

Fort Pillow

NARRATIVE

On April 12, the cavalry force of Maj. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's force surrounded Fort Pillow on the Mississippi River. After the fort's commander, Union Maj. Lionel Booth, was killed by a Confederate sniper's bullet, the second in command, Major William Bradford took control. Forrest demanded surrender from the Union troops. Bradford, hoping for reinforcements from Union boats arriving by the Mississippi River, called for a one-hour cease fire. Forrest, however, spotted Union boats approaching and sent men to block the reinforcements. After a brief warning, the Confederates attacked the fort and met little resistance. While Major Bradford fled toward the Mississippi, most of the Union garrison surrendered, expecting to be taken as prisoners of war. But Confederate and Union witness accounts attest that some 300 soldiers, many of them black, were gunned down by the Confederate forces. A federal investigation later concluded that African American troops were massacred by Forrest's men after surrendering.

COUNTY: Lauderdale

DATE:
4/12/1864

GEO COORDINATES:
35.636111° N,
89.842222° W

**PRESERVATION
OPPORTUNITY INDEX:**

CONFEDERATE UNITS:

UNION UNITS:

HISTORICAL THEMES

This engagement is one of 38 sites evaluated by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission and not subject to a TCWPA Battlefield Assessment

EXPLANATION OF ATTACHMENTS/VIDEO:

LINKS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://npshistory.com/publications/battlefield/cwsac/updates/tn.pdf>

LEGEND OF TERMS:

Historical themes: Topics and subject matter that characterize the battlefield including Control of Tennessee's Resources, Crucible for Leadership, Guerilla Warfare, Transformation in Warfare, Enslaved People, and Influence on Campaign. Sites are identified that exhibit themes at moderate to high levels, and some sites may contain one or more Historical Themes.

Preservation Opportunity Index (POI): A rating assigned for each battlefield to indicate relative opportunity and potential for successful site preservation. The Index is generated by a model that evaluates ratings assigned for site significance, condition, risk of loss, protection potential, and opportunities for interpretation. Based upon the POI values for each region in Tennessee (West, Middle, East), sites are indicated as having High, Medium, or Low opportunity.

Geo Coordinates: General/central location of the battlefield area per latitude and longitude coordinates utilized in Google Earth

DO YOU HAVE INFORMATION ON A BATTLE SITE?

Please email us at info@tcwpa.org and we will reach out to you soon. If you have copies of documents or photos to share, you can include those. If you want to discuss by phone, we will schedule that too.

HELP US COLLECT INFORMATION TO PRESERVE THESE BATTLEFIELDS

TCWPA's Statewide Preservation Plan team captains are recruiting volunteers to help gather information about many of the lesser-known sites with hopes of verifying the condition of each site and identifying opportunities for preservation and interpretation.

If you are interested in helping, please contact TCWPA at info@tcwpa.org.

TCWPA will not publish nor release any confidential information, or the name of the contributor, unless you request to be recognized.

Thank you!

The logo for the Tennessee Civil War Preservation Association (TCWPA) is displayed in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. It is positioned in the lower-left corner of a dark blue banner that features a background image of a Civil War-era cannon.

tcwpa

Have Information on a Civil
War Battlesite?

Contact our team at info@tcwpa.org