

ROSSVILLE, McFARLAND HOUSE & SPRING



CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN HERITAGE TRAIL

At the time of the Civil War the community of Rossville, Georgia consisted of no more than a half dozen buildings. The most conspicuous of these structures was a two-story log dwelling



Wartime View of Thomas G. McFarland (John Ross) House
In 1962 the house was disassembled log by log and moved from the corner of Spring Street and Chickamauga Avenue to this location.

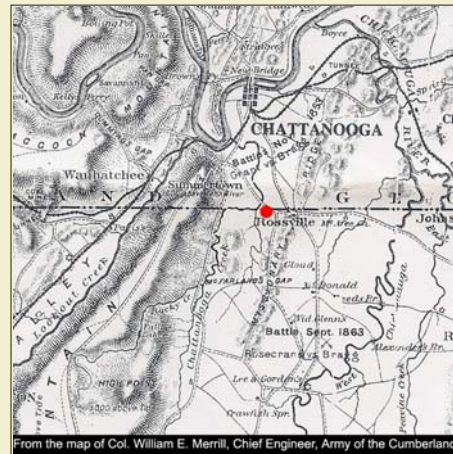
built in 1797 by John McDonald, maternal grandfather of John Ross. He and his brothers and sisters came to live with their grandparents in this home when their mother died.

In 1835 Thomas Gordon McFarland bought the John Ross House from Rev. Scales, who had won it in a land lottery. He and his two brothers lived in the house until Thomas Gordon married Elizabeth Anderson. After they were married Thomas G. and Elizabeth lived in the John Ross House. To this union were born six

children: Josiah Anderson, first mayor of Rossville, 1905 to 1909; John McNair, mayor 1909 to 1910; Thomas Foster, mayor, 1911 to 1912; Martha Jane, Sallie Ann and Ann Elizabeth.

A few hundred yards west of the house was Rossville Gap. Because the Gap provided easy passage through the precipitous barrier of Missionary Ridge, it took on great significance during the campaigns of Chickamauga and Chattanooga in the fall of 1863.

Union soldiers first occupied the environs of Rossville in early September 1863. Within a week of the Confederate evacuation of Chattanooga on

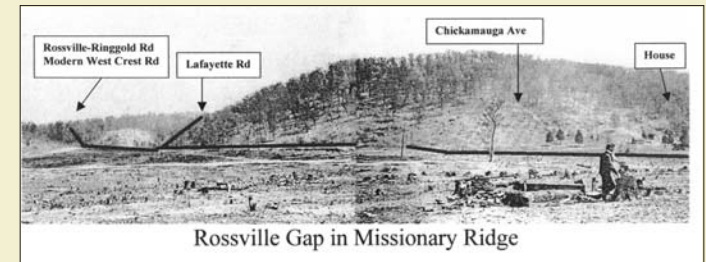


From the map of Col. William E. Merrill, Chief Engineer, Army of the Cumberland

September 7th, Union General Gordon Granger had established his headquarters at this two-story log house. Granger and the men in his Reserve Corps of the Army of the Cumberland remained in the vicinity of Rossville through the morning of September 20th. Then they marched southward to participate in the Battle of Chickamauga.

Rossville became a rallying place for most of the shattered Union Army following the Battle of Chickamauga. By nightfall on September 20th, the scene around the Thomas G. McFarland House was one of "confusion and disorder" with thousands of retreating soldiers milling around or throwing themselves on the ground to rest. Army surgeons occupied the McFarland house with hundreds of wounded patients covering the ground around the building and the adjacent spring.

Following the Federal defeat on the field at the Battle of Chickamauga, General George Thomas, the last Federal General on the field halted at Rossville and established a line of defense against the pursuing Confederates. General



Thomas made the Thomas G. McFarland House his headquarters on September 21st. The Federal forces, including many men from other units who stood with General Thomas, were in line and ready for battle on the morning of September 21, 1863. During much of the morning and afternoon, elements of the Federal Army skirmished with Confederate cavalymen from the command of General Nathan Bedford Forrest. During most of the day, General Forrest was on top of a ridge a short distance south of Rossville Gap observing the movements of the Federal Army in Chattanooga Valley and Chattanooga.

Following the Federal defeat on the field at the Battle of Chickamauga, most of the Federal Army escaped to Chattanooga through McFarland Gap and Rossville Gap.

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<http://www.ChickamaugaCampaign.org>