

## History and Nature Co-Exist at Raymond

While most everyone around the nation was getting ready for Thanksgiving by cooking or travelling, the day before our expressly American holiday Friends of Raymond (FOR) completed its most recent improvement to the Raymond Battlefield and the Raymond Walking Trail with the addition of twelve new markers which tell the story of both nature and the American Civil War. Since the Thanksgiving holiday, indeed, was made official in 1863 during the Civil War, the project's timing is most appropriate, as are the marker topics. After all, the Walking Trail is a three-quarter mile wander through both nature and history.

At the beginning of the walk the first marker discusses some of the history of the historic Natchez Trace (not exactly the same route as the modern Trace), and the historic road runs only a few hundred yards north of the Walking Trail. Nearby, a second marker discusses the now-extinct Carolina Parakeet while featuring a painting of the bird by John James Audubon, who once taught art at the Elizabeth Female Academy just north of Natchez on the Trace.



Paul Gore of A to B Signs in Clinton works to install two markers on the Raymond Walking Trail. Photo by Parker Hills

As one walks the trail, colorful markers discuss flora and fauna at appropriate locations. One marker, entitled "Wetland Birds," identifies the various birds that inhabit non-tidal wetlands, such as the one bordering the old bed of the "Little J Railroad," a narrow-gauge railroad completed in 1882 that connected Natchez and Jackson.

The Walking Trail also features a stretch of the 19th century road that connected Raymond to Port Gibson through Utica. This old highway was concreted around 1927, and forms the eastern part of the trail. Here markers discuss various songbirds of the area, as well as the results of adjacent battlefield archaeological work performed from 2011-2015.





“Wetland Birds” marker on the former “Little J Railroad” bed at the Walking Trail. Marker designs by Parker Hills

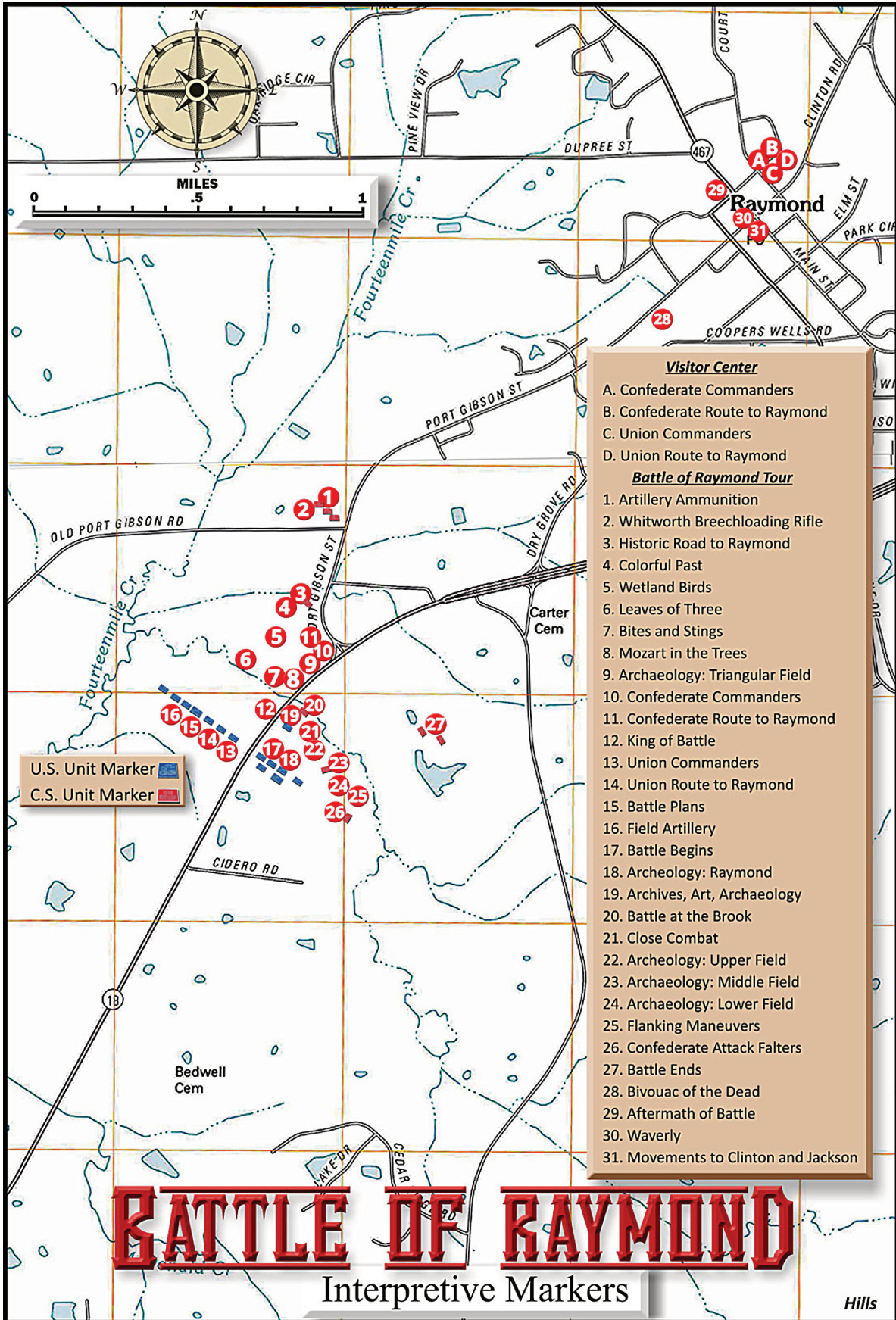
“Archaeology, Triangular Field” marker is near the end of the Walking Trail on the old concrete highway.



In addition to the seven Walking Trail markers, five markers were placed on the Raymond battlefield to complement the battlefield markers that were installed in early December 2019. At that time, a total of 23 markers were installed on the battlefield and in the City of Raymond. All of these markers complement the 25 cannon and 23 metal unit markers that tell the story of the Battle of Raymond, fought on May 12, 1863, as part of the Vicksburg Campaign. The markers were funded by private donations from around the United States and abroad.

Friends of Raymond (FOR), a non-profit group with the mission of preserving and interpreting the history of Raymond, was established in 1998. Since that time, FOR, often working with the American Battlefield Trust and non-profit organizations such as Blue and Gray Education Society, has expanded the Raymond battlefield from literally zero acreage in 1998 to almost 200 acres today. The map below shows the locations of all of the markers.





**Visitor Center**

- A. Confederate Commanders
- B. Confederate Route to Raymond
- C. Union Commanders
- D. Union Route to Raymond

**Battle of Raymond Tour**

1. Artillery Ammunition
2. Whitworth Breechloading Rifle
3. Historic Road to Raymond
4. Colorful Past
5. Wetland Birds
6. Leaves of Three
7. Bites and Stings
8. Mozart in the Trees
9. Archaeology: Triangular Field
10. Confederate Commanders
11. Confederate Route to Raymond
12. King of Battle
13. Union Commanders
14. Union Route to Raymond
15. Battle Plans
16. Field Artillery
17. Battle Begins
18. Archeology: Raymond
19. Archives, Art, Archaeology
20. Battle at the Brook
21. Close Combat
22. Archeology: Upper Field
23. Archeology: Middle Field
24. Archeology: Lower Field
25. Flanking Maneuvers
26. Confederate Attack Falters
27. Battle Ends
28. Bivouac of the Dead
29. Aftermath of Battle
30. Waverly
31. Movements to Clinton and Jackson

# BATTLE OF RAYMOND

Interpretive Markers

Hills