



June 2019

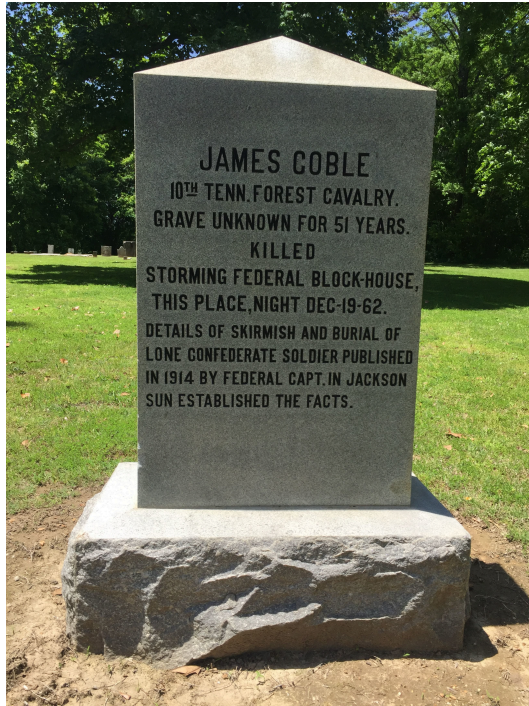
Destroying the Railroad License Plate Circles Jackson



As one column of Brig. General N. B. Forrest's troops battled at Salem Cemetery on December 19, 1862, Forrest's other two columns skirmished north and south of Jackson disrupting a major Union supply line, the Mobile and Ohio Railroad.

This battlefield preservation supporter visited **Carroll Station** – site of the skirmish along the railroad station, north of Jackson. Here Forrest's troops quickly routed 101 Federals (106th Illinois) capturing all, burning the stockade, and destroying the tracks.

At the same time, southeast of Jackson about a mile from the Harts Bridge Road, Forrest's third column skirmished with federals manning a blockhouse, destroying the blockhouse and railroad tracks. The site is on privately owned property, about a ½ mile from this location along what is now the Norfolk-Southern rail line.



The 1914 Coble monument once stood near the southeast blockhouse site. Moved to the Salem Cemetery in 2015, the monument refers to the story of a Union soldier's deathbed letter published in the *Jackson Sun* in 1914 – asking that someone search in a wetlands field near the railroad tracks for the remains of a Confederate soldier killed during the skirmish.

With the letter and an account from a local resident who lived near the blockhouse during the skirmish, Captain T.M. Gates of Jackson found the grave. For many years, trains would stop at the site, allowing passengers to go down to the field to see the lone soldier's gravesite.

Dr. Charles Cox's book, *Monument to Healing: Two Soldiers and the Good Death, 1862, 1914* explores the Coble monument story of reconciliation and healing.

After the Battle of Salem Cemetery and skirmishes at Carroll Station and south of Jackson, Forrest moved his troopers to Trenton and Union City to continue his raids. The December 1862 raids in West Tennessee and Northern Mississippi forced General Grant to largely abandon overland efforts to capture Vicksburg and instead look to an approach that relied upon the more secure Mississippi River for its supplies and communications.

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