

INDIAN MOUNDS TRAIL GUIDE

Welcome to the Indian Mounds Trail. The wood chip covered trail is a 1 1/2 mile loop. Points of interest are marked by numbered wooden posts. The numbers correspond to the text below. The trail covers rolling terrain with limited climbing. Wheelchairs are not recommended. Please, "Take Pride in America" by taking only pictures and leaving only footprints.

Scientists believe that Indians lived in this area from 100 BC to 1000 AD. Thirty mounds ranging in height from 5 to 15 feet remain as evidence of this culture. It has not been possible to connect the builders of this mound group with any definite historic tribe. The Indians used this village for defense, ceremonies, burials and a trade center. The Civil War soldiers used this area for defensive purposes also.

1. Palisade Wall - This mound of earth is what remains of a stockade built by the Indians for defense. Posts were placed on end and banked with earth to hold them in place. The village was surrounded on three sides by the river and deep ravines. This palisade fence completed the defensive perimeter.

As you walk quietly down the trail you will hear the songs of many different bird species. They are abundant in this area. The significance of birds is ceremonially displayed in many artifacts of the Indians of this region.

2. 17th Kentucky Infantry Camp - There were

154 Union infantry, artillery and cavalry units camped at Shiloh on April 6, 1862. Brigadier General Sherman selected the area around Shiloh Church as a camp stating, "I am strongly impressed with the importance of the position, both for its land advantages and its strategic position. The ground itself admits of easy defense by a small command and yet affords admirable camping ground for a hundred thousand men". The 4th Division was camped in this area. They used Cloud Field for training.

The Indians used this field for growing food, hunting and defense. From the palisade wall enemies could be visually detected.

3. Gage's Alabama Battery - Their Commander stated, "I cannot speak too highly of the energy and labor displayed by the men of this battery throughout the day in cutting their way through a thickly wooded country over ravines and hills". They fought in almost every attack and now supported the advance on Grant's last defensive line, but the Confederates encountered another foe, Dill Branch ravine, which made the final approach to Grant's last line of defence a task equal to scaling the wall of a fortress.

4. Dill Branch Ravine - The Indians used this ravine for defense. It also played an important role in the defense of Pittsburg Landing. The Confederate soldiers charged through ankle deep water enduring rifle and cannon fire from Grant's last defensive line and a barrage from the Gunboat's *Tyler* and *Lexington* anchored in the river at the mouth of the ravine.

