



THE EAST TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MUSEUM of EAST TENNESSEE HISTORY

Making history personal

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Two New Feature Exhibitions open at the Museum of East Tennessee History**

*“Common People in Uncommon Times: The Civil War Experience in Tennessee”*

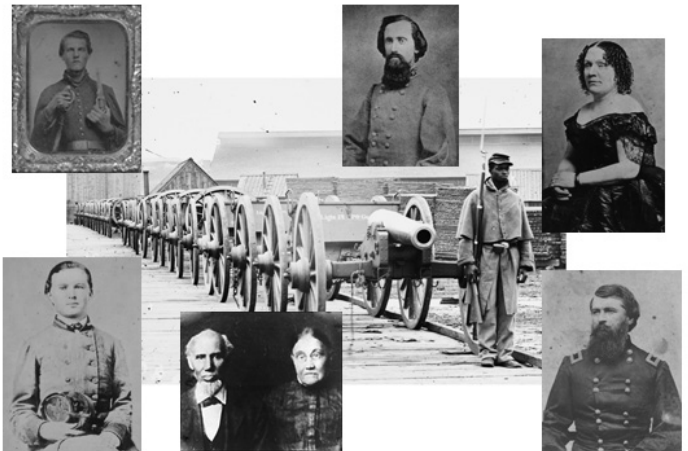
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*“In Death Not Divided: Civil War Tombstones and the Stories They Tell”*

**WHAT:** *“Common People in Uncommon Times”* accompanied by ETHS tie-in exhibit *“In Death Not Divided: Civil War Tombstones and the Stories They Tell”*

**DATE:** Open Nov. 12- Jan. 13, 2013

**LOCATION:** East Tennessee History Center  
601 S. Gay Street  
Knoxville, TN 37902



The East Tennessee Historical Society and the Tennessee State Museum are pleased to announce that the Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission’s official traveling exhibition, *Common People in Uncommon Times*, will be on view at the Museum of East Tennessee History through January 13, 2013. The exhibition commemorates the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil Will and is accompanied by a tie-in exhibit, *In Death Not Divided: Civil War Tombstones and the Stories They Tell*, organized by the East Tennessee Historical Society.

### ***In Death Not Divided: Civil War Tombstones and the Stories They Tell***

From bridge burners to hangings, heroes to villains, grand monuments to simple stones, *In Death Not Divided: Civil War Tombstones and the Stories They Tell* is an intensely personal look at East Tennessee's Civil War experience. "620,000 national casualties is a number," says ETHS Director Cherel Henderson. "But when you realize that this number represents death and suffering multiplied by 620,000, then the real impact on individuals, families, communities, the nation becomes almost incomprehensible." The exhibit also features brief histories of the

National Cemeteries in the region and the attempt to locate and gather the remains of veterans scattered in fields and along roadsides for proper reburial.

**ETHS Director and exhibit curator Cherel Henderson will provide a Brown Bag Lecture on Wednesday, November 28 about the exhibition which is based on the ETHS Civil War legacy project, “Burial Places of East Tennessee Civil War Soldiers.”**

*Common People in Uncommon Times*

This pictorial narrative represents a diverse array of personalities--Confederate soldiers, Union sympathizers, African-Americans, gallant women-- whose sagas illustrate a land divided. The saga of personal struggle and endurance during the Civil War is presented on 10 graphic panels taken from the State Museum’s collection of photographs and artifacts from the era, as well as from other collections across the state. Each panel portrays a different theme: Confederate leaders, Union leaders, African-Americans, civilian home front, common soldiers, war on the water, reconstruction and commemoration.

“Our goal is to educate the public, promote the commemoration, and highlight the legacies of the Civil War by engaging individuals and communities in an accurate and inclusive portrayal of Tennessee's involvement in the Civil War,” said Lois Riggins-Ezzell, executive director of the Tennessee State Museum.

“Tennessee, being geographically centered between the North and the Deep South, was destined to be the focal point of the Civil War,” explained Myers Brown, the exhibition curator and the museum’s curator of extension services. “The state became a major battlefield, supply center, transportation hub, and invasion route for both Union and Confederate armies. The war disrupted and impacted the people of Tennessee in ways that are almost unimaginable.”

Visitors will learn about the lives of the common soldier. Almost 187,000 Tennesseans served in the Confederate armed forces, while more than 50,000 served in the Union army, including some 20,000 African-Americans. Confederate Tennesseans fought in every major battle east of the Mississippi River, from Gettysburg to New Orleans, forming the backbone of the largest army in the western theater, the Army of Tennessee. Whether Union or Confederate, the soldiers’ stories are individual and varied, including boys from the mountains and from the Delta. Aristocrats, farm boys, or former slaves were all impacted by the Civil War.

The Tennessee home front, especially the rural areas, suffered immensely during the war. Crops and farms were destroyed and livestock confiscated. Towns and cities faced the uneasy and unfamiliar aspect of occupation by Union or Confederate armies. The exhibition explores the home front through the stories of people like John Fielder, a store keeper in Henderson County; Kate Carney a defiant secessionist in Murfreesboro, and C.A. Haun, a noted potter from Greene County.

Photographs and archival materials help highlight several different African-Americans and their experience both on the home front and the battle front. Profiled individuals include Allen James Walker, who escaped slavery and joined the 7<sup>th</sup> U.S. Heavy Artillery; Samuel Lowry, a free black who returned to Nashville to serve as a chaplain, and Laura Ann Cansler, who worked to educate former slaves in Knoxville.

The exhibit will present Tennessee's unique story among former Confederate states during Reconstruction and illuminate the Volunteer State's significant role in the manner in which the Civil War was remembered by post-war generations.

*Common People in Uncommon Times: The Civil War in Tennessee* will continue to travel to museums and historic sites during the state's five-year commemoration of the war. For information about the exhibition, visit [www.tnmuseum.org /Exhibits/Traveling\\_Exhibitions/](http://www.tnmuseum.org/Exhibits/Traveling_Exhibitions/).

A Brown Bag lecture and gallery tour with curator Myers E. Brown II is planned for Wednesday, December 5, at noon at the East Tennessee History Center.

### **About the Museum of East Tennessee History**

The Museum of East Tennessee History is operated by the East Tennessee Historical Society and is open 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday; 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, Saturday; and 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Sunday. The East Tennessee History Center is located at 601 South Gay Street, Knoxville, TN 37901, across from the Tennessee Theatre. For more information call (865) 215-8830, email [eths@eastTNhistory.org](mailto:eths@eastTNhistory.org), or visit [www.easttnhistory.org](http://www.easttnhistory.org).

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