

Atlanta History Center's new Civil War exhibit

In 1996, Atlanta History Center (AHC) opened "Turning Point" as its permanent Civil War exhibit. It was curated by Gordon Jones, and it served its purpose well for 30 years. Despite technological changes that now allow for interactive and digital displays that can help to optimize the use of space, AHC has acquired so many Civil War-related artifacts since 1996 that it could no longer display many unique and significant items; so AHC turned again to Gordon Jones to curate and oversee installation of a new exhibit "[More Perfect Union](#): The American Civil War Era" that opened last month. As the title suggests, the exhibit includes a more extensive examination of the years prior to and the years after the war.

How fortunate that Gordon was still on the AHC staff to curate the new exhibit 30 years after he did the same for the former exhibit. In the museum world, that's a rarity.

While the new exhibit occupies a redesigned but equally sized gallery space, it has many more written and printed documents—letters, pamphlets, speeches, books—and less of the "hardware" that "Turning Point" included; but don't worry: AHC will devote a separate gallery to rifles, pistols, swords, artillery projectiles, and other ordnance; and that second gallery will display many of the items acquired over the last 30 years that couldn't be accommodated due to space constraints when only the Dubose Gallery was used. The second gallery will open around the coming new year. Having seen the effort that was required to open the More Perfect Union exhibit, AHC is understandably reluctant to pinpoint this far in advance a specific date for the second gallery opening.

Go see for yourself, and you'll gain a deeper understanding of our nation's most significant event.

More opportunities for Civil War Atlanta Downtown Walking Tour

Since 2007, Georgia Battlefields Association (GBA) has led a Civil War Atlanta Downtown Walking Tour as part of Atlanta Preservation Center's (APC) Phoenix Flies Program, held in March of each year. Atlanta Preservation Center has asked if GBA could offer the tour at other times of the year, and we are currently working with APC to select some dates. Watch the [APC web site](#) or the [tour reservation](#) page for this and several other tours from other organizations.

The GBA downtown walking tour includes several sites that were photographed in the Fall of 1864 when U.S. forces occupied Atlanta and the surrounding area. George Barnard was under contract to the U.S. Army to take photographs of Confederate fortifications once they came under U.S. control. Thankfully, he took many other photos, else we would have no wartime photographs of Atlanta.

Here are some then-and-now comparison photos of sites that are included on our walking tour.



Calico House on SE corner of Collins St and Wheat St.



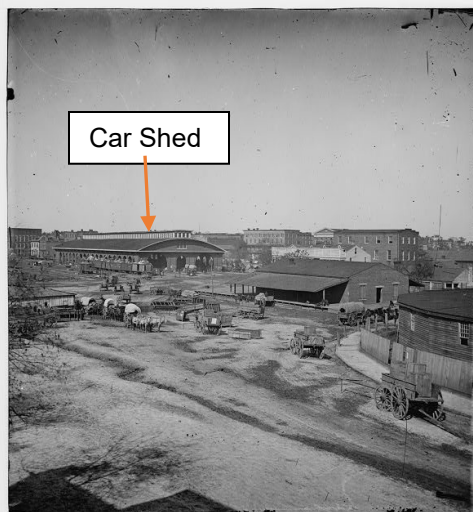
Same site today. Now SE corner of Courtland St and Auburn Ave.



Atlanta City Hall from southwest. Then as now, Washington St is in foreground.



Capitol Building from almost same viewpoint as 1864 photo of City Hall, which was not removed until 1885 to make room for construction of the Capitol, thus indicating that the city was not entirely reduced to ashes in 1864, as is claimed on one of the "historical" markers on the Capitol grounds.



Looking NW towards Car Shed in 1864 from an elevated perspective, perhaps from St. Philip's Episcopal Church.



Looking NW towards Car Shed location today from Courtland St bridge.



Destroyed car shed, 15 November 1864.



Same perspective today, from Central Ave looking West. Former car shed location is 30 feet below the parking deck.