

Chickamauga and Chattanooga

Chickamauga and Chattanooga
National Military Park
Georgia/Tennessee

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



The Battle of Chickamauga, 1863, from the painting by James Walker. COURTESY NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE U.S. ARMY, ARMY ART COLLECTION

On these fields and hills, Union and Confederate armies clashed during the fall of 1863 in some of the hardest fighting of the Civil War. The prize was Chattanooga, key rail center and gateway to the heart of the Confederacy. The campaign that brought the armies here began late in June 1863 when Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans's Army of the Cumberland, almost 70,000 strong, moved from Murfreesboro, Tenn., against Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg's 43,000-man Army of Tennessee dug in 20 miles to the south defending the road to Chattanooga. Six months earlier, these same armies had clashed at Stones River where, after a three-day struggle, the Confederates had retreated. Now, through a series of skillful marches, Rosecrans forced the Southerners to withdraw again, this time into Chattanooga itself. There Bragg dug in again, guarding the Tennessee River crossings northeast of the city, where he expected Rosecrans to attack. But late in August the Federals crossed the Tennessee well below Chattanooga and again Bragg had to withdraw southward.

Bragg concentrated his forces at LaFayette, Ga., 26 miles south of Chattanooga. Here reinforcements from Mississippi, East Tennessee, and finally Virginia eventually swelled his ranks to more than 66,000

men. On September 18, after twice failing to destroy isolated segments of Rosecrans's army, Bragg tried to wedge his troops between the Federals and Chattanooga by sending elements of his army to the east bank of West Chickamauga Creek along a line from Reed's Bridge to just downstream of Lee and Gordon's Mill. This, too, failed.

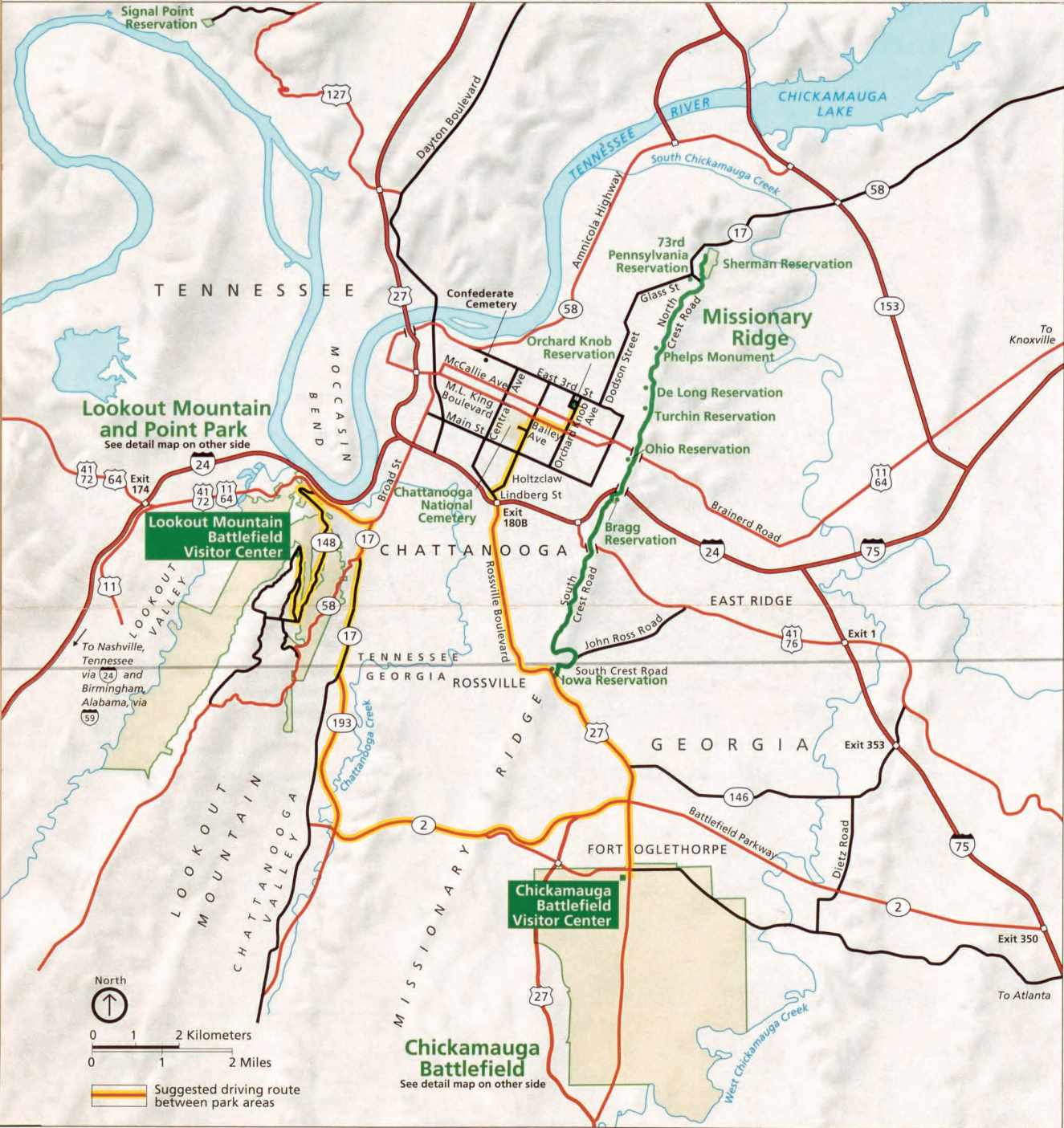
Fighting began shortly after dawn on September 19, when Union infantry encountered Confederate cavalry at Jay's Mill. This brought on a general battle that spread south for nearly four miles. The armies fought desperately all day, often hand-to-hand, and gradually the Confederates pushed the Federals back to LaFayette Road. On September 20 Bragg again tried to drive between the Union force and Chattanooga, but failed to dislodge Rosecrans's line. However, when Rosecrans shifted troops to meet the attacks, a gap opened briefly in the Federal line just as Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's Confederates assaulted that very point. The Southerners smashed through the hole, routing Rosecrans and half his army. Some Federals rallied and formed a new battleline on Snodgrass Hill. Here they held their ground against repeated assaults and earned for Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas the nickname "Rock of Chickamauga." After dark, Thomas withdrew his men

from the field. The defeat forced the Union troops to retreat into Chattanooga. The Confederates pursued, occupying Missionary Ridge, Lookout Mountain, and Chattanooga Valley. By placing artillery on the heights overlooking the river and blocking the best roads and the rail lines, the Southerners prevented most Federal supplies from entering the city. Unless something was done to break the Confederate stranglehold, Rosecrans's army must surrender or starve.

Aware of Rosecrans's plight, authorities in Washington sent reinforcements to his relief. Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker came from Virginia late in October with 20,000 men and Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman brought in 16,000 from Mississippi in mid-November. Thomas replaced Rosecrans as head the Army of the Cumberland and Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant assumed overall command. After that the situation began to change dramatically. On October 28 Federal troops opened a shorter supply route (called the "Cracker Line") from Bridgeport, Ala. On November 23 Thomas's men attacked and routed the Confederates from Orchard Knob. On the 24th, aided by a heavy fog that enshrouded the slopes of Lookout Mountain during most of the day, Hooker's soldiers pushed the Confederates out of their defenses around the Cra-

vens House. On November 25, with most of Bragg's army now concentrated on Missionary Ridge, Grant launched Sherman's troops against the Confederate right flank and sent Hooker's men from Lookout Mountain to attack the Confederate left. Thomas's soldiers, in the center at Orchard Knob, were held in reserve.

Hooker was delayed crossing Chattanooga Creek and the Confederates halted Sherman's attack. To relieve the pressure on Sherman, Grant ordered Thomas's Army of the Cumberland to assault the rifle pits at the base of Missionary Ridge. This was quickly accomplished. Then, without orders, Thomas's men scaled the heights in one of the great charges of the war. The Confederate line collapsed and Bragg's troops fled to the rear. During the night they retreated into Georgia. Union armies now controlled the city and nearly all of Tennessee. The next spring, Sherman used Chattanooga for his base as he started his march to Atlanta and the sea.



The First National Military Park

Between 1890 and 1899 the Congress of the United States authorized the establishment of the first four national military parks: Chickamauga and Chattanooga, Shiloh, Gettysburg, and Vicksburg. The first and largest of these, and the one upon which the establishment and development of most other national military and historical parks was based, was Chickamauga and Chattanooga. It owes its existence largely to the efforts of Gens. H. V. Boynton and Ferdinand Van Derveer, both veterans of the Army of the Cumberland, who, during a visit to the area in 1888, saw the need for a national park to preserve and commemorate these battlefields. Working mainly under the auspices of the Society of the Army of the Cumberland, a veterans organization, Boynton and Van Derveer spent nearly two years gathering support for the park idea among both Union and Confederate veterans. Early in 1890 Ohio Congressman Charles H. Grosvenor introduced into the 51st Congress a bill drafted by Boynton to establish the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. Following speedy Congressional passage, President Benjamin Harrison signed the bill on August 19, 1890.

In recommending creation of the park, both House and Senate military affairs committees pointed out that probably no other field in the world presented more formidable natural obstacles to largescale military operations than the slopes of Lookout Moun-

tain and Missionary Ridge. Since the purpose would be to maintain the park in its historic condition, they also noted that there had been scarcely any changes in the roads, fields, forests, and houses at Chickamauga since the battle, except in the growth of underbrush and timber, which could easily be removed. Taken together these fields offered unparalleled opportunities for historical and professional military study of the operations of two great armies over all types of terrain met with in actual campaigns, such as mountains, gentle and steep ridges, open fields, forests, and streams that presented military obstacles. From carefully placed observation towers on the Chickamauga Battlefield and Missionary Ridge and from the heights of Lookout Mountain, observers and students could comprehend the grand strategy of the campaign that extended over a 150-mile front and follow many tactical details of the actual battles. No battlefield park of this quality and magnitude could be found in any other nation of the world.

The park was officially dedicated on September 18-20, 1895. Most of the 1,400 monuments and historical markers on the battlefields were planned and placed by Boynton and other veterans of the battles, under the supervision of the War Department, which administered all national military parks until they were transferred to the National Park Service in 1933.

Related Park Areas

The National Park Service maintains several other areas that figured prominently in the battles for Chattanooga in addition to those listed on the other side of this folder: Orchard Knob Reservation marks the site of Grant's headquarters, from which he directed Thomas's Army of the Cumberland as it advanced against Missionary Ridge on November 25, 1863. Missionary Ridge, a steep ridgeline east of Chattanooga, is

about 20 miles long and 400 feet above the city. Fortified by the Confederates, the ridge was almost impregnable but it fell to the hard-charging veterans of the Army of the Cumberland. The ridge is accessible by car via Crest Road. Along the road are several small park areas, the most significant of which are Bragg, Ohio, De Long, and Sherman reservations. Bragg Reservation marks the site of Bragg's headquarters during the

siege. The monument here honors Illinois troops who fought in the battle. Ohio Reservation honors Ohio troops who participated in the Chattanooga Campaign. De Long Reservation contains a monument to the 2nd Minnesota Regiment, which fought gallantly on Missionary Ridge. Sherman Reservation marks the area where Sherman's troops tried in vain to break through Confederate defenses. North of Lookout Mountain is Signal Point Res-

ervation, one of many sites used by the U.S. Signal Corps during the Civil War. Exhibits are displayed along the terrace. Chattanooga National Cemetery, maintained by the Veterans Administration, contains Union dead from the battles, along with James J. Andrews and seven of his "raiders," tried and executed by the Confederacy for their part in what came to be called "The Great Locomotive Chase" of 1862.



The Men Who Led the Armies

William S. Rosecrans conducted a masterful campaign in maneuvering Bragg's Confederate Army of Tennessee out of Chattanooga but suffered a nearly disastrous defeat at Chickamauga. He was replaced after allowing his army to become bottled up in Chattanooga.

Braxton Bragg was not well-liked by the soldiers he led, or by his fellow officers, who urged his removal from command for failing to follow up the victory at Chickamauga. He resigned after his army's defeat at Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge.

Ulysses S. Grant became the Union's man of the hour after his aggressive strategy ended the siege of Chattanooga. In March 1864, President Abraham Lincoln rewarded Grant's achievements by making him general-in-chief of all Union armies.

About Your Visit

For More Information Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park P.O. Box 2128 Fort Oglethorpe, GA 30742 706-866-9241 www.nps.gov/chch on the Internet.

For after-hours emergencies, contact the Fort Oglethorpe police at 706-866-2512.

For Your Safety The National Park Service maintains the park as close as possible to its 1863 appearance. We have made every effort to make your visit a safe and enjoyable one. There are, however, still hazards that require your vigilance. Be cautious and use common sense when going up and down steps, hiking on mountain trails, or climbing. Climbing on monuments and cannon is prohibited. Please obey all signs and speed limits.

Protect Park Resources The Archeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) imposes criminal penalties for digging, removing, or damaging this Battlefield's historic resources. Please help us protect these links to our past history. Report any metal detecting, digging, or other suspicious activity to a park ranger.

Visiting Chickamauga and Chattanooga

Chickamauga Battlefield

The visitor center contains exhibits, a bookstore, and the Claud E. and Zenada O. Fuller Collection of American Military Shoulder Arms featuring several rare or unique items among the 346 weapons on display. Be sure to see the "Battle of Chickamauga," a 26-minute multi-media program that provides a unique orientation to this Civil War battle. It is shown throughout the day and tickets may be purchased in the visitor center bookstore. Outside the visitor center an artillery display illustrates the various types of light field artillery used at Chickamauga and Chattanooga. The battlefield contains numerous monuments, historical tablets, wayside exhibits, and hiking trails. Major points of interest on the battlefield can be reached by following the seven-mile auto tour marked on the map. Tour stops 1 through 8 on the map identify key points on the battlefield and correspond to the numbered descriptions below.

1 Slocumb's Battery At mid-morning on the opening of the final day of fighting, September 20, 1863, this battery fired 562 rounds as it tried to cut the Federals off from the Lafayette Road. The monuments and markers along the tour road mark locations of units and batteries engaged in the battle. Metal tablets—blue for Union, red for Confederate—are positioned so that visitors can view the field much like soldiers positioned here in 1863 would have viewed it.

2 The Battleground Unlike other Civil War battles that were fought on open fields, Chickamauga was fought in mostly wooded terrain. Generals had trouble keeping track of their troops, much less directing them. The final day of the battle opened near this spot. About 9:30 a.m. Confederates under Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk attacked Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas's corps lined up behind log barricades. The pressures created by these attacks caused Rosecrans to shift troops to Thomas's aid. This weakened the Federal right flank and set the scene for Longstreet's breakthrough.

3 Mix-Up in the Union Command Shortly before 11 a.m. on September

20, Rosecrans received an erroneous report that Brig. Gen. John M. Brannan's division was out of position, creating what was believed to be a gap in the Federal line. It was while Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Wood's division was shifting to fill the supposed gap, thereby creating an actual one, that Longstreet's troops struck. A part of Brannan's line is marked by monuments, tablets, and cannon. The figures near the base of the Georgia Monument across the road represent the three arms of the military: infantry, artillery, and cavalry.

4 Confederate Breakthrough Just as the last elements of Wood's division pulled out of line and before Maj. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis's division could fill the actual gap thus created, Longstreet's troops charged from the woods behind you, past the Brotherton Cabin, and across the field to the Federal line in the trees. The attack drove the divisions of Davis and Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan and part of Wood's from the field. The Brotherton Cabin is a post-war structure next to the wartime site.

5 Viniard Field One of the bloodiest actions on the battlefield took place



Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center



Brotherton Cabin, Chickamauga Battlefield

here at the close of the first day's fighting on September 19. The action went back and forth throughout the late afternoon. At one point Confederates became trapped in the ravine just to the west of the Hans C. Heg Monument, the large pyramid of cannon balls honoring the fallen Norwegian-born Union colonel. The fighting was so severe that it led Col. John T. Wilder to state, "It seemed a pity to kill men so. They fell in heaps, and I had it in my heart to order the firing to cease, to end the awful site."

6 Wilder Brigade Monument This imposing 85-foot monument honors Col. John Wilder and his brigade of mounted infantry, who occupied this part of the battlefield when Longstreet's troops broke through the Union line on September 20. Armed with seven-shot Spencer repeating rifles, Wilder's 2,000-man brigade poured a deadly fire into Longstreet's veterans but were unable to stop them. The monument stands where the house of 23-year-old Eliza Glenn, a recently widowed mother of two young children, was located. Rosecrans maintained his headquarters here on September 19 and early on the morning of the 20th, when Widow

Glenn's house was burned. A platform at the top of the Wilder Monument affords an excellent view of the battlefield and the surrounding area. (Open seasonally)

7 Rout of the Union Right Many Federal units moving through this area were surprised by Longstreet's attack and driven off the field, including Rosecrans and two of his corps commanders. The Brotherton Cabin, point of the Confederate breakthrough, lies beyond the woods to the east. To the west, on the knoll beyond the field, a monument marks the site of Rosecrans's headquarters at that time.

8 Snodgrass Hill It was here that Gen. George H. Thomas became the "Rock of Chickamauga." When Longstreet's attack struck the Union center some Federal troops there fell back to this hill and made a stand. The log house here marks the site of the 1863 home of the Snodgrass family, which was used as a field hospital after the battle. Chickamauga was one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War. Confederate casualties (killed, wounded, and missing) totaled 18,000 out of 66,000 engaged; Federal casualties were 16,000 out of 58,000.

Lookout Mountain Battlefield and Point Park

The visitor center houses James Walker's 13 x 30-foot painting, the "Battle of Lookout Mountain." A seven-minute narrative program explains the painting. The visitor center also has an information area and an assortment of sales publications. Point Park, located across the street from the visitor center, contains monuments, historical markers, and scenic vistas. From June through August, park rangers present a variety of daily tours, historical talks, and living history demonstrations in Point Park. Check at the visitor center for schedules of special events and activities. From the upper level of Point Park to the Ochs Memorial Observatory is a descent of 500 feet. There are several tiers of steps along the trail, so your physical condition will be tested. Several hiking trails that pass through areas of Lookout Mountain Battlefield can be accessed via the metal stairs located near the Ochs Memorial Observatory.

Point Park Walking Tour Here can be found the most important sites in the area. The tour begins at the *Entrance Gate*, constructed in 1905 by the U.S. Corps of Engineers. It is the largest replica of the Corps' insignia in the world. A user fee is charged for Point Park. Please pay before entering. A fee collection station is located just inside the gate. Fees collected are used for improvements at this park.

Two 12-pound *Napoleon Cannons*, named for Emperor Napoleon III of France, identify one of three Confederate artillery positions inside the park that mark a very small segment of the siege lines that once encircled Chattanooga. This type of smooth-bore cannon was one of the standard weapons used by both sides during the Civil War. The guns could fire a 12-pound projectile 1,700 yards. They were ideal for close-range fighting on level open ground but less effective at long-range fighting in mountainous areas, where rifled cannons were preferred.

The large monument in the center of the park is the *New York Peace Memorial*. On top of the shaft, a Union and a Confederate soldier shake hands

under one flag, signifying peace and brotherly love. The monument is 95 feet high, 50 feet wide at the base, and constructed of Tennessee marble and pink Massachusetts granite.

Corpus and Garrity's Batteries, also consisting of 12-pound Napoleons, are located on the northern edge of Lookout Mountain. Capt. Max Van Den Corpus's Georgia Battery is near the western overlook, from which Lookout Valley and Sunset Rock are visible. Capt. James Garrity's Alabama Battery provides dramatic views of both Moccasin Bend and Chattanooga Valley. Confederate artists using Napoleons and rifled cannons were unable to effectively bombard Union defenses in downtown Chattanooga 2½ or more miles away.

The *Ochs Memorial Observatory*, high above the Tennessee River, offers spectacular views of the Chattanooga area. It was dedicated November 12, 1940, and named in honor of Adolph S. Ochs (1858-1935), onetime Chattanooga resident and later owner-publisher of the *New York Times*. Adolph Ochs and his brother Milton were leaders in creating the Chattanooga Lookout Mountain Park, which was



New York Peace Memorial, Point Park



Cravens House, Lookout Mountain Battlefield

donated to the National Military Park in 1934, adding nearly 3,000 acres. Visible from the terrace of the Ochs Observatory is Lookout Rock, one of the favorite spots for federal officers and enlisted men who had fought in the battles around Chattanooga to pose for photographs to send home to family and friends.

Bluff Trail This trail is reached by way of metal steps to the left of the Ochs Memorial Observatory. It was at this spot on the morning of November 25 that volunteers from the 8th Kentucky Infantry, in competition with volunteers from the 29th Pennsylvania Infantry, became the first Federal soldiers to plant the United States flag atop Lookout Point. Many trails lead away from the main one; all are well-marked. Visitors arriving at Point Park via the trail system must pay the user fee at the Entrance Gate.

Sunset Rock From here Gens. Braxton Bragg and James Longstreet observed Hooker's corps entering Lookout Valley on October 28, 1863, and planned the night attack on John Geary's isolated division at Wauhatchie, an unsuccessful attempt to cut the Federal army's newly opened

"Cracker Line" in Lookout Valley. The Sunset Rock parking area is located approximately one mile south of Point Park on West Brow Road. The rock is a short distance from the parking area down a steep trail. It offers a panoramic view of the Lookout Valley and the site of the Battle of Wauhatchie.

Cravens House The original house, completed in 1856, was used as headquarters by Confederate Gen. Edward C. Walthall before the Battle of Lookout Mountain and by Union Gen. Walter C. Whitaker afterwards. The house was damaged by artillery fire and destroyed after the battle. Robert Cravens, a local ironmaster, rebuilt the house in 1866. It is the oldest surviving structure on Lookout Mountain Battlefield. Nearby are numerous Civil War plaques and monuments. The house, located about halfway up the mountain, is open for tours in the summer months and can be reached by auto via Scenic Highway. Ask at the visitor center about hours and admission rates.

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