Alabama Civil War Trail

150 YEARS

ALABAMA CIVIL WAR TRAIL
Montgomery was chosen as provisional capital of the Confederate States of America. In April 1861, the order to commence hostilities originated in Alabama. In 1865, some of the last battles fought in the war occurred on Alabama soil. From beginning to end, explore this fascinating period in American history on Alabama’s Civil War Trail.

1. **Alabama Department of Archives & History**
   The Department of Archives and History houses one of the finest Civil War artifact collections in the nation. Included are flags, uniforms, weapons and equipment used by Alabama’s soldiers and sailors as well as items used on the home front. The new Museum of Alabama, now under development, will feature additional items from the collections. Those wishing to research Civil War history will have access to thousands of documents, photographs and books.
   624 Washington Ave., Montgomery
   334-242-4363, www.archives.state.al.us

2. **Alabama State Capitol**
   Alabama’s Capitol, which has been called “A Confederate Independence Hall,” served as the very first Capitol of the Confederacy. Jefferson Davis was sworn in on its west portico as president of the Confederate States of America on Feb. 18, 1861. A bronze star marks the spot.
   The Senate Chamber looks as it did in 1861 when the Confederate Convention met and drafted its constitution. The House Chamber is where the ordinance of secession was passed in 1861, withdrawing Alabama from the Union. In 1886, Davis returned and set the cornerstone of the Confederate Monument on the grounds, honoring Confederate soldiers and sailors. Davis’ body laid in state in the Capitol’s Supreme Court chamber.
   600 Dexter Ave., Montgomery
   334-242-3935
   www.preserveala.org

3. **Arlington Antebellum Home & Gardens**
   Union Gen. James H. Wilson’s mounted invasion force came through Elyton in March 1865. The mansion is said to have served as headquarters when the decision was made to send part of Wilson’s force to Tuscaloosa while the main body proceeded to Selma. The mansion, an outstanding example of Greek Revival architecture, dates from the 1840s and is furnished with 19th-century decorative art. After the war, Arlington’s owner helped establish the new city of Birmingham.
   331 Cotton Ave., Birmingham
   205-780-5656, www.informationbirmingham.com

4. **Athens**
   Athens changed hands a number of times during the war. One example occurred in May 1862 when Union troops under Col. J.B. Turchin burned and looted the town. Another was when the Confederate cavalry under Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest captured the town in September 1864.
   Athens-Limestone Chamber of Commerce
   101 S. Beaty St., Athens

5. **Berman Museum of World History**
   The collection includes traveling pistols, which were presented to Jefferson Davis by the Belgian government, as well as major examples of Civil War weaponry.
   Lagarde Park, 840 Museum Dr., Anniston

6. **Bessemer Hall of History Museum**
   The museum includes a Civil War collection relating to the 28th Alabama Regiment.
   1905 Alabama Ave., Bessemer
   205-426-1633, www.bessemerchamber.com

7. **Blue & Gray Museum of North Alabama**
   Civil War military equipment on display includes guns, swords, rifles, bayonets and uniforms.
   723 Bank St. N.W., Decatur, 256-350-4018

Jefferson Davis figurine, available for purchase in the State Capitol Gift Shop
Alabama Civil War Trail

8 Brierfield Ironworks Historical State Park
The Confederate government purchased the furnace in 1863, added a second furnace and rolling mill, and turned out high quality iron for the production of cannon and armor plating for ironclads. In March 1865, the Union 10th Missouri Cavalry burned down the Brierfield Ironworks.
240 Furnace Pkwy., Brierfield

9 Confederate Memorial Park
A unique museum tells the story of the men whose conduct left a legacy of bravery, honor and devotion to duty during wartime, and courage in the face of adversity during peacetime. The museum has an extensive collection of Civil War uniforms, weapons and equipment. The 102-acre park includes Alabama’s only Confederate soldiers’ home, the residence of hundreds of war veterans and widows between 1902 and 1939. Also on the grounds are two cemeteries, a church, a post office, trails and pavilions. There is a Confederate flag large enough to be seen from I-65.
437 County Rd. 63, Marbury

10 Buffalo Soldiers Monument
A bronze statue depicting 10th Cavalry Sgt. George Berry riding up Cuba’s San Juan Hill carrying the regimental flag sits on the campus of the Academy for Academics and Arts magnet school. Hundreds of Buffalo Soldiers from the all-black 10th U.S. Cavalry camped where the school now stands.
2800 Poplar Avenue, Huntsville
256-428-7600

11 “Confederate Rest” & National Cemetery at Magnolia Cemetery
The “Confederate Rest” section of the cemetery has a memorial to the men who died aboard Mobile’s C.S.S. Hunley submarine, plus the graves of 1,100 Confederate war dead. The National Cemetery section is the resting place for Union soldiers who fell during the Battle of Fort Blakeley, including African-American soldiers from Gen. Hawkins’ 1st Division.
1202 Virginia St., Mobile
251-432-8672

12 Cornwall Furnace Park
The Confederate government commissioned this cold blast furnace to produce the iron that went into some of the Civil War’s first weapons. Union forces destroyed the furnace in 1864.
Off Ala. Hwy. 9, two miles east of Cedar Bluff
256-927-8455

13 “Damn the Torpedoes!” Civil War Trail
By 1864, Mobile was the only open port on the Gulf of Mexico with river and rail connections to the Confederate interior. Supplies brought into Mobile helped keep the Confederate armies in the field. Union Admiral David G. Farragut launched a joint navy-army operation in August 1864 to shut down the forts guarding Mobile Bay, climaxing with his vow to “Damn the torpedoes” protecting the city. This trail with interpretive signage stretches from Gulf Shores to Mobile and recounts the fighting that led to the fall of Mobile.

Gulf Shores and Orange Beach Tourism
3150 Gulf Shores Pkwy., Gulf Shores
800-745-SAND, www.gulfshores.com

14 Decatur Civil War Walking Tour
This self-guided walking tour of nine sites begins at the Old State Bank, Alabama’s oldest bank, one of only four buildings standing after the 1864 Battle of Decatur. The bank was also a wartime hospital.
Decatur/Morgan County CVB
719 6th Ave., SE, Decatur
800-524-6181, www.decaturcvb.org

15 Dred Scott Home Site
Dred Scott, the plaintiff in the legendary Scott v. Sanford case, was brought to Huntsville as a slave in 1818 and lived in Alabama for 12 years. In its now infamous decision, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Scott 7-2 in 1857, saying that blacks — whether free or slave — could not be citizens of the United States. Historic marker.
Oakwood Rd., Oakwood College, Huntsville
256-726-7000

16 Emma Sansom Monument
On May 2, 1863, teenage heroine Emma Sansom bravely volunteered to lead Confederate Gen. Forrest’s troops through enemy gunfire, helping them find a shallow ford near her home where they could cross Gadsden’s Black Creek. Her uncommon valor helped Confederate forces overtake and capture the retreating Union Col. Streight and his entire command of 1,466 men in Cedar Bluff.
Gadsden-Etowah Tourism Board
90 Walnut St., Gadsden, 888-565-0411

17 First White House of the Confederacy
This 1835 Italianate-style house was the home of President and Mrs. Jefferson Davis while Montgomery served as the Confederacy’s capital. Many cabinet meetings were held here. First Lady Varina Howell Davis, a Natchez belle, was admired for her hospitality and political savvy. The home displays period pieces from the era and family heirlooms.
644 Washington Ave., Montgomery, 334-242-1861
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15 Forrest-Streight Route
A sequence of running battles between Confederate Gen. Forrest and Union Col. Streight's “Lightning Mule Brigade” began with the Battle of Day's Gap. For details on the marked route, stop by the Crooked Creek Civil War Museum in south Vinemont.

Battleground to Cedar Bluff
256-739-2741

18 Fort Morgan State Historic Site
A museum details the history of the fort including its nationally famous role in the Battle of Mobile Bay. On Aug. 5, 1864, U.S. Admiral Farragut’s fleet of 18 vessels, including 4 ironclad monitors, attempted to enter Mobile Bay, guarded by forts Morgan, Gaines and Powell. Farragut was forced to run the narrow gauntlet in front of the heavy artillery of Fort Morgan. The Union monitor USS Tecumseh struck a torpedo and quickly sank. This is the point where Farragut reportedly uttered his famous remark, “Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!” The battered Union fleet then attacked and overpowered the tiny but gallant Confederate fleet led by the mighty ironclad CSS Tennessee. Farragut’s victory enabled the army to commence siege operations against the fort which ultimately fell on August 23, 1864.

51 Hwy. 180 West, Gulf Shores
251-540-5257, www.preserveala.org

19 Historic Fort Gaines
Federal operations against forts Gaines and Morgan were one of the rare combined land/sea operations of war. After the U.S. fleet successfully entered Mobile Bay and destroyed the Confederate fleet, the U.S. army began siege operations on land. Soon the forts were bombarded day and night by artillery fire from land and sea. Fort Gaines surrendered on Aug. 8; Fort Morgan on Aug. 23, 1864.

51 Bienville Blvd., Dauphin Island
251-861-6992, www.dauphinisland.org

20 Historic Grand Hotel
Known as the “Queen of Southern Resorts,” the Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa dates back to 1847. During the Civil War, the 21st Alabama Infantry had a garrison on the grounds, and part of the hotel was converted into a Confederate hospital. A cemetery for about 300 soldiers who died at the hospital after the Battle of Vicksburg is near the 18th tee of the Azalea course.

One Grand Blvd., Point Clear
800-344-9933, www.marriottgrand.com

21 Historic Huntsville Depot
This depot was used as a Union hospital, prison and living quarters for both black and white Union soldiers, who left graffiti on the walls that can still be seen today. An annual Civil War Encampment educational program introduces children to the daily routines of a soldier’s life, from basic marching drills, to packing a haversack, to cooking over a campfire.

320 Church St., Huntsville
800-678-1819, www.earlyworks.com

22 Janney Furnace
As it neared completion in 1864, this iron furnace in Ohatchee was almost completely destroyed by Gen. Rousseau’s Union troops.

Calhoun County CVB
1330 Quintard Ave., Anniston
800-489-1087, www.janneyfurnace.org
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27 Joe Wheeler Plantation — “Pond Spring”
Confederate Gen. Joseph “Fighting Joe” Wheeler lived here after the Civil War. The 50-acre site has 13 historic buildings and many personal possessions of Gen. Wheeler and his family. The 1872 main house is under restoration.
12280 Ala. Hwy. 20, Hillsboro
256-637-8513, www.preserveala.org

28 Karl C. Harrison Museum of Washington
The museum includes family artifacts of Gen. Robert E. Lee.
50 Lester St., Columbiana
205-669-8767, www.washingtonmuseum.com

29 Marion Female Seminary
Faculty member Nicola Marschall is said to have designed the First National Confederate States of America flag, which was adopted by the Confederate government on March 4, 1861.
Monroe St., Marion
334-683-9622

30 Marion Military Institute & St. Wilfrid’s
A military hospital was established at this college campus. Soldiers who died at the hospital are buried nearby in the cemetery at St. Wilfrid’s. Also buried here, William Brooks, president of the 1861 Alabama Secession Convention.
Washington St., Marion
334-683-9622, www.marionmilitary.edu

31 Museum of Mobile
Highlights of the museum’s Civil War collection include a gallery devoted to Confederate Admiral Raphael Semmes and the C.S.S. Alabama, which captured 65 U.S. merchant ships. An interactive model of the Mobile-built C.S.S. Hunley submarine, numerous flags and weapons, a 70-foot pennant from the C.S.S. Alabama and a sword from Lt. John Low, who served with Semmes aboard the raider, are also featured.
111 S. Royal St., Mobile
251-208-7569, www.museumofmobile.com

32 Newton Civil War Monument
This marker recalls the only Civil War action in southeast Alabama, one month before the war ended in 1865.
College St., Newton
334-299-3361

33 Old Cahawba Archaeological Park
The former capital city of Alabama (1820-1826) was the site of a prison for captured Union soldiers. While conditions at “Castle Morgan” were subject to wartime shortages of supplies that plagued the Confederacy, the facility had the lowest death rate percentage of any prison on either side during the war.
9518 Cahaba Rd., Orrville (near Selma)
334-872-8058, www.preserveala.org

34 Old Depot Museum
This interpretive history museum in an 1891 railroad depot has a Civil War room. In 1862, Selma became a Confederate weapons manufacturing center. Union troops attacked the city April 2, 1865, burning and looting 150 homes.
4 Martin Luther King St., Selma
334-874-2197, www.selmaalabama.com

35 Old Live Oak Cemetery
Many Confederate notables are buried here including: Generals William J. Hardee; Edmund Pettus and John T. Morgan; Navy Captain Catesby Ap R. Jones (commander of the CSS Virginia); Mrs. Elodie Todd Dawson, wife of Confederate officer and sister-in-law of Abraham Lincoln; and a number of other Confederate officers, enlisted men and civilians, some of whom were killed during the war.
7142 Ala. Hwy. 22, Selma
800-45-SELMA, www.selmaalabama.com

36 Pope’s Tavern Museum
This one-time stagecoach stop, tavern and inn was used as a hospital by both Confederate and Union forces during the Civil War. The upstairs museum houses an extensive collection of war artifacts.
203 Hermitage Dr., Florence
256-760-6439
www.flo-tour.org
**Shorter Cemetery**
Alabama Civil War Governor John Gill Shorter is buried in this antebellum cemetery.
*Riverside Dr., Eufaula*
334-687-3793

**Slavery & Civil War Museum**
Authentic historic artifacts and relics portray the American experiences of slavery and the Civil War.
*1410 Water Ave., Selma*
334-418-0800

**Stevenson Railroad Depot Museum**
Stevenson was a vital rail link to major points throughout the Southeast. Union Gen. Rosecran’s men built a pontoon bridge across the Tennessee River here in 1863, allowing thousands of Union troops to advance on the battlefield at Chickamauga.
*Main St., Stevenson, 256-437-3012, www.stevensondepotmuseum.com*

**Tallassee Confederate Armory**
The Richmond, Va., carbine shop was moved into the Tallassee Manufacturing Co. Mill in the spring of 1864 as Richmond was threatened by Union forces. It is the only Confederate armory that was not destroyed during the Civil War. Tours by appointment only.
*1844 Outer Dr., Tallassee*
334-283-5151, www.tallassee.al.us

**Tallassee Confederate Officers Quarters**
When the Confederate armory was moved to Tallassee in 1864, three homes were constructed by the Confederate government to house the officers in command. Two of the three houses remain and are now used as offices.
*301 King St., Tallassee*
334-283-5151, www.tallassee.al.us

**Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park**
The Tannehill Ironworks produced upwards of 20 tons of iron each day at its height of production during the Civil War in 1864. The furnaces were destroyed in March 1865 in a raid by three companies of the Eighth Iowa Cavalry as part of Union Gen. James Wilson’s attack on Alabama war industry sites.
*12632 Confederate Pkwy., McCalla*

**Union Springs Confederate Cemetery**
The cemetery is the burial site of both Union and Confederate soldiers.
*U.S. Hwy. 82 West, Union Springs*
334-738-TOUR

**University of Alabama Campus**
On April 4, 1865, a Union brigade under Gen. John T. Croxton burned the University of Alabama. The Gorgas House was one of only four university buildings to survive the attack. The President’s Mansion was spared only because Union soldiers obeyed the university president’s wife when she sternly ordered them to put out the fire they had started in her house.
*University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa*
205-348-5906, www.museums.ua.edu

**Vaughn-Smitherman Historic Building**
This building was used as a Confederate hospital and features the Lewis collection of Civil War memorabilia. On display are Selma-manufactured munitions from the Civil War period which were salvaged from the Alabama River.
*109 Union Street, Selma*
334-874-2174, www.selmaalabama.com

**Winter Building**
On April 11, 1861, Confederate Secretary of War L.P. Walker sent a telegram from the second-floor office of the Southern Telegraph Company in the Winter Building. It authorized Confederate Brigadier Gen. P.G.T. Beauregard to fire on Fort Sumter in Charleston, S.C. The bombardment of Fort Sumter the following day was the first military action of the Civil War. Historic marker.
*Montgomery CVB, 2 Dexter Avenue, Montgomery*
800-240-9452, www.visitingmontgomery.com

**Winston County “Dual Destiny” Monument**
This unusual statue (below) depicts a Civil War soldier in a half-Confederate, half-Union uniform. He bears flags from the North and South, and carries a broken sword symbolizing divided families and loyalties. Winston County was notorious for threatening to control its own destiny and secede as “The Free State of Winston.” A dramatic musical about its wartime sentiments has been periodically staged at an outdoor amphitheatre overlooking the Bankhead National Forest.
*Winston County Courthouse, Double Springs*
205-489-5029
In 1860, most Southerners feared that election of a president from the Republican party would permanently establish Northern dominance over the South. One month after the election of Republican Abraham Lincoln in November 1860, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union.

In Alabama, delegates were elected to attend a state convention in January 1861 at the State Capital in Montgomery. On the fifth day of the convention, January 11th, after considerable debate (plus the knowledge that Mississippi and Florida had already joined South Carolina in secession), a decision was made. By vote of 61 to 39, Alabama seceded from the Union.

In February 1861, representatives from six of the seven seceded states met at Montgomery (chosen because of its central location) in the Senate Chamber of the State Capitol for the purpose of forming a new nation, to be called the Confederate States of America. The convention adopted a provisional constitution, established a provisional government and selected Montgomery as the provisional capital. Jefferson Davis of Mississippi was elected president. An engraved bronze star on the Capitol’s west portico marks the spot where Davis took the oath of office.

The Confederate government insisted all former United States government installations within the boundaries of the Confederacy be turned over to Confederate authorities. The Federal garrison at Fort Sumter, commanding the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, refused to evacuate. After nearly two months of fruitless negotiations, a C.S. War Department telegram giving Confederate forces permission to fire on the fort was sent from the Winter Building on Dexter Avenue in Montgomery. This order was carried out early the next morning on April 12, 1861.

After the fall of Fort Sumter and Lincoln’s call for volunteers to “put down the rebellion,” four additional states joined the Confederacy and the permanent capital was moved to Richmond, Virginia in May 1861.
Alabama Civil War Trail

Alabama’s Reenactment Events

Long after the last Civil War cannon boomed over Alabama, reenactment events with Confederate and Union “soldiers” in period uniforms became popular across America. Alabama hosts several such events. Tourists are welcome to watch the Blue and Gray “fight” in these staged battles.

Changes in announced schedules sometimes occur. Call in advance to confirm your travel plans, or check the online Alabama Calendar of Events website listings by logging on to www.Alabama.travel.

1 Battle of Blakeley Festival
Spanish Fort • Historic Blakeley State Park
251-626-0798 • April

2 Battle of Ten Island
Ohatchee • 256-390-3910 • April

3 Battle for Cuba Station
Gainesville • 205-652-3447 • Second Sat.-Sun. in March

4 Battle of Selma
Selma • Battlefield Park • 334-875-7241
Fourth weekend in April

5 Battles for the Armory
Tallassee • 334-283-6888
Late October or early November

6 Campaign at Fort Morgan
Gulf Shores • Fort Morgan State Historic Site
251-540-7127 • April

7 Cotton-Pickin’ Celebration
Harpersville • Old Baker Farm
205-672-7209 • Fourth weekend in October

8 Forrest-Streight Raid Re-enactment
Blountsville • Blountville Historical Park
205-429-2338 • First full weekend in May

9 Fort Morgan Siege & Encampment
Gulf Shores • Fort Morgan State Historic Site
251-540-7127 • First weekend in August

10 Recall LaGrange
Leighton • LaGrange College Site Park • 256-446-9324
(Military demonstrations, no battle reenactments)
May

11 September Skirmish
Decatur • Point Mallard Park
256-350-2028 • Sat.-Sun. of Labor Day weekend

12 Siege of Bridgeport
Bridgeport • 256-495-3614 • Fourth weekend in March,
unless Easter and then moved to third weekend in March

13 Skirmish at Luxapalila
Winfield • 205-487-1938
Fourth weekend in September

14 Tannehill Skirmish
McCalla, Tannehill Ironworks Historical State Park
205-477-5711 • Sat.-Sun. of Memorial Day weekend
The Stars and Bars
The First National flag ("Stars and Bars") was adopted in Montgomery on March 4, 1861. Its design reflected a sentimental attachment to "Old Glory," the number of stars in the canton reflected the number of states of the nation.

Although the Confederate states never officially numbered more than eleven, the final versions of the Confederate national flags contained thirteen stars representing the secession governments of Kentucky and Missouri.

Confederate Battle Flag
At the First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run) on July 21, 1861, the smoke and dust of battle made it difficult to distinguish between the red white and blue national banners of the two opposing sides. As a result, the Confederate War Department allowed the armies in the field to carry distinctive flags in battle.

However, an official "battle flag" was never adopted by the Confederate government. Accordingly, there were a number of different types of battle flags used by the Confederate armies in the field. Those used in the Eastern theatre were fairly uniform, but the flags used in the Western theatre of operations were more diverse in their styles and patterns.

The Stainless Banner
As war progressed, more and more Confederate citizens came to see "Old Glory" as a symbol of oppression and imperialistic aggression. Consequently, because the "Stars and Bars" was too similar to the enemy's national banner, a second national flag was adopted by the Confederacy on May 1, 1863. The battle flag or "Southern Cross" was placed in the canton of this new flag. The Second National flag was referred to as the "Stainless Banner" because of its pure white field, for purity of the cause of independence which it represented.

The Third National Flag
The Second National flag was often mistaken for a flag of truce when it hung limply around the staff. As a result, a new flag was created with a broad, red vertical bar was added to the fly end of the "Stainless Banner."

This third and final flag of the Confederacy was adopted on March 4, 1865, exactly four years after the first Confederate flag was approved. Its official life was short-lived due to the surrender of the Confederate armies in April and May.
Over 300 military actions took place in Alabama during the War Between the States. The largest military engagements in the state are listed below and grouped according to their particular campaign. Each battle is listed with approximate numbers engaged.

**Forrest's North Alabama Cavalry Raid**
*September 1864* • Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest led his mounted force into north Alabama and middle Tennessee to cut Federal railroads, capture supplies and divert troops from being sent to Sherman’s army in Georgia.

**Athens** • *September 23-24, 1864* • U.S. 1,300 vs. CS 4,500 • Forrest’s swift movements corralled the Federal defenders in their fort and blockhouses defending the city. Shortly after the fort surrendered, Forrest captured the Federal reinforcements sent to its relief.

**Sulphur Branch Trestle** • *September 25, 1864* • U.S. 1,000 vs. CS 4,500 • Forrest captured the fort and blockhouses guarding the vital railroad bridge.

**Streight’s Cavalry Raid**
*April-May 1863* • Col. Abel D. Streight’s mission was to raid across the mountains of north Alabama into north Georgia to cut the main railroad supplying the Confederate Army of Tennessee. Streight’s force consisted of 1500 infantry mounted on mules and horses. He was pursued by Tennessee and Alabama cavalry under the command of Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest.

**Town Creek** • *April 28, 1863* • U.S. 8,000 vs. CS 2,700 • Federal forces under Gen. Grenville M. Dodge launched a diversion against forces of Gen. N.B. Forrest and Col. Philip D. Roddey to give Col. Streight a head start.

**Day’s Gap** • *April 30, 1863* • U.S. 1,500 vs. CS 1,200 • Streight repulsed Forrest’s attack in the mountainous terrain and in a counterattack captured two cannons.

**Hog Mountain** • *April 30, 1863* • U.S. 1,400 vs. CS 1000 • In this night battle Forrest kept up his attacks in front and flank forcing Streight to withdraw after abandoning the two captured cannons.

**Cedar Bluff** • *May 3, 1863* • U.S. 1,250 vs. CS 500 • Forrest’s relentless pursuit averaged 41 miles per day for five days. Forrest rotated and rested his men allowing Streight’s men no rest. Streight finally surrendered not realizing he outnumbered Forrest almost three to one.

**Decatur demonstration**
*October 1864* • Following the fall of Atlanta, in an attempt to draw Sherman’s army out of Georgia, Gen. John Bell Hood led his army toward Tennessee. Reaching north Alabama Hood had the option to cross his army over the Tennessee River at Decatur unless the Federal defenses proved too strong.

**Decatur** • *October 26-29, 1864* • U.S. 5,000 vs. CS 10,000 • Initial Confederate probes from portions of three Divisions revealed a spirited Federal defense of a mile-long line of earthwork fortifications supported by gunboats in the Tennessee River. Accordingly, Gen. Hood decided to march 40 miles west to Florence where the army could cross the river opposed.
Campaign for Mobile
March-April 1865 • The Confederate defenses protecting Mobile were under the overall command of Maj. Gen. Dabney H. Maury. The fortifications at Spanish Fort and Blakely were formidable and enjoyed the rare support of the Confederate Navy. However, the defenses were manned by battle depleted infantry and artillery units plus Alabama reserves consisting mostly of teenagers. The Federal army under the overall command of Maj. Gen. E.R.S. Canby conducted siege operations intended to wear down the Confederate defenses until the success of an all-out assault would be guaranteed.

Spanish Fort • March 27-April 8, 1865 • U.S. 32,000 vs. CS 1,800 • The U.S. 16th Corps and two Divisions of the 13th Corps invested the Confederate defenses with siege trenches and continuous artillery fire. Just after dark on April 8th a vigorous Federal bombardment of Colored troops invested the Confederate defenses with artillery fire. On April 9th Federal reinforcements arrived from Spanish Fort. That evening a massive Federal assault overwhelmed the thinly manned Confederate defenses.

Blakely
April 2-9, 1865 • U.S. 20,000 vs. CS 3,800 • Two Divisions of the U.S. 13th Corps and a Division from the 16th Corps and a Division of Colored troops invested the Confederate defenses with siege trenches and continuous artillery fire. On April 9th Federal reinforcements arrived from Spanish Fort. That evening a massive Federal assault overwhelmed the thinly manned Confederate defenses.

Campaign for Mobile

Mobile Bay • August 5, 1864 • U.S. 14 wooden warships and 4 ironclad monitors (2,700 sailors) vs. CS - 1 ironclad and 3 gunboats (470 sailors) plus Ft. Gaines (864), Ft. Powell (141), Ft. Morgan (500) • Farragut’s powerful fleet forced its way past Ft. Morgan (losing the monitor USS Tecumseh to a torpedo), destroyed the tiny Confederate squadron and finally forced the surrender of the mighty ironclad CSS Tennessee.

Fort Powell • August 5, 1864 • Evacuated and blown up by the garrison.

Fort Gaines • August 3-8, 1864 • U.S. 1,700 vs. CS 864 • Siege operations including night and day land and sea bombardment forced the surrender of vulnerable Ft. Gaines.

Fort Morgan • August 9-23, 1864 • U.S. 3,100 vs. CS 500 • Ft. Morgan was much stronger than Gaines, but similar siege operations and night and day land and sea bombardment forced the Confederate surrender.

Wilson’s Cavalry Invasion of Alabama

Ebenezer Church • 24 miles north of Selma • April 1, 1865 • U.S. 9,000 vs. CS 1,500 • Heavy spring rains had destroyed bridges and flooded fords so that only a fraction of Forrest’s cavalry could participate. Gen. Wilson’s veterans with much greater numbers and their Spencer repeaters drove the Confederates from the field and on toward Selma.

Selma • April 2, 1865 • U.S. 9,000 vs. CS 3,000 • Forrest’s numbers, including Roddey’s Alabama cavalry brigade, were far from adequate with defenders standing ten feet apart in the fortifications. In the late afternoon the part of the lines held by the militia was overrun causing the collapse of the defenses. The great Confederate arsenal and naval foundry fell into Union hands.

Girard (Phoenix City) • April 16, 1865 • U.S. 7,000 vs. CS 1,500 • After destroying the Selma facilities (and a number of civilian homes) Wilson next captured Montgomery without a fight. The Federals destroyed supplies and continued east toward the Confederate production center at Columbus, Georgia. In a night assault against a hastily assembled force of defenders, Wilson’s troopers overran the Girard fortifications and captured Columbus.

Rousseau’s Cavalry Raid
July 1864 • Maj. Gen. Lovell H. Rousseau led 2,500 cavalrymen in a raid “from Decatur to Opelika” to cut the Montgomery and West Point railroad supplying Gen. Joseph E. Johnston’s Army of Tennessee defending Atlanta.

Ten Islands • 10 miles southeast of Ashville • July 13, 1864 • U.S. 2,200 vs. CS 650 • Gen. James H. Clanton’s Alabama cavalry was hit in front and flank at the Coosa River ford and forced to retreat.

Chehaw Station • 5 miles southwest of Notasulga • July 18, 1864 • U.S. 600 vs. CS 400 • A hastily collected force of Alabama reserve units of teenagers and old men plus a company of University of Alabama Cadets attacked part of Rousseau’s cavalry. The Federals, aided by their Spencer repeaters, drove off the Alabamians and the destruction of the railroad continued.

*Site is not accessible to the public.

The sesquicentennial of the War Between the States is one of three historical periods in state history being observed through 2015 under the banner of "Becoming Alabama" organized by various state historical groups. The other eras are the bicentennial of the Creek Indian War and the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Movement. The "Becoming Alabama" logo was designed by U.S. Mint senior sculptor Susan Gamble, formerly of Montgomery.
Numerous scholarly articles related to the Civil War are available online at www.encyclopediaofalabama.org