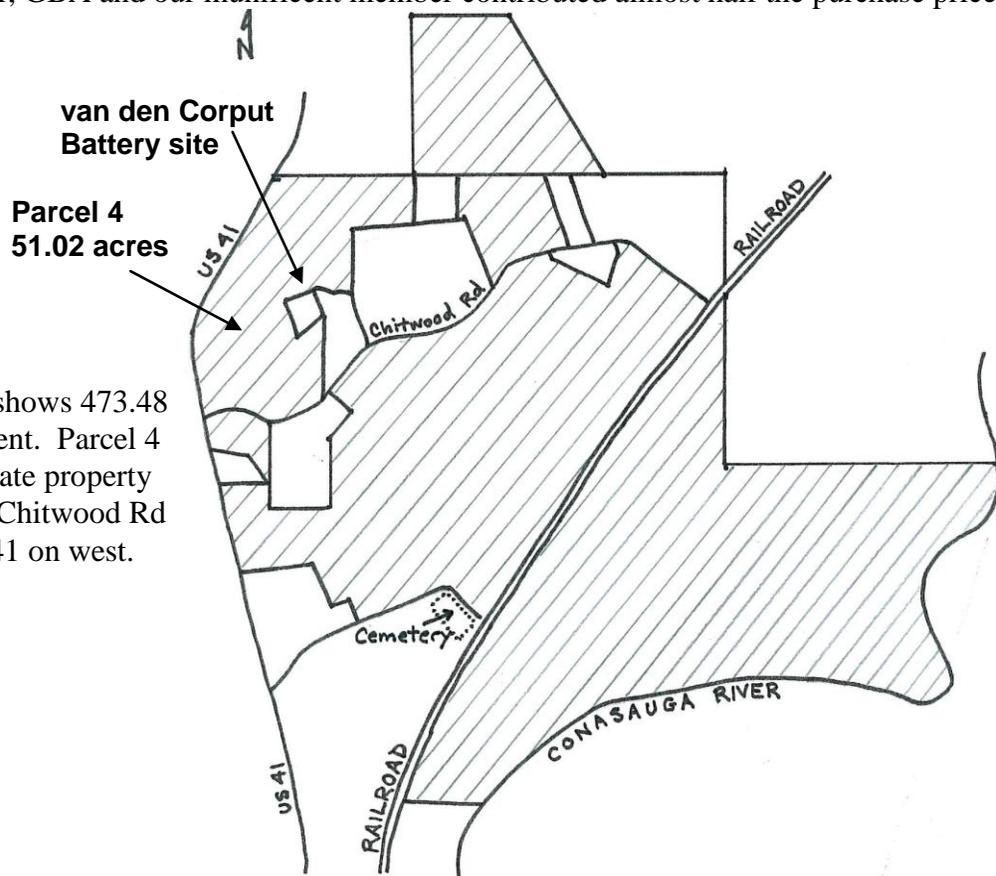


GEORGIA BATTLEFIELDS

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GBA helps Civil War Trust purchase Resaca property

The February 2011 newsletter mentioned GBA's contribution towards a conservation easement on 473.48 acres of land at Resaca. In early March, the Civil War Trust closed on the outright purchase of 51.02 acres of that property for \$153,000. This parcel contains the site of Captain Max van den Corput's battery, whose four guns were captured by the Federals on 15 May 1864. The gun positions are still clearly discernible, but the site is accessible only by transiting a private driveway. The Civil War Trust will deed the land to Gordon County, which will build a parking area, walking trail, and interpretive markers. Friends of Resaca Battlefield contributed towards the purchase price, **GBA provided \$50,000, and a GBA member individually gave \$25,000.** Together, GBA and our munificent member contributed almost half the purchase price.



Diagonal shading shows 473.48 acres under easement. Parcel 4 is bounded by private property on north and east, Chitwood Rd on south, and US 41 on west.

GBA annual tour sees Savannah sites

30 people participated in our 9-12 March tour of Savannah, seeing well-known forts Pulaski, Jackson, and McAllister, as well as lesser known locations, including Rose Dhu, Shaw's Dam, and the privately-owned site where the Old Augusta Road crosses Ebenezer Creek.



Left: Barry Sheehy explains the Federal battery site near Shaw's Dam.

Right: Erosion takes its toll on the large Confederate works at Rose Dhu.

More photos from the tour are available on our web site www.georgiabattlefields.org/tours.htm.

150 years ago

The ponderous Federal advance up the Virginia peninsula holds the attention of the eastern press even while significant developments occur elsewhere.

The slow Confederate advance from Corinth, Mississippi, improbably succeeds in surprising the Federal army camped around Pittsburg Landing and Shiloh Church, Tennessee, on the morning of 6 April. The Confederates nearly drive the Federals into the Tennessee River by the end of the day, only to suffer total repulse on 7 April. Initial press reports for every battle are wild, but the actual casualty reports of the next few weeks are like nothing seen before in North America. Among the over 1,700 Confederate dead is General Albert Sidney Johnston, the highest ranking officer to be killed in action during the war. Add to this over 8,000 wounded and almost 1,000 missing. The Federal loss is similar in killed and wounded, but almost 2,000 more are missing, mostly captured. Total casualties over 23,000 stun readers north and south.

Also on 7 April, 7,000 Confederates defending Island No. 10 surrender to Federals under John Pope. This opens the Mississippi River to the Federals as far as Fort Pillow, which is shelled by Federal gunboats on 14 April.

Fighting comes to Georgia this month. After laboriously hauling artillery across Tybee Island, Federals begin shelling Fort Pulaski, guarding the Savannah River, on 10 April. The heavy mortars prove ineffective, but the rifled guns blast apart the southeast corner of the masonry fort. When shells begin striking near the powder magazine on 11 April, the Confederates surrender, removing Savannah as a major port for blockade running. David Hunter, Federal commander of the Department of the South at Hilton Head, declares any slaves that come within Federal control in Georgia and South Carolina are now free. President Lincoln will rescind the order, though it adds to the momentum for making an end to slavery a war aim of the Federal government.

As part of a Federal advance through central Tennessee into northern Alabama, James Andrews leads a group of 24 volunteer saboteurs south to Marietta, Georgia. On 12 April, 20 of them board a northbound train pulled by the locomotive *General*. During the breakfast stop at Big Shanty, they steal the engine and three box cars and head north, hoping to destroy track and bridges and impede any Confederate reinforcements headed towards Chattanooga. They are relentlessly pursued by the train's conductor, who gathers help as he chases on foot, on a pole car, and on a series of other engines, the last being *Texas*. The Andrews Raid, or Great Locomotive Chase, is over in early afternoon when *General* runs out of fuel. All the raiders are captured within days. The dramatic incident makes for sensational press and has been the subject of several books and films, but it had little if any effect on the course of the war.

Despite the failure of the Andrews Raid, Federals under Ormsby Mitchel take Hunstville and Decatur, Alabama; but their success is largely unexploited.

On 16 April, President Davis signs into law an act that makes every white male between 18 and 35 eligible for conscription. Some classes (e.g., overseers, mechanics) will later be exempted.

On 18 April, Admiral Farragut begins bombarding Forts Jackson and St. Philip that guard the mouth of the Mississippi River. Unsuccessful in shelling the forts into submission, Farragut runs much of his fleet past the forts before dawn on 24 April, defeats the few ships the Confederates can send against him, and the next day pulls up to New Orleans, abandoned by the small Confederate land force. When surrender negotiations with the mayor prove difficult, Farragut threatens to shell the city unless U.S. authority is established. Cut off, Forts Jackson and St. Philip surrender on 28 April. The largest Confederate city has fallen.

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