



The October 2023 Newsletter

The October Meeting will be
Tuesday, October 24, 2023
at 3:00 p. m. in the Meeting Room
of the McMillan Museum

The Program: Paul Brueske Will Present a Program on “The 1865 Raid on Pollard

Coach Brueske was unable to present at the August program for which he had been scheduled. Head Coach of the University of South Alabama’s Track and Field teams, Brueske’s love of Civil War history resulted in his book The Last Siege: The Mobile Campaign, Alabama 1865. Last year he presented a program for ECHS on the Mobile Campaign.

From the Encyclopedia of Alabama, “Pollard experienced three federal

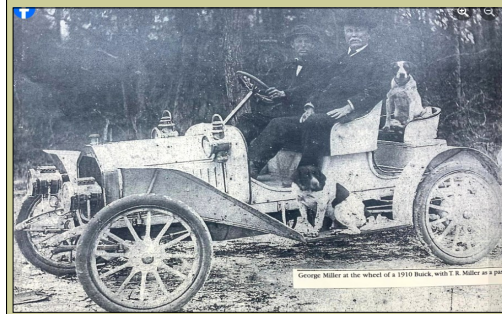
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There will be no November or December Meeting. Plans for a Christmas Party TBD.



A 1904 Pope-Tribune. Owner M. M. Brooks. Labeled as the First Automobile in Atmore.



George Miller at the wheel of a 1910 Buick. T. R. Miller Passenger.

Pictures & Text Courtesy of Jim Cox.

Refreshments

The Society will appreciate any refreshments members choose to bring. The Society will provide drinks.

With the return of an upsurge in Covid, the Society asks that you exercise caution if you are not well on the day of the meeting. Do not attend and plan to return when you are better.



Malaga Inn in Mobile. Built as Twin Townhouses by Two Brothers-in-Law in 1862. Said to be Haunted.

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Programs

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incursions. A U.S. Army brigade under Lt. Col. Andrew B. Spurling marched on Pollard in late March 1865 as part of the movement against Fort Blakeley and took control of the town, which had been abandoned by Confederate troops. About the same time, Maj. Gen Frederick Steele came through, and then Maj. Gen. Benjamin H. Grierson passed through in mid-April.”

A response to a question about an ancestor in the blog Alabama in the Civil War Message Board “([http://](http://www.history-sites.com/cgi-bin/bbs62x/alcwmb/arch_config.pl?md=read:id=24912)

www.history-sites.com/cgi-bin/bbs62x/alcwmb/arch_config.pl?md=read:id=24912), gives this information:

“Pollard became important when Pensacola fell to Union forces. It was the intersection of the rail line north from Pensacola (rendered useless when Pensacola fell) and the rail line from Tensaw, a connection to Mobile. Basically, it was the southern communication/supply route to Montgomery and the Confederate position that protected Montgomery from the Federal troops at Pensacola.”

News and Announcements

Williams Station Day
9:00 AM—4:00 PM
Atmore, Alabama

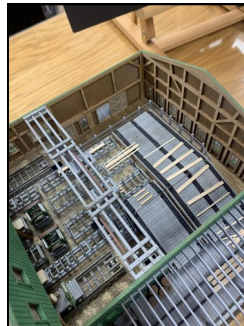


Entertainment, Car Show, Arts and Crafts Exhibits, Heritage Displays, Commercial Vendors, Food, Train Rides, Children’s Area, and More.

ECCHS President Don Sales Spoke to the Clark County Historical Society September 24.



Don is pictured in the Clark County Historical Society Museum in Grove Hill. Don Spoke on the history of Escambia County.



Don took to the meeting the model of a sawmill typical of mills throughout south Alabama in the early 1900’s. The top lifted off to show a detailed interior, which is shown at the left.



The Clarke County Historical Museum is a local history museum complex located on the grounds of the historic Alston-Cobb House in Grove Hill, shown above.

The home and other structures are owned and operated by the Clarke County Historical Society. The property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.

Pictures Courtesy of Jim Cox, publisher of the newspaper the Clarke County Democrat.
<<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100063998856818>>.

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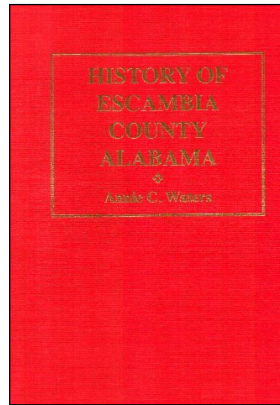
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Christmas Gifts



The wooden toys depicted above would make great gifts. These beautiful toys, made of yellow pine are available in the Alabama Room. They include: single and bi-wing airplanes, pickup trucks, log trucks, trains and helicopters.



Another good gift idea, Annie Walters' book, The History of Escambia County, Alabama, the basic source of information on the history of the county, is available in the reprinted edition. For more information on a donation to the Historical Society for these items, contact Don Sales at 251-809-1528.

History Lives On: Preserving Alabama's Rosenwald Schools

The Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) has opened a new temporary exhibit, "History Lives On: Preserving Alabama's Rosenwald Schools," at the Museum of Alabama in the Department of Archives and History. This exhibit was created by Auburn University's College of Architecture, Design and Construction in partnership



Philanthropist Julius Rosenwald (seated third from the left, next to Booker T. Washington) served on the Board of Trustees of Tuskegee Institute.

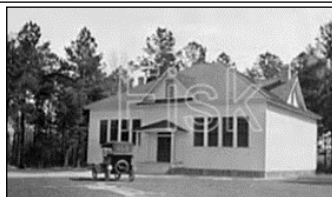
with the ADAH. It will be on view through May 2024.

The Rosenwald School Building Program began in 1912 and eventually provided seed grants for the construction of more than 5,300 buildings in 15 states, including schools, shops, and teachers' houses which were built by and for African Americans. Alabama saw the construction of the first 80 Rosenwald Schools.

There were Four Rosenwald Schools in Escambia County, Alabama. None of the buildings in their original form still exist.



Boykin School Abandoned in 1959-1960. Replaced with Modern Brick Structure (below). ECHS placed an Historical Marker in 2016.



The Pollard School
A three-teacher type, built for \$3,400, cost shared: public, \$600, Rosenwald Funds; \$1,000, Afro-American funds; donations, \$1,800; Budget Year, 1920-21



The Mason School
Damascus type, this school cost \$2,750 with the cost shared: Public \$900, Rosenwald \$800, and Afro-Americans, \$1,050. The budget year is 1920-21.



County Training School. Original school, 1920-25. Rosenwald Funds, 1926, brick and wooden structure. Current building 1959, 1980, and 1981. Historical Marker, Atmore Historical Society, 2016.

The ECHS *Journal* Section

The Yankee Calvary Raid into West Florida and South Alabama

By Andrew J. McCreary

Mr. McCreary was a member of ECHS in its beginning in the 1970s. The article is reprinted from the July and August edition of ECHOES.

Major General Steel Plans 1865 Invasion

Major General Frederick Steel, U.S. Army, Commanding U. S. Forces operating from Pensacola Bay, Florida, started making plans early in 1865 to invade west Florida. The Confederate Army had a small force at Milton along with the home guard, a sizeable force at Camp Pollard, Alabama, and cavalry units of considerable size in the area of Gonzalez, 7-8 miles north of Pensacola. The Confederate Army also had firm control of the west side of the Escambia River from the Alabama state line to Camp Gonzalez.

The Yankees had control of Fort Barrancas, Santa Rosa Island, Pensacola, Pensacola Bay and Escambia Bay. However, there were no Yankee troops in Santa Rosa County until Lt. Col. Andrew B. Spurling, Second Maine Cavalry, U. S. Army, landed his cavalry units from the steamer Matamoros on Feb. 22. Fifty mounted and 250 unmounted cavalrymen landed on Blackwater Bay, six miles below Milton, at Pierce's Mill at ten o'clock at night, and moved north at once to surprise the Confederate camp, just north of Milton.

Attack on Confederate Camp

The attack was made at daylight the next morning without even alerting the guard that was on duty. One Rebel was killed and 20 captured along with 29 horses and 5 mules; 50 stands of arms with full accoutrements along with all the camp equipment and foodstuff in the camp, were destroyed. It was not known how many Confederate soldiers escaped into the swamp but it must have been at least 20 according to the number of rifles that were in the camp.

This troop landing was taken to see what forces and how many Confederate soldiers were stationed in the Milton area and to pick a landing place to be used later on for a raid into south Alabama.

On March 19, Spurling, acting on orders from Steele, began moving his cavalry units from Fort Barrancas to Pierce's Mill, on the east side of Blackwater Bay, just north of the mouth of the Yellow

River. Moving the troops by boat again using the steamer Matamoros, took three days. The last of Spurling's troops and horses were unloaded by 6:30 a. m. on March 21.

The Special Cavalry Expedition

This raid, known as "The Special Cavalry Expedition," was composed of the Second Illinois Cavalry, 429 enlisted men and 14 officers; the Second Maine Cavalry, 212 enlisted men and 10 officers; and the first Florida Cavalry, 177 enlisted men and 5 officers. This made a total of 847 cavalrymen, all on good horses and all well trained soldiers.

The first unit landed was the First Florida Cavalry. Two companies, under command of Capt. E. D. Johnson, were sent to Milton on the 19th to see if the Confederates had reoccupied any of the area there, and to confuse the Rebels as to when and where the Yankees were going to strike next. A large Yankee force was going to move from Pensacola toward Camp Pollard shortly.

Only a few Rebel pickets were found in Milton. These pickets were driven toward Camp Pollard where they disappeared into the swamps. Johnson's companies stayed only two days near Pollard and then joined the main column on the march into south Alabama.

As soon as the last unit was unloaded at Pierce's Mill, the expedition started moving north, bypassing Milton to the west and crossing the Blackwater River several miles upstream, making camp twenty-five miles above Milton at 6:00 p. m. Travel was slow as it had been raining for several days and the streams were swollen. The first day's march was through sandy country and, notwithstanding the rainy weather, the roads were in good condition, but narrow.

The advance guard under Robinson joined the expedition that night. Robinson did not leave any troops at Milton because he felt the Rebels did not have enough troops available to cause any trouble in that area.

Moving into Alabama

Not meeting any armed resistance, Spurling moved on through Santa Rosa County into Alabama on the east side of the Conecuh River to his planned crossing

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of this river at Montezuma Landing, just below what is now River Falls.

The main body of the cavalry traveled on roads which followed trails made by Creek Indians and used by Indians and Indian agents in the late 1700's and early 1800's to bring furs and other products from the Indian tribes of south and central Alabama to Pensacola to the Payton trading company (editor's note –actually Panton, Leslie & Company), for Alexander Mc-Gillivray, leader of the Creek (Muscogee) in Pensacola. These products came from as far north as Tookabatcha, north of present-day Montgomery, Alabama.

Ponies raised in the Creek Indian Nation were used as pack animals. They were unusually small animals but were very strong and could carry a load of one hundred and fifty pounds with ease on the very narrow trails. There were as many as one hundred and fifty pack ponies in some pack trains moving through the wild and unsettled area of south Alabama and west Florida.

Other than furs, honey, bear oil, beeswax, snake root, hickory nut oil, pine tar and medical plants were transported by pack animal over these trails. Some furs and products were brought down the Escambia River in canoes.

As the Yankees moved north, they found the road was only wide enough for an ox cart to travel on. Side roads were nothing more than Indian trails. In 1865, this road north from Pensacola and Milton, which had once been a major route for Indians to bring goods to Pensacola, was not now a well-used road.

Parts were so narrow that two cavalymen could not ride abreast; they had to ride Indian fashion, one behind the other as Indian ponies had moved seventy-five and a hundred years before, or knees and shins would be injured by trees and brush along the side of the road.

Lewis Station, Screamer's Ridge, and Mary Lewis McGowin Floyd

The raiders did not meet any armed resistance after leaving Milton. The only thing that hampered their movement was rain. It rained every day they were on the raid. They passed very few houses until they crossed the Alabama state line. Shortly after, they

entered Lewis's Station, a cross-road community with only a few houses, where they looted the houses, destroyed farm equipment, robbed potato banks, stole sugar cane syrup and replenished their saddle bags with corn for their horses, which they had not had a chance to do since leaving Fort Barrancas.

After leaving Lewis's Station, the Yankees crossed Menden-Hall Creek and came to a small hill known as "Screamer's Ridge," so named because Mary Lewis McGowin Floyd, who owned and ran a store there, also made a corn mash whiskey which caused anyone who indulged in a few drinks to "scream with delight."

She sold farm equipment, household supplies and food staples necessary for daily needs to travelers, immigrants and local inhabitants. The homemade whiskey was made under her supervision from sour corn mash that was sweetened with sugar cane syrup and then distilled.

While living in North Carolina, Mrs. Floyd had learned how to ferment and distill whiskey from the Irish that brought their knowledge of whiskey making from the Old Country. They used rye or wheat where she used corn. There was not a Federal, state or local tax on whiskey until during the Civil War when the federal government put a tax on it, so it was not illegal to make and sell alcohol products.

Mrs. Floyd with her second husband, Thomas, two Floyd daughters and two sons by her first husband, James McGowin, had moved into the Mason Community in the early 1830s. For moving, they put most of their belongings in a large barrel on which were placed trunnions or shafts, to which an ox was hitched and as the ox pulled it, it would roll over and over and so it rolled all the way from the banks of the Flint River in Decatur County, Georgia to the banks of the Conecuh River in Conecuh County, Alabama.

The barrel was water tight to keep the contents dry while crossing streams. It must have been made out of good wood, as it was used to ferment the corn mash after the family arrived in Conecuh County. Some of their cooking and farming equipment was packed in a cart drawn by an ox. Members of the family took turns riding in the cart while other members walked. At night the family slept under the stars, preparing meals after making camp.

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The Old Three Notch Road

Screamers Ridge was on the old Three Notch Road, a roadway surveyed by the Federal Government in the early 1800s to give travelers a roadway into West Florida and Baldwin and Mobile Counties in Alabama, counties occupied by the British at that time. This road was used by some of General Andrew Jackson's troops on their way to Pensacola in 1814, when he ran the British out of Fort Barrancas before the American troops proceeded to New Orleans where they fought and whipped the English again.

The Three Notch Road was much wider than the roads in Florida and made movement of the cavalry much easier for the Yankees. After getting on this road, Spurling headed northeast toward Montezuma Landing, his planned place for crossing the Conecuh River. On his right he passed the M. M. Blackshare's place where Mr. Blackshare's son, Abraham Blackshare, was buried. He was born June 15th 1843 and died in the service of the C.S.A. Army, Nov. 25th 1862.

Grab Creek And Dixie

As the Yankee Cavalry neared Grab Creek, they passed on their right the grave of Peter Mason McGowin in the Foshee Cemetery. He was born Oct. 24, 1833, and died of typhoid fever Dec. 19, 1863, in a Confederate Army camp near Mobile. His widow, Nancy Floyd McGowin, went to the camp where he died and brought his body back and buried him in the family cemetery, which later became known as the Foshee Cemetery.

All the horses and mules that the Yankees found along the way were confiscated and taken with them. The ones not used for riding were used as pack animals to take foodstuff for both man and animal and the loot picked up along the way.

The Yankees passed through Dixie on March 22 and shortly thereafter passed on their left the home of Wiley Dixon and his family cemetery where his son, William H. Dixon, is buried. He was born April 8, 1829, and died Jan. 11, 1864, while in the service of the Confederate Army in the same camp near Mobile where Peter McGowin had died three weeks earlier.

His mother, Elsie May Dixon, went with Nancy McGowin in a wagon to the army camp where the

two men had died and the two women brought their bodies back home for burial. It took them almost two weeks to make the trip. They took their own food with them, camping out at night and sleeping in the wagon on the way to Mobile and under the wagon on the way back, as the coffins were in the wagon.

Homestead of Isaac Hart

After passing the Dixon place, the raiders took a sharp turn in the road and within a short time arrived at the homestead of Isaac Hart on their left. They took what corn he had in his barn. He had a short notice that the Yankees were coming, so he took most of the corn deep in the swamps and hid it.

He took his livestock, goats, sheep, work animals and his wagons as far off the road as possible. The raiders emptied his potato banks, took all his syrup and that is all he lost except the bucket he used to draw water from his well, which they took.

Mr. Hart had been living in Florida on the Yellow River when the Florida Creek Indian War of 1837 broke out. He joined the Army and served as a private in the West Florida Volunteers until the war scare blew over. He later moved into south Alabama and settled on the bounty land he received for serving in the army during this war.

Mr. Hart had four sons serving in the Confederate Army at this time. One of his sons, Allen Thomas, lived a short distance up the road from his father on the right side of the road. He was in the Confederate Army and his wife, on hearing the Yankees were coming, took what livestock she could gather and what cured meat she could carry and hid everything in the woods back of her house. As the raiders were well supplied with corn and potatoes, she only lost some chickens and pigs that she could not hide and a wagon they burned.

Another son, Reuben Sylvester, was in the Rebel Army and was captured Aug. 3, 1864 by the Yankees between Marietta and Atlanta, Georgia, during the Battle of Atlanta. He was wounded in Marietta a short time before his capture. An almost spent Yankee bullet hit him in his forehead, broke the skin for three inches and glanced off his skull. He said later that his head was too hard for a Yankee bullet to penetrate.

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He was sent to Camp Chase, Ohio, arriving there Aug. 13. He was paroled from Camp Chase on March 18, 1865, and was shipped to Point Lookout, Maryland, arriving there March 27, and was released shortly after the war ended April 9. It took him over a month to get home as he had to walk all the way home. He said people along the way were “real nice,” giving him food and letting him sleep most of the time in their barns. He was not alone; hundreds of others were going home the same way.

Preparations to Protect Bridges and Spread the Word, “The Yankees Are Coming.”

Although it was raining and had been for several days, high water did not hinder the Yankees on their march as there is not a creek of any size on the east side of the Conecuh River between where they entered the Three Notch Road and the town of Andalusia, so they did not have to cross any large swollen streams.

The people of south Alabama had been expecting the Yankee raiders for some time and a home guard had been formed and stationed at McCauley's Bridge, now McGowin Bridge, to protect it and to fight the Yankees. The guard was commanded by Capt. Milton Amos of Brooklyn, who lived in Belleville before moving to Brooklyn and in Milton, Fla. before moving to Alabama. Milton, Fla. was named for him; before, it was known as “Scratch Ankle.” Trenches about twenty yards long were dug on the west side of the river on each side of the road leading to the bridge.

Word spread fast that the raiders were in south Alabama after they crossed the state line. Anybody that had a horse and could ride was going in front of the raiders telling everybody “The Yankees are coming.” Some of the messengers were overtaken by the Yankees and made prisoners.

Two members of the home guard from McCauley Bridge were sent toward Andalusia by Capt. Amos to tell the people there and people living along the way that the Yankees were coming, but they were on slow horses and were overtaken by the much faster cavalry horses. They were captured and added to the growing list of prisoners the Yankees had taken.

Burning of McCauley Bridge

When word was received at McCauley Bridge of the number of Yankees in the raiding party, it was decided to burn the bridge and not try to defend it, and this was done. While it was still burning, a Yankee patrol was seen on the east side of the river. The deciding factor in burning the bridge was the small size and inexperience of the members of the guard and the need for good rifles. No attempt was made by the raiders to cross the river and it was never in the plans of Col. Spurling to cross the river anywhere except at Montezuma Landing.

The trenches dug on the west side of the river can still be seen today. They are about four feet deep. The roadway can still be seen as it is also about four feet below the surrounding area. When the river is low, some of the bottom parts of the burned piling can also be seen. A bridge across the Sepulga River about a mile and a half above where it forks with the Conecuh River was also burned on the same day the McCauley Bridge was burned. No attempt was made to defend it. It was known as the Kenard Kendall Bridge. It was not rebuilt after the war.

This bridge was on an old Indian trail that wound its way from Fort Gaines, Georgia, crossing the Conecuh River at a place known as the Forks. Before the Kenard Kendall Bridge was built, travelers forded the river near where it was built.

After leaving the Sepulga River, the trail wound its way through the piney woods to Fort Crawford on Murder Creek, not having to cross a stream of any size until Murder Creek was reached. This route was used by some of the early immigrants as they moved into south Alabama and west Florida.

The McCauley Bridge was rebuilt several years after the war but not at the same site. It was built about two hundred yards upstream from where the burned bridge stood. A ferry was used until the new bridge was completed. The present bridge over the river on U.S. 29 is about half way between where the two other bridges stood.

While the home guard was staying at the McCauley Bridge, they had to furnish their own rations. If they needed something they didn't have, they would call upon the Samuel McGowin family for it. He lived about one half mile below the bridge.

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The men in the home guard had gotten syrup several times. However, when Capt. Amos went to get some more, he received several cans but when he got back to camp and opened them, they were filled with water. Capt. Amos said, "Those girls did that; they were mad with me because I didn't send some of these young Bucks to get the supplies." Mr. McGowin had five daughters.

Word of Mistreatment of Civilians Spread Andalusia

After leaving the Harts, Col. Spurling moved his cavalry northeast toward Andalusia, passing the Conecuh River Baptist Church on his left. It is still standing today. Isaac Hart and his wife, Mary, are buried in the church cemetery. The cavalry stopped and made camp about sundown on the 22nd, only six miles from Andalusia near the Conecuh River, but word did not reach Andalusia until almost midnight that the Yankees were so close.

The small town was entered at daylight the next morning by the Yankees. It was the first crossroad of any size the raiders had seen since leaving Fort Barrancas. Most of them had not seen Milton as it was bypassed. The troops and horses had been living off the land since leaving Blackwater Bay and the pickings had been rather lean at times, and the expedition also had the additional burden of the prisoners, Afro-Americans, horses and mules that had been picked up on the way.

There were only a few stores and warehouses in Andalusia, but they were well stocked, as the owners had not had time to move, hide or destroy the supplies. This was a welcome relief to the Yankees. Saddle bags filled, the troops, prisoners, Afro-Americans, camp followers and the animals were fed and after a short rest, the advance guard left for Montezuma Landing, four miles north of the camp, to prepare for the crossing of the Conecuh River by the main body of the expedition. Some crossed by ferry; others swam their horses to the other side.

A large supply of Enfield rifles was found in Andalusia. There was one in almost every household, the owners expecting to use them to protect their life and property. There was a large supply in one of the warehouses. They were either destroyed or

confiscated along with any that were found in houses.

After the advance guard left, the rest of the troops stayed several hours looting houses of jewelry, silver, cooking equipment or anything small enough that they could carry with them and that had any value at all. Any citizen that made any resistance to the looting was shot. All stores and warehouses were burned before they left. The troops picked up several men of military age and took these men with them.

The treatment that the Yankee soldiers were giving defenseless citizens spread rapidly, and people began burying all their valuables such as jewelry, silver, knives, money and even farm equipment and taking their livestock and fleeing to places of safety deep in the river swamps and as far from a road as possible. If the Yankee troops came up on such a group of people, they enjoyed shooting into the group. If any resistance was given to the looting, the house was burned with all the farm equipment.

People in all directions out of Andalusia took to the woods and swamps when they heard what had happened in Andalusia, taking everything they could with them, as there was no way of knowing where the Yankees were going after looting, stealing and burning everything in Andalusia.

When traveling during the raid, the main body of troops stayed on the main road, but patrols were sent out on every side road of any size to investigate what was there and to pick up any male southerners of military age that might possibly be a soldier on leave, a member of the home guard, or any Afro-American that wanted to go with the Yankees.

A lot of farm equipment was destroyed on these minor raids and some food stuff was found for troops and horses, along with horses and mules. Patrols on these raids stuck to roads; they did not go into wooded places or try to take short cuts through woods. They did not want to become lost and left by the main body of troops for fear of being captured or killed by small bands of rebels hiding in the area.

Raiders Cross Conecuh River and Head West Toward L&N Railroad

After Col. Spurling got his troops, prisoners, Afro-Americans, camp followers and equipment across the Conecuh River, he headed west toward the closest

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point on the Mobile and Great Northern Railroad, later known as the Mobile and Montgomery and still later as the L&N Railroad. They looted, stole horses and mules, both human and animal foodstuff, burning barns and out-houses, and all farming equipment that could be found.

Shortly after crossing Pigeon Creek, the Yankees came up on a small detachment of Rebel soldiers. Lt. Watts of the Confederate Army, son of Governor Watts of Alabama, was home on leave in his native Butler County when he heard that the Yankees were coming. He hastily organized a rebel force to meet and engage the enemy. When he saw the size of the advance guard, he realized he could not offer enough resistance to hinder the advance of the Yankees, so he tried to escape but was wounded and later captured along with two of his volunteers.

Note: It was for this incident that Spurling would eventually receive the Congressional Medal of Honor. War Department records say that Spurling's actions prevented the Confederates from obtaining information about Union troop movements and "was of great value to the Union cause." His obituary said that the Confederates were riding to get reinforcements, "which probably would have wiped out the Federal command" (<https://leepeacock2010.blogspot.com/2016/03/spurlings-raid-into-conecuh-county-took.html>).

Destruction of Railroad Tracks and Buildings at Gravel Station (Now Owassa)

The first raiders to arrive at the railroad tracks cut the telegraph wires and then began ripping up the cross ties and railroad track. This was about four miles above Evergreen. The following is the report made by Major Franklin Moore, commanding officer of the Second Illinois Cavalry for March 23, 1865:

"Arrived at Gravel Station, being ordered with a portion of my command to destroy the railroad, which I did effectually, I remained until the train ran off the track, capturing twelve prisoners. Remained near Gravel Station with my regiment and a portion of the Second Maine Cavalry while Col. Spurling continued to march to Evergreen, my regiment and the Second Maine still waiting for the train expected from Montgomery.

"I placed a portion of my command between the

train already captured and Montgomery to place obstructions on the track to prevent the retreat of the train in case of discovery of the wrecked train, which was done. The train arrived and was captured with 170 prisoners, a portion of which were citizens.

"The rebels fired on my regiment, killing one horse and wounding another. My regiment returned the fire, killing one man who was trying to escape. The train was loaded with clothing, grain, horses, mail, tobacco, etc. Burned everything and resumed march and paroled soldiers, which were afterward released by order of Col. Spurling. Joined Col. Spurling at Evergreen at 11 a.m., one company of my regiment guarding the prisoners until my arrival at brigade."

The first train was from Pollard; it consisted of the engine, one baggage, two passenger and four platform cars. Everything was burned after the train ran off the track. The train from Montgomery consisted of the engine, one baggage, four passenger and two freight cars.

When Col. Spurling arrived at Evergreen, he found an abundance of forage and rations. He destroyed what he could not use or take with him. The rolling stock found in the depot was burned, and engines set on fire.

Evergreen

When the Yankee cavalry moved toward Evergreen, these "undisputed masters of the situation" found much pleasure in firing upon defenseless citizens. They entered Evergreen without any military or civilian resistance, and proceeded to rob families of silverware and jewelry and the surrounding plantations of mules and horses. They also burned the railway station.

Spurling and his forces left Evergreen at 2 p.m. and arrived at Sparta at 4 p.m. The Sparta Depot was filled with war material, six box cars filled with supplies. These were burned. The trestle between Sparta and Evergreen was destroyed. The court house was also burned. The Yankees camped at Sparta the night of March 24th, enjoying the fruits of their labor by watching the fires they had set glow and then seeing the buildings turn to ashes.

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Elijah McCreary and the Completion of the Railroad

When war was declared in 1861, the railroad had not been completed. Construction was begun in Mobile and Montgomery, at the same time, by two construction crews who were to meet, but there was a space of several miles above Evergreen that was still under construction.

This was the distance the two crews lacked meeting with the finished road. Plantation owners sent slaves, mules, horses and construction equipment to finish the line as soon as possible as the railroad was needed to ship war supplies and troops.

Elijah McCreary, who lived fifteen miles south of Evergreen and had three sons who served in the Confederate Army, sent several slaves and two teams of horses along with food stuff to help finish the line. He used only horses on his plantation. Mules were not used for any work.

He also bought \$2,500.00 worth of stock in the railroad from which he never received any dividends. He also never got any of his investment back, but he helped build a railroad through the county. This action actually helped him because he was having to haul his cotton to Claiborne on the Alabama River in wagons, a round trip which often took ten days.

Company E (Conecuh Guard)

With the extra man, horse, and mule-power, the railroad was completed within a short time, and when Company "E" (Conecuh Guard), left Sparta for active duty on April 24, 1861, they rode over the newly finished rail line. Company "E" was organized April 2, 1861. The majority of its members were from the best families in the county and, for the most part, were the most promising young men in the area.

The company was mustered into the Confederate Army at Lynchburg, Virginia, May 7, 1861. Original members of this unit or their replacements fought, died and were wounded in twenty-four battles or skirmishes with the Yankees before it surrendered with General Robert E. Lee at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9, 1865, over four years from the time it was activated.

Sparta Organizes Home Guard

When the people of Belleville heard that the Yankees were on their way to Sparta, they organized a home guard on short notice and rode out to meet, fight, and destroy the enemy. About half way to Evergreen, they rounded a bend in the road and found themselves confronted with a patrol of Yankees burning some farm equipment.

The newly organized home guard turned around and headed for home. Before the raiders could mount and pursue the recruits, they were out of sight, all except William J. McCreary, who was captured because his horse could not run as fast as the others. He was the son of J. A. McCreary and Almirah Naomi (Strange) McCreary. He was fifteen years old, born June 12, 1851.

Although his horse could not run very fast, the Yankees kept it. After being captured, he was taken to Mobile, and then later sent to Ship Island in the Gulf of Mexico. When the war was over, he was released in Mobile and had to walk home.

After capturing Willie J. and his horse, the Yankee patrol turned back and did not go to Belleville.

Note: Ship Island is located off the Mississippi coast and was used as a prisoner of war camp and base for the U.S. Second Regiment throughout the Civil War. According to local Civil War historian Steve Stacey of Monroeville, Ship Island "was an awful place," where the guards "took potshots at Confederates going about their daily life" (<https://leepeacock2010.blogspot.com/>).

Raiders Move to Brooklyn

After watching the embers of the buildings and supplies of everything that had been burned, the Yankee column moved out toward Brooklyn at 5:00 on the morning of March 25th. They arrived at Brooklyn at 11:30..

Migilbra Findley was visiting the family of his son, Martin, who was in the Confederate Army, when a color sergeant with the United State flag passed and Mr. Findley didn't nod his head toward it or take his hat off.

One of the cavalry officers said, "Old man don't you know you're supposed to take your hat off in the presence of the American Flag." Mr. Findley replied, "I fought for that flag under Old Hickory Jackson in Pensacola and in the Battle of New Orleans but I

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don't have any respect for it today." The officers rode off without saying anything else.

After passing through Johnsonville, the Yankees passed the home of Thomas M. Floyd, father of Nancy, widow of Peter McGowin, on their right. On their left, they passed the home of Capt. Amos. Neither of these houses was burned, but all farm equipment and foodstuff not taken was destroyed. The Floyd house is still standing.

Shortly before getting to Brooklyn, they passed the newly built Brooklyn Baptist Church to their left. It was started before the war but finished during the war. The people of Brooklyn were warned well in advance that the Yankees were coming. They hid their valuables, took their livestock deep into the river swamps and for the most part stayed there with them. There were several members of the home guard stationed at McCauley Bridge that lived in Brooklyn but they were nowhere to be found when the raiders arrived.

It was said that there were more people in the swamps near Brooklyn than there were deer, and in 1840, it was estimated that 2,000 deer hides were shipped by boat from Brooklyn to Pensacola. Some looting was done in Brooklyn but for the most part the only losses were foodstuffs for both man and animal, either destroyed or taken with the raiders.

Five miles south of Brooklyn, the Yankees passed on their left the home of Mortimer Boulware, father of Gilchrist (Gil), who was at one time color sergeant for the Conecuh Guard. He received a wound in his right arm during the Battle of Chickamauga, Georgia and later the arm had to be removed. The only thing Mr. Boulware lost was some corn and all his sweet potatoes that were still in the banks.

A patrol rode down to the Sepulga River but did not cross it as the bridge (Kennard Kendall) had been burned and the river was in flood stage due to the recent rains. About half way between the Boulware house and the river, the patrol passed through a forty-acre field in which was located Mr. Boulware's slave quarters, a large barn, and lots for keeping his livestock.

Samuel McGowin, the Boulware Plantation and the McCreary Family

Mr. Samuel McGowin bought the Boulware Plantation after the war ended, and gave it to three of his daughters. They drew straws to see which part each one would receive, and Sarah Jane, Mrs. Ruben S. Hart, drew the longest straw and got the part with the Boulware house, known as the "Big House," on it. The Harts lived in it until they built their own house, which is still standing, then tore down the Boulware house as it was in great need of repair.

During the spring and summer, when the mosquitoes were bad, the Boulwares would move to a house they had built in the piney woods. This house was on a hill which became known as Summer House Hill. They would spend the entire summer there. The community the Boulwares lived in was known as Springdale, now Teddy.

The Yankee column continued south, passing on their left the burned McCauley Bridge where some of the piling was still smoking and the trenches were unoccupied. Within fifteen minutes after passing the bridge that had burned only three days before, the raiders arrived at the home of Samuel McGowin.

The pickings were rather slim at the McGowin Plantation as he had helped feed the home guard when they were guarding the bridge. He had made sure that he would have enough seed corn and potatoes for his spring planting by hiding some of his best ears of corn and several bushels of potatoes in a thicket back of his house on Smith Creek.

The raiders got some of his chickens, sweet potatoes and syrup before they left. As the last of the Yankees were leaving, one of the soldiers threw a silk dress through an open window into the lap of Sarah Jane, one of Mr. McGowin's daughters. She started to throw it back when one of her sisters said, "Don't do that - we may find out who it belongs to," and they did. It belonged to a lady who lived near Sparta and it was returned to her.

The house that Mr. McGowin was living in was built by J. H. McCreary. It was built in the 1830's by having a house raising. Mr. McGowin, being a neighbor, had wanted to go to the house raising, but he didn't have a pair of shoes. He went to Brooklyn and tried to buy a pair on credit from Y. S. Hirshfelder who was running a general store there.

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Mr. Hirshfelder would not let Mr. McGowin have the shoes on credit, so he went to the house raising barefooted. Hirshfelder later bought the McCreary house when Mr. McCreary moved to Belleville

One Sunday the McCrearys were going to church in Brooklyn when the horses ran away, threw Mrs. McCreary out of the wagon, and broke her leg. It never healed correctly and she used a crutch to get around on. Her crutch left marks in the hard pine floors of the house. When the house burned in 1938, some of these marks could still be seen in the floor.

Brewton Station and Fort Crawford

The Yankee column moved on south, halted twelve miles from Brewton Station, and made camp at sundown. At eleven o'clock the next morning, the raiders arrived at Murder Creek and found that some of the planks on the bridge had recently been removed. While the bridge was being repaired, Col. Spurling sent an advance guard of un-mounted men across the creek to see if any rebels could be found.

These men had gone only a short distance when the rebels opened fire on them from a fortification of logs and dirt. Major Frank Moore, commanding officer, was ordered by Col. Spurling, when he heard the firing, to dismount his regiment and advance through the woods as skirmishers, which he did. After the rebels delivered their first and only salvo, they disappeared into the woods and the Yankees did not capture any of them, but the rebels did wound Lt. Vose of the Second Maine Regiment, and two enlisted men of that regiment were slightly wounded.

Before crossing Murder Creek, the Yankees passed Fort Crawford on their right. Used by the early settlers as a place of safety to go to during uprisings or fear of attacks by the Creek Indians, Fort Crawford was also used by General Andrew Jackson, although he never visited the fort, as a rest stop and a staging area for his attacks on the Spanish and English in Florida.

The Army unit that Magilbra Findley was in, while on its way to New Orleans, by way of Pensacola, made a rest stop at Fort Crawford the latter part of October 1814. Magilbra was in Pensacola Nov. 7, 1814, when the British spiked their big guns in Fort Barrancas, blew up the fort, and set sail for New

Orleans.

Gen. Jackson, after the engagements in Florida, moved his army as rapidly as he could to New Orleans where he met the English again on the Plains of Chalmette where the Battle of New Orleans was fought. The battle ended in a crushing victory for Gen. Jackson and moved him one step closer to the White House.

After the Battle of New Orleans, Mr. Findley and his unit stayed several weeks at Fort Crawford on their way to Union District, South Carolina where they had been activated. They helped repair some of the older parts and constructed some new parts that were needed to bring up the safety standards of the fort. This was just over one year since the Battle of Burnt Corn Creek, July 24, 1813, and the terrible massacre at Fort Mims, Aug. 30, 1813, and eight or nine months since the Battle of Horseshoe Bend March 27, 1814.

There were still bands of Creeks wandering through the area living off the land by stealing livestock, foodstuff and clothing from whites that had run the Indians off their land. The settlers needed a place of safety to enter in case the Indians ever became strong enough to mount another attack.

Actions at Camp Pollard

Col. Spurling joined Gen. C. C. Andrews at Pollard on the 26th. The Rebels, under Gen. James H. Clanton, retreated north from Camp Gonzalez, Florida when they realized they were greatly outnumbered by the Yankees. General Clanton made a final stand on the road at Pine Barren Creek below the Alabama-Florida line, but the rebels were defeated and made a hasty retreat into south Alabama, not even stopping at Canoe Station, the Rebel cavalry headquarters.

A few stragglers went through Camp Pollard, but they only stayed long enough to pick up what supplies they could find and take with them. They then disappeared into the swamps. General Clanton was shot in this battle, fell from his horse and was captured by the Yankees.

When the Yankees entered Camp Pollard, they found very little corn or hay for their horses and no subsistence for their troops, as the [fleeing] Rebel troops and the local citizens, on hearing the Rebels

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were retreating, carried everything that could be moved away from the camp and hid it deep in the swamps. The troops and most of the citizens went into hiding before the Yankees arrived.

The country through which the Yankees had been traveling was almost destitute of food supplies and their subsistence supplies for the soldiers, prisoners, Afro-Americans and horses were about to run out. A supply ship, from Fort Barrancas, was supposed to come up the Escambia River with supplies, but even with the high water in the river, the ship failed to pass over a sand bar at the mouth of the river at Ferry Pass.

Camp Pollard was completely destroyed by the Yankees; every building was burned. A vegetable garden planted by some of the soldiers made good grazing for the mules and horses. One of the local citizens said that the only thing the Yankees didn't do was scatter salt on the ground so nothing would ever grow on the site of the camp.

Canoe, Williams Station (Today's Atmore), Stockton, and Blakeley

After leaving Camp Pollard, the advance column of the raiders arrived at Canoe Station on the 27th. It had been raining for two days and the roads were in very bad condition. Canoe Station had been headquarters for General G. C. Armistead's brigade, which was composed of the sixth and eighth Alabama Cavalry. These units had taken the blunt of the fighting, trying to keep the Yankees from entering Alabama.

The Yankees found considerable corn at the rebel depot in Canoe Station, which helped them to replenish their supply that was getting short. Most of the rebel troops were away and the local citizens did not have time to remove it. Some local citizens were at the depot loading corn on ox carts when the raiders arrived. The Yankees ate the oxen that were hitched to the carts and burned the carts.

The raiders then moved on through Williams Station to Stockton and Blakeley, stealing horses and mules, destroying farm equipment, and rounding up cattle to be used as food as they moved on.

Conclusion

Destruction was left everywhere the Yankees were. Spurling's march through west Florida and south Alabama was the same type march that Sherman made through Georgia, just on a smaller scale.

Within a few years, most of the land that was once under cultivation was soon covered with young pine and oak trees. Within another few years, it was hard to tell the land which had been cultivated from the virgin forest. In some cases, you could still see furrows where the land had been plowed, but even this soon disappeared.

On Beholding an Arrowhead

By Robert Smiley

Thou art immutable, senseless, lifeless as the hands that fashioned thee.
And yet from thy smooth surface stares forth an Ageless distant visage; and silent laughter
Slithers out from fleshless cheeks.

And well it should, when fashioned bits of
Flint, pebbles, and grains of sand
Outlast this false life; this masquerade called man.

*Dedicated to all the Muscogee Creek Indians East of
the Mississippi River.*

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