

A 2021 BGES Weekend Warrior Program: From Cassville to the Hell Hole—Chapter 3 of the 1864 Georgia Campaign

Presented by Robert Jenkins
November 3–5, 2021; from Marietta, Georgia

For many years, the pivotal Atlanta Campaign has been presented in the shadow of the great eastern showdown between Grant and Lee. Yet the capture of Atlanta is widely regarded as the final nail in the Confederacy's coffin. It provided the national morale lift needed to propel Lincoln to be the first president to be reelected since Andrew Jackson. Several notable historians have undertaken campaign studies, but none has shown more fresh scholarship than Dalton attorney Robert Jenkins.

The opening of the campaign set the tone for the four months that followed. In Chapters 1 and 2, we saw the terrain was daunting and the challenges each commander faced were real and thought-provoking. The demanding, dramatic, and decisive action to maintain the relative security of their forces was lost at Resaca, and the armies moved south. Chapters 3 and 4 continue what is proving to be one of the most important and enjoyable studies of our various multi-year studies. Here is what we have in store for Chapter 3.

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

7 PM. We will meet at the headquarters hotel at 7 PM to meet and greet your fellow students. Bob will follow with a discussion of the third phase of the Georgia Campaign, over-viewing the why and how of the movements of each army across north-central Georgia and the continued importance of controlling the Western and Atlantic Railroad, the strategies of each side, the significance of the campaign, and the challenges faced by army commanders William Sherman and Joe Johnston. The narrative covers May 16-28—the evacuation of Resaca through the battle of Dallas. We will break so you can get your dinner.

Thursday, November 4, 2021

8:30 AM. We will start this morning at 0830, examining the Cassville Affair, in which Confederate Corps Commander John Bell Hood finds his actions subject to controversy. Here, Johnston intended a surprise attack that Hood misfired upon. We will examine some reasons for this as we see A. P. Stewart's defensive position and examine the positions of the Federal Army of the Cumberland under George Thomas.

We will transition to the Confederate positions in the cemetery that most tours visit. The real issue here is that this is the line the Confederates fall back to after Hood bails on his

flank attack. The most interesting aspect of this talk will be the Confederate's withdrawal from what Joe Johnston viewed as a very strong defensive position.

After lunch in Cartersville, we will start our study of the battles known to historians as the battles of "The Hell Hole." The first is the Battle of New Hope Church. Here the Federal XX Corps under Joseph Hooker, former commander of the Army of the Potomac, maneuvered to hit the Confederates around New Hope Baptist Church and Cemetery. We will look at how the Confederates under A. P. Stewart and Carter Stevenson received this assault and will detail the battle relative to Sherman's strategy.

If the traffic cooperates—a big "If"—we will try to give you a chance to see the post-Atlanta battle of Allatoona Pass that was fought on October 5, 1864. Otherwise, we will return to the hotel and you can have dinner on your own. Lunch is included.

Friday, November 5, 2021

8:30 AM. We will leave at 0830, headed for the pristine state battlefield park at Pickett's Mill. This May 27, 1864, battle is one of the most fascinating of the entire campaign, and we will spend the entire morning walking the park and discussing the evolution of this very harsh fight. Of all the engagements in Atlanta, this seems to be the one where you might get the greatest sense of the nature of the country and the conditions that the contending sides fought over. This will take us all morning as we walk between 2 and 3 miles during Bob's narrative—mostly on park trails.

Following lunch (which has yet to be determined), we will take up the final battle of the trifecta—the Battle of Dallas. Here, the Confederates, spearheaded by hard-charging yet convivial Ben Cheatham, will attack the Federal XVI Corps under Grenville Dodge on and around Elsberry Mountain. We will do this in Sarah Babb Park. Then we will go to the Dog Park to track the center of the Federal line under John Logan (who was commanding the XV Corps). After, we will recenter our efforts to the primary Confederate attack following both Bate's and Walker's deployments, followed by Armstrong and Ross's brigade level attacks.

This is a lot to digest in just two days, and so before returning to the hotel, we will recap the battle of Dallas and then place the events from Cassville to Dallas in the larger context of the campaign to date. Of course, if you are staying with us for Chapter 4, this will dovetail perfectly with what we will start back at the hotel in just a few hours' time. We will return to the hotel by 5 PM, and you will be good to go. Lunch is included.

Check out the Zoom presentation of Robert Jenkins presenting the first chapter of the Georgia Campaign [here](#).

Read the interview with Robert Jenkins about the first chapter of the Georgia Campaign [here](#).

Read the interview with Robert Jenkins about the second chapter of the Georgia campaign [here](#).

About the Faculty:

Bob Jenkins is a practicing attorney in Dalton, Georgia. An active preservationist, he has played a significant role in expanding the story of the start of the 1864 Atlanta Campaign. He has completed two outstanding books on the campaign: [The Battle of Peach Tree Creek: Hood's First Sortie, July 20, 1864](#) (2014) and [To the Gates of Atlanta: From Kennesaw Mountain to Peach Tree Creek, 1-19 July 1864](#) (2015). Bob is an animated and detailed interpreter, and you will be regaled with new and thought-provoking information as you take in stunning vistas.

Hotel Information:

This program will be based in Marietta, Georgia, at the Fairfield Inn, 2490 Delk Rd., Marietta, GA 30067. Call 678-737-3715 and ask for the Atlanta Campaign Room. The block the rate is \$119, plus 14% tax, plus \$8 a night in state and local surcharges. The block goes away on October 20.

Transportation:

The servicing airport is Atlanta Hartsfield Airport (ATL). On a good day, the hotel is 25 minutes distant. There are multiple options from ATL, but I strongly encourage you to arrive between 9:30 AM and 2 PM. Ingoing and outgoing traffic for Atlanta is painfully slow during morning and afternoon rush hours. Evening rush hour often runs to 7 PM.

Recommended Reading:

You will be provided with maps and articles that Bob has selected for your edification upon arrival. If you are a user of Amazon and would consider signing up for [AmazonSmile](#), name Blue and Gray Education Society as the beneficiary of your purchases—we are getting a quarterly check from Amazon from supporters who shop on Amazon. A percentage of every purchase, this one and all other purchases, comes to BGES. Thank you.

Albert Castel: [Decision in the West, The Atlanta Campaign 1864](#)

Jacob D. Cox: [Atlanta](#)

Joseph E. Johnston: [Narrative of Military Operations during the Civil War](#)

Jim Miles: [*Fields of Glory: A History and Tour Guide of the War in the West, the Atlanta Campaign, 1864*](#)

Lawrence K. Peterson: [*Decisions of the Atlanta Campaign: The Twenty-One Critical Decisions That Defined the Operation*](#)

Registration Form

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Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes two lunches, all paid admissions, maps, the academic program, support of a professional historian, a tour director, and transportation by passenger van. We will also provide snacks and bottled water.

_____ Registration \$550

_____ Current BGES member \$495

I am not a member but would like to join so that I can get the member's rate; or I am a member who is past-due to renew. Please accept my donation of \$_____ (must be \$75 or more, which is tax-deductible).

I am sending a deposit of \$150 per person and/or memberships. Total enclosed is \$_____. I will pay the balance due before the event.

_____ Check enclosed.

_____ Charge my (circle one) MC VISA AMEXP Discover \$_____

Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to BGES Seminars, P.O. Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531; or fax credit card registrations to 434-432-0596. You may also register online at www.blueandgrayeducation.org.