

Chattanooga National Cemetery
1200 Bailey Avenue
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37404

Description

The Chattanooga National Cemetery, established in 1867, is located on Bailey Avenue at Spruce Street in Hamilton County. The grounds are laid off by many burial sections of various shapes (ovals, circles, crescents, shields, etc.). At the main entrance on the southeast side of the cemetery, there are two gates, one for entry and one for exit. Both gates are supported in a like manner, each having a brick column supporting the gate on one side with wrought-iron fencing on the other side. Another entrance to the cemetery is located on the southwest side near the maintenance building and is protected by a chain link fence and gate.



The administration and public rest room buildings are located on the northeast side of the property, and the maintenance building is situated in the southwest corner of the cemetery. The flagpole is located on the apex of a round hill encircled by a drive thirty feet wide along which many memorial plaques have been erected. The cemetery is enclosed on three sides by chain link fencing and on the remaining side (northeast side) by a stone wall with a three-foot-high wrought-iron extension. The cemetery is bounded on the north and east by principal streets and on the south and west by railroad tracks and yards. A detention pond is located north of the maintenance building. A stone arch is located to the east of the service center. There are two committal shelters where interment services are held. Graves are marked with upright marble headstones, except for Sections VV, TTT, and WWW, which are marked with flat granite markers.

Originally, 75 acres of the cemetery were enclosed by a heavy four-foot-high stone wall with heavy coping stones. It was constructed by details from the troops occupying Chattanooga. Later, with development of additional cemetery acreage, part of this wall was razed (1,500 feet on the northwest side and 300 feet on the northeast corner) extending from the entrance on Bailey Avenue to the south. In 1949, a new stone wall on the northeast side of the cemetery and a new gate at the Bailey Avenue gateway were completed. In 1956, a chain link fence with new gates at the southwest service entrance, and 440 feet of chain link fencing to enclose the service building were installed.



In 1949, the painted brick maintenance building, which includes a paint and oil room, was constructed. The building is enclosed by a chain link fence. In 1960, new built-up asphalt roofing was installed.

The limestone administration building was constructed in 1989. The roof is asphalt shingles. At the same time, the former administration building, constructed of limestone with an asphalt

shingle roof, was converted to a public restroom building. This building is located adjacent to the administration building.

Noted Burials

General William P. Sanders, the only Southern-born Union officer killed in the Civil War, and a cousin of Jefferson Davis, is buried in the cemetery in Section C, Grave 1601.

The cemetery is also the burial site of Federal spy James J. Andrews and several members of his company of volunteer soldiers. Andrews worked for General Don Carlos Buell. During the period from April 7-12, 1862, Andrews and his company of volunteer soldiers from Ohio disguised themselves as civilians and penetrated nearly 200 miles south into enemy territory. Their objective was to initiate a daringly conceived plan to destroy rail and telegraph communication lines between Atlanta and Chattanooga. The plan was organized under the authority of General Ormsby M. Mitchel. On the night of April 6, 1862, Andrews and Brigadier Mitchel drew a plan. It was decided to take their own engineer and train crew, and volunteers were sought from Brigadier General Joshua Sill's Ohio Brigade. Twenty-four were selected and a civilian named Campbell joined them. Briefly, the plan of the raiders entailed boarding a northbound train as ordinary passengers at Marietta, Georgia, seizing the locomotive, "The General," at Big Shanty (now Kennesaw) a breakfast stop, and riding northward to Chattanooga, and leaving destroyed railroad tracks, burned trestles, and clipped telegraph wires in their wake.

The group met at a farm house just east of Shelbyville on April 7, 1862, and were instructed to make their way to Marietta, Georgia. Due to a ten-day rain, the target date was set back one day. Even with the extra day, only twenty-one of the raiders arrived along with Andrews. On Saturday, April 12, nineteen of the raiders boarded the train (two missed the train), where the conductor, engineer and many of the passengers hurried to breakfast, leaving the train unattended. The conductor of the train, William A. Fuller, had his breakfast rudely interrupted by sight of the engine and part of his train heading northward. Since there was no telegraph station and no other locomotive on hand to use in pursuit, Fuller and Anthony Murphy, foreman of the Atlanta railway machine shops, started on foot as fast as they could run. Shortly, they found a handcar, which they pumped as far as Etowah, Georgia. There they pressed into service the locomotive "Yonah" and they started north after loading it with nearby Confederate soldiers. Frequently, Andrews and his raiding party stopped to cut telegraph wires and load on cross-ties to be used in burning bridges, and at one point they tore up the track behind them.

At Etowah Station, Andrews had seen the "Yonah" standing on a side track with steam up but, not wishing to alarm the guards, left it unharmed. As the "General" moved back onto the main track from the siding at Etowah Station, Fuller and the pursuing party were only four minutes behind. Fuller and Murphy abandoned the "Yonah" and ran across to another side track where they uncoupled the engine and one car of the "William R. Smith." With forty armed men, they renewed the chase. Near Adairsville, the raiders had cut the rails, and the pursuers were again forced to abandon their train. Next, they commandeered "The Texas," that had been forced to a siding at Adairsville by the bold Andrews. However, every trick of Andrews to throw off his relentless pursuers failed. Mile after mile, the chase continued. Andrews dropped his boxcars one by one and threw all of his cross-ties onto the tracks, attempting to slow Fuller's party. Finally, Andrews had no car left and no fuel.

Three miles above Ringgold, Andrews ordered his men to jump from the train and scatter into the woods, each man for himself. Here stories differ—some say that the remaining boxcar was set afire and left on the covered bridge, but eyewitnesses say that this never occurred. The outcome of this little drama of the rails was the ultimate capture of Andrews and his raiders. Andrews was tried by a court martial and received his death notice to hang on May 31. He escaped that night along with John Wollam, swam the Tennessee River, but was recaptured while Wollam remained at large for some time. In Knoxville, seven of the twelve others were tried and ordered hung. On June 7, Andrews and the other seven condemned men were taken to Atlanta and Andrews was hanged that same day. A few days later, the remaining twelve joined the others at Atlanta. On June 18, the seven previously sentenced men were hanged. Their remains, along with those of James Andrews, rest in Section H of the Chattanooga National Cemetery. Wollam eventually joined the remaining men and, on October 16, they staged a spectacular escape. Six were quickly recaptured and were later repatriated during a prisoner exchange. The rest divided into pairs and headed in separate directions. The graves of those buried in the national cemetery are arranged in a semicircle around the monument in Section H in the following graves:

Civilian James J. Andrews	Grave No. 12992
Sergeant Samuel Slavens	Grave No. 11176
Private Samuel Robertson	Grave No. 11177
Private George D. Wilson	Grave No. 11178
Sergeant Major Marion A. Ross	Grave No. 11179
Cook William H. Campbell (Civilian)	Grave No. 11180
Private Perry G. Shadrack	Grave No. 11181
Sergeant John M. Scott	Grave No. 11182

All, except James J. Andrews, died on June 18, 1862. Andrews, a citizen of Kentucky, was hanged at Atlanta, Georgia, on June 7, 1862, and originally buried there. He was reinterred in the national cemetery on October 16, 1887.

Had this April 1862 foray of James J. Andrews and his fellow conspirators been successful, the possible consequence to the Union cause is now just one of those interesting if's of history. Yet, it does appear that if Andrews and his men had been successful in their attempt to cut the important railroad line between Atlanta and Chattanooga, the Civil War might possibly have been brought to a swifter conclusion.

Six surviving members of Andrews's raid who had been imprisoned by the Confederates were ordered to Washington to report to Major General Ethan Allen Hitchcock. There on March 23, 1863, Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton personally awarded the Medal of Honor to Private William Bensinger, Private Robert Buffum, Sergeant Elihu H. Morgan, Private Jacob Parrot, Sergeant William Pittenger, and Corporal William Reddick.

Private Jacob Parrot, the youngest member of the Raiders, became the first to be awarded the nation's highest military decoration. His Medal of Honor is permanently on display in the crypt area beneath the Great Rotunda of the Capitol.

In addition, nine other members of the Andrews raid received the Medal of Honor:

Private Wilson Brown, Company F, 21st Ohio Infantry
Corporal Daniel Dorsey, Company H, 33rd Ohio Infantry
Corporal Martin J. Hawkins, Company A, 33rd Ohio Infantry
Private William Knight, Company E, 21st Ohio Infantry
Private John R. Porter, Company G, 21st Ohio Infantry
Private James Ovid Smith, Company I, 2nd Ohio Infantry
Private John A. Wilson, Company C, 21st Ohio Infantry
Private John Wollam, Company C, 33rd Ohio Infantry
Private Mark Wood, Company C, 21st Ohio Infantry

Posthumous awards of the Medal of Honor were made to four of the eight members of Andrews's raid who are interred in the cemetery:

Private Samuel Robertson, Company G, 33rd Ohio Infantry
Sergeant Major Marion A. Ross, 2nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry
Sergeant John M. Scott, Company F, 21st Ohio Volunteer Infantry
Sergeant Samuel Slavens, Company E, 33rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry

Official records indicate that Corporal Martin J. Hawkins and Daniel Allen Dorsey were the only Andrews raiders to be interred in a national cemetery other than Chattanooga. Corporal Hawkins died on February 7, 1866, and is buried in the Quincy National Cemetery, Quincy, Illinois. Corporal Dorsey died on May 10, 1918, and is interred in the Leavenworth National Cemetery, Leavenworth, Kansas. Private James Ovid Smith is interred in the Greenlawn Cemetery, a private cemetery in Columbus, Ohio (Section 3, Lot 84).

A motion picture produced by the Walt Disney Corporation titled "The Great Locomotive Chase," was based on the book by Sergeant William Pittenger, a member of the Raiders who wrote about this most daring and famous escapade of the Civil War. The movie premiered in Atlanta in the 1950's.

There are six Medal of Honor recipients buried in the Chattanooga National Cemetery, including the four members of Andrews's Raiders. Their graves are marked with special markers inscribed with an enlarged gold-leafed replica of the medal of the awarding service and the words "MEDAL OF HONOR." The names and grave locations are as follows:

Samuel Robertson, Private, Company G, 33rd Ohio Infantry - Section H, Grave 11177.
Marion A. Ross, Sergeant Major, 2nd Ohio Infantry - Section H, Grave 11179.
John M. Scott, Sergeant, Company F, 21st Ohio Infantry - Section H, Grave 11182.
Samuel Slavens, Private, Company E, 33rd Ohio Infantry - Section H, Grave 11176.
William F. Zion, Private, U.S. Marine Corps - Section U, Grave 40.
Ray E. Duke, Sergeant First Class, Company C, 21st Infantry Division, U.S. Army –
Section Z, Grave 272

Significant Monuments/Memorials

There are three large commemorative monuments in the Chattanooga National Cemetery:

Andrews Raiders Monument - A large Blue West-erly granite monument located in Section H is topped by a bronze replica of a tall-stacked wood burning Civil War locomotive, erected in 1890 by the State of Ohio. It commemorates an 1862 Civil War raid with thrills and mis-adventures in the best traditions of a "cops and robbers" chase.



Fourth Army Corps Monument - A granite obelisk was erected at the cemetery by the Fourth Army Corps in memory of their fallen comrades, and located between Sections C and F. The date is unknown, but it probably took place some time after the Civil War ended, as various volunteer regiments from many states are inscribed on the four sides of the monument base.



German World War I Prisoners of War Monument - A Quincy granite monument, erected by the German Government on March 21, 1935, to the World War I prisoners of war interred in the cemetery. The monument is located between Section R and the Post Section. Of the list of 92 names inscribed, 14 are not buried in the national cemetery. The German inscription on the face of the monument means: "During the war years died here far from home, and Germany will ever remember you."



A stone arch is located east of the service center. On one side, the inscription reads:

NATIONAL MILITARY CEMETERY
CHATTANOOGA, A.D. 1863

Another side is inscribed as follows:

HERE REST IN PEACE 12,956 CITIZENS
WHO DIED FOR THEIR COUNTRY
IN THE YEARS 1861 TO 1865

Four gun monuments are located vertically along the circumference of the flagpole at ninety degrees from each other. Each is made of an original cast iron sea-coast artillery tube secured by a concrete base.

A Circle of Honor around the flagpole was established in March 1992. Around this circle, units and organizations have erected and dedicated memorials.



Civil War Activity in Area

There was no more formidable active area of operations in the Civil War than that around Chattanooga. It stood on a great bend of the Tennessee River, and on it converged the Memphis & Charleston and the Nashville & Chattanooga Railroads. In and around Chattanooga in the autumn of 1863, there occurred some of the most complex maneuvers and hard fighting of the Civil War. Chattanooga was called the "Key to East Tennessee" and the "Gateway to the Deep South." The possession of Chattanooga was vital to the Confederacy and a coveted goal of the northern armies.

After the Tullahoma campaign in late June 1863, the Union and Confederate armies began to gather forces and equipment for a future struggle. The Union Army occupied a line from Winchester to McMinnville—the same territory the Confederates had occupied previously—while the Confederate General Braxton Bragg established his headquarters at Chattanooga. Bragg evacuated Chattanooga on September 8, 1863, and retreated southward when he learned that the Union Army had crossed the Tennessee River below Chattanooga and was threatening his supply lines. General Bragg planned an all-out attack on General George B. Crittenden who had been following in his rear since the evacuation of Chattanooga and was now at Lee and Gordon's Mills. Bragg moved his troops northward on the east side of the Chickamauga Creek that was some 12 miles south of Chattanooga. His plan was to cross the Chickamauga north of Lee and Gordon's Mills, seize the roads leading to Chattanooga, bear down on Crittenden, and crush this corps or drive it back into the Union center in McLemore's Cover. By turning the Union left in this manner, he hoped to force General William Rosecrans back into the mountains and to reoccupy Chattanooga. Bragg did not seem to suspect that Rosecrans had guessed his intentions and was hurriedly moving to support Crittenden and deploying his troops so as to protect the roads to Chattanooga.

On September 18, all of Bragg's forces, except for three divisions, crossed to the west side of Chickamauga Creek. Union forces moved northeastward so that Bragg would not out-flank the Federal line. At dawn on September 19, the two armies faced each other over a stretch of several miles along the banks of the Chickamauga. Neither army knew the exact position of the other as they maneuvered for position during the night. The following day, little progress was shown by either side. During that night, General James Longstreet arrived with two more brigades ready for action. Bragg formed the Army of Tennessee into two wings for offensive action the next day. The Confederate Army, facing west between Chickamauga Creek and the Lafayette Road formed a line parallel with the road.

On September 19 and 20, came the battle itself. Early in the morning of September 19, Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland and Bragg's Army of Tennessee faced each other. A major battle developed before either commander had prepared a plan. By nightfall, little progress had been made by either side, although casualties were heavy. It was supposedly a Confederate victory. Bragg drove in the Union right and attacked the Union left and curled it up on the center, but at the center stood General George Thomas, who earned the name "Rock of Chickamauga." When Thomas's situation was most desperate, General Gordon Granger came to his rescue. The Union army was beaten but not destroyed. It retired to Chattanooga—its original objective.

During the night of the 19th, Longstreet arrived with five of his nine brigades from Virginia, and his corps was assigned to the Confederate right-wing. Bragg prepared to renew the battle by a series of attacks on the attenuated Union line, from north to south. On the 20th, the battle resumed at daybreak, and neither side made progress; they were almost evenly matched. At about 11 a.m., Longstreet found a breach in the Federal lines and broke through to the rear of the demoralized Federal brigades. As Longstreet's men poured through the gap, sweeping forward like the flood of a mighty river, the entire Union line crumbled. It was then that Thomas earned for himself the title "Rock of Chickamauga." Thomas never left the battlefield and never lost an engagement during the whole war. Thomas placed his forces at Rossville Gap and along Missionary Ridge in preparation of further attacks. He remained there throughout September 21 but then withdrew the Union forces to Chattanooga that evening. By the morning of September 22, all Union troops were in position in the town.

Bragg fought and won the great Battle of Chickamauga. The name Chickamauga was an old Cherokee word, men said, meaning "river of death." Each army had lost nearly a third of its numbers, Bragg's casualty list running to 18,000 or more, and Rosecrans's to nearly 16,000. Rosecrans's campaign was wrecked and his own career as a field commander was ended. He was relieved and assigned to duty in St. Louis, and Thomas took his place. Chickamauga was a Union disaster, but it jarred the Federal campaign in the West back onto the rails. It forced the government to drop the ruinous policy of dispersion and concentrate its forces, and in the end this was all to the good. Additionally, it gave new powers and a new opportunity to Ulysses S. Grant, who knew what to do with both.

On November 23, the battles of Chattanooga began. At 2 p.m. on November 23, the lines of blue moved forward, driving the Confederate outposts and their supports back to the base of Missionary Ridge, and captured Orchard Knob, a low hill a little more than a mile in front of the ridge. General George Thomas sent the divisions of Major General Philip H. Sheridan and Brigadier General Thomas J. Wood forward to demonstrate against the Confederate lines. They moved about a mile from the Rebel lines, taking Orchard Knob with little opposition, before dark. The Union forces occupied the captured entrenchments and erected a battery on Orchard Knob. Except for occasional artillery firing, the fighting ended for the day. During the night of November 23-24, Sherman sent a brigade across the Tennessee River near South Chickamauga Creek to prepare a bridge. By early afternoon, they finished the bridge.

On November 24, the "Battle Above the Clouds" was fought on land surrounding the Craven's farmhouse near Lookout Mountain. Early in the morning, the blue-clad troops of General Joseph Hooker crossed Lookout Creek and began the climb up Lookout Mountain. Little opposition was met because most of the Confederate troops had withdrawn to Missionary Ridge.

By evening, the Union held the mountain. The romantic name was given in later years to this action because of the fog and mist that shrouded the mountain that day from observers below.

At Missionary Ridge on November 25, the decisive blow of the battle was at hand. In the early dawn light, Major General William T. Sherman's men moved against the north end of Missionary Ridge and Runnel Hill, the latter being held by Major General Patrick Cleburne's troops. Heavy fighting continued until about 2 p.m. with little or no progress being made. Major General Joseph Hooker, who had been sent to attack the Confederate left and to block any retreat, was also having little luck. Major General Grant then sent Major General George H. Thomas with four divisions against the center. The divisions advanced rapidly from the base of the ridge, overwhelming the Confederate line and driving them up the steep slope of the ridge. The Confederates on top could not fire for fear of hitting their own men and it became a footrace up the steep slopes, the Federals reaching the top in some places before the Rebels. The gray line broke and ran down the back slope of the ridge towards Chickamauga Creek, where some Confederates waded through the icy water rather than going to the bridges. The continued assault up the ridge had been unplanned, and it seemed that the troops had taken it upon themselves to take the ridge, without direction from their generals. Among the Union men was a newly commissioned second lieutenant named Arthur MacArthur who would one day have a son named Douglas. Lieutenant MacArthur was awarded the Medal of Honor for action on this day. Sheridan's division pursued the Confederates, but General William Hardee's troops held them off and then the Confederates withdrew in the darkness. The battle was over, the siege of Chattanooga was broken, and Bragg's army was intact but beaten. Grant with his typical aggressive style, issued orders for a follow-up immediately at first light. The Federal troops, feeling avenged for the defeat at Chickamauga, screamed at the top of their lungs, "Chickamauga! Chickamauga!" The battle for Chattanooga was over. Sherman and Thomas chased Bragg's troops from Chickamauga Station towards Ringgold, Georgia, without pause. According to Thomas L. Livermore's *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-1865*, the casualties (killed, wounded and missing) were 5,824 Union and 6,667 Confederate.