

## Kentucky's Civil War: Governor Charles S. Morehead



*Historical Marker #1910 in Christian County notes Kentucky Governor Charles Morehead, who was arrested and expelled from the state during the Civil War.*

Born in Nelson County, Morehead was a Hopkinsville attorney, legislator, speaker of the Kentucky House, and U.S. congressman. He was elected governor of Kentucky in 1855.

Early in the Civil War, Morehead was arrested by Union authorities and “accused of being actively engaged in stirring up and promoting rebellion, and directly charged with treason.” Imprisoned in New York City, Morehead’s incarceration stirred up controversy.

After a nearly four-month confinement, Morehead, who refused to take the Union oath of allegiance, was set free under the condition that he never again enter Kentucky or any of the seceded states. The ex-governor spent the remainder of the war in exile in Europe. He later relocated to Mississippi, where he died in 1868. He was buried in Frankfort.

Morehead’s arrest foreshadowed Union military policy in Kentucky, which led to the arrest of hundreds of Kentuckians, including prominent politicians and military leaders.

Photo: Governor Charles S. Morehead. Collection of the Kentucky Historical Society.