

GEORGIA

BATTLEFIELDS

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Tim Whalen elected as Georgia Battlefields Association trustee

At a 15 August 2023 Zoom meeting, the Georgia Battlefields Association trustees elected Tim Whalen to the board. Further, we agreed to consider Tim for election as GBA treasurer at our January 2024 meeting. We'll need a new treasurer because Bill Gurry intends to step down from that position but will remain a trustee. Bill will acquaint Tim with procedures and documents to make the transition as smooth as possible. Also at the 15 August board meeting, we thanked Bill for his exceptional service as treasurer since 2017. We're sure to have occasions to thank Bill again over the next five months.

Tim was born, raised, and still lives in Griffin, Georgia. He received his J.D. from Atlanta Law School. He served as the chief appraiser and as county manager for Spalding County before retiring. He also served as state president of the Georgia Elks Association. Tim writes that he got interested in the Civil War during the 1960s Centennial.

Tim already serves as treasurer of the Atlanta Civil War Round Table, and his performance in that position prompted us to ask if he would be willing to serve as GBA treasurer. We're glad he agreed to serve.



Tim Whalen

GBA 2024 tour will be 18-21 April in Chattanooga: Details in October newsletter.

Trail walks highlight Battle of Chickamauga's 160th anniversary

From 16-20 September, Chickamauga National Military Park historian Jim Ogden will lead 14 in-depth hiking tours examining specific actions and locations during the Battle of Chickamauga. These tours typically last about 90 minutes and usually involve a mile or more of walking through uneven terrain and across unmowed fields.

See the schedule at this link <https://www.nps.gov/chch/chickamauga160historian.htm>

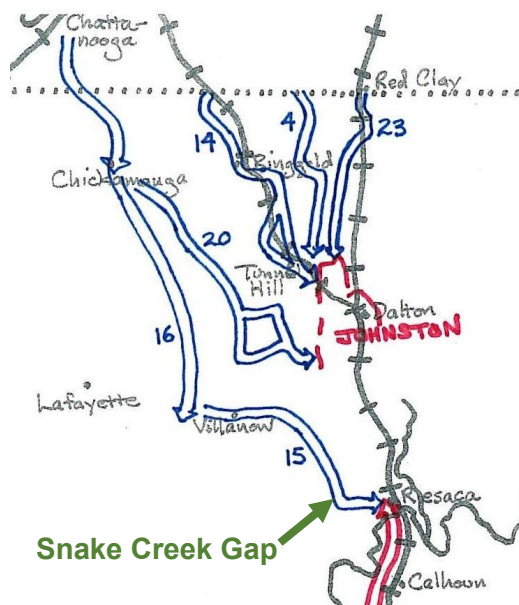
Decisions of the Atlanta Campaign – part 5

GBA member Larry Peterson, author of the 2019 book Decisions of the Atlanta Campaign, continues his series. See first four articles in January, August, and October 2022 and July 2023 newsletters.

Sherman fails to support McPherson's turning movement Article by Larry Peterson

Situation

Sherman's critical decision to attempt to cut Johnston's railroad line of supply at or near Resaca is characterized in military terms as a turning movement. Sherman needed to assign a force to conduct this designated operation via Snake Creek Gap, while ordering his other troops to conduct probing attacks to keep Johnston's army in position west and north of Dalton. Sherman needed to designate which of his commands and commanders would carry out the turning movement. He had to provide enough force to give the maneuver a reasonable chance of success, while also keeping Johnston occupied so that he was less likely to discover the turning movement or send forces to contest it.



Options

Sherman had four options to conduct the turning movement. He could assign the task to McPherson's Army of the Tennessee (15th & 16th Corps), or he could give the same orders to Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas's much larger Army of the Cumberland (4th, 14th, & 20th Corps). A third option involved ordering McPherson's army to complete the movement and augmenting those troops with additional manpower. Finally, Sherman as overall commander, could accompany whomever he assigned to the turning movement and use his own experience and offensive mindset to drive the maneuver to a successful completion.

Decision

To conduct the turning movement, Sherman assigned McPherson and his Army of the Tennessee, consisting of about twenty-five thousand men organized into two corps. Sherman himself would establish his headquarters near Tunnel Hill rather than accompanying McPherson. From there, Sherman would oversee his remaining troops and counter any movements Johnston might make.

Results/Impact

As a result of Sherman's critical decision, McPherson and his army were the only forces ordered to carry out this turning movement. It was a potentially brilliant maneuver, and its success would have had very positive ramifications for the U.S. and chilling prospects for the Confederacy. Yet Sherman placed all the responsibility on the shoulders of an inexperienced army commander with a relatively small force. Even so, as will be discussed in regard to the next critical decision, McPherson had under his command more than enough soldiers to easily capture Resaca and disable the railroad.

Alternate Scenario

As important as this turning movement was to Sherman, he could have better supported it, as Lee did with Stonewall Jackson at the Battle of Chancellorsville. Had Sherman been more aggressive in this situation, any one of the last three options would have given him a much better chance of success. Because of the maneuver's importance, it is difficult to explain why Sherman did not personally accompany whatever force he ordered to perform it. With little chance of Johnston going on the offensive, Sherman's presence near Dalton was unnecessary.

Command Decisions series available at steep discount

The University of Tennessee Press, publisher of the Command Decisions in America's Civil War series, has just published the latest book in the series, *Decisions at Kennesaw Mountain*, and GBA member Larry Peterson is again the author. Further, the publisher has announced a substantial discount on any book in the series purchased before 1 November 2023. To see the list of all 18 books, go to <https://utpress.org/command-decisions/>, where you order by clicking on the book.

For this promotion, all of the books in the series are priced at \$29.95. The discount is 55%, resulting in a price of \$13.48! When checking out, use the promo code DECISIONS55.

Shipping is NOT free. Logically enough, multiple books in one shipment results in a lower shipping cost per book. Typical shipping for one book is \$7.73, making the total \$21.21. Ordering two books reduces the cost per book to \$17.77; five books, \$15.54; ten books, \$14.70. So, you'd benefit by ordering a few instead of just one, or order with a nearby friend and combine into one shipment.

Larry Peterson wrote five books in the series.

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