



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Chickamauga and
Chattanooga National
Military Park

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Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park NEWS RELEASE

August 23, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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The “Good Bishop” Commits a Great Blunder

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park invites the public to participate in a special 150th Anniversary program commemorating Confederate General Leonidas Polk’s occupation of Columbus, Kentucky on September 3, 1861. This program will be on Friday, September 2, at 7:00 p.m. and will be a one hour, part car caravan, part walking tour. The program will begin at the Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center, located at 3370 LaFayette Road in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.

Two years prior to commanding a corps in Braxton Bragg’s Army of Tennessee at Chickamauga, Leonidas Polk commanded Confederate forces along the Mississippi River Valley. Bishop of the Episcopal Church in Louisiana at the beginning of the Civil War, Polk was soon offered and accepted the rank of Major General by an old friend and West Point classmate, Jefferson Davis – President of the Confederate States of America. Without Davis’ approval and against the wishes of the government of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Polk ordered Confederate forces to occupy Columbus, Kentucky on September 3, 1861. Considered one of the great blunders of the Civil War, the occupation of Columbus kept Kentucky in the Union for the remainder of the war. This would prove to be the first of several “sins” committed by the “Good Bishop” during the Civil War.

Program attendees are encouraged to wear appropriate clothing for the weather, bring water, and wear comfortable shoes.

For more information regarding programs at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, contact the Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center at (706) 866-9241, the Lookout Mountain Battlefield Visitor Center at (423) 821-7786, or visit the park’s website at www.nps.gov/chch.

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