

K

ennesaw Mountain



NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD
PARK



G E O R G I A



Kennesaw Mountain

NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK

Scene of a major engagement of the Atlanta Campaign in which Sherman's great flanking movement, in the summer of 1864, split in two the heart of the Confederacy.

IN THE SUMMER of 1863, the North gained complete control of the Mississippi River, the decisive action being Gen. U. S. Grant's capture of Vicksburg on July 4. In the meantime, the Northern armies, based principally on Nashville, were striving to gain control of Tennessee. This was finally accomplished as a result of decisive action in late November around Chattanooga. The Federal Army was now poised to strike, during the next spring, into Georgia and at the very heart of the South.

In a 4 months' campaign, during the spring and summer of 1864, Gen. W. T. Sherman with 100,000 men drove 120 miles from Chattanooga into the heart of the Confederacy and captured the great base and railroad center of Atlanta. During May, June, July, and August, Sherman's troops were in almost constant action, either marching or fighting, against Gen. Joseph E. Johnston's Confederates. Possessing superior forces, Sherman was able to maneuver against Johnston in such a way that a part of his army would hold in front while the remainder moved around the Confederate flank to threaten their rear and communications with Atlanta, thus forcing a succession of withdrawals toward that city.

In the course of this series of movements there were many skirmishes and several battles, including a bloody one at New Hope Church, but no general engagement involving the main strength of both armies until Kennesaw Moun-

tain was reached. Here, for the first time, Sherman decided on frontal attack. The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, therefore, marks a departure in the general strategy and tactical plan that carried Sherman from Chattanooga to Atlanta. In this battle Sherman failed to break the Confederate lines and suffered heavy losses. He then took up again his flanking movements, which succeeded, proving that it could have been done in the first place.

Johnston fought the Atlanta Campaign with tactics similar to those employed by the Roman General Fabius Maximus in defending Rome against Hannibal in the Second Punic War. Like Fabius, who fell back slowly on Rome, delaying and inconveniencing his great Carthaginian antagonist without fighting a decisive battle, Johnston sought in the same way to frustrate Sherman and in the end to save Atlanta.

The men of both armies were of the same general racial stock and blood and possessed of the same intelligence, courage, and devotion to their respective causes. Blood brothers often fought against each other in the opposing armies. The high soldierly qualities displayed by the men, from both the North and the South, who fought at Kennesaw Mountain are for all of us today a matter of pride, even though that engagement produced its full share of misery, horror, and regrets.

At Kennesaw Mountain, in the fourth year of the Civil War, Confederate veterans stayed

Federal veterans and demonstrated the awful penalty exacted on the attackers when brave and experienced men fought from behind trenches, barricades, and field fortifications.

The Atlanta Campaign

On March 18, 1864, the Federal Army in Chattanooga was placed under command of General Sherman who made preparations for an advance against the Confederate Army in Georgia. He was to start from Chattanooga at the same time that General Grant began his drive in Virginia in a great coordinated campaign intended to end the war. The Confederate Army had intrenched at Dalton, Ga., where General Johnston assumed command December 27, 1863, and prepared to resist the expected advance of the Federal forces.

On May 7, 1864, Sherman with approximately 100,000 men moved against Johnston at Dalton, where the latter with about 50,000 men was placed on the defensive. In the campaign that followed, Johnston proved himself a master of defensive strategy. With his smaller army, how-

ever, he was unable to prevent the Federal flanking movements which threatened his line of supplies and communications, and he had to protect this line by withdrawing from one position to another.

The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain

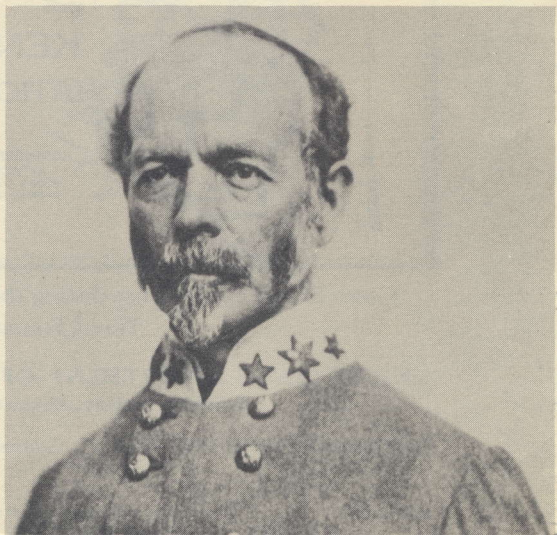
A series of flanking movements forced the Confederates back to the vicinity of Marietta, Ga., where, on June 5, Johnston intrenched on a line 10 miles long between Lost, Pine, and Brush Mountains. Sherman gradually pushed the Confederates back to a position on and around Kennesaw Mountain.

As Sherman approached the position and extended his troops toward the Confederate left flank, Hood's Confederates, on June 22, assaulted in an attempt to disorganize the moving Federals, but were repulsed with heavy losses. This action occurred in the vicinity of the Kolb Farm on the Powder Springs Road.

Sherman determined to try to break through and then destroy the separated wings of the Confederate Army. Thomas' Army of the

Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, Commander of the Federal forces in the Atlanta Campaign (*Signal Corps, U. S. Army*).

Gen. Joseph Eggleston Johnston, Commander of the Confederate Army of Tennessee and the Army of Mississippi which opposed Sherman during the Atlanta Campaign (*Signal Corps, U. S. Army*).





Confederate Fort, Cheatham Hill (*Loudermilk Studio*).

Cumberland was to make one assault at a point in the Confederate center, a hill south of the Marietta-Dallas Road, defended by Gen. B. F. Cheatham, and now known as Cheatham Hill. McPherson's Army of the Tennessee was to assault the Confederate center at the south end of Little Kennesaw Mountain. Both assaults were to be made at the same time, on June 27, so that troops from one part of the Confederate line could not be used to reinforce any other part of the line. The Federal troops bravely assaulted these points, but were repulsed with heavy losses. Sherman lost 2,500 men and Johnston 800 in this final phase of the battle.

Fall of Atlanta

After this repulse, Sherman resumed his flanking tactics, which caused the Confederates to retire from the Kennesaw Mountain position to the vicinity of Atlanta. At this critical moment, on July 17, Johnston received a telegram from Richmond which relieved him of command and substituted Gen. John B. Hood in his place. Crucial and decisive action followed immediately. Four major battles were fought around Atlanta, in each of which Sherman was the victor. After these engagements, the Confederate Army retired, and Sherman entered the city on September 2.

The loss of this manufacturing and railroad center was a severe blow to the South because it deprived the Confederate armies in the field of needed food, equipment, and reinforcements. The occupation of Atlanta prepared the way for the movement that was to take the Federal Army across the State to Savannah—"the March to the Sea."

The success of the Atlanta Campaign, and of the events in the lower South which subsequently derived from it, made the collapse of the Confederacy almost inevitable, the exact date depending upon the success of Grant's operations against Lee in Virginia.

The Park

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park has been administered since 1933 by the National Park Service. As a result of congressional action in 1935 and 1939, the area has grown from a small reservation of 60 acres at Cheatham Hill, acquired by a group of Union soldiers in 1899 and accepted in 1917 by the United States Government as a battlefield site, to a battlefield park of about 3,000 acres. The park includes the principal points of combat in the vicinity of Kennesaw Mountain. Many of the Federal and Confederate earthworks constructed during the battle are well preserved.

How to Reach the Park

The park, located 2 miles north of Marietta, Ga., and about 20 miles northwest of Atlanta, is reached by old U. S. 41, which traverses its northern end. The museum is near the point where old U. S. 41 passes the northern tip of Big Kennesaw Mountain.

There is an annual fee of \$1 and a one-trip fee of 50 cents for automobiles and motorcycles to use the road from headquarters to the top of Big Kennesaw Mountain.

About Your Visit

During your visit you will see, in the Cheatham Hill area, well-preserved earthworks, typical of those used in the entire Atlanta Campaign. The top of Big Kennesaw Mountain affords an excellent panoramic view of the battlefield. Trailside exhibits and markers will enable you to visualize the military operations.

You will find the collection of relics, photographs, and maps at the museum helpful to you. Library facilities and guide service are also available here. Those who plan to visit in a group may receive special service if advance arrangements are made with the superintendent.

Administration

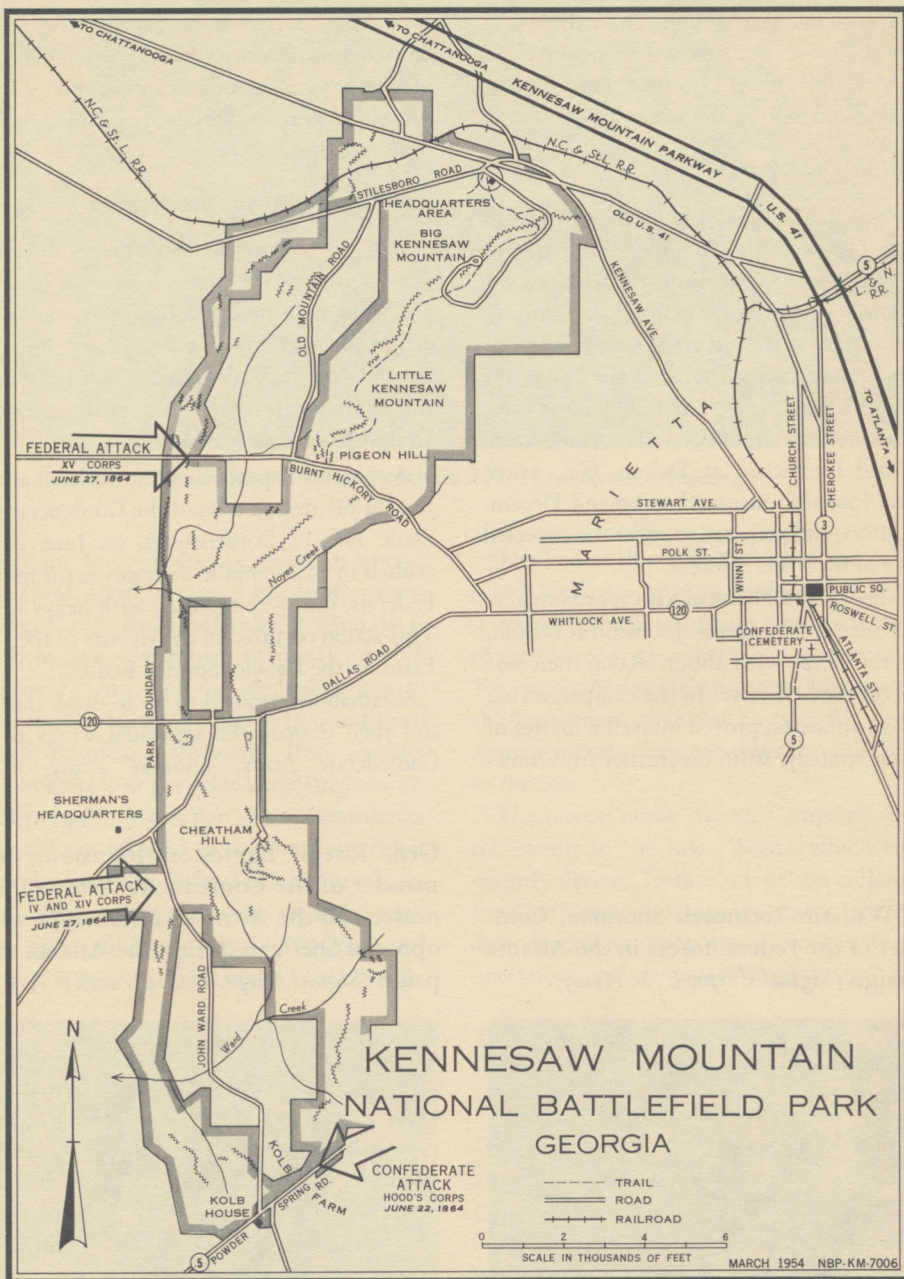
Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park is administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Marietta, Ga., is in immediate charge of the park.

The National Park System, of which Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park is a unit, is dedicated to the conservation of America's scenic, scientific, and historic heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the people.

A 16-page illustrated booklet entitled, The Atlanta Campaign and Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, may be obtained at the park or from the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D. C., at 10 cents a copy.

Federal trenches facing Little Kennesaw Mountain (*Signal Corps, U. S. Army*).





Cover: Sketch of the Truce during the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, by A. R. Waud, famous Civil War artist.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 Douglas McKay, Secretary
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE • Conrad L. Wirth, Director

