

# Stones River National Battlefield

# Cultural Landscape Report

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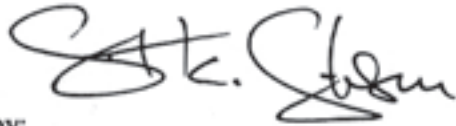
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# Stones River National Battlefield

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Superintendent, Stones River National Battlefield

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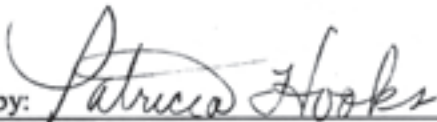


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- 4 Civil War photographs, compiled by Hirst D. Milhollen and Donald H. Mugridge, Washington, D.C. : Library of Congress, 1977. No. 0670
- 5 Kern photograph collection, image SR33
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Other maps and photographs in this document were prepared by the authors in 2005–2006.





# Foreword

Stones River National Battlefield tells the story of a major Civil War battle. The landscape at this park, which comprises only a portion of that great field of battle, belies the carnage and suffering which took place here. But through careful stewardship of the landscape, we can help people understand the events that swept across these pastoral fields and forests. With the guidance of this Cultural Landscape Report, we can manage land to reflect the fields and forests of the 1860s, while fostering the success of native vegetation and wildlife where once there had been the scars of battle. We hope that our stewardship of park land presents an example of how a community can care for places important to all of us.

We appreciate the exceptional contributions of the preparers of this report from Wiss, Janney, Elstner, Associates, Inc., Deborah Slaton and Kenneth Itle, along with those from John Milner Associates, Inc., Krista Schneider, Liz Sargent, and Julie Basic. Their work along with the contributions by Tracy Stakely of the Southeast Regional Office of the National Park Service, will be reflected in the landscape of Stones River National Battlefield and will help visitors and researchers understand the momentous events that took place here during the American Civil War.

Stuart K. Johnson  
Superintendent



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# Introduction

## Management Summary

Stones River National Battlefield is located about three miles northwest of downtown Murfreesboro, Rutherford County, Tennessee. The existing national park includes a portion of the Civil War battlefield of Stones River, a key battle in the campaign to control middle Tennessee, which occurred December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863. The park was established by an Act of Congress in 1927 as Stones River National Military Park under the administration of the Army Quartermaster General. The park was transferred to the administration of the National Park Service in 1933.

In addition to the main portion of the park, referred to as the Nashville Pike Unit, the park includes a number of outlying parcels, among which are the McFadden Farm Unit and the headquarters sites of Union Major General William S. Rosecrans and Confederate General Braxton Bragg. The park also includes two parcels with portions of Fortress Rosecrans, the largest enclosed earthwork built during the Civil War, and the Stones River National Cemetery.

Stones River National Battlefield is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. As noted in the National Register nomination, the battlefield is eligible under Criterion A for “its national and state significance in the military history of the Civil War and its national and state significance in commemoration due to the design and historical associations of the Hazen Brigade Monument and Stones River National Cemetery. It is also eligible for its local significance under Criterion A in African American ethnic heritage and for its local significance under Criterion C in landscape architecture.”<sup>1</sup>

The National Park Service has previously identified eight distinct cultural landscapes that are included in the NPS Cultural Landscapes

Inventory. The integrity of the cultural landscape has been greatly affected in recent decades by the construction of new arterial streets through the greater historic battlefield; intensive residential, commercial, and industrial development around the park; the growth of forest on previously cleared land; and the thinning or cutting of trees in historically wooded areas. The park boundaries were expanded in the late 1980s and early 1990s; however, the existing tour route and interpretive signage were developed for the previously established smaller extent of the park.

This Cultural Landscape Report has been developed primarily to provide treatment recommendations for managing the overall landscape of the park. The treatment recommendations will support future development of an alternative tour route and other physical changes to the park and will identify possible strategies to mitigate the effect of the contemporary urban environment on the historically rural battlefield.

## Historical Summary

Prior to the Battle of Stones River, the landscape over which the battle occurred was covered in stands of woodland and agricultural fields. The Nashville Pike ran through the northern portion of the battle site, as did the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad tracks. The site of the battle was occupied by scattered farms and woodlands including Eastern red cedar growing in dense thickets. The ground on the battlefield consists of shallow soils overlaying limestone and shale bedrock, pitted with sinkholes caused by surface and underground water sources dissolving the limestone: geological features that would prove to be significant in the outcome of the battle.

In its central position within the state, Rutherford County provided a strategic location for control of roads, railroads, and access to the food production of Tennessee. Murfreesboro in late 1862 was the base of operations for the Army of Tennessee, the Confederacy’s principal western army, commanded by General Braxton Bragg. Nashville was controlled by Union forces and

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1. Michael T. Gavin and Sean M. Styles, “Stones River National Military Park / Stones River National Battlefield National Register Nomination, Additional Documentation,” November 14, 2003.

used as a forward supply depot, making control of Murfreesboro essential to the Federal 14th Army Corps (the Army of the Cumberland). Control of the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad was necessary to supply Union forces in a campaign to take Chattanooga.

The Battle of Stones River, which occurred from December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863, was one of the bloodiest of the war. In all, more than 3,000 were killed and nearly 16,000 were wounded. The Army of Tennessee lost control of the rich farmland of middle Tennessee, which would now support the Union forces, and dissent was generated within its command. Following the battle, the Army of the Cumberland was established as a potent defensive force. With the help of former slaves, Union forces constructed Fortress Rosecrans, a fortification that served as a supply depot and base of occupation for the Union for the duration of the war. Fortress Rosecrans was also important to the Union in protecting and maintaining control of the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad throughout the war.

During and following the war, the battlefield became the site of several memorials. Soon after the battle, in the spring of 1863 members of the Hazen Brigade were detailed to construct a monument to their unit's heroism at Stones River. On March 29, 1864, the National Cemetery was established at a site between the Nashville Pike and the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad. The Artillery Monument was constructed in 1906.

Efforts to establish a national park on the battlefield began in the late nineteenth century. The Stones River Battlefield and Park Association, chartered on April 28, 1896, secured options for the purchase of property connected with the battle to establish a park. Congressional action to establish a park was delayed until after World War I. The 1926 Act for the Study and Investigation of Battlefields resulted in the establishment of Stones River National Military Park by Congress on March 3, 1927, under the control of the War Department.

Between 1928 and 1934, additional land was acquired by donation from the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway. The War Department began rehabilitation and alteration of the grounds in July 1930, and the park was

officially dedicated in July 1932. In 1933, the National Park Service gained jurisdiction over all historic sites, battlefields, monuments, and parks previously administered by the War Department, and additional acreage was added to the park at Stones River. Development of Stones River during the 1930s occurred through the efforts of the new federal public works agencies established in 1933.

The National Park Service Mission 66 program was developed to provide funding to revitalize the national parks over a ten year period concluding in 1966, to coincide with the agency's fiftieth anniversary. Construction in the early 1960s included a new visitor center with parking lot. On April 22, 1960, the park was redesignated as Stones River National Battlefield. The battlefield's authorized boundary was expanded in 1987 and in 1991. In 1997, the National Park Service reversed tour routes through the park to improve visitor understanding of the history of the battlefield. In 2003–2004, the visitor center was extensively expanded and remodeled. Within the last two years, some social trails have been closed to provide protection for the cedar glades.

## Project Methodology

Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. (WJE) of Northbrook, Illinois, was the lead firm for this study. WJE staff performed archival research for the project and prepared the management summary and site history portions of the written report. The Charlottesville, Virginia, office of John Milner Associates, Inc. (JMA) provided landscape architectural services for the study, including existing conditions documentation and physical condition assessments, comparative analyses and integrity evaluations, and preparation of treatment recommendations.

Existing conditions documentation and physical condition assessments were undertaken during two site visits. The first site visit was conducted by JMA landscape architects Liz Sargent and Julie Basic in October 2005; this visit involved documentation of the Nashville Pike, McFadden Farm, and Hazen Brigade units, as well as the sites of General Rosecrans's and General Bragg's headquarters. During this time, WJE and JMA staff also participated in the start-up meeting at the park's administrative offices to initiate the project. The second site visit was conducted by JMA

landscape architects Krista Schneider and Julie Basic in April 2006; this visit primarily involved documentation of the Fortress Rosecrans parcels. During the second site visit, JMA staff met with key park staff to discuss management issues and treatment concerns regarding the cultural landscape. During both site visits, JMA staff ground-truthed and annotated base maps obtained from the park and completed digital photography as part of the existing conditions survey. The base maps were created by exporting linework from the GIS (geographic information system) data provided by the park into AutoCAD.

The project team gathered historical materials from the collection of the park during the site visit of October 2005. WJE performed additional research at the Tennessee State Library and Archives in Nashville and at the National Archives II in College Park, Maryland. WJE also contacted the Denver Service Center of the National Park Service, which provided copies of relevant documents to the project team. The materials collected included previous written reports; historic photographs and sketches; maps and plans; and written documents such as letters and journal descriptions.

JMA completed comparative analyses and integrity evaluations by comparing historical information—taken from the site history and historic maps and photographs—to existing conditions data in order to understand how the landscape changed over time. This process was aided by comparative photography undertaken during the October 2005 visit, where views in historic photographs were recreated as closely as possible in today's landscape. Integrity evaluations were completed using the seven aspects of historic integrity as described in *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports* and according to standards set by the National Register of Historic Places.

After completing the analyses and evaluations, landscape features were classified as either contributing (dating from, and supporting, the period of significance); non-contributing (post-dating and/or not supporting the period of significance); or undetermined (too little information was known about the feature to make a definitive classification). Missing features that were present during the period of significance, but no longer exist, were also identified. This

classification system aided in understanding which landscape features should be retained or restored, which features could be adapted to accommodate new changes, and which missing features might be returned to the landscape.

The treatment plan drew from the condition assessments and the results of the comparative analyses and integrity evaluations in order to determine appropriate treatment alternatives for the park. An overarching treatment concept was developed to direct treatment guidelines and recommendations. Guidelines and recommendations responded to existing issues, such as maintenance concerns and the proposed tour road, and offered suggestions that would preserve and enhance the park's historic landscape character, as well as enhance interpretation efforts.

## Scope of Work

The project team was provided with a detailed statement of work for this CLR by the National Park Service. The CLR study includes the core battlefield, the McFadden Farm/Artillery Monument site, General Bragg's Headquarters site, General Rosecrans's Headquarters site, the Hazen Brigade Monument site, and the Fortress Rosecrans parcels. Detailed study of the national cemetery is not included, nor is study of the larger historic battlefield beyond the park boundaries. The CLR describes the historical development of the site; documents the existing conditions; analyzes the landscape's potential National Register significance; identifies character-defining landscape features; determines an appropriate treatment strategy; and develops specific treatment recommendations.

The final CLR report consists of the following chapters:

- **Introduction:** The introduction provides the administrative context for the project; describes its purpose; summarizes the physical history of the site; reviews the project scope and methodology of the project team; describes the physical boundaries of the study and the regional context of the study area; summarizes the findings of the study; and recommends areas for further investigation.
- **Site History:** The site history is a historical description of the landscape and its

significant features. It includes a discussion of the historic contexts and describes the periods of significance associated with the landscape.

- **Existing Conditions and Analysis:** The existing conditions of the extant landscape are documented and described, for each unit of the park and for landscape characteristics such as land use, circulation, and structures. For each unit of the park, the existing conditions are compared to the conditions in existence during the periods of significance, and the integrity of the landscape is analyzed.
- **Treatment:** The recommended approach for long-term management of the landscape is described, based upon its significance, existing condition, and use.

During discussions with park and Southeast Regional Office staff, the following key issues were identified to be addressed in the CLR:

- Planning is in progress to change the route of the tour road through the park, with new wayside exhibits planned for the revised tour route. The Environmental Assessment for this project is complete. The Finding of No Significant Impact was signed on December 23, 2005.
- Control and monitoring of invasive and alien plant species is ongoing, and limited areas that were historically open fields have been converted to native grasses. A draft plan for vegetation management is under development. Also, a fire management plan was completed in 2003 and is scheduled to be updated in 2008.
- To maintain open field areas, selected areas that were fields at the time of the battle were planted with corn, cotton, soybeans, and hay by local farmers since the early 1970s. This arrangement ended in 2004. During 2005 and 2006, the School of Agribusiness and Agriscience at Middle Tennessee State University continued to plant these fields. A local farmer may be interested in continuing to farm these fields in the future, but this has not been resolved. (During the Civil War, the dominant crops were corn and cotton. Livestock roamed freely in the woods and

pastures, which were bounded by fences to contain the farm animals.)

- The recently completed Medical Center Parkway connecting downtown Murfreesboro to Interstate Highway 24 is leading to many new developments for historic battlefield lands south of the park boundaries. Another new street adjacent to the park boundaries is Garrison Drive east of Thompson Lane, completed in 2006. Planned developments include a multi-story hospital, a Chamber of Commerce visitor center, a conference center, multi-story hotels, numerous restaurants, and an outdoor mall. Several strip shopping centers and multi-story buildings have already been constructed in this area. The potential to screen these new developments from view needs to be considered.
- Newly-acquired park lands include forest and fallow agricultural land with invasive alien species as well as former landfill sites. Planning for the long term cleanup and restoration of these lands needs to be undertaken.
- The ecologically significant cedar glades ecosystem within the park boundaries contains two federally endangered plant species. The cedar glade area is currently bisected by the park tour road. Alteration of this road is part of the planned change to the tour route.

## Description of Study Boundaries

The CLR study boundaries are identical to the boundaries of the park, except that the National Cemetery has been excluded. The park parcels included in the study are the Nashville Pike Unit, the Hazen Brigade Monument site, the McFadden Farm Unit, the General Rosecrans's Headquarters site, the General Bragg's Headquarters site, the Redoubt Brannon parcel, and the Lunette Palmer/Lunette Thomas/Curtain Wall No. 2 parcel.

The Nashville Pike Unit of the park lies near the intersection of two historic roadways. The Old Nashville Highway, known as the Nashville Pike during the Civil War, runs northwest to southeast.



This road is intersected by historic McFadden's Lane, now known as Van Cleve Lane, which is currently closed to traffic within the park. The historic Wilkinson Pike forms the southern boundary of the park. Parallel to the Nashville Pike is the historic Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad; control of this railroad was a major factor in the Civil War campaign in middle Tennessee. The railroad currently forms the northern boundary of the Nashville Pike Unit with the exception of the Unicorn Tract north of the railroad. The park is also bordered by a number of non-historic contemporary roadways, all of which experience heavy automobile and truck traffic. Two major routes run parallel to Old Nashville Highway: New Nashville Highway (U.S. Highway 41/70S), north of the railroad between the Nashville Pike Unit and the McFadden Farm Unit; and Interstate Highway 24, about one mile southwest of the park. The eastern boundary of the Nashville Pike Unit is formed by Thompson Lane, a new road built in the 1990s. Thompson Lane includes a large embankment and bridge passing over the Old Nashville Highway and the railroad. The western boundary of the Nashville Pike Unit is an irregular property line through fields and woods. The Hazen Brigade Monument site is located between the Old Nashville Highway and the railroad.

The second-largest parcel of the park is the McFadden Farm Unit. This area is north of New Nashville Highway and west of Thompson Lane. The park property extends to the Stones River on two sides. This area is currently accessible either from the south via Van Cleve Lane or from the east via the Stones River Greenway trailhead. The two points of access are connected by a footpath that passes under the bridge carrying Thompson Lane over Stones River.

The two generals' headquarters sites are relatively small parcels along the Old Nashville Highway and West College Street. The General Rosecrans's Headquarters site is northwest of the larger park sections, and the General Bragg's Headquarters site is southeast of the larger sections, reflecting the disposition of the armies at the start of the battle.

The two small parcels associated with Fortress Rosecrans are located southeast of the remainder of the park. Redoubt Brannan is on West College Street where it crosses Stones River; Lunette

Palmer/Lunette Thomas/Curtain Wall No. 2 are farther south near the Old Fort Golf Course and the commercial development along Tennessee Highway 96 west of downtown Murfreesboro.

## Summary of Findings

This CLR generally concurs with the significance evaluation of existing National Register documentation for Stones River National Battlefield regarding the areas, criteria, and period of significance for the property. Based on a comparative analysis of historic and existing conditions associated with the battlefield, the CLR suggests that the majority of the park possesses sufficient integrity to either the Civil War battle sub-period of significance, or the early park development sub-period of significance, to convey its important associations to the visitor. Many of the battlefield's historic cultural and natural resources survive from one of these periods of significance. Despite the fact that changes within and around the park have occurred to diminish aspects of its integrity, the strong relationship between the military events of the battle and the surviving features of the landscape continue to be expressed in the surviving fabric of the park.

One of the most significant threats to the integrity of the park today is the extensive industrial, commercial, and residential subdivision development occurring along its boundary and within its viewshed. Another threat to integrity is the evolving character and composition of vegetative communities. Although National Register Bulletin 40 recognizes that vegetation is often a reversible condition that is one of the more easily managed threats to battlefield integrity, natural resource protection considerations, viewshed protection, and the constant management needs associated with the control of invasive plant species render vegetative scene restoration difficult at best. The CLR focuses to the degree possible on enhancing integrity by suggesting specific alternatives for land cover where it will support the park's new Interpretive Plan.

This CLR supports the goals established by the park and the region for managing and interpreting Stones River National Battlefield. Of primary importance is the ongoing desire to

continue to enhance the legibility of 1863 landscape conditions, particularly in association with a proposed change to the tour road and the preparation of a new Interpretive Plan. The treatment plan developed as part of this CLR addresses these goals by making recommendations regarding changes in land cover (removal of non-contributing woodland, rehabilitation of historic woodlands, and re-establishment of historic field and fencing patterns), protection and rehabilitation strategies for important natural resources such as the cedar glades and riparian buffer areas, as well as identification of missing buildings and structures, and guidelines for managing and maintaining special resources such as Civil War earthworks.

The treatment plan recommends that the overall approach to landscape treatment should be **rehabilitation**. This approach affords the park the opportunity to update and enhance its interpretive program and make changes to land cover while continuing to protect resources and systems associated with the period of significance. The overarching concept for cultural landscape treatment at Stones River is to balance the protection and enhancement of the battlefield's historic integrity with contemporary park visitor access and interpretation responsibilities and sustainable land management practices. Many of the specific landscape treatment actions are intended to help convey the story of the battle by reinstating historic conditions or establishing aids to interpreting missing battle features. The concept also takes into consideration contemporary land ownership issues, which include a park composed of numerous noncontiguous parcels linked by public road corridors and edged by developments that are often inconsistent with the character of the landscape at the time of the battle. Finally, the concept also recognizes the value of post-battle commemoration, and seeks to reconcile commemorative features with features that relate directly to the battle.

The CLR also spells out the overarching approach to treatment for each of the landscape characteristics considered within the document: spatial organization; natural systems and features; vegetation; circulation; buildings and structures; views; small-scale features; and archeological resources including earthworks. The CLR also addresses other related landscape issues such as

new design and construction, and opportunities for pursuing partnerships with local entities. Recommendations related to the various landscape issues are developed from the overall treatment approach. Specific projects for implementation of the treatment plan have also been defined. The CLR team has identified seventeen implementation projects that the park can utilize in securing funding for and implementing various landscape treatment recommendations. These projects include the following:

1. Remove invasive plants from cedar glade communities
2. Rehabilitate cedar brake and dense cedar woodland communities in areas of interpretive value
3. Enhance and expand native warm-season grass fields and meadows
4. Establish filter strips in association with crop exhibits, roads, parking areas, and trails
5. Remove non-contributing woodland vegetation
6. Manage mixed woodlands to promote a combination of natural and cultural resource values
7. Update invasive plant species control plans
8. Establish screen plantings in specific locations to manage views
9. Protect the Pioneer Brigade Earthworks, and manage woodland environs to preserve associated resources
10. Mark and interpret the locations of historic buildings and structures missing from the battlefield landscape
11. Restore fencelines missing from the battlefield landscape
12. Consider alternatives for establishing and maintaining non-historic fencelines, controlled visitor access points, and linear connections between park units

13. Rehabilitate portions of historic Van Cleve Lane
14. Convert a portion of the tour road to a pedestrian trail that connects with the proposed new tour route
15. Establish design guidelines for contemporary park features, such as site furnishings
16. Enhance connections between noncontiguous park units and parcels

## **Recommendations for Further Research**

This CLR recommends that a former African American community that once edged Van Cleve Lane within the park be interpreted to the public. This effort would require conducting additional research and investigation into the community.

Archeological investigation of the missing buildings that are known to have been present at the time of the battle—McFadden Farmstead, Toll House, Block House, and cabins west of Van Cleve Lane, along Old Nashville Pike, and on the site of General Rosecrans’s Headquarters—are warranted given their interpretive value to the park.



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# Site History

## Development of the Site prior to the Battle

The earliest occupants of the middle Tennessee region were likely the Native Americans known as Mound Builders. Prior to the arrival of European settlers, Shawnees lived along the Cumberland River in middle Tennessee, but were driven out by Cherokees and Chickasaws.<sup>2</sup> Many battles occurred among the Native American tribes in the region. The area was eventually regarded as a common hunting ground with no single tribe settling there.

The middle Tennessee region remained unsettled by European colonists until approximately the 1760s, but was visited by explorers, hunters, trappers, and fur traders prior to that time. A trading post was established at French Lick (later Nashville) in 1710, and the first permanent settlement was established in the Nashville area in 1779–1780. The settlement survived despite attacks by Native Americans on the unguarded settlers. In 1783, Davidson County was created by an act of the legislature of North Carolina, incorporating what was later to become Rutherford County. Attempts to establish permanent settlements in the county were initially unsuccessful because of hostile Native Americans, although the area had been explored by non-native hunters as early as 1767.<sup>3</sup> The first permanent settlement in the county was probably established on the upper banks of Stones River in 1797.<sup>4</sup>

In 1786 forty grants of land were made in the Stones River tract, many in return for military service, although some recipients never settled on or even visited the land they had been granted. North Carolina issued titles to land in

the area well after that state ceded its claim and after Tennessee became the sixteenth state in the Union on June 1, 1796. In 1795, signing of Pinckney's Treaty ended Spanish attempts to control the Mississippi River and Spanish encouragement of Native American attacks on settlers in the region ended as well, further encouraging additional settlement. Among the earliest settlers in the area of Stones River were Samuel Wilson, who was probably granted land by North Carolina as a result of service in the army, and Nimrod Meniffee, who owned the land that was to become the site of the national cemetery.<sup>5</sup> After 1805, when treaties were signed with the Cherokee, increased settlement occurred in middle Tennessee.

Rutherford County was organized by the Tennessee General Assembly on October 25, 1803. The county was named in honor of General Griffith Rutherford, a Revolutionary War hero who also fought Native Americans within the region.<sup>6</sup> By 1836, the boundaries of the county were amended to reach their present extent.<sup>7</sup> The Rutherford County seat remained at Jefferson, between the forks of the Stones River, until 1812 when it was moved to Murfreesboro. The town was first named Cannonsburg after Tennessee governor Newton Cannon, and renamed Murfreesboro after Captain Matthew Murfree on November 19, 1811.<sup>8</sup> Murfreesboro was incorporated in 1817 and served as the capital of Tennessee from 1819 until 1826. At that time, Nashville was established as the state capital because of its favorable location on the Cumberland River.

To facilitate commerce, the state of Tennessee had constructed several macadamized roads in

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2. Anne Wilson Willett, *A History of the Stones River National Military Park*, Thesis for Master of Arts degree (Murfreesboro, Tennessee: Middle Tennessee State College), August 1958, 10.
  3. Carlton C. Sims, ed. *A History of Rutherford County* (Murfreesboro, Tennessee: Rutherford Courier, 1947), 11.
  4. Ibid.

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5. Ibid., 16.
  6. Ibid., 25.
  7. Sean M. Styles, with Miranda Fraley, Mary O. Ratcliffe, and Robert W. Blythe, eds. *Stones River National Battlefield Historic Resource Study* (Atlanta, Georgia: Cultural Resources Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, 2004), 17.
  8. *Rutherford County. History of Tennessee* (Chicago and Nashville: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1887), 815.

the 1830s, including the Nashville, Murfreesboro and Shelbyville Turnpike (referred to as the Nashville Pike). The state roads had a convex roadbed overlain with crushed stone, topped with stone dust, and compacted with water; the Nashville, Murfreesboro and Shelbyville Turnpike had a graded roadbed at least thirty feet wide. The turnpike had a toll gate every five miles, with toll houses for the gatekeepers who collected fees from persons using the road. The turnpike and its related structures were completed by 1842, providing a high quality road that was later used by military forces for transport of supplies.<sup>9</sup>

The first railroad in the state, the Nashville & Chattanooga, was chartered in 1845 and began service from Nashville to Murfreesboro on July 4, 1851. The line was completed to Chattanooga in February 1854. The railroad linked middle Tennessee with the ports of Charleston and Savannah, as well as the Ohio River at Louisville, Kentucky, and thus the Midwest. A workforce of slaves owned by the Nashville & Chattanooga, together with Irish immigrant labor, completed construction of the railroad through Rutherford County. The lines of the Western Union Telegraph Company followed the railroad, and telegraph operators had offices at intervals along the rail system. During the Civil War, federal forces sought to control the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad as part of a campaign to capture Confederate-held Chattanooga. Both armies used the telegraph for communications, and during the war these lines were vulnerable to attack by cavalry patrols, which intercepted dispatches and cut lines in enemy-held territory.

In 1860, the population of Rutherford County was 27,918 persons, of whom nearly half were slaves. Tennessee was the second largest corn producing region in the Confederacy east of the Mississippi River, and Rutherford County alone provided more than a million and a half bushels of corn annually. The county also provided 150,401 bushels of wheat each year; more than fifty tons of sweet potatoes and Irish potatoes in

9. Styles, 26. See also Edward C. Annable, Jr., *A History of the Roads of Rutherford County, Tennessee, 1804–1878: Historic Road Research, and Its Applications for Historic Resource Surveys and Local History* (Thesis for Master of Arts degree, Middle Tennessee State University), 159–162.

1860; and was also significant for production of hogs, horses, and mules.<sup>10</sup> The site of Stones River National Battlefield was occupied by scattered farms and woodlands including eastern red cedar growing in dense thickets or “cedar brakes.” Each farm typically consisted of a farmhouse, barn, and outbuildings including corn cribs and shelters for cotton gins. Woodland boundaries were rectilinear and bordered by rail fences and cultivated fields of corn or cotton. The ground on the battlefield consists of shallow soils overlaying limestone and shale bedrock, pitted with sinkholes caused by surface and underground water sources dissolving the limestone. These geological features would prove to be significant in the Battle of Stones River.

As conflict loomed and other states seceded from the Union, secession meetings were held in Tennessee. In a referendum on February 9, 1861, the state voted against secession.<sup>11</sup> Unlike east Tennessee, where pro-Union sentiment was strong, west and middle Tennessee, including Rutherford County, initially supported slavery but wanted to remain neutral and part of the Union. However, as pressure increased to support the Union cause, in a referendum on June 8, 1861, Tennessee voted to secede—the last state in the Union to do so.

In its central position within the state, Rutherford County provided a strategic location for control of roads, railroads, and access to the food production of Tennessee. The Union army occupied Murfreesboro from February through September 1862, except for a period of two days when General Nathan Bedford Forrest and 1,400 Confederate cavalry captured and held the Union garrison in mid-July.<sup>12</sup> In October, the Union army concentrated at Nashville and the Confederates moved north from Chattanooga to Murfreesboro.

10. Styles, 28, citing the United States Bureau of Census, *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1864), 136, 459.

11. Anne Willett, 24, citing Carter Patten, *A Tennessee Chronicle* (Chattanooga, Tennessee: 1953), 185.

12. Robert Selph Henry, ed., *As They Saw Forrest* (Jackson, Tennessee: McCowat-Mercer Press, 1946), 40.



## The Battle of Stones River, December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863

Murfreesboro in late 1862 was the base of operations for the Army of Tennessee, the Confederacy's principal western army, commanded by General Braxton Bragg. From Murfreesboro, the Confederate cavalry staged raids against Union supply lines in Tennessee, Kentucky, and Alabama. The proximity of Murfreesboro to Nashville, controlled by Union forces and used as a forward supply depot, made control of Murfreesboro essential to the Federal 14th Army Corps.<sup>13</sup> Control of the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad was necessary to supply Union forces in a campaign to take Chattanooga. In addition to practical considerations, the Union was anxious for a military victory to boost morale after the disappointing Maryland and Kentucky campaigns. A demoralizing defeat at Fredericksburg, Virginia, in mid-December amplified the need for military success. President Abraham Lincoln also hoped a victory in late 1862 would make his recently issued Emancipation Proclamation an effective tool for ending the possibility of foreign recognition and support of the Confederacy.

On October 30, 1862, Major General William S. Rosecrans assumed command of the Union forces in Bowling Green, Kentucky, sixty miles north of Nashville. In response to the proximity of the Army of Tennessee to Nashville, Rosecrans moved the Union army to the Tennessee capital in early November. He then reorganized his force into three wings, commanded by Major Generals Thomas L. Crittenden, Alexander M. McCook, and George H. Thomas.<sup>14</sup> On December 26, Rosecrans sent the three wings of his army along different routes toward the Confederate army: Thomas toward Franklin, McCook toward Nolensville, and Crittenden toward Murfreesboro.<sup>15</sup>

Bragg had spent the fall of 1862 foraging the region around Murfreesboro for supplies and recruiting troops, with divisions of the Army of Tennessee billeted in Murfreesboro and surrounding towns. The army's cavalry was organized in commands under Brigadier Generals Nathan B. Forrest and John H. Morgan. Forrest's troops had attacked the Mobile & Ohio Railroad, which supplied Brigadier General Ulysses S. Grant's army in Mississippi, and Morgan's troops attacked the Louisville & Nashville in Kentucky, which supplied General Rosecrans's army in Nashville. A third of the cavalry remained under Brigadier General Joe Wheeler for picket duty. Bragg's lack of concern about the threat of a Union offensive led to Major General Carter Stevenson's division being detached from the Army of Tennessee and sent to Vicksburg.<sup>16</sup> Stevenson's departure and the absence of Forrest's and Morgan's forces prompted Rosecrans to move against the weakened Confederates. It took four days for the entire Union army to unite west of Murfreesboro, delayed by cavalry resistance and rain, sleet, fog, and mud.

Both Bragg and Rosecrans chose to attack the right flank of the enemy and cut off their supply line and escape route. Rosecrans's plan called for Crittenden's wing to leave its position on the west bank, ford Stones River, and attack Bragg's right the following morning. Rosecrans deployed the wings of McCook and Thomas on the west

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Stones River National Battlefield. Styles references the following sources of information relative to the campaign: Charles M. Spearman, *The Battle of Stones River*; Peter Cozzens, *No Better Place to Die: The Battle of Stones River*; from the Confederate perspective: Stanley F. Horn, *The Army of Tennessee: A Military History*; Thomas L. Connelly, *Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862–1865*; from the Union perspective: Thomas B. Van Horne, *History of the Army of the Cumberland: Its Organization, Campaigns, and Battles* and William Bickham's *Rosecrans' Campaign with the Fourteenth Army Corps, or the Army of the Cumberland: A Narrative of Personal Observations . . . with Official Reports of the Battle of Stone River*. Styles notes the limitations of the latter two documents and indicates the need for a new study of the Army of the Cumberland. Such a study, *Days of Glory: The Army of the Cumberland, 1861–1865*, by Larry Daniel, was published in 2004.

13. Styles, 24. Soon after the Battle of Stones River, the 14th Corps was renamed the Army of the Cumberland. At that time, each wing became a corps. Citing Peter Cozzens, *No Better Place to Die: The Battle of Stones River* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 14–15.

14. Styles, 24.

15. The synopsis of the battle history is adapted from that presented in the *Historic Resource Study* for

16. Styles, 24. Citing Thomas L. Connelly, *Autumn of Glory: The Army of Tennessee, 1862–1865* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1971), 41.

bank of the river, on his right and center respectively. Bragg had the same plan of attack, calling upon General John C. Breckinridge's Division to hold his right flank on the river's east bank, while assaulting with Lieutenant William Hardee's Corps on the left.<sup>17</sup>

On the evening of December 30, the military bands of both armies began to play. As described by a soldier present at the battle:

The still winter night carried their strains to great distance. At every pause on our side, far away could be heard the military bands of the other. Finally one of them struck up "Home Sweet Home." As if by common consent, all other airs ceased, and the bands of both armies as far as the ear could reach, joined in the refrain. Who knows how many hearts were bold next day by reason of that air?<sup>18</sup>

At dawn on December 31, 1862, Bragg's troops stormed across the fields to attack the Union right flank, hoping to drive the Union forces back to the river while cutting off their main

supply routes at the Nashville Pike and the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad. The Union forces were cooking breakfast when the Confederate forces swept in. Union commanders tried to halt and resist but the attack was too powerful. The rocky ground and cedar forests blunted the assault to some extent, although the Army of the Cumberland's right flank was in shambles by 8:00 a.m. Confederate units to the north began attacking the enemy in their front, to hold the Union units in place as the flanking attack swept up behind them. General Philip Sheridan's troops were able to repulse the first enemy attack, but had to reposition themselves to maintain their escape routes. Confederate troops assaulted the federals without coordination, with communication made difficult by the terrain. With great losses, the Union forces slowed the Confederate assault. The terrible carnage among the rocks and trees of this area prompted soldiers to name it "the Slaughter Pen."

General Rosecrans cancelled the attack across the river and brought his reserve troops into the fight. With General George Thomas, Rosecrans rallied fleeing troops and formed a new line backed by artillery along the Nashville Pike. The horseshoe shaped line provided better

17. *Ibid.*, 29. Citing Connelly, 51–54.

18. Sam Seay, *First Tennessee Infantry*. Quoted in "The Union Approach," *Stones River National Battlefield* internet site, History & Culture section, <http://www.nps.gov/stri/>



**FIGURE 1.** Troops in General Samuel Beatty's Union brigade repel attacking Confederates at about noon on the first day of the battle, in this drawing by Private Alfred E. Mathews of the 31st Ohio Volunteers.





**FIGURE 2.** Union cavalry in pursuit during the battle, from a painting by William T. Trego.

communication, and the Union cannon covered the open fields between the cedars and the road. The woods and rocky ground helped the Union. Confederate organization fell apart during the struggle through the cedars, and the Confederate artillery was unable to penetrate the forest with its dense growth and uneven terrain. As night approached, the Union army retained control of the turnpike, its lifeline to Nashville, with access to supplies to continue the fight.

The Round Forest, located between the Nashville Pike and Stones River, anchored the left of the Union line. At 10:00 a.m. on December 31, General James Chalmers' forces advanced across the fields in front of General William B. Hazen's men. The partially-burned Cowan house and outbuildings forced Chalmers' men to split just before they came within range, and General Chalmers was wounded as his line wavered and broke. Despite a following attack by General Daniel Donelson's Brigade through Cruft's Brigade south of the pike, Hazen's Brigade was able to hold to the north. During the afternoon of December 31, Colonel Hazen's Brigade held against four Confederate attacks and provided an anchor for the Nashville Pike

line of supply to the Union forces. Hazen's Brigade was the only Union unit not to retreat on that day, but the carnage in this fighting prompted soldiers to name the field Hell's Half Acre.<sup>19</sup>

After spending January 1, 1863, reorganizing and caring for the wounded, the two armies engaged again on the afternoon of January 2. General Breckinridge attacked General Horatio Van Cleve's Division on a hill overlooking McFadden's Ford on the east side of the river at 4:00 p.m. The Confederate forces took the hill and continued on towards the ford, but came within range of fifty-seven Union cannon massed on the west side of the Stones River. In forty-five minutes more than 1,800 Confederates were killed or wounded, and the Union counterattack that followed pushed Breckinridge's Division back to Wayne's Hill.<sup>20</sup>

Beginning on January 1 and continuing to January 3 or 4, the Union Pioneer Brigade dug earthworks parallel to the Nashville Pike for the Chicago Board of Trade Battery and rebuilt the

19. Styles, 33–34.

20. *Ibid.*

restle over the river that the Confederates had destroyed.<sup>21</sup> With the approach of Union reinforcements, the Army of Tennessee withdrew to the Duck River, twenty-five miles to the south, on the evening of January 3, 1863. On January 5, the Union army marched into Murfreesboro.

The Battle of Stones River was one of the bloodiest of the war: the Confederate casualties numbered 10,266 of the 37,700 engaged, and the Union casualties were 13,259 of the 43,400 present. In all, more than 3,000 were killed and nearly 16,000 were wounded; some of the wounded spent as many as seven days on the field before help could reach them.<sup>22</sup> The Army of Tennessee lost control of the rich farmland of middle Tennessee, which would now be available to support the Union, and dissent was generated within its command.

### Landscape Character: 1863

Refer to the Period Plan for 1863 (Fig. 3). Prior to the Battle of Stones River, the landscape over which the battle occurred was characterized by irregularly ordered stands of cedar forest or “cedar brakes,” mixed stands of cedars and hardwoods, and open agricultural fields utilized to grow primarily corn, cotton, and hay, or as pastures for livestock. Farmsteads dotted the landscape in a dispersed pattern; many were sited along the major road corridors in existence at the time. Farmsteads typically consisted of a dwelling house, a small grouping of outbuildings nearby, and fenced crop fields. At least one of the local farmsteads is known to have included a peach orchard in close proximity to the Nashville Pike.

The primary circulation corridors that traversed the landscape in the mid-nineteenth century included the Nashville Pike and the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad tracks. The lesser roads included McFadden’s Lane and the Wilkinson Pike. A ford crossing of Stones River existed north of the McFadden Farm near the end of McFadden’s Lane. Post and rail fences

lined the Nashville Pike, a toll house and gate stood along the pike, and a block house was located along the rail line. Other important landscape features present at the time of the battle included bridges across Stones River: one for the Nashville Pike and one for the rail line. Local industries, most on a very small scale, included brick plants, cotton processing, and mills that relied on the water power generated by Stones River.

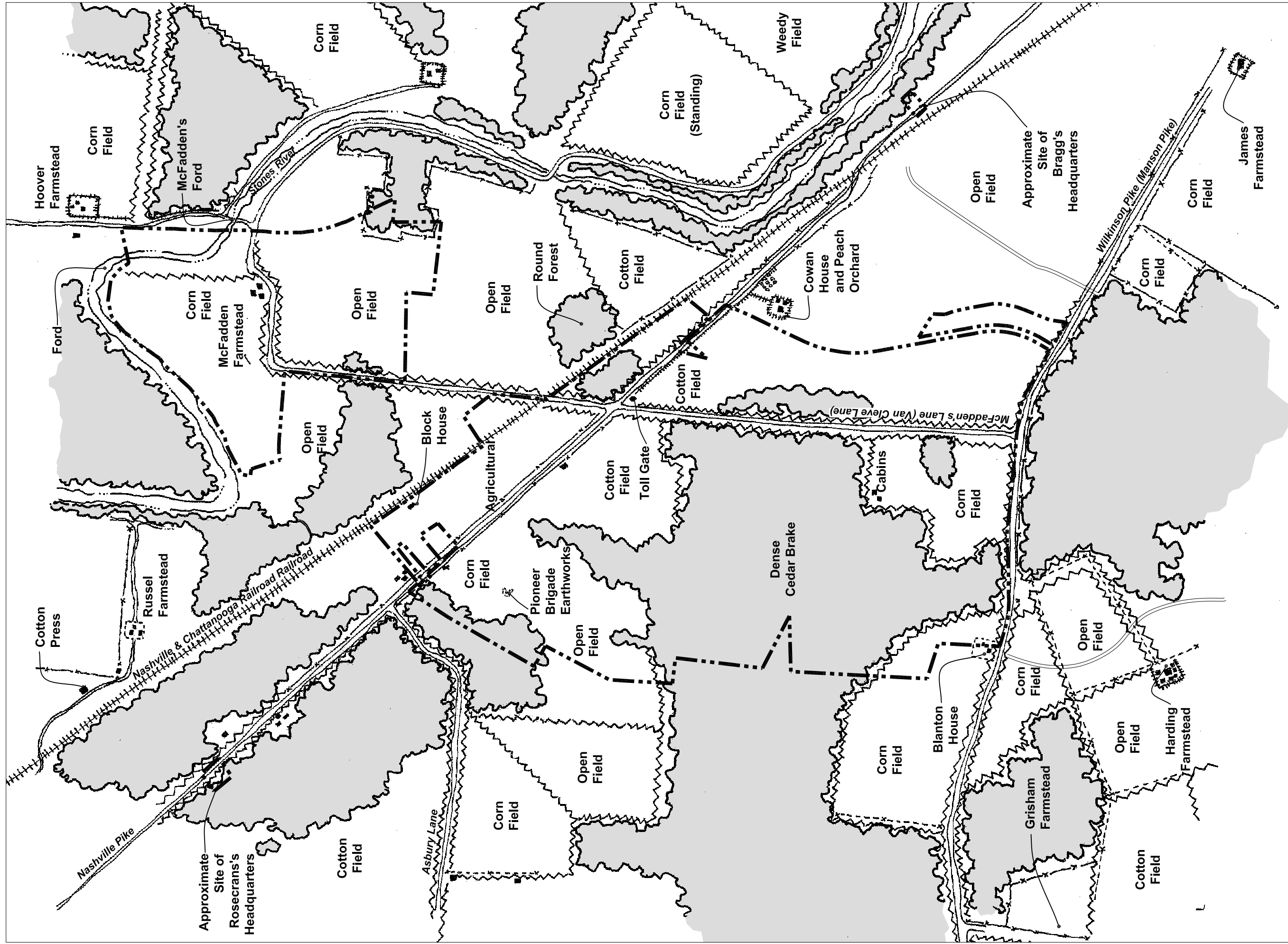
The site of General Rosecrans’s Headquarters was a small cabin along the Nashville Pike. The cabin was surrounded by woods. In the decades after the war, the cabin was apparently used as a church by an African American congregation. The site of General Bragg’s Headquarters was an open field just south of the location where the Nashville Pike crossed over the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad. Trees and other vegetation lined Stones River just northeast of the site. The headquarters likely occupied a tent or temporary building on the site.

The three-day battle that was waged across the agricultural landscape was heavily influenced by the local terrain and land cover. Because the battle occurred in winter, there were no crops growing; however, it is likely that corn and cotton stalks remained standing in the fields. Outcroppings of limestone, dense stands of cedar trees, and knolls with commanding views played key roles in the tactics and outcome of the battle. The dense cedar brakes and limestone outcroppings in the vicinity of present-day Wilkinson Pike and Van Cleve Lane blunted the initial Confederate attack on the Union forces, and later slowed the Confederates as they attempted to attack again across the Wilkinson Pike. Union occupation of the high ground overlooking the western banks of Stones River near the McFadden Farm was another key factor in the Union deflection of Confederate attack.

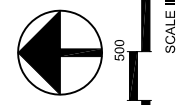
The Battle of Stones River left a lasting impression on the local landscape. Artillery fire damaged, denuded, and killed many of the trees within the woodland areas. Both armies appropriated features of local farmsteads for use, particularly the wooden rail fences, which would have been used for firewood. Existing woodland was also likely cut over for the same purpose. During the later Battle of the Cedars, the soldiers used rail fences and woodland trees for

21. Battle Reports, December 26, 1862, to January 5, 1863. Battle Report No. 10, Report of Capt. James St. Clair Mortor, U.S. Engineers, commanding Pioneer Brigade. O.R., Series I, vol. XX, pt. I, sec. 29.

22. Styles, 34, Citing Charles M. Spearman, *The Battle of Stones River* (Columbus, Ohio: Blue & Gray Enterprises, Inc., 1993), 27; Cozzens, 201; casualties from Official Records, vol. XX, 215, 261.



- Legend**
- Current Park Boundary
  - Rail Fence
  - ☁ Tree Cover
  - Buildings
  - Roads
  - Water
  - ++++ Picket Fence
  - Unknown Fence
  - ++++ Railroad Tracks



# Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Period Plan - January 1863  
Figure 3

**Sources**  
1962 Historical Fence and Groundcover Map; Topographical Sketch of the Battle Field of Stones River, surveyed under the supervision of Capt. Michler.

temporary protective field cover. Military personnel appropriated food stores from residents' barns and storage structures. After the battle, the many dead are known to have been buried on the battlefield, leaving the local landscape riddled with the burial trenches holding more than 3,000 corpses. Finally, soon after the battle, as a direct result of the engagement, the Hazen Brigade Monument was erected on the high ground overlooking the rail line and near the Nashville Pike, standing as a constant reminder of the events of December 31, 1862–January 2, 1863.

## Union Occupation and Reconstruction

Following the battle, the Army of the Cumberland was established as an “immovable defensive force,” and Union forces, with the help of former slaves, constructed Fortress Rosecrans, an earthen fortification that served as a supply depot and base of occupation for the Union for the duration of the war.<sup>23</sup> This large enclosed earthen fortification was designed by James St. Clair Morton, Chief of Engineers of the Army of the Cumberland, and was intended to provide a forward supply depot and a refuge in case of a future defeat.<sup>24</sup>

Fortress Rosecrans was sited atop several low hills for the defense of the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad, and encompassed the river crossings of both the railroad and the Nashville Pike. (Raids by Confederate cavalry often targeted bridges, the destruction of which offered an easier way to disrupt supply lines than attacks along the route.) Construction of Fortress Rosecrans began on January 23, 1863. Union troops worked seven days a week on the earthworks from January to April 1863. General Rosecrans reported in March, “Our depots and defenses are being pushed forward here with almost 4,000 men daily at work.”<sup>25</sup> A railroad



**FIGURE 4.** Workmen repair the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad near Murfreesboro after the battle, 1863.

spur 1,200 feet long and crossing the Nashville Pike was built within the fortress to help supply the troops building the fortress; the first supply train arrived in February 1863.

As completed by the end of April 1863, the earthworks measured 1,250 yards from north to south and 1,070 yards east to west, creating an enclosure of about 200 acres surrounded by a line of curtain walls, lunettes, and rifle pits. Both the railroad and the pike bisected the fort, with openings in the fortress walls to allow passage on these arteries.<sup>26</sup> Trees and brush around the fort were cleared and ditches constructed fronting the lunettes and curtain walls. Four earthwork redoubts—each constructed on a hill and containing artillery, a powder magazine, and a wooden blockhouse—were intended as a last line of defense in case the lunettes were overrun. One of these, Redoubt Brannan, was built across the Nashville Pike to guard the rail and road bridges. The smaller section of the fortress, northwest of Stones River, encircled four sawmills along the river and two railroad freight depots. The larger section of the fortress, southeast of Stones River, contained the bulk of the warehouses and barracks, which were located near the railroad for easy supply.

23. Gavin and Styles, 8-5.

24. Styles, 34. Styles notes that the design of the fort was probably based on the *Treatise on Field Fortifications*, written by Dennis Hart Mahan, the former commandant of West Point. (Citing O. R., Series I, Vol. XXIII, pt. II, 81.)

25. Quoted by Edward C. Bearss, *The History of Fortress Rosecrans* (Stones River National Military Park, 1960), Chapter 1: 3, citing O.R., Series I, Vol. XXIII, pt. II, 154.

26. Styles, 36. Citing O. R., Series I, Vol. XLIX, pt. II, 502; Edwin C. Bearss, *The History of Fortress Rosecrans* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1960), 4.





FIGURE 5. The Hazen Brigade Monument, shortly after its construction.

During the summer of 1863, members of the Hazen Brigade were detailed to construct a monument to their unit's heroism at Stones River. The site selected for the monument was an area in the Round Forest containing the graves of forty-five of the brigade's fallen. Lieutenant Edward Crebbin of the Ninth Indiana Volunteers supervised construction of the monument from June to November 1863.<sup>27</sup> Crebbin's crew was threatened by the appearance of Confederate cavalry in October 1863. The Union Army of the Cumberland was besieged within Chattanooga, and Wheeler's Confederate command had been

ordered to break the railroad line at Murfreesboro, but the proximity of Fortress Rosecrans discouraged an assault.

The Hazen Brigade Monument consisted of an eleven foot tall square limestone mass. The monument and adjacent cemetery were enclosed by a four foot tall, dry laid stone wall, with access through three steps on the south side. In November 1863, the 115th Ohio Regiment was transferred to Murfreesboro. Two experienced stonemasons from the regiment, Sergeant Daniel C. Miller and Private Christian Bauhoff, were employed to inscribe the monument during the spring of 1864.<sup>28</sup>

27. Ibid., 38. Citing Daniel A. Brown, *Marked for Future Generations: The Hazen Brigade Monument 1863–1929* (Murfreesboro, Tennessee: National Park Service, 1985), 7–8.

28. Ibid., 39. Citing Brown, 11–19.

By June 1863, General Rosecrans began to move troops forward in the campaign to capture Chattanooga. With the fortress completed, its defense was left to a few thousand convalescent troops, supported by other army reserve divisions throughout the summer and fall. Throughout the Tullahoma and Chattanooga campaigns, Fortress Rosecrans served as a critical link in the supply chain for the Union army.

Following the battle of Chickamauga on September 19 and 20, the Confederate army pushed forward toward Chattanooga. With their control of middle Tennessee threatened, Union reinforcements were sent by train from Nashville to supplement the defense of Fortress Rosecrans. The troops arrived at the fortress on the morning of October 5. Seeing the Union defensive strength of the fortress, Confederate cavalry under Major General Wheeler instead attacked and destroyed the railroad bridge on the Middle Fork of Stones River, about three miles south of Murfreesboro.

Following the Battle of Missionary Ridge at Chattanooga, Tennessee, on November 25, 1863, the main Confederate army withdrew to Georgia. Fortress Rosecrans remained a vital link in the Union supply chain as General Sherman began the campaign through Georgia in 1864.<sup>29</sup>

On March 29, 1864, General Horatio Van Cleve was asked to select a site for the founding of a national cemetery.<sup>30</sup> Van Cleve detached Captain John A. Means of the 115th Ohio for duty as a topographical engineer. Means oversaw the cemetery's layout from June 2, 1864, until his discharge on April 25, 1865.<sup>31</sup> The site of the National Cemetery was located between the Nashville Pike and the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad, on a slight rise where Union artillery had repulsed Confederate attacks on the afternoon of December 31, 1862. The burials in the National Cemetery were arranged in a trapezoidal pattern centered on a gravel carriage path leading to a square with a flapole.

Fortress Rosecrans again showed its importance when General Hood's Confederate Army of Tennessee invaded middle Tennessee from Alabama in November 1864, with the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad as its target. A Confederate force of about 1,600 men advanced to within six miles of Murfreesboro on December 2. But with several thousand Union troops encamped at Fortress Rosecrans, a direct assault was not possible. On December 5, the Confederates attacked Union defenses along the Nashville Pike at Overall Creek, about four miles northwest of the fortress. Union troops dispatched from Fortress Rosecrans fought the Confederate raiders in an engagement known as the Battle of the Cedars on December 7. Most of the fighting occurred several miles west of the fortress where the Wilkinson Pike crosses Overall Creek. Meanwhile, the main Confederate force was attempting to overcome the Union defenders of Nashville. When news of the destruction of the Army of Tennessee at Nashville reached the Confederate forces near Murfreesboro on December 16, they were forced to withdraw, ultimately retreating back to Alabama. By December 24, 1864, the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad was again open for Union supply trains between Nashville and Murfreesboro.<sup>32</sup>

After the surrender of General Robert E. Lee in Virginia, on April 9, 1865, the remnants of the Army of Tennessee in North Carolina surrendered in May 1865. At that time, most of the Union occupation forces at Fortress Rosecrans were mustered out of service and Chaplain William Earnshaw was designated to oversee the completion of Stones River National Cemetery. The Union dead buried throughout middle Tennessee were reinterred at the cemetery, while many of the Confederate dead remained buried where they had been interred, or were removed to local family plots.

Many Confederate sympathizers had moved south after the defeat at Stones River. After the war, veterans and their families returned to their homes and farms in Rutherford County. Buildings that had been abandoned or demolished during the fighting or subsequent Union occupation were salvaged for lumber. When the Union occupation troops left in 1866,

29. Bearss, Chapter 2: 10.

30. Styles, 39. Citing Brown, 19.

31. Ibid. Report of Chaplain William Earnshaw to Brevet Major General J.L. Donaldson, Chief Quartermaster of the Department of Tennessee, October 5, 1866, 229.

32. Bearss, Chapter 7: 17.

the buildings of Fortress Rosecrans were sold at auction and the earthworks left to continue to erode or to be used as fill in construction.<sup>33</sup>

### **Fortress Rosecrans Landscape Character: 1863**

Refer to the Fortress Rosecrans Period Plan for 1863 (Fig. 6). Fortress Rosecrans, a series of earthen fortifications and abatis enclosing a central supply depot, was constructed east of the battlefield in 1863 after the Battle of Stones River. Beginning on January 23, 1863, federal troops occupied Murfreesboro and adjacent lands and constructed the fortress to protect the two important local bridge crossings of Stones River along the Nashville Pike and the rail line, and supplies stored within the large fortress, from Confederate attack. Work on the fortress continued for six months, and included rock blasting and earth moving.

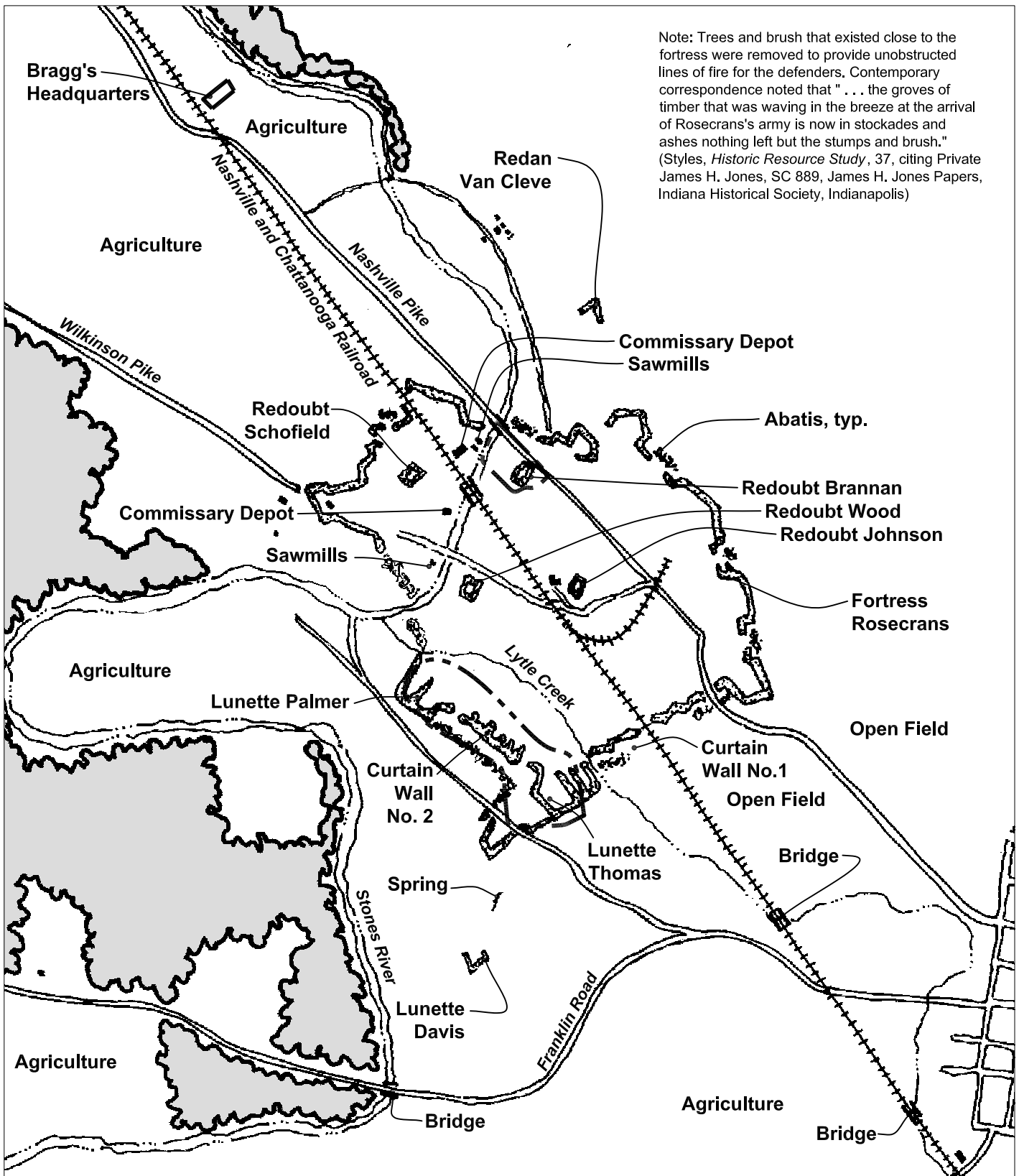
Fortress Rosecrans extended to either side of Stones River, and measured 1,250 yards from north to south and 1,070 yards from east to west. It included four redoubts, or rectangular defensive structures, and nine lunettes, or angled forms, connected by linear systems (curtain walls) of earthworks. The lunettes and curtain walls included traverses behind their walls, and were fitted with embrasures, or openings, through which the defenders could fire their cannon. Gabions (earth filled baskets) were placed outside the embrasures for extra protection against incoming artillery fire. Artillery emplacements were sited near the breaks in the fortification where the rail line and Wilkinson Pike extended into the fortress. The redoubts, sited on the hills, were supported by powder magazines and blockhouses.

The landscape in the vicinity of the fortification was heavily impacted by the earth moving associated with establishment of the system of parapet walls, ditches, fields-of-fire, glacis, traverses, and redoubts. The troops cleared trees within 1,000 yards of the fortification to establish a clear and unobstructed field of fire for the artillery. Felled trees were utilized to form abatis, or obstructions to slow attackers. The troops also used the trees to construct housing and

necessary military structures. Local circulation systems were disrupted as well. The Wilkinson Pike was terminated at the walls of the fortification, blocking the connection to Murfreesboro.

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33. Lenard Brown, "Fortress Rosecrans: A History, 1865 – 1990," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* 50, no. 3 (1991), 139.



Sources: *Topographical Sketch of Fortress Rosecrans Near Murfreesboro, Tenn.*, Surveyed by...John Rzila [sic], April 1865; *Topographical Sketch of the Battle Field of Stones River...* Surveyed Under the Direction of Capt. N. Michler; *Map No. 5 Battle Field of Stone [sic] River...* Captain Francis Mohrhardt, U.S.V., Sept. 1865; ORA Atlas Plate CXII.

**Legend**

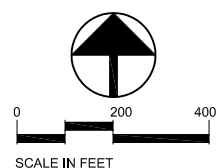
- Current Park Boundary
- ☁ Tree Cover
- Buildings
- Roads
- ++++ Railroad Tracks

# Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

**Fortress Rosecrans Period Plan - Fall 1863**

**Figure 6**







## Continued Agricultural Use of the Site and Early Commemoration

In 1878, four structures standing on the battlefield at the time of the battle—the Burriss, Gresham, Harding, and Jenkins houses—were still present. Other houses on the battlefield included the Hord House, McCullough House, Blanton House, James House, and MacGregor House. In addition, dwellings existed along McFadden Lane and the Wilkinson Pike. A cabin along the Nashville Pike that had served as General Rosecrans's headquarters during the battle had become an African American church by that date.<sup>34</sup>

After the battle, a total of 11,933 acres of land in Rutherford County was either abandoned by its owners or confiscated by the federal government when the owners left voluntarily to aid the Confederacy. During the war this land was distributed to freedmen, but when President Andrew Johnson pardoned former Confederates after the war much of the land was returned to its previous owners and was used for farming corn and cotton. Most of the Stones River battlefield remained in private hands from the conclusion of the battle in 1863 until 1928, when the War Department began to acquire land to establish a battlefield park.

The first established unit of what would become the national cemetery system was the soldiers' cemetery at Gettysburg, laid out by the State of Pennsylvania in 1863. On Christmas Day 1863, Major General George H. Thomas ordered the establishment of a national cemetery at Chattanooga. Orders to establish a national cemetery at Stones River were issued in 1864. Work at the site began in June 1865 with interments beginning in October of that year. Work on the cemetery was mainly completed by 1869.

In 1867, the federal government established twenty-six additional national cemeteries on or



**FIGURE 7.** The Nashville Pike near the Stones River National Cemetery, circa 1890s.



**FIGURE 8.** Farmers on the battlefield in the 1890s.



**FIGURE 9.** The Hazen Brigade Monument, circa 1890s.

34. Styles, 56. *The Historic Resource Study* cites the D.G. Beers & Company *Map of Rutherford County, Tennessee from New and Actual Surveys*. (Compiled and Published by D.G. Beers & Company, Philadelphia, 1878.). See Fig. 11.

near Civil War battlefields. The national cemeteries became central to memorial services, first with the holiday known as Decoration Day, which initially recognized the Union dead, and later when that holiday became Memorial Day.

During the war, Confederate dead were commonly buried on the battlefield or in a nearby cemetery, or were sent home in sealed coffins. Unlike their Union counterparts, the Confederates had no systematic method or the resources for burying their dead. After the war, local “ladies’ memorial associations” were formed in the South, some originating in wartime women’s aid societies that were organized to perform hospital and relief work. At Stones River following the war, local women formed the Memorial Society of Murfreesboro to purchase land for a cemetery. The Confederate cemetery was located one-and-a-half miles south of Murfreesboro, between the railroad and the Shelbyville Pike. On April 3, 1873, the city of Murfreesboro bought twenty acres of land for the creation of Evergreen Cemetery with the intention of moving the dead from the Confederate cemetery.<sup>35</sup>

In the North, several veterans’ organizations formed in the wake of the national cemetery movement. The largest and most influential of these was the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), founded in Springfield, Illinois, in 1866. From 25,000 members in 1877, the organization grew to 409,000 members by 1890 and offered benefits including funeral services for members and admission to old soldiers’ homes run by the organization.<sup>36</sup> Numerous other veterans’ groups consisting of Union and Confederate veterans also appeared in the decades following the war. In the South, these included the Southern Historical Society, founded in 1869 by veterans including General Bragg; the Association of the Army of Northern Virginia (AANV), founded in 1870; and the Association of the Army of



FIGURE 10. Interpretive sign on the battlefield, circa 1890s.

Tennessee, founded in 1871.<sup>37</sup> Several local women’s groups banded together to form the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) in September 1894.

The movement toward sectional reconciliation that marked the 1880s and 1890s, as expressed in joint reunions of Union and Confederate veterans, focused on battlefield bravery and sacrifice.<sup>38</sup> Confederates participated in reunions after 1880, and in 1888, a watershed gathering of both Union and Confederate veterans occurred at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg.

The GAR was involved in preservation of the Gettysburg battlefield as a memorial to the men who fought in the battle,<sup>39</sup> and also in preserving the battlefield of Vicksburg. The Societies of the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of Tennessee also urged the creation of parks, the former to preserve the battlefields of Chickamauga and Chattanooga and the latter to preserve the battlefield of Shiloh. A bill was submitted in early 1890 to create a national park at Chickamauga and Chattanooga that would mark the lines of both sides and interpret the tactical aspects of the battles with strategically placed observation towers. These two clashes engaged troops from every southern state, eighteen northern states, and involved famous

35. Ibid., 63. Citing Mabel Pittard, *Rutherford County* (Memphis, Tennessee: Memphis State University Press, 1984), 96; John C. Spence, *Annals of Rutherford County 2* (Murfreesboro, Tennessee: Rutherford County Historical Society, 1991), 257–58; *Murfreesboro Monitor*, 7 December 1867 and 18 June 1874.

36. Wallace E. Davies, *Patriotism on Parade: the Story of Veterans’ and Hereditary Organizations in America, 1783–1900* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955), 31–35.

37. Styles, 60. Citing Foster, 50–54, 91.

38. James M. Mayo, *War Memorials as Political Landscape* (New York: Preager Publishers, 1988), 256; McConnell, 213–18; Foster, 79–87.

39. Styles, 62. Citing Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Evolution of the National Military Park Idea* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Office of Park Historic Preservation, 1973), 22–26; Davies, 28.



**FIGURE 11.** Detail of “Map of Rutherford County, Tennessee” (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: D.G. Beers & Co., 1878). Van Cleve Lane is shown as a dashed line connecting the Wilkinson Pike to the Nashville Pike.

generals as commanders on both sides. Realizing the national significance of the battlefield, Congress established a national military park at Chickamauga and Chattanooga on August 18, 1890, two years after the Gettysburg reunion. Congress later passed legislation that created national military parks at Antietam in 1890, Shiloh in 1894, Gettysburg in 1895, and Vicksburg in 1899.<sup>40</sup>

The Stones River Battlefield and Park Association, chartered on April 28, 1896, included both Union and Confederate veterans. The association secured options for the purchase of property connected with the battle, reportedly 2,400 acres in January 1897, and 3,400 acres in June of that year.<sup>41</sup> Members erected wooden signs to mark and interpret specific locations on the battlefield. The secretary of the Stones River Battlefield and Park Association wrote: “The association has placed upon the battlefield a

large number of substantial wooden tablets, marking points of special interest and importance, such as headquarters of Federal and Confederate commanders, McFadden’s Ford on Stone’s River, places where distinguished officers were slain, and many other important localities.”<sup>42</sup>

In December 1895, Tennessee Congressman James D. Richardson introduced legislation to establish a national military park at Stones River. The bill initially proposed the acquisition of 1,000 acres in addition to the existing national cemetery, while later versions proposed acquiring 3,100 acres. When these bills were not secured, the association instead lobbied to have markers erected on the field. Senate Bill 4818 and House Resolution 18713, introduced in 1912, were meant “to establish an accurate system of markers on the battle field of Stones River, in Tennessee.” The Commissioner of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Park, Charles H. Grosvenor, argued against the establishment of a park at Stones River, stating, “More than fifty years have elapsed since the battle of Stone’s

40. Ibid. Citing John C. Paige and Jerome A. Greene, *Administrative History of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park* (Denver: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1983), 9–10; Lee, 28–32.

41. Ibid., 65.

42. Ibid.



River and the marks, locations, earth works, or whatever else there was there are entirely obliterated. . . . The Commission is of the opinion that the bill should not pass.”<sup>43</sup>

Creation of a park at Stones River was delayed after the turn of the century because of numerous requests for establishment of military parks nationwide. The establishment of new military parks was also postponed around 1902 until a survey of sites could be completed.<sup>44</sup> The commissions that oversaw the first four military parks were phased out by the Sundry Civil Bill of 1912, and responsibility for all military parks was shifted to the Secretary of War to administer through the War Department. When legislation in 1916 created the National Park Service, this new agency had jurisdiction over national parks and monuments within the Department of the Interior but no authority over military parks. After World War I, Congress authorized a survey under the 1926 Act for the Study and Investigation of Battlefields. This study classified Stones River as a Class IIA battlefield worthy of some kind of monument or marker, resulting in the establishment of Stones River National Military Park by Congress on March 3, 1927.<sup>45</sup>

### **Landscape Character: 1926**

Refer to the Period Plan for 1926 (Fig. 12). After the Civil War, the landscape associated with the Stones River battlefield returned to agricultural use, land owners returned to their farmsteads and rebuilt their homes, and new residents began to settle in the area. The majority of the area was utilized for agriculture, and little tree cover or woodland was present during this period. In addition, the landscape began to change due to increasing subdivision. As parcels changed hands, they were often broken into smaller lots. One area that changed dramatically was the central section of the battlefield west of the Nashville Pike and the Hazen Monument. Here, a small community became established. By the time of park establishment, the community featured two primary roads lined with houses, at least two churches, and likely small businesses.

The community was composed primarily the homes of African American families.

Other post-battle additions to the landscape included the Hazen Brigade Monument, completed in 1863; the National Cemetery, completed in 1865; the U.S. Regulars Monument in 1882; and the Artillery Monument placed in 1906. Commemoration of the Battle of Stones River most likely led to an increase in visitors to the region, including veterans and the families of those buried in the cemetery.

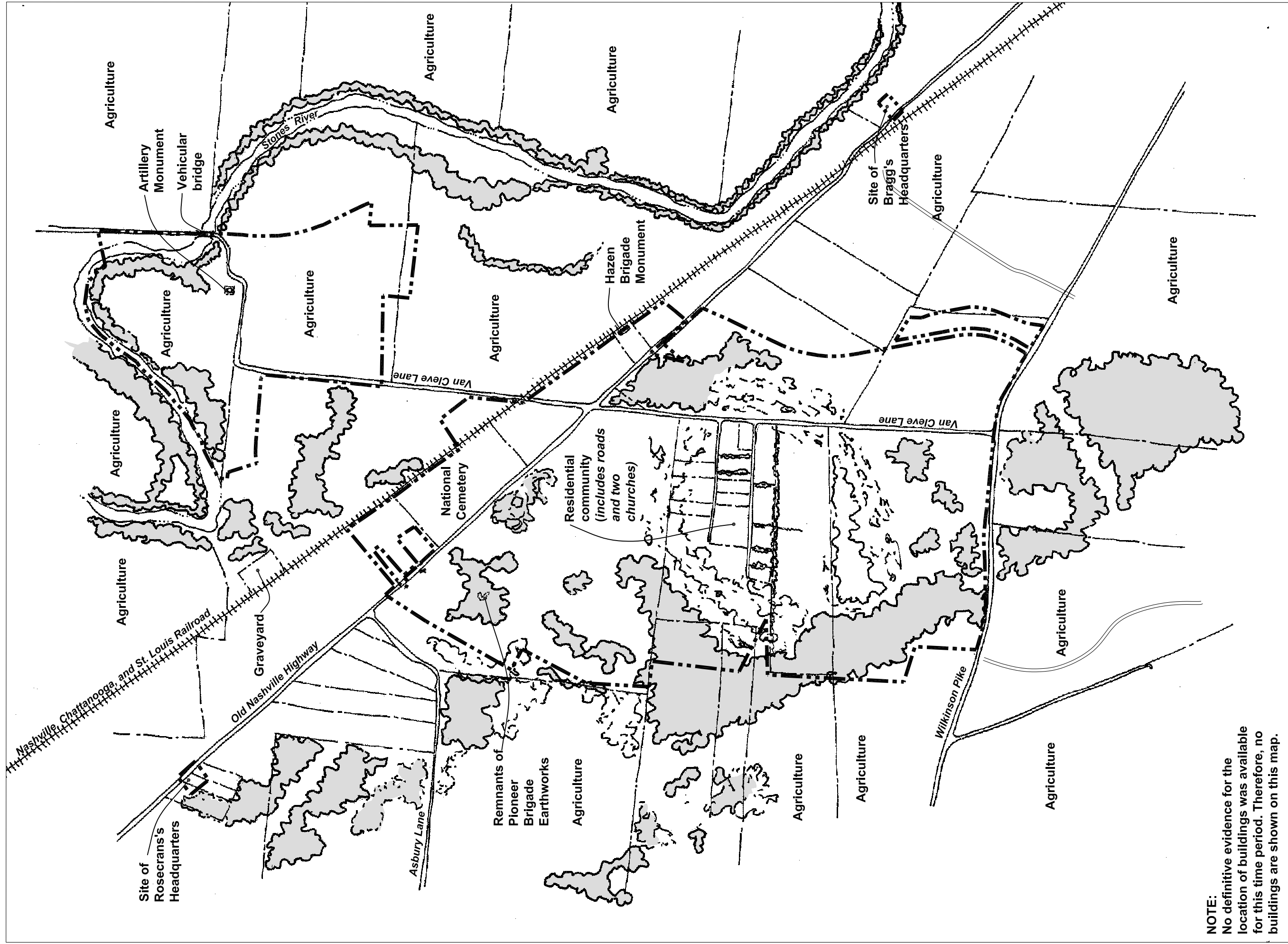
Little if anything is known about the condition and character of the Fortress Rosecrans site at this time. Agricultural use of the landscape and erosion likely claimed portions of the earthen fieldwork. Successional woodland also probably obscured other portions. It is known that the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway owned Redoubt Brannan in 1926.

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43. *Ibid.*, 66.

44. Ronald F. Lee, *The Origin and Later Evolution of the National Military Park Idea* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Office of Park Historic Preservation, 1973), accessed at [http://www.nps.gov/history/online\\_books/history\\_military/](http://www.nps.gov/history/online_books/history_military/)

45. Anne Willett, 61.



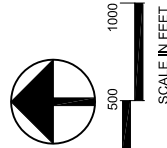
**NOTE:**  
 No definitive evidence for the location of buildings was available for this time period. Therefore, no buildings are shown on this map.

- Legend**
- +—+—+— Current Park Boundary
  - - - Plat Boundaries
  - ☁ Tree Cover
  - Roads
  - ~ Water
  - + + + + + Railroad Tracks

# Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Period Plan - 1926  
 Figure 12



**Sources**  
 1938 Aerials for vegetation; 1899 Map of Battlefield of Stones River Tennessee, surveyed by Oscar Jones; various NPS master plans prior to 1950s, used for alignment of initial park tour road.

## Federal Stewardship

### War Department Administration, 1927–1933

Portions of the Stones River battlefield were designated a national military park under the control of the War Department on March 3, 1927. Legislation to create a park at Stones River had been introduced to Congress several times during the early twentieth century, but it was not until 1928 that acquisition of property for the park began. The War Department appointed a three-member commission to research troop movements and inspect the battlefield. The commission consisted of Major John F. Conklin of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Union veteran John D. Hanson, and Confederate veteran Sam H. Mitchell.<sup>46</sup> A study was completed by Lt. Col. H.L. Landers of the Army War College to support the commission's work, including preparation of maps of the battlefield and troop movements.

Prior to 1928, land set aside to commemorate the Battle of Stones River included the Stones River National Cemetery and the Hazen Brigade Monument, both owned and administered by the War Department since the time of the Civil War. Two additional commemorative sites were owned by the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway, formerly known as the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad. In addition to the Hazen Brigade Monument and the monuments within the national cemetery, other monuments erected at the battlefield included the U.S. Regulars Monument, a fifteen foot tall sandstone column erected in 1882 in the Stones River National Cemetery, and the Artillery Monument, a thirty-four foot tall concrete obelisk designed by Hunter McDonald and built by the shops of the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway, and erected in 1906.

In 1928, the commission submitted its report with recommendations for land acquisition and park development. Following approval by the acting secretary of war, the commission was directed to

oversee implementation of the plan and the State of Tennessee ceded jurisdiction over lands that would be included in the park.<sup>47</sup> The commission identified for acquisition a 325-acre tract considered to have encompassed most of the battle's heaviest action, with boundaries of the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway right-of-way on the north; Wilkinson Pike on the south; Van Cleve Lane on the east; and a line parallel to and less than half a mile from the eastern boundary on the west. Acquisition of two separate privately-owned quarter-acre tracts was also recommended. These tracts included the locations of the headquarters sites of Generals Bragg and Rosecrans.<sup>48</sup> The commission did not recommend acquiring land north of Stones River, where fighting occurred on January 2, noting that ". . . at the present time this land is very inaccessible. There are now no bridges across Stones River in the vicinity of the battle field; the battle field north of Stones River can only be reached by poor county roads leading from the vicinity of Murfreesboro."<sup>49</sup> The War Department also did not acquire seven, one-eighth-acre parcels recommended by the commission for placement of interpretive markers.

Only a portion of the approximately 4,000-acre battlefield could be obtained; the commission noted that "the 325 acre tract of land that it is proposed to acquire by no means covers fully the entire site of the hardest fighting of the battle of Stones River, but with the funds available it is believed to be the best selection possible under the circumstances."<sup>50</sup> The recommended land was described by the commission as a nucleus for future acquisition, should funding become available.<sup>51</sup>

Between 1928 and 1934, land including the Artillery Monument (Monument Lot) and Redoubt Brannan at Fortress Rosecrans (Old Fort Lot) was acquired by donation from the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway. The Hazen Brigade Monument and Stones River National Cemetery, both of which predated the 1927 establishment act, were already federally

46. "Report of the Inspection of Battlefield of Stones River, Tennessee," typescript submitted to the Secretary of War, July 17, 1928; *Daily News Journal* (Murfreesboro), April 23, 1929.

47. Anne Willett, 62, 75.

48. *Ibid.*, 64–65.

49. "Report on Inspection of Battlefield of Stones River, Tennessee," July 17, 1928, to the Secretary of War.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Anne Willett, 65–73.



**FIGURE 13.** Farmhouses on the battlefield, 1928.

owned. Administration of these sites was transferred to the park. The commission also recommended that thirty-five interpretive markers be erected within the park, two at the Artillery Monument, and one at Redoubt Brannan. Seven additional tablets were to be erected on parcels of land to interpret and mark specific events of the battle, although these seven one-eighth-acre parcels were the only tracts recommended by the commission that were not eventually purchased for the park.

Although title to all forty-six properties slated for procurement had not yet been acquired, the War Department began rehabilitation and alteration of the grounds in July 1930. All existing domestic and agricultural structures on park property, particularly along Van Cleve Lane, were determined to postdate the battle and were subsequently removed. The commission recommended removal of the dwellings of African American households that lined Van Cleve Lane during the 1920s, with one structure retained for future use as a museum.<sup>52</sup>

52. Styles, 47. A 1931 newspaper account mentions a "Negro settlement" along Van Cleve Lane. One of these dwellings was retained for future use as a museum for the United Daughters of the Confederacy. This cabin was destroyed by a severe storm on March 25, 1935. Letter from superintendent Richard B. Randolph to Director Cammerer, March 28, 1935.



**FIGURE 14.** Farmhouse and the Artillery Monument, 1929.

When the administrative functions of the military park and the national cemetery were consolidated in 1927, visitor contact, administrative, and utility functions continued to operate out of the superintendent's lodge and dependencies at the cemetery. The two roads that existed at the time of the battle, Nashville Pike and Van Cleve Lane, were widened, graded, and graveled where they passed through the park. A new tour road was constructed leading south through the park from Nashville Pike and turning east to Van Cleve Lane.

From the initial development of the battlefield until the early 1960s, there were four entrances into the main park area. Vehicular entrance from





**FIGURE 15.** Van Cleve Lane south of the Nashville Pike was almost impassable in January 1931.



**FIGURE 16.** Van Cleve Lane in February 1931, after regrading and surfacing by the War Department. This view is looking south across the Nashville Pike intersection.

the Old Nashville Highway was through the main entrance and at the intersection of Old Nashville Highway and Van Cleve Lane. Each of these entrances was marked with stone pillars. The first park tour road also connected with Van Cleve Lane.<sup>53</sup> A local stone mason, Herbert Smith, constructed the stone pillars at the two primary entrances. He was later hired to create entrances at the national parks at Fort Donelson and Shiloh.<sup>54</sup>

In October 1931, a ceremony was held at the main entrance gate located across from the staff residence. Sam Mitchell, the Confederate veteran who had served on the Battlefield Park Commission, raised an American flag near the ranger station, which was located in the center of the main entrance drive near the stone pillars.<sup>55</sup> Three cannon from Redoubt Brannan and a flagpole were erected adjacent to the northern entrance gate.<sup>56</sup> The park was officially dedicated in July 1932.<sup>57</sup>

53. Styles, 68.

54. *Ibid.*

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*

57. "Elaborate Event with Colorful Exercises Will Mark

In the commission's 1928 inspection of the site, the northern section of the 325-acre tract was described as open and under cultivation, while the central and southern portions of the field, north of Manson Pike, were described as rocky and wooded with cedar. Immediately following acquisition by the War Department, local farmers plowed and seeded the open areas of the tract with fall oats; in return for which they were to receive the harvest for their work.<sup>58</sup> Landscape changes were made under the direction of Captain. H. J. Conner. In October 1931, a newspaper reported that, "acres and acres of dense underbrush have given way to carefully cleared land and many of the huge rocks, which dotted the landscape, have been removed, however leaving a sufficient number to add greatly to the attractiveness of the park."<sup>59</sup> Other War Department alterations included construction of a median at the park roads to

Dedication of Stones River Park Tomorrow,"  
*Rutherford Courier* (Murfreesboro, Tennessee),  
July 14, 1932, 1.

58. Anne Willett, 75.

59. Styles, 68.



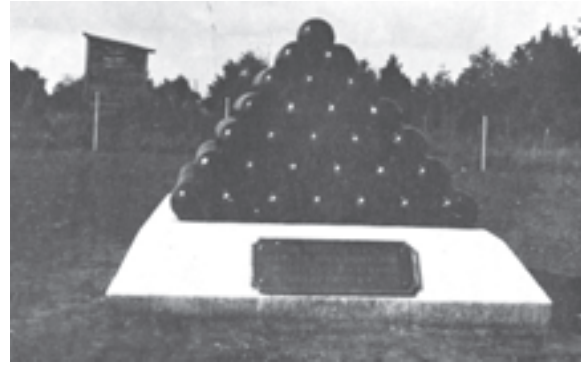
**FIGURE 17.** The main entrance to the park under construction in 1931.



**FIGURE 18.** The completed main entrance to the park, 1932.



**FIGURE 19.** The Artillery Monument in 1931, after repainting by the War Department.



**FIGURE 20.** The General Bragg Headquarters Site marker immediately after its completion in 1931.

create a boulevard, preparation of landscape plans, and planting of 2,500 trees, plants, and shrubs.<sup>60</sup> Maps developed by the NPS after 1933 document the formal landscape treatments created during the War Department tenure of the site, including formal plantings of exotic flowering trees and shrubs along Nashville Pike and along the tour road at park entrances. Flowering trees and shrubs were planted at the park entrance and along sections of the park tour road, including roses, arborvitae, wisteria, holly, chokeberry, dwarf spirea, maple, peach, juniper, and a magnolia.<sup>61</sup>

### **Fortress Rosecrans Landscape Character: 1938**

Refer to the Fortress Rosecrans Period Plan for 1938 (Fig. 21). Little is known about the specific evolution of the site of Fortress Rosecrans between the end of the war and acquisition of portions of the site by the federal government in the 1920s and 1930s. After the Civil War and the abandonment of Fortress Rosecrans, the City of Murfreesboro began to expand. While much of the area remained in agricultural use, new residential development also occurred. Both of these activities likely contributed to the deterioration of the earthen fortifications of

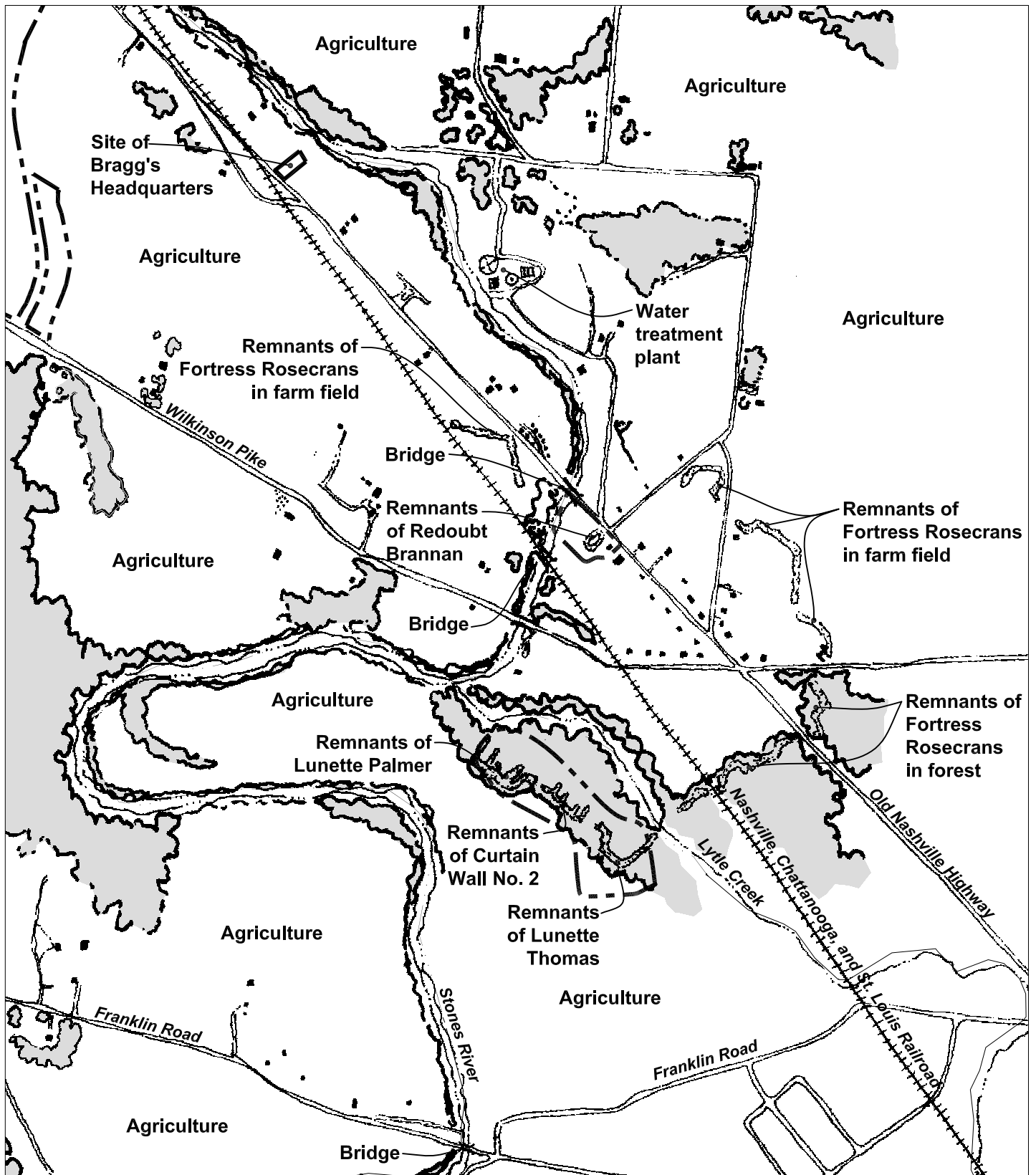
Fortress Rosecrans, which began to erode or be incrementally plowed under or built upon with roads and dwellings. Areas that were not developed or farmed were left unmanaged, and woodlands began to colonize the earthworks. The structures associated with the fortress' interior were likely dismantled and the materials reused in other construction projects.

Between 1928 and 1934, the War Department slowly acquired parcels related to the Battle of Stones River. A four-acre parcel encompassing Redoubt Brannan was acquired by the War Department in 1928 from the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway as part of the original establishment of the park, but there was no interpretation or public access to the site.<sup>62</sup> The Lunettes and Curtain Wall parcel remained in private ownership throughout this period.

60. Anne Willett, 73–76.

61. James Garland, "Stones River National Military Park: Approximate Location of Exotic Plants with Number & Variety, March 17, 1934," NPS map number 327-1063; and Garland, "Stones River National Military Park: Entrance and Drive to Park and Cemetery, March 12, 1934," NPS map number 327-1064

62. *Preservation and Visitor Use Plan and Environmental Assessment: Remnants of Fortress Rosecrans: Redoubt Brannan*. National Park Service Southeast Region, March 1995.



Sources: STRI 1938 aerial photographs AEY-8-191; 1916 Rutherford County Atlas.

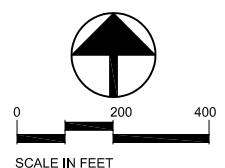
- Legend**
- Current Park Boundary
  - ☁ Tree Cover
  - Buildings
  - Roads
  - + + + + Railroad Tracks

# Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Fortress Rosecrans Period Plan - 1938

Figure 21





## Early National Park Service

On August 10, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 6166, through which the National Park Service gained jurisdiction over all historic sites, battlefields, monuments, and parks previously administered by the War Department, the Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capitol.<sup>63</sup> With transfer of administration to the NPS, Stones River was expanded to include an additional 65.6 acres of land in the Nashville Pike unit. This addition to the park boundaries had been authorized for acquisition by the War Department but not yet officially transferred to the government. The tracts were acquired through deeds by the NPS. The total park acreage was brought to 344.69 acres by this acquisition.

Much of the development of Stones River in the 1930s occurred through the efforts of the new federal public works agencies established under the National Industrial Recovery Act of June 1933, which provided unemployment relief and helped to conserve land and water resources. Agencies whose efforts benefited the national parks included the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Public Works Administration (PWA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Projects in the national parks involved land reclamation and park development, with \$40 million allocated by the PWA from 1933 to 1937 to fund road and trail construction, campground development, museum construction, and restoration of historic structures.<sup>64</sup>

From 1933 until 1955, the park was administered by Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, after which Stones River was assigned its own superintendent. From 1933 through 1935, PWA workers made improvements to the main battlefield and erected a wire fence around the park perimeter to keep out livestock from adjacent farms. In 1933 and 1934, the tour road and Nashville Pike were re-graded. Vegetative buffers were planted along portions of



FIGURE 22. View of the Artillery Monument, September 1935.



FIGURE 23. The main entrance to the park, 1937.



FIGURE 24. Van Cleve Lane, view south from the Nashville Pike, 1937.



FIGURE 25. View northwest toward the filling station just beyond the park boundaries, showing screen planting implemented in 1934.

63. Styles, 69. Citing Barry Mackintosh, *The National Parks: Shaping the System* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1991), 24; Unrau, 43.

64. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Coming of the New Deal* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959), 284–288; Unrau, 96–101.





**FIGURE 26.** Informational sign at the General Bragg's Headquarters site, 1930s. The marker is visible in the background at left.



**FIGURE 27.** Park entrance, 1930s.



**FIGURE 28.** Roadside markers and directional signage along Old Nashville Highway, 1930s. Also note the overhead electrical lines and wood utility poles along the road.



**FIGURE 29.** Park entrance, 1930s.

the park's perimeter, and the open fields were harrowed, fertilized, and graded. Severe storms on March 25, 1935, uprooted more than one hundred large trees, damaged many smaller trees and the wire fence, and severely damaged the United Daughters of the Confederacy cabin along Van Cleve Lane, which was not rebuilt.<sup>65</sup>

The exotic flowering plantings at the entrances and along the tour road that had been planted during the War Department era were likely removed prior to 1962.<sup>66</sup> By 1938, most of the park, aside from areas along the western

boundary, did not contain dense foliage, except for isolated trees and small stands. The dense cedar brakes of the battle era were no longer present.<sup>67</sup> Visitor access to the site changed when the New Nashville Highway (U.S. Route 41) was built north of the railroad in 1950–1952.<sup>68</sup>

The National Park Service prepared several master plans for the park between the late 1930s and the late 1950s. These plans, some of which were not implemented due to lack of funding, all addressed the rehabilitation of the park through physical development. Recommendations

65. Richard B. Randolph, Superintendent, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, Superintendent's Narrative Report, March, 1935, CHCH park archives. Refer also to Garland maps cited in note 59.
66. Styles, 70. He notes that these plantings were not recorded on the park maps drawn in 1962, and comments on a trend toward the removal of exotic plantings and the reintroduction of native species to historical parks during the 1930s and 1940s.

67. *Ibid.*, citing Record Group 145, Records of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Can #2281, AEY-8-69, National Archives and Records Administration, Cartographic and Architectural Branch, College Park, Maryland. Refer also to aerial photograph of the park taken in April 1938.
68. John T. Willett, *Master Plan for Preservation and Use of Stones River National Military Park* (Murfreesboro: National Park Service, 1960), vol. III, sec. C, p. 2.

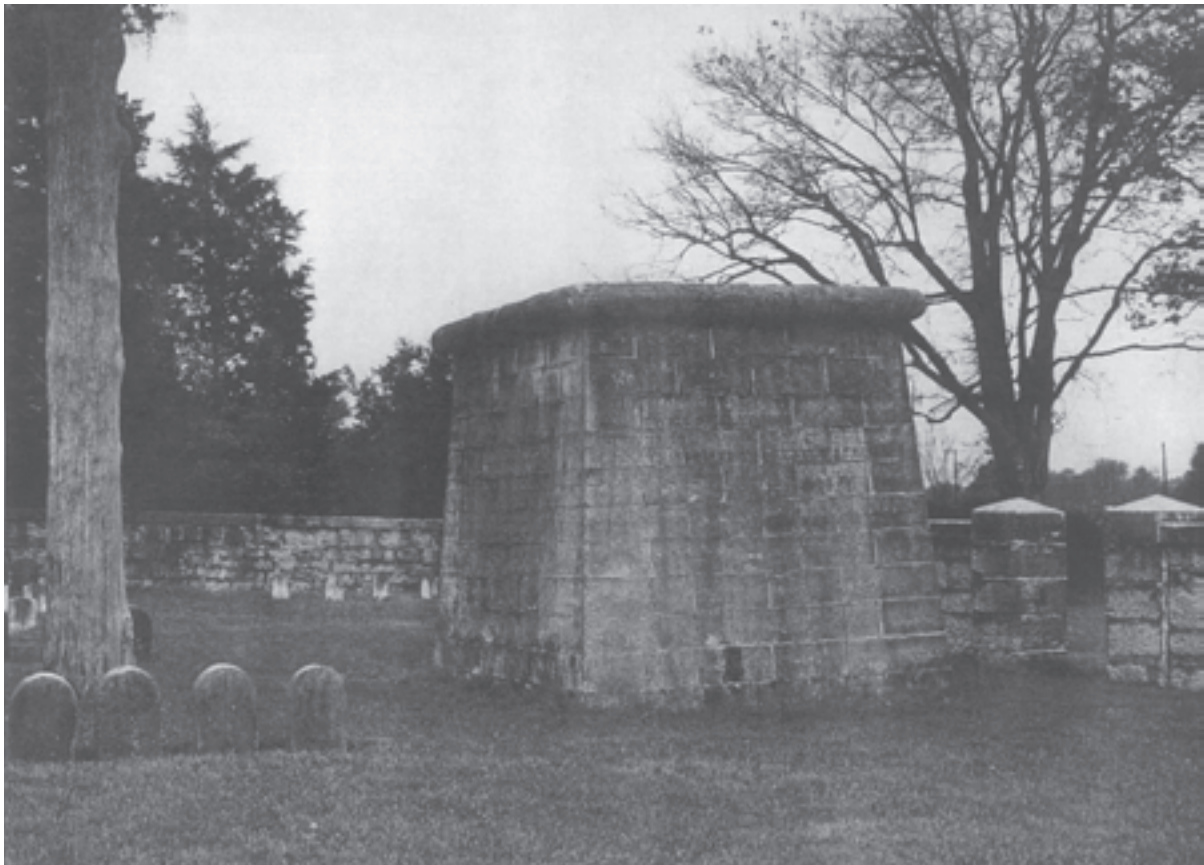


FIGURE 30. View of the Hazen Brigade Monument, April 20, 1960.

included construction of a new visitor center, relocation of the tour road and entrance gates, and acquisition of an additional 1,000 acres to connect the various tracts within the park and increase the percentage of the original battlefield under federal protection. Limited funding made only minor improvements possible in response to these plans. In the 1940s and 1950s, this work included the resurfacing of the tour road and Van Cleve Lane.<sup>69</sup>

### **Landscape Character: 1955**

Refer to the Period Plan for 1955 (Fig. 31). By the mid-1930s, the park included land on both sides of the Nashville Pike, encompassing the Stones River National Cemetery and the Hazen Brigade Monument, and south to Wilkinson (Manson) Pike and east to Van Cleve Lane. The park also included lands associated with the McFadden Farm and the Artillery Monument, two small parcels marking the sites of the headquarters of the generals of the opposing forces, as well as the Redoubt Brannan parcel of Fortress Rosecrans.

Throughout the 1930s, the War Department managed the landscape associated with the park to approximate the mid-nineteenth century conditions of the battlefield, and to enhance the experience for the visitor. The park established new entrance features, including stone pillars, fences, gatehouses, and ornamental plantings, along the Nashville Pike and Van Cleve Lane. The entrances were linked through construction of a new tour road. The War Department also erected a series of painted cast iron tablets that described the key events of the battle. These were similar to those utilized at other National Military Parks such as Vicksburg, Chickamauga and Chattanooga, and Shiloh. Concrete boundary markers and directional signs were established as part of the development of the park. The War Department also erected cannonball monuments at the sites of the headquarters of Generals Rosecrans and Bragg. As part of park development, existing residences and institutions located within the boundary were demolished, including the buildings of the existing African American community.

During the 1930s, as part of the national work programs established by the federal government

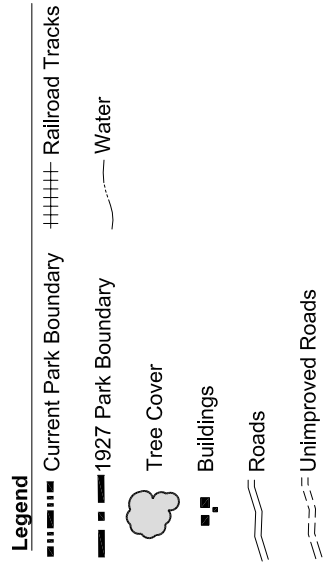
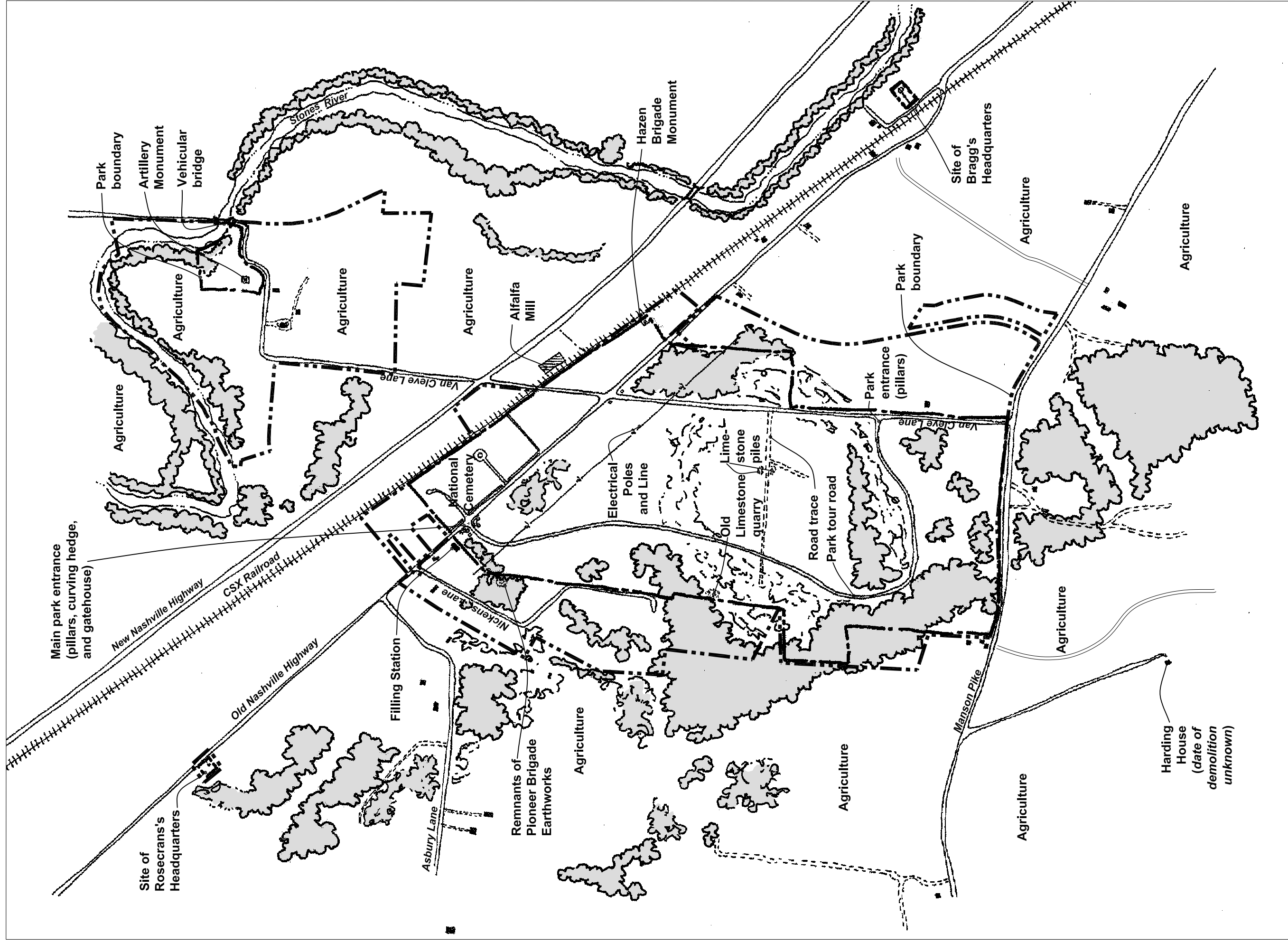
in response to the public need during the Great Depression, Civilian Conservation Corps workers planted trees and shrubs in order to diminish the open nature of the park landscape, and to enhance the character of the cemetery, park entrances, and park margins. They also conducted erosion control measures along the Nashville Pike and in other areas undergoing soil erosion.

Changes that occurred within the landscape adjacent to the park included the construction of the New Nashville Highway (U.S. Route 41) north of the railroad tracks, a vehicular bridge over Stones River near McFadden Ford, and a filling station at the edge of the park near the National Cemetery. Overhead electrical lines and utility poles were also placed along the Old Nashville Highway (formerly called the Nashville Pike). Despite these changes, much of the region's economy continued to rely upon agricultural activities, and farmsteads and farm fields were an ongoing presence within the Stones River landscape.

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69. Anne Willett, 87.





## Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Period Plan - 1955  
Figure 31

**Sources**  
1938 aerial photograph for vegetation; 1936 Stones River NMP Topography Plan; 1950 Road System Plan.

## Mission 66 Development

The National Park Service Mission 66 program was developed to provide funding to revitalize the national parks over a ten year period concluding in 1966, to coincide with the agency's fiftieth anniversary. During and following World War II, limited funding and deferred maintenance had contributed to deterioration of the parks' infrastructure. At the same time, park visitation had increased as Americans had more income, leisure time, and access to automobiles for transportation.

Conrad L. Wirth, an NPS landscape architect who had overseen recreational planning and state park development during the 1930s, was appointed director of the NPS in 1951. In January 1956, Wirth proposed the Mission 66 program, supporting the concept with a slide show depicting the poor conditions of the parks that was presented to President Dwight D. Eisenhower and his cabinet. The multimillion-dollar Mission 66 program involved improvements to roads, expansion of park facilities, and repair of existing infrastructure.<sup>70</sup>

The Mission 66 report for Stones River notes:

As the fighting actually occurred over a general area some four or five miles in diameter, the present park embraces only a small portion of the original battlegrounds. The historic remains, besides the fields, woodlands and streams (which may be considered historic because of the events associated with them) are few in number.<sup>71</sup>

In support of the park improvements proposed for Mission 66, Park Superintendent Victor H. Shipley noted that:

The National Park Service is, without doubt, the greatest experiment of its kind in the whole world. Begun in 1916, with the ten or twelve parks then in existence, the Service has expanded until we find some part of it in every section of our great country. This vast empire-for-pleasure has been put together and maintained by those who believe in the philosophical principle that true patriotism

70. Conrad L. Wirth, *Parks, Politics, and the People* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 111; Unrau, 59–62.

71. *Mission 66 for the Stones River National Military Park* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 1957), 1.

has, among its many component parts, the two indispensable qualities which are known as pride and appreciation and that this pride in and appreciation for our native land can be increased by making it possible for any and all of us to make some sort of contact with these certain geographical sections which have, in some peculiar way, become a definite part of the American heritage. This philosophy, then, presupposes that these certain geographical sections which have been set aside as parks, monuments, military parks, etc., should be developed to the extent that all our people may have the opportunity to visit and become acquainted with them . . . Development of a new entrance road, headquarters area and interpretation center, other facilities for visitor comfort and experience, and proper staffing as set out in Mission 66 for Stones River will permit this area to take its rightful place as one of the most important memorials of the American heritage.<sup>72</sup>

Mission 66 work at the park was guided by the 1960 Master Plan for Stones River National Battlefield, including the historic fence and

72. Victor H. Shipley, Superintendent, Stones River National Park, Memorandum to Director, NPS, 10 February 1956. See section on "Philosophy and Accomplishments Proposed (Mission 66)."



FIGURE 32. Aerial view of the newly-constructed visitor center, 1963.

ground cover map prepared by NPS historian Edwin C. Bearrs.

On April 22, 1960, the park was redesignated as Stones River National Battlefield (74 Stat. 82), part of a larger reorganization of NPS administration and nomenclature. The Secretary of the Interior was directed to administer, protect, and develop the battlefield in accordance with the provisions of the National Park Service Organic Act of August 25, 1916. Also, the park boundary was expanded to include approximately seven additional acres at the McFadden Farm unit. The land acquired extended this unit northward to the banks of Stones River.

Construction in the early 1960s included a new visitor center with parking lot. The visitor center, constructed in 1961–1963, was designed by Donald F. Benson of the NPS Eastern Office of Design & Construction. The original plan included three equal wings at 120-degree angles arranged around a central hexagonal lobby

space. It incorporated offices, a museum, and related interpretive facilities.<sup>73</sup>

In the summer and fall of 1963, landscape and site work related to the new visitor center was implemented, including concrete sidewalks at the visitor center and staff residences, a new culvert at the entrance roadway, brick and redwood (not cypress as originally specified) park signs, and replanting of the ground areas disturbed by the visitor center project. Small features built at this time included a flagpole and drinking fountain. At the main entrance to the park, the stone walls extending from each of the pillars and the wooden gates were also constructed as part of this work.<sup>74</sup>

The Mission 66 program for Stones River National Battlefield emphasized the need for an improved vehicular approach and circulation.

73. Sara Allaback, Ph.D., *Mission 66 Visitor Centers: The History of a Building Type* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 2000), Appendix I.
74. Darren H. Bohnet, Project Supervisor, "Narrative to Accompany the Completion Report of the Landscape Construction" (Murfreesboro, Tennessee: Stones River National Battlefield, 1964).



**FIGURE 33.** View of the newly completed Visitor Center, June 1, 1966.

The need to establish a new entrance approach was given particular emphasis, as the existing county road leading to the site reportedly was low, prone to flooding, and involved a hazardous railroad crossing. In the prospectus, a discussion of land and water rights noted:

A modest amount of additional land will be required for a protected right-of-way for a suitable park entrance road from the new four-lane highway location. This will necessitate acquiring some 8.5 acres of land in six private ownerships at a total estimated cost of approximately \$28,000.<sup>75</sup>

Improvements included conversion of the existing tour road into a closed-loop road with a single entrance on the Nashville Pike. Alterations were also made to entrance gates from Nashville Pike to the tour road. Other components of the plan included construction of two residences for site personnel (a third house was added to the plan and completed in 1963); installation of outdoor exhibits and markers; and additions to staffing and seasonal personnel (tour leaders). A total cost of \$246,000 was estimated for physical improvements.

In 1966, the city of Murfreesboro acquired fifty acres at the site of Fortress Rosecrans and established Old Fort Park. The new park included Lunette Palmer, Curtain Wall No. 2, and Lunette Thomas.<sup>76</sup> The city considered Old Fort Park primarily a recreational area, and little effort was made to protect and interpret the remains of Fortress Rosecrans as a cultural resource. In 1976, one observer noted:

The city owns a cycle park immediately contiguous to the fortification [Lunette Palmer], and apparently little or no effort has been made to prevent the cyclists from using the steep earthen banks for their entertainment. Road cuts through the embankments are common . . . Portions of the fortification contain trash . . . [The city] proposes building a golf course up to the very edge of the lunette . . .<sup>77</sup>

75. *Mission 66 Prospectus, Stones River National Military Park, Tennessee* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, April 1956), 14.

76. Mike West, "The Post's Top 10 Historic Sites," *The Murfreesboro Post*, [www.murfreesboropost.com](http://www.murfreesboropost.com).

77. Catherine H. Blee, "An Assessment of the Cultural Resources of Stones River National Battlefield and the Proposed Development Impacts on Them" (Denver Service Center, National Park Service, January 1976), 19.

## Contemporary National Park Service

The battlefield's authorized boundary was expanded in 1987 (Public Law 100-205) and again in 1991 (Public Law 102-225). The 1987 boundary increase added two parcels along the western side of the Nashville Pike unit and one smaller parcel at the eastern side along Old Nashville Highway; and additional land at the McFadden Farm unit. The 1987 boundary increase also incorporated the Fortress Rosecrans Curtain Wall No. 2 and Lunettes Palmer and Thomas parcel owned by the city of Murfreesboro into the authorized boundary. The 1991 boundary expansion increased the park to its current limits, with additional parcels added to the east and west sides of the Nashville Pike unit, an expansion of the McFadden Farm unit, and an expansion of the Redoubt Brannan parcel.

In the early 1990s, Thompson Lane was extended south from the New Nashville Highway to connect with Wilkinson Pike and Tennessee Highway 96, Old Fort Parkway. This project included the construction of an overpass to carry Thompson Lane over the CSX railroad and Old Nashville Highway. The new overpass and associated embankments greatly affected viewsheds from the park eastward.

The National Park Service began to address the condition and interpretation of the Redoubt Brannan and the Curtain Wall No. 2 and Lunettes Palmer and Thomas parcels in the early to mid-1990s. These features were described as "preserved under a forest cover" in a 1991 study.<sup>78</sup> The woodland cover was also described as having a well-developed understory and dense communities of invasive species such as privet and honeysuckle.<sup>79</sup> Visitor use of the former Old Fort Park had led to the establishment of hard-packed earth trails along the top of the parapet walls and within the fortifications. These conditions were subsequently addressed by the National Park Service through removal of hazard trees and invasive species, the addition of soil to

78. National Park Service, *Preservation and Management Plan; Environmental Assessment; Remnants of Fortress Rosecrans: Lunettes Palmer and Thomas; Old Fort Park; Murfreesboro, Tennessee* (Atlanta: Southeast Regional Office, 1991), iii.

79. *Ibid.*, 11.



compacted trail prisms, removal of trash, and the establishment of new visitor access and interpretive improvements. A boardwalk and interpretive trail was established and a parking lot was constructed to enhance the visitor experience.

In 2003–2004, the visitor center was extensively expanded and remodelled. The work included several additions and replacement of all exterior materials.

Planning is under way to change the route of the tour road through the park. The Environmental Assessment for this project has been completed. New wayside exhibits are planned for the battlefield. Installation of these exhibits is planned for late 2008 or early 2009.

Control and monitoring of invasive and alien plant species is ongoing, and limited areas that were historically open fields are being converted to native grasses. A draft plan for vegetation management is under development. Also, a fire management plan was completed in 2003 and is scheduled to be updated in 2008.

To maintain open field areas, selected areas that were fields at the time of the battle have been farmed since at least the early 1970s by a number of different farmers. Crops included soybeans and hay, as well as wheat, corn, cotton, milo, and millet. This arrangement ended in 2004. During 2005 and 2006, the School of Agribusiness and Agriscience at Middle Tennessee State University planted and harvested these fields. Another local farmer may be interested in continuing to farm these fields in the future, but this has not been resolved. (At the time of the Civil War, the dominant crops were corn and cotton. Livestock roamed freely in the woods and pastures, which were bounded by fences to contain the farm animals.)

The Medical Center Parkway connecting to a new interchange on Interstate Highway 24, completed in 2005, has led to many development proposals for historic battlefield lands south of the park boundaries. This planned development includes a multi-story hospital, a Chamber of Commerce visitor center, a conference center, and a shopping center. The potential to screen this new development from view needs to be



**FIGURE 34.** The Thompson Lane overpass at the Old Nashville Highway under construction, early 1990s.

considered. Another new street, Garrison Drive, was completed in 2006, connecting from Wilkinson Pike to West College Street east of Thompson Lane.

In addition to fallow agricultural land and former landfill sites, newly acquired park lands also include dump sites, home sites, non-historic farm outbuildings, animal pens, fences, and business sites. Planning for the long term cleanup and restoration of these lands needs to be undertaken. The ecologically significant cedar glades ecosystem within the park boundaries contains two federally endangered plant species: the Tennessee coneflower (*Echinacea tennesseensis*) and Pyne's ground plum (*Astragalus bibullatus*).<sup>80</sup> The cedar glade area is currently divided by the park tour road. Reduction of one leg of this road is part of the planned change to the tour route.

### **Landscape Character: 2005**

Refer to the Period Plans for 2005 (Figs. 35 and 36). Between 1956 and 2006, the Mission 66 program, property acquisitions, and a move toward balancing cultural and natural resources greatly altered the appearance and composition of the park landscape. Mission 66-era additions included a visitor center, a parking lot, the conversion of the existing tour road to a single-entry closed-loop road, interpretive stops along the loop road, and the installation of several wayside exhibits. In 2005, with the exception of some of the wayside exhibits, the addition of new trails and signage, and alterations to the visitor center, all of these elements remain intact and little changed.

Since 1955, the park has worked to better approximate land cover conditions at the time of the battle. Trees have been planted in areas that were wooded at the time of the battle, and agricultural fields have been approximated, either through limited cropping or through the establishment and maintenance of warm season grass fields in historic locations. In some areas, woodland cover now exceeds the historic

conditions, for example at the McFadden Farm property, along the park's southern boundary, and west and southwest of the Visitor Center. Woody growth has increased in part due to diminished maintenance funding. Areas that are less wooded than at the time of the battle include the northwestern edge of the park's Nashville Pike unit.

During this period the park has grown, encompassing a larger portion of the battlefield and affording the park the opportunity to increase its interpretation of the events of December 1862–January 1863. The landscape surrounding the park has changed dramatically, affecting the park's setting and the visitor experience. Many of the roads that connect the various park units, particularly U.S. Highway 41, are now lined with commercial businesses and light industrial facilities. The construction of a factory nearby and the Thompson Lane overpass has heavily impacted the setting of the Hazen Brigade Monument. Finally, agricultural activities on the lands surrounding the park continue to diminish, and are increasingly being replaced by residential subdivisions.

The construction in the 1990s of the Thompson Lane connector and overpass has had a dramatic impact on the historic landscape. Located east of Van Cleve Lane, the road corridor is visible from the eastern portion of the Nashville Pike Unit and the Hazen Brigade Monument. The large concrete structure that carries the road corridor across Old Nashville Highway and the rail line is particularly visible from these areas. In addition to the impact this roadway has had on the visual quality of the park, the road has changed local circulation patterns, due to its bypassing of the Old Nashville Highway. In fact, the Old Nashville Highway has become obsolete for most travelers with the exception of local residents and park visitors.

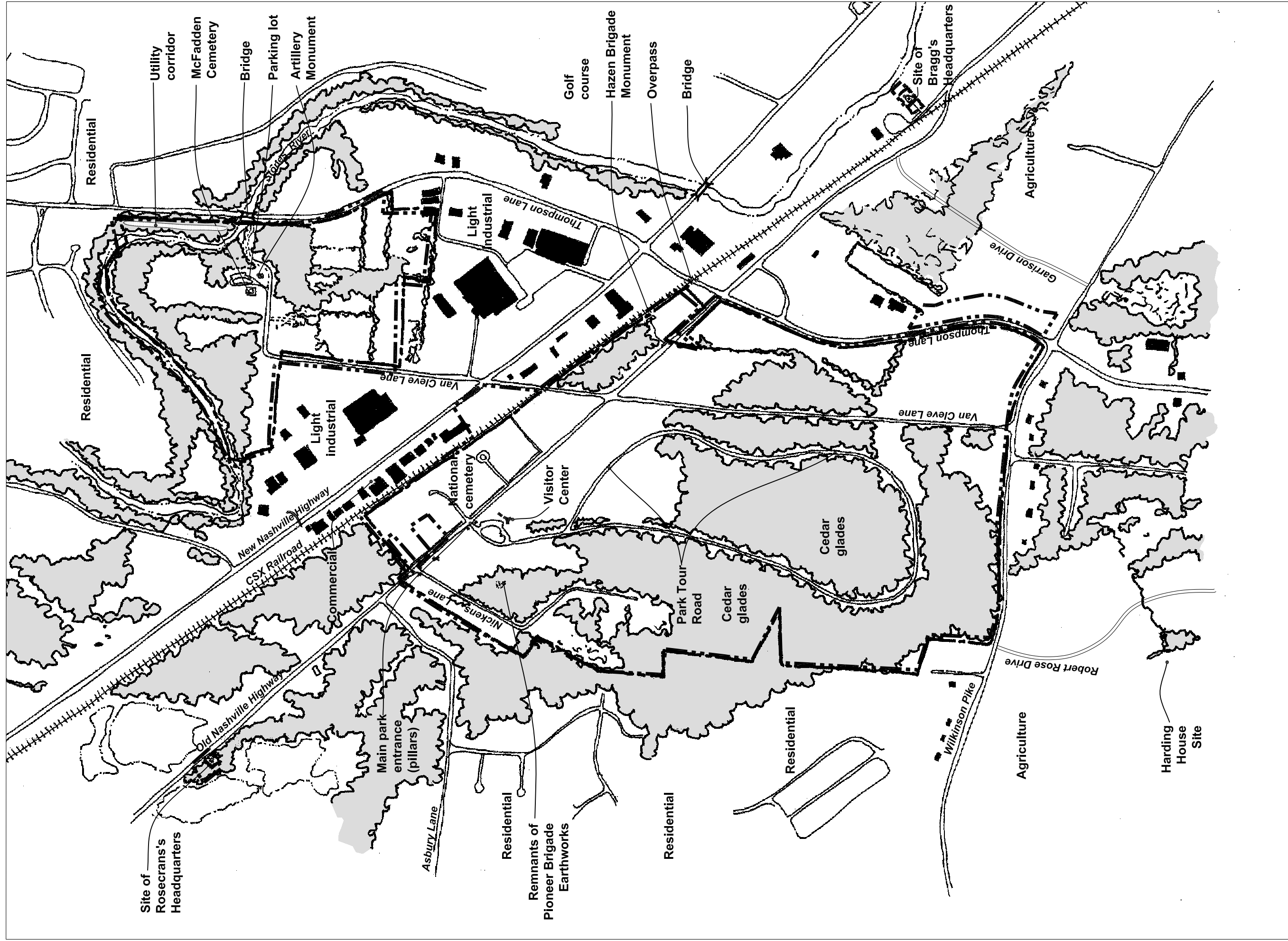
The Fortress Rosecrans earthworks are maintained under a variety of vegetative cover, including dense forest, light forest, and tall grass. The focus of vegetation management has been the removal of exotic and hazardous vegetation, and the establishment of native plants with “the least amount of intervention and ground

80. Tennessee coneflower was planted in the cedar glades in the 1970s by Professor Thomas Hemmerly of Middle Tennessee State University. Pyne's ground plum was planted by the National Park Service. No intentional plantings within the cedar brakes have been documented.

disturbance.”<sup>81</sup> Vegetation has also been managed to stabilize the slopes leading to Lytle Creek. Currently, woody vegetation obscures some of the historic views of the river that help connect the fortification to its historic use.

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81. National Park Service, *Preservation and Management Plan*, 16.



- Legend**
- Current Park Boundary
  - ☁ Tree Cover
  - Buildings
  - Roads
  - ~ Water
  - ++++ Railroad Tracks



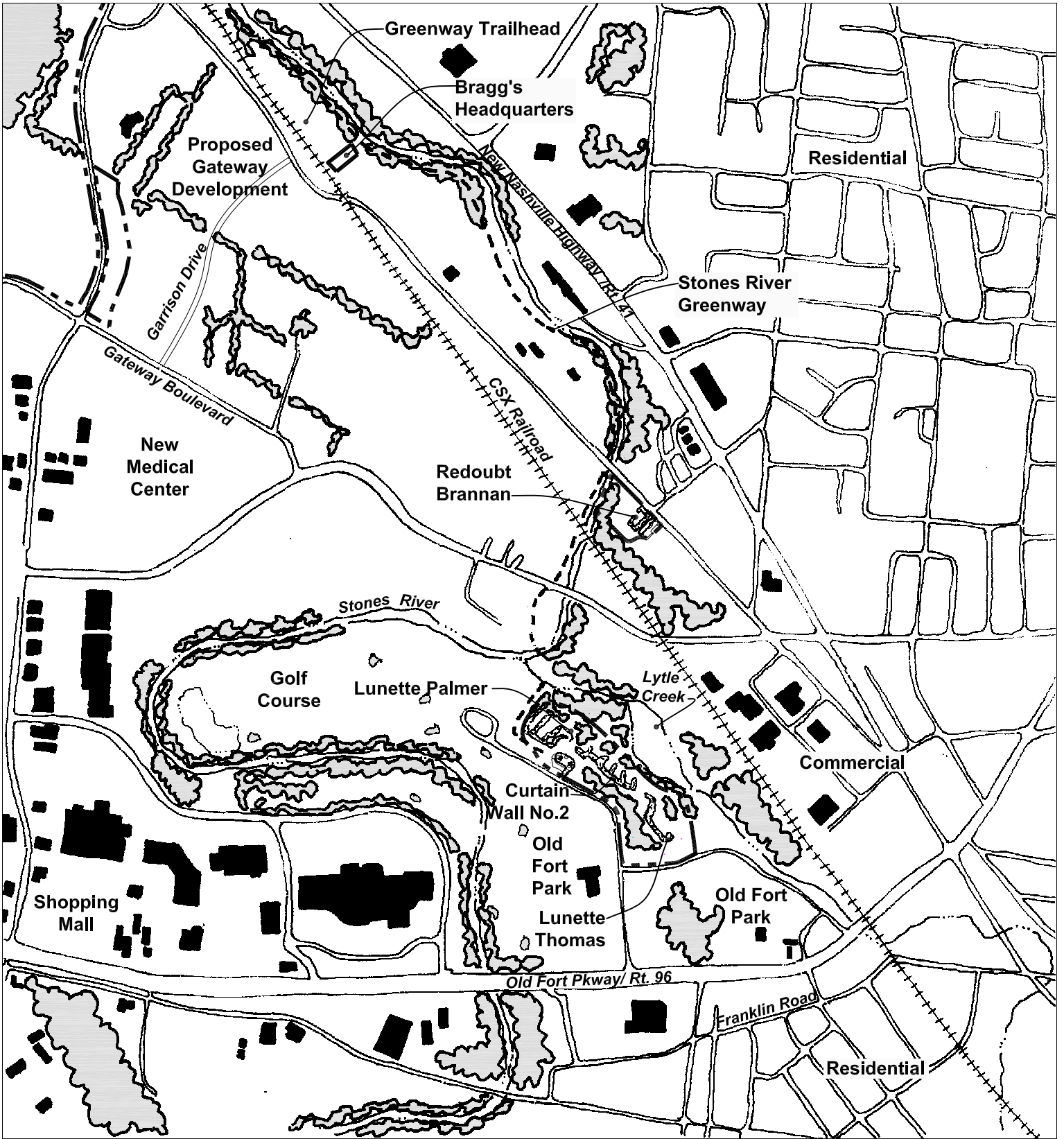
# Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Period Plan - 2005  
Figure 35

**Sources**  
GIS data provided by NPS and converted into AutoCAD; digital ortho quads provided by NPS.





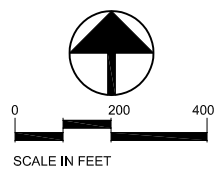
Source: GIS data provided by Stones River National Battlefield and converted into AutoCAD.

- Legend**
- Current Park Boundary
  - ☁ Tree Cover
  - Buildings
  - Roads
  - ++++ Railroad Tracks

# Stones River National Battlefield

Murfreesboro, Tennessee

**Fortress Rosecrans Period Plan - 2005**  
**Figure 36**



## Evaluation of Significance

Stones River National Battlefield maintains significance in military history, landscape architecture (National Cemetery), African American ethnic heritage, and commemoration. The park's nomination to the National Register of Historic Places documents this significance by describing how the site's history and associations meet the terms of Criteria A, B, C, and D.

Per Criterion A, the battlefield is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history: generally, the Civil War, and specifically, the Battle of Stones River that occurred from December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863. Per Criterion B, the battlefield is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, particularly Union Major General William S. Rosecrans, commander of the Army of the Cumberland; Brigadier General Philip H. Sheridan; and Confederate General Braxton Bragg, commander of the Army of Tennessee. Per Criterion C, the battlefield (National Cemetery) embodies the distinctive characteristics of a period of landscape design and possesses high artistic values. Finally, per Criterion D, preliminary archeological investigations performed by the National Park Service indicate that areas of the battlefield are likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

The National Register Nomination (Additional Documentation) for Stones River National Battlefield notes that the property is eligible for listing under Criterion A for national and state significance in the military history of the Civil War, and for national and state significance in commemoration due to the design and historical associations of the Hazen Brigade Monument and Stones River National Cemetery; for local significance under Criterion A in African American ethnic heritage; for its local significance under Criterion C in landscape architecture; and for local significance under Criterion D.<sup>82</sup>

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82. Gavin and Styles.

## Military History

The Stones River National Battlefield is nationally significant under Criterion A because it contains a large portion of the area where the most intense fighting during the Battle of Stones River occurred. Over the course of three days, from December 31, 1862, to January 2, 1863, Union and Confederate armies fought at Stones River to determine control of the rich agricultural region of middle Tennessee and its turnpikes, rivers, and railroads. In 1862, the Confederate Army of Tennessee was headquartered in Murfreesboro, from which the Confederates contested Union control over agricultural resources and sent cavalry raids against Union supply lines. Twenty-five miles northwest of Murfreesboro, Nashville served as supply base to the Federal 14th Army Corps (the Army of the Cumberland). In terms of supplying Union forces, capture and control of Murfreesboro and the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad was essential to the Union goal of moving from Nashville toward Chattanooga.

The outcome of the Battle of Stones River was important in the direction of the war. It was a major battle in the Union's effort to divide the southeastern Confederacy.<sup>83</sup> In addition, the battle provided an important victory for the North at a time when defeat might have brought England and France into the war on the side of the Confederacy.<sup>84</sup> Finally, the loss at Stones River prevented the Confederacy from taking the strategic initiative in the Western Theater, affecting the outcome of the entire war.<sup>85</sup>

The Battle of Stones River also served an important role in the future of both armies. As noted in the National Register Nomination—Additional Documentation:

The ability of Rosecrans's army to withstand Bragg's furious assault without breaking established the Army of the Cumberland's reputation as an immovable defensive force. This defensive resiliency would resurface again in battle at Chickamauga, Atlanta, and

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83. James L. McDonough, *Stones River: Bloody Winter in Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1980).

84. Cozzens.

85. Earl Hess, *Banners to the Breeze: the Kentucky Campaign, Corinth, and Stones River* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).

Franklin, but it was forged at Stones River. Likewise, the Battle of Stones River typified the Army of Tennessee's fate as a hard-luck loser and produced dissent within its command structure that reduced its effectiveness for the balance of the war.<sup>86</sup>

Fortress Rosecrans, including the Curtain Wall, Lunettes, and Redoubt Brannan, is significant for several reasons. First, the fort provided an important supply depot for the Army of the Cumberland and a means of protecting the critical resource of the railroad. Fortress Rosecrans was the largest enclosed earthwork of the war, encompassing the river crossings of both the Nashville Pike and Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad and protecting the large bridge and railroad trestle spans between Nashville and Murfreesboro. The surviving remnants of Fortress Rosecrans and Redoubt Brannan are nationally significant under National Register Criterion A for their association with the post-battle Union occupation of Murfreesboro; under Criterion C because they represent advanced nineteenth-century military fortifications, and convey significant information about the immense logistical network that allowed the Union to prevail in the Civil War; and under Criterion D because they may possess information that could increase our understanding of nineteenth-century earthen fortifications.

## Landscape Architecture

Stones River National Battlefield is considered significant in terms of landscape architecture with specific reference to the Stones River National Cemetery. The National Register Nomination (Additional Documentation) ascribes local significance to the cemetery for its formal geometric plan (circa 1892) and funerary sculpture. The cemetery design is a departure from the popular Victorian style of winding paths and naturalistic plantings, instead following a formal design with rows of simple grave markers. The Stones River National Cemetery exemplifies the style selected for national cemeteries to create a character of "simple grandeur" rather than Romanticism.

## Commemoration

The battlefield is significant in terms of commemoration, as represented first by construction of the Hazen Brigade Monument in 1863. The Hazen Brigade Monument, constructed as the war was still in progress, is the oldest Civil War monument in the United States still extant at its original location. Other commemorative structures including the U.S. Regulars Monument (1882) and the Artillery Monument (1906) were later added to the landscape of the battlefield.

Commemoration also occurred through establishment of the Stones River National Cemetery, created in 1864 as part of the system of national cemeteries authorized by Congress on or near Civil War battlefields. The battlefield was the site of memorial celebrations by the GAR and other organizations over the next several decades, and the subject of tourism encouraged by the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railway.

Establishment of a park in commemoration of the battle began with chartering of the Stones River Battlefield and Park Association in 1896, and continuing through acquisition of property and placement of markers. Congress did not join in the effort to establish the park until the 1926 Act for the Study and Investigation of Battlefields recommended commemoration of the Battle of Stones River. This recognition resulted in the establishment of the Stones River National Military Park on March 3, 1927.

## Ethnic Heritage

Stones River National Battlefield is considered significant in terms of African American ethnic heritage in that African Americans played an important role in the construction of Fortress Rosecrans during the war and in building the National Cemetery after the war. The National Cemetery houses the remains of members of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) and is the largest burial ground for USCT veterans in the country. African American soldiers carried out the dangerous task of transferring the remains of the Union dead from other battle sites and re-intering them at Stones River. William Holland, a USCT veteran, is buried in the Harlan/Holland family cemetery (circa 1909) adjacent the walls of

<sup>86</sup>. Gavin and Styles, 8-5.

the Hazen Brigade Monument cemetery. In addition, an African American community known as Cemetery existed near the battlefield from 1863 until the 1930s.

## Period of Significance

The National Register Nomination (Additional Documentation) defines the period of significance of Stones River National Battlefield as 1862–1931.<sup>87</sup> Primary dates and periods of importance associated with the site include the dates of the battle itself (December 31, 1862–January 2, 1863); the period in which Fortress Rosecrans was in use (January 1863 through May 1865); the overall period of the Civil War (1861–1865); and the decades of the early park development period (1927–1931).

The significance of the primary character areas of the battlefield is related to the period of the battle and the period of early park development. The Nashville Pike unit, McFadden Farm, General Rosecrans’s Headquarters Site, and General Bragg’s Headquarters Site are all significant in terms of the dates of the battle. The Hazen Brigade Monument, although constructed after the battle, is a memorial of the battle and is associated with the broader Civil War period. Fortress Rosecrans, including the Curtain Wall and Lunettes as well as Redoubt Brannan unit, is associated with the broader Civil War period and particularly with the dates of the construction and active use of the fortress.

The integrity of each character area of the battlefield landscape is assessed in the Existing Conditions and Analysis chapter, following the condition assessment and comparative analysis of the landscape in each area.

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87. Ibid.