

# William Tecumseh Sherman, the second most known union general's life and military...

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## **William Tecumseh Sherman**

“ I am tired and sick of war. Its glory is all moonshine. It is only those who have neither fired a shot nor heard the shrieks and groans of the wounded who cry aloud for blood, for vengeance, for desolation. War is hell.” These famous words were spoken by General William Tecumseh Sherman of the Union Army at the Michigan Military Academy on June 19 1879. William Sherman was possibly the second-most known Union general during the Civil War, next to Ulysses S. Grant. During the start of the war, William Sherman had some troubling moments during the First Battle of Bull Run but made a good comeback in the campaign of Vicksburg. Furthermore, he made further strong commands in the campaign of Atlanta against Confederate generals Joseph E. Johnston and John B. Hood. Sherman’s most famous act was his infamous “ March to the Sea” where he advanced to Savannah, Georgia, destroying anything of military value.

During the start of the Civil War, Sherman was having trouble during the First Battle of Bull Run but later made a strong comeback in the campaign of Vicksburg. During the First Battle of Bull Run, Sherman made a mistake in commanding a brigade which ended up in getting defeated. After the battle, Sherman became very pessimistic and feuded with the press. People thought Sherman was having a mental breakdown and accused him of insanity. However, Sherman stayed alongside with Grant during the campaign of Vicksburg. He made an excellent suggestion to John McClernand to attack Arkansas Post which Grant noted to be successful and an important achievement.

Subsequently, William Sherman continued to succeed in the campaign of Atlanta. There, he faced off against first General Joseph E. Johnston and then General John B. Hood. Sherman's original intention in the Atlanta campaign was to cut off Confederate supply lines, destroy the Tennessee Army, and capture Atlanta. Under the command of Joseph E. Johnston, many skirmishes took place on the outskirts of the city that ended up in Union victories. Confederate president Jefferson Davis was not satisfied with Johnston's performance, so he was replaced by John B. Hood who promised to attack Sherman's force and attempt to save Atlanta. However, Hood also failed in defending the city, and they surrendered. Sherman proceeded to burn Atlanta during September and began his boldest act of the war

Sherman's most famous, or perhaps infamous, act during the Civil War was his "March to the Sea" where his force of 60,000 troops went on a rampage to destroy anything of military value. Sherman's main purpose in this brutal act of total war (a kind of warfare in which all possible resources and population are destroyed) was to rid the Confederate Army of their resources from the Southern citizens. He had also hoped to undermine the Southerner's morale and influence them to abandon the Confederacy. Starting in November, he laid waste to factories, farms, and plantations and tore up railroads. They arrived at Savannah on December 21, 1864, unguarded. Sherman presented the captured city as a Christmas gift to Lincoln.

All in all, despite his inadequate start, William Tecumseh Sherman was an important general during the Civil War. His most famous achievement was

his " March to the Sea", the first act of total war. In the end, Sherman's choice to lay waste to Georgia greatly affected the war's outcome to the Union's favor. Although the necessity of Sherman's total war may have been questionable, it was nevertheless effective in crippling the Confederate cause.