

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

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Andrews Raid still in the news 162 years later

Many of you are familiar with the Andrews Raid, during which the locomotive *General* and three boxcars were stolen at Big Shanty (now Kennesaw, Georgia) and taken northward in an attempt to destroy bridges on the rail line connecting Atlanta to Chattanooga. The objective was to frustrate Confederate efforts to send troops and supplies to Chattanooga and thereby improve the prospects for the U.S. Army's capture of that city. The raid was led by James Andrews, a civilian who recruited one other civilian and 22 soldiers, all from Ohio regiments, for this sabotage mission, which failed and led to the capture of all 24 men, 19 of which received the Medal of Honor before 3 July 2024, when President Biden presented the Medal to family representatives of Philip Shadrach and George Wilson. Why the 162-year delay?

We don't know for certain why Shadrach and Wilson, both from the 2nd Ohio Volunteer Regiment, were not awarded the Medal long ago. For Shadrach, it may have been in part due to confusion over his real name: He appears in various accounts as Charles P., Perry, or Philip Shadrach. For both men, the delay was partly because award of the Medal was for over 50 years not nearly as rigorous a process as it is today. The latest, ultimately successful effort to recognize them originated as far back as the early 1970s.

At the beginning of the Civil War, the U.S. armed forces had no system of awards and decorations such as they have today. The Medal of Honor was created in December 1861 for Navy enlisted men and in July 1862 for Army enlisted men. Since it was for years the only medal, it was awarded during the Civil War for a variety of reasons, including as an incentive to reenlist. As late as 1916, 911 medals, many from the Civil War, were revoked due to inadequate justification compared to the more rigorous criteria subsequently established.

Many people know that the first Army Medals of Honor (the design of the Medal varies by service) were presented by Secretary of War Stanton on 25 March 1863 to six Andrews Raid participants (Parrott, Bensinger, Buffum, Mason, Pittenger, Reddick). They had been prisoners and then formally exchanged. Nine more medals were awarded in September 1863: Seven of these went to men (Dorsey, Wood, Porter, Brown, Knight, Alf Wilson, Hawkins) who had escaped in October 1862 from a jail in Atlanta and made their way back to U.S. lines, and two medals went to men (Ross, Robertson) who had been hanged along with five other men on 18 June 1862 in Atlanta after conviction by a court martial. Another Medal was awarded on 6 July 1864 to one of the men (Smith) who had been pressed into service by Confederates before he could join the others in Marietta, Georgia, before the train was stolen. After the raid, Smith came under suspicion and was briefly jailed but later deserted back to U.S. lines. Another medal was awarded 20 July 1864 to another (Wollam) of the eight escapees. The next medal was awarded 4 August 1866 to another (Scott) of the seven men who had been hanged on 18 June 1862. What for over 140 years was thought to be the last Andrews Raid medal was awarded 28 July 1883 to another (Slavens) of the seven men who had been hanged on 18 June 1862.

If you've been doing the math as you read the preceding paragraph, congratulations. If the explanation was clear enough, you should have 19 Medals of Honor awarded among the 24 men that Andrews organized to go on the raid, but you probably noticed that the award dates were spread over more than 20 years, even though they were all for the same action, which illustrates the variability in the ways the medal was awarded in the first 50+ years of its existence. Since Andrews (hanged on 7 June 1862) and Campbell (among the seven men hanged on 18 June 1862) were civilians, they were never eligible for the Medal of Honor. George Wilson and Philip Shadrach, the two who were awarded the medal on 3 July 2024, were also among the seven hanged on 18 June 1862. This accounts for 23 of the 24 men originally part of the raiding party.

The 24th man is Samuel Llewellyn, who, along with Smith, was pressed into Confederate service before he could rejoin the rest of the group in Marietta, Georgia. Unlike Smith, Llewellyn was able to desert from the Confederate army before he could come under suspicion as a raider. The Department of the Army has thus far resisted declaring Llewellyn eligible since he did not go on the raid and was never imprisoned. (Hawkins and Porter also missed participating in the train theft because they overslept, but they were subsequently identified as part of the raiding party and

were imprisoned with the others.) Llewellyn himself said he did not deserve the Medal. A group of dedicated people vows to continue to press Llewellyn's case. Perhaps there will be another Andrews Raid-related award of the Medal of Honor. If the latest award is precedent, the next award should be in 2186.

Related reading:

Russ Bonds - *Stealing the General: The Great Locomotive Chase and the First Medal of Honor*

Related Sites:

Atlanta History Center, Atlanta: [Locomotive Texas](#) display

Southern Museum of Civil War & Locomotive History, Kennesaw: [Locomotive General](#) display

Coolidge Medal of Honor Heritage Center, Chattanooga: [Andrews Raid](#) display

Georgia Battlefields Association led 27 July tour for Society for Women and the Civil War conference in Atlanta

The [Society for Women and the Civil War](#) held its 2024 annual conference in Atlanta. Kennesaw State University's [Center for the Study of the Civil War Era](#) was a cosponsor for the conference. Georgia Battlefields Association led a 27 July tour to the [Atlanta History Center](#), the [Roswell Mills](#) site, the [Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History](#), and the [Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park](#).



SWCW conference participants at Roswell mill workers monument.

Kennesaw Mountain Battlefield Park proposal for Mountain Drive

The Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (KMNBP) administration is redesigning Kennesaw Mountain Drive to decrease user group conflicts and allow for the safe operation of a shuttle bus to transport visitors to the top of the mountain.

Currently, Kennesaw Mountain Drive is a two-lane, asphalt-paved roadway, approximately 20 feet wide, with 10-foot-wide lanes, sustained grades exceeding 12% and one foot or less of shoulder for approximately 80% of its length of 1.2 miles. There are 9 blind curves and steep drop offs. These conditions, in addition to high use by pedestrians and bicyclists, has resulted in safety concerns. Planning and civic engagement efforts were conducted by KMNBP in 2017 to propose the use of parking fees and a shuttle system to transport visitors up to the top of the mountain rather than private vehicle use in order to decrease conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. The Park is now in the implementation stage, designing the shuttle stop area and determining appropriate bicycle use times for when the shuttle is not in operation.

The proposed changes would include expanding shuttle bus operations to be daily, a pedestrian lane, and limited bicycle access to the road (subject to certain hours). The proposed redesigned road would have a 10-foot shared bus/bike lane on the inside curve with 2-way traffic and a 10-foot pedestrian lane on the outside curve. New pavement markers would be painted along the road to delineate the pedestrian and bike/bus lanes. In addition, a shuttle stop would be constructed at the base of Kennesaw Mountain Drive next to the Visitor Center.

Georgia Battlefields Association
315 S. 5TH ST
GRIFFIN GA 30224-4343

www.georgiabattlefields.org

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