



## Remember Me: Capital Guards

**Where organized:** Little Rock

**Date organized for Confederate service:** June 10, 1861

**Battles:** Shiloh, TN; Perryville, KY; Murfreesboro, TN; Chickamauga, GA; Chattanooga, TN; Ringgold Gap, GA; Atlanta, GA; Franklin, TN; Bentonville, NC

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**Number of men who survived the war:** 25

**Date monument was dedicated:** May 15, 1911

### Capital Guards and the Arsenal Crisis

On February 5, 1861, two military companies from Helena marched to the State Capitol grounds in Little Rock and set up camp for the night, resolved to seize the arsenal.

Little Rock awoke the next morning to find itself an armed camp. Eventually more than 1,000 men from counties across south and east Arkansas had assembled in the capital. The city council quickly called its own militia company, the Capital Guards, to maintain the peace. Captain Gordon N. Peay assembled his men on the front lawn of his home, and briefed them on the situation.

The Capital Guards were considered the best young men in the city. They held important jobs in a wide variety of legal, banking, medical, and trading backgrounds. The Capital Guards formed around the militia camped on the State House grounds, and tempers flared among the militiamen. Following the surrender of the arsenal, the Capital Guards provided an escort for the Federal soldiers to the river, in case there was any trouble with the crowd of bystanders watching the proceedings.



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### Private Peter Hotze's Diary

*June 19, 1861*

*"I was awakened at 3 a.m., we were supposed to march early, but matters delayed until 11 a.m. We started our march at 1 p.m. during the heat of the day. The weather was nice, but hot and the streets were very dusty. I said good bye to Konrad. In the morning I will give him my will for he is my sole heir. We are prepared for the departure because the young people are always full of hope, so the farewell was not so sad. In the arsenal and on the march through the city, we saw many tears shed as husbands said good bye to their wives and children and sons left their fathers. I had a hard time keeping from crying myself. When we saw those heartbreaking scenes. But now it's all over and I am glad. When we reached the river, we rested for about one hour until the other companies had caught up with us.*

*Finally came the order, "Right shoulder arms, march!"*



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### From the *Arkansas Gazette*, May 18, 1911

“On the same spot in the City Park where the Capital Guards, the flower of Little Rock, assembled nearly 50 years ago to go forth to battle in the cause of the Confederacy, the daughter of one captain of the company and the granddaughter of another yesterday morning pulled the ribbons that unveiled a handsome monument to their memory.

Judge W.C. Ratcliffe, first lieutenant of the Capital Guards when it was mustered out of service, acted as master of ceremonies, and made a stirring speech, in which he recalled the events of a half century ago. “We were happy then - all happy,” said Judge Ratcliffe. “We did not appreciate what was before us. . . .”

Dr. Charles R. Hyde offered prayer, declaring that, “We are proud of the legacy of the heroic deeds of those who died for us, and with loving hearts dedicate this monument today, ‘Lest We Forget’.”



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### MONUMENT TO THE CAPITAL GUARDS

“The movement to erect this monument originated at a gathering by some sons whose fathers were members of the Capital Guards of Little Rock, which later became Company A of the 6th Regiment Arkansas Infantry. There are many descendants of the members of this company residing in Little Rock, where the company was organized, as well as throughout the State, and it was thought a fitting tribute to the memory of these gallant soldiers, and would be an appropriate feature during the general reunion of the Confederate Veterans, to be held in Little Rock May 16, 17, and 18, 1911.

Many citizens of the city proposed to follow the example of other citizens by assisting in the erection of a monument which would be at all times an ornament to the city and an object of interest to its many visitors.

The monument will be erected in the historic City Park on the exact spot where the Company formed, fifty years ago, before leaving Little Rock.”

- *W.G. HUTTON, 1911*