

North Carolina's "Last Shot" in the Civil War: Surrender of General James Green Martin at Waynesville ^[1]

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By Kelly Agan, N.C. Government & Heritage Library, 2015

See also: [Last Shot Confederate Memorial](#), [Commemorative Landscapes of North Carolina](#)^[2]

On May 7, 1865, Confederate [General James Green Martin](#) ^[3] surrendered the Army of Western North Carolina at



Confederate ("Last Shot") Memorial in Waynesville, N.C. Photo by Tom Vincent, North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.

Waynesville, nearly a month after Appomattox. The surrender followed a skirmish at White Sulphur Springs between Confederate troops under [William Holland Thomas](#) ^[4] (Thomas's Legion) and Union troops under Lieutenant Colonel William C. Bartlett. [Thomas's Legion](#) ^[5] surprised the Union troops who retreated to Waynesville, with Martin advancing (likely unaware of [Johnston's surrender at Durham](#) ^[6] on April 26). When a truce was called the next day, Martin surrendered the North Carolina troops under his command.

The date of surrender is currently marked as May 7; however there is some uncertainty in pinpointing the exact date. Union Brigadier General Davis Tillson listed the date at May 3 in his official report, and Robert T. Conley, in Thomas's Legion and present at the skirmish and surrender, placed the skirmish on May 6. Some secondary sources have given May 10 as the surrender date.

Waynesville was not the last battle of the Civil War, although popular belief maintained the fiction and memorialized it in 1923 in a [monument dedicated to the spot in Waynesville](#) ^[2] believed to be near the location of the "last shot" of the Civil War.



Reunion of Cherokees, Thomas Legion. From the General Negative Collection North Carolina State Archives. North

References: Carolina State Archives Flickr Photostream.

[7]

Crow, Vernon H. 1982. *Storm in the mountains: Thomas' Confederate Legion of Cherokee Indians and Mountaineers*. Cherokee, N.C.: Press of the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.

Clark, Walter, ed. 1901. *Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina, Vol. III*.

Clark, Walter. 1916. "Memorial Address Upon the Life of General James Green Martin, Delivered at Raleigh, N.C., May 10, 1916."

Mike Coffey, e-mail message to author, April 6, 2015.

Image Credit:

Vincent, Tom. Confederate Memorial in Waynesville. North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.

Reunion of Cherokees, Thomas Legion. From the General Negative Collection North Carolina State Archives. North Carolina State Archives Flickr Photostream. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/north-carolina-state-archives/4290085567/> [7] (accessed May 7, 2015).

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