

SURRENDER OF CLARKSVILLE



Confederate Occupation



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In the mid-afternoon of February 19, 1862, Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote, aboard his flagship, the timber-clad gunboat USS *Conestoga*, passed Linwood Landing around the bend of the Cumberland River a mile and a half north of here. The ironclad USS *Cairo* and a steam tugboat accompanied him, just three days after Confederate forces surrendered Fort Donelson. Steaming upstream, the ships arrived at the bluffs, the location of Fort Defiance, and disembarked troops who proceeded to occupy that fort and Fort Clark, the “river battery” located below the bluffs on the south bank of the Red River.

After securing the forts, Foote steamed to the Clarksville landing just below here. He had observed several white flags including one over

Fort Defiance. Arriving at the town landing, the Federals saw smoke rising from the Memphis, Clarksville and Louisville Railroad bridge south of here, set afire by retreating Confederates.

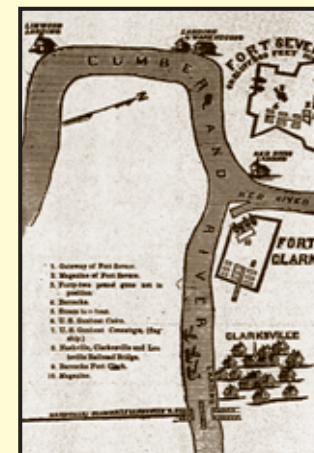
Foote, on crutches from an ankle wound received at Fort Donelson, met with a group of citizens led by former postmaster general Cave Johnson, former county judge Thomas W. Wisdom, and Clarksville mayor Charles G. Smith. They asked Foote to ensure the safety of the

townspeople and their property.

Initially refusing to do so, Foote

reconsidered and signed a proclamation the next day. Clarksville had surrendered; the war, and occupation, was at the front door.

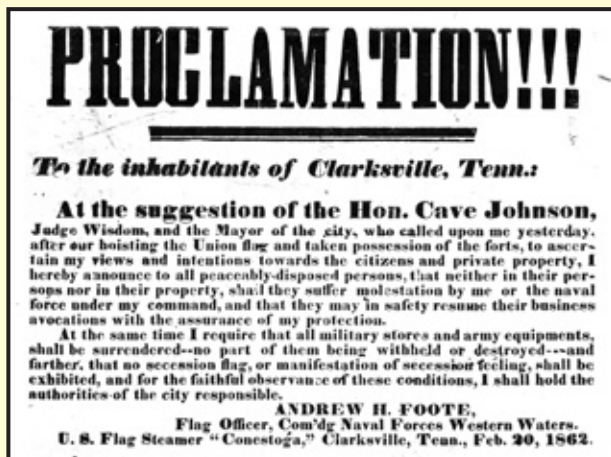
The *New York Herald* reported the event on February 24, 1862. On March 4, the *New York Times* included a map of the area; a reporter aboard *Conestoga* wrote the accompanying story.



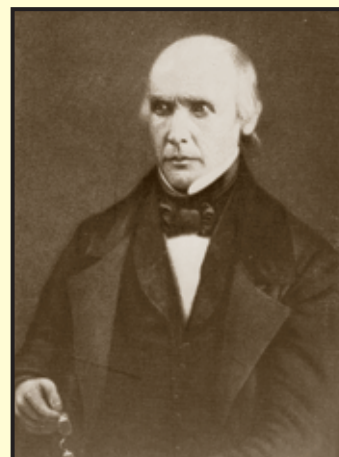
New York Times, March 4, 1862, showing Clarksville and forts
Courtesy Howard Winn



Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote –
Courtesy Library of Congress



Foote's Proclamation – Courtesy Howard Winn



Cave Johnson – Courtesy Howard Winn