

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

Annual tour with Ed Bearss

GBA had another great tour with Ed Bearss. Despite wind driven rain on Friday (13 March) we learned about Rome Crossroads (near Calhoun), Armuchee Creek, Rome, Adairsville, and Kingston. Saturday (14 March) took us to Cassville, Cooper Iron Works, New Hope Church, Pickett's Mill, and Dallas. We finished Sunday morning (15 March) at Pine Mountain and the Ector trench near the site of Latimer's Farm. See our web site for more photos.



Ed explains the fighting at Pickett's Mill



Jim Ogden (left) and Ed Bearss (right) at the Polk monument on Pine Mountain. Ed is wearing the GBA 20th anniversary shirt.

Ed Bearss DVD, GBA 20th anniversary polo shirt, and new treasurer

During the tour, we sold *American Journey*, a video biography of Ed Bearss. Here's a link to a preview www.encorecreative.net/?portfolio=american-journey-the-life-and-times-of-ed-bearss. We also featured GBA 20th anniversary polo shirts. If you want a DVD (\$25) or a polo shirt (\$35 - specify size and either maroon or green color), please mail your checks to GBA at PO Box 589, Tate GA 30177. **Note:** The new organization address is because Lloyd Thompson has replaced Frank Chew as treasurer. Frank was acknowledged for his ten years of service during the tour.

Old Clinton "War Days" Festival is 2-3 May

The annual Old Clinton War Days event occurs this year on 2 & 3 May. On both days, gates open at 9 a.m., reenactor camps open at 10:05, and battle reenactments (Sunshine Church and Griswoldville) start at 2:05 p.m. The event also features food, crafts, and artifact displays. Proceeds (\$5 for adults, \$3 for children age 6 to 18) are used to preserve the Old Clinton Historic District. The memorial service at 8:05 p.m. Saturday at the Old Clinton cemetery is free.

Old Clinton is 12 miles northeast of Macon, just a block west of US 129. For more info, call Earlene Hamilton at 478 986 6383 or the Jones County-Gray Visitor's Center at 478 986 1123.

150 years ago this month – April 1865

On 1 April, Sheridan's cavalry and Warren's infantry smash into the Confederates at Five Forks, Virginia, take 4,500 prisoners, and cut the remaining railroad linking Petersburg and Richmond to the rest of the Confederacy. Already planning evacuation, Lee's hand is forced before dawn the next day when the U.S. 6th Corps rips open the Confederate line southwest of Petersburg. A.P. Hill is killed trying to rally his corps. Lee organizes a desperate holding action but sends a message to President Davis that the defenses must be abandoned. Davis, his cabinet, and many government officials flee Richmond late on the 2nd, and the city is heavily damaged by looters before the Federals arrive on the 3rd. President Lincoln is visiting the army when the events unfold, and he rides through Petersburg on 3 April and Richmond on 4 and 5 April. He leaves for Washington late on 8 April, aware that the Confederate army is fleeing westward. Over 8,000 Confederates are captured at Saylor's Creek on 6 April, and Grant sends a surrender proposal to Lee on 7 April. Lee rebuffs this request, but a pause to receive much needed rations at Farmville and the poor condition of the men and animals allow part of Grant's force to outpace the Confederates and block them near Appomattox Courthouse. Lee surrenders there on 9 April. Parole of the less than 25,000 men remaining in the Army of Northern Virginia causes the ex-soldiers to head home, many on foot.

On 13 April, Secretary of War Stanton orders an end to the draft and to purchase of war materiel. On 14 April, the U.S. flag flies once again over Fort Sumter, just over four years since the fort's bombardment started the war.

President Lincoln arrives in Washington about the same time as news of Lee's surrender. From the second story of the White House, he addresses a crowd that includes John Wilkes Booth. Five days later, Booth shoots Lincoln at Ford's Theater, and the President dies on the morning of 15 April. One of Booth's co-conspirators seriously injures Secretary of State Seward, but attacks on Vice President Johnson and other cabinet members are thwarted. Most of the plotters are arrested before the end of the month, and Booth's attempted escape ends near Port Royal, Virginia, when he is killed early on 26 April. Lincoln's body lies first in the White House, then the Capitol, before leaving Washington on 21 April for a rail journey back to Springfield.

For his part, President Davis arrives in Danville, Virginia, early on 3 April and speaks of continuing resistance. His flight takes him next to Greensboro, North Carolina, where he meets with Generals Johnston, Beauregard, and Breckinridge on 12 & 13 April and tells them not to surrender. Incredulous, Johnston ignores Davis's exhortation and meets with Sherman near Durham. Sherman tells Johnston of Lincoln's assassination, though Sherman is attempting to keep the news from his own troops for fear of their reaction. On 18 April, Johnston signs a surrender agreement that Sherman submits to Washington for approval. Secretary of War Stanton reacts angrily to the generosity of the terms and the inclusion of political matters, and he sends Grant to relieve Sherman of command. Grant proceeds to North Carolina and on 24 April gives his friend the chance to renegotiate the surrender. By this time, Davis has heard of Lincoln's assassination and has sent his approval of the original terms, but Johnston accedes to new terms on the 26th. Johnston's surrender covers almost 100,000 men scattered throughout North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. By the end of the month, Davis has transited Salisbury and Charlotte and is at Yorkville, South Carolina, hunted by Federal cavalry and suspected of complicity in Lincoln's murder. His route has taken him through areas already damaged by Stoneman's cavalry raid that originated in East Tennessee.

As the prison camps empty, Vicksburg becomes a transit point for Federals headed home. Paid by the person, a greedy contractor overloads *SS Sultana* with former POWs. When the added weight strains the engines, three boilers explode north of Memphis on 27 April: An estimated 1,800 people die, the greatest maritime disaster in American history.

Near Mobile, the Federals bombard and then capture Spanish Fort on 8 April and Fort Blakely on 9 April. The Confederates evacuate Mobile by 12 April, though the Federals continue to lose ships to mines. By 29 April, Confederate General Richard Taylor, commanding the Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana, agrees to a truce.

Wilson's raid through Alabama reaches Selma on 2 April. The defenses appear strong, but a late afternoon charge breaks the Confederate line, and Wilson captures 2,700, then destroys the last remaining weapons manufacturing center in the South. By 12 April, he takes Montgomery, initial capital of the Confederacy, and on 16 April takes West Point and Columbus, Georgia, the last battles east of the Mississippi. He learns of Lee's surrender while en route to Macon, which he captures on the 20th. There, he receives a coded message from Sherman—forwarded by a courier from Johnston—and reads that not only has Lee surrendered, but negotiations are underway for Johnston to surrender. Wilson sends patrols to look for any signs of resistance.

On 21 April, Mosby disbands his partisan ranger unit in northern Virginia, while General Wofford is trying to organize partisans in northwest Georgia and bring them under control.

On 1 April, *CSS Shenandoah* takes four whaling ships in the mid Pacific.

Operations against the Indians occur in California, Kansas, Indian Territory, and Dakota Territory.

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Address correction requested
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