



# Rebel Underground

Sons of Confederate Veterans  
Major John C. Hutto Camp # 443  
Jasper, Alabama

Published Monthly

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The Major John C. Hutto Camp's June Camp Meeting  
will be in Jasper, Alabama on  
Sunday 21 June 2026 at 2:00 pm

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June's Speaker is the Alabama Division's Lieutenant Commander John Land, speaking on  
The Reconstruction Amendments to the US Constitution.

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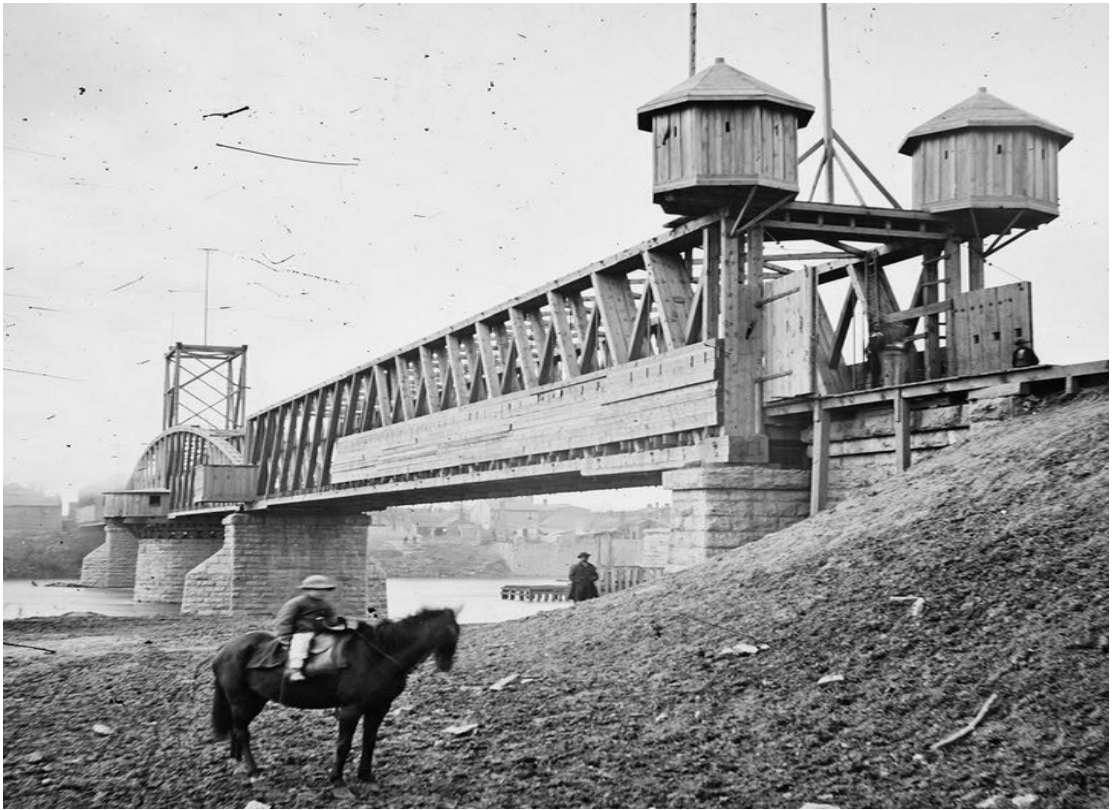


York Light Artillery - Confederate  
Memorial Service Montgomery  
25 April 2026



The Major John C. Hutto Camp's flag  
display at the Montgomery Capitol

**Opening Shots at Nashville**  
**Hal Litchford | June 21, 2026**



Fortified railroad bridge across Cumberland River, near Nashville | Library of Congress

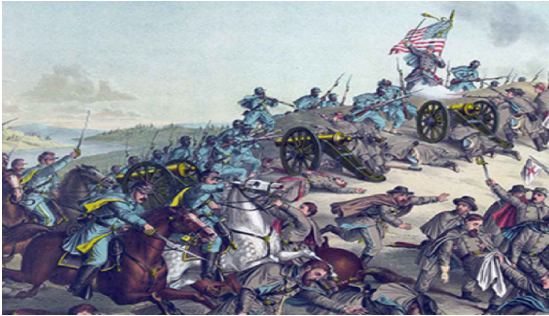
**At this little-known first clash of the Battle of Nashville,  
Black Union troops faced their first deadly combat test**

Today, houses in a quiet post–World War II subdivision line a low bluff overlooking Mill Creek and a railroad trestle just southeast of downtown Nashville. Nothing indicates that these homes sit on hallowed ground where the first engagement of the Battle of Nashville occurred.

After the Franklin, Tennessee, debacle of late November 1864, Confederate General John Bell Hood advanced the weakened Army of Tennessee to the outskirts of Nashville. Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest’s cavalry corps led the vanguard. Forrest reached the Union’s outer defensive lines on December 1. He quickly dispatched Brigadier Abraham Buford’s division to destroy the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroad

running south and east from the city.

Shortly after leaving Nashville, the railroad crossed Mill Creek by way of three trestles along a one-mile stretch. Each was guarded by a fortified military blockhouse. Buford's Confederates approached and decided to attack Blockhouse No. 2, occupied by a detachment of the 115th Ohio Infantry under the command of Union Lieutenant George D. Harter.



USCI troops attacking the Confederate position in Nashville | public domain

350 officers and men of the 44th United States Colored Infantry (USCI) regiment and Companies A and D of the 14th USCI, both under the command of Colonel Lewis Johnson.

Around 11 a.m. on December 2, Buford's troopers began surrounding the blockhouse. Before the Confederates could complete the investment—and before Buford's men could demand its surrender—a Union troop train approached from Murfreesboro. Aboard were

The 44th USCI was a green regiment. Johnson had surrendered the original 44th USCI at Dalton the previous October. After being exchanged, he filled the ranks with new recruits and reorganized the regiment in Chattanooga.

As the train cautiously approached the blockhouse, a masked Confederate artillery battery opened fire and disabled it on the trestle. A wild scramble ensued as the USCI troops ran for the safety of the blockhouse, with several soldiers falling into the creek. But the stockade was too small to accommodate the sudden influx of men, leaving many of the USCI troops exposed to relentless Confederate fire from all sides. Their only recourse was to entrench on the lower slopes of the bluff.

The two sides then hammered away at each other throughout the day while Confederate artillery pummeled the blockhouse. By dark, all Union commands had exhausted their ammunition, and the stockade lay in ruins. Overnight, Colonel Johnson embarked on a desperate and risky evacuation, expecting to fight his way back to the safer Nashville defenses. The Confederates were inexplicably lax, however, and most of the ambulatory Federal soldiers escaped overnight without incident.

The Union toll was 12 killed, 96 wounded, and 57 missing—35 percent of the troops

engaged. Another 80 or so able-bodied men were left at the blockhouse. Confederate losses were light.

This little-known action was the opening engagement of the Battle of Nashville. The sharp and bloody fight also marked the baptism of fire for the 44th USCI and the first participation of USCI troops in the contest for Nashville.



Nashville, Tennessee, railroad yard and depot in 1864 | public domain



General John Bell Hood | public domain

The little-known opening clash near Nashville—where Black Union troops faced one of their first deadly combat tests—is just one of the powerful stories explored on the upcoming five-day tour tracing the collapse of Hood’s 1864 Tennessee campaign.

Join historian Hal Litchford on “Hood’s 1864 Tennessee Campaign, Part II” tour to explore this overlooked battlefield and other pivotal sites from the final campaign for Nashville.

WHAT: "Hood's 1864 Tennessee Campaign, Part II: Nashville, Lyon's Raid, & Retreat From Nashville," Part II." Note: This tour is fully accessible and engaging as a standalone experience; no prior participation in Part I is necessary. WHERE: from Franklin, TN  
WHEN: August 26–30, 2026

## HUTTO CAMP OFFICERS

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Commander .....	James R. Blackston
1 <sup>st</sup> Lt. Cmd .....	Trent Harris
2nd Lt. Cmd .....	Jeremy Jackson
Adjutant .....	John McGraw
Chaplain .....	Thomas Foster
Judge Advocate .....	Cherokee Brasher
Communications .....	Tony Pennington
Facebook .....	Brandon Prescott - Jeremy Jackson
Quartermaster .....	Billy Kinchelow
Flag Committee Chairman .....	Trent Harris
Newsletter Editor .....	James Blackston

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Website: [www.huttocamp.com](http://www.huttocamp.com)

Facebook - [Hutto Camp](#)

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The Rebel Underground is dedicated to bringing our readers the very best of important news concerning Confederate History and Southern Heritage. We are not ashamed of our Confederate History and Southern Heritage. We dare to defend our rights.