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THE ARMY OF THE SOUTH-WEST, AND THE FIRST CAMPAIGN IN ARKANSAS.

BY SAM'L PRENTIS CURTIS,
BREVET CAPTAIN AND AID-DE-CAMP TO MAJOR GENERAL CURTIS.

CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

(Continued from page 132.)

At nearly every plantation on the line of march, there was to be seen, either a smouldering pile of half-burned cotton, or the blackened traces of its conflagration, and on the banks of White River were scattered the burnt fragments of bales destroyed by the rebel gunboat *Maurepas*.

On the last day's march to Augusta, the army encountered two extensive barricades of fallen timber, recently prepared by the rebels to obstruct the march of the Union army. A way was, however, soon made through them, and a large number of slaves, who had been compelled by their masters to aid in preparing these obstructions, were, by order of General Curtis, confiscated as property, and set free. These "contrabands" followed the army to Helena.

Thus far the line of march had been along, or near, White River. Hopes had been entertained that the gunboats and transport fleet would reach Augusta, but on the arrival at this town, no trace of them was apparent; they had not arrived, and no one knew anything about them. To add to the feeling of disappointment, scouts from Pocahontas brought late St. Louis papers containing the first discouraging news of McClellan's seven days' fighting before Richmond. Fears

were entertained that the army of McClellan was either defeated or had been compelled to surrender.

The army remained at Augusta three days, but as nothing could be learned concerning the gunboats, it became necessary to move still lower down White River to Clarendon, where it was confidently expected the fleet would be found. The army was passing down the east bank of White River. Cache River, running into White, below Augusta, caused an immense cypress swamp, covering a large tract near its mouth. To avoid this swamp, a detour to the east was necessary, leaving White River, and not again touching it before reaching Clarendon. Des Arc and Duvall's Bluff, two towns on the west bank, garrisoned by the rebels, would thus necessarily be avoided. The former, until recently, was in telegraphic communication with Memphis. The latter was the terminus of the railroad to Little Rock, and was garrisoned by a rebel force consisting of five regiments of Texan Rangers, one regiment of Arkansas cavalry, one regiment of Texas infantry, one battery of six pieces, and two 42 pound guns.

On July 7th, Curtis left Augusta before daybreak, a conflagration in the town lighting the road. Such things were of frequent occurrence during the remainder of the march to Helena. After sixteen miles march the army bivouacked for the night in a thick forest near the crossing of Cache. The rebels had here constructed the most formidable barricade and abattis of fallen timber, encountered on the march, but after considerable labor, a way was found around it, and the army crossed the Cache in safety.

In the latter part of this same day occurred the brilliant engagement of "Round Hill" or "Bayou DeCache," a few miles beyond the crossing of Cache River.

The official reports furnish a correct history.

COL. HOVEY.

HEADQUARTERS SECOND BRIGADE, }
GENERAL STEELE'S DIVISION, A. S. W., July 7, 1862. }

CAPTAIN :

Pursuant to orders, I directed Col. Harris, with parts of four companies of his regiment, the eleventh Wisconsin infantry, and parts of four com-

panies of the 33d Illinois infantry, and one small steel gun of the 1st Indiana cavalry, in all a little less than four hundred men, to make a reconnoissance in advance of our lines. He fell in with the rebel pickets at Hill's plantation, and fired on them. Passing the forks of the road at this place towards Bayou De View, he had proceeded but a short distance, when I overtook him and turned him back, with instructions to hasten down the Des Arc road, and, if possible, rescue a prisoner just captured. He marched rapidly for half a mile, and fell into an ambush. The woods swarmed with rebels, and the firing was terrific. I have since learned that over two thousand Texas troops were here drawn up in line of battle. Capt. Miller led our advance, and was immediately followed by 1st Lieut. Chesebro, both of whose companies were deployed as skirmishers. These companies began the fight. The little cannon was planted a short distance to the left of the road, and opened fire. The rebel advance fell back on the main line, which was concealed by thick underbrush from our men. Col. Harris pushed on his advance until they came within range, when suddenly the enemy began a murderous fire. Our force, thus fiercely and unexpectedly assailed, was ordered to fall back, and in executing this order fell into some little confusion. The Rangers charged. Here Col. Harris was severely wounded, but still kept his horse, and though fainting, fought. I had now reached the field. The rebels, a full regiment strong, were charging at a gallop on the little steel gun which was left with Lieut. Denneman and one man. All others were gone. Capt. Potter with his company here came to the rescue, aided in limbering up, and withstood the charge of cavalry till the gun had fairly gained the road, when it was taken in charge by Lieut. Partridge. Capt. Potter was seriously wounded.

I now ordered the gun up the road in haste, and the infantry into the corn-field. As the rebels, confident of victory, came charging up the road at full speed, and in great force in pursuit, the infantry fired. The rebel column hesitated, but moved on. Another volley, and the ground was covered with their dead. Riderless horses rushed wildly in all directions. The Rangers wavered and halted. The third fire completed their demoralization and overthrow. They left as suddenly as they came, and in great disorder.

It was now certain that we had engaged a large force of well-armed men; how large it was impossible to tell, nor did I know their strategy, or have any but the most imperfect idea of the topography of the adjacent grounds. It seemed prudent, therefore, to hold the position already chosen, and which had proved to be a good one, and wait events. I soon discovered a large cavalry force filing past in front of my position, but just beyond musket range. When fully in front they halted, and ordered a charge. I could distinctly hear the order: "Charge, charge on the corn field!" but for some reason no charge was made. The column was again put in motion, with the intent, as I supposed, to gain my rear and cut off communication and reinforcements. Fortunately, the force which had been ordered back from the first onset, was now in position to check this movement, and again the rebels were forced to retreat.

Hardly had this movement failed, when I was apprised of an attempt to turn my left, and immediately despatched Capt. Elliott and his company to thwart it. During these shiftings of positions I could plainly see them caring for their dead and wounded, and removing them, but to what extent, I have no means of telling. They now formed on their original line of battle, and I moved upon them, extending my line till it became merely a line of skirmishers, to prevent being flanked, so great was the disproportion of the forces. No men could behave more handsomely than did the Wisconsin 11th, on my right, and the Illinois 33d on my left, while Lieut. Denneman, with his gun, supported by as large an infantry force as I could spare, held the centre. The rebels gave way, and, while driving them from the field, I heard a shout in the rear, and before fully comprehending what it meant, Lieut. Col. Wood, of the 1st Indiana cavalry, with one battalion and two more steel guns, came cantering up. It was the work of a moment for Lieut. Baker to unlimber his pieces and get in position. The woods were soon alive with shot and shell. The retreat became a rout. Our cavalry, led by Maj. Clendenning, charged vigorously, and the day was ours.

Already one hundred and ten (110) of the enemy's dead have been found, while their prisoners and the officer in charge of the flag of truce speak of the "terrible carnage," and estimate their dead at more than two hundred, and their wounded at a still greater number. Their loss in dead was, undoubtedly, much greater than the one hundred and ten whose bodies were found. I have been unable to ascertain the number of their wounded, or to make a reliable estimate; nor have I a report of the prisoners taken. A large number of horses were captured, and many left dead on the field. Sixty-six were counted within an area of half a mile square.

Our loss was seven killed and fifty-seven wounded.

The rebel force—Texas troops—engaged in the fight, could not have been far from two thousand (2,000) men, and was supported by a still larger reserve force, all under the command of Gen. Rust.

The loyal force was less than four hundred (400), increased just at the close by a cavalry force of about two hundred (200).

Where officers and men so uniformly behaved well, I can almost say heroically, it is, perhaps, invidious to particularize; and yet I may be pardoned for calling attention to the gallant conduct of Col. Harris and Capt. Miller, of the 11th Wisconsin; Maj. Clendenning, of the 1st Indiana cavalry, and Capt. L. H. Potter, of the 33d Illinois. Surg. H. P. Strong was on the field throughout the action, and his services deserve recognition.

Later in the afternoon, reinforcements came up, and Gen. Benton pursued the fleeing foe five or six miles towards Des Arc, killing several and taking prisoners. All along the route, he found the houses filled with the dead and wounded; curbstones were wet with blood, and in one case, even the water of the well was crimson with gore. Gen. Benton's force consisted of the 8th Indiana, Col. Shunk; a section of Manter's battery, 1st Missouri light artillery, Lieut. Schofield; part of the 11th Wisconsin, Major Platt; one howitzer from Bowen's battalion; the 13th Illinois cavalry, Col. Bell, and a battalion of the 5th Illinois cavalry, under Major Apperson.

After the battle, and while the wounded were being collected and cared for, another body of rebels appeared on the Bayou De View road and drove in our pickets. I immediately sent Lieut. Col. Wood, of the 11th Wisconsin, with a force of infantry, and the 1st Indiana cavalry to pursue and capture them. He proceeded to Bayou De View, shelled the rebels from their camp, and prevented the burning of the bridge, on which fagots had already been piled. By this time it was dark, and the forces rested.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

C. E. HOVEY, Colonel Commanding.

To Capt. J. W. Paddock, Ass't Adj't General.

LIEUT. COL. WOOD.

HEADQUARTERS FIRST INDIANA CAVALRY, }
HELENA, ARK., July 15, 1862. }

COL. CONRAD BAKER, COM'D'G. 4TH BRIGADE:

Sir—In obedience to your order, on the 7th inst., I proceeded with the 2d battalion, 1st regiment Indiana cavalry, and two steel rifled guns to the bridge across Bayou De View, which we fortunately succeeded in saving from destruction, the rebels having built a fire at the north end ready to burn it. This we prevented by cautiously approaching their pickets, who fired upon us and fled. We returned their fire and shelled their camp, killing three. The rest, supposed to be five hundred, fled in the utmost confusion.

In carrying out your order, we incidentally engaged a large force of the enemy composed of the 12th and 14th Texas cavalry, with several battalions of conscripts at Round Hill, eight miles north of Bayou De View. When within a mile of the place known as Round Hill, we met a messenger from Col. Hovey, who said that the Colonel had been attacked by a large force and had three companies killed. We afterward met a squad of infantry hurrying toward our camp on Cache River, who informed us that they had been "badly used up; Col. Hovey, 33d Illinois volunteers, with about four hundred infantry and one gun under the command of Lieut. Denneman, 1st regiment Indiana cavalry, had been fighting with the rebels and had retreated before a very large force, having a great number of men killed and wounded." Increasing our speed, we arrived at Round Hill, and the first squad of infantry we saw ran from us, supposing us to be the enemy. The principal part of the infantry were standing in groups in the edge of the woods adjoining the road. These received us with demonstrations of joy, cheering us enthusiastically. Here we met Col. Hovey and the gun belonging to the 1st Indiana cavalry. Col. Hovey told me that the enemy was down the road, and "plenty of them," at the same time saying to us "pitch into them." And we did "pitch into them," at full speed. The three guns, closely followed by the battalion of cavalry, galloped down the lane in the woods where we first discovered the enemy approaching in the form of a V. Instantly forming our line of battle, with guns in battery in the centre, and with one squadron on the left and

the other on the right, we poured canister into their front and shell in their rear. As the enemy gave way before this terrific fire, we followed them closely, giving no respite, for about two miles, sometimes running up our guns within one hundred yards of their lines. When the enemy began to waver, by my direction Maj. R. M. Clendenning, with companies E and G, made a furious charge upon their right flank, engaging them in a most gallant style for about twenty minutes, coolly receiving the enemy's fire. These two companies poured volley after volley from their carbines and pistols, cutting up the enemy's ranks in a dreadful manner. These two companies deserve special notice. They fought like veteran soldiers. At one time all the officers of company E were dismounted. Capt. Wm. W. Sloan, killed; 1st Lieut. Wm. V. Weathers, thrown from his horse; 2d Lieut. Chas. L. Lamb (my Adjutant), having his horse shot from under him. Notwithstanding these casualties, the men fought as only brave men can fight; riding into the enemy's ranks they delivered their fire with telling effect. Unable to stand before these determined men, the enemy broke and fled in great confusion, the cavalry breaking through the infantry, panic-stricken at the intrepid daring of our men. As the enemy fled we poured canister at them and shell over them, following them until further pursuit was useless, and we remained masters of the field. During the fight, Col. Hovey directed the movements of the skirmishers on our flanks. The infantry, with the exception of these skirmishers, was not engaged, but followed in the rear ready should any contingency arise requiring their assistance. The rebels suffered very severely. We have since ascertained their loss to be over two hundred killed and many wounded. We captured *one* prisoner. Capt. Wm. W. Sloan, company E, 1st Indiana cavalry, was killed while gallantly leading his men in the hottest of the fight. Maj. R. M. Clendenning was very severely wounded, a shot passing through the right lung, and one lodging in his arm. The conduct of Major Clendenning merits the highest commendation. He is a brave man. Corporal Nathan Collins and private James J. Clark were severely wounded. These deserve special notice. Eight others were slightly wounded. My thanks are due to Lieuts. William B. Baker and G. Denne-man, of the battery, and my Adjutant, Charles L. Lamb, for their cool and gallant conduct while exposed to the enemy's fire; also, to all the officers and men engaged.

After a short rest, we proceeded, with seven additional companies of infantry, under the command of Lieut. Col. Wood, of the 11th Wisconsin regiment, to the bridge across Bayou De View, as before mentioned.

I have the honor to be your obedient servant,

WILLIAM F. WOOD,

Lieut. Colonel 1st Reg. Indiana Cavalry.

This brilliant engagement compares well with any action of similar proportions during the war. The small number of national soldiers, scarce six hundred men, mingled fragments

of different infantry, artillery and cavalry commands, not even numbering in all a regiment, defeating and driving before them two thousand Texan rangers, with a loss trifling when compared with the enemy's loss of over two hundred, again affords an example of the superiority of disciplined soldiers to raw troops. In justice to the rebels, it must be admitted that in the quality of our arms, we were much their superiors. They may also have been apprehensive of the approach of the main army, which, however, could not have been brought into immediate action against them. Yet the fact of their complete rout by the small force engaged against them, still remains as a brilliant Union victory.

The army continued the march, and on the 9th reached Clarendon, on the east bank of White River, below Duvall's Bluff and Des Arc, and by the circuitous route over which the army had traveled, fifty-five miles from Augusta.

Before reaching Clarendon, news was received that the gunboats, with a land force commanded by Col. Fitch, were at the town, but it now appeared that the boats and troops had gone down the river the day before the arrival of the army of Curtis. The reason was unknown, and nothing of a more definite nature could be learned of their movements. Some anticipated their return, and it was even reported that the smoke of their chimneys had been seen down the river. But they came not, and it was rumored that they had been ordered into the Mississippi to assist in a demonstration on Vicksburg. To add to the bitterness of disappointment, the report, coming through rebel sources of information, that McClellan's army had been certainly defeated before Richmond, was circulated through camp, and cast a gloom over the spirits of the soldiers.

It was necessary that some decisive course be immediately adopted. Provisions were nearly exhausted, and the supplies on hand would last for but a few more days. All communication with loyal territory had terminated at Jacksonport. To await at Clarendon the arrival of the gunboats, or to go still lower down White River, in the absence of all informa-

tion as to their movements, was useless. The surrounding country would not furnish subsistence to the army, and a delay might involve the perils of starvation. All present plans for the capture of Little Rock must succumb to the more pressing necessities of the troops. The only practicable course to pursue, was to advance with as much rapidity as possible to some point on the Mississippi, and open communication by water with Memphis. Helena, a town of some importance before the war, distant sixty miles, south of east from Clarendon, and about one hundred miles by river below Memphis, was selected as the point where the army of the South-West should find rest, and, as afterwards appeared, terminate its long and arduous campaign.

The following order arranged the details, and the order of march on the remainder of the route to Helena:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE SOUTH-WEST, }
CAMP AT CLARENDON, ARK., July 10, 1862. }

Special Orders, }
No. 228. }

* * * * *

II. Brig. Gen. C. C. Washburn will proceed at 4 o'clock A. M., to-morrow, the 11th inst., with the most efficient portion of his command, and such other forces as may report to him from the 1st and 3d divisions, all to be provided with five days cooked rations, by forced marches to Helena, Ark., where he will assume command, preserve good order and property on the part of the soldiers and citizens, and await further orders from these Headquarters.

III. Capt. F. S. Winslow, A. Q. M. and Chief Q. M. of this army, and Lieut. J. W. Noble, Aid-de-Camp of the General Commanding, will accompany Brig. Gen. C. C. Washburn, on the expedition to Helena, and use all means in their power to open communication with the steamboats, and secure the necessary supplies for this army.

IV. *Order of March.*—Lieut. B. O. Carr, A. A. Q. M. and A. D. C., will regulate trains. Head of column will move at 4½ o'clock, July 11, 1862, in rear of the command of Brig. Gen. Washburn, otherwise ordered from these headquarters.

- 1st. General Commanding and Escort, Bowen's Battalion.
- 2d. 3d Division forces, Brig. Gen. Osterhaus.
- 3d. Train of General Commanding.
- 4th. Train of 3d Division.
- 5th. Maj. E. W. Weston's Command.
- 6th. Train of Maj. Weston's Command.

- 7th. Gen. Washburn's Train Guards.
- 8th. Gen. Washburn's Train.
- 9th. 1st Arkansas Infantry, and Commissary and Quartermaster's General Trains and Stock.
- 10th. Train of 1st Division.
- 11th. 1st Division forces, Brig. Gen. F. Steele.

The 2d Division, Brig. Gen. E. A. Carr, will bring up the rear as soon as his troops are sufficiently rested, with a strong rear guard.

Unless otherwise directed this order of march will be continued to the Mississippi River.

By command of Maj. Gen. Curtis.

H. Z. CURTIS, Asst. Adjt. Gen'l.

On the 11th and 12th of July, Clarendon was evacuated, Carr's troops, which had brought up the rear of the army, and were the last to arrive, being the last to depart. For four days the march continued over hot, dusty roads, through a rich cotton-growing country, with fine plantations, now principally devoted to the cultivation of corn.

At nearly every plantation, the slaves had learned of the march of the "Yankees" through the land, and hundreds lined the road, well supplied with provisions, and prepared to follow the army to any place it might move. These slaves, together with those that had been previously "confiscated," formed the nucleus of the large camps of "contrabands" afterwards established at Helena.

General Curtis arrived in Helena July 14th, establishing his headquarters in the fine residence of the rebel General Hindman. Washburn had arrived two days before, and Captain Winslow and Lieut. Noble had proceeded at once to Memphis and made arrangements to have supplies sent to Helena. Upon the arrival of Curtis, steamboats were laying at the wharf with an abundance of commissary stores.

Here ended the long and arduous march, averaging seven hundred and fifty miles, of the "Army of the South West."*

*In an obituary notice of General Curtis in the Annals for January, 1867, as also in a sketch of his life, in the Phrenological Journal for November, 1867, the writer has under estimated the average distance marched by the army during this campaign. A more complete list of distances from point to point than was then attainable, with proper allowances for return marches, from several points, makes the average march of the

The first campaign of an army in Arkansas (and with it this narrative) properly terminates in the capture of Helena, then, and for a long time afterwards, as a strongly garrisoned town, the advanced Union post on the line of the Mississippi. Changes were made in the organization of the army, but it never again took the field as an independent command. Some regiments were ordered away, and others supplied the vacancy. The brigade of Col. Fitch became embodied in the army, which was re-organized in four divisions, the first three divisions being commanded by their former Generals, Steele, Carr, and Osterhaus, and the 4th division being commanded by Brig. Gen. A. P. Hovey.

Curtis still intended to move on Little Rock, and the re-organization of the army was made partly for that object. But the delays encountered, and the inability to secure the cooperation of the gunboats on the White and Arkansas rivers, prevented the execution of this plan. The accompanying reports of the White River expedition, show that the failure of Fitch to connect with Curtis, at Clarendon, was mainly due to a similar cause. The gunboats, which until lately had been under the control of Halleck, were placed under the direct control of the Secretary of the Navy, and applications from the Department Commander for their assistance in opening White River, were met with tedious delay and inefficiency. Halleck asserted that the original

entire army about seven hundred and fifty miles. The erroneous estimate made it but five hundred miles. Another error arising from misinformation, occurs in the first chapter of this history, Annals of April, 1866, as well as in the obituary of General Curtis, Annals of January, 1867. The General is said to have been born in Ohio, February 3d, 1807. The true place and time of his birth, as shown by his father's family record, and the statements of the older members of his family, were "at the family homestead, near the village of Champlain, New York, on the 3d of February, A. D. 1805." An inaccuracy of statement in a paragraph on page 132, Annals for April, 1869, relative to the attack on a hospital boat on White River, escaped attention until the number was published. The error arose from substantially following the recorded language of a hastily written "brief," or abridgement of General Carr's dispatch to the commanding General. There is an evident confusion as to the number of boats attacked. The facts were, that while a number of flat-boats were in use by the Union troops on White River, there seems to have been but one used as a hospital boat, which materially suffered under the rebel fire. Whether other boats contained any of the sick, or whether they were attacked by the enemy, does not certainly appear. It is enough, however, that one boat, unmistakably a hospital, was thus attacked, to show the practical operation of Hindman's guerrilla system.

object in seizing Helena was to furnish a base of operations on Little Rock, operating from the Mississippi. It was, indeed, the object to change the base to the Mississippi or Lower White River, and Halleck had originally directed Steele to move from Pilot Knob to Helena. This order was suspended by the merging of Steele's command with the Army of the South West, and Helena was rather seized as the last resort of an army in danger of destruction from want of supplies, and not properly supported by a gunboat flotilla, at a point much nearer, and communicating directly by railroad with the rebel State capital.

Numerous expeditions were thrown out into the surrounding country from Helena. It is impossible to mention more than a few. The division of Hovey moved back and re-occupied Clarendon for a time, and reconnoissances by gunboats and troops on steamboats were made down the Mississippi and in the Arkansas Rivers. On July 17th, General Curtis, with a considerable force, moved down the Mississippi and twenty-five miles up the Arkansas. A large amount of small arms and ammunition, and some twenty-five pieces of artillery, had been smuggled across the river and into Arkansas, during the previous week, near Gaines' Landing. Gen. Curtis destroyed between seventy and eighty rebel flatboats and one small steamboat, his advance driving a rebel picket from Gaines' Landing, and killing one rebel. He sent scouts south of the Arkansas River in the hope of intercepting the artillery. On July 20th he returned to Helena. Majors T. I. McKenny and Wm. D. Bowen, with a detachment of the 46th Indiana Infantry and Bowen's batalion, while detached from General Curtis, destroyed a steam ferry and twenty or thirty flat boats. At Eunice, where a railroad had been commenced leading west to the Washita, they destroyed a locomotive and some rolling stock. At Prentiss, Miss., they captured over one hundred muskets, and at Napoleon, some fifteen or twenty casks of sugar and molasses.

In the latter part of August, a naval and military expedition, consisting of one brigade, commanded by Colonel C. R.

Woods, the gunboats under acting flag officer Phelps, and the rams under Colonel Ellet, moved down the river from Helena. Near Milliken's Bend they captured the rebel transport steamer "Fair Play," with a large and valuable cargo of arms and ammunition. A rebel force was pursued inland, on the west bank, to Monroe, Louisiana, the terminus of a railroad and telegraph line. The depot buildings were burned, and the telegraph line was destroyed, thereby cutting off the rebel communication with Little Rock and Providence, La. Eleven hogsheads of sugar, three baggage wagons, and considerable baggage were also destroyed. Thirty-five prisoners were captured, and a large number of negroes were brought to Helena. A portion of the command, with Colonel Ellet's rams, entered the Yazoo River and captured a battery of four 42-pound guns and two field pieces, the enemy flying without an attempt at resistance. The heavy pieces were disabled, and the field pieces were brought away. This was among the first attacks on Vicksburg. The expedition returned, reconnoitering the banks, and clearing out the guerrillas, to Helena.

About the last of August, Curtis obtained a leave of absence to attend the Pacific Railroad Convention in Chicago. Before the expiration of his leave, he was appointed to the command of the Department of the Missouri. The immediate command of the Army of the South West, was assumed by Steele, but the army was soon afterwards absorbed in other organizations, a portion being retained under Steele in the operations against Vicksburg.

No other army had thus far, in the history of the war, performed a like march of seven hundred and fifty miles, the average distance traveled from Rolla to Cross Hollows, Bentonville and Fayetteville, and thence to Batesville, Little Red River and Helena, through as wild, as mountainous, and as varied a region, over a tract as remote from the sources of supply, and subjected to as many vicissitudes of climate. No other army had thus far swung loose from its base, abandoned its communication with all loyal territory and sur-

rounded by a watchful and dangerous enemy, performed a long and arduous march of over one hundred and fifty miles, patiently enduring every hardship, and finally arriving at a new base of operations in safety, and after the loyal people of the land had almost become assured of its capture or annihilation.

Without detracting from the glory which is elsewhere due, it may well be said that no other army had thus far surpassed, in usefulness, the army of the South West. The battle of Pea Ridge, shining one of the brightest in the long list of Union victories; the numerous lesser but successful skirmishes, culminating in the brilliant engagement of Round Hill; the protection which had for many months been afforded to St. Louis the great centre of military operations in the West; the restoration of Missouri to the Union; the paralysis of the rebellion west of the Mississippi; the capture of Helena, the advance post on the line of national occupation of the Mississippi; the injury, havoc and waste that had been created in the enemy's country, and which had crippled his power and abated his spirit, with the assistance and co-operation thus afforded the national army east of the Mississippi, were the military good work it had performed.

The future historian of the great rebellion, may award to all, the glory which is due, but while the soldiers who fought the later contests of the war, may perhaps boast of more hard fought fields and bloodier battles, profounder strategy, and greater campaigns, attended with more brilliant results, their glory will not be greater than that which belongs to the earlier patriots who set the example of the first great victories, and made the first successful campaigns of the war.*

* A brief statement of the connection of the writer with the Army of the South West, is here appropriate, as showing the opportunities afforded him for giving a correct narrative, with the reasons for its having been written. During the campaign he was a Sergeant of Co. "A," 2d Iowa Infantry Volunteers, detailed on clerical duty at the headquarters of his relative, Gen. Curtis, continuing in similar employment under General Curtis, Schofield and Rosecrans, at department headquarters in St. Louis. Upon the termination of his original enlistment, he received a commission in a Kansas regiment with the appointment of Aidecamp to Gen. Curtis, which he retained until the close of the war in 1865. Gen. Curtis was requested by the Corresponding Secretary of the State Historical Society, in 1863, to furnish for publication in the ANNALS an account of the

And of these he will record no more successful or more difficult campaign than that of Curtis, no nobler corps than the "Army of the South West." †

CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.—APPENDIX.

REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF THE WHITE RIVER EXPEDITION UNDER COL. GRAHAM N. FITCH, TO RELIEVE GEN. CURTIS.

ST. CHARLES (WHITE RIVER), ARK., June 17, 1862.

BRIG. GEN. QUIMBY, Commanding Dist. of Miss:

Sir:—On arriving eight miles below here, last evening, we ascertained that the enemy had two batteries here, supported by a force (numbers un-

South-Western campaign. The General requested the writer to prepare an appropriate account, which, in the absence of any other history of the campaign, has been extended far beyond the limits originally contemplated. It is due to the memory of Gen. Curtis to say, that, although written at his request, he never saw the manuscript, and only the three first numbers of the ANNALS containing the work, and he is responsible for no more than appears over his own signature, or as extracts from his writings and orders.

† Table of distances traveled by the Army of the South-West, commanded by Maj. Gen. Curtis, 1862.

Rolla to Lebanon, Missouri.....	63 miles.
Lebanon to Marshfield, Mo.....	26 "
Marshfield to Pierson's Creek, Mo.....	12 "
Pierson's Creek to Springfield, Mo.....	9 "
Springfield to Cassville, ".....	57 "
Cassville to Keetsville, ".....	10 "
Keetsville to Sugar Creek, Arkansas.....	12 "
Sugar Creek to Cross Hollows, ".....	12 "
Sugar Creek to Bentonville, ".....	18 "
Bentonville to Fayetteville, ".....	20 or 25 "
Camp Cross Timbers to Cassville, Mo.....	12 "
Cassville to Galena, ".....	31 or 35 "
Galena to Forsyth, ".....	31 "
Forsyth to Vera Cruz, ".....	49 "
Vera Cruz to West Plains, ".....	45 or 50 "
West Plains, Mo., to Salem, Ark.....	32 "
Salem to Batesville, ".....	39 "
Batesville to Little Red River, Ark.....	38 "
Batesville to Jacksonport, ".....	26 "
Jacksonport to Augusta, ".....	35 "
Augusta to Clarendon, ".....	56 "
Clarendon to Helema, ".....	60 "

known) of infantry. A combined attack was made at 7 A. M. to-day. The regiment under my command (46th Ind.) landed $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles below the batteries. Skirmishers were thrown out, who drove in the enemy's pickets. The gunboats then moved up and opened on their batteries. A rifled shot from one of the latter penetrated the "steam drum" of the "Mound City," disabling, by scalding, most of her crew.

Apprehensive some similar accident might happen other of the gunboats, and thus leave my small command without their support, I signaled the gunboats to cease firing, and we would storm the batteries. They ceased at exactly the right moment, and my men carried the batteries gallantly. The infantry were driven from the support of the guns and the gunners shot at their posts. Their commanding officer, "Fry," formerly of the United States Navy, wounded and captured, and eight brass and iron guns with ammunition taken. The enemy's loss unknown; we have buried seven or eight of their dead, and others of their dead and wounded are being brought in; the casualties among my own command few and simple, the only real loss being from the escaping steam on the "Mound City." She will probably be repaired ready to proceed with us up the river to-morrow. A full report will be made as early as possible.

(Signed)

G. N. FITCH, Col. Com'd'g.

ON STEAMER "WHITE CLOUD," }
ASCENDING WHITE RIVER, ARK., JUNE 19, 1862. }

BRIG. GEN. QUIMBY, Com'd'g Dist. Miss:

Sir:—Current events have hitherto prevented the detailed report of the affair at St. Charles, in this state, promised in my hasty despatch of the 17th inst.

The vicinity of the enemy having been ascertained on the evening previous, a combined movement was arranged, with a view to an attack, between Capt. Kelty, senior officer of the gunboats, for 6 o'clock A. M. of that day (17th inst). At that hour the flotilla moved up to about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles below the town. The land troops (46th Ind.) disembarked and skirmishers were thrown out, who quickly drove in the enemy's pickets and pushed forward to the foot of the bluff, upon which the village is built, and the batteries were placed. Beyond the foot of the bluff the skirmishers could not advance without being exposed to the fire of our gunboats. Their fire (gunboats) had, up to this time, been in the supposed direction of the batteries, but their precise location was not known, as they were concealed by thick timber on the brow of the hill. The position of the lower batteries was first discovered by its firing upon the officers of the 46th Indiana while forming the regiment for an anticipated advance. Capt. Kelty was informed that the pickets were driven in and the troops ready to storm the batteries unless he desired to silence them by moving up with his gunboats. He preferred the latter alternative, and his fire was severe and well directed, and briskly returned by the enemy. After its continuance

some thirty minutes, a 64 pound rifled shot, from one of the guns of their upper battery, entered the larboard fore-quarter of the "Mound City," killing a gunner and passing through the steam drum. The crew were seen from the shore to spring through the port-holes into the river. Scarcely had they done so before a party of the enemy's sharp-shooters descended the bluff from the batteries, and under cover of fallen timber on the river bank, commenced firing upon those who were struggling in the water, and also, firing upon those in oar-boats sent to pick them up. At the same time another party of the enemy, concealed in the timber of the opposite side of the river, pursued the same barbarous course. So strongly marked was the contrast between the conduct on their part and that of our sailors and soldiers at Memphis, who risked their lives to save those of the enemy who had been driven into the river by steam or flames, as to excite an intense desire upon the part of the land forces to end the scene and punish their barbarity. And aside from this desire, well-grounded fears were entertained that other of the gunboats—"St. Louis," "Conestoga," and "Lexington" (the two latter wooden)—might be disabled, and the expedition thus deprived of its main support. The gunboats were therefore signaled to cease firing that the troops might storm the batteries. The skirmishers were again advanced and ordered to pay particular attention to such of the enemy as had been shooting our men in the river. The main body of the regiment followed in line at 300 yards. On reaching the top of the bluff, the line right-half wheeled to take the batteries flank and rear, and were put upon double quick. The enemy had stationed one piece to the right of their lower battery in the direction of our approach, but finding the piece and its supporters flanked, they attempted to withdraw it to cover the rear of the battery. It was overtaken and captured near what was to have been its new position, and the capture of the battery quickly followed. The loss of the enemy is not accurately known. We have buried eight or nine of their dead, others, skirmishers, are known to have been killed and wounded by our skirmishers in a cornfield and the edge of the timber, but the necessity of moving on up the river soon as possible, and the fatigue of the men (weather very warm), compelled us to leave them to the care of citizens and surgeons of the vicinity, who promised, and doubtless will bestow, every attention. Among the dead buried was an officer we failed to identify. Their commander, Col. Fry, an old officer of the United States Navy, was wounded and captured, and about thirty prisoners taken. Four of the guns captured have been sent to Memphis; the others, for want of transportation, were thrown in the river, or otherwise rendered useless. The land troops lost none killed, and the injuries were few and simple. The loss from steam on the "Mound City" is great; nearly all her crew, of more than a hundred, being disabled, among them Capt. Kelty, and half or more of them are dead. The injury to the ship is slight. I placed on board of her a new crew of infantry and mortar boatmen, all of whom had been serving with my command as gunners. The ship is under charge of a Master. One of the wounded of the enemy, since died, stated that Col. Fry ordered the firing upon the

crew of the "Mound City," while in the water. It is but just to him, however, to say that he denies the charge. Opposite the upper battery the enemy had sunk their gunboat "Maurepas" and two transports to obstruct the channel, but failed to accomplish their object. Every officer and man of the 46th did his duty.

Very respectfully, yours,

G. N. FITCH, Col. Com'd'g 46th Ind. Vol's.

U. S. GUNBOAT "ST. LOUIS," June 19, 1862.

COL. G. N. FITCH :

Colonel :—Yours of this evening has been received, and in reply I have to say, that upon the advice of the pilots of both this ship and the "Lexington," and the White River pilot I have on board, in connection with the fact that I have already, to-day, stirred up the bottom with the "St. Louis," as seen from the "Lexington" by Lieut. Com'd'g Shirk and the officers of that gunboat, and that as the river is falling quite rapidly, I have concluded not to subject the gunboats to the risk which appears to be imminent of loss or detention all summer by low water by proceeding any farther up the river.

You cannot regret more than I the necessity which prevents our communicating with Gen. Curtis, but, under the circumstances, I shall not feel justified in risking my command.

I will start down the river at 4 o'clock to-morrow morning.

I am very respectfully your obedient servant,

W. MCGUNNEGLE, Lieut. Com'd'g.

ST. CHARLES, ARK., June 21, 1862.

MAJ. GEN. L. WALLACE, Com'd'g, Memphis, Tenn. :

Dear Sir :—Yours of 19th received. Although advised that you was *near* I did not know you was *in* Memphis, and therefore made my report as heretofore directed, to Gen. Quimby. The reports for yesterday and day before having been made out before receipt of yours, were given the same direction, but are enclosed to you. Hereafter I will report to you direct.

You will perceive by accompanying reports that we ascended the river eighty miles above this point and found the water too shallow to permit the heavier gunboats to proceed further with safety. We have therefore returned here to wait orders. Nothing was said about reinforcements in my report of 17th inst., as information obtained here on that day rendered it quite certain that the principal dependence of the enemy for closing the river against us was upon the batteries, troops and sunken boats at this place. These obstacles being overcome it was thought our combined force would be sufficient to repel any guerrilla attacks from the river bank, and take or silence a battery, it was deemed not improbable might be found at Duvall's Bluff (95 miles above here), the terminus of a railroad from Little Rock, and only 40 miles distant from that place.

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