

Battle of Peach Tree Creek  
July 20, 1864

This information is a very brief summary of what was presented by Robert D Jenkins at the Buckhead Heritage Society meeting on July 17, 2009. Mr. Jenkins is writing a book on the battle that should be out in 2010.

---

Midday on July 20<sup>th</sup> (about 1:00 PM), Newton's 2<sup>nd</sup> Division (US) – part of Thomas' IV Corps - crossed Peachtree Creek heading south along Buckhead Road (now Peachtree). When reaching the crest of the hill (at Piedmont Hospital) – about 4:00PM, he was attacked by Walker's troops (CSA) (Gen.'s Stevens and Gist), but not in a coordinated manner. Stevens was killed withdrawing his troops (see monument at Wycliff and 28<sup>th</sup> Street).

Maney's (CSA) troops were to attack Newton, but when seeing Steven's repulse, decided it best to trade distant shots from an area about in the middle of Anjaco to just above Ardmore Park. Maney had about 5000 troops, and would very likely have overrun Kimball (US) at the top of the hill, but decided not to attack.

About 4:20, Gen. Featherston (Mississippi) moves across Tanyard Creek (where the park meadow and trestle are today), and attacks small Union units (22<sup>nd</sup> Wisconsin and 138<sup>th</sup> NY) along the crest along current day Collier Rd. (from about Ardmore down to Redland). They pushed the Union troops back down the hill, to the low area roughly where Redland Rd and Golf View Drives are today. The remaining troops of Ward's 3<sup>rd</sup> (US) division were making camp in the corn field – where the golf course is now – came to the support of the engaged Union troops at that point.

The result was massive hand to hand fighting, with high casualties on both sides. Featherston's troops, not receiving any assistance (especially from the right), withdrew. The Mississippi brigades under Featherston received over 80% casualties, the worst of any in the war.

About 4:30 in the afternoon, Union troops had positioned themselves roughly at the Howard property, with artillery protecting against further advance down the valley. (the guns were roughly where Collier Road circles the end of the park.) The 55<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Alabama troops attacked this position from up Tanyard Creek, and suffered heavy losses.

About the same time, Gen. O'Neal (CSA) under Gen. Walthall Attacked the Union flanks from an area roughly at Collier and Howell Mill. The attacked pushed the Union troops down the valley to roughly where the Bitsy Grant tennis center is today. At 5:15, support was received from the 24<sup>th</sup> SC and 53<sup>rd</sup> TN, but was inadequate to press further. The union troops rallied and pushed O'Neal's troops back from that point.

General Reynolds (CSA) continued the attack on the Union flanks about 5:00PM coming down from the Howell Mill road area about where Gladstone Rd. and Moneray Dr. are

today. He was stopped by Hapeman's 104<sup>th</sup> Illinois, ending the last Confederate attack of the day at 5:15PM.

Overall, Federal casualties (killed, missing, wounded) were 2167, and Confederate Casualties were 2369. These numbers differ from 'official' reports by Gen. Sherman, but were compiled from official records by Robert Jenkins.

The battle was effectively a draw, and prevented the Union troops from advancing and taking Atlanta from the North side that day. The Confederates needed a decisive victory to halt Sherman's advance, and did not get this.

As for size of the engagement, it was in the 'top 20' of all Civil War battles, and was only one of 7 that had substantial hand to hand action. It lasted roughly 90 minutes.