

# COWETA'S HISTORICAL MARKERS

Story and photos by Megan Almon

**T**hough the growth and progress of the 21st century booms around them, Georgia's Historical Markers serve as reminders of sacred grounds.

Passersby pause to read the gold-plated words and, for a moment, remember the once blood-soaked fields of hard-fought battles, the resting places of individuals whose actions made a difference for their fellow man, the staggering downpayments for today's freedoms.

Coweta is home to five such markers — three that can be visited in a brief walk around historic downtown Newnan's Court Square, one a stone's throw away in peaceful Oak Hill Cemetery, and the fifth a short drive away in Grantville.

- "The Battle of Brown's Mill" marker, located on the East Court Square, commemorates Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler's

the Federals and even freed some of their own who had been taken captive.

- The "Confederate Hospitals State Historical Marker," also located on the historic Court Square, pays homage to the seven Confederate hospitals located in Newnan between 1862 and 1865, as well as the man who directed and supervised them - Samuel H. Stout, Army Medical Director Department of Tennessee.

- "Coweta County," the third on the Court Square, is the marker that commemorates the creation of our county in the early 19th century, as well as its namesake, Gen. William McIntosh, half-blood Creek Indian, head chief of the Coweta Towns. Gen. McIntosh, who allied with the Americans during the War with the British, was killed in his home by some of his own people after he signed the

268 Confederate soldiers — many of whom died of wounds or disease in Newnan's Confederate hospitals — resting there. Others lost their lives during the Battle of Brown's Mill. Only two of the graves are marked "unknown."

Visitors strolling through the graveyard may also find the gravesites of two Revolutionary War soldiers, as well as one from the first World War.

- A short drive up Highway 29 North takes you to the city of Grantville, and the location of the fifth, and final, historical marker in Coweta County — the "Gravesite of Lt. Thomas E. Zellers."

Zellers, a native of Grantville, left the Naval Academy in 1920 for assignment aboard the USS Mississippi. Originally a turret commander, Zellers rose to the rank of lieutenant. In 1924, Zellers' turret



heroic action that saved Newnan from possible destruction by the Federal cavalry which, under Brig. Gen. E. M. McCook, had planned a raid to destroy railroads south of Atlanta en route to Andersonville, where 32,000 Federal prisoners were being held.

Wheeler crossed paths with McCook's men three miles south of Newnan, and though they were outnumbered, defeated




Treaty of Indian Springs, which ceded land to the Whites.

- The "Confederate Dead" marker stands on the east side of Newnan's tranquil Oak Hill Cemetery, located near the Court Square between Jackson and Jefferson streets. Looming over a stretch of cemetery adorned with white stone crosses, the marker commemorates the



was engulfed by an explosion that killed him and 47 others, but not before Zellers acted quickly to save the ship and the rest of the crew.

The U.S. Navy named a ship after him. The ship served during World War II and during the Korean War, receiving five battle stars before it was decommissioned in 1971. 

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