RECEIVED MAY 6 1970 NATIONAL REGISTER

OLUSTEE BATTLEFIELD

U.S. 90, 2 miles east of Olustee Columbia County Baker

The major engagement of the Civil War in Florida was fought on the Battlefield of Olustee on Feb. 20, 1865.

Federal forces from Jacksonville were endeavoring to break up Confederate supply and communication lines between East and West Florida and to divert the supplies north for Union use. For 10 days, their march westward had met little opposition, and their cavalry had nearly reached Lake City. Then on Feb. 11, there was a sharp skirmish, and the invaders withdrew to Sanderson.

On Feb. 20, the Federals again made contact with Confederate cavalry about noon. The battle raged all afternoon, and at one point, there was almost no ammunition in the Confederate trenches. Staff officers, couriers, and orderlies rode at top speed between the front lines and an ammunition car on the railroad to the rear, carrying cartridges to the trenches in anything available.

The arrival of reinforcements and ammunition tipped the scales in favor of the Confederates, and the Federals hastily retreated, leaving dead and wounded on the field.

It was a costly battle for the Union. One Federal soldier who took part later wrote that "of four thousand and one hundred Federal soldiers who went under fire at noon, scarcely one half marched out at sunset unhurt." The figures may be incorrect, but the results are clear, and for the rest of the war, Union forces were confined to Jacksonville, Fernandina, St. Augustine, and Pensacola.

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

AUG 1 2 1970

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On the morning of February 7, 1864, a Federal force of between five and six thousand troops reoccupied Jacksonville. They were to take part in a planned invasion of the Florida interior to achieve three objectives: cut Confederate lines of communication which supplied desperately needed commissary goods to the Southern cause; recruit for Negro regiments in the service of the United States; bolster efforts on behalf of Union sympathizers to restore Florida to her former allegiance. For ten days, their march westward met little opposition, with Federal cavalry advancing nearly to Lake City. Then on February 11, there was a sharp skirmish, and the invaders withdrew to Sanderson.

General Joseph Finegan, Confederate commander, called for reinforcements from Georgia to supplement his meager force of 1,200. By February 18, a force of approximately 5,000 Confederates had gathered near Olustee at Ocean Pond. Defensive positions were prepared from Ocean Pond on the Confederate left across the railroad (the axis Federal advance) to a small pond south of the railroad on the Confederate right.

The Federal advance guard encountered the Confederate cavalry about midday three miles in advance of the prepared defences. As the forces engaged, additional troops were sent forward by the Confederates. Within one hour, the entire Southern Army had been moved forward from the entrenchments. The battle raged all afternoon, and at one point, the Confederate forces almost ran out of ammunition. However, the arrival of reinforcements and ammunition tipped the scales in favor of the Confederates. The Federal forces retreated leaving supplies, equipment, dead and wounded on the field.

The Battle of Olustee (Ocean Pond) was the major engagement of the Civil War in Florida. It was a costly encounter for the Union with estimated casualties of 1,861. The Confederate losses totaled 946. Although it was a clear cut Confederate victory, it did not result in the withdrawal of Union troops from Florida, but rather merely confined the invaders to Jacksonville, Fernan dina and St. Augustine.

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	F	s, Will: lorida.	Gaine	sville	2: U	nive:	rs:	itv o	f Flo	rida.	1964	Irenr	int).	
	Dodd, Dorothy. Olustee Battlefield Memorial. Tallahassee: Florida Board of Parks Reprint, 1950.													
	Jones, Charles C. The Evacuation of Battery Wagner and the													
	Battle of Ocean Pond. Augusta: Chronicle Publishing Co., 1888.													
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