

Streight's command was of about the same strength as the column under Grierson, which was at the same time setting out from La Grange for the raid through Mississippi, described in a previous chapter. It was taken on steam-boats up the Tennessee to Eastport, Alabama, where it was joined by an infantry force under General Dodge. After the capture of Tusculumbia by Streight, the two columns separated. General Dodge made a sweeping raid through Northern Alabama, and returned to Corinth. Streight struck for Northern Georgia, intending to capture Rome and Atlanta, destroying there large manufactories and magazines. He was closely followed by Forrest and Roddy, with a superior force of Confederate cavalry. He kept up a running fight for over a hundred miles, when his command, exhausted and out of ammunition, was surrendered about fifteen miles from Rome. The privates were exchanged, but Streight and his officers were kept in close confinement in Richmond, being charged with felony for having incited slaves to rebellion. Streight finally, on February 9, 1864, with 107 other Federal officers, escaped from Libby Prison. He succeeded, with about sixty of the fugitives, in making his way into the Federal lines. He surrendered 1365, and lost in the actions with Forrest 100 men. The Confederate loss in killed and wounded he claims to have been five times as large as his own.

For six months, as already stated, Rosecrans remained in camp at Murfreesborough. The Confederate army, under Bragg, lay about thirty miles south, on a branch of the Nashville Railroad running from Wartrace to Shelbyville. In May Grant was across the Mississippi fighting Pemberton and Johnston, and before the close of the month had shut up the former in Vicksburg, while the latter was straining every nerve to gather an army sufficiently large to raise the siege. At about this time the authorities at Washington supposed that Johnston was being heavily re-enforced for this purpose from General Bragg's army. Early in June, therefore, Halleck urged Rosecrans to take advantage of Bragg's weakness and drive him into Georgia, when East Tennessee would become an easy prey to the Federal forces. But the matter was looked upon in quite a different light at Rosecrans's headquarters. There it seemed better that Bragg should stay where he was. It was not believed that he had been materially weakened: it seemed evident that the Confederate War Department was resolved upon keeping its foothold in Tennessee as well as in Mississippi.¹ Again, if Rosecrans advanced and compelled Bragg's retreat, his army, for want of an adequate cavalry force, was in no condition to pursue, and the consequence would be unfavorable to Grant, who would then have to meet the bulk of Bragg's army. At a council of war called by Rosecrans, composed of seventeen officers (corps and division commanders and generals of cavalry), it was the opinion of eleven that Bragg had not been materially weakened, the other six thinking that 10,000 men had been sent to Johnston. Only four of the seventeen thought the Army of the Cumberland could then advance with a reasonable prospect of fighting a great and successful battle, and even these were doubtful. The council unanimously agreed that an advance was inadvisable.²

Alabama or Northern Georgia. Should you be surrounded by rebel forces and your retreat cut off, defend yourself as long as possible, and make the surrender of your command cost the enemy as many times your number as possible. A copy of the general order from the War Department in regard to paroling prisoners, together with the necessary blanks, are herewith furnished you. You are authorized to enlist all able-bodied men who desire to join the 'army of the Union.' You must return as soon as the main objects of your expedition are accomplished.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"J. A. GARFIELD, Brigadier General and Chief of Staff."
"Additional by Telegraph."

"The written instructions you have received are designed to cover the cases you allude to. It is not necessary that a manufactory be directly in the employ of the rebels to come under the rule there laid down. If it produces any considerable quantity of supplies which are likely to reach the rebel army, it is to be destroyed. Of course small mills, that can only supply the necessities of life to the inhabitants, should not be injured. Any considerable amount of supplies likely to reach the rebel army are to be destroyed. If you dress your soldiers in the costume of the enemy, they will be liable to be treated as spies; you should not do this without the consent of the men, after they have been fully advised of the possible consequences.

"(Signed), J. A. GARFIELD, Brigadier General and Chief of Staff."

¹ This was against General Joe Johnston's advice, who said that the Confederate government must choose between Mississippi and Tennessee. He urged the retention of Tennessee, which he declared to be "the shield of the South."

² The following is the correspondence which passed between Rosecrans and Halleck in reference to an immediate advance:

"Murfreesborough, Tenn., June 11th, 1863.
"Your dispatch of to-day is received. You remember that I gave you, as a necessary condition of success, an adequate cavalry force. Since that time I have not lost a moment in mounting our dismounted cavalry as fast as we could get horses. Not more than three hundred remain to be mounted. The Fifth Iowa, ordered up from Donelson, arrived to-day. The First Wisconsin will be here by Saturday. My preliminary infantry movements have nearly all been completed, and I am preparing to strike a blow that will tell. But to show you how differently things are viewed here, I called on my corps and division commanders and generals of cavalry for answers in writing to the questions:
"First. From your best information, do you think the enemy materially weakened in our front?
Second. Do you think this army can advance at this time with reasonable prospect of fighting a great and successful battle?
Third. Do you think an advance advisable at this time? To the first, eleven answered no; six, yes, to the extent of ten thousand. To the second, four, yes, with doubts; thirteen, no. To the third, not one yes; seventeen, no.
"Not one thinks an advance advisable until Vicksburg's fate is determined. Admitting these officers to have a reasonable share of military sagacity, courage, and patriotism, you perceive that there are graver and stronger reasons than probably appear at Washington for the attitude of this army. I therefore counsel caution and patience at headquarters. Better wait a little to get all we can ready to insure the best result. If by so doing we, perforce of Providence, observe a great military maxim—not to risk two great and decisive battles at the same time—we might have cause to be thankful for it. At all events, you see that, to expect success, I must have such thorough grounds that when I say 'Forward,' my word will inspire conviction and confidence where both are now wanting. I should like to have your suggestion.

"W. S. ROSECRANS, Major General.

"To Major General H. W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief."

"Washington, June 12, 1863.
"GENERAL,—Your telegram of yesterday is just received. I do not understand your application of the military maxim not to fight two great battles at the same time. It will apply to a single army, but not to two armies acting independently of each other. Johnston and Bragg are acting on interior lines between you and Grant, and it is for their interest, not ours, that they should fight at different times, so as to use the same force against both of you. It is for our interest to fight them, if possible, while divided. If you are not strong enough to fight Bragg with a part of his force absent, you will not be able to fight him after the affair at Vicksburg is over, and his troops return to your front.

"There is another military maxim, 'that councils of war never fight.' If you say that you

A few days later, the Vicksburg campaign seeming so near its successful termination, and it being understood that General Burnside would co-operate by an advance into East Tennessee, the Army of the Cumberland was set in motion. This advance—made under great disadvantages, which the reader has already been taught to appreciate—and the brilliant movements by which General Bragg was driven from Shelbyville to Chattanooga, form the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE CHATTANOOGA CAMPAIGN.

II. THE ADVANCE FROM MURFREESBOROUGH.

The Confederate Situation in Tennessee.—Estimate of Forces.—The Order to Advance.—Actions at Liberty and Hoover's Gaps.—Occupation of Shelbyville.—The Race for Elk River.—Bragg abandons Middle Tennessee.—Rosecrans brought to a Halt.

BRAGG'S army held the line of Duck River, guarding the railroad from Nashville to Chattanooga. Polk, with 18,000 men, was strongly entrenched at Shelbyville, where, by the forced labor of 8000 slaves sent from Georgia and Alabama, a line of earth-works had been constructed five miles in extent. On his right, at Wartrace, and holding the railroad, was Hardee's corps, 12,000 strong, with outposts at Liberty and Hoover's Gaps, guarding the mountain approaches from the north. In the rear, eighteen miles south of Duck River, another entrenched camp lay behind a difficult mountain range at Tullahoma. Besides Polk's and Hardee's corps north of Duck River, Bragg had another, under Buckner, in East Tennessee, numbering 10,000 effective men.

The entire Confederate army of Tennessee on the 20th of June, 1863, numbered 46,000 effective men.¹ Rosecrans's army at that time was not less than 60,000 strong, but this superiority of numbers was balanced by the inferiority of his cavalry, and by the necessity of a detachment of force at every stage of his advance into the enemy's country. It was, therefore, the obvious policy of the Federal commander to compel Bragg to fight a battle in Tennessee. It was with this idea that Rosecrans planned his summer campaign, waiting only the assurance that the retreat of Bragg's army, which must be reckoned among the things possible, would not seriously affect the Vicksburg campaign.

The Confederate General John Morgan having been sent, with a large detachment of cavalry, northward for an excursion into Kentucky, it seemed an opportune season for an advance against the enemy, orders for which were issued on the 23d of June. The movement began the next day. The direct road to Shelbyville was the easiest approach, while those farther eastward led through difficult mountain passes, strongly guarded by the enemy. An advance by the former would have terminated in a battle with the ene-

my not prepared to fight Bragg, I shall not order you to do so, for the responsibility of fighting or refusing to fight at a particular time or place must rest upon the general in immediate command; it can not be shared by a council of war, nor will the authorities here make you fight against your will. You ask me to counsel them to caution and patience. I have done so very often, but after five or six months of inactivity, with your force all the time diminishing, and no hope of any immediate increase, you must not be surprised that their patience is pretty well exhausted. If you do not deem it prudent to risk a general battle with Bragg, why can you not harass him, or make such demonstrations as to prevent his sending more re-enforcements to Johnston? I do not write this in a spirit of fault-finding, but to assure you that the prolonged inactivity of so large an army in the field is causing much complaint and dissatisfaction, not only in Washington, but throughout the country.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"Major General ROSECRANS, Murfreesborough, Tennessee." H. W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief.

"Headquarters, Department of the Cumberland, Murfreesborough, June 21, 1863.

"GENERAL,—In your favor of the 12th instant you say you do not see how the maxim of not fighting two great battles at the same time applies to the case of this army and to Grant's. Looking at the matter practically, we and our opposing forces are so widely separated that for Bragg to materially aid Johnston he must abandon our front substantially, and then we can move to our ultimate work with more rapidity, and less waste of material on natural obstacles. If Grant is defeated, both forces will come here, and then we ought to be near our base. The same maxim that forbids, as you take it, a single army fighting two great battles at the same time—by the way, a very awkward thing to do—would forbid this nation's engaging all its forces in the great West at the same time, so as to leave it without a single reserve to stem the current of possible disaster. This, I think, sustained by high military and political considerations. We ought to fight here, if we have a strong prospect of winning a decisive battle over the opposing force, and upon this ground I shall act. I shall be careful not to risk our last reserve without strong grounds to expect success.

"Major General H. W. HALLECK, General-in-Chief."

In Rosecrans's letter (last quoted) to Halleck there is unnecessary impertinence. A single army might easily fight two great battles at the same time. Rosecrans speaks of it as "a very awkward thing to do," as if it were impossible.

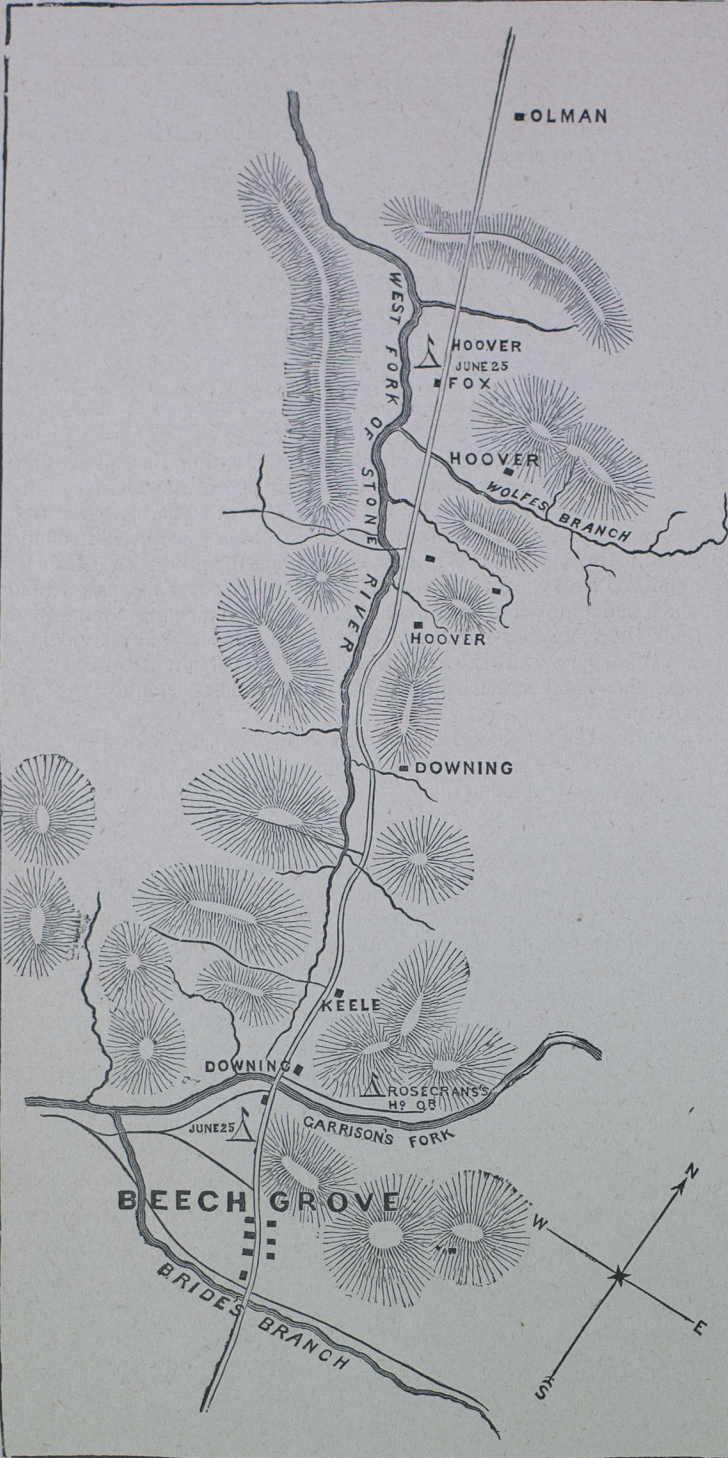
In his testimony before the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War (see *Rosecrans's Campaigns*, p. 27), Rosecrans says: "I felt it my duty to sacrifice all personal gratification, and even to fall in the estimation, temporarily, of the country and friends who had high hopes and expectations of the Army of the Cumberland, to secure General Grant, in his operations before Vicksburg, from the consequences of compelling Bragg to retire, when it would not be possible for us so to pursue as to prevent him from re-enforcing Johnston, whose relative numbers to our troops under General Grant was deemed more formidable than I subsequently learned it to have been."

¹ Estimated from official returns. The following are the returns of this army from November 20, 1862, to June 20, 1863, inclusive:

	Aggregate Present and Absent.	Aggregate Present.	Present for Duty.
November 20, 1862	61,229	36,656	30,649
December 10, 1862	88,454	69,075	61,030
January, 1863	83,750	49,551	36,951
February 20, 1863	87,753	65,158	49,088
March 31, 1863	96,301	65,594	49,915
April 30, 1863	98,217	67,849	52,069
May 20, 1863	93,217	64,732	50,233
June 20, 1863	83,597	59,542	45,974

These returns show:

1. That Bragg outnumbered Rosecrans at the battle of Stone River by nearly 8000 men, the effective Federal force at the time of that battle being only 43,400 men.
2. That Bragg lost at Stone River about 14,000 men, as will appear by comparing the returns of those present for duty in December, 1862, and in January, 1863. Rosecrans's loss was 8778 killed and wounded, and nearly 3000 prisoners, altogether between 10,000 and 11,000.
3. That Bragg had not been weakened materially by any re-enforcements sent to Johnston, since the returns for April, May, and June of those present for duty do not vary by more than 6000 men.
4. That at the date of Rosecrans's advance, June 24, 1863, Bragg's army numbered an aggregate present of 60,000, of whom 46,000 could be brought into battle.



THE ADVANCE THROUGH HOOVER'S GAP.

were carried by McCook and Thomas on the 24th. The works at the entrance of Hoover's Gap, the eastern pass, were unoccupied by the enemy when Wilder's mounted infantry approached them, so sudden and unexpected was the advance, and a train of nine wagons was captured on its way to camp, with a drove of beef cattle and some prisoners. At the southern extremity of the Gap, in the vicinity of the enemy's camp at Beech Grove, there was some resistance. A miniature battle was fought between a few regiments of Wilder's brigade and a superior Confederate force, in which the Federal detachment was almost overpowered before Reynolds's division could come to its aid. The loss in Wilder's command, after two hours of fighting, was 63 killed and wounded; deserters and prisoners estimated the enemy's loss at over 500. The Confederate force defending the Gap was a part of General Pat Cleburne's division.

Another portion of Cleburne's command guarded Liberty Gap, which had in the mean time been carried by Willich's brigade of Johnson's division. Willich charged with his men, and, turning the enemy's flanks, drove him from the position, capturing his tents, baggage, and supplies. The other end of the Gap was carried with equal gallantry by Baldwin's brigade. The next day Johnson held the Gap, to keep up the delusion as to a direct advance upon Bragg's intrenchments. In the afternoon an attempt was made by the enemy to regain his lost position, and the attack was sufficiently serious to compel Johnson to send in Carlin's brigade of Davis's division. Davis was ill, but, hearing the noise of the battle, left his couch, and reached the front in time to witness the charge of Carlin's brigade and the defeat of the enemy.

Rosecrans now pushed his army on to Manchester, flanking Bragg, who immediately abandoned his useless intrenchments. These were occupied by Granger and Stanley on the 27th. Stanley, with his cavalry, had joined Granger at Christiana. Advancing on Guy's Gap, covering Shelbyville, that position was carried after a little brief skirmish. The enemy was already in retreat, and Shelbyville was captured that evening, with three guns, 500 prisoners, 3000 sacks of corn, and other supplies. The main body of Wheeler's cavalry, which had covered the retreat, escaped by swimming Duck River.

By this time all of McCook's and Thomas's corps were at Manchester. Wilder's command was ordered to Decherd to destroy the bridge over Elk River, but this was found too strongly guarded. In the race for Elk River, Bragg had come out ahead, securing his military road, which he had constructed five miles east of the railroad. Covered again by Wheeler's cavalry, he had left Tullahoma on the 30th of June, to escape the blow which Rosecrans was prepared to strike on his right flank, and succeeded in crossing the Elk at Estelle Springs without a battle. Negley's and Sheridan's divisions, with Turchin's cavalry, came up with the enemy's rear-guard, under Wheeler, July 25. Skirmishing followed, but the resistance was so stubborn that Bragg did not lose a gun. When the river, then swollen by the rains of the last nine days, was crossed by Rosecrans on the 3d, the enemy had vanished. Crittenden's corps, brought down from McMinnville, had taken possession of the road leading from Decherd by way of Tracy City to Chattanooga, thus compelling Bragg to retreat through the mountains westward. McCook had also advanced so as to keep him to the west of Winchester. But Bragg had a fair start, and these movements proved of little consequence. The Confederate army retreated across the Cumberland Mountains to Chattanooga, destroying the railroad in its rear, and crossing the Tennessee at Bridgeport.

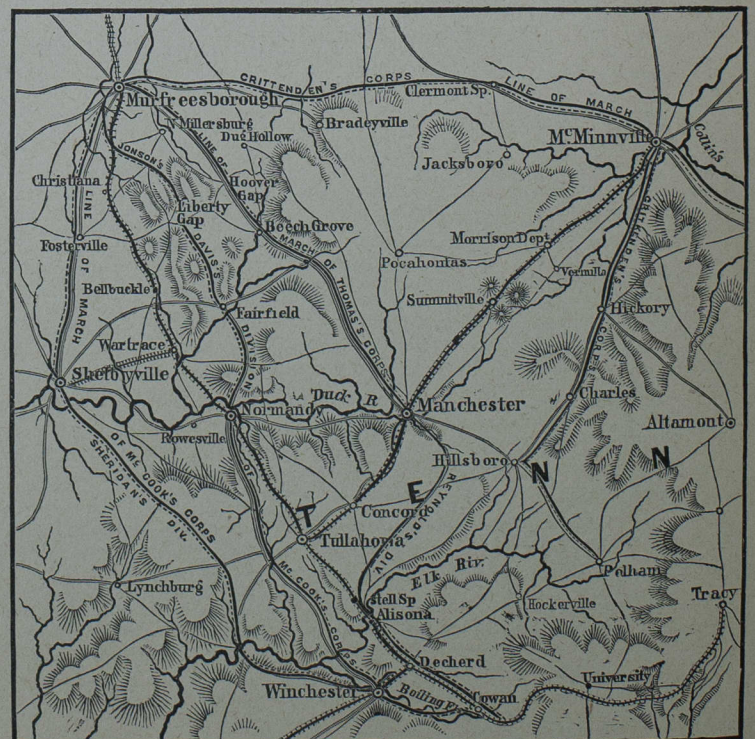
Rosecrans was disappointed. He had hoped to fight a battle in Tennessee. He had scarcely counted upon the rapid backward movement made by Bragg. Something had been gained. He had recovered Middle Tennes-

my in his well-intrenched and chosen position—a battle which, if successful, would be gained at great sacrifice, and leave Bragg an open door for retreat. The mountain roads led to Bragg's right and rear. A strong demonstration on the Shelbyville road would compel that general to uncover the difficult approaches on his right, and once beyond these, Rosecrans, by a very rapid movement to Manchester or Winchester, would cut off retreat, and force the enemy to a battle, the conditions of which would be equal as to the field of conflict, and as to numbers much in his favor. With Morgan's command out of the way, his cavalry was able to cope with Bragg's, while he was superior in infantry by at least 20,000 men.

McCook's corps began its march early on the morning of the 24th. Phil Sheridan's division took the direct road to Shelbyville, preceded by five companies of mounted infantry. The other two divisions, under Generals Jeff C. Davis and R. W. Johnson, followed for six miles, and then turned to the left into the road to Liberty Gap. Thomas's corps, starting at the same time, moved directly on Manchester by way of Hoover's Gap. Crittenden's corps, the last to move, made a long detour to McMinnville, about forty miles southeast from Murfreesborough. Granger, commanding a reserve corps, supported McCook and Thomas. The cavalry was divided—Turchin, with one brigade, going with Crittenden, while the rest, under Stanley, were thrown out on the right flank.

For several days the weather had been clear and promising, but on the very morning of the advance from Murfreesborough it began to rain. For seventeen successive days the rain continued, swelling streams, and so badly cutting up the roads that rapid progress, the most essential element entering into the campaign, was impossible. One division occupied three days in marching twenty-one miles. Such a season at this period of the year had not been known in Tennessee for a score of years.

Both Liberty and Hoover's Gaps, about ten miles from Murfreesborough,



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE MIDDLE TENNESSEE CAMPAIGN.