

Sherman's March to the Sea and Milledgeville, GA

Teacher Introduction:

Governor Joseph E Brown was in charge of Georgia during The Civil War. The capital city was Milledgeville. He lived in, what we call today, Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion. The Governor's Mansion was an important status symbol to the state. In November of 1864, Union General William T Sherman began his March to the Sea campaign from Atlanta to Savannah. Sherman wanted to show the people of the South and the Confederacy that the Union was stronger than them and that the Confederacy could not protect them from the invading North. After leaving Atlanta, Sherman's troops headed for the state capital, Milledgeville. Governor Brown had warning that Sherman was on his way to Milledgeville. In preparation for Sherman's arrival, Governor Brown released 150 prisoners in return for serving in the Confederate army to help protect the capital. He also ordered 500 slaves from surrounding areas to help protect the capital too. To help protect the Governor's Mansion, Brown had the mansion stripped of all of its furnishings and possessions which were then loaded on to wagons and trains and sent south. Governor Brown and family left the mansion too and headed south for Montezuma, Georgia before the arrival of Sherman's men. The first of Sherman's troops entered Milledgeville on November 22, 1864. In total, Sherman brought 30,000 Union troops to the capital. Sherman himself arrived in the capital the following day, November 23rd. Sherman made the Governor's Mansion his headquarters. Sherman noticing that the mansion was completely empty, slept on the floor of the family dining room for one night before leaving the next day to continue his march to Savannah. Governor Brown returned to Milledgeville after Sherman and the Union troops had left and all the mansion's furnishings and possessions were returned in January of 1865.

Additional information for upper grades:

The only two public institutions still open when Sherman's troops entered Milledgeville were the military hospitals. The troops were surprised by how small the capital city was describing it "a sort of one-horse town." The capitol building was a popular stop for many of the Union troops. Inside they found Confederate notes which the soldiers are took for purchases later on. During the afternoon of November 23, 1864, Union troops held a mock Georgia legislative session in the legislative chambers of the capitol building. Needless to say, most of the troops participating in this mock session were drinking. It is rumored that the troops brought forth a bill to vote Georgia back into the Union it had seceded from in January of 1861. The following day, after General Sherman had left the city at ten in the morning, the troops decided to have even more fun than the mock session and held a mock funeral for Governor Brown. Men carried a casket full of pikes through the streets of Milledgeville to the home church of Governor Brown. Once at the Baptist church, the casket was set in the front it and a lieutenant colonel gave a eulogy. Later the remaining troops left Milledgeville to continue their march to Savannah.

A Teacher's Note on this lesson:

This lesson would ideally serve as a pre or post visit lesson to a field trip to Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion. It helps to introduce or reinforce some of the topics covered on a mansion tour. This lesson can also be used as a standalone in your classroom to help teach your students about Sherman's March to the Sea and the capital of Georgia during The Civil War, Milledgeville. Feel free to adapt or change parts of the lesson to suit your classroom needs. If you do decide to take a field trip to Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion, please let us know when scheduling if you want us to make more connections to what your students have learned in class.

Georgia State Social Studies Standards

Grade 4: **SS4H5** Explain the causes, major events, and consequences of the Civil War

Grade 8: **SS8H5** Analyze the impact of the Civil War on Georgia.

Grade 8: **SS8G1** Describe Georgia's geography and climate.

US History: **SSUSH9** Evaluate key events, issues, and individuals related to the Civil War

Lesson Objectives

- Identify General William T Sherman and Governor Joseph E Brown
- Understand Sherman's actions in Milledgeville
- Draw conclusion about the events of Sherman's March to the Sea stop in Milledgeville

Lesson Duration – One class period or one hour. *This can be modified to fit your class period length or divided across class periods or days.*

Lesson

Begin the lesson by summarizing the information related in the teacher introduction above. Present it in whatever way is most comfortable for you and works best for your students. There are visual included at the end.

1. To start discuss with your students what the purpose of a state capital is and how the governor's house is important to the city.
 - a. Why is it important to protect your capital form invaders? *A capital city is home to your government, economy, and leaders. If invaders were to take it over they would be in control of all of those things, the state could fall.*

- b. What does it say to the residents if invaders take over the capital and home of their leader? *It shows that the government of that state is weak and the leader is weak.*
 - c. For younger grades – Imagine you are in charge of your house and you knew someone was coming to take control of it from you, what would you do to prepare? *Take and hide your valuables and possessions from people who would take them.*
2. Have students take notes over the material presented
- a. For younger grades – they can use the T chart included in this lesson and you and take notes together focusing on what actions General Sherman and Governor Brown took during this time.
 - b. For upper grades – The History Channel and PBS have some great videos to provide more background about Sherman you can show as an introduction and to supplement material presented:
<http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/shermans-march>
<http://www.pbs.org/video/2365546468/>
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Lesson Activities

The activities are divided for lower and upper grades. Feel free to change and adapt to your specific grade level needs. Resources for each activity are at the end.

Lower Grades –

- A. Using what the students learned about Sherman and his March to the Sea, have the students sort the actions of General Sherman and Governor Brown using the sorting cards provided. This can be done in either small groups or individually and students can use or not use the notes they took. Review as a class once everyone is finished.
- B. If you choose to take a fieldtrip to Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion, review with your students when you return to class about what they learned while at the mansion. Review the importance of capital cities and the purpose of the governor's mansion. Then students can complete the post-visit questions worksheet.

Upper Grades –

- C. To give more context to the geography of Georgia, have students map Sherman's March to the Sea from Atlanta to Savannah. The Civil War Trust website has a good map and information that can accompany the map of Georgia activity included with this lesson.
<http://www.civilwar.org/hallowed-ground-magazine/fall-2014/scorched-earth.html>

- D. Have students read “Sherman’s March; Journal of Eye-witness” from the NY Times either with a partner or on their own. After reading, have students write about how the takeover or stop in Milledgeville was different than other stops during the campaign. How was it different than the students expected a takeover of a capital city to be?

<http://www.nytimes.com/1864/12/23/news/sherman-s-march-journal-of-an-eye-witness.html?pagewanted=all>

Resources

Kennett, L. (1995). *Marching Through Georgia*. New York City: HarperCollins Publishers.

Marszalek, J. F. (2014). *Scorched Earth: Sherman's March to the Sea*. Retrieved from Civil War Trust: <http://www.civilwar.org/hallowed-ground-magazine/fall-2014/scorched-earth.html>

Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion. (2015). Retrieved October 10, 2016, from <http://www.gcsu.edu/mansion>

Bailey, Anne J. "Sherman's March to the Sea." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. 02 August 2016. Web. 06 October 2016.

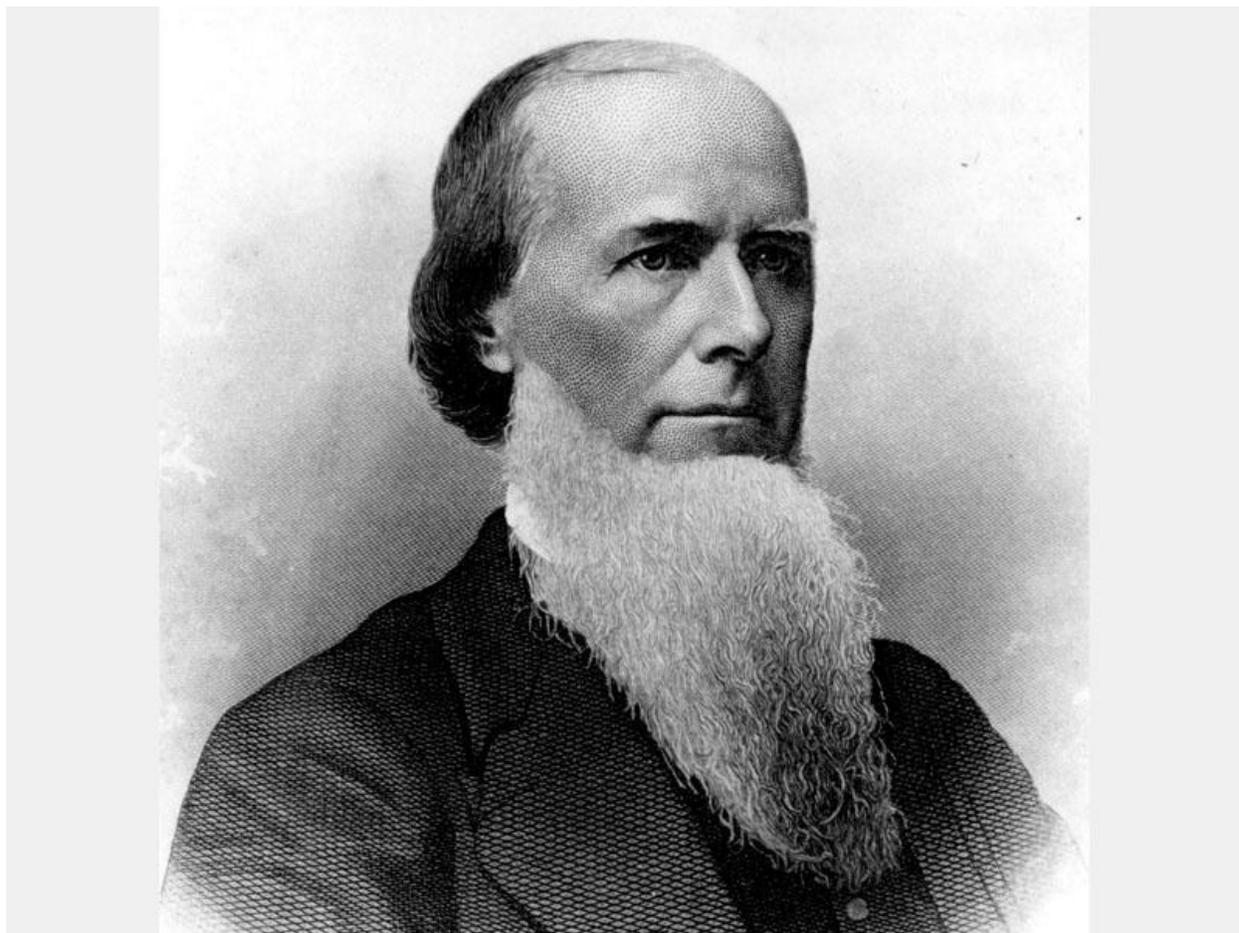
Seale, W., Mason, S., Turner, J. C., & Williams Jr, J. G. (n.d.). *Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion Interpretive Plan*. Milledgeville.

Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion



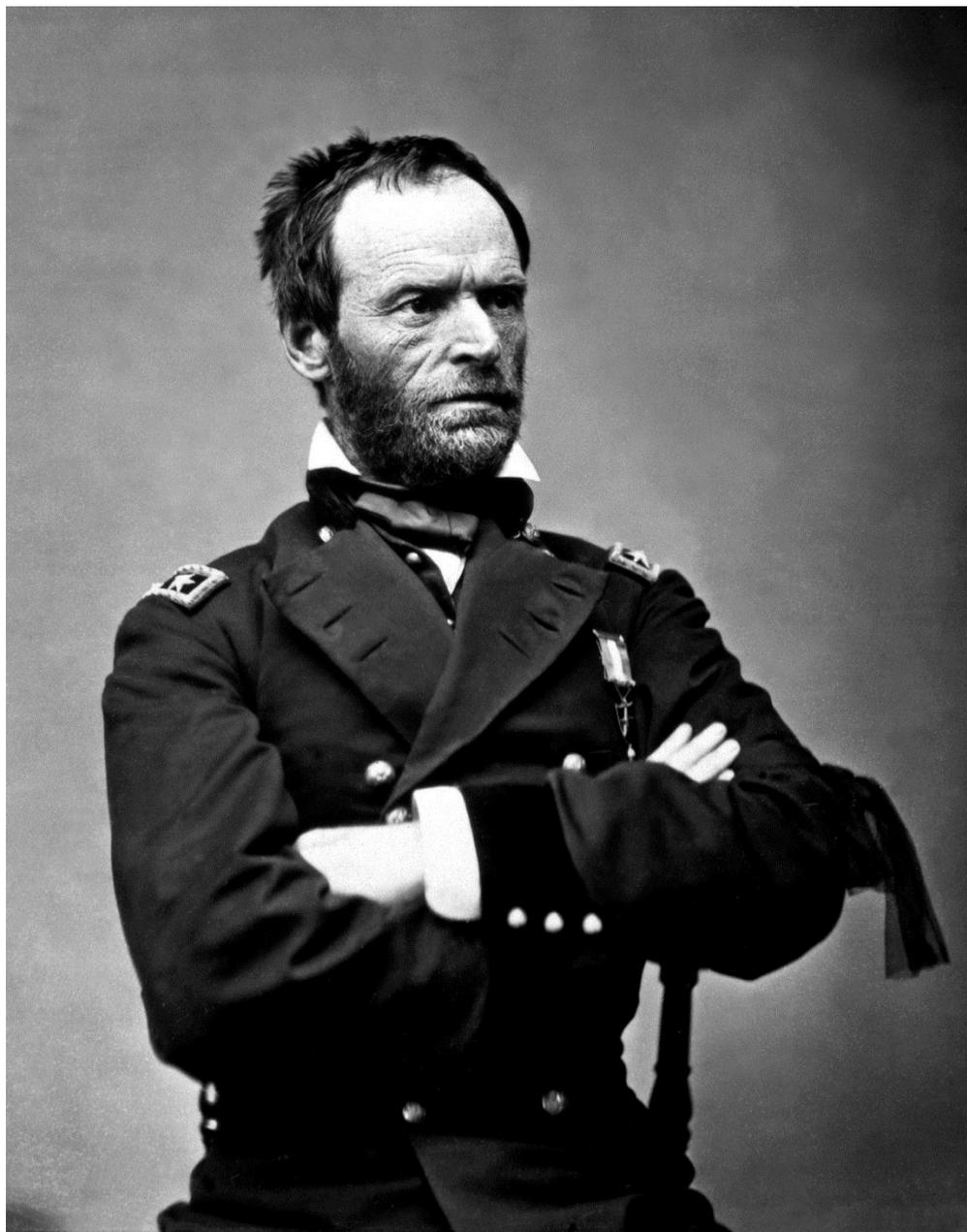
The mansion was completed in 1839 and the home to eight Georgia governor's and their families before the capital was moved to Atlanta in 1869. Governor Brown was governor of Georgia during The Civil War and was elected in 1857 serving four terms until 1865 when he was arrested and forced to resign by the Union.

Governor Joseph E Brown



Governor Brown was governor of Georgia during The Civil War and was elected in 1857 serving four terms until 1865 when he was arrested and forced to resign by the Union.

General William T Sherman



General Sherman was a leader of Union troops during The Civil War. During his March to the Sea campaign, he led about 60,000 Union troops across 285 miles from Atlanta, Georgia to Savannah, Georgia from November 15, 1864 until December 21, 1864.

Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion Family Dining Room



This is the family dining room of the mansion and the room where we believe General Sherman slept the one night he stayed at the mansion. The room was stripped of all of its furnishings prior to his arrival and would have been empty when he got there.

The Map of Sherman's March to the Sea



After leaving Atlanta, Sherman's troops marched to the state capital of Milledgeville.

Lower Grades T Chart Notes Sheet

Governor Joseph E Brown

General William T Sherman

Directions:

1. *Make copies of each of the sets of cards*
2. *Cut out the cards*
3. *Mix up the cards*
4. *Distribute to either individual students or small groups*
5. *Have students separate the cards that describe Brown and Sherman and their actions during their Sherman's March to the Sea in Milledgeville.*



**Released prisoners
and ordered slaves to
help protect the city**

**Had the Mansion
emptied out before
arrival of Union troops**

**Fled the city with
family and
possessions to the
south**



**Marched from Atlanta
to Savannah**

**Made his
headquarters in the
Governor's Mansion**

**Only spent one night
in Milledgeville**

**Governor of Georgia
during the Civil War**

**Union General during
the Civil War**



Name: _____

Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion Post-Visit Questions

1. What was one item from Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion that you think was the most important for Governor Brown to remove before Union troops arrived? Why?

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2. If the army were coming to take over your house, what would be the most important item you'd want to take with you when you left? Why?



3. Why do you think General Sherman would want to take control of the Governor's Mansion?

After defeating Atlanta, Sherman's army continued on towards Savannah. His army split into two wings, a right and a left. Each group taking a slightly different yet parallel route towards the sea. Along with the over 60,000 troops were about 2,500 supply wagons and 600 ambulances. Sherman brought about 30,000 of his troops to the state capital of Milledgeville.

On the map label the cities Sherman's troops passed through in Georgia:

- Atlanta
- Hillsboro
- Eatonton
- Milledgeville
- Louisville
- Irwinton
- Savannah

