

# GEORGIA

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# BATTLEFIELDS

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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](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org)

## Historic house in Dalton could use your help

For the first four months of 1864, the Huff house in Dalton served as the headquarters for General Joseph Johnston when he commanded the Army of Tennessee. It was in the parlor of the Huff House that Major General Patrick Cleburne made his 2 January 1864 proposal to arm slaves as Confederate troops. See photo below.

The last owner willed the house to Whitfield-Murray Historical Society (Jan 2014 newsletter). The Society has already replaced the HVAC unit and part of the roof and is now working on the security system, floors, carpet, and kitchen. They intend to prepare the lower floors as meeting space. Johnston's bedroom on the second floor will be redone to look as it did when he was there, while other second floor rooms will contain historical displays.

If you can donate money or know of funding sources, please write to Whitfield-Murray Historical Society, Huff House Committee, 715 Chattanooga Ave, Dalton GA 30720.



## GBA has a new treasurer

You may have noticed the change of address from Atlanta to Tate on the April newsletter and on Georgia Battlefields Association's web site. The change resulted from the 24 March formal transfer of the treasurer position from Frank Chew to Lloyd Thompson. Frank was our treasurer for ten years, and anyone who has been a member of a non-profit or voluntary organization knows just how critical the treasurer is to the organization's efficiency and survival. The other trustees expect to get the same outstanding service from Lloyd that we got from Frank. If you have a chance, please say thanks to Frank and welcome Lloyd.



Lloyd Thompson and Frank Chew at the Cooper Ironworks Furnace during our March 2015 tour.

## **150 years ago this month – May 1865**

On 1 May, President Johnson appoints nine men to a military commission that will try the Lincoln conspirators. On 2 May, Johnson orders a \$100,000 reward for the capture of Davis, who is now at Abbeville, South Carolina, where he meets with Secretary of War Breckinridge, General Bragg, and the commanders of the five cavalry brigades that form his escort. Davis outlines his plan for continuing the war and is deflated when he hears more realistic assessments from the cavalry commanders. Davis crosses into Georgia on 3 May, the same day that Lincoln's funeral train arrives in Springfield. At Washington, Georgia, the Confederate government disbands, the president's military escort is pared down to a squadron, and the cabinet members disperse, some to be captured and others (Benjamin and Breckinridge) to make fantastic escapes. Davis and his family are captured by units of James Wilson's cavalry near Irwinville, Georgia, on 10 May. He is taken first by wagon to Macon, where he is cordially hosted by Wilson, then by rail to Atlanta and on to Augusta, with a stop on the way to pick up Vice President Alexander Stephens. From Augusta, their journey continues by boat until they arrive at Fort Monroe, Virginia on 22 May. Davis is imprisoned there to await trial.

On 4 May, about 20 miles north of Mobile, Richard Taylor surrenders his Department of Alabama, Mississippi, and East Louisiana. Lincoln's body is interred in a temporary tomb in Springfield the same day.

On 10 May, President Johnson declares armed resistance at an end, even though more surrenders are pending. Samuel Jones surrenders his command at Tallahassee on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Jeff Thompson surrenders his command in Arkansas on the 11<sup>th</sup>, and on the 12<sup>th</sup>, at Kingston, General Wofford surrenders almost 4,000 troops in northwest Georgia not covered by other agreements. Also on 12 May, the Confederates win a small battle at Palmito Ranch, Texas, the last battle of the war. On 26 May, representatives of General Kirby Smith, commanding Confederate forces in the Trans-Mississippi, negotiate a surrender at New Orleans. On 27 May, President Johnson orders the release of Confederate military prisoners, except for some high ranking officers; and on 29 May, he issues a broad amnesty proclamation, again exempting high ranking officers.

On 12 May, General O. O. Howard is named to head the Freedmen's Bureau, intended to aid the transition of over four million slaves into citizenship.

Union armies from the east and west, having marched to Washington from Virginia and North Carolina, participate in a grand review on 23 and 24 May.

Having left Richmond shortly after Davis on 3 April but only occasionally intersecting the president's route thereafter, the Confederate treasury is largely disbursed to Davis's cavalry escort, army paymasters, cabinet members, and government agents; and a substantial amount of the paper notes are burned. Ultimately, the remainder is seized by U.S. troops when the wagons reach Florida, but the accompanying \$450,000 in private bank deposits are given a military escort back towards Richmond. While camped near what is now Chennault, Georgia, on 24 May, the wagon train is attacked by Confederate parolees and deserters. General Porter Alexander, paroled to his home near Augusta, recovers \$110,000 from the looters and returns it to the Richmond banks, but at least \$250,000 is missing. Rumors of buried treasure in the area persist to this day.

Sloppy handling of ammunition results in a huge explosion in Mobile on 25 May. As many as 300 people die, and damage is estimated at \$5,000,000.

Operations against the Indians occur in Nebraska and New Mexico Territories.

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**April 2015**

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