

# CLARISSA HUNT PLANTATION AND CONFEDERATE COURIER'S GRAVE



## CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN HERITAGE TRAIL



HOLE FROM CANNON BALL IN HUNT HOUSE

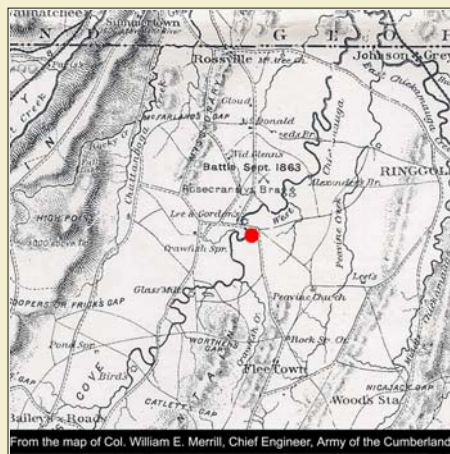
On the east side of the West Chickamauga Creek, a short distance from Lee and Gordon's Mills, on the LaFayette Road, was the imposing "Snow Hill" plantation that had been established by James H. Hunt. He operated the area's post office, called Snow Hill, from his house. By 1860, Hunt had died, and the plantation was managed by his widow, Clarissa Gordon Hunt. She was the niece of James Gordon. The 1860 census shows Clarissa to have been a well-to-do woman. Her net worth was shown as real estate valued at \$4,000.00, and a personal estate of \$10,000.00. Her personal estate included ownership of nine Negro slaves, who resided on the property in two slave houses. Living with Clarissa in the main plantation house was her oldest son, Thomas

Hunt, described as a "farm laborer," and three younger children, two girls and a boy.

When the Confederate Army of Tennessee withdrew from Chattanooga on September 6, 1863, most of the men marched through this area on the LaFayette Road. General Braxton Bragg also made his headquarters in the area. Since most of

his dispatches are headed "Snow Hill," it can be assumed that he occupied Clarissa Hunt's house before continuing south to LaFayette.

On September 18, 1863, Confederate forces under General Leonidas Polk advanced up the road toward the Federal position at Lee and Gordon's Mills. Throughout the afternoon an artillery duel developed. Most of the Confederate soldiers lay flat on the ground during this action. Because of the undulating nature of the terrain on the eastern side of West Chickamauga Creek, the Federal artillery shells did little damage to the Confederates. Many of the Federal shells, one Confederate officer observed, passed over the heads of the prone infantrymen and burst in the rear. One ball, however, did strike the rear of Clarissa Hunt's house, piercing the wall, going through an inner wall, and through another door before fragmenting.



From the map of Col. William E. Merrill, Chief Engineer, Army of the Cumberland

In order to maintain communication, General Leonidas Polk had established a courier line. One of the Confederate couriers was killed by a piece of shell on the Henderson plantation. "He was eating a piece of cornbread," J. Frank Henderson later wrote, "when a cannonball struck him in the breast." Although they did not know his name, members of the Henderson family buried him beside the road and later marked the grave.

At least two other Confederate soldiers were buried on the Hunt farm. "We [had] taken one young man out of Mrs. Hunt's



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cellar," W. H. Henderson stated in a letter to his sister. "He was shot in the head, letters in his pockets [indicated] he was from South Carolina. We carried him to the top of the hill north of Mrs. Hunt's on the right of the main road where another was killed. We buried both of the boys in one grave about 40 yards from where the road was at [that] time and about 100 yards from the top of the hill."

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