

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

Published by Georgia Battlefields Association, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of Georgia's Civil War history and sites. Contact newsletter editor by e-mail: info@georgiabattlefields.org

Next GBA tour led by Ed Bearss is 12-15 March 2015

Subject: Atlanta Campaign from 16 May to 4 June 1864. **Guides:** Ed Bearss and Jim Ogden.
Price: \$395 includes Thursday reception and meals on Friday and Saturday. Your registration is confirmed when your check payable to GBA arrives at 7 Camden Rd NE, Atlanta GA 30309.
Hotel: Fairfield Inn, 20 Canyon Pkwy, Cartersville GA (I-75 exit 288). \$101 (89+12 tax). 770 387 0400. www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/atlev-fairfield-inn-and-suites-cartersville/

Savannah River dredging and CSS Georgia

In early October, state and federal officials signed an agreement to deepen the Savannah River ship channel. One part of the project will be the recovery of the remains of *CSS Georgia*, which was scuttled 150 years ago December (see December 2013 and June 2012 newsletters). The recovery effort is scheduled to begin in October 2015, cost \$15 million, and take as much as two years. Preservation of recovered material could take much longer. No announcement has been made about where preservation will occur and where or whether the remnants will be displayed.

New Fort Walker marker installed

On 7 October, Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails <http://civilwarheritagetrails.org> installed a new marker (see photo at right) at Fort Walker, the remains of which are in the southeast corner of Atlanta's Grant Park. Georgia Battlefields Association provided some content for the marker.



GBA participates in Civil War program at The Galloway School

On 20 October, GBA helped explain Civil War events in Sandy Springs to students at The Galloway School.

Time to apply for annual battlefield preservation grants

The American Battlefield Protection Program annual preservation grant process is underway. See www.nps.gov/abpp/grants/battlefieldgrants/2015grants.html for guidelines and an application form. If you don't have access to the internet, call grants manager Kristen McMasters at 202 354 2037. Mailed applications must be postmarked by 2 January 2015.

These ABPP grants cannot be used to acquire land, unlike those through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Georgia projects received grants in 2009, 2010, and 2012.

150 years ago this month

After convincing Halleck and Grant that chasing Hood around northern Alabama is fruitless, and after sending George Thomas and two corps to Tennessee to deal with whatever Hood attempts next, and after hectoring Halleck and Grant for most of October to authorize a march to the coast, Sherman is at Kingston, Georgia, on 2 November when he receives Grant's telegram to "Go on as you propose." Grant knows that the presidential election—and, thanks to the fall of Atlanta, the likely re-election of Lincoln—will be over before Sherman can get underway on what is viewed in Washington as a risky campaign. Sherman instructs his subordinates to send all excess baggage and provisions and any sick or otherwise limited men and animals to Tennessee. He reorganizes the remaining force into two armies under Howard and Slocum, and orders the destruction of much of the railroad between Atlanta and Chattanooga and of any equipment and buildings in Rome, Atlanta, and many other towns that might be of military use to the Confederates once the Federals embark on their march. The result is a major wrecking and burning of Atlanta, principally along the rail lines. The percentage of city buildings destroyed is argued to this day, but 40% is a supportable figure. On 25 November, Governor Brown asks state militia General W.P. Howard to report on the condition of Atlanta.

62,000 veteran Federals leave Atlanta on 15 and 16 November, their destination not revealed to most of the troops: One army heads towards Augusta and the other towards Macon, in part to deceive the Confederate resistance, which will consist of 5,000 cavalry under Wheeler and whatever militia the state government can muster. The only infantry battle during the March to the Sea, as it will come to be known, occurs on 22 November at Griswoldville, northeast of Macon. A woefully overmatched militia force attacks a Federal division and is bloodily repulsed. For the rest of the month, the Federals march towards Savannah, taking the state capital of Milledgeville on 22 November and living off the contents of every barn, corn crib, and food storage building they encounter. Burnings of residences are rare, but most farm or plantation outbuildings go up in smoke. On 27 November, a U.S. cavalry foray towards Augusta battles with Wheeler at Waynesborough. The Confederate horsemen can still hold their own but can no longer routinely best the Federal troopers, especially when they are backed by infantry. On 30 November, Confederates including Georgia militia repulse a Federal force advancing from Hilton Head to cut the railroad at Honey Hill, S.C.

The war presents few scenes as unusual as two armies turning their backs on each other and advancing rather than retreating, but as Sherman's armies march through Georgia, Hood marches into Tennessee. He is delayed at Florence, Alabama, by a high Tennessee River and the need to gather supplies. After raiding in western Tennessee early in the month, including destroying \$6.7 million worth of Federal supplies and capturing two gunboats at Johnsonville on 4 November, Forrest joins Hood at Florence on 16 November to replace Wheeler's cavalry that has been left in Georgia to oppose Sherman. Hood finally heads north on 21 November with 30,000 infantry and 8,000 cavalry. He adroitly outflanks Schofield at Columbia but can't close the trap at Spring Hill on 29 November, when the Federals march past the Confederate bivouacs during the night. Chagrined at the missed opportunity, Hood is determined to catch the withdrawing Federals before they can cross the Harpeth River at Franklin. He orders an attack as daylight fades on 30 November, and a ferocious fight lasts well into the night. Confederate casualties are horrendous and include perhaps their best division commander, Pat Cleburne, and five other generals killed or mortally wounded. Waiting in Nashville for any further Confederate advance is Thomas with 70,000 men, including the city garrison, those sent north by Sherman, and A.J. Smith's troops that helped defend Missouri.

From the Shenandoah Valley, the remnants of Early's Confederate force are redeployed to rejoin Lee around Richmond and Petersburg. Grant maintains pressure on Lee's extended defense lines, while Confederate cavalry raid in northern Virginia in an attempt to divert Federal troops.

On 8 November, President Lincoln defeats McClellan with 55% of the popular vote but a massive 212 to 21 electoral victory. Republicans will also have majorities in the House and Senate. On 14 November, Lincoln accepts McClellan's resignation from the Army. As a reward for his recent victories, Sheridan is promoted to the open major general slot in the Regular Army. On 21 November, Lincoln writes his famous letter to Mrs. Bixby regarding the loss of her sons. On 24 November, Attorney General Bates resigns. James Speed succeeds him on 2 December.

On 25 November, Confederate agents from Canada set ten fires in New York City but don't achieve the larger conflagration they intended.

As has been true for most of the war, U.S. Army operations against the Indians continue throughout the month. Clashes occur in Kansas, Texas and the New Mexico, Nebraska, Colorado territories. On 25 November, Colonel Kit Carson and 330 volunteers are attacked by over 1,000 Kiowa and Comanche at Adobe Walls, Texas. After several hours, Carson retreats but burns several Indian villages during the expedition. On 29 November, a largely volunteer force from Denver, under a veteran of the 1862 battles in New Mexico, attacks a Cheyenne village at Sand Creek, Colorado. The attack is more a massacre than a battle, with many women and children among the slain.

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