

Marietta National Cemetery
500 Washington Avenue
Marietta, Georgia 30060

Description

The Marietta National Cemetery, established in 1866, is located 20 miles northwest of Atlanta in Cobb County. The site is rectangular in shape and is in full view of Kennesaw Mountain. It is situated within the corporate limits of the town of Marietta. The cemetery is comprised of 23.2 acres of undulating land rising from the entrance and the four sides to a high hill near the center, where the rostrum is located. This hill is the focal point of the cemetery. The grade rises again along the eastern edge of the cemetery. From the main entrance, roads wind around and through the grounds, dividing them into numerous sections of various sizes and shapes to conform to the natural features of the land. The ground rises gradually from all sides and the summit near the center of the cemetery commands an extensive view of the surrounding country. The cemetery is beautifully laid out into 13 sections and is intersected with winding walks and avenues. The burial sections are of all shapes—ovals, shields, crescents, circles, etc., and the graves of the soldiers, all marked with upright marble headstones, are placed in rows corresponding to the shape of the section. The many walks, beautiful trees and shrubs, as well as the numerous monuments, make this a very beautiful cemetery.



The cemetery is enclosed by a rubble stone wall, covered with four-inch stone coping 22 inches wide, which was constructed circa 1872-1874 by Bird Wallace, Contractor. The main entrance is situated at the northwest corner and is protected by a double iron gate. An iron service gate is located near the center of the west side. On a granite arch over the main entry gate is the following inscription: "Marietta National Cemetery, Established 1866." Inscribed on the opposite side of the arch is the following: "Here rest the remains of 10,312 Officers and Soldiers who died in defense of the Union 1861-1865." The arch was constructed in 1883 by the Stone Mountain Granite Company. Near the center of the cemetery is an oval mound on which is erected the flagpole. A smaller entrance, also protected by an iron gate, is located at about the center of the west side. The lodge is situated a short distance to the west of the main entrance, and the utility building is located to the south of the main entrance. A rostrum is located in the western portion of the site, and a committal service tent is situated to the southeast of the lodge.

The clay tile and stucco lodge was constructed in 1921. The roof is asphalt shingles. There are six rooms, a front porch, and a basement.

Mr. Bird Wallace was contracted to build the perimeter wall after the very substantial original fence was outdated. He also built the first lodge made of brick which he had molded and burned in his own brickyard



just east of his residence on Roswell Road (which is now the Roswell Street Baptist Church). Other citizens were employed as foremen or various assistants. The wall was afterward capped with 4-inch by 22-inch coping of Bedford limestone, which held the old wall together for a dozen years, until about 1882, when the masons employed to erect the granite gateway were detailed to go over the entire wall for pointing the random rubble joints with cement mortar. (The main wall was laid up in lime mortar.) Many years later, the height of the wall was increased, in two stages, by an addition of two to six feet, to fit the street grade changes and for keeping out intruders. The coping was replaced after the face lifting and additional pointing was done, this time in portland cement.

The wall for closing the flanks of the widened space for the entrance gateway is of a different texture. This wall is of Chicamauga limestone, with a history. It was a remnant from a bridge contract which Henry Green Cole, the donor of the land for establishment of the cemetery, completed for the Western and Atlantic Railroad at Allatoona Creek. These leftover dimension stones were hauled to the top of the cemetery hill where Cole had hoped to build his home before the war. After Cole donated the site for the national cemetery, he hauled the stones over to the "Joyce Place," the site of Bayard Cole's residence built by his father, DeWitt Cole. From the "Joyce Place," a second choice for Henry Green Cole's residence, the Chicamauga lime rock was finally hauled over to the cemetery gateway on Webster Cole's rock wagon and erected into the substantial wall which now flanks the cemetery gate on both sides.

National Cemetery Administration microfilm records contain a copy of a letter written by D. W. Cole on December 1, 1948, to then superintendent of the cemetery R. V. Ridenhaur. He stated that as a boy who grew up in and out of the cemetery, he recalled the original very substantial fence, oak posts, red cedar rails and heart pine pickets, all heavy dimensions. In the early eighties, the handsome granite gateway was erected, beginning with a Major Gauld's performance of making concrete of hand broken rock, "branch" sand, and Rosendale cement, for the base mat under the footings of the gateway. These new flanking walls were of limestone ashlar derived from Cole reserves which D. W. Cole personally hauled to the site and furnished sand for the mortar. His letter goes on to state that the main wall, Bird Wallace type, was quite a different piece of goods, built of field stones, for which Wallace with his mule teams scoured the County, sand from road gutters in the same territory, lime mortar for setting and grouting throughout. Stones not laid on their "best beds" but rather set on edge, "shiner" fashion, interior filled in with random rubble or cobbles and grouted with same lime mortar; top plastered with some mortar. After a time, under separate contract, the wall was coped with Bedford limestone, with the effect of a bonding agent. Some ten years later, the masons were detailed to point the main wall throughout with good natural cement mortar. The coping and pointing held the wall together until recent years when it was again pointed in Portland cement, incidental to raising the height and resetting of the coping.

The brick and stucco utility building, with a stone and concrete foundation, was constructed in 1926. The roof is tin. An addition to the west end was constructed in 1938, and a chimney and stove added in 1945. In 1952, an addition of 1,048 square feet was constructed.

At the same time the granite arch at the main gate was erected, in 1883, the brick and granite coped rostrum was erected. The remains of this rostrum, including the brick pillars, were turned into a wisteria arbor in March 1940. A new white marble and concrete rostrum, 37 feet by 22 feet, with a metal roof was then constructed in April 1940. The structure is of a classic

architectural design and resembles a Greek temple of the Acropolis. Three marble benches were added in June 1940. A flagstone walk between the rostrum and the flagpole passes beneath the wisteria arbor.

A brick public restroom building was constructed in 1926 and rebuilt in 1934. The structure is 12 feet by 18 feet and has an asphalt roof.



Noted Burials

There is one Medal of Honor recipient buried in the Marietta National Cemetery: Lee Hugh Phillips - Corporal, United States Marine Corps, Company E, 2nd Battalion 7 Marines, 1st Marine Division (Rein). He is buried in Section B, Grave 8. His grave is marked with a headstone inscribed with an enlarged gold-leafed replica of the medal of the United States Marine Corps and the words "MEDAL OF HONOR."

Significant Monuments/Memorials

Twentieth Army Corps Monument - A marble monument, somewhat Egyptian in character, approximately ten feet high, with a base of approximately two feet square and a very tapered square shaft. This monument was erected in May 1870 by the Twentieth Army Corps and dedicated to their comrades. It is located in Section B.



Wisconsin Monument - The monument was dedicated on Memorial Day 1925 to the 405 sons of the state of Wisconsin who had perished in Georgia during the Civil War and who are interred in the cemetery. The Wisconsin legislature appropriated \$5,000 for the monument, and the contract was awarded to Stotzer and Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The shaft is a memorial hewn from Wisconsin granite and is of simple dignity in appearance, standing 12 feet high with the likeness of a badger, the Wisconsin symbol of heroic tendency, at the top. A scroll upon the face bears the message of dedication. During the dedication, the band of the 22nd Infantry and Troops from Fort McPherson led the parade through the streets of Marietta. In the line of march of the parade were representatives of veterans' organizations, the Grand Army of the Republic, United Confederate Veterans, U. S. Spanish War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, and Disabled War Veterans. General D. B. Freeman of North Georgia Brigade of U. S. V. read Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. The principal address was made by Charles B. Perry of Wisconsin. Charles M. Hambright unveiled the monument, and it was accepted by Mrs. Katharine Kling, President of Woman's Relief Corps of the O. M. Mitchell



Post of the Grand Army of the Republic. More than 2,000 attended the unveiling. Following the ceremony, a salute was fired over the graves of the Union soldiers.

Gold Star Mothers Monument - On April 24, 1960, the Atlanta Chapter 24 of the Gold Star Mothers donated a marble monument located at the base of the flagpole near the entrance to the rostrum. The monument is 2 feet high, 2 feet, 8 inches long, and 1 foot, 4 inches deep.

Pearl Harbor Survivors Association Monument - Dedicated on December 7, 1996.

A plaque affixed to one of the pillars on the east side of the entrance arch commemorates Henry Greene Cole, who donated the land for the Marietta National Cemetery. The plaque is inscribed as follows:

IN MEMORY OF HENRY GREENE COLE OF MARIETTA, GEORGIA
WHO GAVE THESE GROUNDS TO HIS COUNTRY
THIS TABLET IS ERECTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Civil War Activity in Area

Even before the great Battle of Atlanta, Marietta played a part in the unfolding drama of the Civil War. Sometime after 5 a.m., on April 12, 1862, James G. Andrews and a group of volunteers from an Ohio brigade were recruited by the Union Army for an espionage mission. Their assignment was to make a raid into the area held by Confederate troops and destroy the bridges between Atlanta and Chattanooga, cutting a vital supply link. On the morning of April 12, Andrews and his men, known to history as the "Raiders," boarded a freight train at Marietta bound north for Chattanooga. At a breakfast stop at the Big Shanty Station (now known as Kennesaw), when the crew and passengers left the train, the Raiders uncoupled the train and commandeered the locomotive nicknamed the "General." Their action was quickly discovered by the conductor and his crew whose pursuit began the "Great Locomotive Chase." After an 87-mile chase, the General finally ran out of fuel, and the Raiders continued their flight on foot. In less than a week, however, the Confederate forces succeeded in capturing all the men, including Andrews. Trials were held for the spies, and Andrews and seven of his men were hanged. Soon after, six of the Raiders escaped from jail, were recaptured, and a year later were exchanged with Union prisoners of war. These six men were the first to receive the newly created Medal of Honor (see Chattanooga National Cemetery for additional information).

The Atlanta campaign, fought in northwestern Georgia during the spring and summer of 1864, was one of the most important military campaigns of the Civil War. Northern forces were under the command of Major General William T. Sherman and Confederates were commanded first by General Joseph E. Johnston and then by General John B. Hood.

By early 1864, Union armies were poised for what they hoped would be a quick campaign to dismember the Confederacy and end the war. Leaders on both sides had long recognized the importance of Atlanta, located a few miles south of the Chattahoochee and about 120 miles from Chattanooga, Tennessee. Atlanta's four railroads were not only the best means of communication between the eastern and western parts of the Confederacy, but they were also the major lines of supply for the Southern armies in Virginia and north Georgia. The city's hospitals cared for the sick and wounded and her factories produced many kinds of military goods. In

addition, the city's capture would give the Union armies a base from which they could strike further into Georgia to reach such vital manufacturing and administrative centers as Milledgeville, Macon, Augusta, and Columbus. All these things were clear to the men who led the opposing armies.

William Tecumseh Sherman had been chosen as supreme commander in the West in early 1864. Grant knew he could be counted on to carry out his part of the grand strategic plan for 1864. Sherman's assignment was to break up the Confederate army in northern Georgia, get into the interior of the enemy's army as far as he could, and inflict all the damage he could against their war resources. Sherman had almost 100,000 men organized into three armies: the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by Major General George H. Thomas; the Army of the Tennessee, commanded by Major General James B. McPherson; and the Army of the Ohio, commanded by Major General John M. Schofield. By early May, Sherman had assembled these troops around Chattanooga and was prepared to march with them into Georgia.

Opposed to Sherman's host was the Confederate Army of Tennessee, commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston. At the beginning of May, the 55,000 men of his army were concentrated around Dalton, Georgia, 35 miles southeast of Chattanooga. The southern force consisted of two infantry corps commanded by Lieutenant Generals William J. Hardee and John Bell Hood, and a cavalry corps led by Major General Joseph Wheeler. The Confederate government wanted Johnston to march into Tennessee and reestablish Southern authority over that crucial state. Johnston believed that he should await Sherman's advance, defeat it, and then undertake to regain Tennessee. This issue had not been resolved at the opening of the campaign in early May, and lack of understanding and cooperation illustrated by this incident, would hamper Confederate efforts throughout the campaign.



Johnston requested reinforcements. A large body of 15,000 troops constituting the Army of the Mississippi and commanded by Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk joined Johnston, raising the Confederate force to about 70,000.

The first major battle of the campaign, the Battle of Resaca, was fought from May 13-15. The 13th was spent in skirmishing and establishing the positions of the two armies. The 14th saw much heavy fighting and, on the 15th, both sides made attacks that achieved some local success but were inconclusive. During the night of May 15-16, the Confederates withdrew and crossed to the southern bank of the Oostanaula River, burning the bridges behind them. No accurate casualty figures are available, but Federal losses were probably about 3,500 and Confederate casualties about 2,600.

Once across the Oostanaula, Johnston sought to make a stand and draw the Federals into a costly assault. He expected to find favorable terrain near Calhoun, but in this he was disappointed and during the night of May 16-17, he led the Confederates on southward toward Adairsville. The Federals followed, Sherman dividing his forces into three columns and advancing on a broad front. Adairsville proved to be an unsuitable position for Johnston to start battle, so it was abandoned during the night of May 17-18. On May 19, Johnston ordered Hood to

march along a country road a mile or so east of the Adairsville-Cassville Road and form his corps for battle facing west. Johnston formed his army on a ridge and hoped that Sherman would attack him there on May 20. That night the Confederate leaders held a council of war. During the night, the Confederates withdrew across the Etowah River. Sherman gave his men a short rest. They were still 53 miles from Atlanta.

Sherman expected to push through this region south of the Etowah with little delay. His optimism was ill-founded, for the rough terrain and heavy rains favored Johnston's smaller force and helped delay the Federal advance for five weeks. Johnston posted his army around Allatoona Pass, a gap in the high hills south of the Etowah through which the railroad ran on its way southward to Marietta. He had again occupied a strong position, hoping that Sherman would attack it. Sherman, however, was determined to avoid a direct assault and crossed the river to the west where the country was more open. Dallas, a small town about 14 miles south of the river, was the first objective. On May 24, the Federals were closing in on Dallas. By that evening, the Southerners held a line east of Dallas.

On May 25, in a late afternoon battle at New Hope Church, Thomas's army lost about 1,500 men. The Confederates suffered little and were elated at their success. On the 26th, both commanders were working to position their men in the woods east of Dallas. There was little fighting during the day except for skirmishing.

Sherman attempted to defeat the right of the Southern line by a surprise attack on the following day. In the battle known as Pickett's Mill, the Northerners were hurled back with about 1,500 casualties. For the Federals, this engagement was one of the most desperate of the campaign. Over the next few days, fighting continued almost constantly. When it became clear that no decisive battle would be fought at Dallas, Sherman gradually sidled eastward to regain the railroad. On June 3, advance elements of the Federal forces reached the little town of Acworth and, within a few days, almost all of the Northern troops were in that general area.

By June 10, Sherman was ready to resume the advance. The Southerners had taken up a line north of Marietta that ran from Brush Mountain on the east to Pine Mountain in the center to Lost Mountain on the west. Rain fell almost every day and hampered the Northern advance. For several days, there was heavy skirmishing in which the Federals captured Pine Mountain and made gains at other points. By the 16th, the Southerners were forced to give up Lost Mountain. Johnston tried to hold a new line, but it was attacked by the Federal artillery. During the night of June 18-19, the Confederates took up a new position along the Kennesaw Mountain and off to the south. In the days that followed, McPherson and Thomas were engaged in what amounted to a siege of the Southern position. Little progress could be made on the ground, but the artillery on both sides was used in attempts to batter and weaken the enemy. Day after day, the big Union guns pounded the Southern line, their fire being answered by Confederate cannon high on Kennesaw Mountain.

After a battle at the Kolb farmhouse on June 22, in which several Confederate attacks were hurled back by the Federals, there was relative calm along the lines for several days. The lines now ran from the railroad north of Marietta to Olley's Creek southwest of the town.

Several days after the battle at the Kolb farm, Sherman decided that he would make a direct assault on Johnston's lines. He decided to strike the Confederates at three points:

McPherson would assault the southern end of Kennesaw Mountain, Thomas would move against a salient known as the "Dead Angle" several miles to the south, and Schofield would push south on Sandtown Road and attempt to cross Olley's Creek. The date of the assault was June 27. The best estimates place Northern losses at about 3,000 men. The Southerners lost at least 750 killed, wounded or captured. Sherman had been criticized for ordering the frontal attack on Johnston's lines. Had the assault succeeded, he would have won a great victory. As it was, he did not continue the attacks when it was clear they would fail, and he had managed to secure a position from which he could easily pry Johnston out of the Kennesaw line.

The Confederate government had been displeased by Johnston's conduct of the campaign, which led President Jefferson Davis to remove him from command, and replace him with John B. Hood, by order issued on July 17. Hood was promoted to the temporary rank of full general.

On July 19, the Army of the Cumberland crossed Peachtree Creek, but as it advanced, it drifted toward the west. Thus by the afternoon a gap had developed in the Northern line between Thomas on the right and Schofield in the center. Hood decided to concentrate the corps of Hardee and Stewart against Thomas. The attack on Thomas was set for 1 p.m. on July 20. What Hood had planned as a quick blow against an unprepared Northern army developed into a head-long assault against a partially fortified line. Northern casualties in the battle of Peachtree Creek were reported at 1,600. The estimate of Southern losses was 4,700.

Attention then shifted to the eastern side of Atlanta. Hood, determined to strike McPherson, had moved past Decatur on July 20 and 21 and entrenched a line running north and south a few miles east of Atlanta. He chose Hardee's Corps to be the flanking column and planned to have Cheatham's men attack the front of McPherson's army from the west while Hardee struck from the south and east. Late on the 21st, Hardee's men withdrew from their advanced position north of Atlanta and by midnight were marching out of the city. On the morning of July 22, Sherman found the Southerners gone from his immediate front and concluded that Atlanta had been abandoned. As his armies pushed forward, however, they discovered that the defenders had only fallen back to a new position. It was not until noon that Hardee had his men in position and at 1 p.m., he sent them forward. Poor coordination also weakened the force of the Confederate offensive. Nevertheless, the fighting was severe. The first charge was driven back, but the Southerners returned to the attack again and again throughout the long afternoon. Several times they swarmed over the Federal positions, capturing men and cannon, but each time they were driven back. In one of the early charges, McPherson was killed by advancing Confederate skirmishers. Finally, at about 7 p.m., the Southerners abandoned the attack and fell back. Their losses have been estimated at about 8,000. Union casualties were reported at 3,722.

Although he had inflicted heavy losses on the Southerners, Sherman seems to have become convinced that he would not be able to capture Atlanta by his customary tactics. He brought up a battery of siege guns and shelled the city. He also decided to try cavalry raids in the hope that his horsemen could reach the railroads below Atlanta and, by cutting them, force Hood to evacuate the city. Late in July, two expeditions were launched. One under Brigadier General George Stoneman was to swing to the east to McDonough, Lovejoy Station, and Macon, tearing up the railroad and destroying supplies as it went. The other expedition, under Brigadier General Edward M. McCook, was to operate to the west and join Stoneman in attacking the Confederate lines of communications south of Atlanta. From the start, both raids were badly managed.

Stoneman chose to go directly to Macon rather than follow orders. He reached the vicinity of Macon on July 31 where he was attacked by the Southerners and captured along with about 500 of his men.

On August 10, Hood struck out at his opponent's line of supply. He sent cavalry commander Wheeler with 4,000 men to destroy the railroad north of Marietta and to disrupt Sherman's communications with the North. Although Wheeler was able to make some temporary breaks in the line, he was unable to reduce substantially the flow of supplies to Sherman's armies. Eventually, the Confederate cavalry drifted into Tennessee and did not rejoin Hood until the campaign was over. Wheeler's departure led Sherman to send out a third cavalry expedition, commanded by Brigadier General Judson Kilpatrick. The Northerners reached the railroads below Atlanta and on August 18-20, succeeded in tearing up sections of the track. On the 20th, they were driven away. Kilpatrick reported to Sherman that the railroad had been so thoroughly wrecked that it would take at least ten days to repair it. However, on the following day, the Federals saw trains bringing supplies into the city from the south. Clearly, the Northern cavalry was not strong enough to destroy Hood's lines of supply. New plans would have to be tried if the Unionists were to capture Atlanta.

When Sherman made no new efforts to flank the city and when the Northern cavalry raids were beaten off one after another, many men came to believe that Atlanta had been saved. Many thought that Wheeler's cavalry had cut off Sherman's supplies and that this had forced the Federal commander to lift the siege. Sherman had not retreated. Rather, he concluded that only his infantry could break Hood's lines of supply and had resolved to move almost all of his force to the southwest of the city. The movement began on August 25. By noon on the 28th, Howard's Army of the Tennessee had reached Fairburn. Later that afternoon, Thomas's troops occupied Red Oak. The Northerners spent the rest of the 28th and the 29th, destroying the tracks. Only one railroad, the Macon and Western remained in Confederate hands. Sherman soon moved to cut it. By August 29, Hood had learned of the Federal activities at Fairburn. In early September, Hood knew that Atlanta could not be held any longer. He evacuated the city during the night of September 1-2. Supplies that could not be carried away were burned. On September 2, Major James M. Calhoun surrendered Atlanta to a party of Federal soldiers. The capture of Atlanta delighted and heartened Northerners. News of Sherman's victory was greeted with ringing bells and cannon fire all over the North.



Sherman soon turned Atlanta into an armed camp. In mid-September, a truce was declared and the citizens who chose to remain in the Confederacy were transported by the Northerners to Rough-and-Ready, where they were handed over to Hood's men who conveyed them farther south. After completion of this unpleasant task, Hood determined to reverse Sherman's strategy and to move with his whole army around Atlanta to draw Sherman after him into Alabama or Tennessee. Sherman left a strong garrison in Atlanta and followed Hood northward for several weeks. Unable to bring his opponent to bay, Sherman detached a strong force to deal with the Confederates and returned to Atlanta. Hood's army was virtually destroyed in several

battles fought in Tennessee in November and December. Sherman, meanwhile, reorganized his armies and, on November 15, burned Atlanta and marched out of the city on his way to the sea.