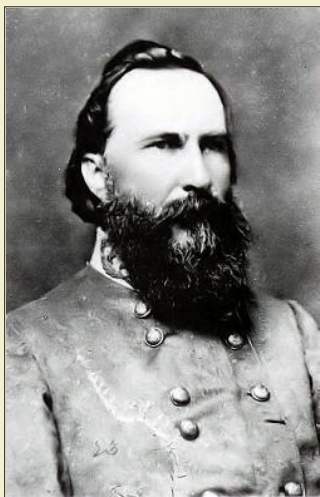


STONE CHURCH AND CATOOSA STATION



CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN HERITAGE TRAIL

Organized in 1837, the Chickamauga Presbyterian Church, commonly called "The Old Stone Church," was a landmark in the Ringgold area at the time of the war.

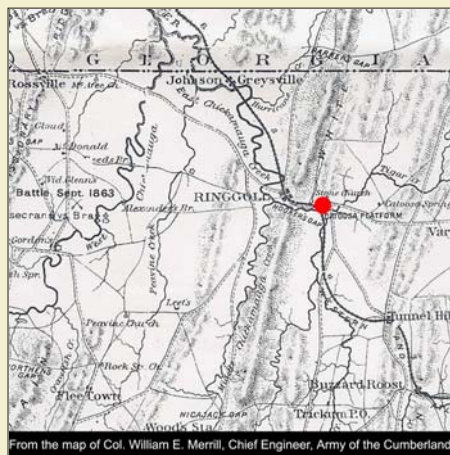


GENERAL JAMES LONGSTREET

The coming of the Western and Atlantic Railroad and the construction of an impressive stone depot in 1849 had a great influence on the growing economy of Ringgold and the surrounding area. A second station or platform was constructed just south of the gap named "Catoosa Station," to serve the nearby summer resorts of Catoosa Springs and Cherokee Springs.

In September, 1863, elements of General Nathan Bedford Forrest's cavalry patrolled Ringgold. On September 11, 1863 Federal forces from Van Cleve's Division of the 21st Army Corps of the Army of the Cumberland invaded Ringgold from the west. At the same time, Colonel John T. Wilders Mounted Infantry Brigade invaded from the north. They were pushed back by Forrest, who also had the railroad bridge over the creek at Ringgold Gap destroyed. Because the railroad bridge was burned, the trains coming to Ringgold could get no further than Catoosa Station, south of the gap.

On September 17th, the Federals again came to Ringgold. This time, however,



they received a surprise for the Confederates had received massive reinforcements. The commander of the U.S. Army Reserve Corps, General Gordon Granger, wrote: "At 3 o'clock on the morning of the 17th General Steedman started from his camp at Rossville with six regiments of infantry and a battery of artillery for the purpose of making a reconnaissance in the direction of Ringgold. In this undertaking, he met no resistance from the enemy until within two miles of that place."

Steedman, as Van Cleve had earlier, met pickets from Forrest's cavalry who were still guarding the road at Ringgold. After a brief exchange of fire, the Confederates withdrew to Ringgold. Steedman's troops followed, and as soon as they got over the creek they placed their artillery on the same hill that Van Cleve's gunners had used earlier. They fired a number of shells into Ringgold, causing a lengthy Confederate Army wagon train to retire in confusion through the gap.

The cannon fire alerted Confederate infantry regiments that were in camp in the southeastern end of the gap. Unknown to the Federals, massive reinforcements for Bragg's army had been coming by train from Virginia and Mississippi. The



LONGSTREET AT CATOOSA STATION

cannon fire brought an instant Confederate attack through the gap against the invaders. This movement, Lieutenant Colonel R. B. Snowden, commanding the 27th Tennessee Infantry Regiment, later wrote, "caused the enemy to open fire with his artillery. The advance of our skirmishers and some fifteen minutes of shelling from our battery caused the enemy to retire to the Chattanooga road."

During the next two days there were thousands of Confederate soldiers passing through Ringgold coming from Catoosa Station, they passed through the gap, through Ringgold and continued on the fight in the great Battle of Chickamauga.

Please visit our website at:
<http://www.ChickamaugaCampaign.org>