in the Civil War, and many men were shot as they tried to untangle themselves. When they reached the ditch, they found the vertical wall to be almost insurmountable, frozen and slippery. Union soldiers rained murderous fire into the masses of men, including musketry, canister, and artillery shells thrown as hand grenades. Unable to dig footholds, men climbed upon each other's shoulders to attempt to reach the top. A succession of color bearers was shot down as they planted their flags on the fort. For a brief time, three flags reached the top, those of the 16th Georgia, 13th Mississippi, and 17th Mississippi.

Longstreet called off the disastrous attack after 20 minutes. As the Confederates retreated, Union soldiers captured over 200 men in the ditch. It was one of the most lopsided defeats of the war, with the Confederates suffering 813 casualties compared to the Union's 13. The combination of this defeat and word that Bragg had been defeated at the Battle of Chattanooga meant the effective end of the Siege of Knoxville. Longstreet did not resume his attacks and withdrew on December 4. His Knoxville Campaign had been a failure, unable to defeat Burnside or to assist Bragg. East Tennessee remained under Union control for the remainder of the war.

Taken from - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Fort_Sanders

**Knoxville after the Civil War**

After the war, with the expansion of the railroad system, river access & geographical location many northern investors settled in Knoxville and started industrial companies that helped Knoxville recover relatively quickly.

Other companies that sprang up during this period were Knoxville Woolen Mills, Dixie Cement, and Woodruff's Furniture. Between 1880 and 1887, 97 factories were established in Knoxville, most of them specializing in textiles, food products, and iron products. By the 1890s, Knoxville was home to more than 50 wholesaling houses, making it the third largest wholesaling center by volume in the South. The Candoro Marble Works, established in the community of Vestal –
South Knoxville in 1914, became the nation's foremost producer of pink marble and one of the nation's largest marble importers.

In 1869, Thomas Hughes, a Union-sympathizer and president of East Tennessee University, secured federal wartime restitution funding and state-designated Morrill Act funding to expand the college, which had been occupied by both armies during the war. In 1879, the school changed its name to the University of Tennessee, hoping to secure more funding from the Tennessee state legislature. Charles Dabney, who became president of the university in 1887, overhauled the faculty and established a law school in an attempt to modernize the scope of the university.

The post-war manufacturing boom brought thousands of immigrants to the city. The population of Knoxville grew from around 5,000 in 1860 to 32,637 in 1900. West Knoxville was annexed in 1897, and over 5,000 new homes were built between 1895 and 1904.

Taken from - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knoxville,_Tennessee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knoxville,_Tennessee)

**Battlefield Today**

The Fort Sanders area became the City of Old West Knoxville on March 3, 1888. The new town occupied 805 acres and developed into an upper middle class neighborhood during the latter part of the 19th century. Many elaborate Victorian residential houses we built during this time, especially located on the uphill sides and where the University of Tennessee is located now. Old West Knoxville was annexed into the City of Knoxville in 1897.

**People**

**Confederate Lt. General James Longstreet**

Born on January 8, 1821 Longstreet was one of the foremost Confederate generals of the Civil War and the principal subordinate to General Robert E. Lee, who called him his "Old War Horse." He served under Lee as a corps commander for many of the famous battles fought by the Army of Northern Virginia in the Eastern Theater, but also with Gen. Braxton Bragg in the Army of Tennessee in the Western Theater.

Longstreet was criticized for the slow pace of his advance toward Knoxville in November and some of his troops began using the nickname Peter the Slow. Burnside evaded him at the Battle of Campbell's Station and settled into entrenchments around the city, which Longstreet besieged unsuccessfully. The Battle of Fort Sanders failed to bring a Confederate breakthrough. When Bragg was defeated by Grant at Chattanooga on November 25, Longstreet was ordered to join forces with the Army of Tennessee in northern Georgia. He demurred and began to move back to Virginia, soon pursued by Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman in early December.

Longstreet's talents as a general made significant contributions to the Confederate victories at Second Bull Run, Fredericksburg, and Chickamauga, in both offensive and defensive roles. He also performed strongly during the Seven Days Battles, the Battle of Antietam, and until he was seriously wounded, at the Battle of the Wilderness. His performance in semiautonomous command at Knoxville, Tennessee, resulted in a Confederate defeat. His most controversial service was at the Battle of Gettysburg, where he disagreed with General Lee on the tactics to be employed and reluctantly supervised the disastrous infantry assault known as Pickett's Charge.
He enjoyed a successful post-war career working for the U.S. Government as a diplomat, civil servant, and administrator.

Taken from - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Longstreet

**Union Major General Ambrose Burnside**

Ambrose Everett Burnside was born on May 23, 1824 and was an American soldier, railroad executive, inventor, industrialist, and politician from Rhode Island, serving as governor and a U.S. Senator. As a Union Army general in the American Civil War, he conducted successful campaigns in North Carolina and East Tennessee but was defeated in the disastrous Battle of Fredericksburg and Battle of the Crater. His distinctive style of facial hair is now known as sideburns, derived from his last name.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Burnside was a brigadier general in the Rhode Island Militia. He raised a regiment, the 1st Rhode Island Volunteer Infantry, and was appointed its colonel on May 2, 1861. Within a month, he ascended to brigade command in the Department of Northeast Virginia. He commanded the brigade without distinction at the First Battle of Bull Run in July, committing his troops piecemeal, and took over division command temporarily for wounded Brig. Gen. David Hunter. After his 90-day regiment was mustered out of service, he was promoted to brigadier general of volunteers on August 6, and was assigned to train provisional brigades in the nascent Army of the Potomac.

Burnside would go on to command in Maryland and Virginia before moving onto East Tennessee. President Lincoln was unwilling to lose Burnside from the Army and assigned him to command the Department of the Ohio and his old IX Corps. In Ohio, Burnside issued his controversial General Order Number 38, making it a crime to express any kind of opposition to the war. Burnside used it to arrest former Ohio congressman and candidate for governor of Ohio, Clement Vallandigham, a prominent leader in the copperhead peace movement, and try him in a military court (despite the fact that he was a civilian). Burnside also dealt with Confederate raiders such as John Hunt Morgan.

In the Knoxville Campaign, Burnside advanced to Knoxville, Tennessee, first bypassing the Confederate-held Cumberland Gap. After occupying Knoxville unopposed, he sent troops back to the Cumberland Gap. Brig. Gen. John W. Frazer, the Confederate commander, refused to surrender in the face of two Union brigades and Burnside arrived with a third, forcing the surrender of Frazer and 2,300 Confederates. After Union Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans was defeated at the Battle of Chickamauga, Burnside was pursued by Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, against whose troops he had battled at Marye's Heights. Burnside skillfully outmaneuvered Longstreet at the Battle of Campbell's Station and was able to reach his entrenchments and safety in Knoxville, where he was briefly besieged until the Confederate defeat at the Battle of Fort Sanders outside the city. Tying down Longstreet's corps at Knoxville contributed to Gen. Braxton Bragg's defeat by Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant at Chattanooga. Troops under Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman marched to Burnside's aid, but the siege had already been lifted; Longstreet withdrew, eventually returning to Virginia.

Taken from - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ambrose_Burnside
Union Engineer Captain Orlando M. Poe

Orlando Metcalfe Poe born on March 7, 1832 was a United States Army officer and engineer during the American Civil War. After his work during the Civil War, Poe was responsible for much of the early lighthouse construction on the Great Lakes.

Poe was appointed brigadier general of volunteers effective on November 29, 1862, however the appointment was rejected by Congress in the spring of 1863. Poe reverted to his old rank of captain in the regular army and was soon transferred to the Western Theater, where, in his capacity as chief engineer of the XXIII Corps, he was a key factor in the defense of Knoxville, Tennessee. This city was successfully defended against a siege led by Confederate Lt. Gen. James Longstreet, which culminated in the November 29, 1863, during the Battle of Fort Sanders. For essentially this action, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman selected Poe as his chief engineer in 1864. Poe oversaw the burning of Atlanta, for which action he was honored by Sherman. He continued to serve as chief engineer during Sherman’s March to the Sea as well as in the war’s concluding Carolinas Campaign.

In the summer 1865 Poe became the Lighthouse Board’s chief engineer; in 1870 he was promoted to the position of Chief Engineer of the Upper Great Lakes 11th Lighthouse District. In this capacity he designed eight "Poe style lighthouses" and oversaw construction of several. Poe was named District Engineer for the Eleventh Lighthouse District.

Taken from - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orlando_M._Poe

Union Brig. General William P. Sanders

William Price Sanders born on August 12, 1833 was an officer in the Union Army in the American Civil War, who died at the Siege of Knoxville on November 19, 1863.

Despite a pre-war reputation for being sympathetic to the South, Sanders (a Kentucky native) remained loyal to the Union. He was promoted to first lieutenant on May 10, 1861. He soon rose to the rank of captain and was assigned to the 3rd U.S. Cavalry on May 14, 1861. On August 2, 1861, he was transferred to the 6th U.S. Cavalry, where he participated in the Peninsula Campaign and the Battle of Antietam. After Antietam, Ambrose Burnside gave him a command in the Department of the Ohio, resulting in his transfer to Cincinnati, Ohio. Burnside then decided to have Colonel Sanders lead a raid into East Tennessee, where he was to scout out the enemy, as well as disrupt communication and transportation networks. He also pursued Morgan's Raiders. Sanders later returned to Kentucky, where he was promoted to brigadier general on October 18, 1863, although this appointment was never confirmed by the Senate.

Sanders next moved with his forces to Knoxville, where he arrived September 3, 1863. On November 18, Sanders was struck in the side by forces under the command of Confederate Colonel E.P. Alexander, an acquaintance of Sanders. The sharpshooter is believed to have been in the tower of Bleak House. Sanders was taken to the Lamar House, where he died the next day.

Sanders was initially buried in the cemetery of Second Presbyterian Church in downtown Knoxville under cover of darkness, but his remains were later moved to the Chattanooga National Cemetery. He was a bachelor at the time of his death, but was dating Sue Boyd, a Knoxville relative of Confederate spy Belle Boyd. Miss Boyd is not believed to have betrayed
him, and is reported to have mourned his death. The Battle of Fort Sanders, part of the Knoxville Campaign, occurred approximately 10 days after his death.

Union "Fort Loudon" was renamed "Fort Sanders" in his memory. Knoxville's Fort Sanders neighborhood and Fort Sanders Hospital, both of which are located on the site of the fort, are also named after him. In addition, the Sons of Union Veterans has a chapter in East Tennessee named in memory of "Colonel William P. Sanders". A historic marker on Kingston Pike denotes the location where he was mortally wounded. Ironically, the marker is on the property of Second Presbyterian Church, which relocated from downtown Knoxville to the place where William Sanders was hit.

Taken from - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_P._Sanders

**Union Earthworks**

16 forts built out of dirt by Union troops to protect Knoxville, here are some of the most notable besides Fort Sanders.

**Ft. Byington**—University of Tennessee “The Hill”

**Ft. Stanley**—across Henley Street Bridge, hill on the left of Chapman Highway

**Ft. Dickerson**—across Henley Street Bridge, hill on right of Chapman Highway

NOTE: If Confederates had captured Ft. Dickerson, Confederates could have fired cannons on downtown Knoxville from hill

**Ft. Higley**—across Henley Street Bridge, hill on left down Blount Avenue

**Armstrong Hill** - across Henley Street, hill along the Tennessee River west of Ft. Higley

**Knoxville National Cemetery**

The Knoxville National Cemetery is a United States National Cemetery established in 1863. The cemetery currently encompasses 9.8 acres, and has more than 9,000 interments. The 60-foot Union Soldier monument, which stands in the eastern corner of the cemetery, is one of the largest Union monuments in the South.

Knoxville National Cemetery was established by Major General Ambrose Burnside, whose Union forces had occupied Knoxville in September 1863 at the height of the Civil War. Burnside assigned the task of laying out the cemetery to his assistant quartermaster, Captain E.B. Chamberlain. The cemetery’s first burials were Union dead exhumed and moved from Cumberland Gap and other parts of the region. Chamberlain’s plan was so effective, that the cemetery was one of the few in the nation that required no alterations upon being designated a national cemetery at the end of the war.

The graves at Knoxville National Cemetery are arranged in a circular pattern, with each burial section separated by walkways. The burial sections each form one quarter of the circle, with the headstones converging toward the middle, where there is a flagpole and cloth canopy. A stone wall surrounds the perimeter, the southeast section of which divides the cemetery from the
adjacent Old Gray Cemetery. The northeast section of the wall, which contains the main entrance, is topped by an iron fence, with the entrance secured by an iron double-gate. The administrative office and service building is located just inside the gate.

Most of the grave markers are marble headstones of a standard size and shape, although a few have larger and more elaborate markers. Inscriptions typically give the deceased's name and years lived, and in some cases, note the deceased's rank, company, and/or war in which they served. The burials are limited to veterans and spouses of veterans. After the Civil War, the cemetery only accepted Union burials, although the cemetery contains at least one Confederate grave. The cemetery is currently administered by Chattanooga National Cemetery, and contains veterans of every war since the Civil War.

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 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.

Completed in 1901, the monument initially stood 50 feet - the height having been calculated to surpass that of the Confederates' monument — and was topped by a bronze eagle with wings spread. 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. 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.

The monument, built of locally-quarried marble, represents a medieval fortress, with stained glass windows and an inner room and staircase. The 8-foot 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.

Taken from - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knoxville_National_Cemetery

Confederate Cemetery/Bethel Cemetery

The history of the Bethel Cemetery began in 1859 when Knox County acquired two acres of land from brick mason Preston D. Blang for use as a graveyard. The date of the first interment is uncertain.

The advent of the Civil War necessitated the use of at least part of the plot for Confederate military burials. The first documented burial of this type that of Lieutenant J. N. Hicks of the 3rd Tennessee Regiment occurred on September 2, 1861. With the number of burials escalating, the cemetery was enlarged in 1862 by the purchase of two acres of land from Joseph A. Mabry Jr. By the time the Confederate forces evacuated Knoxville in August 1863, a total of 1465 identified Confederates were buried here.
The Confederates returned several months later and laid siege to Federal-held Knoxville. In the climatic engagement of the campaign at Fort Sanders on November 29, 1863, 129 Southern soldiers were killed and were buried in the shallow graves on the battlefield. Later, two local businessmen touring the battlefield noticed that the graves had been disturbed by animals and made arrangements to rebury the remains. Approximately 105 bodies were removed from the battlefield and reburied in two mass graves in the country cemetery. The work was evidently performed by Caledonia “Cal” Johnson, a freed slave.

In addition to the original 1465 graves and the 105 battlefield dead from Fort Sanders, the cemetery also became the resting place of 50 prisoners of “Union men” as well as 50 unidentified Confederate soldiers. Thus, approximately 1670 dead from the Civil War period, including Confederate soldiers from every southern state, came to rest in the county cemetery.

On May 13, 1868, the Ladies Memorial Association of Knoxville was established for the purpose of caring for the graves of the Confederate dead. The association was granted a charter by the Chancery Court of Knox County in 1872. On January 30 of the following year, Knox County deeded that portion of the county cemetery containing the Confederate burials to the association, who promptly named it Bethel Cemetery. Another warranty deed for the same plot, referred to as the “Confederate Cemetery” in the document, was executed on June 22, 1892. The size of the transferred parcel was 2.42 acres.

The newly separated cemetery had no regular staff until 1884, when P. Johnson became caretaker. In 1886, he was succeeded by William Daniel Winstead, a shoemaker by trade who had lost a leg in the Battle of Gettysburg while serving under the 6th North Carolina State Troops. Winstead constructed, or at least assisted in the construction of, the caretaker’s cottage, which is a folk Victorian design with Gothic Revival and Italianate influences.

Around 1882 the Ladies Memorial Association resolved to erect a monument at Bethel Cemetery and set about the difficult and protracted task of raising money for the project. The cornerstone was laid during a ceremony on May 21, 1891. The exercises including the installation of a copper time capsule which contained, among other things, a list of burials in the cemetery and a variety of Civil War artifacts. The completed monument was unveiled on Memorial Day, May 19, 1892. The unveiling was preceded by a parade through the city led by General Edmund Kirby Smith, former commander of the Confederate Department of East Tennessee. The principal address was delivered by United States Senator William B. Bate, who was a former Confederate general and a former governor of Tennessee. His address was heard by thousands who gathered at the Bethel Cemetery for the occasion.

The new monument consisted of a shaft surmounted by a northward-facing Confederate soldier at the “parade rest” position. The soldier, designed to appear life-size when viewed from ground level, was designed by Knoxville artist, Lloyd Brasson, and sculpted by George Hoyle Whitaker, a former soldier in the 143rd New York Infantry. The monument, constructed of Tennessee gray marble quarried nearby and erected by the Knoxville firm of George W. Callahan and Brothers, measured 12 feet square at the base and 48 feet high. The cost was $4,500, and contributors included both Confederate and Union veterans.
Burial of Confederate veterans and widows occurred at the improved Bethel Cemetery until the mid-twentieth century. The Ladies Memorial Association held annual Memorial Day services there and continued to make improvements to the site. In 1897, a stonewall along the front of the cemetery was constructed by and partially through the generosity of George W. Callahan. The ornamental cannon balls and wrought iron gates, constructed by Valley Forge Iron Works of Knoxville, were apparently installed at the same time. The association suffered a continuing decline in membership during the early twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1959, the group’s income amounted to less than $2,000. The concrete wall around the east, north, and west sides of the graveyard was constructed in 1908. Other expenditures included markers honoring Mrs. Joseph L. McLeer and Miss Missie Ault, as well as repairs to the residence occupied by the Winstead family.

William Winstead died in 1907, leaving the role of cartaker to wife Bridget Foley Winstead who, in turn, relinquished the role to the daughter Mamie in 1930. By the late 1950’s, Mamie determined to leave the deteriorating neighborhood. Her attachment to Bethel, however, proved too great to sever. She offered to remain and make extensive repairs to both house and cemetery if she could be provided with assurance of ownership. On April 18, 1959, the Ladies Memorial Association, in view of the family’s many years of service and uncompensated services, deeded Bethel Cemetery to Mamie Winstead and presented her with the approximately $200 in its treasury. She was also empowered to take such steps as might be necessary to preserve the historic cemetery.

Over the years, Mamie Winstead undertook a variety of projects to improve the site. A security fence was erected in 1957. The house was renovated, and the cemetery grounds were landscaped. In 1984, the Confederate monument was restored. Plaques were erected in 1963 around the monument listing the identified Confederate burials by state. While “Miss Mamie” periodically requested financial assistance for her projects, much of the money expended was her own. In fact, much of the approximately $20,000 which Mamie Winstead inherited from Mary Birdsong was expended on improvements to Bethel.

On November 21, 1989, Mamie Winstead died. Her last will and testament bequeathed Bethel Cemetery and the remainder of her estate to the new Hazen Historical Museum Foundation. In doing so, she insured that this historic cemetery would be preserved and maintained in perpetuity.

History provided by –

The Mabry-Hazen House
1649 Dandridge Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37915
(865) 522-8661
www.mabryhazen.com
For more information or potential field trips

The Confederate Cemetery/Bethel Cemetery
The Mabry-Hazen House
1649 Dandridge Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37915
(865) 522-8661
www.mabryhazen.com

Knoxville National Cemetery
939 Tyson Street, NW
Knoxville, TN 37917
Phone: (865) 855-6590 or (865) 855-6591
http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/knoxville.asp

Knoxville Civil War Roundtable
http://www.discoveret.org/kcwrt/

Permanent Exhibit - Battle of Fort Sanders, November 29, 1863
Frank H. McClung Museum
University of Tennessee
1327 Circle Park Drive
Knoxville, TN 37996-3200
(865) 974-2144
http://mcclungmuseum.utk.edu/education/ft-sanders.shtml

Permanent Exhibit – Voices of the Land: The People of East Tennessee
Museum of East Tennessee History
601 S. Gay Street
Knoxville, TN 37902
Phone: (865) 215-8824
http://easttnhistory.org/content.aspx?article=1284&parent=1200

Have any concerns or a suggestion on how to make better? Please contact...

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