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Boone and Crockett Club

## William Tecumseh Sherman - Civil War Hero

Born in 1820, Sherman's given name, Tecumseh, has always attracted attention. It was said that his father "caught a great fancy for the great chief of the Shawnees, Tecumseh."

Supposedly it was only after his father died, when he was age nine or ten, that his foster parents added "William" to his name. To his family and close friends, he was known by his nickname, "Cump." To the soldiers under his command he was "Uncle Billy."

Under Gen. Sherman, a new type of warfare evolved—total war. Following the burning of Atlanta in 1864, Sherman recognized that for the Union to win, the will of the South had to be broken. What followed was his famous "March to the Sea." His troops spread across the countryside, foraging for their food and destroying everything that could be of value to the enemy.

He said, "I will make Georgia

howl," and he did. When he finally captured Savannah, he sent a message to President Lincoln. "I beg to present to you a Christmas gift, the city of Savannah."

It is generally accepted that Sherman's capture of Atlanta saved Lincoln from possible defeat in the 1864 election. Many people in the North were tired of the war, and it appeared that Gen. McClellan, Lincoln's opponent, was ready to recognize the independence of the Confederacy and to end the war. The capture of Atlanta raised hope for an eventual Union victory that carried Lincoln into his second term as president.

Sherman's troops continued their march, now to the north through South Carolina, destroying its capital, Columbia, en route. They pushed on to Durham, North Carolina, where Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrendered to him on April 17, 1865, eight days after Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

When Ulysses Grant was elected as president in 1868, Sherman succeeded him as commanding General of the Army, a post he held until 1884 when he retired. During this time, he was heavily involved in the

**BOOK BY WILLIAM T. SHERMAN**

*Memoirs of General William T. Sherman,*  
two volumes, (1875)

Indian wars in the West. Sherman lived his last years in New York City where he was elected to Honorary Life Membership in the Boone and Crockett Club. He died in 1891. Gen. Johnston, whose surrender to Sherman ended the Civil War, was a pallbearer at Sherman's funeral.

Sherman has been considered to be one of the most brilliant strategists in the annals of war, and his campaigns were studied by such notables as Erwin Rommel and George Patton. His two-volume autobiography, published in 1875, offers a detailed overview of his career. On April 11, 1880, he delivered an address to the graduating class at Michigan Military Academy in which he supposedly issued the famous phrase, "War is Hell." In a later address, he said: "There is many a boy here today who looks on war as all glory, but boys, it is all hell." ■

*Theodore J. Holsten Jr.*

**LEFT:** A photographic portrait of William Tecumseh Sherman as a young army officer.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Volume one of *Memoirs of General William T. Sherman*, written by himself in 1875.

**BELOW:** Sherman oversees the artillery bombardment in the siege of Atlanta in August 1864.

