



The Battlefield Dispatch

-2013- A Year of Commemoration and Remembrance

This January 1, after a night of celebration marking the passage of another year, people awoke to find themselves looking forward to various hopes and dreams that might be ushered in by this new year. However, the year itself undoubtedly brings special meaning to different people, especially those who are avid students of United States History.

In 1838, and 175 years ago this year, thousands of men, women, children, slaves, soldiers, missionaries and others found themselves huddled in and around the small community of Ross's Landing (present-day Chattanooga, Tennessee). Unfortunately, what brought them there was not a celebration but upheaval and the changing of a generation. As members of the Cherokee Nation anxiously awaited their impending removal West, to what must their thoughts have turned? To decades of memories being left behind? To the uncertainty of where this removal trail might take them?



Trail of Tears National Historic Trail Logo
(Courtesy of NPS)



Lieutenant George Van Pelt heroically defends his battery at Chickamauga in this stylized engraving (courtesy of Chicago Historical Society)

Twenty-five years after the Cherokee Removal and 150 years ago this year, the landscape around Chattanooga was once again in turmoil. The Civil War had just entered its third year, and a Union army was making arrangements to strike Chattanooga, "The Gateway to the Deep South."

As blue and gray clad soldiers readied themselves for an active year of campaigning, great strides had already been made in changing the face of the war. On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, virtually freeing all slaves in the states rebelling against the Union. This initial blow to the Confederacy eventually brought about the push for arming freedmen and escaped slaves, thus leading to the call for full equality of those once held in bondage.

Even with the increased hopes and dreams of emancipation for slaves, 1863 would bring increased suffering to families and communities across the nation. For in this upcoming year, the country would witness great battles fought at Chancellorsville in Virginia, Gettysburg in Pennsylvania, Fort Wagner in South Carolina, Vicksburg in Mississippi, Chickamauga in Georgia, and Chattanooga in Tennessee.

Interpretive park rangers will explore Cherokee Removal and the Civil War in the Chattanooga area by presenting special programs that will take place over the course of the year.

A list of spring programs is on page 4 of this newsletter. However, for a more in-depth look at park programs, please visit www.nps.gov/chch and click the "Schedule of Events" link.

Superintendent's Sidebar

President Benjamin Harrison signed into law the act that established this National Military Park on August 19, 1890 -- the purpose of the act was to preserve the landscape and suitably mark the fields, forests, and hillsides where some of "the most remarkable maneuvers and brilliant fighting took place from September through November 1863, during the Campaign for Chattanooga. This was the first piece of legislation authorizing the preservation of an American battlefield, preceding Gettysburg by five years.

With the park's establishment, the protection of battlefields in their original condition became of national importance -- and a sum of \$125,000 was granted by the federal government to begin the purchase of the land and preserve significant portions of the battlefields in Georgia and Tennessee. Landscape restoration activities began in earnest in 1893 when an additional \$100,000 was appropriated by Congress and laborers were hired -- all Civil War veterans equally divided between ex-Union and ex-Confederate soldiers. The veterans began to clear out the nearly 30 years of overgrowth from the battlefields and began the process of identifying and then marking the lines of battle.

One-hundred and twenty years later, landscape restoration continues to be a priority for the park, as we battle the ever-growing vegetation, and combat a variety of invasive plants in order to maintain the open field and forest patterns of 1863, preserve the battlelines, provide visitor access to commemorative features, and maintain important scenic views in the park. There are a variety of opportunities for you to get involved in battlefield restoration work this spring as we prepare for our fall 150th events. Come join us on the battlefields.

Finding the Federal Road on Moccasin Bend – The History

In the last issue, readers were presented an overview of the historical and scientific resources used to locate the Federal Road on Moccasin Bend. In this issue, the important historical stories associated with this road and its connection with Cherokee Removal and the American Civil War will be discussed.

What makes this tract of land so valuable to the National Park Service and to the American People?

In 1805, representatives of the United States Government and the Cherokee Nation signed the Treaty of Tellico. The second article of the treaty specified that the United States mail was to pass through lands owned by the Cherokee, Creek, and Choctaw Indians, and that United States citizens should have "free and unmolested" use of the road winding through their "countries." One of those road sections crossed Moccasin Bend at a ferry site operated by John Brown, a mixed-blood Cherokee.

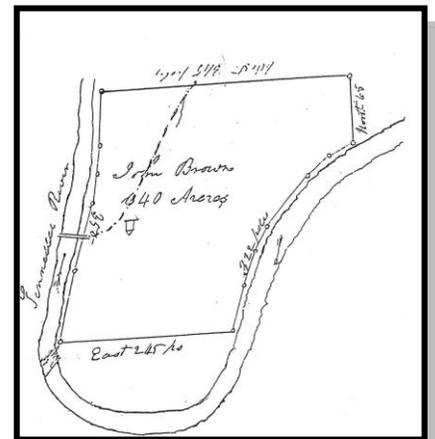
However, the road eventually transformed from being used as a means of safe passage for the mail and supplies to one of heartache and destruction. Two times in 1838, the road and the ferry crossing were used to assist in the removal of Cherokees from their native homes and lands.

The first road and ferry use occurred on June 17, 1838, when 1,076 Cherokees crossed Moccasin Bend being escorted by Federal soldiers. In October 1838, a mixed-blood Cherokee named John Bell led a second group across the Bend. This group, which included 700 Cherokees, supported the Treaty of New Echota and were viewed as traitors by many Cherokees.

Whether individuals and families were forcibly removed, being escorted by soldiers, or chose to emigrate on their own, almost 2,000 Cherokees crossed Moccasin Bend using the road and Brown's Ferry.

By 1863, the ferry was still in operation though much of the transportation of goods and supplies now transpired along Chattanooga's railroads. Nonetheless, as Confederate forces surrounded the city and began their siege of starvation, Brown's Ferry and the Federal Road became a focal point for transporting supplies into the beleaguered city. Since Confederates destroyed the railroads leading into Chattanooga and placed cannon and men atop the surrounding mountains to hinder travel, the only other alternative was the old, unpaved road network. On October 27, 1863, Union troops captured Brown's Ferry, constructed a pontoon bridge across the Tennessee River at the ferry crossing, and opened a supply route using virtually the same road built in 1805. Thus, troops in the city were able to receive much-needed food and supplies.

Once a road used to assist in removing a nation, by the time of the Civil War, the Federal Road was being used to save a nation.



John Brown Reservation (Adapted from J. Douthat - *Robert Armstrong's Survey Book of Cherokee Lands*, 1993)

Volunteer for the Army – 150 Years Later!

Civil War armies required tens of thousands of soldiers, the largest armies ever seen on United States soil. Commemorating these soldiers' actions also requires an army and we want YOU to be a part of it! Volunteers are needed for events throughout the year, especially in September, October and November. Here are just some of the volunteer needs we have identified:



Volunteers assist with registration for Civil War Trust Park Day 2012 in March

For questions or to volunteer, contact park volunteer coordinator Will Sunderland at:

423-752-5213 ext. 137
OR
william_sunderland@nps.gov.

See you for the 150th!



Volunteer Logo (Courtesy of NPS)

- **Registration** – Many anniversary events will require pre-registration and we need volunteers to help sign people in and give directions.
- **Guides** – For the October Occupation and Liberation Symposium, we need volunteers who are good with kids to guide groups in between activities.
- **Greeters** – We need smiling faces welcoming school groups and the public to events, providing basic information, and directing them to various planned activities.
- **Special Events Team** – Every activity requires many hours of pre-event preparation. Think you can help? Join the S.E.T. team!
- **Parking Crew** – Like teamsters moving armies, we need volunteers to help guide visitors in parking cars to ensure

- visitors arrive and depart safely and the battlefield grounds are protected.
- **Landscape Restoration** – Park work days will be held throughout the year to restore the battlefields to their 1863 appearance (See “Restoring the Battlefield Landscape” below for more information). Want to complete a group project at another time? We welcome groups of all kinds-students, scouts, civic clubs, corporate groups, or friends looking for a service project!
- We have many, many more needs. Just contact us!



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

In 1863, Union and Confederate forces fought for control of Chattanooga, known as the “Gateway to the Deep South.” Confederates were victorious at nearby Chickamauga in September. However, renewed fighting in Chattanooga that November provided Union troops victory and control of the city.

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Restoring the Battlefield Landscape

Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park was different in many ways 150 years ago. Families farmed the land, clearing plots in between the timber. Fences kept livestock away from crops like corn, leaving the animals to forage in the woods. This cleared much of the low-hanging vegetation and ground cover in the area that would become fighting grounds in the fall of 1863.

Additionally, invasive plant species such as Chinese privet and mimosa had not yet been introduced to the area. Today, these and other plants have grown up between the trees, blocking views and making it difficult to imagine what the more than 150,000 Civil War soldiers experienced as they fought for their lives on this ground.

The National Park Service is dedicated to preserving the ground in the park as closely as possible to its 1863 appearance and to caring for the monuments and markers placed by Civil War veterans. As

we approach the 150th commemoration of the Battles for Chattanooga, we need *your* help in preserving the landscape.

The park will host a series of public volunteer work days where you can help us prepare!

April 6 – Civil War Trust Park Day
June 8 – National Get Outdoors Day
October 19 – National Public Lands Day



The McCallie School brought out 150 high school seniors in October to assist park resource management staff in preparing the battlefield for the 150th anniversary



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The Battlefield Dispatch is a quarterly publication of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

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Upcoming Spring Programs and Locations

Saturday, February 16 @ 3:00 p.m.

Ross's Landing Hike
 (Outdoor Chattanooga, 200 River Street, Chattanooga, TN)

Saturday, February 23 @ 2:00 pm

A War for Freedom: Freedom Fighters on Many Fronts
 (Chickamauga Battlefield)

Saturday, March 9 @ 2:00 p.m.

Women in War: The Roles Women Played
 (Chickamauga Battlefield, Tour Stop #6, Wilder Brigade Monument)

Friday, March 29, 6:30 p.m.

Ladies on the Field: Unique Witnesses of Chickamauga
 (Chickamauga Battlefield)

Friday, April 5 @ 6:30 p.m.

Bread or Blood: The War Hits Home
 (Chickamauga Battlefield)

Saturday, April 13 & Sunday, April 14

58th North Carolina Living History
 (Chickamauga Battlefield)

Saturday, April 27 @ 2:00 p.m.

There's a Park for That!
 (Chickamauga Battlefield)

For additional information concerning programs, please visit www.nps.gov/chch and click the "Schedule of Events" link. You may also call Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center at 706-866-9241 or Lookout Mountain Battlefield Visitor Center at 423-821-7786 to receive more information.

Another great way to keep up-to-date on programs and other occurrences within the park is through Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/chchnps>

