WELCOME!
Teaching with Primary Sources across Tennessee, administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University, engages learners of all ages in using primary sources to explore major issues and questions in many different disciplines.
Contact: Stacey Graham or Kira Duke at (615) 898-2947 or www.mtsu.edu/tps

NEWS
- Remember to “Like” the TPS-TN Facebook page to receive the latest workshop and resource announcements as well as suggested links and sources from the Library of Congress Web site.
- The TPS-TN Web site has recently added two new tools. The first is a 2-page annotated listing of helpful links for the study of African American history. The second tool is a 5-page, comprehensive listing of links relating to the study of the Civil War. Please note that this is an updated version from the Civil War Links PDF posted in 2010. Separate, 1-page “top ten” version also updated and available. All links have been selected from among the Library of Congress’ collections, exhibitions, and teacher materials, as well as those produced by TPS-TN.

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

Reenactment of Civil War siege of April 1862, Bridgeport, Alabama [2010]
What do you notice about the men in this reenactment? How might they be different from the men who actually fought in 1862?

THEME: CIVIL WAR—DIVIDED TENNESSEE
Feature essay by Dr. Antoinette van Zelm, Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area

When Tennessee seceded from the United States on June 8, 1861, it became the last of eleven states to join the Confederacy. Tennessee’s late decision reflects the turmoil among its citizens over this momentous choice. Before, during, and after the Civil War, Tennesseans remained divided over the best course of action to take with respect to the Union.

The different geographies, economies, and histories of Tennessee’s three grand divisions influenced the politics of each region. In mountainous East Tennessee, with its small farms and strong historical ties to the American Revolution, Unionism took firm root. (continued on page 2…)

UPCOMING EVENTS:
- July 13—(Murfreesboro) “Exploring Our Nation’s Library Online” Session at Tennessee Association of School Librarians’ Workshop. Time 9 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.
- July 14—(Clarksville) “Building a National History Day Project Using the Library of Congress” Workshop at Austin Peay State University Library from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email Kelly Wilkerson.
In the flatlands of West Tennessee, which had a cotton-based economy and was home to close to 70% of the state’s slaves, support for secession grew strong. In Middle Tennessee, with its mixture of large plantations and small farms, residents exhibited little support for secession until after the April 1861 firing on Fort Sumter and President Abraham Lincoln’s call for troops.

Slavery had become increasingly entrenched in Tennessee over the course of the 1800s. By 1860, the state had 275,000 slaves—close to 25% of the population—and only 7300 free blacks. Protests against slavery included the actions of slaves themselves, either through defiance and work stoppages or, most powerfully, through running away. At least one escaped Tennessee slave, the Rev. Jermain Wesley Loguen, published a narrative that denounced slavery as “an overgrown monster that devours alike law and humanity.”

As sectional tensions over slavery increased in the 1850s, Tennesseans generally responded moderately. When talk of secession arose early in the decade, Governor William Bowen Campbell discouraged it decisively. Given how close state elections were in Tennessee, politicians did not want to alienate voters in East Tennessee, where nationalism was strong. Late in the 1850s, however, politics in Tennessee began to change as dissension over slavery continued and the Whig party disintegrated.

In February 1861, Tennessee voters emphatically rejected holding a state convention on secession. Two months later, however, everything changed. After the Confederates fired on federal Fort Sumter off the coast of South Carolina, President Lincoln called for 75,000 troops, including two regiments from Tennessee, to put down the rebellion. The General Assembly declared independence and approved aligning with the Confederacy. On June 8, 1861, voters in West and Middle Tennessee supported secession, but voters in East Tennessee still rejected it. Unionists in the East unsuccessfully petitioned the state to remain part of the United States.

Thus, as the war began, Tennessee faced deep divisions. Communities and even families sometimes had divergent views on whether secession or union was best for Tennessee. In July 1861, Martha Hall of Knoxville wrote to her sister, “How any Tennessean can be for the Lincoln government, under all the circumstances, is to me a mystery of mysteries.” Some Unionists, in fact, chose to leave the state. Hermann Bokum, a German immigrant, went North in 1862 and the next year published a testimonial in which he denounced the break-up of the Union and the treatment of Unionists in East Tennessee.

Whether Confederate or Unionist, most Tennesseans expected the Civil War to end quickly. Few predicted the devastation that would take place between 1861 and 1865.

A more detailed version of this essay will be available on our Web site by July 21, 2011.
LESSON IDEA—“A House Divided”

What would it have been like to be a civilian in Tennessee during the Civil War? What immediate impact might the war have had on your life? What would the long-term impact have been? In this lesson plan, “‘A House Divided’: The Civil War Home Front in Tennessee,” written by Rebecca Byrd from New Center Elementary in Sevier County, students ponder these questions as they examine a series of primary sources including photographs, handwritten sources, and print sources from the Library of Congress and the Tennessee Virtual Archive.

On day one, students begin by discussing their initial thoughts about what life would have been like during the war. Using a graphic organizer, students examine a variety of sources looking for clues as to the political, social, economic, environmental, and emotional impact of the war. As a class, ask students to analyze the image to the left. Then break them up into groups to examine a set of sources. Each group should work with a different set.

On day two, students begin by sharing their observations from day one. If possible, allow students to project each source onto a screen so that the entire class can see it. Next give each group a soldier portrait. Students will write letters to their soldiers about life at home. Students should be encouraged to use descriptive language and details from the class discussion in their letters. To conclude the lesson, have students compare their initial thoughts on what life would have been like with their thoughts after completing the lesson. What are the similarities? What are the differences? How has their thinking changed over the course of the lesson?

This lesson plan meets state curriculum standards for grades 5 and 8 Social Studies and English/Language Arts.

LESSON IDEA—Liljenquist Family Collection of Civil War Photographs

One of the Library’s newest and most fascinating digital collections is the Liljenquist Family Collection of over 700 tintype and ambrotype photographs of Civil War soldiers. The collection contains portraits of Confederate and Union soldiers, including African American soldiers, as well as group portraits of soldiers and their families. The weapons, clothing, props, backgrounds, and especially the expressions on the subjects’ faces all shed light on the motivations and lifestyles of average Civil War soldiers.

There are many ways to view this collection: on the Prints and Photographs Online Catalog (Liljenquist Family Collection of Civil War Photographs with a recommended slideshow of staff favorites), on Flickr (Civil War Faces), and on MyLOC (The Last Full Measure: Civil War Photographs from the Liljenquist Family Collection with extra features such as “Revealing Details”).

Start off by reading “From the Donor’s Perspective: The Last Full Measure” by teenaged donor Brandon Liljenquist with your students, or assigning it for homework. Then have students view on computers or a projector screen several of the portraits from this collection; the slideshow may be most useful here. Ask each student to select a photograph that affects the way he/she thinks about the Civil War, as the George Weeks photo did for young Brandon Liljenquist. If the subject of the photograph has a name, try to find him and his regiment in the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System. If unidentified, imagine what his name and home may be. In either case, write a short biography of the soldier, including where (and if) he fought, what happened to him, and what his thoughts on the war may have been.

This idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for grade 8 Social Studies (standard 5.0) and English (standards 3.0 & 4.0), and high school A.P. U.S. History.
Memoirs of a Southern Woman

Memoirs of a southern woman "within the lines" / Branch, Mary Jones Polk. [1912] Courtesy of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

This memoir, written half a century after the Civil War, contains the reminiscences of a privileged Southern woman from Columbia, TN, including thoughts on slavery, women’s roles, and plantation life before the war. Click on “View this item,” then “HTML file” under “Full Text” to access the text.

Union District in East TN

The Tribune war maps [Compiled by] G. Woolworth Colton. [1861]

This particular map in this atlas (click on 2nd thumbnail and then zoom in on the map on the bottom left) is called “Position of the Union District in East Tennessee.” Can you find the district? Why would it be pointed out in this atlas? What other features separate the East from Middle and West Tennessee?

Uncle Sam Wants You!

Sixteenth Regiment U.S. Infantry! Recruits wanted! Fifty able-bodied men will be accepted within the next two weeks to fill up the ranks of the Regiment of the Regular Army, now in Tennessee. [Poster] [1862]

Where are these soldiers from and where are they fighting now? What inducements are offered to attract recruits? What impression of a soldier’s life does this poster portray?

Posing on Lookout Mountain

Unidentified soldier in Union officer's uniform at Point Lookout, Tennessee, sitting with cavalry saber in hand and slouch hat resting beside him on a rock [1863?]

After their success in capturing Chattanooga in November 1863, many Federal soldiers had their pictures taken on Lookout Mountain. (See here for another example.) Why would they do this? Why is this a good backdrop?