

Founder of Foster & Creighton

Confederate Map Maker Wilbur Foster Helped Build a City

MAJ. WILBUR FOSTER, who drew the map of the battlefield at Nashville reproduced on the last page of this section, was one of the most

famous engineers and map makers who ever lived in Nashville. Founder of the still-active firm of Foster & Creighton, he died in 1922 at the age of 88.

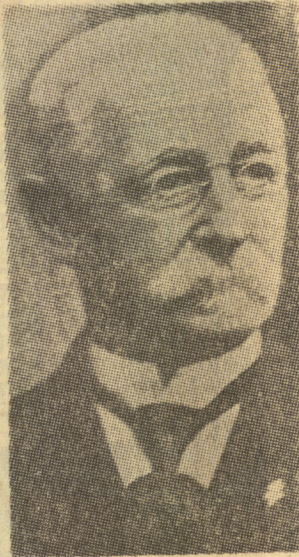
A native of Springfield, Mass., Major Foster came to Nashville as a young man and worked as a civil engineer on the building of early railroads in Middle Tennessee. During the decade before the Civil War he worked on several smaller roads, including the Central Southern and Edgefield and Kentucky, which were later absorbed by the L&N.

His Work Endures

Major Foster was the engineer in charge of building the first railway bridge across the Cumberland at Nashville. This bridge was burned by Confederates in 1862 and was replaced with a new superstructure to handle heavy equipment. The masonry work, however, is as sturdy today as when the major built it, more than a hundred years ago.

At the outbreak of the Civil War Wilbur Foster joined Company C of the Rock City Guards, Nashville, and as a private soldier was detailed by Gov. Isham G. Harris to fortify the Cumberland and Tennessee rivers. He reported that Fort Henry, on the Tennessee, was below the high water level, and when the governor "poohed-poohed" his report, later proved accurate, he asked to be returned to his regiment, the First Tennessee.

Foster located the water



Maj. Wilbur Foster
Builder, mapper, engineer

batteries at Fort Donelson, which were the first shore installations to win a victory over Foote's fleet of Federal gunboats. Promoted to the rank of major, he was attached to the staff of Gen. A. P. Stewart during the Atlanta campaign, and was officially commended for his military maps, location and construction of breastworks, rifle pits and other fortifications around Atlanta.

Honeymoon Delayed

After the war Foster opened an engineering business in Nashville, and in 1884 merged it with the contracting firm of Foster & Creighton. In 1886

he rebuilt the steel suspension bridge across the river at Nashville, and the same year married Elizabeth Nichol. He delayed his honeymoon until the bridge could be opened to traffic.

That same year, too, Foster built the city's first street railway. In 1868 he prepared a map of Davidson County which is more detailed than any done since, showing roads, streams and the names of many residents of rural sections. A copy of this map is now owned by the Tennessee Historical Society, a gift of Stanley F. Horn.

Among his other engineering jobs in Nashville were the laying out of West End Avenue and Belmont Boulevard, the building of the Nashville & Fairgrounds street railway (the fairground was then at Centennial Park) and the construction of heavy retaining walls around the State Capitol on Capitol Hill.

All-Day Cigars

Many stories were told about the Major, who lived to be 88 years old. He smoked cigars, and when the doctor cut him down to one a day he ordered cigars made eight inches long and an inch in diameter—sort of an all-day cigar. Every morning he walked to work—from his home at Seventeenth and West End to his office at Fourth and Church.

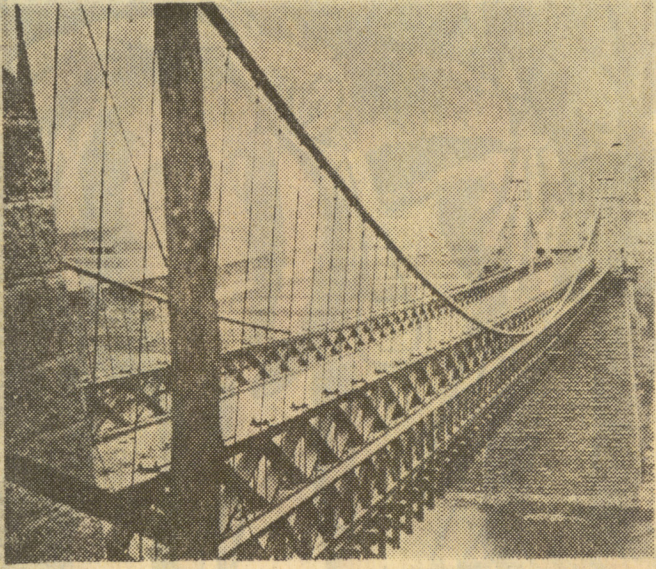
Serving with Hood's Army of Tennessee, Major Foster helped stake out the battle line at Nashville, and later drew an accurate map of the battlefield which was published in the Confederate Veteran magazine, published at Nashville.

Major Foster's battle map, sponsored as an advertisement by Nashville's Third National Bank, appears in color on the back page of this section. It shows positions of Federal and Confederate battle lines on

both days of the battle, and even the homes of many citizens who lived in the area.

It is interesting to note that "Montgomery" on Cedar Lane appears with the name, but no dot for the house. It is generally believed that the

Montgomery house was burned during the war, and was not standing at the time of the battle. The old Montgomery carriage house is still standing near the site of the old house atop the hill on Cedar Lane.



This suspension bridge across the Cumberland River at Nashville is believed to be the one built by Maj. Wilbur Foster during the first year after the Civil War.

An Unreconstructed Editor

New South? Lost Cause? Not for Cunningham!

SUMNER Archibald Cunningham has been dead just over a half century—a "gallant Confederate soldier" yet remembered by some Middle Tennesseans well past their three score and ten.

A granite monument, a tribute from the people of the South, marks Cunningham's grave in Willow Mount Cemetery, Shelbyville. But this is not the only—nor the most impressive—monument to S. A. Cunningham.

Perhaps his most enduring monument is the Confederate Veteran, a magazine published in Nashville for almost 40 years, from 1893 to 1932. It was largely through his efforts that publication continued for 19 years after his death.

In a few libraries, public and private, complete files of the Veteran can still be found—a rich treasure and store of war stories and anecdotes told by men whose memory might not be perfect—but after all, they were there! Collectors of Civil War material set considerable store by the Veteran—dealer Charles Elder estimates a complete file would be worth in the neighborhood of \$500.

Dr. James I. Vance, minister of the First Presbyterian Church, preached Cunningham's funeral there, and unwittingly enough the preacher used a phrase that the old soldier never would have permitted, had he known it.

"It is because the South's cause is a lost cause," Dr. Vance orated, "that there is a kind of romantic devotion that gathers about it."

Didn't Approve

There's no doubt that S. A. Cunningham, if a spark of life had been left in him, would have sat bolt upright in his coffin and disagreed with the minister. He never approved the phrase "Lost Cause," and would not use it in the Veteran.

"Will correspondents to the Veteran please take notice," he once wrote, "that the two detestable terms, 'New South' and 'Lost Cause' will not be printed. Many a fairly good article is turned down by use of that last term. They both originated assuredly in the minds of prejudiced Northerners."

And here was the preacher,



S. A. Cunningham
He never gave up

at Cunningham's funeral, talking about the "Lost Cause."

The truth was that the "cause" had never been lost, as far as Cunningham was concerned. "The war was never over with him," Vance went on. "I do not mean its bitterness; I mean its ideals; what it stood for. This never passed with him. He nursed it in his heart."

A plainer explanation would have been that Cunningham considered the South's "cause" to be states rights. Military means for its attainment having been exhausted, it was then being sought by other means.

Cunningham never approved of the "Blue and the Gray," either. If he had to use it, it would come out "Gray and the Blue."

"A 'comrade in Alabama' in 1902, had a Civil War pillow recovered in 'blue and gray,' a newspaper reported. Cunningham was indignant.

"Why make the new cover blue and gray?" he wrote. "Pity the sentiment that goes so far out of the way as to desecrate a pillow made by a loyal Confederate woman in the Sixties for a hospital. Do let us quit such twaddle!"

The Confederate Veteran was the official organ of the United Confederate Veterans and the United Daughters of the Confederacy. In its tribute to Cunningham the U.C.V. said he "believed he had been designed by God to do the

very work in which he was engaged.

"His creation, the Confederate Veteran, has maintained a unique place in military journalism and in its chosen paths has never been surpassed. It was the center of Confederate plans and impulses, and every part of the South felt the impress of its touch and power."

Cunningham's greatest ambition was to publish a fine magazine, and this he did. His family having died he was left alone in the world. His work was his life, and he needed very little money. The Veteran contained a reproduction of copy, with good reproduction of photographs, and a moderate run of advertising. Its excellent type, high quality paper and generous amount of white space made it easily readable for aging veterans whose sight was growing dim.

During all its years of life the magazine faced a problem that steadily grew worse. Its subscribers were dying off as the number of Confederate veterans grew smaller each year. And then, too, the magazine had to handle a heavy load of obituary material as more and more old soldiers passed into the valley of the shadow. Their descendants, by and large, were thinking of new wars and new causes, and were not interested in renewing their subscriptions.

Born in Bedford

S. A. Cunningham was born in Bedford County in 1843, raised on a farm and joined Company B, 41st Tennessee Infantry Regiment in 1861, as a mere boy. Captured at Fort Donelson, he was exchanged, fought in the Dalton-Atlanta campaign and Hood's Tennessee campaign. After the war he published a weekly paper, the Commercial, in Shelbyville. Under the byline of "S.A.C." he was a correspondent for the Nashville American.

During a campaign to raise funds for a Jefferson Davis memorial, Cunningham decided to publish a leaflet giving information about the memorial, to be distributed. This leaflet seemed to "fill a want," and it finally became the Confederate Veteran. Cunningham dedicated his magazine, and his life, to telling the story of the "War of the States."

One of the publisher's greatest achievements was to call the attention of the world to Sam Davis, the "Boy Hero of the Confederacy." Without his efforts it is doubtful that Tennessee and the world would have ever known the full story of how young Sam died at a rope's end rather than betray his commander to the enemy. As one writer put it, the Sam Davis monument on Capitol Hill is as much a monument to S. A. Cunningham as it is to Sam Davis. Cunningham conceived the memorial, and raised the funds for its erection.

Robert A. Halley of Nashville wrote that "Sumner Cunningham was one of the most remarkable men that came back from the war and engaged in the endeavor to be useful to his native section." It can be added now, after half a century, that S. A. Cunningham made his mark—and his work lives after him.

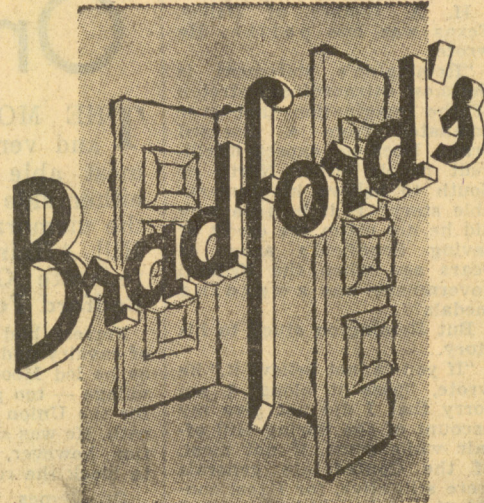
Never Again!

It was late in the war, perhaps in the summer 1864. A Confederate officer sitting by the roadside, saw a dilapidated soldier coming down the road. His clothing was in rags, a shoe was lacking, his head was bandaged and one arm in a sling. As he walked along the dusty road the soldier was talking to himself. He was saying:

"I love my country. I'd fight for my country. I'd starve and go thirsty for my country. I'd die for my country."

"But if ever this war is over I'll never love another country."
—Confederate Veteran

Now specializing in FURNITURE • CARPETS • DRAPERIES • ACCESSORIES • DECORATING
• 4100 hillsboro road • free parking • hours: 9:00-5:30 six days • open house monday and friday nights 'til 9



Bradford's had its part, also, in the rebuilding of the South

One short generation after the close of the Civil War Bradford's founder—one Jacob H. Bradford, with father-in-law J. R. Carson—saw the need for a furniture store selling stable, stylish goods. Their vision proved to be of benefit not only to themselves, but also to the economic progress of bustling, growing Nashville, with their employment of a goodly number of men in both the retail and the manufacturing end of their thriving business. As their business grew, they developed, in addition, a "take it TO the people" salesmanship, whereby horse drawn vans transported their wares to outlying districts, to brighten the heart of many a rural housemarm with a prettied-up home! But we're getting ahead of ourselves . . .

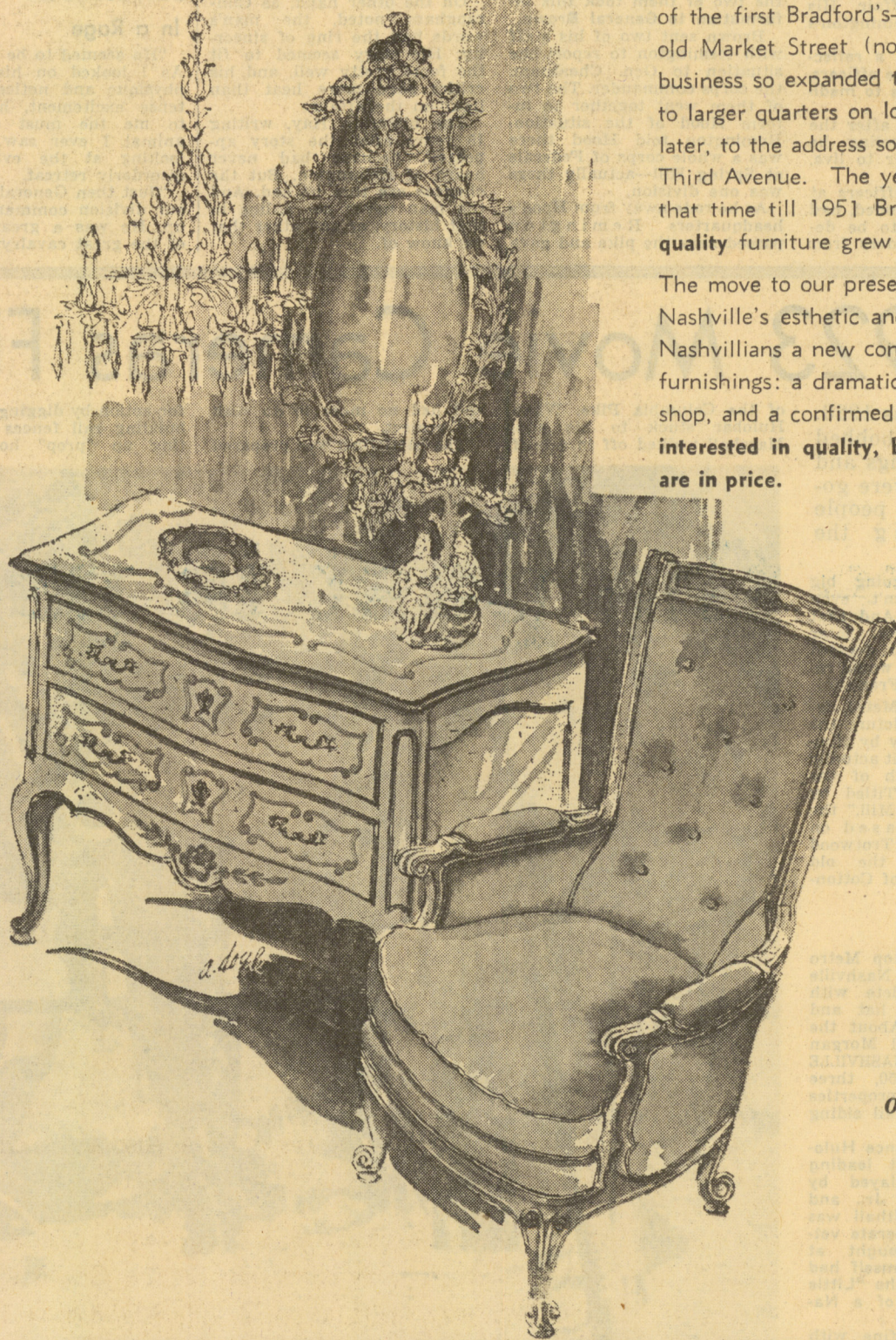
The year was 1889 when Jacob opened the doors of the first Bradford's—just north of Broad on old Market Street (now Second Avenue). The business so expanded that in a few years they had to move to larger quarters on lower Broad, and, several moves later, to the address so many of you are familiar with on Third Avenue. The year of that move was 1909, and from that time till 1951 Bradford's reputation for quality furniture grew . . . and grew.

The move to our present location in 1951 was a big step in Nashville's esthetic and cultural progress—it gave Nashvillians a new concept of shopping for quality home furnishings: a dramatic and refined background in which to shop, and a confirmed opinion that people are more interested in quality, beauty and good advice than they are in price.

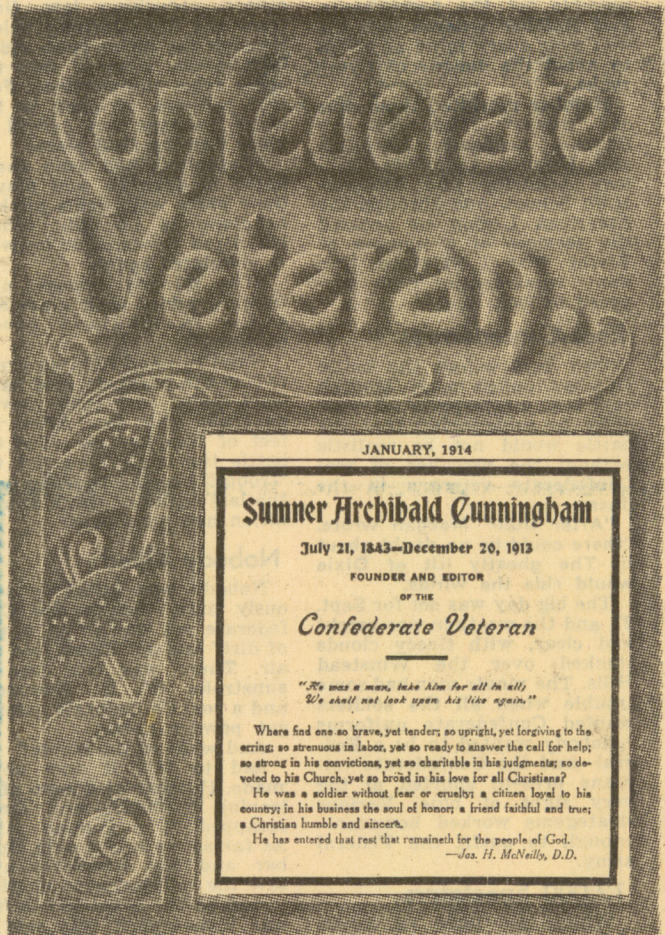
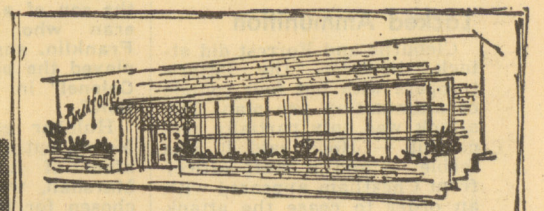
Our hope is that we can contribute to the future of Nashville by bringing a new awareness to our people of what a home should be—a haven, where graciousness and culture and appreciation of beauty can enrich the everyday life of the ones who live there. Won't you visit us soon . . . and often? We're always happy to have you.

75 years

of quality home furnishings
1889 1964



Bradford furniture makes you proud of your home!



This was the cover of the Confederate Veteran for January, 1914, with a black-bordered box on the death of its editor and publisher, S. A. Cunningham.