

BATTLES OF BLUE SPRINGS



Fighting on the Same Ground Twice



On October 10, 1863, Union Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside's campaign to diminish Confederate military strength and control in this corner of Appalachia suddenly arrived at the village of Blue Springs (present-day Mosheim). When Union Gen. Samuel P. Carter's cavalymen encountered Confederate Gen. John S. Williams's troopers, who were camped nearby, fighting began that morning and an artillery duel continued all day. By the afternoon, the two-mile-long Confederate lines were stretched to the breaking point. Union Gen. Edward Ferrero led an infantry attack at 5 P.M. that breached the Confederate defenses, causing

numerous casualties and forcing Williams to retreat toward Virginia. The Federals pursued them the next day, but the Confederates escaped.

Union Gen. Alvan C. Gillem's cavalry force marching from Bulls Gap met



Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside
Courtesy of Library of Congress

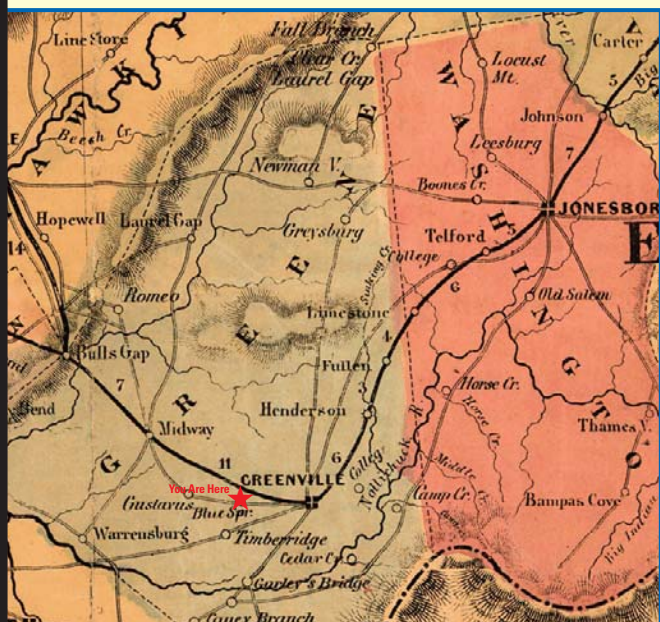


Gen. Alvan C. Gillem
Courtesy of Library of Congress



Gen. John S. Williams
Courtesy of Library of Congress

a small Confederate force on the same battlefield on August 23, 1864. The Federals engaged Confederate Col. Henry L. Giltner's 4th Kentucky Cavalry pickets and drove them back two miles toward the ridge south of Greenville Road, where they encountered more Confederate troops. Giltner's men repulsed repeated Union attacks. Then William Brown, a local boy, pointed out a "by-road" to Union Col. John K. Miller, who used it to eposition his 13th Tennessee Cavalry. His next attack turned the Confederate left flank. A frontal assault then broke the Confederate line and resulted in "a running fight, which was closed by night two miles beyond Greeneville, the enemy halting and endeavoring several times to reform," Gillem reported. Union control of Greene County was again assured, for the time being.



Lloyd's Official Map of the State of Tennessee, 1863
Courtesy Library of Congress