

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

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New power line may threaten Resaca battlefield

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is planning a new power line to connect a substation near Dalton to a new substation near Calhoun. TVA rationale for the project and maps of the proposed routes are at <http://tva.gov/power/projects/centerpoint/index.htm>. One of the proposed routes would cross the Resaca battlefield, outside the land owned by the state, but traversing the site of the fighting on the Confederate right flank on the afternoons of 14 & 15 May 1864.

Ken Padgett, vice president of Friends of Resaca Battlefield (www.resacabattlefield.org), voiced his objection at a 7 October public hearing in Calhoun. Many others affected by the potential power line routes also indicated their opposition. While preservationists (and others) are often unsuccessful in opposing power lines, we might be able to influence the route in this case.

You can oppose the route that transits Resaca battlefield by contacting Steve Pitt at 1101 Market St (MR 4G), Chattanooga TN 37402-2801 or newtransline@tva.gov before **8 November**.

Kennesaw Mountain Superintendent John Cissell to retire

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park Superintendent John Cissell will retire from the National Park Service in January. While we can safely assume that John's successor will also be a supporter of preservation, the new superintendent will have to work hard to match John's interest and zeal in saving Civil War sites. Best wishes to John, and we hope to have him around to help the preservation cause in any capacity.

Preservationist Scott Howell dies

GBA regrets to report the death of Scott Howell, relic hunter and preservationist. Scott was a founding member of Friends of Civil War Paulding County and also helped develop the Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails. He donated many of his relic finds and was always helpful to GBA.

GBA in the press publicizing need for preservation

GBA continues to spread the word about preserving Georgia's Civil War sites. On 14 July, GBA was featured in the *Neighbor* Newspapers for the 140th anniversary of the Battle of Peachtree Creek. Next, GBA was mentioned in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* on 22 & 25 July regarding our efforts to place two new historic markers at Battle of Atlanta sites in Freedom Park and Inman Park. GBA's design and sponsorship of these markers was recognized with an Atlanta Preservation Center Keystone Award in a 23 September ceremony at Oakland Cemetery. Most prominently, preservation efforts in Paulding County appeared in an 18 October *Atlanta Journal Constitution* front page article, which resulted from a press tour arranged jointly by the Civil War Preservation Trust, Friends of Civil War Paulding County, and GBA. We hope that heightened awareness of the threat to Civil War sites will increase the chance of their preservation.

War in Georgia: 140 years ago – November 1864

November begins with another exchange of telegrams between Sherman and Grant. Grant asks: "Shouldn't you destroy Hood?" Sherman replies that pursuit of Hood is useless: "If Hood will go to the Ohio River, I will give him rations. Let him go north: My business is down south." Grant accedes: Sherman now has authority for his march to the sea. All sick men and all surplus supplies and equipment are sent to Nashville by rail, repaired after Hood's October attacks.

On 8 November, President Lincoln is reelected. At Kingston that day, Sherman issues Special Field Order 119, informing his men that they are about to embark on a great march, though the destination is not specified. The next day, he issues Order 120, encouraging the men to forage liberally but stating that only corps or army commanders can authorize destruction of private property. While Sherman is against wanton destruction, he also believes the South's planter class bears responsibility for the war. His men know his philosophy, which has been sent to the

newspapers so that all in the path of his armies will also know: To anyone loyal to the United States, all forbearance; and to the petulant, no mercy. The troops will define petulance liberally. Among Sherman's last telegrams before cutting off communication with the North is one to the Navy Department, informing them to look for him along the Georgia Coast around Christmas.

By 11 November, Federal troops in Atlanta have heard that they will soon depart. Some of them break into the liquor supplies, and fires result. At Cartersville on the 12th, Sherman watches the last trains head north before chief engineer Orlando Poe destroys the railroad south of the Etowah River. For the next three days, destruction centers on Atlanta, where any thing that might be militarily useful is burned or broken. On 15 November, the Federal armies begin leaving the city, setting fires that burn through most of the day. As the troops leave, looters and arsonists begin their work, and Sherman himself helps put out unauthorized fires. Poe estimates 37% of the city is destroyed. A week later, Georgia Militia General Howard surveys the city, reporting that only bricks and metal are salvageable. He estimates that two-thirds of the city's trees are destroyed and that looters took \$1 million worth of material after the Federals left.

Sherman has talked about the two wings of his force heading for Augusta and Macon, hoping to mislead anyone who relays his comments to Confederate authorities. In reality, the 62,000 men, 65 guns, 2500 wagons, 25,000 horses and mules, and 10,000 cattle will proceed on roughly parallel paths to Savannah. Facing them will be Joe Wheeler's cavalry and assorted militia and partisan groups, some of whom wreak as much havoc on the populace as do the Yankees. Wheeler quickly reports that the Federal force consists of four corps and 60,000 to 70,000 men, but the Confederates have little capability to act upon Wheeler's accurate estimate.

The remaining two weeks of November witness the Federal armies cutting a swath through central Georgia. Despite orders to the contrary, unwarranted destruction is widespread. Citizens of a large area are left destitute and—just as Sherman intended—they become a burden to rather than a source of support for the Confederacy. Wheeler's cavalry harasses the marching columns but to no great effect, and the only infantry clash occurs on 22 November at Griswoldville, where an ill-prepared force of Georgia Militia is bloodily repulsed. That same day, Federal infantry enters Milledgeville, the state capital. They hold mock sessions of the Georgia legislature, loot the state museum and library, and use state currency and archives as fuel for their campfires. Finally, the provost marshal intercedes and establishes his headquarters in the Capitol to prevent further damage. A few Federals who have escaped the prison camp at Andersonville stumble into Milledgeville, and their wretched condition incites anger in all who see or hear of it. This anger will result in greater destruction, especially along the route of the more northerly column.

On many evenings, Sherman chats with escaped slaves, from whom he gathers information; but he also hears their belief that the passage of the Federal force represents the jubilee. Despite Sherman's injunction that they must not follow the army, a swelling number of former slaves attach themselves to the Federal columns. The soldiers sometimes find their new followers helpful and amusing, but the sheer number of people eventually makes them a hindrance. Before the end of November, several Federal units crossing rivers have taken up their temporary bridges before the "contrabands" can cross. Some of the former slaves ford or swim the chilly water, some drown, and some are taken by Confederate cavalry and returned to slavery.

Late in the month, Federal cavalry under Judson Kilpatrick, feints towards Augusta to draw Wheeler's Confederate horsemen away from the main columns. Kilpatrick successfully diverts Wheeler, his West Point classmate, but loses several hundred horses and men and is almost captured himself in clashes around Waynesboro and Buckhead Creek.

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