

# Knoxville's *Civil War Trails & Tours*

## Crescent Bend

During the Civil War, Crescent Bend was used by both Union and Confederate Armies as a command center and hospital. Thousands of soldiers encamped and fought skirmishes on its farmland. It is also noteworthy for this era for possibly being a safe house on the Underground Railroad. A hidden trapdoor beneath the main staircase led to a room where runaway slaves were sheltered.



Drury Armstrong's Crescent Bend started with 600 acres of land on the north side of the Holston River (now called the Tennessee River). Within a few years he acquired another 300 acres on the south side. He owned several other tracts of land in and around Knoxville, upon one of which a famous Civil War battle, the Battle of Armstrong's Hill, would be fought. In addition to these land holdings, he also owned 50,000 acres of wooded and pastoral mountain land in Sevier and Blount Counties, Tennessee. He gave the name "Glen Alpine" to his land between the West Prong of the Little Pigeon River and the East Prong of the Little Tennessee River. This land today makes up about 10% of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

During the Civil War, the house was used by both Union and Confederate Armies as a command center and hospital. Thousands of soldiers encamped and fought skirmishes on Crescent Bend farmland. Originally the Union Army controlled Crescent Bend and built an earthen fortification around the house; began on the western side of the house, wrapped around the back of the house, and connected with Kingston Pike on the east. This defensive earthen trench work gave the Union Army a commanding view of the river and the pike leading into town.

On November 18, 1863, Union Brigadier General William P. Sanders was mortally wounded on Crescent Bend farmland where the present Second Presbyterian Church now stands and died the next day at the Lamar House in downtown Knoxville. The Confederate Army advanced and captured Crescent Bend.

2728 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919 • 865-637-3163



The Bijou Theatre, built in 1909, was a vaudeville house, hosting big names like the Marx Brothers and Will Rogers, and later a movie theatre, restored in the 1970s. It has since welcomed acts like Tony Bennett, Dizzy Gillespie and the Ramones. Two Civil War generals died here, and it is said that their ghosts have haunted it ever since.

The Bijou is home to the "Tennessee shines" radio show the last Wednesday night of every month, featuring Americana music.

Tours of the Bijou are by advance reservation.

803 S. Gay Street, Knoxville, TN 37902 • 865-522-0832

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## Old Gray & National Cemeteries

Established in 1850, Old Gray is a garden cemetery that serves as a resting place of politicians, businessmen, artists and veterans. It is known for its beautiful marble statues, elaborate headstones and grand monuments. Just beyond it is National, established in 1863 to bury fallen Union troops. Today, it is one of the largest Union monuments in the South.

543 N. Broadway St., Knoxville, TN • 865-522-1424

## East Tennessee History Center

The center's signature exhibit, "Voices of the Land," explores 250 years of East Tennessee's culture from Native Americans and the Civil War to civil rights and country music.

601 S. Gay St., Knoxville, TN • 865-215-8824



## The Mabry-Hazen House Museum & Bethel Cemetery

Located on the highest hill in downtown Knoxville, the Mabry-Hazen House and grounds hosted soldiers from both sides during the war. Tours of the home feature more than 2,000 family artifacts and a nice Civil War display.

The nearby Bethel Cemetery is the burial site of more than 1,000 Confederate and 40 Union soldiers. The burials include several hundred soldiers killed in the Battle of Fort Sanders. Cemetery is open Daylight hours. A small museum is open 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Saturdays.

The house is open Wednesday-Friday 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Bethel Cemetery is open Saturdays 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Admission is \$5 adult.

1711 Dandridge Ave., Knoxville, TN 37914 • 865-522-8661

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## Confederate Memorial Hall (Bleak House)

This mansion was the headquarters for Confederate Generals James Longstreet and LaFayette McLaws during the siege of Knoxville in November 1863. The tower was a good vantage point to view the Battle of Fort Sanders about a mile away. Sharpshooters stationed in the house tower traded shots with their Union counterparts during the fighting. Three Confederates died when a Union artillery shell hit the tower. Bloodstains and scars from the incident are still visible in the tower today.



Guided tours of the house include museum areas and restored furnished rooms including the room Longstreet used. The site is owned and operated by the United Daughters of the Confederacy.

The museum is open March-December on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 1:00-4:00 p.m. Last tour begins at 3:15 p.m. Also open by appointment. \$5 adult.

3148 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, TN 37919 • 865-522-2371

## McClung Museum

McClung Museum is located on the University of Tennessee campus. The museum's rich "Civil War in Knoxville" exhibit contains artifacts, photographs and much more on the city during the war. Much on the Battle of Fort Sanders, fought just a few blocks away in November 1863, is here.

The museum is open Monday-Saturday, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Sunday 1-5pm. Free.

1327 Circle Park Drive, Knoxville TN • 865-974-2144



## Fort Dickerson

One of the Union forts built to protect the southern approaches to Knoxville, Fort Dickerson is now part of a city park. Confederates under Gen. Joseph Wheeler attacked the place November 15-16, 1864 but were turned back. Great views of Knoxville and the Tennessee River from here.  
Fort Dickerson Road SW, Knoxville, TN 37920

## Farragut Folklife Museum/Battle of Campbell's Station

Union forces under Gen. Ambrose Burnside barely reached the Campbell's Station intersection first in a race with Gen. James Longstreet for Knoxville. Burnside held off Confederate attacks and withdrew into the city.

Open Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Free.

Farragut Town Hall, 11408 Municipal Center Drive, Farragut TN 37934 • 865-966-7057