

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

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GBA annual tour, 18-21 April 2024: Chattanooga & Ringgold

In mid-September 1863, the Confederate Army of Tennessee, reinforced by units from elsewhere in the western theater and by two divisions from the army of Northern Virginia, achieved its greatest victory at Chickamauga. Less than ten weeks later, it suffered one of its greatest defeats, largely due to the Confederate senior commanders (including President Davis) being unable to work with each other, in the battles around Chattanooga. It was saved from an even greater disaster by one division and its commander fighting a determined delaying action at Ringgold.

Several of these battlefields have been at least partially preserved by the establishment of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (CCNMP) and subsequent efforts, but many sites remain unprotected, uninterpreted, and very difficult to comprehend without an informed and experienced guide. You'll be able to overcome that last impediment if you join Georgia Battlefields Association (GBA) for our 2024 tour led by CCNMP historian Jim Ogden, an unequalled guide to the actions of late 1863.

Most of our previous tours have involved two-and-a-half-days (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) of touring preceded by a Thursday evening reception. The 2024 tour will be a three-and-a-half-day event (Thursday through Sunday morning). On Wednesday evening (17 April), GBA representatives will be in the hotel lobby to hand out map packets, but there will be no reception. The **price of \$580**—note the increase to reflect the additional day of touring—will include lunches and dinners for Thursday through Saturday. If you can't join us for whole tour, tell us what days you do plan to attend by sending an e-mail (be sure to include your phone number) to info@georgiabattlefields.org, and we will correspond with you about a reduced price.

Thursday: We'll begin at the park atop Lookout Mountain to take in the panoramic view of what one of the battle participants called "this grand amphitheater of war." We'll then proceed largely chronologically, first covering the tortuous U.S. Army supply line that so influenced the events. The principal supply base for the U.S. Army of the Cumberland, largely surrounded in Chattanooga as of late September 1863, was Louisville, with an advance supply depot at Nashville and forward supply depots at Stevenson and Bridgeport, Alabama (see map). From Bridgeport, the only access to the beleaguered troops and horses and mules was by narrow, minimally improved and occasionally steep roads that involved crossing Walden's Ridge and approaching the city from the north. Passage of these roads took a significant toll on wagons and the animals that hauled them in the cold and often rainy days of October 1863. We'll go to Bridgeport and trace some of the supply route (now on modern roads). We'll see where Wheeler's Confederate cavalry attacked some of the wagon trains. Upon the late October arrival of U.S. Grant, he quickly implemented a plan to open what became known as the Cracker Line to shorten the supply route and drastically improve the food and fodder situation for U.S. forces in the area. We'll visit the site of Brown's Ferry, the crucial first step to opening the Cracker Line, and the site of the Battle of Wauhatchie, the Confederate attempt to cut the new supply line.

Friday: We'll assemble again on Lookout Point, to get the same view that the Confederates atop Lookout Mountain had of the events of late October and early November 1863. We'll proceed on foot down the mountain to partially retrace the 23 November approach of U.S. forces to the "Battle Above the Clouds" and visit the final Confederate stand at the Cravens House.

Saturday: We'll visit Orchard Knob, seized by U.S. forces on the same day of the Lookout Mountain battle. Orchard Knob became an important observation point for the fighting that would occur on 25 November as Grant's plan to force the Confederates off Missionary Ridge unfolded. We'll make a short visit to the Chattanooga National Cemetery, not far from Orchard Knob. Next come several stops along Missionary Ridge, from Sherman's unsuccessful attempt to roll up the northern end of Confederate defenses, to the unexpected yet spectacularly successful assaults on the center of the Confederate line, and culminating at Rossville Gap at the southern end of the Confederate line.

Sunday: We'll go to Ringgold, where Major General Patrick Cleburne and his division fought a successful rear-guard action that allowed the disheartened and disorganized Confederate infantry and artillery and the bulk of their supply wagons to reach Dalton, behind the natural defense of Rocky Face Ridge.

Suggested reading: Peter Cozzens, The Shipwreck of Their Hopes: The Battles for Chattanooga.

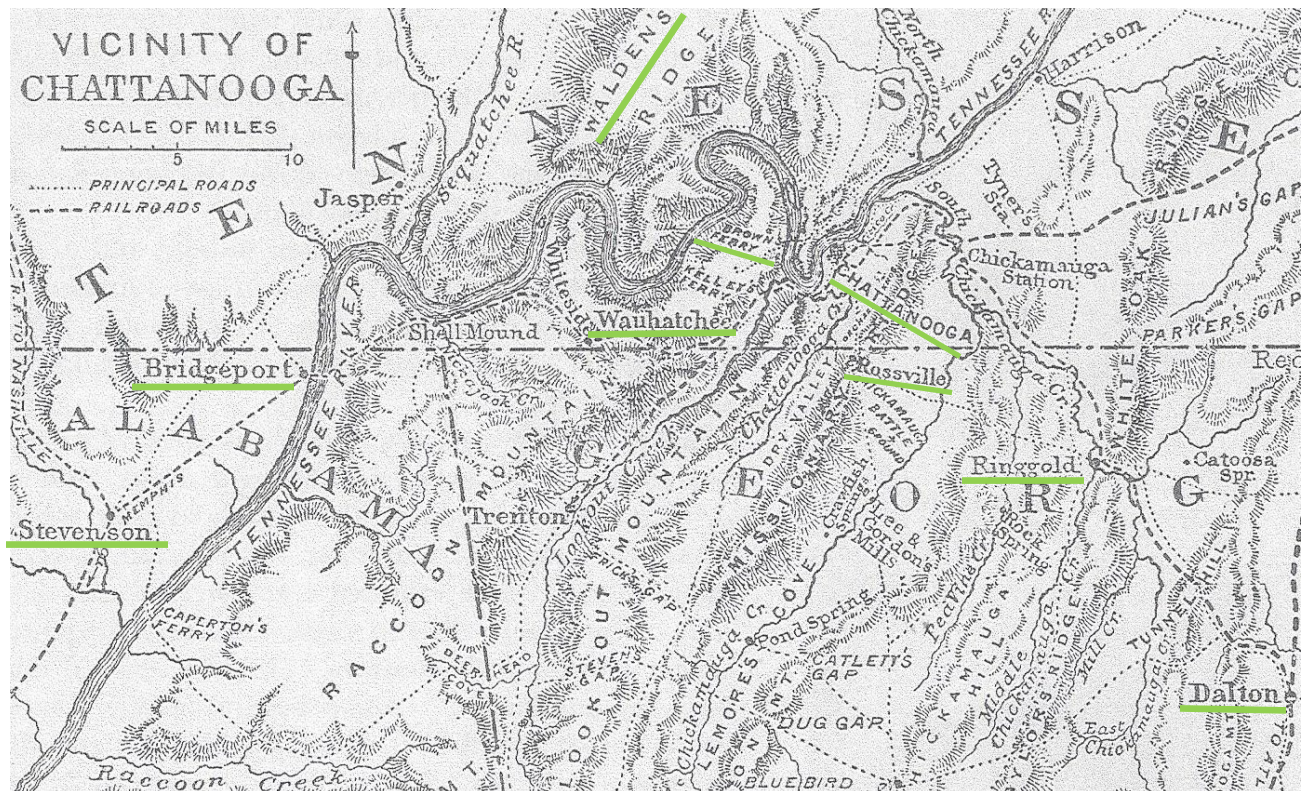
Hotel: Chattanooga offers many hotel opportunities. We're still working to narrow down the choices.

Registration: See our web site [tours page](#) and click the link to register.

Use PayPal or a credit card to complete registration online, or you can mail a check payable to Georgia Battlefields Association to **PO Box 669953, Marietta GA 30066**.

If you have any trouble registering or paying online, contact us at info@georgiabattlefields.org.

Come join us for a comprehensive tour by an unmatched guide.



Map from Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, Volume 3, p. 640.

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