The Atlanta Campaign

VOLUME 2:

From the Etowah River to Kennesaw Mountain,
May 20–June 27, 1864

David A. Powell

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To my wife, Anne for her constant presence and support.

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Preface

This volume is the second in a series of five covering the entire Atlanta Campaign, the epic four-month struggle between the combined Federal Armies of the Cumberland, the Ohio, and the Tennessee, commanded by William T. Sherman, and the Confederate Armies of Mississippi and Tennessee led by Joseph E. Johnston. My goal has been to present a detailed operational (and sometimes tactical) history of one of the Civil War's most complex military events. Alongside the titanic struggle between U. S. Grant and Robert E. Lee in Virginia, Sherman's and Johnston's operations in northern Georgia were watched with bated breath by Northerners and Southerners alike.

My own journey on the road to Atlanta has been a rewarding one. A wealth of primary sources reveals legions of soldiers on both sides anxious to have their stories told. I have tried to tell them to the best of my ability, alongside some degree of analysis. Those were difficult times and on occasion my analysis might seem overly severe. I think and hope I have rendered judgment fairly. Often there is no right or wrong answer in war, leaving us to learn lessons and attempt to apply them. While weapons and tactics change, the human element remains constant.

Volume 2 is complete and in your hands. The third installment is well along the path to completion, with the last two volumes not far off. I hope you enjoy the trip.

Acknowledgments

No project exists in a vacuum, and this effort is a case in point. I would like to thank the following people for sharing ideas, sources, and time: Keith Bohannon, Robert Carter, Chris Cash, Norman Dasinger, Gary Ecelbarger, Laura Dunning Elliott, David Friedrichs (for his outstanding cartography), John Fritz, Jon-Erik Gilot, William Griffing of *Spared and Shared*, Linda Hocking at the Litchfield Historical Society, historian and fellow campaign enthusiast Robert Jenkins, Gordon Jones and the folks at the Atlanta History Center, Pat McCormick for the road trips and the copy editing, fellow Savas Beatie author Dan Masters, NPS historian Jim Ogden and Ranger Lee White of the Chickamauga Chattanooga National Military Park, Mike Peters, Tony Patton at Resaca, John Sexton of Atlanta (for sharing important sources with me), Bjorn Skaptason of Chicago (for sharing his work on Ephraim Dawes and the 53rd Ohio), Marc and Beth Storch (for all their help with materials at the Wisconsin Historical Society), Bryce Suderow, Deborah Wagner of the 103rd OVI Museum, Wayne Willingham, Jim Woodrick (for his help at the Mississippi state archives), and Stephen Davis.

There are many others who helped along the way, too numerous to list—among them the librarians and archivists at so many repositories around the country that helped me access so many outstanding primary source materials.

Finally, I must also thank my publisher Theodore P. Savas and his superb Savas Beatie team, including Veronica Kane (production), Sarah Closson (media), Sarah Keeney and Lisa Murphy (marketing), and everyone else there who has played a part in making this journey possible.

As ever, I thank my wife, Anne and our three dogs for their love and support.

Introduction

The Campaign Thus Far

William T. Sherman's command comprised of the Armies of the Cumberland (Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas), the Tennessee (Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson), and the Ohio (Maj. Gen. John H. Schofield) marched southward on May 7, 1864, fulfilling its part in Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's grand design that summer. Grant intended simultaneous offensives across the board to overwhelm the Confederacy's depleted manpower pool and material resources. Together, Grant and Sherman unleashed a different style of war-making: unrelenting and remorseless.

In Virginia, Grant and Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee clashed almost nonstop in what would soon become the bloodiest season of the war. In Georgia, where Sherman faced Rebel Gen. Joseph E. Johnston, neither man favored the stand-up, blow-for-blow combat practiced by their eastern counterparts. As a result, the Georgia Campaign was defined more by maneuver than by mortality—a strategic dance historian Richard M. McMurry artfully characterized as "the red clay minuet." Faced with forbidding terrain and entrenched defenders, Sherman soon realized that frontal attacks resulted in nothing more than bloody failure. Instead, he turned to flanking.

Sherman's forward base was Ringgold, 23 railroad miles south of Chattanooga. Johnston's Army of Tennessee wintered at Dalton, 16 miles farther to the southeast behind the imposing mountain wall of Rocky Face Ridge and an elaborate network of field fortifications. The thread connecting these two locations was the Western & Atlantic Railroad, which in peacetime operated on 138 miles of state-owned tracks between Atlanta and Chattanooga. Both armies needed the rail line to supply their forces and neither could operate far from a depot for very long. With the massive resources of the United States behind him, Sherman had far more wagon

transport—and thus a greater degree of tactical freedom—than did Johnston, but even so, 10 days was about the limit of independent Union operations before the need to reconnect with the rail line.

Sherman's objectives were simple: to break up Johnston's army if possible or at least keep him from sending troops to Virginia. Having worked out their plans over the course of the previous spring, Grant and Sherman were acting in concert.

Conversely, Johnston and Confederate President Jefferson Davis never agreed on a coherent plan and the result was a fundamental rift in Confederate strategy. Davis relentlessly demanded offensive action, urging Johnston to cross the Tennessee River into Middle Tennessee or even Kentucky and offered in exchange substantial reinforcements to do so. Davis, however, never grasped that Johnston's logistic constraints made this plan wholly unreasonable. A move into Tennessee would require the Army of Tennessee to haul with it many days of food, forage, and ammunition, especially when passing over the Cumberland Plateau. To do so, Johnston would require hundreds of additional wagons and thousands more mules and horses—none of which the Confederacy could supply.

Johnston's army began the campaign greatly outnumbered with 55,000 Confederates (40,000 effectives) facing roughly 100,000 Federals. Johnston thus deemed an offensive impossible and decided that if he was to have any chance of defeating Sherman, he needed reinforcements immediately. As a sop to the president's demands, he offered up a defensive-offensive strategy: he would draw Sherman deeper into Georgia until, once the Federals were weakened by the detachments necessary to secure their lengthening supply lines, the Army of Tennessee could fight on more equal odds. If through maneuver the Rebels could fall upon a part of Sherman's larger force and defeat it, all the better. Only then, Johnston argued, could he move north. Davis demurred.

The impasse was never resolved. When Sherman began moving, Richmond undertook last-minute efforts to reinforce Dalton with troops from Savannah, Mobile, and most importantly, Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk's 15,000-man Army of Mississippi. Most of these troops arrived piecemeal between May 9 and 19; the last elements did not arrive until the beginning of June. In what was perhaps his greatest service to the Confederacy, Leonidas Polk exceeded his orders and moved all of his available infantry and a cavalry division to Georgia—much Davis's dismay. Presented with a fait accompli, Richmond did not countermand the move. Without that influx of manpower, the Army of Tennessee would have faced an early and disastrous defeat.

There was fighting around Dalton—Rocky Face Ridge, Dug Gap, Crow Valley—for a week or so, but the first real battle of the campaign occurred at Resaca on May 14-15. Johnston made a stand within a fortified bridgehead on

the north bank of the Oostanaula River, fending off Union attacks and even counterattacking until the XVI Corps crossed the river below Resaca at Lay's Ferry, forcing Johnston to retreat. Resaca cost the Federals 5,500 casualties, and Johnston 3,800 men, including as many as 1,000 prisoners and deserters.

Minor fights occurred at Calhoun and Adairsville, but the Confederate commander did not risk another combat until May 19 at Cassville, just north of the Etowah River. There, though accounts conflict and postwar claims and accusations cloud what happened, Johnston essayed another counterattack after attempting to divide the enemy's force, but Sherman failed to take the bait. Johnston fell back a short distance and struck up a defensive posture, hoping to lure Sherman into an attack, but that plan fell through when Hood and Polk expressed their doubts about the plan. That night the Army of Tennessee retreated across the Etowah, ending the first phase of the Atlanta Campaign.

Numbers and Losses

Tabulating campaign strengths for each army can be difficult. Confederate strengths and losses have long been underreported, increasingly so as the campaign wore on. After John B. Hood replaced Johnston in July the problem grew worse, with Hood charging that Johnston deliberately misrepresented both categories in order to downplay his own failings. The lack of reports, some destroyed, some never penned, renders the task even more difficult.

I have made painstaking efforts to determine the most accurate numbers available. My assessment relies primarily on four different sets of numbers. On the Confederate side, the most important number is the 'present for duty" (PFD) figure, which directly corresponds to the Union category of the same name, making for the most accurate comparison. The second number is "aggregate present," which is Johnston's ration strength, critical for logistical considerations. On the Federal side, up to April 30 the Union forces reported their own "present for duty" (PFD) numbers. Unfortunately, once the campaign started Sherman mandated that each command report a new category—"effectives"—which included men on extra duty, in short-term arrest, and any sick expected to recover shortly. This was a departure from usual practice aimed at more accurately determining Sherman's ration (or feeding) strength, but it interjected additional confusion into modern interpretive efforts. Sherman's new category fell somewhere between the more common classifications of PFD and "aggregate present."

Sherman's "effectives" should not be confused with the Confederate category of the same name; Sherman's "effectives" was a very different beast. The Confederate version counted only enlisted men, armed and in ranks, omitting officers and

other men "present for duty." Historically, Confederate "effectives" significantly undercounted Rebel strengths throughout the war. Johnston used this figure in his writings to make his army seem much smaller than his opponent's force. On April 30, the Army of Tennessee reported only 43,887 "effective total present," but 54,500 officers and men were PFD, with an aggregate of 63,777. Thus, his effectives were only 80.5% of those PFD, and only 68.8% of the number of men actually with the army. To determine more accurate strengths compared to Federal numbers, Confederate "effectives" or "effective total present" numbers should be modified by adding an average of 19.5% to include officers, thus producing a de-facto PFD estimate.[1]

By contrast on May 1 Sherman's combined armies reported a total of 110,123 "effectives," but that figure is also misleading. A better count also comes from Sherman, who reported that he began the campaign with 98,727 officers and men available "for offensive purposes." Unfortunately, Union April 30 PFD numbers do not match either of Sherman's totals, largely because they include men and units not part of the campaign but instead serving as garrison troops, making for inexact comparisons. Going forward, the PFD returns for May, June, July, and August were not published in the *Official Records* so that direct comparisons are not possible without extensive archival research. Fortunately, many of those returns have been preserved in the National Archives and are used extensively throughout this study.

To recoup: Sherman's "effectives" category was about 10.3% higher than Union PFD numbers, while the Confederate "effectives" category was 19.5% lower than their PFD numbers—a dramatic difference. The best comparison that can be made is that Sherman began the campaign with about 98,000 combat troops while Johnston fielded 54,500.

To complicate matters, the Confederate and Union armies were in a constant state of flux. Reinforcements and returning sick and wounded fell on the positive side of the ledger, but detachments, combat losses, and illness fed the wastage. Desertion was a significant problem for the Rebels, while the Federals faced expiring enlistments that drained away manpower. A complete accurate accounting is therefore impossible, but the extant numbers do allow for some accurate estimation.

As of April 30, 1864, Joseph E. Johnston began the campaign with 54,698 officers and men present for duty, including the forces at Resaca and Rome. By May 25 he had received no fewer than 26,000 additional men detailed as follows:

1 U.S. War Department. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 128 vols. (Washington, D.C.: 1880-1901), Series I, vol. 38, pt. 3, 676, hereafter *OR*.

Johnston's Confederate Army		
Date	Numbers	Notes
As of April 30	54,698	
Prior to May 7	+4,069	Canty's Brigade, 54th and 63rd Georgia of Mercer's Brigade, and the 1st and 2nd Arkansas Mounted Rifles
Up to May 10	+900	Remainder of D. H. Reynolds's Brigade, from Mobile
Up to May 13	+5,306	General Polk, his HQ troops and W. W. Loring's Division
Up to May 20	+9,939	The 57th Georgia assigned to Mercer, Sam French's infantry division, and William Jackson's cavalry division
Up to May 25	+2,036	Quarles's Brigade; plus the 1st Alabama and 35th Alabama and 30th Louisiana
Total	76,878	
Losses	-5,500	4,500 through Resaca, plus estimated desertions
Etowah River Total	71,738	

If Johnston's PFD strength were about 71,000 on May 25, his aggregate would be about 84,500 men. While the *Official Records* do not include the May 20 or June 1 returns for the Army of Tennessee, on June 10 the army reported 69,946 PFD and an "aggregate present" of 82,413.[2]

Federal numbers were also changing. On June 8, Sherman received a major reinforcement in the form some 10,000 men with the XVII Corps, while between May 10 and August 25 no fewer than 37 other infantry regiments and five artillery batteries also joined him. Most of these units were still on veteran furlough when the campaign opened. Offsetting those gains were two steady drains. First came the need to detach regiments to secure an ever-lengthening supply line. Over time, 30 infantry regiments, three artillery batteries, and most of a cavalry regiment (the Union 1st Alabama) were assigned those duties. The second was the departure of another 22 infantry regiments and one artillery battery which had time-expired and sent home to muster out. This was a net loss of 15 regiments, or the equivalent of a small division.[3]

Sherman reported that he began the campaign with 110,123 "effectives," but, for "offensive purposes" only 98,727. However, that figure includes two cavalry divisions that would not join him for nearly two weeks, so they should not be

2 *OR* 38, pt. 3, 677.

3 To further complicate matters, even among the time-expired regiments not all the men were due to leave the service; subsequently, men not due to depart formed smaller battalions or were transferred to other commands.

included prior to the middle of May. Based on Sherman's own ratio between "effectives" and for "offensive purposes," we can extract the following estimates:

William T. Sherman's Army Group Summary as of May 1, 1864			
	Effectives	Offensive Purposes	Notes
	102,324	92,092	
Garrisons	-8,833	-8,833	19 regiments and 1 battery
Departing Units	-650	-650	2 regiments and 1 battery
Estimated Losses	-7,000	-7,000	Dalton to Cassville
Arrivals/Returning Units	+5,246	+5,246	13 regiments
Total	91,087	80,855	

George Stoneman's cavalry division joined on May 10, and Kenner Garrard's on May 12 (less Col. Eli Long's 2,500-man brigade of Ohioans, which would not arrive until June 10), adding 5,249 troopers. However, on May 23 Sherman detailed Judson Kilpatrick's division to stay behind and guard the rail line between Cassville and Resaca, which subtracted roughly 3,000 from his total, thus the net gain was only 2,249 sabers. His largest reinforcement, the XVII Corps, was still a fortnight away. Thus, Sherman's force on May 23 came to 93,336 "effectives," or 83,993 "for offensive purposes."

Summary as of May 25, 1864		
	Sherman	Johnston
Available for Combat	83,282	71,378
Aggregate	92,536	84,500

By the time he was ready to cross the Etowah River, Sherman's force advantage had shrunk from a two-to-one edge in manpower enjoyed during the first phase of the campaign to near parity, a mere eight-to-seven ratio. Accordingly, maneuvering in the face of such a powerful foe was much riskier. Sherman was willing to take that risk. But was Johnston now ready to meet him blow for blow?

Chapter 1

May 20 to 24: Across the Rubicon

On Saturday, May 21, Gen. Joseph E. Johnston tersely informed President Jefferson Davis that since May 15th "the enemy has pressed us back [another] . . . thirty-two miles." Anticipating Davis's expected anger, Johnston hastened to add that "I have earnestly sought an opportunity to strike the enemy," but instead then recited a litany of excuses—the vulnerability of his railroad, Sherman's flank marches, and the Federals' penchant for "fortifying the moment [they] halted"—which left him no such chance. Worse, in "making this retrograde march we have lost much by straggling & desertion."[1]

This last was a real concern. Lieutenant Thomas B. Mackall recorded that "every measure [is being] taken to prevent stragglers and bring back absentees." However, "many broken-down men with sick tickets [were] going to [the] rear. . . .[and] Marietta," twenty miles to the south, was "reported full of stragglers [including] over—thousand barefoot men." Captain Benjamin Williams of the 47th Georgia, a member of Maj. Gen. W. H. T. Walker's division, personally observed "hundreds of barefooted men," and worse, "hundreds of completely broken-down men were sent to the rear on sick tickets." Though admitting to "some dissatisfaction, Mackall insisted that "all will be rectified by rest."[2]

1 Linda Lasswell Crist, with Kenneth H. Williams and Peggy L. Dillard, eds. *The Papers of Jefferson Davis*, 14 vols. (Baton Rouge, LA: 1971-2015), 10: 434. The last line quoted here is recorded differently in the *Official Records*, where it reads "making this retrograde march we have [not] lost much by straggling or desertion"—an entirely opposite meaning. See historian Stephen Davis's discussion of this change in Stephen Davis, *Texas Brigadier to the Fall of Atlanta, John Bell Hood*. (Macon, GA: 2019), 157-158, fn. 16.

2 *OR* 38, pt. 3, 985; William A. Bowers, Jr., *History of the 47th Georgia Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Confederate States Army* (San Augustine, FL: 2013), 53.

Private John Jackman of the 9th Kentucky recalled that he "slept magnificently last night. All quiet until late in the evening," when there "was some cannonading down the river," which he took to be the Yankees once again "flanking us on the left." Corporal Martin Van Buren Oldham of the 9th Tennessee in Frank Cheatham's Division had a more immediate complaint: "Our rations which were due us last night did not appear until this evening, so that we were scarce of something to eat." Oldham's shoes were also worn out, rendering him "almost barefoot," a condition only partially alleviated when his friend, Pvt. R. W. Knox, brought him a new pair from the quartermaster. "Although two numbers too large," Oldham grumbled, "I [had] taken them for fear I would be accused of wishing to play out of the fight." Later that day, when the orders came down sending barefoot men to the rear and two members of his company boarded a southbound train, Oldham groused, "I rec[eived] my new shoes too soon. . . . [I]t is impossible for me to get off a good thing."[3]

Captain Samuel T. Foster of the combined 17th/18th Texas in Patrick Cleburne's Division recorded that "this morning Genl [William J.] Hardee's Corps had orders to discharge all their guns before 6 O'clock A.M. and there was a constant roar of Musketry for about an hour-—No news from the front." After a day of "bathing and washing" clothes, thanks to a nearby millpond, that evening Foster also drew a new pair of shoes. Like Oldham, he "had to take a pair of No. 8s because there were none smaller to be had. It was those or none."[4]

Both men, members of William J. Hardee's Corps, blamed Lt. Gen. John Bell Hood for their latest retreat. "Some say that Gen Hood could not rely on his men to hold their position," wrote Oldham, while Jackman heard that "Hood and [Lt. Gen. Leonidas] Polk [both] declared they could not hold their position." This was well informed speculation; army gossip percolated rapidly through even the lower ranks. Still, there were some positive takeaways. The Federal pursuit had been lackluster. Headquarters courier William Trask recalled that General Hardee, despite his anger at the decision to fall back, was "much pleased . . . [and] highly gratified" by their unmolested passage of the Etowah.[5]

Hood also simmered. On the 21st he dispatched a confidential letter via Col. Henry P. Brewster of his staff to personally inform President Jefferson Davis of

3 William C. Davis, ed., *Diary of a Confederate Soldier: John S. Jackman of the* Orphan *Brigade* (Columbia, SC: 1990), 128; May 22, Martin Van Buren Oldham Diaries, University of Tennessee at Martin.

4 Samuel T. Foster with Norman D. Brown, ed., *One of Cleburne's Command, The Civil War Reminiscences and Diary of Capt. Samuel T. Foster, Granbury's Texas Brigade, CSA* (Austin, TX: 1980), 79-80.

5 May 22, Martin Van Buren Oldham Diaries; Davis, *Diary of a Confederate Soldier*, 128; Kenneth A. Hafendorfer, *Civil War Journal of William L. Trask Confederate Soldier and Sailor* (Louisville, KY: 2003), 150.

the army's status: "Colonel Brewster has been with us since we left Dalton and can give you an account of the operations of this army. . . . I think it would be well for you to have a conversation with him." Though the exact nature of that "conversation" can only be surmised, it clearly was not an affirmation of Johnston's leadership. Nor was Brewster circumspect in his remarks to others. On June 4, Brewster visited the ever-popular Mary Chesnut, who subsequently wrote that "Joe Johnston was kept from fighting at Dalton by no plan—no strategy." Further, the colonel charged that Johnston was "overcautious," while insisting that "Hood and Polk wanted to fight. It is said [Johnston] is afraid to trust them because they do not hate Jeff Davis enough . . . and all this delay is breaking Hood's heart. . . . So much retreating would demoralize even General Lee's army." If Hood's previous letters to Richmond pushed the limits of military discipline, Brewster's mission exceeded them by a wide margin. "The ambitious Hood," wrote historian Steve Davis, "was positioning himself for promotion."[6]

Rumors also swept the Army of Mississippi. One of Polk's officers brought a general rumor "that he [Polk] and General Hood were responsible for the failure of the army to fight." Unruffled, the bishop replied, "is that so? Well, you may say that I take all the blame upon myself." When the staffer protested this magnanimity, the general merely added, "Ah, well; let it go, my shoulders are no doubt broad enough to bear it." To his wife, Polk remained equally upbeat: "When General Johnston will offer battle I do not know, but think that it cannot be many days hence. The troops are in fine spirit and feel quite confident." Privately the mood at headquarters was less sanguine. That same Saturday, aide (and son-in-law) Capt. William Gale recorded that "things look bad for us in a military way. We all have gloomy anticipations. Gen. J. is not the man we thought him. He lacks enterprise in the last degree. He hesitates and delays and retreats and waits for circumstances to force a fight on him, instead of watching [for] his chance and forcing the enemy to fight him at his own time and place [emphasis in original]." Gale dismally concluded that General Sherman "understands the 'flanking' business thoroughly."[7]

6 Ellsworth Eliot, Jr., *West Point in the Confederacy* (New York: 1941), 100-101; C. Vann Woodward, ed., *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* (New Haven, CT: 1981), 616; see also Craig L. Symonds, *Joseph E. Johnston, A Civil War Biography* (New York: 1992), 295-296; Brian Craig Miller, *John Bell Hood and the Fight for Civil War Memory* (Knoxville, TN: 2010), 114; Davis, *Texas Brigadier*, 159-160. Henry P. Brewster, born in South Carolina, joined the Texas Revolution in 1836. He became Sam Houston's personal secretary and, later, Attorney General for the Republic of Texas. He served on Albert Sidney Johnston's staff at Shiloh and in the Army of Tennessee thereafter. He was not just a Hood staffer, but also a close personal friend.

7 William M. Polk, *Leonidas Polk, Bishop and General*, 2 vols. (New York: 1894), 2: 362-363; May 21, William Gale Diary, University of the South, Sewanee, TN.

There was also a need to reorganize. Upon moving to Georgia, the Army of Mississippi contained only two infantry divisions under Maj. Gens. William W. Loring and Samuel G. French. At Resaca, Polk also assumed control of Brig. Gen James Cantey's Division, a provisional formation organized out of reinforcements being rushed to the front—Cantey's own brigade of Alabamans and Mississippians, plus Brig. Gen. Daniel H. Reynolds's Arkansans. At Cassville, for tactical reasons (and perhaps because Cantey did not do well at Resaca) Polk placed his two brigades under French, while shifting one of French's brigades to Loring's control. On the 20th, with little explanation, Cantey's Division was reconstituted, perhaps because more reinforcements were expected soon.

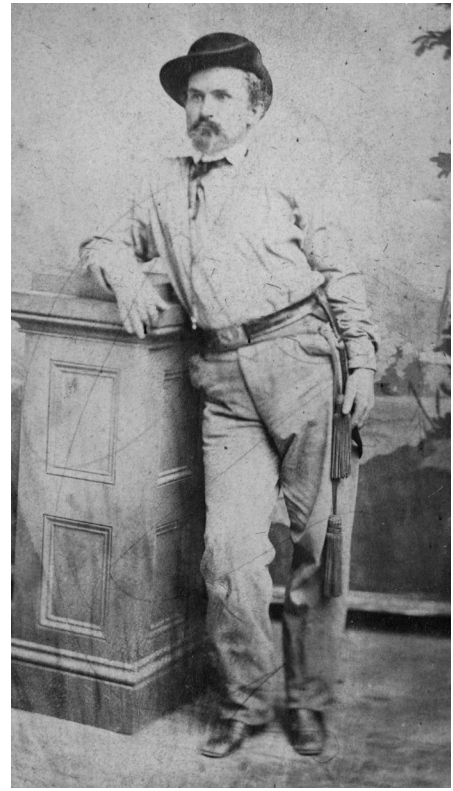
Despite the various combats and the retreats, each of which engendered a fresh wave of deserters, Johnston's army continued to gain strength. As of May 23, he commanded 69,000 combat troops, well above the 54,500 who started at Dalton. Conversely, Sherman's numbers were reduced by detachments and casualties—though by how much, Johnston could not be sure. Still, with almost all available reinforcements now on hand, the Confederates would never enjoy a more favorable force ratio.[8]

The Confederate War Department, meanwhile, sought to wring every man that could be spared to send to Johnston's aid. From Maj. Gen. Dabney H. Maury's District of the Gulf, War Secretary James E. Seddon summoned Brig. Gen. William A. Quarles's Tennessee brigade, 989 men strong, augmented by the 30th Louisiana infantry, another 400 men in seven companies. From Jacksonville on the east Florida coast came Col. Robert H. Anderson's 5th Georgia Cavalry, a powerhouse of 938 officers and men. On the 24th, Seddon ordered Lt. Col. Charles H. Ohlmstead's 1st Georgia Regulars, 800 strong, up from Savannah. All told, another 3,100 troops were now en route; 2,000 of them joined the army by the 25th.[9]

Back on May 14, Seddon ordered the 26th Alabama, guarding Camp Sumter in Georgia—better known as Andersonville—to return to Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. These men were veterans, having served under Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson and then in Richard Ewell's Second Corps. After Gettysburg, the depleted

8 See the Prologue for a detailed breakdown of Johnston's strength.

9 *OR* pt. 4, 732,741; Steven H. Newton, *Lost for the Cause: The Confederate Army in 1864* (Mason City, IA: 2000) A, 233, 285. The 1st Georgia's strength is estimated from Robert S. Durham, *The Blues in Gray, The Civil War Journal of William Daniel Dixon and the Republican Blues Daybook* (Knoxville, TN: 2000), 215, with the strength of one company at 75 men and 4 officers. Seddon's orders concerning Quarles and the 30th Louisiana also included the 37th Mississippi, but here Richmond was confused. The 37th Mississippi was already with the army, having arrived at Resaca on May 9 and suffered severely in that action.



Confederate Brig. Gen. William A. Quarles of Tennessee. He and his brigade joined the Army of Tennessee during the last week of May.
Library of Congress

regiment was sent south to recruit, escorting prisoners along the way. Writing on the 22nd, Maj. Gen. Samuel Jones explained that Seddon's orders had come too late, for the 26th was already heading to Montgomery, Alabama. Instead of recalling them, Seddon simply redirected them to Johnston's army. Their arrival would add another 400 men to Cantey's Brigade.[10]

Here also occurred one of the more unusual inter-army communications of the war. Union XVI Corps divisional commander Thomas Sweeny and Confederate division commander Patrick Cleburne were both of Irish origin. Each was born in County Cork, Sweeny in 1820 and Cleburne eight years later. Sweeny was a prominent member of the Fenians, an Irish secret society dedicated to freeing the Emerald Isle. Thinking of the fight to come, he sent a letter across the lines inviting Cleburne to join him after the war in raising an Irish army-in-exile, jointly comprised of blue and gray veterans, to liberate their native island. The offer failed to impress Cleburne, who replied that "after this war closed, he thought both would have had fighting enough to satisfy them for the rest of their lives."[11]

In Marietta, the atmosphere was one of incipient panic. With an 1860 population of nearly 2,700, including nearly 1,200 slaves, Marietta was a thriving city of banks, hotels, and commerce of all kinds. Institutions of higher learning included the Georgia Military Institute, whose cadets were now in state service for the emergency. But the war brought many changes. By 1863, Col. David Lang of the 8th Florida, an 1857 graduate of GMI serving in Virginia, learned of the changes, writing, "I presume that I would hardly meet a familiar face upon

10 *OR* 35, pt. 2, 484, 496, and 38, pt. 4, 762.

11 Irving A. Buck, *Cleburne and His Command* (Dayton, OH: 1982), 213.

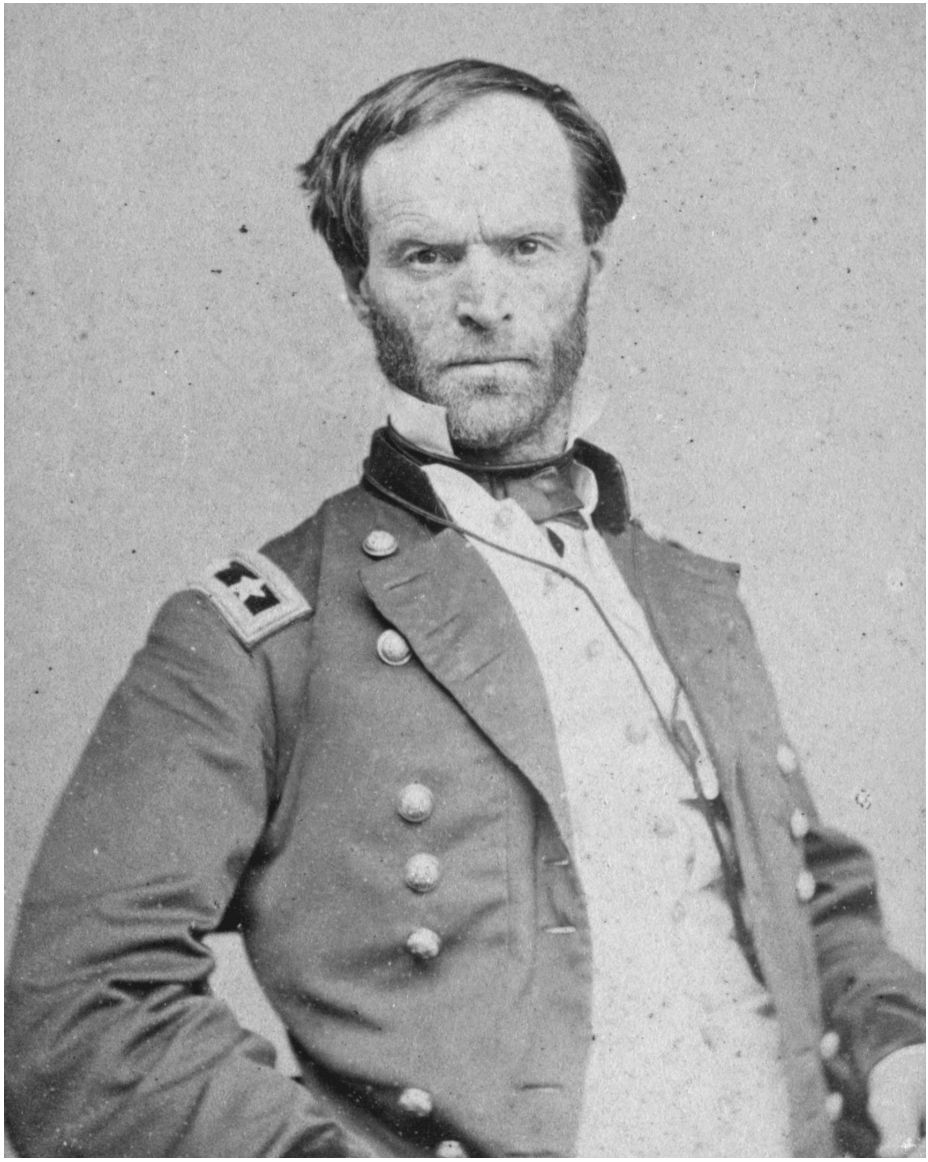
the streets of Marietta now, if I were to visit it. Most of my old acquaintances have moved, I learn, to Atlanta and Macon, and their places have been filled with refugees from the frontier." It was also jammed with soldiers, both well and unwell. Aside from being Johnston's main supply depot, it housed numerous hospitals and hosted throngs of stragglers. On May 20, Johnston created pandemonium in the city with a preliminary evacuation order. According to the *Augusta Chronicle & Sentinel*, when word "to move stores, &c. from Marietta" arrived, it triggered a "stampede," and "some little alarm to the citizens of Atlanta." All this came despite the newspaper's insistence that the order was only precautionary, only needed "because of the possibility of that place being temporarily uncovered by our army while maneuvering, and not because of any existing intention to bring the army lines nearer Atlanta."[12]

Confederates Gale and Jackman were both correct. Sherman was intending to flank again. He had "no intention" of testing Johnston at Allatoona, which place, he informed Ellen, "afford[s] [the enemy] Strong positions. These I must avoid, and shall move due south to Dallas & thence to Marietta & the Chattahoochee Bridge." Once across that last stream, his main body—which he estimated at 80,000 to 85,000 men—could move on Atlanta. Concerning the geography, Sherman spoke from personal knowledge. In 1844, while investigating equipment losses suffered by the Georgia militia during the Seminole Wars, he traversed this same country, "to which I took such a fancy." For a time Sherman even resided at the nearby estate of Glen Cove, befriending its owner Col. Louis Tumlin and visiting the enormous Indian mounds located on Tumlin's property.[13]

While Sherman made ready for that next move, two more generals arrived. On May 20, Brig. Gen. Nathan Kimball reported to George Thomas. Kimball was an Indiana doctor and Mexican War veteran who served in Virginia and Maryland until severely wounded at Fredericksburg. After joining the Army of the Tennessee in 1863, he fought at Vicksburg and remained in Mississippi until summoned to take charge of the First Brigade in John Newton's Second Division, IV Corps, replacing Col. Francis T. Sherman of the 88th Illinois. There had been

12 Bertram H. Groene, "Civil War Letters of David Lang," *The Florida Historical Quarterly*, vol. 54, no. 3 (Jan., 1976) 357; "Latest from the Front," *Augusta Chronicle & Sentinel*, May 25, 1864.

13 *OR* 38, pt. 4, 248; Brooks D. Simpson and Jean V. Berlin, *Sherman's Civil War, Selected Correspondence of William T. Sherman, 1860-1865* (Chapel Hill, NC: 1999), 639; William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of W. T. Sherman, Written by Himself, with an Appendix, Bringing his Life Down to its Closing Scenes, Also a Personal Tribute and Critique of the Memoirs*, by Hon. James G. Blaine, 2 vols. (New York: 1891), 2: 41-42. Today, the Etowah Mounds are a state park. When Sherman tried to visit Tumlin on May 21, the colonel (an honorific, not a military rank) was not home and was probably refugeeing south with his slaves. When the Federal party inspected the mounds, they were driven off by Rebel shells.



William T. Sherman. *Library of Congress*

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