

FIVE STAR GENERAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL

AMERICA'S FOREMOST SOLDIER DURING WORLD WAR 2, SERVED AS CHIEF OF STAFF FROM 1939-1945, BUILDING AND DIRECTING THE LARGEST ARMY IN HISTORY

HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH GENERAL/PRESIDENT EISENHOWER

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WRITTEN IN PART BY GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER



General George Marshall also served as US Secretary of State (1947-1949) and won the Nobel Peace Prize. (1953) for his "Marshall Plan"



George C. Marshall Research Library in Lexington, Virginia

The following article written by Gen Dwight Eisenhower appeared in the August 1964 edition of The Atlantic.

George Catlett Marshall was one of VMI's most celebrated graduates. At the dedication of the George C. Marshall Research Library in Lexington, Virginia, several of his close associates, including President Johnson, Robert Lovett, and General Omar Bradley, paid tribute to his leadership. General Eisenhower in particular spoke with insight of his forthright relations with his former commanding officer during the war years.



General Dwight D. Eisenhower and General George C. Marshall

"It is a high privilege for me, once again, to pay a simple tribute to General George C. Marshall. This time I do so in terms of my contacts with him."



A few of his characteristics are uppermost in my memory, and on these, I shall dwell. They include his consideration for others; his clear, direct, and logical approach to any major military problem; his complete, single-minded dedication and loyalty to his country and government; and his selflessness and objectivity in making decisions and in courageously discharging his vitally important duties.

From World War I onward, I had often heard of George Marshall. By older officers, he was always described as a brilliant soldier, by many as a genius. But until World War II was a week old, I had met him only twice, and then but momentarily. My direct association with him began December 14, 1941, on a Sunday morning in the old "munitions buildings" in Washington, D.C. He placed me in charge of military planning, later adding operations. On that Sunday morning a great deal of our conversation dealt with the situation in the Pacific. General Marshall brought me up to date with events and then said that he would look to me for assistance in planning help for that beleaguered area.

Just before dismissing me, he gave me some brief instructions that I have never forgotten. I can repeat his words almost verbatim, "Eisenhower," he said, "the department is filled with able men who analyze their problems well but feel compelled always to bring them to me for final solution."

I must have assistants who will solve their problems and tell me later what they have done."

He looked at me with an eye that seemed to me cold, and so, as I left the room, I resolved then and there to do my work to the best of my ability and report to the General only situations of obvious necessity or when he sent for me.

This habit I cultivated to the point that one day, finding myself in a crisis, I issued an order that occasioned for me ten days of acute embarrassment. Indeed, I suspected—with obvious reason—that I might be ignominiously dismissed from the presence of the Chief of Staff, if not from the Army.

THE FACTS WERE THESE

We badly needed to send a division of troops to Australia, and it happened that in one of our ports and ready to depart was the British ship the *Queen Mary*. Having permission to use her, I directed the loading of 15,000 men on her and started her across the Atlantic and around the Cape of Good Hope without escort.

Because of her speed, I was not particularly worried until we intercepted a cable sent by an Italian official in Brazil to his government in Rome. It read as follows:

"The *Queen Mary* just refueled here, and with about 15,000 soldiers aboard left this port today steaming southeast across the Atlantic."

At once I had visions of all the German submarines in the South Atlantic trying to concentrate around the Cape of Good Hope area, intercepting the great ship and filling her full of torpedoes. For the next few days, I slept little. But finally, I had the welcome news that the *Queen Mary* had arrived safely in Australia.

I felt so good that I took the time off to go voluntarily to the General's office to tell what I had done and of the great suspense in which my principal assistants and I had been living. I said that I had not told him this before because I saw no use for his bearing the same burden of worry that I had been carrying. But now that all was well, I thought he might like to know what had happened.

He smiled and said, *"Eisenhower, I received that intercept while you did. I was merely hoping that you might not see it, and so I was saying nothing to you until I knew the outcome."*

Rarely have I seen such generous consideration for a subordinate so beautifully exemplified.

One incident has a bearing upon his conception of the performance of duty without fear or favor. I was in his office once when he picked up the telephone to answer a call that an aide said came from a senator, the chairman of an important committee. As I watched the General's face, it became flushed; he was more than a little annoyed.

Within moments he angrily broke in to say, "Senator, if you are interested in that man's advancement, or that of any other, the best thing you can do is to avoid mentioning his name to me. Good-bye!" Then he said to me, *"I may make a thousand mistakes in this war, but none will be the result of political meddling!"* I take orders from the Secretary of War and the President; I would not stay here if I had to respond to outside pressures. Moreover," he added, "I don't like people who are seeking promotions."

To possible senatorial displeasure, he gave not a single thought.

In early conferences of the American Chiefs of Staff and, later, of the combined Chiefs of Staff—which meetings I attended as one of his assistants—he quickly established himself as the dominant figure. His vision was so clear, his grasp of complex issues so instinctive and precise, and his convictions so strong, that he was invariably the leader in discussions and resultant decisions. In all Allied meetings in which I was present with him, this continued throughout the war; his complete absorption in the task at hand was apparent to all.



Gen Marshall Quote

In one meeting I saw convincing proof of his utter selflessness. American Chiefs of Staff were traveling to the Cairo and Teheran conferences in November of 1943. They stopped overnight at Allied Headquarters in the African Theater of War. Speculation was then rife as to the identity of the individual to be named to head the cross-channel operation scheduled for the next spring, *named Overlord. Washington headlines, I was told, were agog about the matter, some misguided persons even alleging that General Marshall and I were engaged in a bitter vendetta, each falsely accused of seeking the prize of command.*

On the evening of the President's arrival in Carthage, General Marshall, and Admiral King, quartered with me in my cottage, had a long conversation into which Admiral King brought this subject. He had been given to understand in Washington, he said, that General Marshall was to go to London and I to the post of Chief of Staff. According to the Admiral, it was assumed the President, believing that Marshall would like to be in the field and that he had earned the right to make his own choice of positions, had ordered the shift in assignments, *agreeing to accept me as a substitute for General Marshall in his Washington post.*

Admiral King, however, was convinced that the nation needed General Marshall in Washington and said he was going to use what influence he had with the President to keep the Chief of Staff there. He made

a prolonged presentation of his arguments and then, finally, invited my comments. I merely replied I would try to do my duty wherever my superiors decided I should serve.

General Marshall smiled and remarked, "I don't see why any of us is worrying about this. The President will have to decide on his own, and all of us will obey." He went on to say: *"The President has asked for my preference, and I've refused to express any."*

I was struck by his complete objectivity; *and not once in later years did he ever give me a hint as to his personal choice of the two positions.*

Incidentally, there was a sequel to this story that should dispel any fanciful idea that there might have existed any rivalry between General Marshall and me for the Overlord command. At the end of the Cairo Conference, the *President decided to keep General Marshall in his vital post.*

The telegram informing Stalin that I would go to London was written out in longhand by General Marshall and signed by the President. The original text was then sent to me by General Marshall with this note:

Dear Eisenhower. I thought you might like to have this as a memento. It was written very hurriedly by me as the final meeting broke up yesterday, and the President signed it immediately.

G.C.M

The telegram was not as important to me as was the kindly thoughtfulness so clearly evidenced *by a busy superior who wanted a subordinate to have a souvenir certain to be highly valued.*

In December of 1945, I assumed General Marshall's duties as Chief of Staff of the Army. One thing he said as I came to report to him has persisted in my memory. *He expressed a great feeling of relief at laying down the duties of active service; the enthusiasm for the rest, recreation, and happiness of the life he saw stretching out before him and his family was, to say the least, unusual for him.*

I was not only happy for him; I wished that I could have done the same. But the sequel to this incident was far from pleasant. Hardly had he been settled in the family home in Leesburg when he came into my office and announced: *"The President is sending me to China; I'll be needing some help from the Army; will you see that my requests are considered?"*

"Of course," I replied. "Anyone you want." But I could not help asking whether he was not to have some rest and vacation.

"It seems," he said, "that the matter is one of some urgency."

Not a word of complaint against fate or superiors—he just set about quietly to do his duty. But this time *I knew where his heart lay; and I knew he felt keen disappointment, even though he would never voice it.*

Finally, sometime before he entered the hospital on his last illness, I stood with him as there was presented to the government, in his honor, a portrait of this unusual man. *He was one of the three or four men whom, in positions of great responsibility, I have rated—in my mind—as the most distinguished in character, ability, and leadership.*

At that simple ceremony, *I found myself wishing that he could have understood how much he had meant to America, how much his fellow citizens appreciated the vision that impelled him in the late thirties and early forties to labor so hard to prepare the nation for the probability of its entry into the war and against pacifistic tendencies that almost defeated the draft law.*

I thought of his moral courage, calmness, and wisdom after the war began in directing the mobilization and worldwide deployment of great armies and air forces; of the readiness and selflessness he displayed in forsaking all his cherished plans as he undertook new and onerous duties in the afternoon of his life.

These and a myriad of other things, I prayed that he might fully understand. But his modesty would have rejected any effort of others to tell him.

Now the documents telling of his life and time are being collected, edited, and made ready for historical use. They will tell future generations what those of us who were privileged to serve with him have long known: Here was truly a great man! (end of Eisenhower's comments)

THE PERSONAL ATTACKS ON GENERAL MARSHALL EISENHOWER FAILS TO RESPOND POLITICS OVER INDIVIDUAL LOYALTY???

The end of World War II saw the United States defeating two enemies -- Germany and Japan -- and gaining a new one, the Soviet Union.

The wartime alliance between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. had proven to be a marriage of convenience. With the ink barely dry on the treaties ending the war, the two new dominant world powers found themselves locked in a battle throughout postwar events. The Cold War had begun.

As the relationship between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. deteriorated, the fear of a Red Menace gripped America. Such sentiments were eagerly exploited by politicians seeking to fan the flames of communist hysteria. Republican senator Joseph McCarthy was one such politician. McCarthy grabbed headlines in 1950 with his claim that he held a list of 205 State Department employees who were "known Communists." When pressed for details, he reduced the number of names on the list to 57 but still maintained his fiery demands for their expulsion.

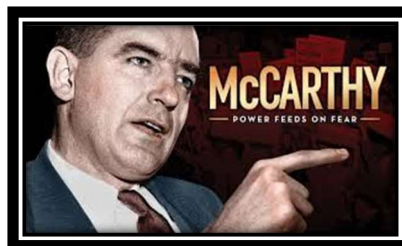
Dwight Eisenhower found Joseph McCarthy's demagoguery reprehensible. As a military man, he had been able to distance himself from petty political crusades in the name of the greater cause. But in 1952, as a first-time candidate for the office of the presidency, he found it would be a good deal more difficult to maintain his political purity.

When McCarthy delivered a blistering attack against former Secretary of State George C. Marshall, calling him "a man steeped in falsehood," (see McCarthy's full attack on Marshall on pages 2201 & 2202) candidate Eisenhower was faced with a dilemma. A popular member of his party was publicly disparaging a man Ike considered a valued mentor.

Eisenhower's personal and political instincts came into conflict during a campaign stop in McCarthy's home state of Wisconsin. Eisenhower was prepared to deliver a defense of Marshall, praising him "as a man and a soldier," and condemning the tactics of McCarthy as a "sobering lesson in the way freedom must not defend itself." But noble intentions gave way to political reality.

Aware of McCarthy's huge base of support and not willing to risk losing votes in a crucial state, Eisenhower omitted his defense of Marshall, his former mentor and boss during World War II, when he gave his speech.

Eisenhower endured a torrent of criticism, even from some Republicans, that he had compromised his principles for political advantage. It was a decision that would haunt him for the rest of his life.



EISENHOWER'S EVENTUAL DESTRUCTION OF SENATOR MCCARTHY

McCarthy's influence did not abate after Ike had entered the White House. In an apparent effort to demonstrate that he, too, was tough on communists, Eisenhower supported legislation extending the reach of espionage and sabotage laws and authorized the FBI to step up its efforts to infiltrate and disrupt Communist Party activities.

Eisenhower refused to grant executive clemency to Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were convicted of spying for the Soviets, even though he admitted being "impressed with all the honest doubt" concerning the fairness of their trial. Ike allowed the execution to go forward in "the hope that it would deter others." But various news organizations, including the generally supportive *Time* magazine, criticized what they called the Eisenhower administration's "disgraceful episodes of appeasement" of McCarthy and his anti-communist crusade.

President Eisenhower defended his refusal to denounce McCarthy publicly, claiming that to do so would only further polarize the nation and reward McCarthy with additional publicity.

To his aides, Eisenhower vowed, "I will not get into the gutter with this guy."

By the end of 1953, polls indicated that at least half of all Americans had a favorable impression of McCarthy and his tactics. Emboldened by such support, McCarthy set out to widen the scope of his investigations. This time, however, he would go too far.

When McCarthy, armed with little more than hearsay and innuendo, set out to expose communists within the U.S. Army, Eisenhower decided enough was enough. He instructed his staff to present information that would discredit McCarthy. It was revealed that McCarthy had petitioned the Army to award preferential treatment to his assistant, David Shine. Finding himself on the defensive, McCarthy demanded notes of meetings between Eisenhower administration personnel and Army officials.

Eisenhower established a presidential precedent by invoking executive privilege in refusing to turn over the notes. Claiming that matters of national security might be breached if administration officials were forced to testify under oath, Eisenhower robbed McCarthy of the opportunity to perpetuate his inquisition. From that point on the Army-McCarthy hearings degenerated into a series of increasingly unfounded and paranoid accusations.

Eisenhower quietly exerted pressure on Republican senators to go forward with a censure of McCarthy. In December 1954, the Wisconsin senator was condemned for conduct unbecoming a Senator.

Eisenhower had been successful in undermining McCarthy by employing "hidden hand" tactics, but critics contended that more decisive action could have prevented many innocent people from being forever tainted by groundless charges.

THE ACTUAL SPEECH MADE BY US SENATOR JOSEPH MCCARTHY ON THE FLOOR OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE ATTACKING RETIRED GENERAL, FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE, AND THEN PRESENT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE GEORGE C. MARSHALL IN JUNE 1951

MCCARTHY LISTS PERCEIVED FAILURES OR CONCESSIONS TO THE SOVIET UNION, THEN SUGGESTS THAT MARSHALL IS PART OF A COMMUNIST CONSPIRACY:

"How can we account for our present situation unless we believe that men high in this government are concerting to deliver us to disaster?" This must be the product of a great conspiracy, a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man. A conspiracy of infamy so black that, when it is finally exposed, its principals shall be forever deserving of the maledictions of all honest men.

Who constitutes the highest circles of this conspiracy? About that, we cannot be sure. We are convinced that Dean Acheson, who steadfastly serves the interests of nations other than his own, the friend of

Alger Hiss, who supported him in his hour of retribution, who contributed to his defense fund, must be high on the roster.

The President? He is their captive... I do not believe that Mister Truman is a conscious party to the great conspiracy, although it is being conducted in his name. I believe that if Mister Truman could associate good Americans around him, he would have behaved as a good American in this most dire of all our crises...

Let us again review the Marshall record, as I have disclosed it from all the sources available, and all of them are friendly. This grim and solitary man it was who, early in World War II, determined to put his impress upon our global strategy, political and military...

It was a Marshall-sponsored memorandum, advising appeasement of Russia in Europe and the enticement of Russia into the far-eastern war...

It was Marshall who, at Tehran, made common cause with Stalin on the strategy of the war in Europe and marched side by side with him thereafter.

It was Marshall who enjoined his chief of the military mission in Moscow under no circumstances to "irritate" the Russians by asking them questions about their forces, their weapons, and their plans, while at the same time opening our schools, factories, and gradually our secrets to them in this count.

It was Marshall who, as Hanson Baldwin asserts, himself referring only to the "military authorities," prevented us from having a corridor to Berlin. So, it was with the capture and occupation of Berlin and Prague ahead of the Russians.

It was Marshall who sent Deane to Moscow to collaborate with Harriman in drafting the terms of the unnecessary bribe paid to Stalin at Yalta...

It was Marshall, with Acheson and Vincent eagerly assisting, who created the China policy which, destroying China, robbed us of a great and friendly ally, a buffer against the Soviet imperialism with which we are now at war.

It was Marshall who, after long conferences with Acheson and Vincent, went to China to execute the criminal folly of the disastrous Marshall mission.

It was Marshall who, upon returning from a diplomatic defeat for the United States at Moscow, besought the reinstatement of 40 million [dollars] in lend-lease for Russia...

It was the State Department under Marshall... that sabotaged the \$125 million military aid bill to China in 1945.

It was Marshall who fixed the dividing line for Korea along the 38th parallel, a line historically chosen by Russia to mark its sphere of interest in Korea.

It is Marshall's strategy for Korea that has turned that war into a pointless slaughter, reversing the dictum of Von Clausewitz and every military theorist since him that the object of war is not merely to kill but to impose your will on the enemy...

It is Marshall who, advocating timidity as a policy so as not to annoy the forces of Soviet imperialism in Asia, had admittedly put a brake on the preparations to fight, rationalizing his reluctance on the ground that the people are fickle and if war does not come, will hold him to account for excessive zeal.

What can be made of this unbroken series of decisions and acts contributing to the strategy of defeat? They cannot be attributed to incompetence. If Marshall were merely stupid, the laws of probability would dictate that part of his decisions would serve this country's interest...

What is the objective of the great conspiracy? ... To diminish the United States in world affairs, to weaken us militarily, to confuse our spirit with talk of surrender in the Far East, and to impair our will to

resist evil. To what end? To the end that we shall be contained, frustrated and, finally, fall victim to Soviet intrigue from within and Russian military might from without..." [\(End of speech\)](#)

[MARSHALL'S RESPONSE](#)

Marshall responded to these personal attacks with dignity and honor, even when those he had helped in the past failed to fully support him.



George Catlett Marshall
[A True American Who Served His Country Well](#)

When former General Dwight D. Eisenhower was campaigning for president in Wisconsin in 1952, he shared a stage with Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Eisenhower planned to deliver a tribute to Marshall's great accomplishments and a defense of his character. However, on the advice of his political aides, Eisenhower deleted the Marshall tribute from his speech.

[Marshall, in his gracious and honorable way, never held a grudge against his old friend Eisenhower and rarely spoke of the outrageous accusations that had been made against him.](#)



President Harry Truman and Secretary of State George C. Marshall

[NOT SO WITH THEN-PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN - 1952](#)

["I had never thought the man who is now the Republican candidate would stoop so low," President Truman declared about Eisenhower's failure to defend Marshall.](#) Truman at first had stayed out of the campaign, but eventually, he plunged in. He resented the Republican attacks on his record, and he thought that Stevenson's erudite speeches were going over the heads of the American people. Truman traveled the country in a whistle-stop campaign as he had in 1948 and made angry and extreme charges.

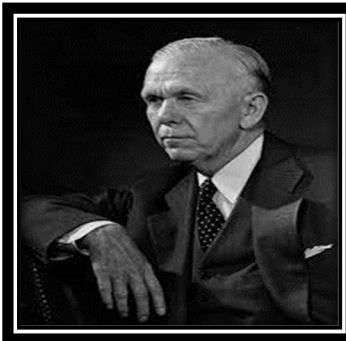
"There was a time when I thought he would make a good President," Truman told a crowd in Ohio, as he discussed Eisenhower's qualifications. "That was my mistake." Eisenhower, Truman insisted, Eisenhower was a "stooge for Wall Street." On another occasion, he said that the general was the puppet of "Republican reactionaries" who were telling Eisenhower what to say. Republican "truth squads" followed President Truman and replied to what they said were his "fabrications."

From this point forward any relationship or "Getting Along" which each other never had a chance!

SUMMARY/INFORMATION



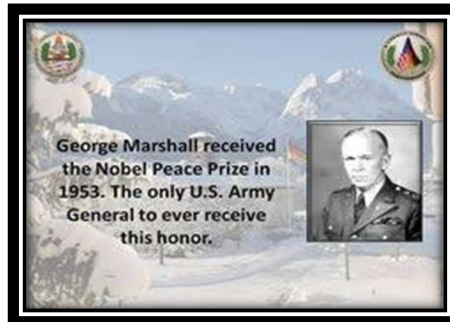
50TH SECRETARY OF STATE 1947-1949



3rd SECRETARY OF DEFENSE 1950-1951



15TH CHIEF OF STAFF – US ARMY 1939-1945



NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNER – 1953



HIS HAPPIEST PLACE TO BE. - WORKING IN HIS GARDEN

He served as U.S. Special Envoy to China 1945-1947

He served As The 10th President of The Red Cross from 1949-1950

He Graduated from VMI (Virginia Military Institute) at the age of 20.

In 1944 he became the first person in the US Army to become a 5 Star General.

Winston Churchill lauded him as "The Organizer for Victory" for his leadership in the Allies Victory in 1942.

After finally retiring in 1951, at the age of 71, Marshall largely withdrew from public life. A notable exception was in June 1953, when he accepted President Eisenhower's appointment to head the American delegation to the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

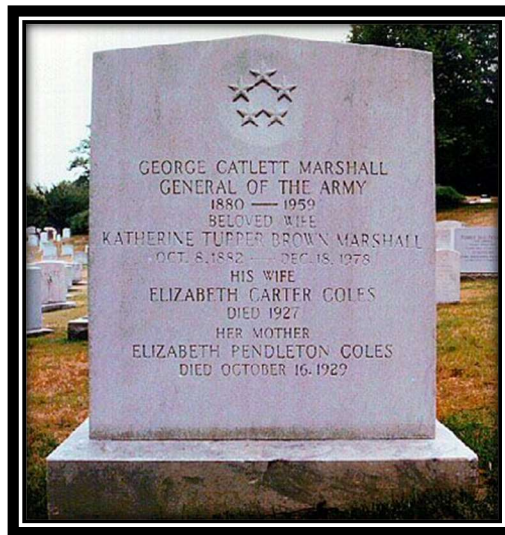
The delegation included Earl Warren and Omar Bradley, and according to Bradley, as Marshall walked up the Westminster Abbey aisle to take his seat before the ceremony, the audience rose to its feet as a gesture of respect.

Marshall looked behind him to see who the arriving dignitary was, then realized the audience had stood for him.

Marshall was also invited to the post-ceremony banquet at Buckingham Palace and was the only non-royal seated at Queen Elizabeth's table.

DEATH AND LEGACY

George Marshall died on October 16, 1959, at 78 in his home in Washington D.C., and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery beside his first wife and her mother, Elizabeth Pendleton Coles (1849–1929). His second wife was also buried with him after she died in 1978.



After leaving office, in a television interview, Harry Truman was asked who he thought was the American who made the greatest contribution in the last thirty years. Without hesitation, Truman picked Marshall, adding "I don't think in this age in which I have lived, that there has been a man who has been a greater administrator, a man with a knowledge of military affairs equal to General Marshall.

Orson Welles, in an interview with Dick Cavett, said that "Marshall is the greatest man I ever met... He was the greatest human being who was also a great man... He was a tremendous gentleman, an old-fashioned institution which isn't with us anymore."

Despite worldwide acclaim, dozens of national and international awards and honors, and the Nobel Peace Prize, public opinion became bitterly divided along party lines on Marshall's record. While campaigning for president in 1952, Eisenhower denounced the Truman administration's failures in Korea, campaigned alongside McCarthy, and refused to defend Marshall's policies. Marshall, who assisted Eisenhower in his promotions, and in refusing to lobby for the position of supreme commander effectively stood aside, thus allowing Eisenhower an opportunity to be chosen for that role, was surprised at the lack of a positive statement supporting him from Eisenhower during the McCarthy hearings.

[VIDEO 'THE BIG PICTURE' AVAILABLE](#)

If interested in watching the **29-minute video explained below**, *[please copy the link listed below and paste it into your browser.](#)*

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?304826-1/the-general-marshall-story>



The **"GENERAL MARSHALL STORY"** is a film produced in 1963 by the US Army and broadcast now by C-SPAN and [is narrated by a young Walter Cronkite.](#)

This film aired as part of "The Big Picture" series, on ABC television from 1951 through 1975. The series focused on historic battles, figures, and traditions in U.S. military history. [END](#)

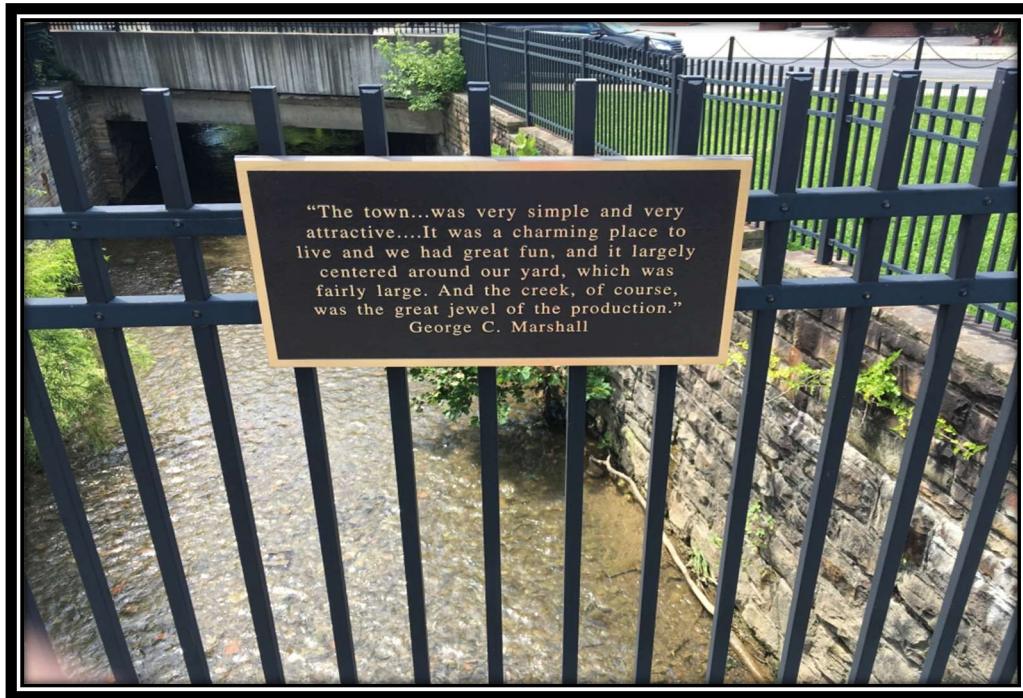


The sign above reads "I come from a young country, therefore an impatient country. Our purpose is to see that peace comes to the world, to men's minds, and comfort to the people. There is no doubt in my mind that if we decide this thing we can do it successfully and there is no doubt in my mind that the whole world hangs in the balance. [George C. Marshall](#)



The cost of war is written neatly on many ledgers whose columns are gravestones. I am moved to find some means of avoiding the calamity of another way” [George C. Marshall](#).

He was a Military Leader, A Politician, Humble, yet very Persuasive, a Natural Born Leader, and a very Highly Respected Individual throughout the World and a true American Patriot who did everything his country asked of him, perhaps the likes of which we may never see again.



PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT EVEN THOUGH THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM WEBSITES & OTHER SOURCES THAT APPEAR TO BE AUTHENTIC, I CAN NOT GUARANTEE THAT ALL THE DATA IN THIS ARTICLE IS ACCURATE AND CORRECT.