

The 400 Roswell missing women of 1864

5:23 AM, Aug 7, 2011 | [comments](#)

Written by
[Jeff Hullinger](#)

FILED UNDER

[Local News Headlines](#)
[Top Stories Today](#)
COMMUNITIES

[midtown](#)
[acworth](#)

ROSWELL, Ga. -- As local commuters drive to work every day, the vast majority of are impervious to an event that occurred 147 years ago.

This is the 150th year since the beginning of the American Civil War. So much conflict history surrounds Atlanta and North Georgia.

Just down the road from a myriad of strip shopping centers in Atlanta and Roswell is a story of unimaginable suffering.

The Allenbrook residence in Roswell, owned by the family of Roswell King, served as the home of the Ivy Woolen Mills Superintendent.

In 1864, the mills were churning out 191,000 yards of cloth and 30,000 yards

of "Roswell grey" uniforms made by hundreds of white and black women.

11Alive reporter Jeff Hullinger asked the State of Georgia's "go to guy" on the Civil War, Barry Brown, "Are you surprised we don't really know this story in Atlanta?"

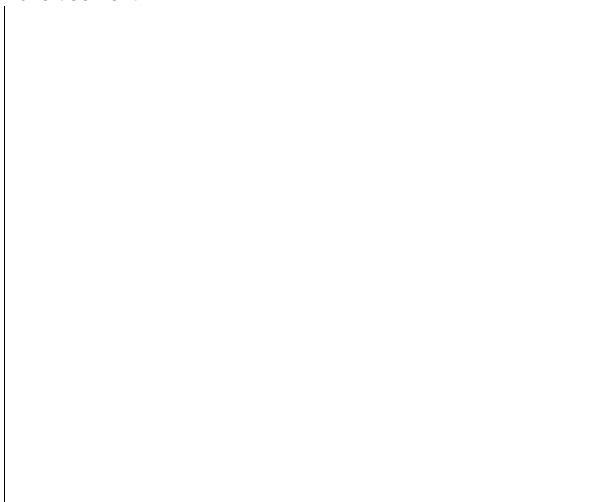
"Absolutely, it's one of the most heart rendering stories of the Civil War era," replied the heritage tourism specialist with the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

A quarter-mile down river stands the ruins of the mill, through the thicket, the mosquitoes, the mud, and the snakes.

Large snakes stand guardian over the ruins near the intersection of Roswell Road and Riverside Drive, off the Chattahoochee River.

It was here Union General Kenner Gerrard and his men first saw the French flag flying and the hundreds of women working to make the Confederate cloth.

Advertisement



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™

The flag was flown to try to fool the army crossing the chest-high river.

Why the ruse?

"It was the only idea they had left. The ivy woolen mill manager, Theofile Roche, thought it would keep the Federals at bay and they wouldn't burn the operation," Brown said.

It didn't work. They burned the mill.

General Sherman ordered General Gerrard to arrest the 400 women and their 300 children and charge them with treason. He said, "let them foot it."

The Union soldiers rounded up the Southern women and quarantined them in Roswell's Square until early August. Then they marched with children in tow 10 miles to Marietta.

In Cobb County, women and children were put on railcars, shipped north of the Ohio River with nine days of rations and dumped.

Many died. Many were never seen again.

"They were cut loose on their own. Their families were still down here in the South," said Brown. "They were left to make a living for themselves in a land not familiar with. Some made it back to Roswell."

A 10-foot column of Georgia granite now stands off Sloane Street in Roswell, about 200 yards from the square. At its top, there's an uneven break to symbolize

the suffering of these women lost in the summer of 1864.

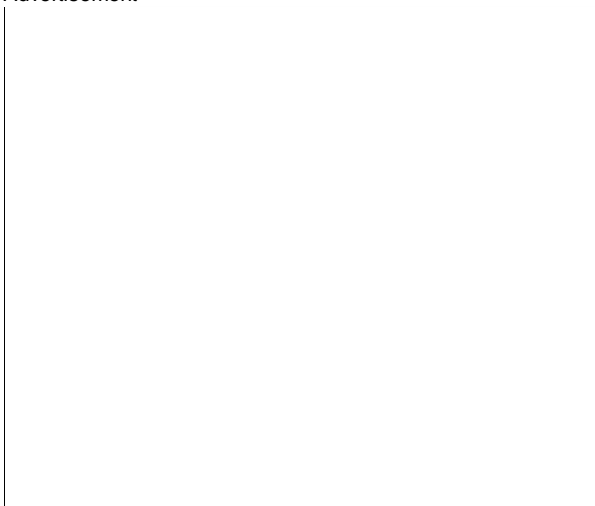
Buried nearby in the Roswell cemetery lie the remains of Adeline Bagley Buice. She was one of those women sent north.

Along with her children, she wandered for five years, settling in Chicago.

When she did make it back to Roswell, Buice discovered her husband, a Confederate soldier, thought her dead and had remarried.

The State of Georgia has [links for you](#) to check out if you are interested in the Civil War. In addition, a [state-funded website](#) by the Georgia Historical Society allows travelers to plot driving tours along Civil War marker trails using GPS.

Advertisement



Print Powered By  FormatDynamics™