Title:

“Atlanta is gone. The agony is over. There is no hope, but we will try to have no fear.”: Examining the Atlanta Campaign from the Confederate Perspective

Abstract:

As evidenced by the title, this essay will examine how historians have viewed the Atlanta campaign from the Confederate perspective over time. It will revolve around several key questions. Was Joseph E. Johnston the best choice to head the Army of Tennessee in 1864? Why did Johnston fail to defeat or at least stall longer General William T. Sherman’s advance? Should Johnston have been removed, and was John Bell Hood the best choice to replace him? Why did John B. Hood fail to defeat Sherman? Could the Confederates have won the Atlanta Campaign? Finally, how important was the Atlanta Campaign to the outcome of the Civil War? This essay will compare and analyze notable historians’ answers to these questions, endeavoring to understand what happened during the late summer of 1864 in the red clay hills of north Georgia.

Short Biography:

John D. Fowler holds a Ph.D. from the University of Tennessee (Knoxville). He has written several books and articles including *Mountaineers in Gray: The Nineteenth Tennessee Volunteer Infantry, CSA* and *Breaking the Heartland: The Civil War in Georgia,* a book in which he served as contributor and co-editor. His research focuses on the Civil War’s Western Theater and the Confederacy. He has taught at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville), Kennesaw State University, and Dalton State College. He has also served as the founding director of both the Center of the Civil War Era at Kennesaw State and the Bandy Heritage Center for Northwest Georgia at Dalton State College. He is currently a professor of history at Dalton State and is working on a monograph covering the war in Tennessee.