

signal service. I must also thank my commanders of Posts who supported my line of operation and deserve like consideration as their duties were more arduous; Col. Boyd at Rolla; Col. Waring at Lebanon; Col. Mills at Springfield, and Lieut. Col. Holland at Cassville.

To do justice to all I would spread before you the most of the rolls of this army, for I can bear testimony to the almost universal good conduct of officers and men who have shared with me the long march, the many conflicts by the way, and final struggle with the combined forces of Price, McCulloch, McIntosh and Pike under Major General Van Dorn at the battle of Pea Ridge.

I have the honor to be very Respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL R. CURTIS,

Major General."

Capt. N. H. McLEAN,

Assistant Adjutant General.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

THE REPORT OF GENERAL FRANZ SIGEL.

"HEADQUARTERS 1st AND 2d DIVISIONS,
CAMP PEA RIDGE, ARKANSAS, March 15, 1862. }

"General:—I have the honor to lay before you the following reports in regard to the actions of the 1st and 2d Divisions from the third to the 9th day of this month.

1st. Expedition to Pineville on the 5th of March. On the evening of the 5th the main body of the two Divisions was encamped near McKreisick's farm three and a half miles south-ward of Bentonville, and one mile from the fork of the roads leading west to Maysville, and north-east to Pineville, Missouri. The 2d Missouri under Col. Schaffer and one company of cavalry were stationed at Osage mills, (otherwise called Smith's mills) five and a half miles south east of McKreisick's farm, whilst our pickets guarded all the other avenues to the camp.

For the purpose of reconnoitering the country towards the Indian territory, and to detain the rebels of south-west Missouri to follow Price's army by the state line road, Major Conrad with five select companies of infantry, sixty men of cavalry, and two pieces of Welfley's battery, was ordered to proceed on the first day to Lindsays Prairie, where he arrived in the evening, sixteen miles south-west of McKreisick's farm, on the scout (the 5th) to Maysville, and to return on the 3d day to our camp.

Such was our position on the 5th when I received orders from you to send a detachment of cavalry to Pineville where there were said to be two or three hundred rebels who disturbed and endangered the Union people of McDonald county. I directed Major Meszaros with eighty men to march at 10 o'clock P. M. on the north-western road to Pineville whilst Capt. Keilmanssegge was sent to Maj. Conrad at Maysville to lead his sixty men of cavalry with one piece of artillery and twenty infantry, at 10 o'clock in the night, from Maysville to Rutledge and Pineville, and to act in concert with Major Meszaros. A home guard company stationed between Pineville and Keitsville was ordered to occupy at night the

roads leading to Neosho and Kent, and thereby prevent the secesh to escape in that direction.

Major Meszaros and Capt. Von Keilmansegge should approach the town from the east, south-east and south-west. It was understood that these detachments should attack the town simultaneously at 5 o'clock in the morning. Just a few minutes before 10 o'clock in the evening, when Meszaros was prepared to leave the camp, I received news from Col. Schaffer at Osage mills, that his pickets posted in the direction of Elm Spring were fired upon by the enemy. This in addition to your own despatches, reporting the enemy's forces at Fayetteville, and a strong party of cavalry advancing towards Middletown, and besides this, your order to march to Sugar Creek, made me at once aware of the dangerous position of my command. I therefore ordered Col. Schaffer to break up his camp immediately, to send the cavalry company to Osage Spring, to cover his right flank, and to march with his regiment to Bentonville, leaving Osage Springs to the right, and McKreisick's farm to the left. All other troops I ordered to be prepared to march at 2 o'clock in the morning.

In regard to the expedition to Pineville, it was too late to countermand the movement under Capt. Von Keilmansegge, and I therefore ordered Major Meszaros to begin his march and accomplish his task, with his own detachment and that of Capt. Von Keilmansegge, but to return to Sugar Creek as quickly as possible without running his horses, so that they could be of some use in the ensuing battle.

Major Conrad was made aware of our situation and instructed to join us at Sugar Creek by some circuitous road leading north-east. The result of the expedition was not very great, but satisfactory. The attack was made according to the instructions given, and at the precise time, but only one Captain, one Lieutenant, and fifteen men of Price's army were found in the town, and made prisoners; the others had left some days previously.

The commands of Maj. Meszaros and Capt. Von Keilmansegge [arrived] safely on the 6th in our camp at Sugar Creek, bringing with them their prisoners. Unfortunately they had to leave behind and to destroy a printing press and types, taken at Pineville, as the roads they took were too bad to bring this important material along. Major Conrad with his detachment found his way to Keitsville and Cassville, which place he left on the 9th and arrived at the former place with Colonel Wright some time after I had opened the road to Cassville on the pursuit of Price's forces, which retired from Keitsville to Berryville.

II. Retreat from McKreisick's farm by Bentonville to camp Halleck * on Sugar Creek.

At two o'clock in the morning of the 6th the troops encamped at McKreisick's farm moved forward toward Bentonville in the following order:

Advance guard under General Asboth.

1 Company of 4th Mo. cavalry (Fremont Hussars.)

2d Ohio Battery under command of Lieut. Chapman.

15th Mo. volunteers under command of Col. Joliat.

*Not camp Halleck, camp Halleck was at Cross Hollows.

Train of 1st and 2d Divisions, escort and guarded by detachments of the respective regiments.

The 1st Division under Col. Osterhaus.

The flying Battery.

5th Mo. cavalry (Benton Hussars), and the
36th Illinois cavalry, Capt. Jenks.

Before leaving camp I detached Lieutenant Shepherd, of Co. "A," Benton Hussars, with twenty men from Osage Springs to communicate with Col. Schaffer, and to bring news to Bentonville as soon as the enemy would approach that place.

The advance guard of General Asboth arrived at Bentonville at 4 o'clock when I directed him to halt until the train came up more close. He then proceeded to Sugar Creek, followed by the train. Meanwhile the 2d Missouri, Col. Schaffer, and one part of the 1st Division arrived in town. I ordered this regiment as well as the 12th Mo. under command of Major Wangelin, the Flying Battery under Captain Elbert, and the whole disposable cavalry force under Col. Nemett, comprising the Benton Hussars, the 36th Illinois cavalry under Captain Jenks, and a squad of thirteen men of Fremont Hussars under Lieut. Fred. Cooper, to occupy and guard the town to let the whole train pass, and remain at my disposal as a rear guard.

At 8 o'clock the train had passed the town and was moving on the road to Sugar Creek. With the intention not to be too close to the train and awaiting report from Lieut. Shephard's pickets at Osage Springs, two hours elapsed, when (ten minutes after ten) it was reported to me that large masses of troops, consisting of infantry and cavalry, were moving from all sides towards our front and both flanks.

After some observation I had no doubt that the enemy's advance guard was before us; I immediately called the troops to arms and made them ready for battle. As Bentonville is situated on the edge of Osage prairie, easily accessible in front, and covered on the right and left and rear by thick woods and under brush, I ordered the troops to evacuate the town and to form on a little hill north of it. Looking for the 2d Missouri I learned to my astonishment, that it had left the town by a misunderstanding of my order.

I am glad to say this matter is satisfactorily explained by Col. Schaffer, but at the same time, I regret to report that this regiment was ambuscaded on its march and lost in the conflict thirty seven men in dead, wounded and prisoners.

The troops now left to me, consisted of about eight companies of the 12th Mo., with an average strength of forty five men; five companies of Benton Hussars, and five pieces of the Flying Battery, in all about six hundred men. The troops I directed to march in the following order:

Two companies of the 12th at the head of the column, deployed on the right and left as skirmishers, followed by the Flying Battery: one company of the same regiment on the right, and one on the left of the pieces, marching by the flank and prepared to fire by ranks to the right and left, the remainder of the regiment behind the pieces; two companies of cavalry to support the infantry on

the right and left, and the rest of the cavalry under command of Col. Nemett, with one piece of artillery, following in the rear.

In this formation, modified from time to time according to circumstances, the column moved forward to break through the lines of the enemy, who had already taken position in our front and on both flanks whilst he appeared behind us in the town, in line of battle reinforced by some pieces of artillery.

The troops advanced slowly, fighting and repelling the enemy in front, flankwards and rear, wherever he stood or attacked, from the moment we left the town at 10½ in the morning until 3½ in the afternoon, when we met reinforcements, the 2d Mo., 25th Illinois, and a few companies of the 44th Illinois. We sustained three regular attacks and were uninterruptedly in sight and under the fire of the enemy. When the first reinforcements had arrived, I knew that we were safe, and left it to the 25th and 2d Mo., and afterwards to Col. Osterhaus, to take care of the rest which he did to my satisfaction.

It would take too much time to go into detail of this most extraordinary and critical affair; but as a matter of justice I feel it my duty to declare, that according to my humble opinion, never troops have shown themselves worthier to defend a great cause than on this day of the 6th of March.

III. Battle of the 7th near Leesburg [Leetown] and on Pea Ridge.

In the night of the 6th the two Divisions were encamped on the plateau of the hills near Sugar Creek, and in the adjoining valley separating the two ridges extending along the creek. The 2d Division held the right, and the 1st the left of the position, fronting toward the west and south-west in order to receive the enemy should he advance from the Bentonville and Fayetteville road, Col. Davis' division, forming the centre, was on our left, and Col. Carr covered the ground on the extreme left of our whole line.

Early in the morning, report came in that troops and trains of the enemy were moving the whole night on the Bentonville road around our rear towards Cross Timbers, thereby endangering our line of retreat and communication to Keitsville, and separating us from our reinforcements and provision trains.

This report was corroborated by two of my guides, Mr. Pope and Mr. Brown, who had gone out to reconnoitre the country. I immediately ordered Lieut. Schramm of my staff, to ascertain the facts, and to see in what direction the troops were moving. On his return he reported that there was no doubt in regard to the movement of a large force of the enemy in the aforesaid direction. You then ordered me to detach three pieces of the Flying Battery to join Colonel Bussey's cavalry in an attack against the enemy in the direction of Leesville [Leetown], Col. Osterhaus was directed to follow him, with three regiments of infantry and two batteries.

At about 11 o'clock the firing began near Elk Horn Tavern and Leesville.

To see how matters stood, I went out to Col. Carr's Division and found him a short distance beyond the tavern engaged in a brisk cannonade, several pieces partly disabled and partly without ammunition were returning whilst another advanced from the camp. The enemy's fire was directed to the place where I halted. I ordered two pieces of the battery which came up to take position on an elevated ground to the left and to shell the enemy. After a few shots the fire of the

enemy opposite our position became (position on an elevation) weaker and I sent the two pieces forward to join their battery. I then returned to look after my own troops, and passing along the road met the Iowa 3d cavalry which had been sent in advance of Col. Osterhaus and which now escorted their Lieut. Colonel, who was severely wounded, back into camp. I immediately sent to you, to order the regiment back to Leesville, which order was given and the regiment returned.

I met Lieut. Gasson of the Flying Battery who reported to me, that our cavalry had been driven back by an overwhelming force and our three pieces taken by the enemy. As there was no infantry to support them I now ordered Major Meszaros and the two other pieces of the Flying Battery to reinforce Col. Osterhaus, but during their march I learned Col. Davis had been directed to advance with his whole Division to Leesville, which induced me to send only Major Meszaros to that point, and directed the two pieces of the Flying Battery to act as a reserve, and to join the troops left in their encampment. Proceeding to the camp to find out what was going on there and whether we were safe in our rear (toward Bentonville) I found the following troops assembled in their respective positions; the 17th Mo., and a detachment of sixty men of the 3d Mo., the 25th and 44th Illinois, two pieces of Welfley's Battery, (12 pounders), two companies thirty sixth Illinois cavalry, and nearly the whole 2d Division, comprising the 2d and 15th Mo., Carlin's Battery, and two companies of the Benton Hussars. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when the cannonading and musket firing became more vehement and when you ordered me to reinforce Col. Carr at Elk Horn Tavern and Col. Davis and Col. Osterhaus near Leesville, as both forces, especially those at Leesville were according to your reports pressed hard and losing ground. I therefore sent General Asboth with four companies of the 2d Mo., under Col. Schaffer, and four pieces of the 2d Ohio Battery under Lieut. Chapman to assist Col. Carr. Major Poten with the 17th Mo., one company of the 3d Mo., two companies of the 15th Mo., two pieces of the Flying Artillery, under Capt. Elbert, and two companies of the Benton Hussars, under Major Heinrich, I ordered to advance on the Sugar Creek road toward Bentonville to demonstrate against the rear of the enemy. Two pieces of the 2d Ohio Battery with six companies of the 2d Mo. remained in their position to guard the camp, and two companies of the 44th Illinois, with twenty men of the 36th Illinois cavalry under Captain Russell were sent forward in a north-western direction to remain there as a picket between Leesville and the Sugar Creek road.

With all other troops, the 15th Mo., the 25th and 44th Ill., and the two pieces of Capt. Welfley's Battery, I marched to Leesville to reinforce Col. Davis and Osterhaus. My intention was to throw back the enemy from Leesville into the mountains and towards Bentonville, and then by a change of direction to the right to assist Gen. Asboth and Col. Carr by deploying on their left.

[To be Continued.]

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