

Fortifications of Nashville

25 January 2023



The Operational Situation

After Forts Henry and Donaldson Fall, A.S. Johnston has to move the Defensive line far to the south since the defenses of Nashville are incomplete owing mostly to shortages of labor

Nashville is evacuated and N.B. Forrest removes as many supplies as he can and destroy what remains, including the unfinished fort on the Cumberland River

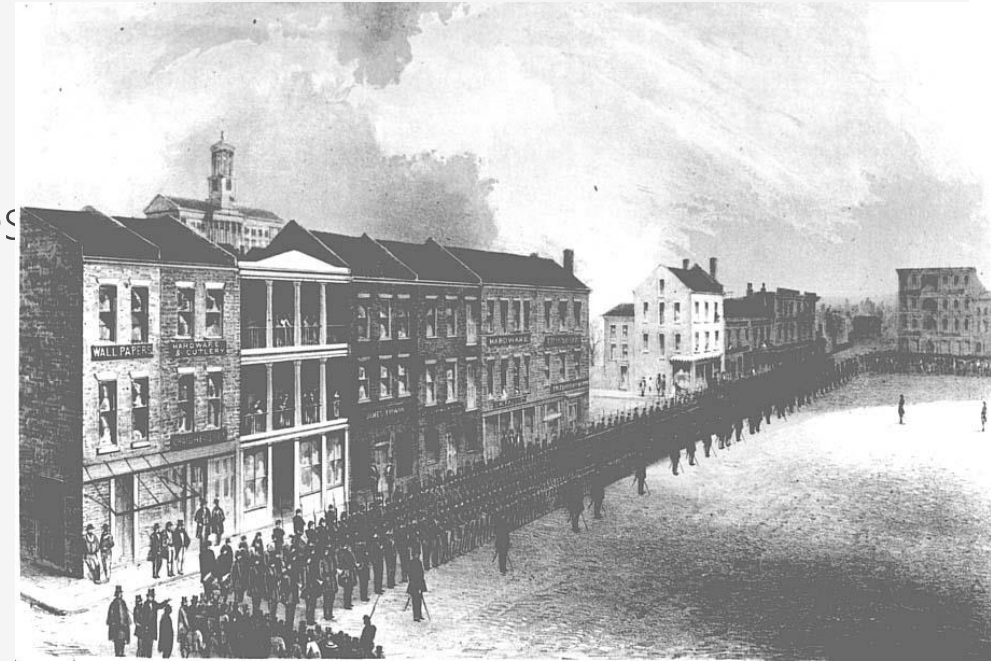
Guns are spiked and thrown over the bluffs and attempts are made to burn the fort, but at least two large guns remain as well as some gun carriages and other structures




What comes next?

While Federal gunboats do secure the Tennessee River, significant and destructive battles at Shiloh and Corinth overtax Grant's army and additional supply bases and lines of communication are needed

As federal forces occupy Nashville to become rapidly apparent that Nashville will have to serve as a forward supply base at the very least, but just as the Confederates did, Federal occupiers have to manage multiple priorities





The Army of the Ohio began rebuilding sections of the Central Alabama Railroad and the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad that had been destroyed by retreating Confederate troops

To protect these railroads from raids from guerrillas/partisans and Confederate cavalry, stockades and small fieldworks were built adjacent to the trestleworks

As this work continues and becomes necessarily more complex, and other concerns continue it becomes obvious the competent engineering expertise is needed

James St. Clair Morton

James St. Clair Morton an engineer in the Corps of Engineers and second in the West Point class of 1851 was assigned to the Army of the Ohio in June 1862 and became its Chief Engineer

the assistant engineer of construction of forts around Charleston, SC such as Fort Sumter, from 1851 to 1852. Afterwards, he was the assistant engineer of construction at Fort Delaware until 1855, when he returned to the United States Military Academy to teach as an assistant professor of mathematics and military engineering for two years

Rejecting the contemporary military strategy of the time, Morton became a strong advocate of Dennis Hart Mahan and was considered one of his best-known students. He would write essays to Secretary of War John B. Floyd regarding Mahan's principals even applying them to the defense of NYC

After leaving the United States Military Academy, Morton would be the chief engineer of the Sandy Hook Lighthouse district in New Jersey. Once his work there was completed, he was appointed by the Department of the Interior as chief engineer of the Washington Monument and the water works in the District of Columbia.^[5] During this time, Morton would also be promoted to first lieutenant.

In 1860, Morton was selected by the Navy Department to examine the Chiriquí Province in Central America for the possibility of a railroad across the Isthmus of Panama. He concluded from his findings that it was possible, but contracted malaria while in the area.

While recovering in Washington, Morton was sent in March 1861 to Dry Tortugas, Florida to act as the supervising engineer for Fort Jefferson. With the orders to put the fort into fighting condition, he attempted to help conceive a 420-gun fort and was promoted to captain on August 6, 1861. When malaria affected Morton again in early 1862, he returned to Washington to recover. Once he was well, he helped with the repairs at Fort Mifflin, Pennsylvania



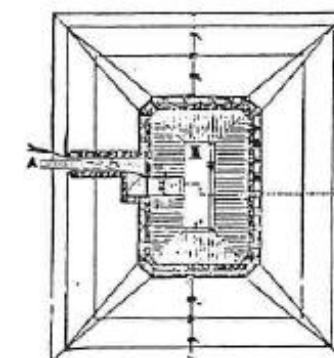
Morton Fortifies the Railroad

Morton began building stockades on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad in July and by the end of that month he has laid out and constructed fourteen stockades, 8, 16, and 24 yards square

Most of these were simple, practical structures consisting of a square blockhouse with loopholes overlooking a bridge which usually fortified to some degree.

Generally, these stockades were built on each side of a river and fortified with a redoubt

Designation of works.	Size inside of square or length of development in yards.	Number of garrison.	Station on Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.
Stockade A.	16 yards square.	One company.	1 mile below Anderson.
Stockade B.	do.	do.	Bass.
Stockade C.	do.	do.	1½ miles below Bass.
Stockade D.	do.	do.	2 miles below Bass.
Stockade E.	do.	do.	2¼ miles below Bass.
Stockade 1.	do.	do.	Anderson.
Stockade 2.	do.	do.	4½ miles above Anderson.
Stockade 3.	8 yards square.	Half company.	5 miles above Anderson.
Stockade 4.	16 yards square.	One company.	8½ miles above Anderson.
Stockade 5.	24 yards square.	Two to three companies.	Tantalou.
Stockade 6.	16 yards square.	One company.	Cowan.
Stockade 7.	do.	do.	Do.
Redoubt 1.	95 yards developed.	Two to three companies.	Elk River.
Redoubt 2.	87 yards developed.	do.	Do.
Stockade 8.*	16 yards developed.	One company.	Duck River, South Fork.
Stockade 9.*	do.	do.	Duck River, North Fork.



PLAN OF RECTANGULAR BLOCK-HOUSE.



ELEVATION OF RECTANGULAR BLOCK-HOUSE.



SECTION ON A. B.

Focus Shifts

By late July, Military Governor of Tennessee Andrew Johnson wants D.C. Buell to fortify Nashville with redoubts and other works to ward off raids into the city

Accordingly, Buell orders CPT Morton to Nashville to select sites and design additional simple fortifications to overlook the major thoroughfares

Buell directs that these works were to be erected in the quickest possible manner and made more elaborate at a later date

HEADQUARTERS,
Huntsville, August 6, 1862.

Captain MORTON, *on Chattanooga Road :*

Go at once to Nashville and select sites and give plans and instructions for redoubts to protect the city. For the present I only propose to throw up small works to hold from four to six companies and from two to four pieces of artillery. They should be in the edge of the city, to command the principal thoroughfares and other prominent points. They should not be within musket-range of houses that could be used to fire into them. They should have easy communication with the city. See Governor Johnson, and if he approves, devise some defenses also around the capitol; devise also some defenses for the bridge. These works must all be practical and as simple as possible in the beginning, so that they can be constructed with the greatest promptness and occupied immediately by a small force. They can then be elaborated and made more formidable. Start the works at once, the most important first. The commanding officer will call in slave labor on it. Look to your bridge defenses at the same time. I shall want you here in a very few days.

D. C. BUELL.

Work Begins

Morton decides on three primary fortifications at first:

- 1) A four Gun Position on Saint Cloud Hill, to be the most important work which would begin on August 13th
- 2) A four-gun work on and around Capitol Hill
- 3) Fortified positions around the bridge around capitol hill

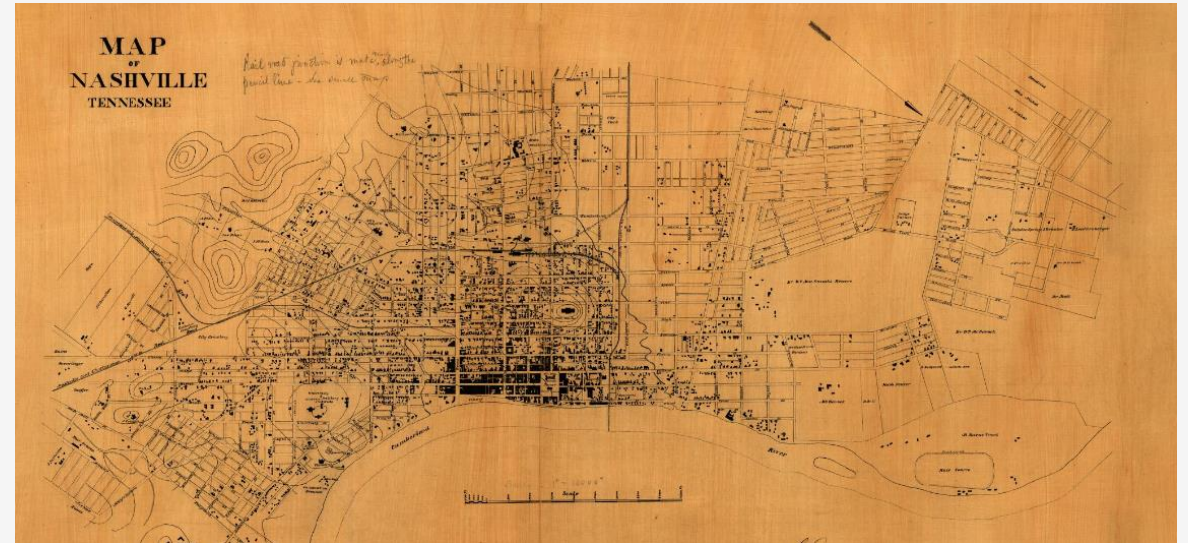
Just as for the Confederates however, labor becomes a significant problem- he had requested 1000 slaves but received only 150

As the operational situation increased the urgency, the Federal Army impressed 2000 blacks in the Nashville area and began the work

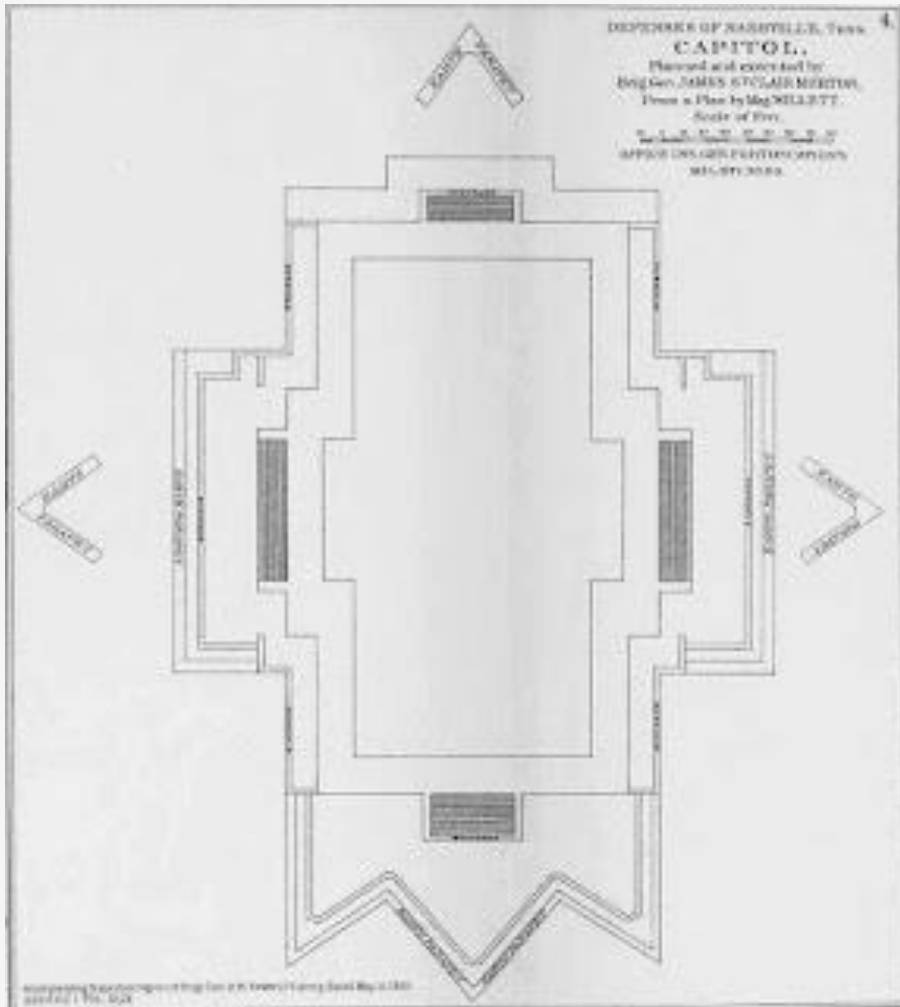
By October, Morton releases the names he had chosen for the forts he was constructing:

- 1) The work on Saint Cloud Hill would be named in honor of the commander of U.S. Forces in Nashville, BG James Scott Negley
- 2) The work around Capitol Hill was to be named Fort Andy Johnson in honor of the Military Governor of the state

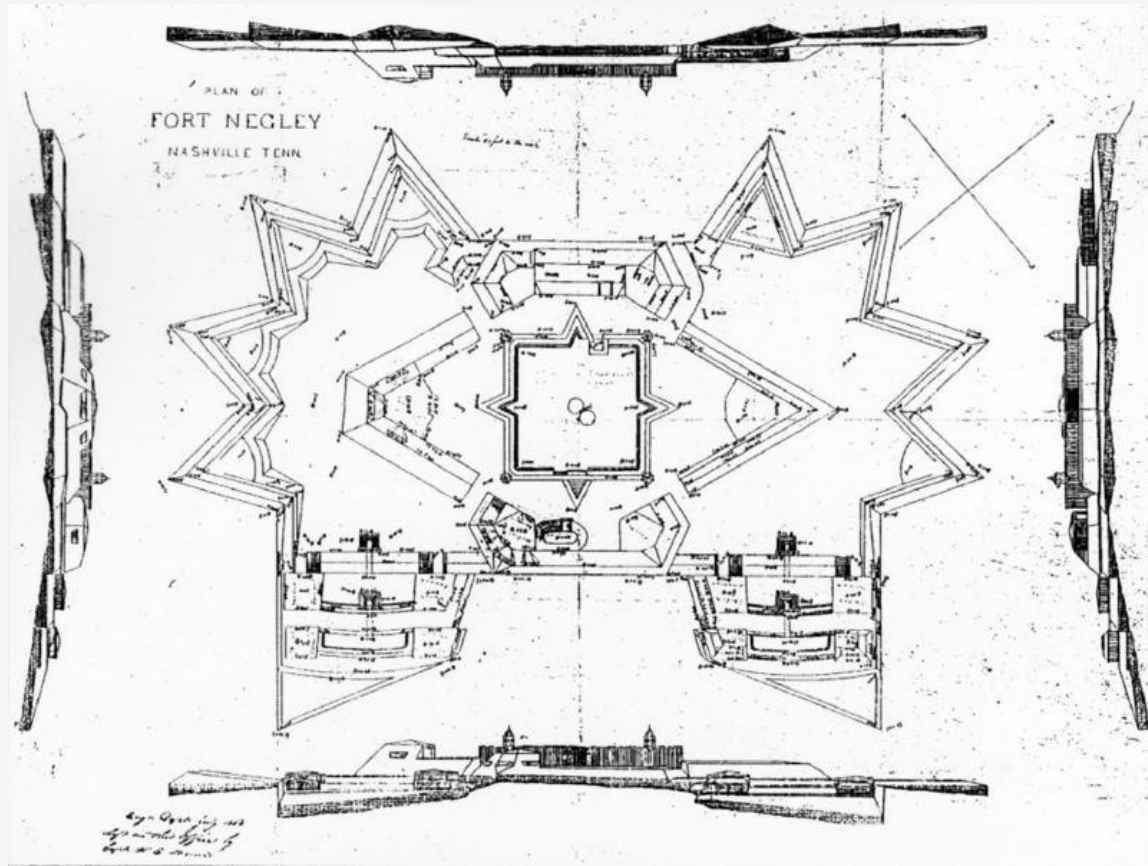
Additional structures were planned for Curry's Hill, west of Fort Negley, and Farris' Hill southwest of Fort Negley, that could be commanded from Fort Negley if the city fell



Fort "Andy Johnson"



Fort Negley Begins to Take Shape



Work Continues

