



### Facts on the Town of New Manchester

- In 1845 James Rogers and former Georgia Governor Charles McDonald purchased land along Sweetwater Creek for a textile mill. Construction began in 1846 and in December of 1849 the Sweetwater Factory opened its doors for the first time.
- On December 21, 1849, the General Assembly incorporated the mill as the Sweetwater Manufacturing Company. The first goods produced were cotton yarns and cloth.
- On August 9, 1850, the Sweetwater Factory Post Office was established with J. Rogers as the Postmaster. On September 10, 1857, the name was changed to the New Manchester Post Office.
- On December 25, 1857, Sweetwater Manufacturing Company (through Charles McDonald) sold the property to the New Manchester Manufacturing Company of Campbell County for \$50,000.00.
- The five-story high mill was large enough to support a town of approximately 250 people with 90 employees working in the factory.
- The cotton used in the factory came from Atlanta and Marietta where the company had warehouses. Each wagon would carry 4 to 5 bales of cotton, each bale weighing approximately 400 pounds.
- In 1860 Arnoldus V. Brumby and William J. Russell leased the operation from Charles McDonald who would die on December 16, 1860. Brumby and Russell invested an additional \$15,000.00 in new machinery and buildings. Thirty-five thousand board feet of lumber were purchased from Angus Ferguson's sawmill located a half-mile upstream.
- In 1861, the Civil War began and the Confederate government contracted with the factory to provide cotton osnaburg and muslin cloth for the Confederate Army's use.
- The mill was powered from Sweetwater Creek turning an undershot breast style mill wheel that weighed 45,000 to 50,000 pounds. The waterwheel turned the drive shaft that would power every piece of machinery in the factory.
- The factory was operated by mostly women during the war years, the majority of the men being off fighting the war. In 1863 a local militia called "Alexander's Company" was created to protect the factory and its goods from robbers desperate to obtain cloth. Their term of service ended on February 1, 1864. This unit never saw any war action.
- On July 2, 1864, Union Cavalry, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Kentucky Cavalry, under the command of Lt. Col. Silas Adams and the 14<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry under Major Haviland Thompkins, arrived and occupied the town of New Manchester without firing a shot.
- On July 9, 1864, the factory buildings and company store were burned to the ground. The factory workers, men, women, and children, were now prisoners charged with treason. They were taken to Marietta where they were combined with the Roswell factory workers being detained at the Georgia Military Institute (GMI). These two groups were transported to Louisville, Kentucky by train. They were detained there until they signed an oath of allegiance to the United States, where-upon they were released to stay North of the Ohio River. Those that did not sign the oath were kept as prisoners of war until the war ended.
- When the Civil War ended, a few citizens returned to the area, but as there was no factory to provide work, they did not resettle on Sweetwater Creek.
- The woolen mills in Roswell were rebuilt after the war and attracted workers back to the area. That is why we now have a city of 88,000 at Roswell and a 2589 acre Sweetwater Creek State Park at New Manchester.