



DRIVING TOUR OF  
**CIVIL**  
**WAR**  
 SITES OF  
*Cape Girardeau*

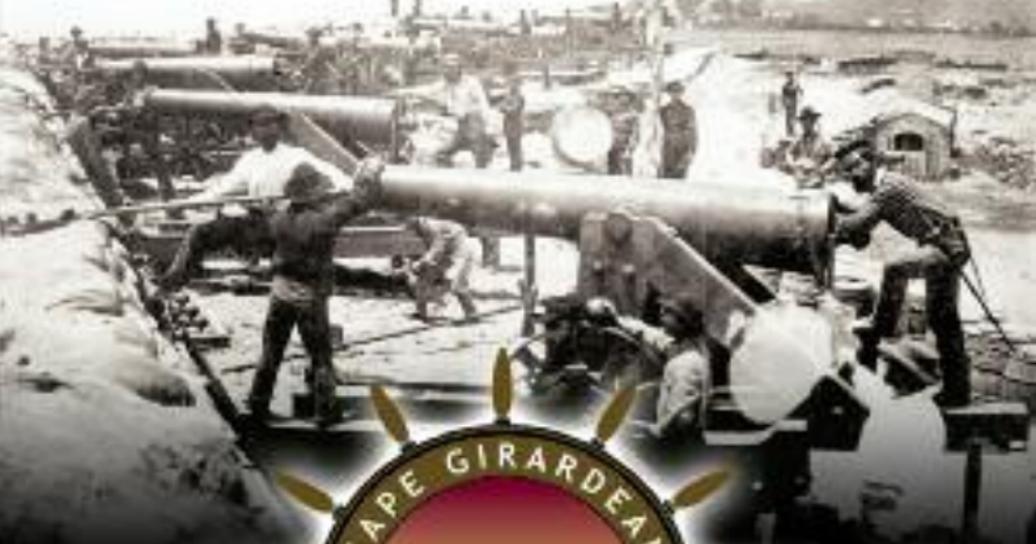


**The nation is engaged in Civil War. Battles take place across the nation. Cape Girardeau is no exception.**

The date is April 26, 1863, and suddenly the calm of an early spring morning is shattered as Union and Confederates soldiers engage in a fierce, four-hour artillery battle that will be known as the Battle of Cape Girardeau.

As the turmoil winds down, the air is heavy with smoke and the smell of gun powder. There are casualties — six Union soldiers lay dead with dozens wounded; the Confederates probably lost twice that number. And there are other casualties: Mothers whose hearts break and mourn for sons who won't be coming home. Sons who to this very day still lie in unmarked graves in Old Lorimier Cemetery.

The "War Between the States" tore deeply at the very fabric of our nation. It was a time when brother fought against brother. Cape Girardeau was a divided community. Although many in Cape Girardeau were sympathetic to the Confederacy, the city was held for the duration of the war by Union forces. You'll find monuments honoring those who fought for the North and for those who fought for the South. Throughout the city, there are memories of this war. Prepare to step back in time as you visit the historical sites of the Civil War in Cape Girardeau.



**CAPE GIRARDEAU CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**  
**PHONE:** 573.335.1631 or 1.800.777.0068  
**EMAIL:** info@visitcape.com  
**WEBSITE:** visitcape.com  
**ADDRESS:** 100 Broadway, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

➔ Travel downtown to the riverfront on Water Street and park near the corner of Water and Themis Streets. Proceed to the Themis Street gate in the Mississippi River floodwall.



## STOP 1 Mississippi Waterfront

- Mississippi Levee
- Port Cape Girardeau
- Site of St. Charles Hotel

The waterfront was a busy place in 1861; normally there would have been many steamboats and various other craft, including a ferry, tied up at this location. Note that the river would have been much wider and shallower at that time.

On the southwest corner of the intersection is one of the oldest structures in Cape Girardeau, today the **Port Cape Girardeau restaurant**. Records don't tell us exactly when construction on this building began but the building was probably a commission house serving the river commerce. In August of 1861 Ulysses S. Grant was made commander of the District of Southeast Missouri. Grant may have used this building as a headquarters during his brief stay in Cape Girardeau, while he took residence in the **St. Charles Hotel**, the site of which is exactly one block west on Themis. Grant later moved his headquarters to Cairo, Illinois, and continued a military career that eventually would reunite the nation. During the battle of Cape Girardeau, the Union steamer, *Ocean Wave*, docked here at 2:00 pm with additional ammunition and troops from Cairo. They were not needed.

➔ On Themis Street, go two blocks west toward the courthouse, passing the site of the St. Charles Hotel, and turn left on Spanish, noting the base of the courthouse steps. Go one block and turn right on Independence St. Go one block to Lorimer Street and turn right. Go up hill and park on street adjacent to Courthouse Park. Be sure to walk to the front of the courthouse for a fantastic view of downtown and the river.

## STOP 2 Courthouse Park

- Confederate Memorial
- Union Memorial
- Common Pleas Courthouse

The **Common Pleas Courthouse** was built in 1854, without the two wings and cupola that are now present. The Union Provost Marshal used the courthouse as headquarters, and the basement dungeon was used to hold Confederate soldiers and sympathizers, as well as recalcitrant Union soldiers.

During the war, sandstone blocks served as steps up to the Courthouse from Spanish Street below. At the end of the 19th century, concrete from England was used to build the existing steps. This was said to be the first use of concrete paving in Missouri south of St. Louis. At the foot of these steps is said to be the location of an intense "discussion" between Generals Grant and Benjamin Prentiss in August 1861. The two generals had conflicting orders concerning who was actually in command of the Union effort in Southeast Missouri. Eventually Prentiss "retreated" and Grant remained in command. Some months later, at the battle of Shiloh in Tennessee, Prentiss and his troops saved the day for Grant by holding their position for several hours until they were forced to surrender.



The cupola originally topped the **St. Charles Hotel** and was later removed and added to the courthouse.

The **Union Monument and Fountain** were presented to the city in 1911 by the Women's Relief Corps. In 1961 it was rededicated to the memory of all American veterans. In 2003, the original statue was destroyed when a tree limb fell on it. A Missouri artist recast the statue from pieces of the original and the soldier returned to his watch some months later.

The **Confederate War Memorial** was presented to the city in 1931 by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and was dedicated to southeast Missouri's Confederate soldiers. Originally located near the old Mississippi River bridge, it was later moved and rededicated in 1995.

➔ Continue straight to Broadway. Continue straight across Broadway and up hill to Bellevue Street intersection.



Common Pleas Courthouse

To your right, east of this intersection, was the site of **Fort A**. Fort A was constructed as one of four forts ringing the city in 1861 on the orders of General Fremont. Fort A had a clear view of the city, approaches from the north, and the river. The site is now covered by Bellevue Street and private residences. An existing grist mill, powered by a windmill, was incorporated into the fort.



➔ Turn left on Bellevue Street, go one block and turn right on Fountain Street. Continue for two blocks on Fountain and park in drive on right just past small park.

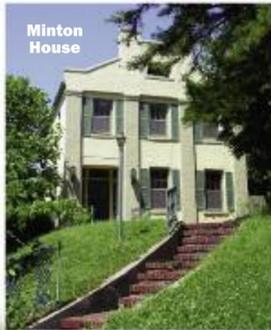
## STOP 3 Old Lorimer Cemetery

This cemetery, established in 1808 by Cape Girardeau founder Pierre Louis Lorimer, contains graves of Lorimer, his wife Charlotte, and many other figures important to the early history of Cape Girardeau. A number of Civil War soldiers are buried here. Many of the graves are unmarked. Near here is the **Minton House** which was used as a smallpox hospital during the war. Further north from this spot, about three blocks, was the site of the Union army horse corral. Note that these less desirable facilities (cemetery, hospital, and corral) were located some distance from the main encampments, city, and forts.

➔ Turn left on Washington Street.

At the end of the first block, on the right at 444 Washington Street, is the **Minton House**, the hospital described above.

Note that it is private property although photographs from the street are allowed. The house was built in 1846 and is one of the oldest houses in Cape Girardeau. At the outbreak of the Civil War, it was occupied by a lawyer, Matthew Moore, who published a weekly newspaper that advocated secession.



Minton House

Common Pleas Courthouse



Confederate Memorial

Union Monument and Fountain

Union troops apparently used the printing press to print a pro-Union newsletter. Legends of a tunnel running from the house to the river area have never been substantiated.

➔ Continue straight ahead on Washington for five blocks. The street name will change to Normal and the campus of Southeast Missouri State University is reached. Past Pacific Street continue up the hill and look for a parking place close to the pedestrian mall in the center of the streets.

## STOP 4 Fort B

On the east side of the median area is a small monument noting the locale of **Fort B**. To the south is Kent Library. Behind Kent Library is a parking area. A quarry further south (today **Houck Stadium**) provided lime for cement construction before, during, and after the Civil War. The owner of the quarry, Michael Dittlinger, had a house in the general location of the library and parking area. Fort B was constructed around the house, which then became part of the fort, and on to the approximate location of Academic Hall. This fort was open-sided, with earthworks on the west and north sides. The fort was well-armed, with howitzers and 24 lb. siege guns. The fort overlooked the Jackson road to the south (now Broadway) and the Perryville Road which came from the northwest and wound around this hill.



Fort B monument



During the **Battle of Cape Girardeau**, Fort B was heavily engaged with its cannon doing major work on the Confederate advance. The range of a 24 pound cannon (the nominal weight of the shot) was better than a mile. Thus, these cannon easily commanded the approaches to Cape Girardeau from the west and northwest.

About one-half mile north of this site, at the intersection of Henderson and New Madrid Streets, was the site of **Battery A** which guarded more of the Perryville Road approaches. Battery A was also involved in the battle of Cape Girardeau.

➔ Go west down the hill and turn right on Henderson Street. Continue straight for the equivalent of several blocks to the intersection (stop sign) with New Madrid Street.

In 1863 this was the approximate location of Perryville Road. Just behind and to the right of you was the location of **Battery A**, with two guns. During the Battle of Cape Girardeau, it began firing but was ordered to stop as the Confederate forces were out of range.

➔ Turn left on New Madrid and proceed to intersection (stop sign) with West End Boulevard. Go straight ahead to the intersection with Perry Avenue.



1st Nebraska Infantry

Somewhere in this area was the approximate location of two companies of the **1st Nebraska Infantry** (later redesignated the 1st Nebraska Cavalry) and perhaps four companies of the **32nd Iowa Infantry**. This position controlled the high ground overlooking both the Jackson and Perryville Roads.

➔ Turn left on Perry Avenue. Go two blocks and turn right on Pensicot. Pull over and stop. (Note: This is all private property.)

## STOP 5 Federal Right Flank

This high ground was also part of the 1st Nebraska line.

Probably, rifle pits were dug along the brow of this hill. Straight ahead, across the valley, is the **New Lorimer Cemetery**. The Confederate battle line was arrayed along the hill of the cemetery, particularly during the latter stages of the battle. This site gives a good view of the terrain between the opposing forces.

➔ Proceed down the hill and turn left on Penny Avenue. Go south to Broadway, passing between the battle lines.

Straight ahead note the location of **Southeast Missouri Hospital**, which sits on a high hill. On the top and flanks of the hill were additional rifle pits.

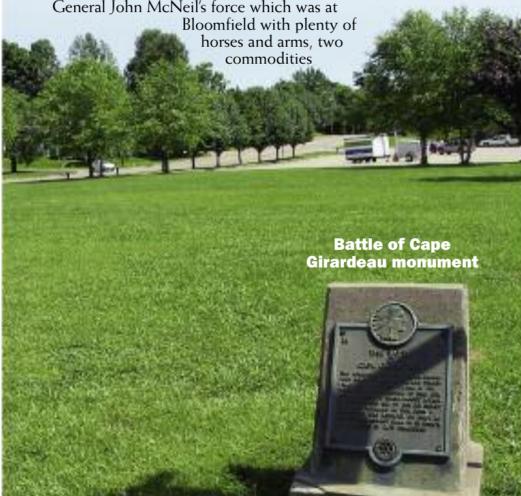
➔ Turn right on Broadway. Broadway was the old Jackson Road in this part of the town. Go two blocks west on Broadway and turn left at the light on to Caruthers Avenue. Park along the street. Walk down the sidewalk west along Broadway to the corner of Cordelia Street.

## STOP 6 Battle of Cape Girardeau

A small monument located here signifies the **Battle of Cape Girardeau**, April 26, 1863. Face east (back the way you just walked). The Confederate battle line paralleled Caruthers Avenue, stretching from up the north hill to your left, all the way over the low hills to your right. The Union forces at first formed a skirmish line opposite the Confederate line in this area, then reformed, with reinforcements, at the relative safety of the line of hills due east. Note that the present hospital hill had at least rifle pits on it, and two pieces of artillery later in the battle as well.

Near this spot, perhaps a bit further west on Broadway, sat the four pieces of Confederate artillery. Being in plain view and easy range of Fort B, they were later moved south where they came under fire from other Union batteries and eventually withdrew.

The campaign that culminated in this battle occurred when Confederate General John Marmaduke led an expeditionary force of 5000 men into Missouri. His target was Union General John McNeil's force which was at Bloomfield with plenty of horses and arms, two commodities



Battle of Cape Girardeau monument

Marmaduke needed. Marmaduke split his command into two columns to trap McNeil, however, McNeil quickly retreated to Cape Girardeau. Other Union troops from Pilot Knob under General Vandever advanced toward Fredericktown and Cape Girardeau following one of the columns of Confederate troops. Marmaduke's army approached Cape Girardeau in two columns, one from Jackson, the other from the direction of Bloomfield.

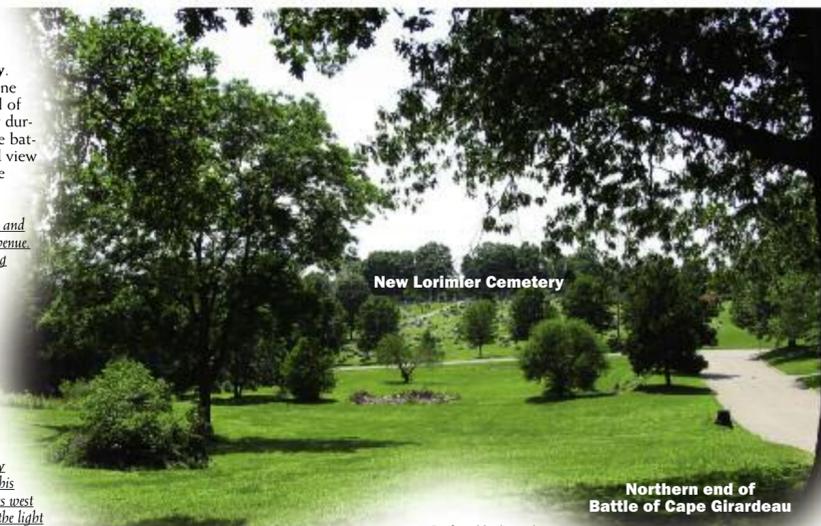
Confederate commanders quickly came to the conclusion that they could not take the city of Cape Girardeau, owing to the ring of fortified hills that surrounded the town on the west. To gain time for their eventual retreat, they ordered the attack primarily as a demonstration. While line fighting existed during the battle, mostly the battle consisted of an artillery duel in which the Confederates were easily outgunned.

The battle began in the morning as a Union skirmish line south of this point retreated from the Confederate forces. Most of the engaged Union forces were from the 1st Nebraska Infantry. The Union troops reformed along the hills stretching southward from the current location of Southeast Missouri Hospital. Eventually the battle first shifted south and then back north of this spot before the Confederates withdrew.

The **Lacey House**, which stood approximately where Grace Methodist Church is today, was caught in the fighting. During the fighting a cannonball passed through its brick walls and came to rest under a piano. This reportedly caused a fire, which the household slaves or servants put out. After the battle, these servants buried Confederate dead not far from the house.

➔ Continue for one and one-half blocks on Caruthers, turning left at the top of the hill on Thilenius Street. Go one block on Thilenius. Straight ahead and to the left is the Southeast Missouri Hospital. Turn right on Sunset Boulevard.

As you drive south on Sunset you are in the no-man's land between the Confederate line to your right (west) and the Union line arranged along the high ground on your left.



New Lorimer Cemetery

Northern end of Battle of Cape Girardeau

➔ Go four blocks and turn left on Whitener Street. Drive up the hill.

At the top of the hill is the privately-owned Thilenius house, **Longview**, built just after the war. This was the site of **Battery B** on which during the Battle of Cape Girardeau were two 12-pound cannons and two 12-pound howitzers of the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry. These cannon were effective not only in deflecting the main Confederate advance but also in preventing further advance along Bloomfield Road to the south. This area also marked the southern flank of the 1st Nebraska Infantry. After the Confederate artillery moved south from its original location, this battery fired on them, forcing the Confederate artillery to withdraw once more. Toward the end of the battle the two cannon were pulled back to Fort B and the howitzers were moved to the hospital hill.

➔ Continue down the hill to Keller Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Independence and continue south, although the street name has changed to Minnesota Avenue. Continue south on Minnesota, cross William Street, and continue two blocks to Bloomfield Street.

One section of Marmaduke's troops advanced down Bloomfield Road in a demonstration against this portion of the Union defenses. The presence of **Fort C** and artillery fire from Battery B kept them at a safe distance.

➔ Turn left on Bloomfield Street. Proceed to the stop sign at West End Boulevard.

On the high ground behind and to either side of you were the locations of dismounted Union cavalry units during the Battle of Cape Girardeau (see below).

➔ Continue straight down Bloomfield Road to a T intersection with Pacific Street.

At this point, straight ahead on slightly higher ground, sat **Fort C**.

➔ Turn left on Pacific, immediately right on Good Hope Street, go one block and turn right on Ellis Street. Go 100ft down the street and park. Look through the fence to the historic marker noting Fort C.

## STOP 7 Site of Fort C

Ellis Street crosses the middle of the site of **Fort C**. Before the war, this area served as a clay pit for a brick operation. The large cannon in Fort C pointed directly down Bloomfield Road and, with a clear line of fire, easily controlled access to the city from that direction. During the Battle of Cape Girardeau, Confederate forces stayed out of range of the Fort's



Walls of Fort D

cannon. Arrayed to the west of the fort and either side of Bloomfield Road were the **2nd Missouri State Militia Cavalry** (to the south of Bloomfield Road) and the **1st Wisconsin Cavalry** (to the north). These dismounted cavalry forces awaited what they presumed would be the main Confederate advance, which did not materialize in this area. Two cannons of their horse artillery — the mountain howitzers — were sent to Battery B on the Thilenius Hill along with a company of soldiers in support.

➔ Proceed one-half block to a stop sign.

Straight ahead, to the south of Fort C, was a **fairgrounds** prior to the Civil War; this open space was used as the main Federal encampment area for much of the war.

➔ Go left for one block and turn right on Sprigg Street. Go six blocks south to Locust Street. Turn left and go one and one-half blocks to Fort D. Parking is available on the street or to the right rear of the fort.

## STOP 8 Fort D

Cape Girardeau sits on the first continuous high ground in Missouri upstream of the Ohio River and was deemed an important site for numerous strategic reasons. **Fort D** was constructed in 1861 at the same time as the other Cape Girardeau forts. Like the others, Fort D was designed by Captains Franz Kappner and Henry Fladd of the Army Engineers. Construction began on August 6, 1861 under the direction of **Lieutenant John W. Powell** from Illinois. The design is in a French bastion form, a triangle with open base. The earthworks faced away from the river. Reportedly, Fort D housed both 24 and 32-pound cannons, which would easily control any upriver movement on the Mississippi. Soldiers who served at the fort reported that "Quaker" cannon (logs painted black) were used to enhance the appearance of the armament. In order to keep warm during the winters, soldiers dug artificial caves in the hillside below the fort and stayed in these. In 1936 the site was purchased by the local American Legion post, and the earthworks were restored to their original height, with some modifications. A stone building, constructed in the middle of the fort at the site of the original powder-house was dedicated to the city, and today is part of the city park system. Fort D did not see action during the Battle of Cape Girardeau and probably never fired its guns in anger, serving mostly as a symbolic deterrent.



Lieutenant John W. Powell (right) and his brother

Longview

Lieutenant Powell was in charge of the various forts for some months; he then organized a volunteer battery from loyal citizens in Cape Girardeau, as Powell was an Illinois officer, they were mustered in as **Battery F, 2nd Illinois Artillery**. With his troops, he fought at the battle of Shiloh, where he lost his arm as a result of the fighting. In 1869, John Wesley Powell would become famous as the leader of the first expedition to successfully navigate the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. He died in 1902 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

➔ Return to Sprigg Street and turn right. Continue to Route 74 and turn right. Turn left on Fountain Street just before the bridge. Turn right on Morgan Oak Street. Turn into the River Campus of Southeast Missouri State University.

## STOP 9 St. Vincents Seminary

This is the old **St. Vincents Seminary**. The oldest buildings were built before the Civil War in 1854. Be sure and walk to the river side of the buildings for a good view of the Mississippi River. These buildings will serve as the core of Southeast Missouri State University's River Campus, specializing in cultural and performing arts.

➔ Turn left on Spanish Street just before the site of the old bridge. Go two blocks north on Spanish and turn right on William Street. Turn left on Main.

Note the **Red House Interpretive Center**. Lewis and Clark passed by here in 1803, Lewis visiting with the local commander of Cape Girardeau and the Southeast Missouri founder Pierre Louis de Lorimer. This house is a reconstruction.

This concludes your driving tour of the Civil War sites of Cape Girardeau.



CREDIT: Text, map, and modern photos by Scott House, Missouri Civil War Heritage Foundation with assistance from the Civil War Roundtable of Cape Girardeau and the Southeast Missouri State University Center for Regional History

➔ Travel downtown to the riverfront on Water Street and park near the corner of Water and Themis Streets. Proceed to the Themis Street gate in the Mississippi River floodwall.



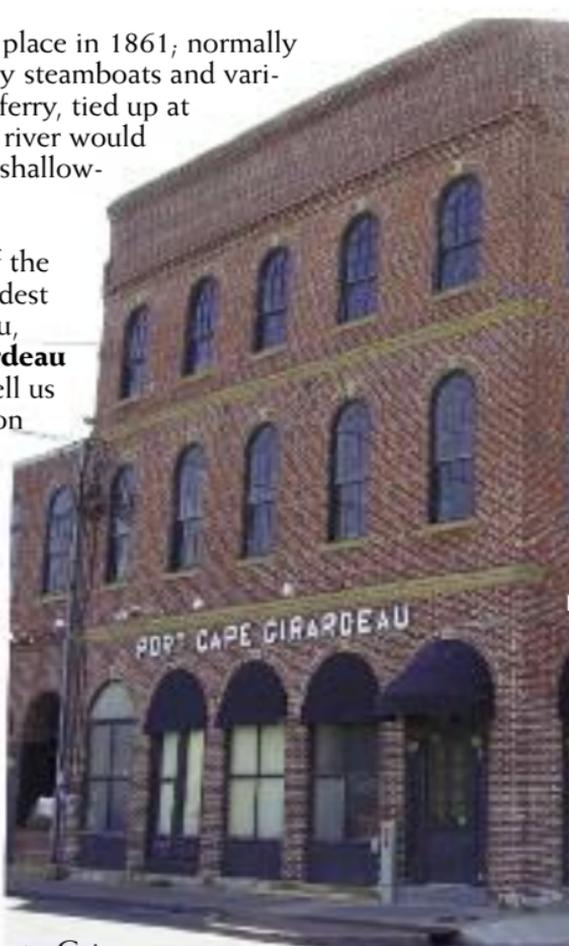
## STOP 1

# Mississippi Waterfront

- ~ Mississippi Levee
- ~ Port Cape Girardeau
- ~ Site of St. Charles Hotel

The **waterfront** was a busy place in 1861; normally there would have been many steamboats and various other craft, including a ferry, tied up at this location. Note that the river would have been much wider and shallower at that time.

On the southwest corner of the intersection is one of the oldest structures in Cape Girardeau, today the **Port Cape Girardeau restaurant**. Records don't tell us exactly when construction on this building began but the building was probably a commission house serving the river commerce. In August of 1861 Ulysses S. Grant was made commander of the District of Southeast Missouri. Grant may have used this building as a headquarters during his brief stay in Cape Girardeau, while he took residence in the **St. Charles Hotel**, the site of which is exactly one block west on Themis. Grant later moved his headquarters to Cairo, Illinois, and continued a military career that eventually would reunite the nation. During the battle of Cape Girardeau, the Union steamer, *Ocean Wave*, docked here at 2:00 pm with additional ammunition and troops from Cairo. They were not needed.



➔ On Themis Street, go two blocks west toward the courthouse, passing the site of the St. Charles Hotel, and turn left on Spanish, noting the base of the courthouse steps. Go one block and turn right on Independence St. Go one block to Lorimier Street and turn right. Go up hill and park on street adjacent to Courthouse Park. Be sure to walk to the front of the courthouse for a fantastic view of downtown and the river.

## STOP 2

# Courthouse Park

- ~ Confederate Memorial
- ~ Union Memorial
- ~ Common Pleas Courthouse

The **Common Pleas Courthouse** was built in 1854, without the two wings and cupola that are now present. The Union Provost Marshal used the courthouse as headquarters, and the basement dungeon was used to hold Confederate soldiers and sympathizers, as well as recalcitrant Union soldiers.

During the war, sandstone blocks served as steps up to the Courthouse from Spanish Street below. At the end of the 19th century, concrete from England was used to build the existing steps. This was said to be the first use of concrete paving in Missouri south of St. Louis. At the foot of these steps is said to be the location of an intense "discussion" between Generals Grant and Benjamin Prentiss in August 1861. The two generals had conflicting orders concerning who was actually in command of the Union effort in Southeast Missouri. Eventually Prentiss "retreated" and Grant remained in command. Some months later, at the battle of Shiloh in Tennessee, Prentiss and his troops saved the day for Grant by holding their position for several hours until they were forced to surrender.



Common Pleas Courthouse

Confederate Memorial

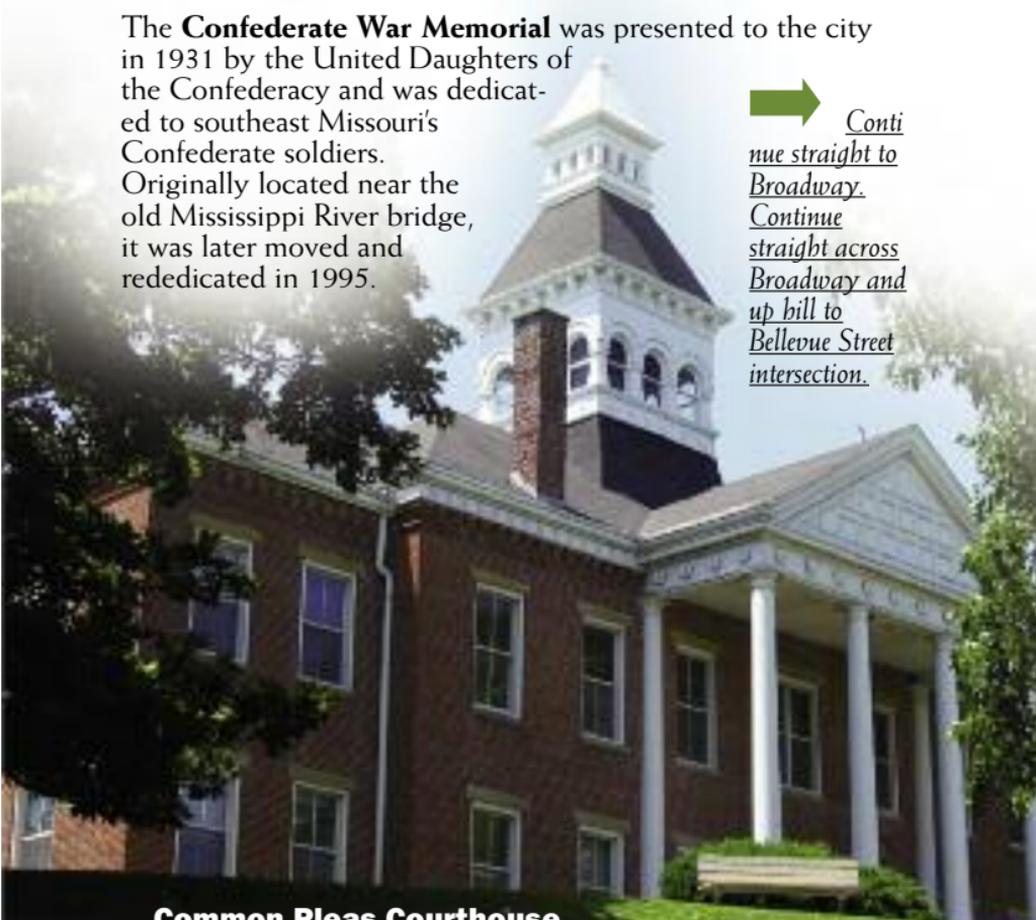


The cupola originally topped the **St. Charles Hotel** and was later removed and added to the courthouse.

The **Union Monument and Fountain** were presented to the city in 1911 by the Women's Relief Corps. In 1961 it was rededicated to the memory of all American veterans. In 2003, the original statue was destroyed when a tree limb fell on it. A Missouri artist recast the statue from pieces of the original and the soldier returned to his watch some months later.

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➔ Continue straight to Broadway. Continue straight across Broadway and up hill to Bellevue Street intersection.



Common Pleas Courthouse

To your right, east of this intersection, was the site of **Fort A**. Fort A was constructed as one of four forts ringing the city in 1861 on the orders of General Fremont. Fort A had a clear view of the city, approaches from the north, and the river. The site is now covered by Bellevue Street and private residences. An existing grist mill, powered by a windmill, was incorporated into the fort.



➔ Turn left on Bellevue Street, go one block and turn right on Fountain Street. Continue for two blocks on Fountain and park in drive on right just past small park.

### STOP 3

## Old Lorimier Cemetery

This cemetery, established in 1808 by Cape Girardeau founder Pierre Louis Lorimier, contains graves of Lorimier, his wife Charlotte, and many other figures important to the early history of Cape Girardeau. A number of Civil War soldiers are buried here. Many of the graves are unmarked. Near here is the **Minton House** which was used as a smallpox hospital during the war. Further north from this spot, about three blocks, was the site of the Union army horse corral. Note that these less desirable facilities (cemetery, hospital, and corral) were located some distance from the main encampments, city, and forts.

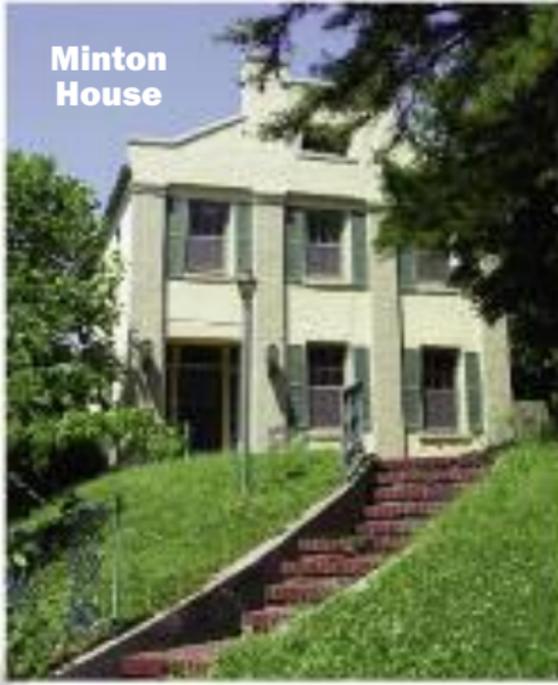
**Port Cape Girardeau restaurant**



➔ Turn left on Washington Street.

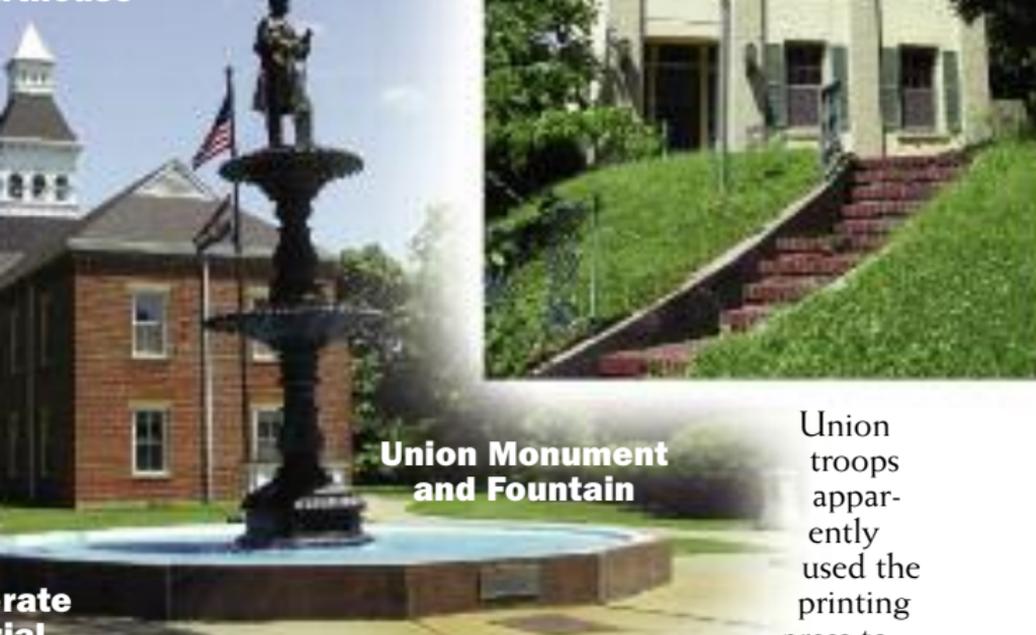
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Note that it is private property although photographs from the street are allowed. The house was built in 1846 and is one of the oldest houses in Cape Girardeau. At the outbreak of the Civil War, it was occupied by a lawyer, Matthew Moore, who published a weekly newspaper that advocated secession.



**Minton House**

**Union Pleas**



**Union Monument and Fountain**

Union troops apparently used the printing press to print a pro-Union newsletter.

Legends of a tunnel running from the house to the river area have never been substantiated.

➔ Continue straight ahead on Washington for five blocks. The street name will change to Normal and the campus of Southeast Missouri State University is reached. Past Pacific Street continue up the hill and look for a parking place close to the pedestrian mall in the center of the streets.

### STOP 4

## Fort B

On the east side of the median area is a small monument noting the locale of **Fort B**. To the south is Kent Library. Behind Kent Library is a parking area. A quarry further south (today



**Houck Stadium**) provided lime for cement construction before, during, and after the Civil War. The owner of the quarry, Michael Dittlinger, had a house in the general location of the library and parking area. Fort B was constructed around the house, which then became part of the fort, and on to the approximate location of Academic Hall. This fort was open-sided, with earthworks on the west and north sides. The fort was well-armed, with howitzers and 24 lb. siege guns. The fort overlooked the Jackson road to the south (now Broadway) and the Perryville Road which came from the northwest and wound around this hill.

**Fort B monument**



During the **Battle of Cape Girardeau**, Fort B was heavily engaged with its cannon doing major work on the Confederate advance. The range of a 24 pound cannon (the nominal weight of the shot) was better than a mile. Thus, these cannon easily commanded the approaches to Cape Girardeau from the west and northwest.

About one-half mile north of this site, at the intersection of Henderson and New Madrid Streets, was the site of **Battery A** which guarded more of the Perryville Road approaches. Battery A was also involved in the battle of Cape Girardeau.

➔ Go west down the hill and turn right on Henderson Street. Continue straight for the equivalent of several blocks to the intersection (stop sign) with New Madrid Street.

In 1863 this was the approximate location of Perryville Road. Just behind and to the right of you was the location of **Battery A**, with two guns. During the Battle of Cape Girardeau, it began firing but was ordered to stop as the Confederate forces were out of range.

➔ Turn left on New Madrid and proceed to intersection (stop sign) with West End Boulevard. Go straight ahead to the intersection with Perry Avenue.



Somewhere in this area was the approximate location of two companies of the **1st Nebraska Infantry** (later re-designated the 1st Nebraska Cavalry) and perhaps four companies of the **32nd Iowa Infantry**. This position controlled the high ground overlooking both the Jackson and Perryville Roads.

➔ Turn left on Perry Avenue. Go two blocks and turn right on Pemiscot. Pull over and stop. (Note: This is all private property.)

## STOP 5

### *Federal Right Flank*

This high ground was also part of the 1st Nebraska line. Probably, rifle pits were dug along the brow of this hill. Straight ahead, across the valley, is the **New Lorimier Cemetery**. The Confederate battle line was arrayed along the hill of the cemetery, particularly during the latter stages of the battle. This site gives a good view of the terrain between the opposing forces.

➔ Proceed down the hill and turn left on Penny Avenue. Go south to Broadway, passing between the battle lines.

Straight ahead note the location of **Southeast Missouri Hospital**, which sits on a high hill. On the top and flanks of the hill were additional rifle pits.

➔ Turn right on Broadway. Broadway was the old Jackson Road in this part of the town. Go two blocks west on Broadway and turn left at the light on to Caruthers Avenue. Park along the street. Walk down the sidewalk west along Broadway to the corner of Cordelia Street.

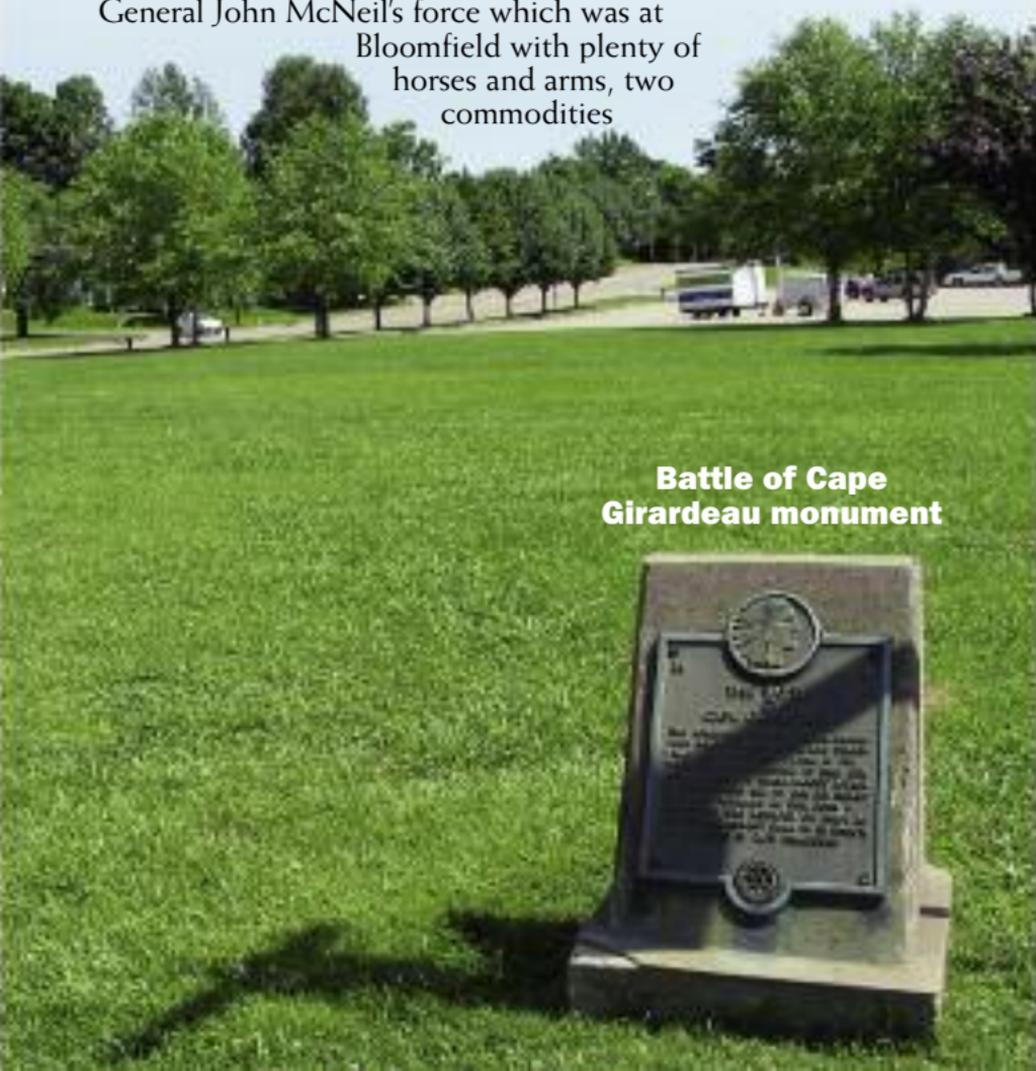
## STOP 6

### *Battle of Cape Girardeau*

A small monument located here signifies the **Battle of Cape Girardeau**, April 26, 1863. Face east (back the way you just walked). The Confederate battle line paralleled Caruthers Avenue, stretching from up the north hill to your left, all the way over the low hills to your right. The Union forces at first formed a skirmish line opposite the Confederate line in this area, then reformed, with reinforcements, at the relative safety of the line of hills due east. Note that the present hospital hill had at least rifle pits on it, and two pieces of artillery later in the battle as well.

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**Battle of Cape Girardeau monument**

Marmaduke needed. Marmaduke split his command into two columns to trap McNeil, however, McNeil quickly retreated to Cape Girardeau. Other Union troops from Pilot Knob under General Vandever advanced toward Fredericktown and Cape Girardeau following one of the columns of Confederate troops. Marmaduke's army approached Cape Girardeau in two columns, one from Jackson, the other from the direction of Bloomfield.

Confederate commanders quickly came to the conclusion that they could not take the city of Cape Girardeau, owing to the ring of fortified hills that surrounded the town on the west. To gain time for their eventual retreat, they ordered the attack primarily as a demonstration. While line fighting existed during the battle, mostly the battle consisted of an artillery duel in which the Confederates were easily outgunned.

The battle began in the morning as a Union skirmish line south of this point retreated from the Confederate forces. Most of the engaged Union forces were from the 1st Nebraska Infantry. The Union troops reformed along the hills stretching southward from the current location of Southeast Missouri Hospital. Eventually the battle first shifted south and then back north of this spot before the Confederates withdrew.

The **Lacey House**, which stood approximately where Grace Methodist Church is today, was caught in the fighting. During the fighting a cannonball passed through its brick walls and came to rest under a piano. This reportedly caused a fire, which the household slaves or servants put out. After the battle, these servants buried Confederate dead not far from the house.

➔ Continue for one and one-half blocks on Caruthers, turning left at the top of the hill on Thilenius Street. Go one block on Thilenius. Straight ahead and to the left is the Southeast Missouri Hospital. Turn right on Sunset Boulevard.

As you drive south on Sunset you are in the no-man's land between the Confederate line to your right (west) and the Union line arranged along the high ground on your left.



### New Lorimler Cemetery

### Northern end of Battle of Cape Girardeau

➔ Go four blocks and turn left on Whitener Street. Drive up the hill.

At the top of the hill is the privately-owned Thilenius house, **Longview**, built just after the war. This was the site of **Battery B** on which during the Battle of Cape Girardeau were two 12-pound cannons and two 12-pound howitzers of the 1st Wisconsin Cavalry. These cannons were effective not only in deflecting the main Confederate advance but also in preventing further advance along Bloomfield Road to the south. This area also marked the southern flank of the 1st Nebraska Infantry. After the Confederate artillery moved south from its original location, this battery fired on them, forcing the Confederate artillery to withdraw once more. Toward the end of the battle the two cannons were pulled back to Fort B and the howitzers were moved to the hospital hill.

➔ Continue down the hill to Keller Avenue and turn right. Go one block, cross Independence and continue south, although the street name has changed to Minnesota Avenue. Continue south on Minnesota, cross William Street, and continue two blocks to Bloomfield Street.

One section of Marmaduke's troops advanced down Bloomfield Road in a demonstration against this portion of the Union defenses. The presence of **Fort C** and artillery fire from Battery B kept them at a safe distance.

➔ Turn left on Bloomfield Street. Proceed to the stop sign at West End Boulevard.

On the high ground behind and to either side of you were the locations of dismounted Union cavalry units during the Battle of Cape Girardeau (see below).

➔ Continue straight down Bloomfield Road to a T intersection with Pacific Street.

At this point, straight ahead on slightly higher ground, sat **Fort C**.

➔ Turn left on Pacific, immediately right on Good Hope Street, go one block and turn right on Ellis Street. Go 100ft down the street and park. Look through the fence to the historic marker noting Fort C.

## STOP 7

### Site of Fort C

Ellis Street crosses the middle of the site of **Fort C**. Before the war, this area served as a clay pit for a brick operation. The large cannon in Fort C pointed directly down Bloomfield Road and, with a clear line of fire, easily controlled access to the city from that direction. During the Battle of Cape Girardeau, Confederate forces stayed out of range of the Fort's



### Walls of Fort D

cannon. Arrayed to the west of the fort and either side of Bloomfield Road were the **2nd Missouri State Militia Cavalry** (to the south of Bloomfield Road) and the **1st Wisconsin Cavalry** (to the north). These dismounted cavalry forces awaited what they presumed would be the main Confederate advance, which did not materialize in this area. Two cannons of their horse artillery — the mountain howitzers — were sent to Battery B on the Thilenius Hill along with a company of soldiers in support.

➔ Proceed one-half block to a stop sign.

Straight ahead, to the south of Fort C, was a **fairgrounds** prior to the Civil War; this open space was used as the main Federal encampment area for much of the war.

➔ Go left for one block and turn right on Sprigg Street. Go six blocks south to Locust Street. Turn left and go one and one-half blocks to Fort D. Parking is available on the street or to the right rear of the fort.

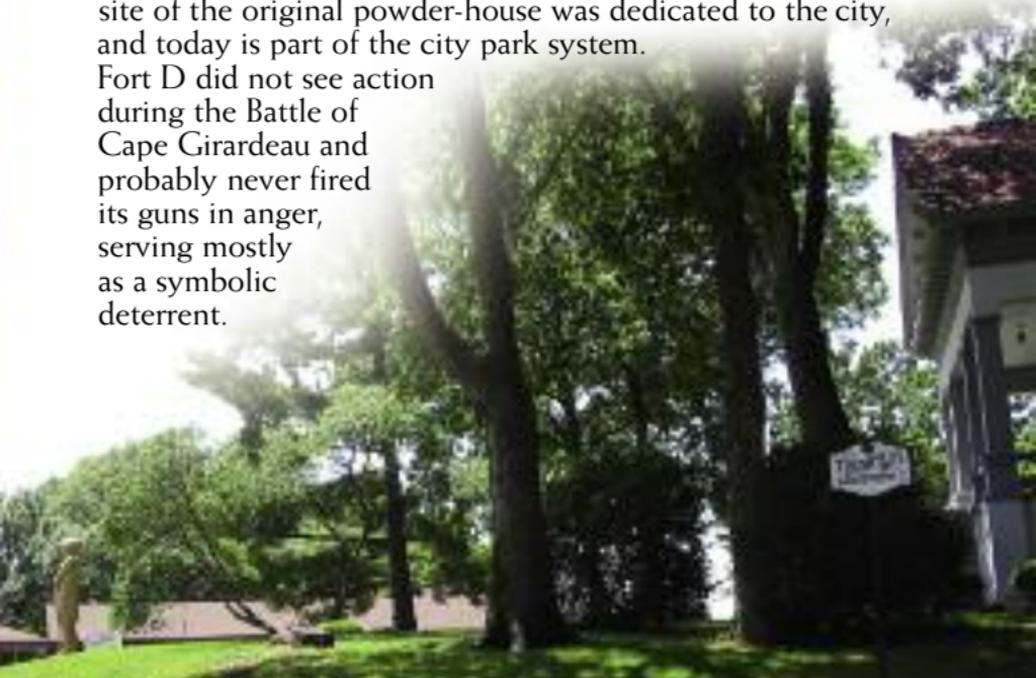
## STOP 8 Fort D

Cape Girardeau sits on the first continuous high ground in Missouri upstream of the Ohio River and was deemed an important site for numerous strategic reasons. **Fort D** was constructed in 1861 at the same time as the other Cape Girardeau forts. Like the others, Fort D was designed by Captains Franz Kappner and Henry Fladd of the Army Engineers. Construction began on August 6, 1861 under the direction of **Lieutenant John W. Powell** from Illinois. The design is in a French bastion form, a triangle with open base. The earthworks faced away from the river. Reportedly, Fort D housed both 24 and 32-pound cannons, which would easily control any upriver movement on the Mississippi. Soldiers who served at the fort reported that "Quaker" cannon (logs painted black) were used to enhance the appearance of the armament. In order to keep warm during the winters, soldiers dug artificial caves in the hillside below the fort and stayed in these. In 1936 the site was purchased by the local American Legion post, and the earthworks were restored to their original height, with some modifications. A stone building, constructed in the middle of the fort at the site of the original powder-house was dedicated to the city, and today is part of the city park system.

Fort D did not see action during the Battle of Cape Girardeau and probably never fired its guns in anger, serving mostly as a symbolic deterrent.



**Lieutenant John W. Powell (right) and his brother**



**Longview**

Lieutenant Powell was in charge of the various forts for some months; he then organized a volunteer battery from loyal citizens in Cape Girardeau, as Powell was an Illinois officer, they were mustered in as **Battery F, 2nd Illinois Artillery**. With his troops, he fought at the battle of Shiloh, where he lost his arm as a result of the fighting. In 1869, John Wesley Powell would become famous as the leader of the first expedition to successfully navigate the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. He died in 1902 and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

➔ Return to Sprigg Street and turn right. Continue to Route 74 and turn right. Turn left on to Fountain Street just before the bridge. Turn right on Morgan Oak Street. Turn into the River Campus of Southeast Missouri State University.

## STOP 9 St. Vincents Seminary

This is the old **St. Vincents Seminary**. The oldest buildings were built before the Civil War in 1854. Be sure and walk to the river side of the buildings for a good view of the Mississippi River. These buildings will serve as the core of Southeast Missouri State University's River Campus, specializing in cultural and performing arts.

➔ Turn left on Spanish Street just before the site of the old bridge. Go two blocks north on Spanish and turn right on William Street. Turn left on Main.

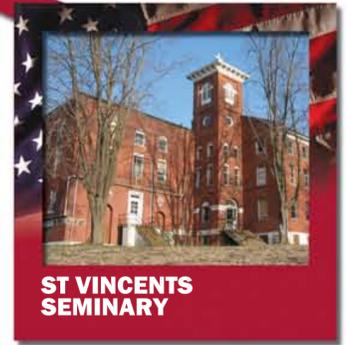
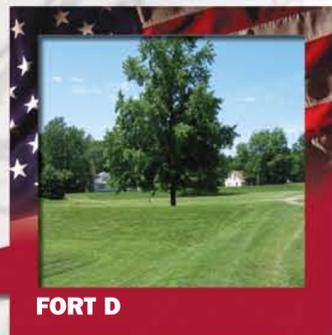
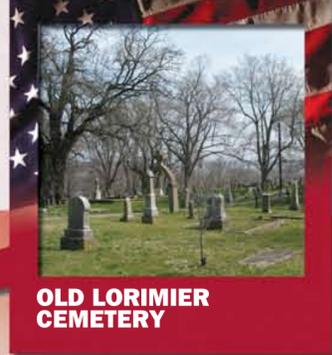
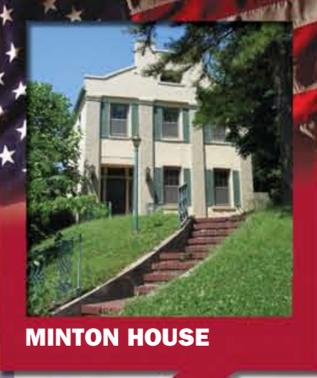
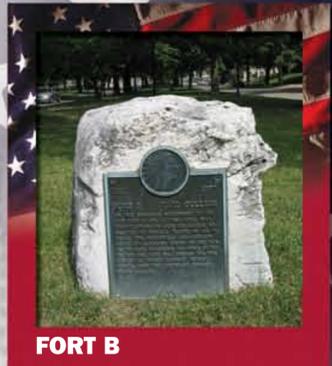
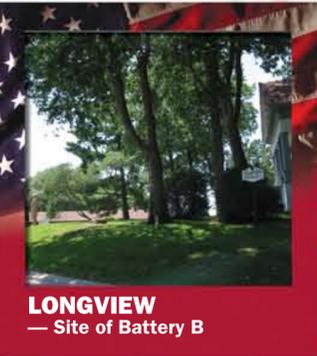
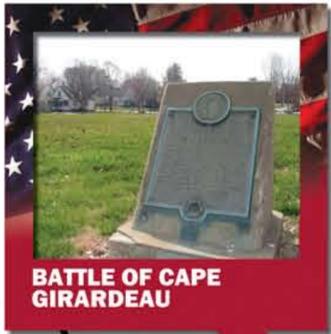
Note the **Red House Interpretive Center**. Lewis and Clark passed by here in 1803, Lewis visiting with the local commandant of Cape Girardeau, founder Pierre Louis de Lorimier. This house is a reconstruction.



This concludes your driving tour of the Civil War sites of Cape Girardeau.

CREDITS: Text, map, and modern photos by Scott House, Missouri Civil War Heritage Foundation with assistance from the Civil War Roundtable of Cape Girardeau and the Southeast Missouri State University Center for Regional History

- Union lines
- Confederate lines
- 1861 roads
- Tour route
- Stops



DRIVING TOUR OF  
**CIVIL WAR** SITES OF  
*Cape Girardeau*

