

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

To a variety of lay and professional historians the American Civil War was fought in Virginia with only minor battles, of little consequence, fought in the west. This obviously is not correct. In fact, much is to be learned from the battles of the Western Armies. For today's student of military theory and practice the Union's Campaign for Chattanooga, Tennessee, and its resulting Battle of Chickamauga, is a valuable study of marked contrasts. On the one hand, brilliant strategic planning and operational maneuver, in concert with skillful deception, allowed the Union's Army of the Cumberland to advance virtually unchallenged into the vital Southern city of Chattanooga on 9 September 1863. Following this successful drive into the gateway of Georgia and the Confederacy, however, was the Union defeat on the tactical battlefield just twelve miles to the southwest.

In support of each army was an evolving medical support system grounded on the experiences and lessons of previous campaigns and battles. Both armies had medical leaders familiar with the medical organization, its recent accomplishments, and its capabilities. How these leaders applied the medical support doctrine of the era, within the

scope of their duties, affected the lives of thousands of soldiers wounded on the Chickamauga battlefield.

The objective of this study is to examine the medical structures of both combatants, describe medical actions during the Chickamauga Campaign, from August to October 1863, and evaluate the effectiveness of each. As a result of this analysis appropriate implications will be carried forward to the health service support system of the United States Army in 1990.

#### Primary Research Question

What can the present-day Army Medical Department leader learn from the medical support provided at the Battle of Chickamauga?

#### Secondary Questions

How was the medical support organized for each army?

How did the medical leadership of each army plan for the Chickamauga Campaign?

How was medical support provided to each army during the Battle of Chickamauga?

What were the actions of the medical personnel as each army consolidated in and around Chattanooga following the Battle of Chickamauga?

#### Assumption

Medical support lessons which were learned 126 years ago remain valid for study today. This assumption is more involved than merely addressing the professional development

of this work's readers. Specifically, it is valid for US Army health service support planners and concept developers, when planning and developing health service support for the US Army in 1990 and beyond, to consider lessons learned as a result of medical support provided in the Western Theater during the Civil War. In essence, the past provides a model for the future.

### Definitions

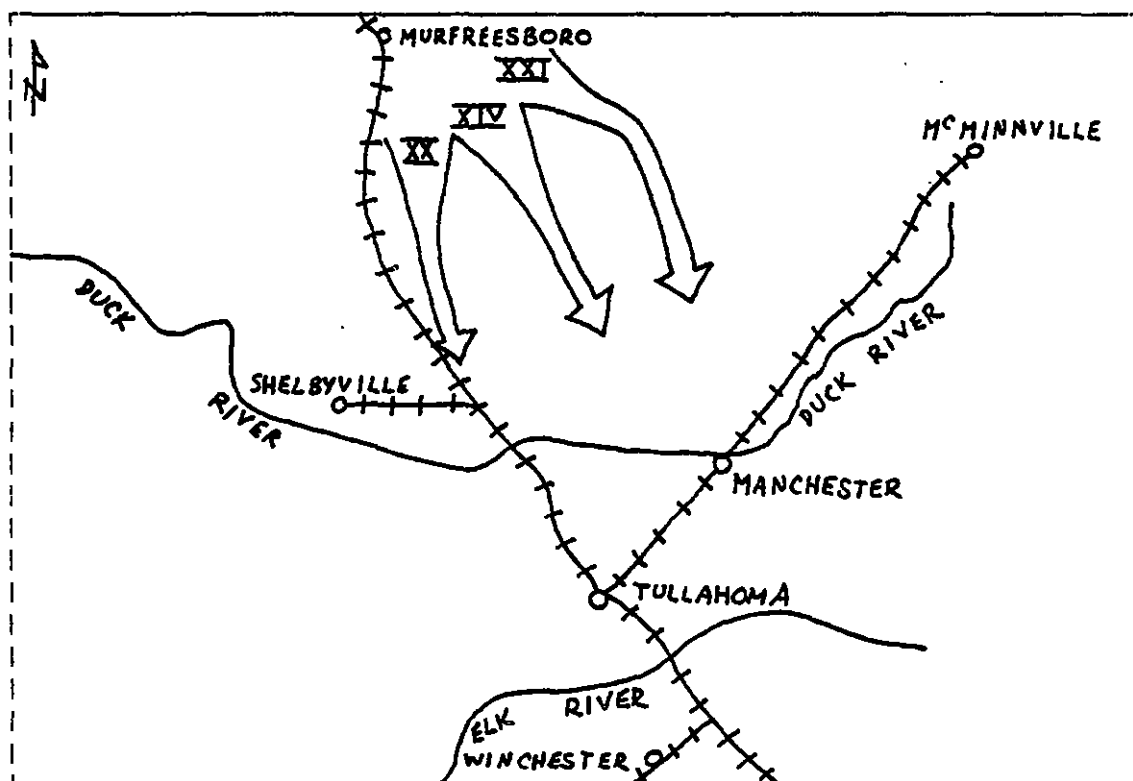
This study differentiates between medical support of the Civil War and health service support of the 1990's. Medical support during the Civil War will be described in Chapter Two as the service rendered by physicians, nurses, ambulance drivers, litter bearers, and ancillary personnel to the sick and wounded soldier. Functions of medical support included planning for the medical needs of an army in campaign, providing the personnel and supplies needed for that support effort, and executing the medical support plan. Executing the medical plan, as a sub-function of medical support, entailed establishing medical facilities, finding and treating medical casualties, and evacuating those patients, in turn, to each appropriate facility.

Health Service Support, as differentiated from medical support, and described in Chapter Two, encompasses a broader range of capabilities. The categories of health service support include evacuation, hospitalization, blood management, health service logistics, medical laboratory

services, veterinary services, preventive medicine services, dental services, and the associated command, control, and synchronization of each with the other and with the needs of the supported organization. <sup>1</sup>

### Background

Since January 1863 the US War Department had been demanding a move on the southern city of Chattanooga. On 23 June, 1863, the Union Army of the Cumberland, under the command of Major General William S. Rosecrans, departed the area around Murfreesboro, Tennessee and began that much awaited campaign.



Map 1. The Tullahoma Campaign, 23 June - 4 July, 1863. Movements and Area of Operations.

In less than two weeks, the Confederate Army of Tennessee, commanded by Major General Braxton Bragg, was forced out of the fortified city of Tullahoma and south of the Tennessee River. <sup>2</sup> The Tullahoma Campaign is still considered by many students and practitioners of military art as one of the benchmarks of strategic movement occurring throughout the course of military history. From the first week of July to the 15th of August, Rosecrans kept the Army in the vicinity of Tullahoma in order to replenish his supplies, await the ripening of the forage that grew between Tullahoma and Chattanooga, and, of greatest concern, repair the vital rail link between the supply base of Nashville and the crossing sites along the Tennessee River. He accomplished each of these tasks despite great pressure from Washington for the immediate continuation of operations. <sup>3</sup>

While busy with the refitting of his Army, Rosecrans developed plans to move on and capture Chattanooga. The city was important as both the gateway to Georgia and a focal point of movement within the Confederacy. In fact, this rail hub was the key link to internal lines of communication between Richmond, Virginia to the east, the Gulf Coast to the south, and the Mississippi River to the west. General Bragg and his Army of Tennessee had been forced to move into and fortify Chattanooga by the movements of the Army of the Cumberland during the Tullahoma Campaign. As the move on Chattanooga began the city was protected by

defensive lines and cavalry screens established along the Tennessee River to the northeast and southwest. \*

This thesis examines the medical support provided to the soldiers of both armies as they entered the next series of operations: the campaign for the occupation and control of Chattanooga and its vital rail network.

16 Aug 63..	Army of the Cumberland begins its movements on Chattanooga.
29 Aug 63..	Army of the Cumberland begins crossings of the Tennessee River.
8 Sep 63..	Army of Tennessee begins its evacuation of Chattanooga.
9 Sep 63..	XXI Corps, Army of the Cumberland occupies Chattanooga.
19 Sep 63..	Battle of Chickamauga, first day.
20 Sep 63..	Battle of Chickamauga, second day.
21 Sep 63..	Army of the Cumberland begins to occupy Chattanooga entrenchments.

Fig. 1. Sequence of Events, Chickamauga Campaign.

## ENDNOTES

### CHAPTER 1

1. United States, Department of the Army, Field Manual 8-55, Planning for Health Service Support (Washington: GPO, 1985) 2-1.
2. United States, Congress, Joint, Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War 38th Cong. 2nd Sess., Vol 3. (Washington: GPO, 1865) 27-8; United States, Secretary of War, The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 128 Vols. (Washington: GPO) 23/2: Report With Enclosures, Granger to Rosecrans, 9 Jun. 1863, 403-9. (Hereafter referred to as OR. Volume and part cited in Series I unless otherwise noted); Thomas Van Horne, History of the Army of the Cumberland (1875, 2 Vols. Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot, 1988) 1:302-9.
3. OR 23/2, Telegram, Lincoln to Rosecrans, 28 May 1863, 369; OR 23/2, Telegram, Stanton to Rosecrans, 7 Jul. 1863, 518; OR 23/2, Telegram, Halleck to Rosecrans, 24 Jul. 1863, 552, 554-6, 592, 597; United States, Congress, Report of the Joint Committee 28-9.
4. Additional discussion of movements for both Union and Confederate Armies can be found in Gilbert Kniffin, 'Manoeuvring Bragg Out of Tennessee,' Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, ed. Robert Johnson and Clarence Buel, 4 Vols. (New York: Century Co) 3:635-7.