

**STATEMENT OF YULANDA BURGESS
IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE BILL 1130**

I, Yulanda Burgess, am a resident of Detroit, Michigan, residing at 10857 Lakepointe, Detroit, Michigan 48224-1701, and support H.R. 1130 which was reintroduced Representative Bobby Rush of Illinois on February 8, 2019. It is my understanding that this bill will cause a special resource study of the Fort Pillow Historic Park located in Henning, Tennessee, to determine its suitability and feasibility to become a unit of the National Historic Park System. I support the "Fort Pillow National Battlefield Park Study Act" for the reasons set forward:

1. Given the National Park Service's commitment to be more inclusive of African Americans involvement in the American Civil in its narratives, historical memories, and preservation of historic sites over the past decade, I believe that the public's awareness of United States Colored Troops garrisoned at Fort Pillow would be enhanced if it became a unit of the National Park Service.

2. The United States Colored Troops involved at Fort Pillow has national historical significance as it resulted in the 38th Congress conducting an investigation and hearing of the slaughter and re-enslavement of African American soldiers.

3. I believe that the State of Tennessee is currently unable to preserve, promote and foster public awareness of the April 12, 1864 massive killing of Union soldiers and civilians.

4. I am the great granddaughter of Armstead Burgess who was a private in the 6th United States Colored Heavy Artillery, Co. B, garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

5. My great grandfather Armstead Burgess was wounded and reenslaved after April 12, 1864, and reported back to duty on May 19, 1865. See Attachment A.

6. I believe that Armstead Burgess was one of the few who survived the massacre at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

7. Since 2013, I have collaborated with the descendants of Peter Williams (who was a private with the 6th United Stated Colored Heavy Artillery, Co. A, and also survived the massacre) to preserve the memory and bring public awareness of the massacre that occurred on April 12, 1864.

8. As a spokesperson for the descendants who are currently engaged in the historical legacy of Fort Pillow, I state that without our efforts there would be no memorial at the fortification for the Union soldiers and civilians who we subjected to a tragedy on April 12, 1864.

9. These efforts include annually organizing, funding and conducting commemorations and memorials at the fortification. See Attachment B.

10. The annual memorial is categorized as a non-public event in which the Fort Pillow Park rangers offer assistance and is similar to other private recreational events that are allowed in the park.

11. The Fort Pillow Park staff does not limit the amount of people who attend and does not dictate the invited guests.

12. Fort Pillow Historic Park does not include the memorial on its calendar.

13. As such, we have faced challenges honoring the Union soldiers and civilians who were garrisoned at Fort Pillow in 1864.

14. These challenges include the financial obligations in conducting the memorials and commemoration as the State of Tennessee does not contribute to this annual effort.

15. The total non-profit cost incurred solely by the descendants for the 2019 memorial was \$563.15, with an expectation of approximately \$531.50 for 2020. See Attachment C.

16. Additionally, the memorial is subjected to racist comments on social media as exemplified on the Fort Pillow State Historic Park Facebook April 14, 2018 posting which began as a summary with photographs of that year's memorial. See: <https://www.facebook.com/FortPillowStateHistoricPark/>)

17. My announcement of the 2019 was subjected to racist comments on the "Civil War Talk" discussion group which was later removed by the moderators. See Attachment D.

18. I, along with other descendants of Armstead Burgess and Peter Williams, have prepared ourselves defensively for those who might attend the annual memorial in a threatening and malicious manner.

19. This includes peacefully and verbally deescalating any harm that might occur to our invited guests given that we are only accompanied by two Park Rangers when the memorial is held.

20. Additionally, our lack of resources impeded our ability to timely notify and invite the general public, historical organizations, educational institutions and educators, local, state and national political leaders to the annual memorial. See Attachment E.

21. These challenges also include easy access to the fortification.

22. Access to the fortification is not handicapped accessible.

23. It is only due to the cooperation of the Fort Pillow staff led by Robby Tidwell that participants wishing to observe the anniversary of the massacre and honor the Union soldiers and civilians are transported from the Visitor's Center to the fortification.

24. These accommodations include providing a flatbed trailer which is pulled by a tractor or the Park Rangers driving those with mobility issues in SUV to the fortification.

25. Those wishing to walk to the fortification need to hike two miles round trip as the State of Tennessee has failed to repair a suspension bridge which shortens the walk to one mile round trip.

26. The failure of the State of Tennessee to maintain access to the fortification exemplifies its inability to maintain the park's infrastructure.

27. The State of Tennessee's failure to commemorate the massacre with a memorial each year exemplifies its lack of commitment to educate and preserve the history of Fort Pillow.

28. This lack of commitment is rooted in the Tennessee Historical Commission's failure to include Fort Pillow in its 150th Anniversary observations of the American Civil War.

29. It was only through protests that began in May 2013 and continued through November 2013 that Fort Pillow was included in Tennessee's sesquicentennial observations which was finally initiated by Jeff Wells, Fred Prouty, Norm Hill and Dr. George Smith. See Attachment F.

30. The State of Tennessee's miseducation is exemplified by Tennessee Senate Resolution No. 178 dated April 2, 2018 signed by Senator Reginal Tate and Speaker of the Senate Randy McNally as it promotes the misinformation that the Confederate cavalry "easily stormed and captured Fort Pillow" whereas factual historical evidence concludes that on April 12, 1864, the Union soldiers held off the Confederates from early morning to mid-afternoon before the slaughter of men, women and children commenced and continued into the next day. See Attachment G.

31. I, along with the descendants of Peter Williams, have educated the public about Fort Pillow through collaboration with Rhodes College, the University of Memphis, appearing on news shows, have been featured in newspaper articles, participated in lectures and presentations, and oral history projects.

32. I believe that the National Park Service is a more suitable entity to handle the annual memorial, publicity, and public awareness which has been handled by the descendants.

33. I believe the National Park Service has access to and could use primary resources to preserve the legacy of Union soldiers who fought and were later massacred at Fort Pillow and to address the racism that often occurs over this historically significant event.

34. I believe the National Park Service will help initiate a platform for education and resources regarding the massacre that occurred on April 12, 1864 and the events that led to it.

35. I believe that Fort Pillow inclusion in the National Park system will solidify its connection with the Corinth Battlefield Unit and the Corinth Contraband Camp as soldiers of Company A and B of 6th USCHA were trained in Corinth and inhabited the contraband camp prior to being mustered into service.

36. The soldiers' connection with Corinth, Fort Pickering in Memphis and its connection with the contraband camp is not sufficiently exhibited in the Fort Pillow Visitor's Center.

37. The reasons set forth above are just a few examples of my experiences in preserving the history of Union soldiers and civilians who were garrisoned and massacred at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

38. As a spokesperson for the Descendants of the Fort Pillow Massacre, I state our wish for Fort Pillow State Park to be included in the National Park Service.

39. We support any effort which will explore the feasibility of transferring this historic site under the National Park Service.

Yulanda Burgess
May 20, 2019

Attachment A

43
FINAL STATEMENT

1
1st Lt. Samuel B. [unclear]
Co. 27. 1st Regt. U.S.C. Art. 14th
7th [unclear]
VOLUNTEERS.

NOTE 1.—These certificates (or duplicates) are to be given to each Volunteer Soldier or drafted man who may be discharged previously to the discharge of his company. That he may at once receive from the Company Commander, pay, *Ac.*, due him, and the captain or other commanding officer, the company will certify to the act of the delivery of the duplicate certificate; on these certificates the Soldier is "entitled to" the discharge, and should also present his discharge to the Paymaster to take the amount ordered on it. The discharge is to be given back to the Soldier by the Paymaster; the latter only retaining as his voucher the duplicate certificate.

NOTE 2.—If the Soldier is entitled to pay for the use of his horse, the Company Commander will certify to that fact on the back of both these final statements, and also to the fact he has pay due for having been so situated on his own horse.

NOTE 3.—When a Soldier is furnished with final statements, his descriptive list if he has one, should be taken up by the officer who gives the Soldier these statements, and endorsed with a statement to that effect by the officer. This endorsement should exhibit a full statement of the time for which the Soldier was allowed pay on his final statements, the clothing account, and all other charges against him or in his favor, so as to comprise a complete exhibit of his account. It will then be transmitted to the commanding officer of the Soldier, who will cause all the data necessary to a full understanding of the Soldier's account on the muster roll upon which the Soldier's discharge is reported. The descriptive list will then be forwarded. The object of this is, that the commanding officer of the Soldier's account may be settled upon the receipt of these outside rolls, and the Soldier receive any pay or allowances that may be due him at the time of his discharge, and which may not appear on his final statements from the fact that his descriptive list is incomplete. These amounts for back pay, *Ac.*, are settled by the SA Auditor of the Treasury Department.

NOTE 4.—Charges for loss or injury to ordnance, horse equipments, and other miscellaneous charges, should appear under the heading of "Other Scrapages."

NOTE 5.—Bounty paid by State authorities, and not by the United States, will not be entered on this statement.

NOTE 6.—Amounts due the Sather and Landress must be entered on the muster roll on which the Sather's death, desertion, *Ac.*, is reported, as well as on the final statement, otherwise the amount cannot be collected from the United States.

NOTE 7.—This blank will be used for deceased volunteers and drafted men, as well as for others.

NOTE 8.—Where a Soldier dies in Hospital or on detached service, his descriptive list, if he has one, should be sent with his final statements, in duplicate, to the Second Auditor, Washington, D. C.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE
July 18th 1864
Duplicate with Inventory sent 2d Auditor.

Ent on [unclear] [unclear]

I certify, on honor, that Armistead Augustus Tomate of
Captain John H. Brown Company (B) of the 7 Regiment of U.S.C. Art 14th
VOLUNTEERS, of the State of _____, born in Franklin, State
of Alabama, aged 17 years; 5 feet 9 inches high; Black complexion,
Black eyes, Black hair, and by occupation a Laborer, having joined the company on
its original organization at South Miss, and enrolled in it at the muster into
the service of the United States at South Miss, on the 7th day
of Sept, 1863, (or was mustered in service as a recruit, by _____
at _____, on the _____ day of _____,
1863, or was drafted and mustered into the service of the United States from the _____

Enrollment District of the State of _____, at _____,
on the _____ day of _____, 1863,) to serve in the Regiment, for
the term of Three Years; and having served **HONESTLY** and
FAITHFULLY with his Company in the field to the present date, is now
entitled to a **DISCHARGE** by reason of Missing in Action since
April 12, 1864. supposed to have been killed

The said Private Armistead Augustus Tomate was last paid by Paymaster
Wm. Tolman to include the 31st day of Dec, 1863, and has
pay due him from that time to the present date; he is entitled to pay and subsistence for
TRAVELING to place of enrollment, and whatever other allowances are authorized to volunteer
soldiers, drafted men, or militia, so discharged. He has received from the United States **CLOTHING**
amounting to _____ dollars, since the _____ day of _____,
1863, when his clothing account was last settled. He has received from the United States
_____ dollars advanced **BOUNTY**.

There is to be stopped from him, on account of the State of _____, or other
authorities, for **CLOTHING, &c.**, received on entering service, _____ dollars; and
for other stoppages, viz: Cannot give the amount of clothing
known the Company clothing both was lost at Fort Pillow
from April 12, 1864, cannot procure any more _____ dollars.
He has been furnished with **TRANSPORTATION** in kind from the place of his discharge to
_____ ; and he has been **SUBSISTED** for **TRAVELING** to his
place of enrollment, up to the _____, 1863.

He is indebted to _____, **SUTLER**, _____ dollars.
He is indebted to _____, **LAUNDRESS**, _____ dollars.

Given in Duplicate, at Fort Pickens Tenn, this 10 day
of July, 1864

Walter H. Siffert
2d Lieut 7 U.S.C. Art 14th
Commanding Company B

A. G. O. No. 95—First.)
Effects lost at Fort Pillow
from April 12, 1864

Private Armstead Burgess

1st Regiment Alabama Siege Artillery, Co. B

1st Regiment Tennessee Colored Heavy Artillery, Co. B

6th US Colored Regiment Heavy Artillery; Co. B

5th US Colored Regiment Heavy Artillery, Co. B

7th US Colored Regiment Heavy Artillery, Co. B

11th US Colored Infantry New, Co. B

Armstead Burgess enlisted in the Union Army on August 17, 1863, at Corinth, Mississippi, when he was seventeen-years-old. He had been enslaved on the plantation of Benjamin Burgess in Pleasant Site, Franklin County, Alabama. Many African Americans had taken refuge in Corinth, Mississippi, where the federal government had established a “contraband camp.” The men were eventually recruited from that civilian camp and the surrounding areas to become soldiers in the Union Army. Among these individuals were Armstead’s older brother, Robert Burgess who enlisted in the infantry. As the majority of these men were from Alabama, Armstead’s regiment received that state’s designation: the 1st Regiment Alabama Siege Artillery. In the spring of 1864 its designation changed to Tennessee and finally from a volunteer force to regular Army under the Bureau of Colored Troops to become the 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery.

Armstead served as a private in the US Artillery and Infantry from September 7, 1863, until January 12, 1866. He was described as black complexion with black hair and eyes, and five feet, nine inches tall. His occupation was “laborer.”

On April 12, 1864, Private Burgess was engaged in battle at Fort Pillow on the banks of the Mississippi River near Henning, Tennessee. Beginning at approximately 8 o’clock in the morning, approximately 589 Union soldiers held their ground and sustained only twenty casualties until the Confederates, under the leadership of Nathan Bedford Forrest, advanced under ceasefire. It was under these broken terms of warfare that the Confederates overcame the Union soldiers. A legitimate battle engagement had turned into a massacre as by mid-afternoon. Private Burgess suffered head injuries caused by a musket rifle and was shot in the leg. Despite these injuries, he survived. However, approximately 335 men from his regiment (the 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery), the 2nd US Colored Light Artillery, and 13th Tennessee Cavalry were massacred after they surrendered. Civilian men, women and children were murdered, and white Union officers executed. The onslaught was so horrific that eyewitness accounts state that the water of the Mississippi River turned red.

African American soldiers who were not massacred or escaped were reenslaved by the Confederate Army as its government did not consider them soldiers. They were, instead, treated as slaves in rebellion and white men serving as officers of black troops were considered traitors. It was under these conditions that Armstead and about thirty of his brothers in arms and a white officer were marched towards Brownsville, Tennessee. Along that route, these soldiers witnessed the execution of their white commanding officer. Armstead was taken to Mobile, Alabama, where

his injuries were finally treated. For several months he worked on Confederate fortifications in Alabama and Mississippi. The Confederates later transported him by train to Richmond, Virginia. Armstead's enslavement and oppression finally concluded in the spring of 1865 due to the Union Army capturing the Confederate capital of Richmond.

On May 19, 1865, Private Burgess answered the roll call at Fort Pickering in Memphis, Tennessee. He had dutifully returned from his regiment after thirteen months and the Union Army recognized his status as a former prisoner of war. The original heavy artillery unit no longer existed and his regiment had been redesignated the 11th US Colored Infantry, New. Internal conflict between members of the older companies and newer companies caused friction. Armstead was involved in the conflict and imprisoned at Irving Prison, Block 10, for fighting from August 30, 1865 until October 16, 1865.

Certificates of honorable discharge for Armstead Burgess, Private, are dated July 10, 1864. An excerpt reads:

Having honestly and faithfully with his Company in the field to the present date, is now entitled to a discharge for reason of missing in action since April 12, 1864, supposing to have been killed.

The discharge certificates note that Armstead's "Effects lost at Fort Pillow Tenn April 12, 1864." The certificates were not reissued upon the realization of Armstead's survival; instead, one was voided and the muster roll for May and June 1865 state: "Returned from missing in action on May 19, 1865." The final muster roll card states that Armstead was mustered out of service on January 12, 1866. He owed the United States Government \$42.79 for his clothing allowance and \$2.39 for ordnance. His only paycheck was issued in November 1863. It was under these financial circumstances and visible scares of warfare that Armstead began a new chapter of his life as a Veteran of the Civil War. Armstead's brother, who enlisted with him in Corinth, became war casualty.

From 1866 to 1869 Armstead migrated between the surrounding counties of Memphis, Tennessee, working as a laborer and farm hand. During that time, he married Lewisa Williams and they had three children. By 1869, the family settled in Somerville, Fayette County, Tennessee. Lewisa died in November 1872 in Tennessee. Armstead continued to live in Somerville, Tennessee, as a farmer and laborer with his children.

In 1876 Armstead married Mollie McDowell in Rossville, Tennessee, and began another stage of his life. Their household included twelve children and the family were members of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church (now known as Christian Methodist Episcopal Church). The CME church was a denomination established by former slaves in Jacksonville, Tennessee in 1870. In 1884, the entire family migrated from Somerville, Tennessee, to Holly Grove, Monroe County, Arkansas, where they continued to farm. It is from this marriage that there are known descendants from their children who migrated to Topeka, Kansas, and Memphis, Tennessee. Mollie died in 1906 in Holly Grove, Arkansas.

Armstead married a third time to Laura Gilham. His misfortune continued as she was killed shortly after their marriage in March 1909 in a tornado that devastated Brinkley, Arkansas. His fourth wife was Bettie Brown Wilson Williams whom he married in November 1909. Both his third and fourth marriages included step-children. He continued to live in Monroe, County Arkansas, for the duration of his life.

Armstead began applying for his pension in 1889 as his health deteriorated. Complaints included rheumatism, stomach ailments, loss of vision in one eye, and chronic headaches. During the course of his pension applications, physicians noted two depressions in his skull: one measuring a half inch by three-quarters inch wide, and a one-third inch deep; the second measured a quarter inch wide by a quarter inch long. A wound was also noted on his right leg. In response to the pension board's request for witnesses to support his claim that he received these wounds in battle, Armstead affirmed the following under oath:

I was wounded in the massacre at Fort Pillow during the late war. ...It is impossible for me to furnish evidence of persons who were right present and saw wound given me or of persons having personal knowledge of the matter of how I incurred wounds of head during said fight.

This veteran finally received a pension in about 1901. There is no evidence that he received his military service payment. He continued to receive a veteran's pension with increases as his health declined until his death on April 4, 1923, in Holly Grove, Arkansas.

Armstead Burgess's name appears on the African American Civil War Memorial Monument in Washington, D.C., listed in the 11th US Colored Infantry (New) section. The National Park Service recognizes the formation of his artillery unit at its original battery in Corinth, Mississippi, along with the contraband camp. Additionally, Armstead is incorrectly referred to as Armstrong Burgess in Andrew Ward's *River Run Red: The Fort Pillow Massacre in the American Civil War*. The mistake having arose from the Armstead's pension papers.

Civil War Union Veteran Armstead faithfully served his country for 853 days in a war that liberated both him and millions of African Americans from slavery. His last resting place is Shady Grove Cemetery (Clarendon, Arkansas) in the "colored" section which is overgrown with brush, wild grasses, and fallen trees scattered about. The search will continue to find the grave of this old veteran who lived his life with a visible wound sustained in Fort Pillow and the scares inflicted by a segregated country.

Attachment B



April 12
1864

Remembering
Fort Pillow

Fort Pillow State Park
Henning, Tennessee

April 13, 2019
10 am to 4 pm

Remembering...

2nd US Colored Light Artillery

6th US Colored Heavy Artillery

13th Tennessee Cavalry, US
(Bradford's Battalion)

Civilians

Today is an occasion to pause and remember the sacrifices of the Union soldiers and civilians garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864. The vast majority of approximately 540 Union soldiers were killed in action, wounded, became missing never to be heard of again, imprisoned in South Carolina or Georgia, were re-enslaved, or executed. Civilians also fell victim to the onslaught. Within a few days after this massacre, the international outcry became a rally to "Remember Fort Pillow." Today, 155 years later, the rally continues as "We Remember Fort Pillow."

Prelude Service

At the Visitors Center Flag Pole at 10:30 am

National Anthem	<i>All</i>
Welcome	<i>Robby Tidwell, Fort Pillow State Park Manager</i>
The Occasion	<i>Master Sargent Joe Williams, US Army, Retired</i>
Placement of Wreath	<i>Descendants and Guests</i>

Order of Service

Inside the Fortification at 12 Noon

Parading and Posting Colors	<i>Active Military and Veterans or Commemorative USCT Units</i>
Roll Call	<i>Senior Chief Norris Thomas US Navy Retired</i>
Prayer and Scripture	<i>Rev. Brown Lee Donelson</i>
Pledge of Allegiance	<i>All</i>
Spiritual	<i>O Rapturous Scenes (Written by Bishop Lucius Henry Holsey) Sung by Yulanda Burgess</i>
Placement of Wreath and Flags	<i>Descendants</i>
Remembrance in Rosemary	<i>Patricia Tyson and Bobbi Coles, African American Civil War Museum and Memorial Guests</i>
Remarks/Reflections	<i>Norris Thomas, III</i>
Scattering of White Carnations and Rosemary and Recognition of Fort Pillow Soldiers and Civilians <i>Directed by Yulanda Burgess</i>	<i>Jailyn Hurt, Flower Girl All</i>
Closing Prayer and Benediction	<i>Rev. Brown Lee Donelson</i>
Taps	
Retire Colors	<i>Active Military and Veterans or Commemorative USCT Units</i>

Pledge of Alliance

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Symbols of Remembrance

The White Carnation was used by the Garnet Equal Rights League who sponsored the Grand Review of US Colored Troops on November 14, 1865, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Soldiers were showered with carnations during the parade. It became the official flower for USCT veterans and descendants. Today, the flower is being used to remember the USCTs, USVs and Civilians garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

Rosemary throughout the ages has been a symbol of remembrance. Rosemary placed here today symbolizes that we have not forgotten the deeds and acts of our ancestors.

The ***Fort Pillow Descendants' logo*** symbolizes gold for the 13th Tennessee Cavalry, red for the 2nd US Light Artillery and 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery, and the flag they defended.

Future Dates for Remembering Fort Pillow
April 11, 2020; April 10, 2021; April 9, 2022

Contact: RememberFortPillow1864@yahoo.com

Attachment C

EXPENSES FOR 2019 REMEMBERING FORT PILLOW

ITEM	DETAIL	SOURCE	
Meals	Ribs, Chicken, Sides, and Beverages	Norris	\$160.00
Fresh Rosemary	Sprigs	Sam's Club	\$62.25
Fresh Carnations	\$1 each plus 9.5% tax	Piano's Flowers and Gifts	\$99.42
Artificial Wreaths	3 at \$19.99 each	Joann's	\$63.57
Postage	Invitation mailings	UPS Store	\$12.00
Office Supplies (Envelopes)	Invitation mailings	UPS Store	\$12.00
Craft Supplies	Glue and hot glue sticks	Joann's	\$3.95
Floral supplies and Easels	3 easels, ribbon, cloth wire	Dealers Discount	\$38.97
Floral supplies	Ribbons, flowers and greens	Dealers Discount	\$74.33
Lettering	Lettering	Joann's	\$11.16
Lettered Ribbon	Corsage Ribbon	Ribbon Warehouse	\$25.50
Printing	Programs and Invitations	Private Donation	\$0.00
		GRAND TOTAL	\$563.15





Estimated Expenses for 2020 Remembering Fort Pillow

ITEM	DETAILS	TOTAL
Artificial Wreaths	3 at \$40.00 each	\$120.00
Easels	3 at \$5.00 each	\$15.00
Fresh Carnations	100 at \$1.00 each	\$100.00
Fresh Rosemary	Source: Sam's Club Delivered	\$58.50
Postage	USPS	\$12.00
Printing (Programs, Invites, etc)	100 @.13 (mix 1/w and color. 2 sided)	\$26.00
Invitations/Publicity	Stamps, paper, envelopes etc	\$40.00
Does Not include corsages		\$0.00
Carry over lettering and floral supplies		\$0.00
Meals		\$160.00
	TOTAL	\$531.50

Attachment D

[Home](#) > [Forums](#) > [The Haversack - Special Featu...](#) > [Reenactors Forum](#) > [Events, Living Histories, &...](#) >

Remembering Fort Pillow, April 13, 2019

 Yulie ·  Yesterday at 10:58 AM ·  None 

[Watch](#)

 **Yulie**
Corporal

Yesterday at 10:58 AM

#1

FORT PILLOW COMMEMORATION **April 13, 2019 at Fort Pillow State Park** **10 am to 4 pm**

3122 Park Road, Henning, Tennessee 38041

Rain or Shine

The annual tribute to Union soldiers and civilians involved in the Fort Pillow Massacre will occurred on Saturday, April 13, 2019. This event is coordinated by the descendants of Union soldiers and civilians who were garrisoned at Fort Pillow. Thus far, descendants of three Union soldiers and civilians have been located. The public is invited. This will be the 155th Anniversary. It is a memorial and fellowship to honor those who were victimized on April 12, 1864.

This annual event will take place at Fort Pillow in Henning, Tenn., from **10 am to 4 pm**. It is important that everyone meet at the Visitors Center at 10 am as transportation to the fortification needs to be coordinated. People will either take the one mile hike to the fort or take a tractor pulling a flatbed. There will be very limited availability to SUVs for those with mobility issues. There is also access to the fortification by driving to a location and walking 1/2 mile, but you must come to the Visitors Center to obtain the map. People are certainly welcomed to budget their own time on getting there. However, the ceremony within the fortification will begin at promptly 12 noon. The Park Rangers arrange a personal guided tour after the ceremony. People are welcomed to stay for refreshments after the ceremony. Everything, including clean-up will conclude at 4 pm.

What to bring:

- Your own chair
- Wear sturdy walking shoes
- Rain gear as this is a rain or shine event
- Sun gear if it's sunny and hot

How to Get to Fort Pillow:

It's about 40 miles from Memphis but will take you a good amount of time to get there. Seriously. Give yourself ample time to get there. Follow your GPS directions. You will not be going through the town of Henning. You'll take some narrow back roads which will place you back on a more open road to get there. When you see the prison, you'll know you're on the right route. Upon entry to the park, take the road all the way back until it ends at the Visitors Center.

ADDITIONALLY:

National Fort Pillow Wreath Laying Ceremony

Memphis National Cemetery

April 12, 2019

10 am

3568 Townes Ave.

Memphis, TN 38122

There will also be a ceremony in Memphis on April 12, 2019, to honor the Fort Pillow soldiers and civilians buried at the Memphis National Cemetery. The cemetery is located at 3568 Townes Ave., Memphis, TN 38122.

-Yulie

Attachments



Fort Pillow Invite 2...

400.1 KB

Views: 5

Last edited: Yesterday at 1:34 PM

Report Bookmark

+ Quote Reply

ForeverFree, diane, roberts and 1 other person



Pat Young

Brev. Brig. Gen'l

Forum Host

Featured Book Reviewer

Yesterday at 1:08 PM

#2

Thanks for posting this.

Being Irish, he had an abiding sense of tragedy, which sustained him through temporary periods of joy.

[William Butler Yeats](#)

[Report](#) [Bookmark](#)

[Like](#) [+ Quote](#) [Reply](#)



jackt62

2nd Lieutenant

Yesterday at 1:18 PM

#3

Glad to see that this tragic episode is being commemorated.

[Report](#) [Bookmark](#)

[Like](#) [+ Quote](#) [Reply](#)

[ForeverFree](#)



BillO

Captain

Yesterday at 1:25 PM

#4

LOL

"Brevity is the soul of wit."

William Shakespeare, "Hamlet", Act 2 scene 2

[Report](#) [Bookmark](#)

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Yulie

Corporal

Yesterday at 1:49 PM

#5

BillO said: [↑](#)

LOL

Please give me an understanding why you think that any of this (whether the commemoration or otherwise) is laughable.

-Yulie

[Report](#) [Bookmark](#)

[+ Quote](#) [Reply](#)



BillO

Captain

Today at 12:46 PM

#6

"massacre"?

"Brevity is the soul of wit."
William Shakespeare, "Hamlet", Act 2 scene 2

Report Bookmark

Like + Quote Reply



Old Breck

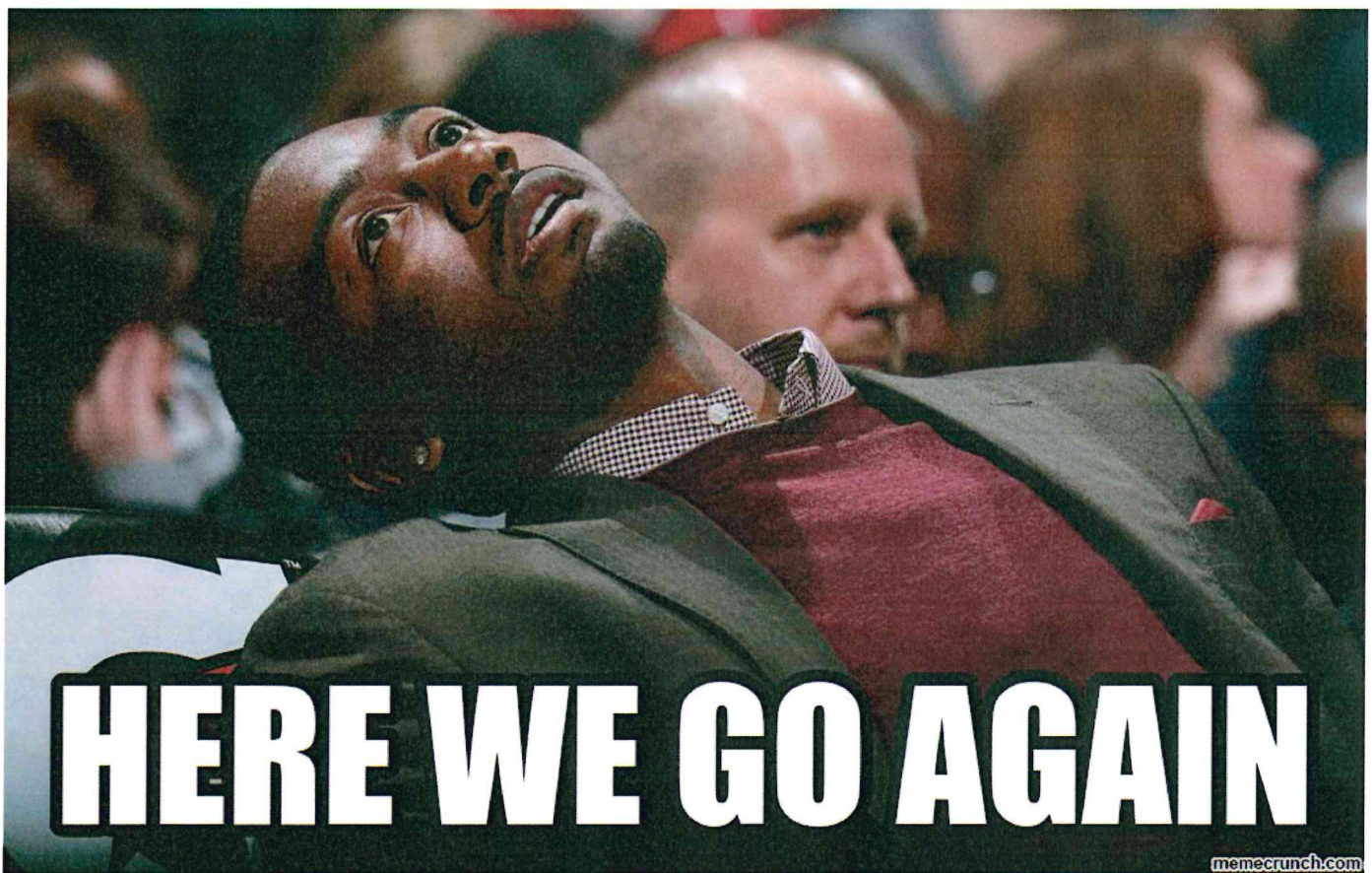
Private

57 minutes ago

#7

BillO said: ↗

"massacre"?



"My pilot mate was a New Yorker. He was strong for the Union; so was I....A month later the secession atmosphere had considerably thickened on the Lower Mississippi and I became a rebel; so did he."

The Private History of a Campaign That Failed

Report Bookmark

Like + Quote Reply



Yulie

Corporal

9 minutes ago

BillO said: ↗

"massacre"?

Yes. Massacre. The people who were there fitting for their lives and survived called it a massacre during their lifetime. The descendant's of these men and women continue to call it a massacre. It's your choice to believe them or not.

Your interjection into this event announcement is sad.

-Yulie

[Report](#) [Edit](#) [Bookmark](#)

[+ Quote](#) [↩ Reply](#)

 **Yulie**
Corporal

3 minutes ago

#9

Old Breck said: ↗


[View attachment 297157](#)

Your comment (in conjunction with another comment) regarding this announcement regarding a memorial held by descendants of Union soldiers who were at Fort Pillow is sad and undignified.

-Yulie

[Report](#) [Edit](#) [Bookmark](#)

[+ Quote](#) [↩ Reply](#)



Write your reply...

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Remembering Fort Pillow, April 13, 2019 | American Civil War Forums

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Attachment E



Descendants Remembering the Fort Pillow Massacre

10857 Lakepointe, Detroit, MI 48224-1701
313.910.0410
rememberfortpillow1864@yahoo.com

April 12
1864

March 6, 2019

Via Email, only: Essence.Motley@mail.house.gov

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush
c/o Essence Motley, MPH, Assistant to the Member/Staff Assistant
2188 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-1301

**RE: Remembering Fort Pillow Commemoration and Tribute
April 13, 2019**

Dear Representative Rush:

On behalf of the descendants of Union Civil War soldiers and civilians who were subjected to the atrocities of April 12, 1864, I thank you for your efforts to bring recognition to this incident. We realize that the battle to bring public awareness of this massacre and appropriately remember the legacy of these men who fought for our freedoms is a heroic endeavor.

We continue to remember our ancestors in a tribute each year at the Fort Pillow fortification. It will be a pleasure if you, your staff and your guests will join us for this observation on Saturday, April 13, 2019, beginning at 10 a.m. Please find enclosed the flyer for this occasion.

It is important that you and your guests meet at the Visitor's Center at 10 am to either hike to the fortification or take transportation (a tractor pulling a flatbed). The hike to the fortification is about one mile. There will be limited availability to SUVs for those with mobility issues. The ceremony within the fortification will begin promptly at 12 noon. The Park Rangers will arrange for a personal guided tour after the ceremony.

Following the ceremony, there will be a cook out (barbecue) for guests and family members. It will be a wonderful opportunity to meet and personally talk with descendants of Union soldiers and civilians who were garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

I apologize for the late invitation and hope that you are able to attend. Please let me know as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



Yulanda Burgess
Descendant of Pvt. Armstead Burgess

/yb
Enclosure



Descendants Remembering the Fort Pillow Massacre

10857 Lakepointe, Detroit, MI 48224-1701

313.910.0410

rememberfortpillow1864@yahoo.com

April 12
1864

March 27, 2019

First Baptist Church – Broad
c/o Matrice Caswell, Administrative Assistant
2835 Broad Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

**RE: Remembering Fort Pillow Commemoration and Tribute
Fort Pillow State Park
3122 Park Road, Henning, Tennessee
April 13, 2019**

Dear Pastor and Church Family:

On April 13, 2019, descendants, kin, friends and guests will honor and pay tribute to Union soldiers and civilians involved in the Fort Pillow Massacre which occurred on April 12, 1864. This is the 155th Anniversary. It is a commemoration and fellowship to honor those who were victimized on April 12, 1864. This event is planned by descendants of two Union soldiers who survived the massacre.

This annual event will take place at Fort Pillow in Henning, Tenn., from 10 am to 4 pm. It is important that everyone meet at the Visitors Center at 10 am to be involved in either hiking to the fort or taking transportation (a flatbed pulled by a tractor). People can certainly budget their own time to walk the mile to the fortification. The ceremony within the fort will begin at 12 noon. The Park Rangers will arrange for a personal guided tour after the ceremony. Those with mobility issues will be transported by SUV, but will need to contact me by April 1, 2019, so we can accommodate them.

You are invited to a meal after the ceremony at Fort Pillow. Please RSVP to me by April 1, 2019, so can prepare for you. Please free to contact me for more information.

Very truly yours,



Yulanda Burgess
Descendant of Pvt. Armstead Burgess
313.910.0410
yulandab@msn.com

/yb

Enclosures





Descendants Remembering the Fort Pillow Massacre

10857 Lakepointe, Detroit, MI 48224-1701

313.910.0410

rememberfortpillow1864@yahoo.com

March 15, 2019

Ladrica Menson-Furr, Director
University of Memphis
African and African American Studies
Via Email: lmnsnfr@memphis.edu

**RE: Remembering Fort Pillow Commemoration and Tribute
Fort Pillow State Park
3122 Park Road, Henning, Tennessee
April 13, 2019**

Dear Dr. Menson-Furr:

On April 13, 2019, descendants, kin, friends and guests will honor and pay tribute to Union soldiers and civilians involved in the Fort Pillow Massacre which occurred on April 12, 1864. This is the 155th Anniversary. It is a commemoration and fellowship to honor those who were victimized on April 12, 1864. This event is planned by descendants of two Union soldiers who survived the massacre.

This annual event will take place at Fort Pillow in Henning, Tenn., from 10 am to 4 pm. It is important that everyone meet at the Visitors Center at 10 am to be involved in either hiking to the fort or taking transportation (a flatbed pulled by a tractor). People can certainly budget their own time to walk the mile to the fortification. The ceremony within the fort will begin at 12 noon. The Park Rangers will arrange for a personal guided tour after the ceremony. Those with mobility issues will be transported by SUV, but will need to contact me by April 1, 2019, so we can accommodate them.

Please share this information with students and faculty.

Please feel free to contact me for more information.

Very truly yours,

Yulanda Burgess
Descendant of Pvt. Armstead Burgess
313.910.0410
yulandab@msn.com

/yb

Enclosures

April 12, 1864



Robert Bell and Joe Williams, a descendant of Pvt. Peter Williams, Fort Pillow survivor.
Photo by Jim Weber, *Commercial and Appeal*, April 12, 2017

Remembering Fort Pillow

*Tribute and Commemoration of the
men, women and children who were brutalized on April 12, 1864*

Saturday, April 13, 2019

10 am to 4 pm

Fort Pillow State Park

3122 Park Road, Henning, Tennessee 38041

***Hosted by the Descendants of Union Soldiers Who Survived the
Massacre at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864***

Please meet at the Fort Pillow Visitors Center at 11 am.
The ceremony will be begin at 12 noon inside the Fortification. Rain or Shine.

A fellowship barbecue will take place after the ceremony.

For information, contact Yulanda Burgess at RememberFortPillow1864@yahoo.com

Future Remembrance Dates: April 11, 2020; April 10, 2021; April 9, 2022



Descendants Remembering the Fort Pillow Massacre

10857 Lakepointe, Detroit, MI 48224-1701

313.910.0410

rememberfortpillow1864@yahoo.com

April 12
1864

Remembering Fort Pillow, April 13, 2019

What to bring:

- Your own chair
- Wear sturdy walking shoes
- Rain gear as this is a rain or shine event
- Sun gear if it's sunny and hot

How to Get to Fort Pillow State Park

3122 Park Road, Henning, Tennessee

It's about 40 miles from Memphis and approximately 11 miles from Henning but will take you a good amount of time to get there. Seriously. Give yourself ample time to get there. Follow your GPS directions. You will not be going through the town of Henning. You'll take some narrow back roads which will place you back on a more open road to get there. When you see the prison, you'll know you're on the right route. Upon entry to the park, take the road all the way back until it ends at the Visitors Center.

Wreath Laying Ceremony Memphis National Cemetery

April 12, 2019

10 am

3568 Townes Ave., Memphis, TN 38122

There will also be a ceremony in Memphis on April 12, 2019, to honor the Fort Pillow soldiers buried at the Memphis National Cemetery. The cemetery is located at 3568 Townes Ave., Memphis, TN 38122. The ceremony is scheduled to begin at 10 am.

Callie Herd is coordinating this effort and will provide further details. You can reach her at 901.485.2701, callieherd@gmail.com.

Attachment F

FW: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>

Tue 9/17/2013, 4:22 PM

To:yulandab@msn.com <yulandab@msn.com>

Cc:Jeff Wells <Jeff.Wells@tn.gov>;normhill1@msn.com <normhill1@msn.com>;

Patrick McIntyre <Patrick.McIntyre@tn.gov>

Dear Ms. Burgess,

Mr. Norm Hill has shared with me your questions about the participation of the Tennessee Wars Commission and the Tennessee Historical Commission's involvement with the 150th remembrance of the Battle of Fort Pillow, Tennessee.

First of all Tennessee's official Civil War 150th State Sesquicentennial Commission is in charge of creating "signature events" for each year of our states 150th observance of the Civil War years. I would suggest that you contact Ms. Patricia Gray at Tennessee Department of Tourism Development who is Tennessee's key contact person for the Tennessee Sesquicentennial Commission at: Patricia.Gray@tn.gov or her office at: 615-741-9004 and/or cell: 615-310-7539. You might also want to contact Ms. Lee Curtis, Director of Program Development at Tennessee Tourism who also works with the State Sesquicentennial Commission at: Lee.Curtis@tn.gov or 615-741-9045.

As to the Wars Commission involvement in the Fort Pillow Commutation I have personally been in talks with Mr. Jeff Wells, Tennessee State Parks Director of Interpretation Programs and Education, about the importance of the 2014 Sesquicentennial remembrance ceremony at Fort Pillow State Historic Site, operated by Tennessee State Parks. Mr. Wells and State Parks will be in charge of the event planning. I have personally spoken with Mr. Norm Hill, Bill Radcliff and Dr. Smith in hopes of involving the USCT living history regiment as possible color bearers for the event. I have also spoken with Ms. Linda Wynn of the Tennessee Historical Commission and historian and professor Dr. Bobbie Lovette about the need to honor those fallen heroes at Fort Pillow on the 150th anniversary on April 12, 2014. I personally alerted T.D.E.C. Commissioner Robert Martineau and Deputy Commissioner Brock Hill (during their May 2013 staff meeting) as to the state and national importance of planning a fitting tribute for the 150th Commemoration of the Battle at Fort Pillow as a remembrance for those honored USCT troops who died for liberty. Mr. Jeff Wells is in charge of the event planning and will no doubt create a fitting remembrance ceremony (Mr. Wells contact information is below).

The Tennessee Wars Commission has spent the last three years in creating the book, *Ready To Die For Liberty, Tennessee United States Colored Troops in the Civil War*. I have today received the first draft copy of the booklet and have made a few corrections for the printers. When those corrections are addressed the Wars Commission will begin the printing of 5,000 copies for distribution to all Tennessee Schools and libraries. I am hopeful that the booklets will be printed in the next few weeks and I would suggest, as I have for several years, that it be included and premiered at the Fort Pillow Tennessee Sesquicentennial event on 2014. The Wars Commission is funding research at the National Archives in Washington for the names of the USCT who were involved (killed and/or missing) in the Fort Pillow engagement and hopefully we will have those names by the 150th memorial event.

All questions on the Tennessee State Park commemorative ceremonies and plans for the Fort Pillow event should be addressed to Mr. Jeff Wells at: Jeff.Wells@tn.gov or call his office at 615: 532-0031.

As Director of Programs for the Tennessee Wars Commission I would be honored to attend the Fort Pillow Commemoration event now in the planning stages and Tennessee Historical Commission Director Patrick McIntyre is also very interested in participating.

I have also attached an earlier version DRAFT COPY of our USCT booklet. This is not the current version being printed and I will be glad to send you a copy when they are ready.

If I can be of further assistance please advise.

Best regards,

Fred M. Prouty
Director of Programs
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37214
615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: norm hill [normhill1@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2013 12:32 PM
To: Patrick McIntyre; Fred Prouty
Subject: FW: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Pat and Fred FYI
Norm

From: yulandab@msn.com
To: decherd2@hotmail.com
CC: normhill1@msn.com; hsojr@bellsouth.net; moverton@mtemc.com; escaped886@yahoo.com; hiwinston@aol.com; 4shirley@bellsouth.net; ggrandall@bellsouth.net; nh5242@aol.com; jabez1950@gmail.com; indhistorian@yahoo.com
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry
Date: Tue, 17 Sep 2013 10:54:13 -0400

Hello Dr. George,

I am attaching the SAVE THE DATE flyer to your cc's.

Be assured that the day will be observed at Fort Pillow, officially or unofficially. We will plough ahead full steam. Our hold is the University of Memphis and the extent of their involvement. The loud voices of a few can be heard on the ears of many. We need to set the record straight that these men fought gallantly from morning until 4 p.m. We need to set the record straight that the men and women who were at Fort Pillow from 4 p.m. well into the next day faced outrageous inflictions of inhumanity just because they were black and because they were Unionist and because many were former slaves who dared to bear arms to fight for their freedom. Many white unionist suffered outrageous treatment just by their mere association. Nathan Bedford Forrest issued the killing orders but his biggest mistake was that, despite the massive slaughter, the will to survive existed in the bodies of a handfull of men and women and children. The survivors told their stories and the atrocities were recorded. Yet, these men, women and children continued to suffer injustice because their accounts were disbelieved or distorted by the ensuing generations in order to give the Confederate forces clean gloves and to glorify Forrest. The resting places of those massacred at Fort Pillow also were desecrated by prejudice and injustice. From heaven they cry, remember me.... So, let us gather on April 12, 2014, and continue to tell their story and remember them. The story is monumental because, despite the possibilities of further Fort Pillows, black men continued to fight

with "Remember Fort Pillow" on their lips.

Peace, Joy, and the Comfort of Jesus,
Yulanda Burgess

From: decherd2@hotmail.com
To: yulandab@msn.com; fred.prouty@tn.gov
CC: normhill1@msn.com; hsojr@bellsouth.net; moverton@mtmc.com; escaped886@yahoo.com;
hiwinston@aol.com; 4shirley@bellsouth.net; gstrandall@bellsouth.net; nh5242@aol.com;
jabez1950@gmail.com; indhistorian@yahoo.com
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry
Date: Tue, 17 Sep 2013 01:39:59 +0000

Yulanda

Thank you for keeping the dream alive to do something special at Fort Pillow as we approach the 150th year of this historical event. It is just difficult to believe that this major event in the history of the war should go unnoticed.

We must observe this significant moment as a tribute to the important role that individuals of African Descent played in making this country the land of the free.

George Smith, Corporal
13th USCT
Living historian

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Yulanda Burgess

Fri 12/6/2013, 10:03 AM

To: Jeff Wells <jeff.wells@tn.gov>

Bcc: George Smith <decherd2@hotmail.com>

Dear Mr. Wells,

I was in Memphis during the Thanksgiving holiday and met with Dr. Sadler (Instructor, African and African American Studies) and Michael Cherry (student) of the University of Memphis regarding Fort Pillow. Dr. Sadler is coordinating a seminar focused on Fort Pillow and the USCTs tentatively scheduled for April 10, 2013, on the UofM campus. Based on my conversation with Dr. Sadler and Mr. Cherry, there appears to be much interest in commemorating the 150th anniversary of Fort Pillow. There has also been interest expressed across the living history community and those involved in preserving the USCT legacy. However, these interests seem scattered and I am trying to grasp exactly what is and can be practically planned. I don't want to witness a nightmare of bus loads of people arriving at the park unexpectedly on April 12, 2014, and clusters of people doing their own commemoration. I consider you the go-to person and would like to discuss with you all these variant interests. My objective is to finalize a comprehensive agenda for the various USCT units and USCT descendants to participate in any activities that will take place on April 12, 2014. Although there are about thirty USCI units, there are only two artillery units. As I mentioned before, a Save the Date has been communicated, but people need to be presented with some final plans so they can plan accordingly. Again, I offer to assist you in this endeavor.

I can be contacted by email or limited by cell phone during the daytime at 313/910-0410.

Best Regards,
Yulanda Burgess

Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

Yulanda Burgess

Fri 10/25/2013, 11:32 AM

To: Susan.Whitaker@tn.gov <susan.whitaker@tn.gov>; michaelbradley@lighttube.net <michaelbradley@lighttube.net>; Norman Hill <normhill1@msn.com>; atop@tennesseehistory.org <atop@tennesseehistory.org>; cwest@mtsu.edu <cwest@mtsu.edu>; Wayne.Moore@tn.gov <wayne.moore@tn.gov>; rmitchel@fisk.edu <rmitchel@fisk.edu>; Fred.Prouty@tn.gov <fred.prouty@tn.gov>; heritagetours@bellsouth.net <heritagetours@bellsouth.net>; oakley@eastTNhistory.org <oakley@easttnhistory.org>; Lee.Curtis@tn.gov <lee.curtis@tn.gov>; lholder@mtsu.edu <lholder@mtsu.edu>; jeremy.harrell@tn.gov <jeremy.harrell@tn.gov>; mapeckham@aol.com <mapeckham@aol.com>; Lois.Riggins-Ezzell@tn.gov <lois.riggins-ezzell@tn.gov>; friendsofchch@gmail.com <friendsofchch@gmail.com>; mjgrainger@cox.net <mjgrainger@cox.net>; stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net <stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net>; Patrick.McIntyre@tn.gov <patrick.mcintyre@tn.gov>; robthicks@aol.com <robthicks@aol.com>
Cc: Patricia.Gray@tn.gov <patricia.gray@tn.gov>; jeff.wells@tn.gov <jeff.wells@tn.gov>
Bcc: george.smith <decherd2@hotmail.com>

October 25, 2013

Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission

Dear Commissioners,

April 12, 2014, will mark the 150th anniversary of the Fort Pillow massacre. To date, I am unaware of any firm plans to commemorate this incident. In the past few months I have been in contact with Jeff Wells (Director of Interpretative Programming and Education) and TCWS Commissioners Norman Hill, and Fred Prouty. Although each have expressed an interest in observing Fort Pillow, none can provide detailed confirmation that there will be a commemoration. In the midst of the sesquicentennial grandeur, the omission of an official commemoration by the Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission would be monumentally unfortunate. Despite this, the descendants of two soldiers garrisoned at Fort Pillow have committed to being at Fort Pillow on April 12, 2014. I am one of those people.

I am the great granddaughter of Private Armstead Burgess, a Union soldier who was wounded but survived the slaughter and resided in Tennessee and Arkansas after the war. Another soldier, Private Peter Williams, survived also his wounds and resided in western Tennessee throughout his life. Both men were members of the 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery. Both families hope to ensure that the Fort Pillow incident and their compatriots who perished on that tragic day are not forgotten.

There have been much discussion on how to commemorate the actions that took place at the fort on the banks of the Mississippi River on April 12, 1864, . The opinions vary from having an encampment, battle scenario, and public displays. These are the things to contemplate as we quickly approach the 150th Anniversary. As descendants of Fort Pillow survivors, we ask for a day of commemoration, reflection, prayer, and tribute to the men, women and children garrisoned at Fort Pillow under the Union forces. We will be the honorary family of those people who were killed. We hope others will join us as we give testimony that their deaths were not taken in vain and reflect on our own liberties and freedom born out of the American Civil War. Most importantly, we hope the

Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission will officially recognize the history of Fort Pillow. Please let us know.

We look forward to supporting each other in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Yulanda Burgess
10857 Lakepointe
Detroit, Mi 48224-1701
313/910-0410
yulandab@msn.com

Fort Pillow in 2014

Yulanda Burgess

Wed 1/30/2013, 12:58 PM

To:george smith <decherd2@hotmail.com>;Norman Hill <normhill1@msn.com>

Cc:Bob <robertlb502@aol.com>

George and Norm,

I inquiry whether you've heard anything about commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Fort Pillow Massacre. If yes, what have you heard and could you provide me with any communications you've received. If you've heard nothing, I would like to work with you to have the State of Tenn acknowledge this event. It requires planning and forethought.

My great grandfather (Pvt. Armstead Burgess) survived Fort Pillow (6th USCHA, Co. B) and I am planning for my family to commemorate the occasion on the actual anniversary date on April 12, 2014. Armstead's descendants are scattered throughout the country and advance planning is necessary to make this possible for them. There are about 300 direct descendant's of Armstead Burgess. Armstead belonged to the Christian (fka Colored) Methodist Episcopal Church and I would like to approach the Bishop of the First Episcopal District which governs Tennessee to participate in any commemoration.

My last visit to the site highlighted all the accessibility issues the historic site has faced. The bridge is out/impassable, the trails are poorly marked and the site doesn't offer transportation to the artillery area. We would need to work with the state to correct these problems.

Robert Bell also has told me that he knows of another descendant who saw action at Fort Pillow. Therefore, it's a possibility that there would be families of two descendants who would attend. I have cc'd him anticipating that he would provide me with that contact.

I have been in communication with Andrew Ward (author of the *River Ran Red*) and he would be a good speaker for this commemorative occasion.

Just putting that out there hoping to make something of it....

-Yulanda

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>

Fri 11/8/2013, 3:27 PM

To: Yulanda Burgess <yulandab@msn.com>

Cc: Jeff Wells <Jeff.Wells@tn.gov>; Patrick McIntyre <Patrick.McIntyre@tn.gov>;

bllovet1936@gmail.com <bllovet1936@gmail.com>; normhill1@msn.com <normhill1@msn.com>;

selllott@gplce.com <selllott@gplce.com>; stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net <stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net>

Ms. Burgess,

Thank you for copying me on your greatly appreciated letter. Well said!

Your comments reflect my own personal goal of commemorating and placing this important history in the hands of your school children and general public. To that end the Tennessee Wars Commission has worked for several years to completed and publish a book dedicated to Tennessee and our nations USCT. That publication, *Ready to Die for Liberty; Tennessee's United States Colored Troops in the Civil War*, is now in hand at our office. I will send you two complementary copies and please advise if you would like additional booklets. Over 2,000 of these books are to be sent to all Tennessee libraries and hopefully they will be available for purchase from the Tennessee Historical Commission and possibly other outlets as well.

I plan to discussed with Mr. Jeff Wells our desire to hopefully premier this publication during the Fort Pillow 150th Commemoration Ceremony in April 2014. I would also like to pursue discussions with Tennessee State Parks as to the feasibility of placing a USCT memorial (similar to the one at the Nashville National Cemetery) on the grounds of Fort Pillow.

If I can be of further assistance please advise and thank you for your support of this project.

Fred M. Prouty
Director of Programs
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37214
615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: Yulanda Burgess [yulandab@msn.com]

Sent: Friday, November 08, 2013 11:33 AM

To: Carroll.West@mtsu.edu

Cc: Susan Whitaker; michaelrbradley@lighttube.net; Norman Hill; atop@tennesseehistory.org; Wayne Moore; rmitchel@fisk.edu; Fred Prouty; heritagetours@bellsouth.net; oakley@easttnhistory.org; Lee Curtis; Laura.Holder@mtsu.edu; jeremy.harrell@tn.gov; mapeckham@aol.com; Lois Riggins-Ezzell; friendsofchch@gmail.com; mjgrainger@cox.net; stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net; Patrick McIntyre; robthicks@aol.com; rep.joe.armstrong@capitol.tn.gov; sen.bill.ketron@capitol.tn.gov; Patricia Gray; Jeff Wells

Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

November 8, 2013

Carroll Van West, PhD
Director, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
Tennessee State Historian

Co-chair, Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission

Dear Dr. Van West,

Thank you for your insight on a Civil War 150th Anniversary Commemoration at Fort Pillow on April 12, 2014. I apologize for this delayed acknowledgment.

I can envision everyone working together and pulling our resources to educate the public about this historic incident as well as acknowledge those men, women and children who lost their lives on that tragic day. Although Fort Pillow is a Tennessee State Park it is part of our nation's history. When Fort Pillow enters into a conversation among historians there is a pause followed by much discussion. The general public, however, has little knowledge of Fort Pillow and what took place. This omission exemplifies how selective remembrance of our historical past can hinder an appreciation of how history overall effects our lives. Therefore, a healing needs to begin so that We, as a nation, can face the tragic moments in our history and begin discussion and preservation of those events.

I have been a victim of selective remembrance as my family didn't often talk about the past. "Don't want to talk about it" or "You don't want to know about that" were phrases often given when I explored my Tennessee and Arkansas family roots. It took a lot of poking and pulling to discover that my great grandfather, Armstead Burgess, was a Civil War soldier. As I travel throughout the country and speak to the public I include him and Fort Pillow in my presentations whenever possible. The responses have been overwhelming. There is sadness that they didn't know about the incident and further sadness that there has been no ongoing effort to remember the soldiers who fought there. What has happened in the insuring one hundred fifty years has become almost as important as what happened on April 12, 1864. These are my experiences....

I have extended my assistance to Jeff Wells as I have been involved in historical interpretation for thirty years and participated in several ceremonies commemorating USCT soldiers. In fact, this past weekend I had the honor of attending and participating in a ceremony for Private Lewis Martin of the 29th USCI in Springfield, Illinois. Pvt. Martin lost an arm and leg in the Battle of the Crater. It took one hundred twenty years for him to receive a headstone. Those who attended the ceremony acknowledged that "It is never too late to right a wrong." Pvt. Martin is symbolic of many native sons of the south who fought for the Union who never received a military burial or tribute. I hope that on April 12, 2014, at Fort Pillow we will pause and acknowledge those native sons and daughters. Let that date begin the movement to establish a monument at Fort Pillow so future generation can see, pause and reflect on the scarifies of those who secured their freedom and liberty.

Very truly yours,

Yulanda Burgess
10857 Lakepointe
Detroit, MI 48224-1701

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>

Fri 11/8/2013, 3:27 PM

To: Yulanda Burgess <yulandab@msn.com>

Cc: Jeff Wells <Jeff.Wells@tn.gov>; Patrick McIntyre <Patrick.McIntyre@tn.gov>;

bllovett1936@gmail.com <bllovett1936@gmail.com>; normhill1@msn.com <normhill1@msn.com>;

sellott@gplce.com <sellott@gplce.com>; stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net <stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net>

Ms. Burgess,

Thank you for copying me on your greatly appreciated letter. Well said!

Your comments reflect my own personal goal of commemorating and placing this important history in the hands of your school children and general public. To that end the Tennessee Wars Commission has worked for several years to completed and publish a book dedicated to Tennessee and our nations USCT. That publication, *Ready to Die for Liberty; Tennessee's United States Colored Troops in the Civil War*, is now in hand at our office. I will send you two complementary copies and please advise if you would like additional booklets. Over 2,000 of these books are to be sent to all Tennessee libraries and hopefully they will be available for purchase from the Tennessee Historical Commission and possibly other outlets as well.

I plan to discussed with Mr. Jeff Wells our desire to hopefully premier this publication during the Fort Pillow 150th Commemoration Ceremony in April 2014. I would also like to pursue discussions with Tennessee State Parks as to the feasibility of placing a USCT memorial (similar to the one at the Nashville National Cemetery) on the grounds of Fort Pillow.

If I can be of further assistance please advise and thank you for your support of this project.

Fred M. Prouty
Director of Programs
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37214
615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: Yulanda Burgess [yulandab@msn.com]

Sent: Friday, November 08, 2013 11:33 AM

To: Carroll.West@mtsu.edu

Cc: Susan Whitaker; michaelbradley@lighttube.net; Norman Hill; atop@tennesseehistory.org; Wayne Moore; rmitchel@fisk.edu; Fred Prouty; heritagetours@bellsouth.net; oakley@easttnhistory.org; Lee Curtis; Laura.Holder@mtsu.edu; jeremy.harrell@tn.gov; mapeckham@aol.com; Lois Riggins-Ezzell; friendsofchch@gmail.com; mjgrainger@cox.net; stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net; Patrick McIntyre; robthicks@aol.com; rep.joe.armstrong@capitol.tn.gov; sen.bill.ketron@capitol.tn.gov; Patricia Gray; Jeff Wells

Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

November 8, 2013

Carroll Van West, PhD
Director, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
Tennessee State Historian

Co-chair, Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission

Dear Dr. Van West,

Thank you for your insight on a Civil War 150th Anniversary Commemoration at Fort Pillow on April 12, 2014. I apologize for this delayed acknowledgment.

I can envision everyone working together and pulling our resources to educate the public about this historic incident as well as acknowledge those men, women and children who lost their lives on that tragic day. Although Fort Pillow is a Tennessee State Park it is part of our nation's history. When Fort Pillow enters into a conversation among historians there is a pause followed by much discussion. The general public, however, has little knowledge of Fort Pillow and what took place. This omission exemplifies how selective remembrance of our historical past can hinder an appreciation of how history overall effects our lives. Therefore, a healing needs to begin so that We, as a nation, can face the tragic moments in our history and begin discussion and preservation of those events.

I have been a victim of selective remembrance as my family didn't often talk about the past. "Don't want to talk about it" or "You don't want to know about that" were phrases often given when I explored my Tennessee and Arkansas family roots. It took a lot of poking and pulling to discover that my great grandfather, Armstead Burgess, was a Civil War soldier. As I travel throughout the country and speak to the public I include him and Fort Pillow in my presentations whenever possible. The responses have been overwhelming. There is sadness that they didn't know about the incident and further sadness that there has been no ongoing effort to remember the soldiers who fought there. What has happened in the insuring one hundred fifty years has become almost as important as what happened on April 12, 1864. These are my experiences....

I have extended my assistance to Jeff Wells as I have been involved in historical interpretation for thirty years and participated in several ceremonies commemorating USCT soldiers. In fact, this past weekend I had the honor of attending and participating in a ceremony for Private Lewis Martin of the 29th USCI in Springfield, Illinois. Pvt. Martin lost an arm and leg in the Battle of the Crater. It took one hundred twenty years for him to receive a headstone. Those who attended the ceremony acknowledged that "It is never too late to right a wrong." Pvt. Martin is symbolic of many native sons of the south who fought for the Union who never received a military burial or tribute. I hope that on April 12, 2014, at Fort Pillow we will pause and acknowledge those native sons and daughters. Let that date begin the movement to establish a monument at Fort Pillow so future generation can see, pause and reflect on the scarifies of those who secured their freedom and liberty.

Very truly yours,

Yulanda Burgess
10857 Lakepointe
Detroit, MI 48224-1701

FW: Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

Yulanda Burgess

Tue 10/29/2013, 8:50 AM

To:george smith <decherd2@hotmail.com>

Dr. George,

Here is a response.

I am moving forward. I don't have any funding to make this possible but it will be possible due to others commitment. It's a pay your own way and be there type of occasion. I need to establish a TN address to handle snail mail. My mother is going to be in Detroit for about two months. That will be a critical time that mail can't be forwarded from our Memphis address to here in Detroit.

More later,

-Yulanda

> From: Carroll.West@mtsu.edu

> To: yulandab@msn.com; susan.whitaker@tn.gov; michaelrbradley@lighttube.net; normhill1@msn.com; atop@tennesseehistory.org; wayne.moore@tn.gov; rmitchel@fisk.edu; fred.prouty@tn.gov; heritagetours@bellsouth.net; oakley@easttnhistory.org; lee.curtis@tn.gov; Laura.Holder@mtsu.edu; jeremy.harrell@tn.gov; mapeckham@aol.com; lois.riggins-ezell@tn.gov; friendsofchch@gmail.com; mjgrainger@cox.net; stevemcdanielrep@bellsouth.net; patrick.mcintyre@tn.gov; robthicks@aol.com; rep.joe.armstrong@capitol.tn.gov; sen.bill.ketron@capitol.tn.gov

> CC: patricia.gray@tn.gov; jeff.wells@tn.gov

> Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration: April 12, 2014

> Date: Sat, 26 Oct 2013 01:17:10 +0000

>

> Dear Yulanda Burgess,

>

> Thank you for the thoughtful communication; I appreciate it. The Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission's signature event schedule has been announced on the commission's website since 2010. Our first event took place in Nashville in 2010, Cookeville in 2011, Shiloh in 2012, Chattanooga in 2013, Franklin in 2014, and Knoxville in 2015. Our whole story approach to commemorating the state's entire Civil War experience is a constant theme in all of these events.

>

> In developing our statewide plans, and understanding the limits of budgets and funding, we felt these major events would reach the largest number of Tennesseans, especially school children. And thousands of students have been able to attend the events, much to our satisfaction.

>

> We also recognized that many individual battle sites would be carrying out their own commemorative activities throughout 2011-2015. Just recently the Battle of Fort Sanders in Knoxville was commemorated appropriately by local groups. Fort Negley in Nashville had a very good event last winter; it will again this year and especially in 2014, no doubt. On Oct. 4-6, I spoke at a three-day event in Collierville which focused on its local battle as well as other West Tennessee battles, including Fort Pillow. Tennessee State Parks have been especially effective in supporting programs at its facilities; for example there is a new center at Fort Johnson (Johnsonville) where another appropriate event took place earlier this year. And, most importantly, Commissioner Susan Whitaker and the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development have marketed and publicized all of these events across Tennessee. The commission itself can only do so much but with our partners in tourism we can promote and get the story out about the many events taking place across Tennessee.

>

> No doubt, Tennessee State Parks will have an appropriate event at Fort Pillow on April 12, 2014, and the commission, through Tennessee Tourism, will publicize the event statewide. I do not know the details--having been focused on the Chattanooga event earlier this month--but I have the upmost confidence that Jeff Wells and the staff at Pillow will have a solid program. I met at the park with Jeff a year ago where we discussed enhancing the exhibits at the park's visitor center. I know that the staff there understands the full story and wants it to be a museum and site that all Tennesseans will be proud of. Indeed, I plan as State Historian to be there at Pillow next April and if the state parks wishes, I will speak as State Historian as to importance of what happened there, both for the Civil War in 1864 and for the years afterward.

>

> Nor should you doubt the commission's commitment to the Fort Pillow story. You will find it in the commission website, on its Tennessee Civil War App (free download for both Apple and Android) and in the sites interpreted for the Tennessee Welcome Center at I-155 Dyersburg (the closest welcome center to the Fort Pillow park). We have been staging and promoting events as their anniversaries approach, and soon it will be time to bring forth Fort Pillow. I look forward to meeting you next April.

>

> Thanks for your commitment to the state's history. Citizens such as yourself make me proud to be a Tennessean.

>

> Carroll Van West, PhD
> Director, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
> Tennessee State Historian
> Co-chair, Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission
> 615-898-2947

Fort Pillow Descendant's rally for commemoration next year

Yulanda Burgess

Wed 5/22/2013, 12:27 PM

To:jridley@nashvillescene.com <jridley@nashvillescene.com>

To Whom It May Concern,

In Betsy Phillip's January 4, 2011 editorial, "Tennessee, It's Time to Let Nathan Bedford Forrest Rest" she states:

Regardless of what you think the reasons for the Civil War were, there were black Memphians at Fort Pillow. Nearly all of them were killed. But you know what? They had families. Their communities suffered from their loss. What would a Nathan Bedford Forrest exhibit at the Civil Rights Museum do but reinforce the idea that Tennessee puts more stock into redeeming him than mourning them?

I am the great daughter of one of the few black Union soldiers who survived the slaughter: Pvt. Armstead Burgess. Many of his descendants live in Memphis and Nashville. Another survivor, Pvt. Peter Williams, has descendant's also residing in Memphis. Both families are in the process of ensuring that the 150th Anniversary of Fort Pillow is not forgotten in the midst of all the hoopla. We are asking a day of commemoration, prayer, and tribute to the men, women and children who garrisoned at Fort Pillow under the Union forces. Pvt Burgess and Pvt Williams were survivor but many, many of their patriots perished under direct orders by the Confederate commanders to systematically kill. We want a focus on the Unionist who were garrisoned at that fort instead of all the modern day myths about the Confederate commanders who ordered their deaths. Let us celebrate THEIR LIVES and acknowledge that their deaths were not in vain.

Please find attached our advocacy flyer promoting an official observation of Fort Pillow for next year.

Please contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Yulanda Burgess

Great Granddaughter of Pvt. Armstead Burgess

1st Alabama Special Siege Light Artillery (org. Corinth, MS)

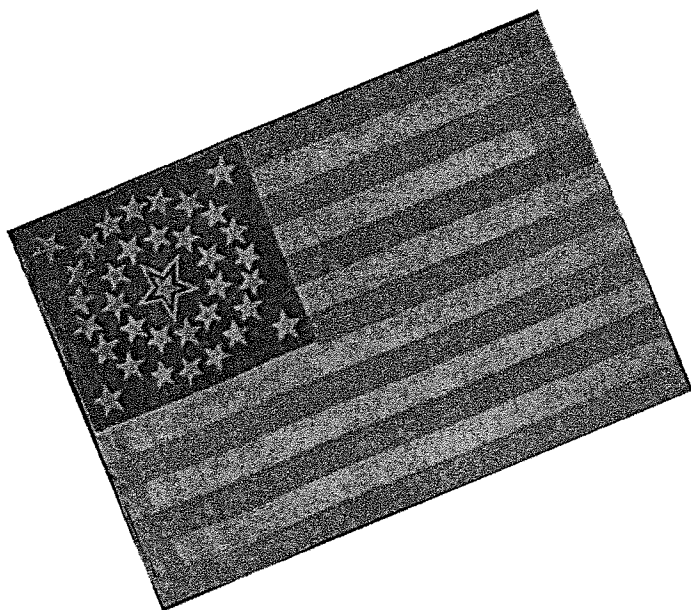
1st Tennessee US Colored Heavy Artillery

6th US Colored Heavy Artillery (Fort Pillow)

POW (MS and VA)

7th US Colored Heavy Artillery (MIA/KIA)

11th US Colored Infantry (New) (Fort Pickering, Memphis, TN)



A Plea To Remember Fort Pillow

**150th Anniversary
Commemorating and Honoring
The Men, Women and Children
Garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864**

**An Invitation to
SAVE THE DATES
April 11-12, 2014**

**Fort Pillow State Historic Park
3122 Park Road
Henning, Tennessee 38041**

The State of Tennessee Historical Commission and its agency, the Tennessee Wars Commission, have not publicly announced any plans to officially observe the 150th Anniversary of Fort Pillow. However, there is a possibility for some type of observation based on a recent a conversation between a USCT descendant and the director of the agency. Therefore, this is a personal invitation -- *with no connection nor speaking on behalf of the Tennessee Historical Commission, its agencies, or the Fort Pillow State Historic Park* -- to join descendants on April 11-12, 2014, to remember their ancestors who were garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

If you would like to encourage the Tennessee Historical Commission to officially "Remember Fort Pillow" please write them directly at:

Tennessee Historical Commission
and Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, TN 37243-0442
email: Ask.TDEC@tn.gov

If you are a Tennessee resident, you are encouraged to write your Tennessee legislature to ensure that this date is not forgotten by this generation. Also, many of the men with the USCT artillery were from Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas, therefore you should approach your congress person to have their native sons remembered.

Tentative plans being organized by the descendants of Fort Pillow include a reception on Friday, April 11, 2014, and a prayer and liturgical service on April 12, 2014. Accommodations are being explored for either in Ripley or Covington, Tennessee. The reception target is in Henning, Tennessee. If and when the State of Tennessee officially makes plans to observe this date, the descendants will fall in line with those official plans.

More information will be forthcoming. If you would like to keep informed, please email:
RememberFortPillow1864@yahoo.com

Information will also be posted on the USCTLHA Yahoo Discussion Board at
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/usctbrigade/>

Please don't let April 12, 2014, pass with a whisper and lack of forethought.

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Yulanda Burgess

Mon 9/23/2013, 12:46 PM

To: Jeff Wells <jeff.wells@tn.gov>

Cc: Norman Hill <normhill1@msn.com>; Patrick McIntyre <patrick.mcintyre@tn.gov>;

George Smith <decherd2@hotmail.com>; Ward Weems <ward.weems@tn.gov>; Fred Prouty <fred.prouty@tn.gov>

Bcc: Jeanette Bouknight@thecmechurch.com <jeanette.bouknight@thecmechurch.com>

Dear Mr. Wells,

Thank you for contacting me. I had made other attempts to contact people at Fort Pillow without success. I am happy that the loop has been closed.

A Save the Date request has been communicated to the USCT and living history community. Additionally, two descendant families of USCT survivors have rallied to gather together for a meet and greet on Friday, April 11, 2014, and to attend commemoration services of Saturday, April 12, 2014. It is, of course, an ultimate goal to locate descendants of Union soldiers who were killed in action at Fort Pillow.

My great grandfather, Pvt. Armstead, was a member of the Christian (Colored) Methodist Episcopal Church. The CME Church's origin is deeply rooted in the Civil War and the State of Tennessee's history. It was established in the Jacksonville, Tennessee by former slaves during reconstruction and the denomination's anthem reflects the struggles and conquest for freedom. Therefore, part of my family's objective is to have the Bishop of the 1st Episcopal District of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Lawrence Reddick, III, participate in the commemorative ceremony. The national headquarters is located in Memphis, Tennessee. See <http://www.thecmechurch.org/>

I have been involved in historical interpretation for thirty years. I am currently a member of the commemorative 5th USCI, Co. C, and on the Board of Directors of the USCT Living History Association. In the course of those years, I have participated in many ceremonies honoring men and women who fought in the armed forces. This includes planning and organizing a ceremony honoring Medal of Honor recipient Milton Holland in Arlington Cemetery. There are certain traditions associated with honoring USCTs, such as singing or reciting the "Valiant Soldier" and the placement of rosemary. If you need any assistance with planning the ceremony or contacting the various USCT units and organizations (approximately 34) please let me know. There has been much discussion on how to commemorate the actions that took place on April 12, 1864. The opinions vary from having an encampment, battle scenario, public displays, and a day of prayer, reflection and homage to the men and civilians whose lives were cut short on that day. These are the things to contemplate as we quickly approach the 150th Anniversary.

Again, thank you for contacting me. I look forward hearing more from you soon.

-Yulanda Burgess

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Yulanda Burgess

Tue 9/17/2013, 4:31 PM

To: Fred Prouty <fred.prouty@tn.gov>

Mr. Prouty,

Thank you for your thorough and thoughtful response. I will contact the individuals you have provided.

I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Best Regards,

-Yulanda Burgess

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>
Wed 9/18/2013, 9:25 AM
To: Yulanda Burgess <yulandab@msn.com>
Ms. Burgess,

Fort Pillow should be thought of as the "Pearl Harbor" and the "Alamo" for African Americans and as you say a place to reflect and to heal.

I your letter of September 16, 2013 you mentioned the photograph of Pvt. Peter Williams of the 6th USCHA who were at Fort Pillow during the battle. I would suggest that the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA) would be very interested in seeing and, if possible, scanning the photo to be recorded in their Civil War archives. If you approve I will be glad to forward this information to Dr. Wayne Moore at TSLA, as I am sure he would very much like to contact you and possibly the State Archives conservationist could give you some pointers on the preservation of the photo.

Please advise and I will send Dr. Moore your email address if that is alright with you.

Regards,
Fred M. Prouty
Director of Programs
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37214
615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: Yulanda Burgess [yulandab@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2013 5:06 PM
To: Fred Prouty
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Fred,

That would be absolutely wonderful. It would be a much needed spot of reflection and contemplation about what all the fighting was about. I hope that it will become a place for people to heal the wounds.

-Y

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>

Tue 9/17/2013, 4:59 PM

To: Yulanda Burgess <yulandab@msn.com>

Yulanda,

At some point I would like to talk with you about possibilities of placing a bronze USCT monument (like the one at the Nashville Nat., Cemetery) at Ft. Pillow. I would recommend that we make a conference call in the near future with all concerned parties.

Sincerely,

Fred M. Prouty
Director of Programs
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37214
615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: Yulanda Burgess [yulandab@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2013 4:31 PM
To: Fred Prouty
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Mr. Prouty,

Thank you for your thorough and thoughtful response. I will contact the individuals you have provided.

I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Best Regards,
-Yulanda Burgess

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Jeff Wells <Jeff.Wells@tn.gov>

Thu 9/19/2013, 1:49 PM

To: yulandab@msn.com <yulandab@msn.com>

Cc: normhill1@msn.com <normhill1@msn.com>; Patrick McIntyre <Patrick.McIntyre@tn.gov>;

decherd2@hotmail.com <decherd2@hotmail.com>; Ward Weems <Ward.Weems@tn.gov>;

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>

Good afternoon Ms. Burgess,

My dear friend, Fred Prouty, shared with me your earlier correspondence so I thought I would jump in and introduce myself. As Director of Interpretive Programming and Education for Tennessee State Parks I'm deeply involved with the event planning at Fort Pillow State Historic Park. Please be assured we share your desire to properly commemorate the sacrifices of the United States Colored Troops. Although planning is in its early stages, I would be pleased to share what we have so far. We are working to improve many of the exhibits in the museum and produce a panel or plaque with the names of those killed at Fort Pillow for permanent display in the museum space. In the reconstructed fortifications we are making improvements to better illustrate what the site may have looked like in the spring of 1864.

Over the weekend of April 12-13, 2014 we are planning a commemorative event that will include living historians (although I was under the impression, perhaps mistakenly, that the 13th USCT would be engaged in Charleston SC that weekend), lectures, tours and a service for those killed. We have been contacted by the Reverends Cliff Bahlinger and Andre Johnson out of Memphis who have expressed a desire to be involved with the service which will include a reading of the names of those killed in action.

As additional details are developed I will be sure to share them with you and look forward to the opportunity to meet and talk.

With kindest regards,

Jeff Wells

Director of Interpretive Programming and Education

Tennessee State Parks

615.532.0031

From: Fred Prouty

Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2013 5:21 PM

To: yulandab@msn.com

Cc: Jeff Wells; normhill1@msn.com; Patrick McIntyre

Subject: FW: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Dear Ms. Burgess,

Mr. Norm Hill has shared with me your questions about the participation of the Tennessee Wars Commission and the Tennessee Historical Commission's involvement with the 150th remembrance of the Battle of Fort Pillow, Tennessee.

First of all Tennessee's official Civil War 150th State Sesquicentennial Commission is in charge of creating "signature events" for each year of our states 150th observance of the Civil War years. I would suggest that you contact Ms. Patricia Gray at Tennessee Department of Tourism Development who is Tennessee's key contact person for the Tennessee Sesquicentennial Commission at: Patricia.Gray@tn.gov or her office at: 615-741-9004 and/or cell: 615-310-7539. You might also want to contact Ms. Lee Curtis, Director of Program Development at Tennessee Tourism who also works with the State Sesquicentennial Commission at: Lee.Curtis@tn.gov or 615-741-9045.

As to the Wars Commission involvement in the Fort Pillow Commutation I have personally been in talks with Mr. Jeff Wells, Tennessee State Parks Director of Interpretation Programs and Education, about the

importance of the 2014 Sesquicentennial remembrance ceremony at Fort Pillow State Historic Site, operated by Tennessee State Parks. Mr. Wells and State Parks will be in charge of the event planning. I have personally spoken with Mr. Norm Hill, Bill Radcliff and Dr. Smith in hopes of involving the USCT living history regiment as possible color bearers for the event. I have also spoken with Ms. Linda Wynn of the Tennessee Historical Commission and historian and professor Dr. Bobbie Lovette about the need to honor those fallen heroes at Fort Pillow on the 150th anniversary on April 12, 2014. I personally alerted T.D.E.C. Commissioner Robert Martineau and Deputy Commissioner Brock Hill (during their May 2013 staff meeting) as to the state and national importance of planning a fitting tribute for the 150th Commemoration of the Battle at Fort Pillow as a remembrance for those honored USCT troops who died for liberty. Mr. Jeff Wells is in charge of the event planning and will no doubt create a fitting remembrance ceremony (Mr. Wells contact information is below).

The Tennessee Wars Commission has spent the last three years in creating the book, *Ready To Die For Liberty, Tennessee United States Colored Troops in the Civil War*. I have today received the first draft copy of the booklet and have made a few corrections for the printers. When those corrections are addressed the Wars Commission will begin the printing of 5,000 copies for distribution to all Tennessee Schools and libraries. I am hopeful that the booklets will be printed in the next few weeks and I would suggest, as I have for several years, that it be included and premiered at the Fort Pillow Tennessee Sesquicentennial event on 2014. The Wars Commission is funding research at the National Archives in Washington for the names of the USCT who were involved (killed and/or missing) in the Fort Pillow engagement and hopefully we will have those names by the 150th memorial event.

All questions on the Tennessee State Park commemorative ceremonies and plans for the Fort Pillow event should be addressed to Mr. Jeff Wells at: Jeff.Wells@tn.gov or call his office at 615: 532-0031.

As Director of Programs for the Tennessee Wars Commission I would be honored to attend the Fort Pillow Commemoration event now in the planning stages and Tennessee Historical Commission Director Patrick McIntyre is also very interested in participating.

I have also attached an earlier version DRAFT COPY of our USCT booklet. This is not the current version being printed and I will be glad to send you a copy when they are ready.

If I can be of further assistance please advise.

Best regards,

Fred M. Prouty
 Director of Programs
 Tennessee Wars Commission
 2941 Lebanon Road
 Nashville, TN 37214
 615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
 fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: norm hill [normhill1@msn.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2013 12:32 PM
To: Patrick McIntyre; Fred Prouty
Subject: FW: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Pat and Fred FYI
 Norm

From: yulandab@msn.com
To: decherd2@hotmail.com
CC: normhill1@msn.com; hsojr@bellsouth.net; moverton@mtmc.com; escaped886@yahoo.com; hiwinston@aol.com; 4shirley@bellsouth.net; gstrandall@bellsouth.net; nh5242@aol.com; jabez1950@gmail.com; indhistorian@yahoo.com
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry
Date: Tue, 17 Sep 2013 10:54:13 -0400

Hello Dr. George,

I am attaching the SAVE THE DATE flyer to your cc's.

Be assured that the day will be observed at Fort Pillow, officially or unofficially. We will plough ahead full steam. Our hold is the University of Memphis and the extent of their involvement. The loud voices of a few can be heard on the ears of many. We need to set the record straight that these men fought gallantly from morning until 4 p.m. We need to set the record straight that the men and women who were at Fort Pillow from 4 p.m. well into the next day faced outrageous inflictions of inhumanity just because they were black and because they were Unionist and because many were former slaves who dared to bear arms to fight for their freedom. Many white unionist suffered outrageous treatment just by their mere association. Nathan Bedford Forrest issued the killing orders but his biggest mistake was that, despite the massive slaughter, the will to survive existed in the bodies of a handfull of men and women and children. The survivors told their stories and the atrocities were recorded. Yet, these men, women and children continued to suffer injustice because their accounts were disbelieved or distorted by the ensuing generations in order to give the Confederate forces clean gloves and to glorify Forrest. The resting places of those massacred at Fort Pillow also were desecrated by prejudice and injustice. From heaven they cry, remember me.... So, let us gather on April 12, 2014, and continue to tell their story and remember them. The story is monumental because, despite the possibilities of further Fort Pillows, black men continued to fight with "Remember Fort Pillow" on their lips.

Peace, Joy, and the Comfort of Jesus,
Yulanda Burgess

From: decherd2@hotmail.com
To: yulandab@msn.com; fred.prouty@tn.gov
CC: normhill1@msn.com; hsojr@bellsouth.net; moverton@mtmc.com; escaped886@yahoo.com; hiwinston@aol.com; 4shirley@bellsouth.net; gstrandall@bellsouth.net; nh5242@aol.com; jabez1950@gmail.com; indhistorian@yahoo.com
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry
Date: Tue, 17 Sep 2013 01:39:59 +0000

Yulanda

Thank you for keeping the dream alive to do something special at Fort Pillow as we approach the 150th year of this historical event. It is just difficult to believe that this major event in the history of the war should go unnoticed.

We must observe this significant moment as a tribute to the important role that individuals of African Descent played in making this country the land of the free.

George Smith, Corporal

13th USCT
Living historian

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Yulanda Burgess

Tue 9/17/2013, 9:54 AM

To: george smith <decherd2@hotmail.com>

Cc: Norman Hill <normhill1@msn.com>; Huston Overton <hsojr@bellsouth.net>; Mary Overton <moverton@mtemc.com>;

gary burke <escaped886@yahoo.com>; Winston Wiley <hiwinston@aol.com>; Shirley Gaines <4shirley@bellsouth.net>;

gail Randall <gsrandall@bellsouth.net>; Helen Hill <nh5242@aol.com>; jimmy smith <jabez1950@gmail.com>;

sharon heist <indhistorian@yahoo.com>

Hello Dr. George,

I am attaching the SAVE THE DATE flyer to your cc's.

Be assured that the day will be observed at Fort Pillow, officially or unofficially. We will plough ahead full steam. Our hold is the University of Memphis and the extent of their involvement. The loud voices of a few can be heard on the ears of many. We need to set the record straight that these men fought gallantly from morning until 4 p.m. We need to set the record straight that the men and women who were at Fort Pillow from 4 p.m. well into the next day faced outrageous inflictions of inhumanity just because they were black and because they were Unionist and because many were former slaves who dared to bear arms to fight for their freedom. Many white unionist suffered outrageous treatment just by their mere association. Nathan Bedford Forrest issued the killing orders but his biggest mistake was that, despite the massive slaughter, the will to survive existed in the bodies of a handfull of men and women and children. The survivors told their stories and the atrocities were recorded. Yet, these men, women and children continued to suffer injustice because their accounts were disbelieved or distorted by the ensuing generations in order to give the Confederate forces clean gloves and to glorify Forrest. The resting places of those massacred at Fort Pillow also were desecrated by prejudice and injustice. From heaven they cry, remember me.... So, let us gather on April 12, 2014, and continue to tell their story and remember them. The story is monumental because, despite the possibilities of further Fort Pillows, black men continued to fight with "Remember Fort Pillow" on their lips.

Peace, Joy, and the Comfort of Jesus,

Yulanda Burgess

From: decherd2@hotmail.com

To: yulandab@msn.com; fred.prouty@tn.gov

CC: normhill1@msn.com; hsojr@bellsouth.net; moverton@mtemc.com;

escaped886@yahoo.com; hiwinston@aol.com; 4shirley@bellsouth.net;

gsrandall@bellsouth.net; nh5242@aol.com; jabez1950@gmail.com; indhistorian@yahoo.com

Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Date: Tue, 17 Sep 2013 01:39:59 +0000

Yulanda

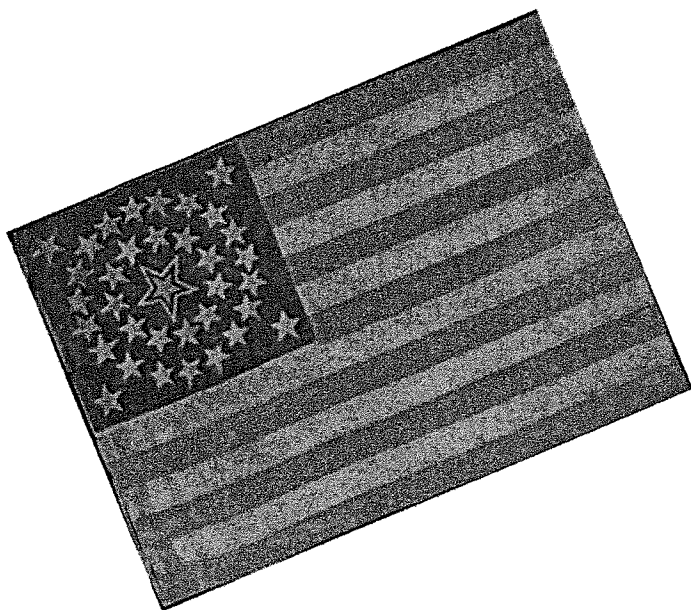
Thank you for keeping the dream alive to do something special at Fort Pillow as we approach the 150th year of this historical event. It is just difficult to believe that this major event in the history of the war should go unnoticed.

We must observe this significant moment as a tribute to the important role that individuals of African Descent played in making this country the land of the free.

George Smith, Corporal

13th USCT

Living historian



A Plea To Remember Fort Pillow

**150th Anniversary
Commemorating and Honoring
The Men, Women and Children
Garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864**

**An Invitation to
SAVE THE DATES
April 11-12, 2014**

**Fort Pillow State Historic Park
3122 Park Road
Henning, Tennessee 38041**

The State of Tennessee Historical Commission and its agency, the Tennessee Wars Commission, have not publicly announced any plans to officially observe the 150th Anniversary of Fort Pillow. However, there is a possibility for some type of observation based on a recent a conversation between a USCT descendant and the director of the agency. Therefore, this is a personal invitation -- *with no connection nor speaking on behalf of the Tennessee Historical Commission, its agencies, or the Fort Pillow State Historic Park* -- to join descendants on April 11-12, 2014, to remember their ancestors who were garrisoned at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

If you would like to encourage the Tennessee Historical Commission to officially "Remember Fort Pillow" please write them directly at:

Tennessee Historical Commission
and Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road, Nashville, TN 37243-0442
email: Ask.TDEC@tn.gov

If you are a Tennessee resident, you are encouraged to write your Tennessee legislature to ensure that this date is not forgotten by this generation. Also, many of the men with the USCT artillery were from Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas, therefore you should approach your congress person to have their native sons remembered.

Tentative plans being organized by the descendants of Fort Pillow include a reception on Friday, April 11, 2014, and a prayer and liturgical service on April 12, 2014. Accommodations are being explored for either in Ripley or Covington, Tennessee. The reception target is in Henning, Tennessee. If and when the State of Tennessee officially makes plans to observe this date, the descendants will fall in line with those official plans.

More information will be forthcoming. If you would like to keep informed, please email:
RememberFortPillow1864@yahoo.com
Information will also be posted on the USCTLHA Yahoo Discussion Board at
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/usctbrigade/>

Please don't let April 12, 2014, pass with a whisper and lack of forethought.

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Fred Prouty <Fred.Prouty@tn.gov>
Tue 9/17/2013, 2:34 PM
To: Yulanda Burgess <yulandab@msn.com>

Fred M. Prouty
Director of Programs
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37214
615-532-1550
Fred.Prouty@tn.gov
fax 615-532-1549
<http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org>

From: Yulanda Burgess [yulandab@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2013 1:02 PM
To: Fred Prouty
Subject: RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration for 2014 Inquiry

Yulanda Burgess
10857 Lakepointe
Detroit, MI 48224-
1701
313/910-0410
yulandab@msn.com

September 16, 2013

Via Email, Only: Fred.Prouty@tn.gov

Mr. Fred Prouty, Military Sites Preservation Specialist
[Tennessee Historical Commission](http://www.tnhistoricalcommission.org)
Tennessee Wars Commission
2941 Lebanon Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

RE: Fort Pillow Commemoration – April 2013

Dear Mr. Prouty,

I write to inquiry if there has been progress on commemorating the incidents of Fort Pillow as part of Tennessee's 150th Civil War observations on April 12, 2014. I write on behalf of two families. Since we last spoke, I had the pleasure to meet another descendant of the Fort Piliow massacre.

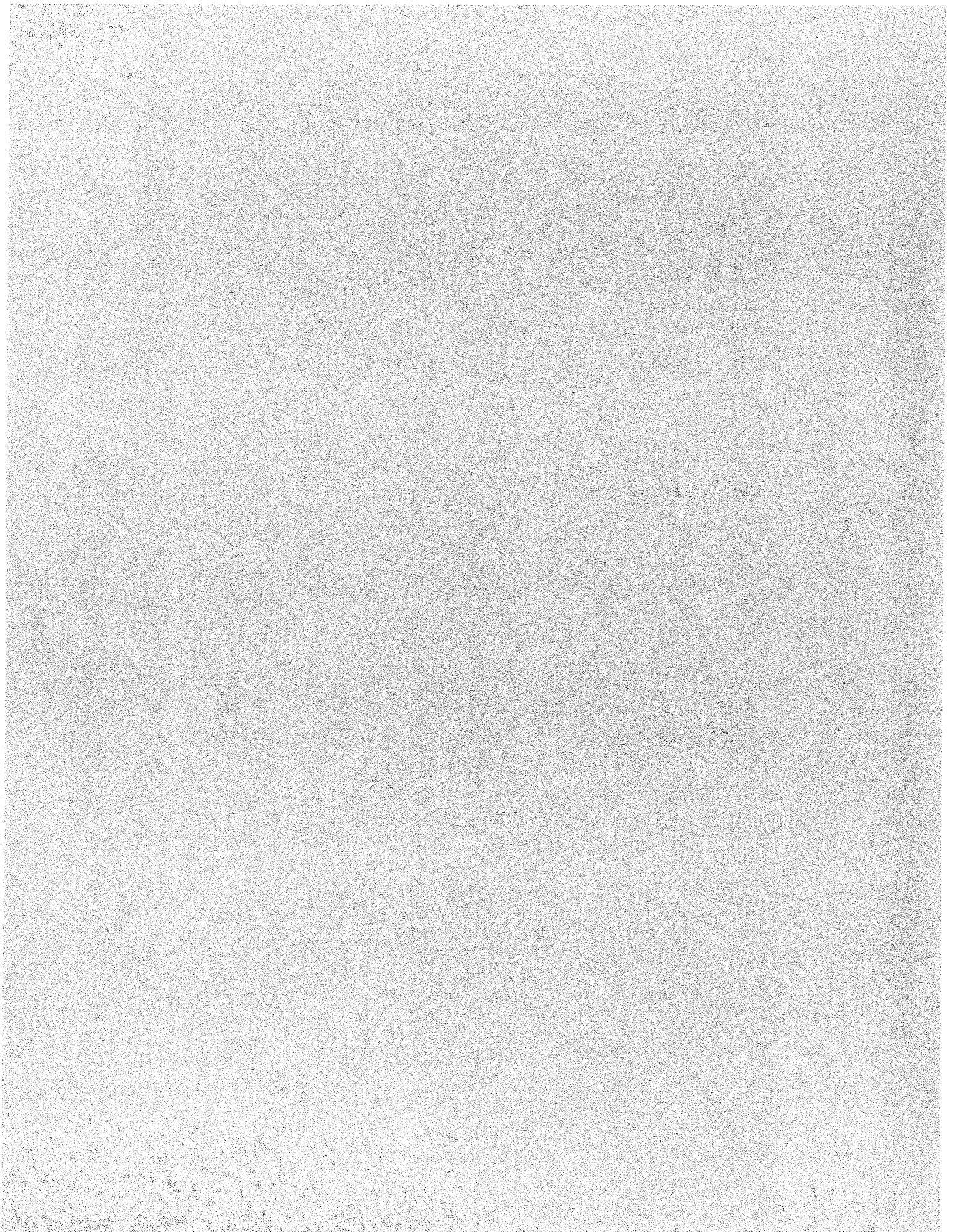
Joe Williams is the great grandson of Peter Williams who, like my great grandfather sustained injuries but suvived Fort Pillow. Pvt. Williams was a native of Tennessee and continued to reside in Tennessee after the war. Joe has done extensive research and can provide information on the 6th USCHA who were taken prisoner. Additionally, Joe has a photograph of Pvt. Peter Williams -- probably the only known photograph of a member of the 6th USCHA. The photograph is in poor condition and in need of restoration. Joe Williams can be contacted at 1270 Mulberry Road, Radcliff, Kentucky, 40160, tele: 270-312-9912.

Therefore, on behalf of the descendant's of Pvts. Peter Williams and Armstead Burgess, please provide an update on any information regarding commemorating the 150th anniversary of Fort Pillow. We are also interested in any preservation efforts being made for Fort Pillow.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please fell free to contact me by telephone or responsive email.

Sincerely yours,

/s/
Yulanda Burgess



Attachment G



Tennessee Senate

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CLERK

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 178

By Tate

A RESOLUTION

to honor the memory of the African-American soldiers who died at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

WHEREAS, from the founding of the United States of America, African Americans have bravely served their country in combat, despite often having to endure racism, discrimination, segregation, and inhumane conditions; and

WHEREAS, some 154 years ago during the Civil War, a shameful episode in our nation's history occurred when African-American Union soldiers were slaughtered while attempting to surrender during The Battle of Fort Pillow; and

WHEREAS, on April 12, 1864, Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest's Confederate cavalrymen attacked the isolated Union garrison at Fort Pillow in West Tennessee, which overlooked the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, of the 500-600-strong Union garrison defending Fort Pillow, more than one-half of the soldiers were African American; and

WHEREAS, after an initial bombardment, General Forrest asked for the badly outmanned garrison to surrender; the Union commander hesitated, hoping for support from Union ships approaching Fort Pillow via the Mississippi River; General Forrest, suspicious of the delay, then ordered the Confederate troops to attack; and

WHEREAS, the 1,500-2,500 Confederate cavalry troopers easily stormed and captured Fort Pillow; as the battle raged inside the fort walls, the situation degenerated into chaos, and command and control on both sides vanished; and

WHEREAS, the Confederate Army's conduct after the battle was quickly called into question; between 277 and 295 Union troops, most of whom were African American, were killed in total, and another 100-plus seriously wounded, while Confederate losses numbered only fourteen soldiers; and

WHEREAS, statistics reported by Encyclopaedia Britannica indicate that twice as many Union soldiers were killed during the battle than were wounded, an inverse ratio for Civil War battles, and only twenty percent of the black soldiers present were taken prisoner, while sixty percent of the white soldiers were captured; and

WHEREAS, both Union and Confederate eyewitnesses reported that an unknown number of African-American soldiers were gunned down while attempting to surrender; many were shot as they fled, while others drowned in the Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, Confederate sympathizers averred that the incident never occurred, and the report of the Congressional committee investigating this brutal episode had a decidedly pro-Union propagandist slant; still, the vast majority of historians are convinced that a massacre did indeed take place; and

WHEREAS, like the Alamo a generation earlier, the Fort Pillow massacre became a rallying cry for African Americans as they fought for their independence via the abolition of slavery; and

WHEREAS, the incident served to harden the resolve of African-American soldiers, and "Remember Fort Pillow!" became their battle cry; and

WHEREAS, the Fort Pillow massacre should be commemorated to remind us of man's inhumanity to man and the horrific aftermath of war and to encourage us to seek peace, understanding, and equality among all people, regardless of race, creed, or religion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we solemnly honor the memory of the African-American soldiers who died at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864, reflecting upon the courage and resolve they displayed while serving their country.

Adopted: April 17, 2018


Senator Reginald Tate


Speaker of the Senate

SENATE RESOLUTION 178

By Tate

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of the African-American soldiers who died at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864.

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.