

The War Between the States: America's Uncivil War

Chapter 23 – Chattanooga/1863/West II

Summary:

Having notched pivotal victories in several areas of action during the summer of 1863—Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Vicksburg, Mississippi, and Honey Springs, Indian Territory (modern-day Oklahoma)—and gained control of most of Trans-Mississippi River America (except for Texas), the Federals turned their strategic sights in the West toward capturing the crucial transportation and communication junction of Chattanooga, near the Georgia border in southeast Tennessee. Their objective: build on their successes in the Mississippi Valley by sweeping eastward across Tennessee, then down through Atlanta and Georgia toward the Atlantic, and finally northward through the Carolinas toward a rendezvous with U.S. armies in the East. En route, they aimed to further isolate the various sections of the Confederacy from one another, multiply their control over both north-south and east-west transportation and communication routes, and, as would become clear, destroy both the military and civilian infrastructure of the South, the latter in order to break the Confederacy's capacity to make war.

Contained within the enormous armies that crashed together in the ensuing conflagrations were thousands of black American soldiers—fighting not only for the North, but, though forgotten or ignored by most American histories, the South as well. Many and diverse were the reasons these men, most of them slaves, opposed the armies that, beginning in 1863, were setting them free (often to subsequently transfer them to a new form of involuntary servitude in the Federal military) as they found them.

Identification:

1. George Thomas
2. Nathan Bedford Forrest

Completion:

1. In September, 1863, Confederate commander _____ led his forces to their greatest Western Theater victory of the war at

- _____. Federal General _____ is credited with saving his side from destruction at that battle.
2. After the battle—the largest of the war in the West—Confederate General _____ begged Confederate commander to destroy the remnants of the Federal Army of the _____, but that commander demurred, allowing the defeated Federals to limp back into the city of _____.
 3. During the Chattanooga campaign, President Lincoln named _____ Commander of all Federal forces in the Western Theater.
 4. In November, 1863, the Federals won two of their most stunning victories of the war at _____ and _____.
 5. After losing the Chattanooga campaign, Western Confederate commander _____ resigned and was replaced by _____.
 6. Probably around _____ thousand blacks served in combat roles during the war for the _____ armies.
 7. A 1862, a Federal medical officer reported a significant number of black soldiers marching through Fredericksburg, Virginia, in the ranks of Confederate General _____.

Thought Questions:

1. Chronicle the key events and personalities of the Chattanooga campaign.
2. Discuss the consequences in the Western Theater, and the overall war, of the Chattanooga campaign.
3. What do you consider some of the most interesting facets of Nathan Bedford Forrest's life and character?
4. Discuss some of the ways in which blacks supported the Confederate struggle for independence.
5. Explain some of the reasons why many Southern blacks chose to support the Confederacy.

