

WEST JEFFERSON IN DAYS GONE BY

By Charlie Miller

Series 33

BATTLE FOR ATLANTA: The Atlanta campaign opened on May 7, 1864. The Army of the Ohio, with 13,559 men was near Red Clay, Georgia, 13 miles north of Dalton. The Army of the Cumberland, 60,7773 men, was near Ringold, 12 miles northwest of Dalton, and the Army of Tennessee, 24,465 men were 20 miles northwest of Dalton. The Army of the Cumberland under Gen. Thomas, fought at Tunnel Hill and Rocky Face on May 9th. Sherman moved his forces to Snake Creek Gap, except for the 4th Corps, and a cavalry division left to cover his communications on the 13th of May. Johnston (CSA) withdrew from Resaca on the night of the 15th and arrived in Adairsville on the 17th. Thomas' Army of the Cumberland advanced towards Ley's Ferry. Johnson had planned to make a stand at Adairsville, but finding the valley too wide he changed his plans. He then retreated south of Cassville. On the 19th Thomas skirmished with Johnson until dark. As Thomas advanced against Johnston, McPherson, and Schofield (USA) were used as wide flanking movements. Johnston then retreated to Allatoona Pass and then to Hope Church. On the 14th of June Thomas was before Pine Mountain.

On the 27th of June, the Army of the Cumberland and the Army of the Tennessee assaulted Kennesaw Mountain. Then Sherman thrust the center of Johnston's line but was repulsed. Thomas then advanced through Marietta and on July 7th, turned toward Atlanta. Johnston then moved to a position south of Peach Tree Creek just north of Atlanta, being forced to that position by the movement of McPherson far to the east.

On July 17, 1864, Gen. Johnston was replaced by Gen. John Bell Hood (CSA). On July 19th Thomas was crossing Peach Tree Creek. This caused a wide interval between Thomas and the Army of the Ohio on his left. To close the gap he ordered Gen. Howard of the 4th Corps sent two divisions to connect with the Army of the Ohio. Hood took advantage of this and on the 20th attacked Thomas, but was repulsed. Gen. McPherson, commander of the Army of the Tennessee was killed on the 22nd of July and was replaced by the commander of the 4th Corps, Gen. O. O. Howard. Hood excavated Atlanta on the 1st of September 1864, nearly being encircled by the Union forces. He withdrew to Lovejoy Station, Georgia. Sherman's army withdrew to Atlanta and the surrounding area to rest and prepare for further operations. The Army of the Tennessee occupied Eastpoint, Ga. and the Army of the Ohio was at Decatur. Thus the Atlanta campaign ended.

Companies A, B, C, and D were mustered out of the service at Pine Mountain, Georgia, on October 7, 1864.

The men whose time had not expired were sent to the 51st O. V. I. to fill out their terms of service.

Dr. Beach's narrative of the campaign will appear in Serial #34