

# The Battle of Atlanta, 1864



The **Battle of Atlanta** was a battle of the Atlanta Campaign fought during the American Civil War on July 22, 1864, just southeast of Atlanta, Georgia. Continuing their summer campaign to seize the important rail and supply center of Atlanta, Union forces commanded by William T. Sherman overwhelmed and defeated Confederate forces defending the city under John B. Hood. Union Maj. Gen. James B. McPherson was killed during the battle. Despite the implication of finality in its name, the battle occurred midway through the campaign and the city did not fall until September 2, 1864, after a Union siege and various attempts to seize railroads and supply lines leading to Atlanta. After taking the city, Sherman's troops headed south-southeastward toward Milledgeville, the State capital, and on to Savannah with the March to the Sea.

The fall of Atlanta was especially noteworthy for its political ramifications. In the 1864 election, former Union General George B. McClellan, a Democrat, ran against President Lincoln on a peace platform calling for truce with the Confederacy. The capture of Atlanta and Hood's burning of military facilities as he evacuated were extensively covered by Northern newspapers, significantly boosting Northern morale, and Lincoln was reelected by a large margin.