





JAMES D. MORGAN.

A new problem was now presented to General Sherman. He was astonished at Hood's withdrawal from the Macon Road. It was true the Confederate army was at West Point, in a position to move on his flank; but Davis's Macon speech, which he had read in full in the Southern papers, left him no room for doubt that an attempt would be made by the enemy, moving in full force to his rear, to compel him to release his hold upon Georgia. He could not decide at once as to his future movements. It was still a question with him whether, while protecting Tennessee against Hood's invasion, he would have men enough left for the execution of his favorite project—the march eastward to Georgia. This question was soon settled by General Grant's generous co-operation and encouragement, and by the patriotism of the loyal states. Every day increased Sherman's confidence. In the mean time he carefully watched the enemy's movements. Tennessee must be protected at all hazards. The devastation of Georgia and the capture of Savannah would not compensate for the surrender of Nashville and Chattanooga to the Confederates.

Hood had already sent Forrest with a cavalry force 7000 strong into Middle Tennessee as a prelude to the march of his whole army. Forrest, on the 20th of September, crossed the Tennessee near Waterloo, Alabama, and destroyed a portion of the railroad between Decatur and Athens. On the 23d he appeared before the latter place, and drove the garrison of 600 men into their fort. The commander of this post was Colonel Campbell, who, in a personal interview with Forrest on the 24th, was persuaded that it was useless to resist the odds against him, and induced to surrender. In half an hour two regiments of Michigan and Ohio troops came to his assistance, and were driven back. Before Forrest reached Pulaski, General Rousseau had collected a force sufficient to defend that place, and the Confederate cavalry on the 29th swung around upon the Nashville and Chattanooga Road, and began to break it up between Tullahoma and Decherd. Rousseau had also moved promptly eastward, and at Tullahoma again barred the progress of Forrest northward. Steadman also, with 5000 men from Chattanooga, had crossed the Tennessee, and put his force in front of the enemy, compelling the latter to fall back through Fayetteville. The injuries done to the road were repaired in the course of a single day. Forrest now divided his force into two columns, commanded by Buford and himself, his own consisting of 3000 men. Buford demanded the surrender of Huntsville on the 30th, and being refused, proceeded against Athens, which General R. S. Granger had ordered to be reoccupied by the Seventy-third Indiana, and, attacking the

untarily appeals strongly to executive clemency. But suppose he stays away until the war is over, and his comrades return home, and when every man's history will be told, where will he shield himself? It is upon these reflections that I rely to make men return to their duty; but, after conferring with our generals at headquarters, if there be any other remedy it shall be applied. I love my friends and I forgive my enemies. I have been asked to send re-enforcements from Virginia to Georgia. In Virginia the disparity in numbers is just as great as it is in Georgia. Then I have been asked why the army sent to the Shenandoah Valley was not sent here. It was because an army of the enemy had penetrated that valley to the very gates of Lynchburg, and General Early was sent to drive them back. This he not only successfully did, but, crossing the Potomac, came well-nigh capturing Washington itself, and forced Grant to send two corps of his army to protect it. This the enemy denominated a raid. If so, Sherman's march into Georgia is a raid. What would prevent them now, if Early were withdrawn from taking Lynchburg, and putting a complete cordon of men around Richmond? I counseled with that great and grave soldier, General Lee, upon all these points. My mind roamed over the whole field. With this we can succeed. If one half the men now absent without leave will return to duty, we can defeat the enemy. With that hope I am going to the front. I may not realize this hope; but I know there are men there who have looked death in the face too often to despond now. Let no one despond. Let no one distrust; and remember that if genius is the bean ideal, hope is the reality.

Grant writes him September 27:  
 "It is evident from the tone of the Richmond press, and all other sources, that the enemy intend making a desperate effort to drive you from where you are. I have directed all new troops from the West, and from the East too, if necessary, if none are ready in the West, to be sent to you."

garrison, was repulsed, without having effected any thing of any consequence. Forrest's command recrossed the Tennessee southward about the 3d of October.

Forrest retreated just in time; for before the end of September, Newton's (now Wagner's) division of Stanley's corps had relieved Steadman's command at Chattanooga; Morgan's division of Jeff C. Davis's corps was on the way to Stevenson; and Rousseau was in pursuit of Forrest with 4000 cavalry and mounted infantry, and was soon to be joined by General C. C. Washburne with 3000 cavalry and 1500 infantry from Memphis. On the 29th, General Thomas had been sent to Nashville to take command of the forces covering Tennessee. Thomas reached Nashville on the 3d of October, and had made such a disposition of his command that, but for the rise of the Elk River, Forrest would have had great difficulty in effecting his escape. Corse's division had been dispatched to Rome, and all the new recruits and such detachments of troops as could be spared from the more northern posts of the West had been ordered to Nashville as reserves.

In the mean time Hood was moving to accomplish his daring scheme of Northern invasion. Removing the rails from the Augusta and Macon Roads for forty miles out from Atlanta, he repaired the West Point Road, toward which he began to shift his army on the 18th of September. Here he remained in the vicinity of Palmetto, with his left touching the Chattahoochee, and, having accumulated provisions for his march, began to cross the river on the 29th. By the 3d of October his army reached the neighborhood of Lost Mountain, with his cavalry on his front and right. The next day he dispatched Stewart's corps with orders to strike the railroad at Ackworth and Big Shanty. The garrisons at both these stations, numbering about 400 men, were captured. Hood's three *corps d'armee* were at this time commanded by Stewart, Cheatham, and Lee.

The entire Confederate army having crossed the Chattahoochee, Sherman, leaving Slocum's corps to occupy Atlanta and guard the crossing of the Chattahoochee, moved the rest of his army—the Fourth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth, and Twenty-third Corps—northward, reaching Kenesaw on the 5th of October. The position of the Confederate army threatened Allatoona, where a million of rations were stored. This post was held by three regiments (890 men) under Colonel Tourtellotte, and was well protected by redoubts. General Sherman had anticipated an attack upon Allatoona, and had, by means of signals, ordered General Corse to re-enforce that post from Rome. The enemy had already got upon the railroad, as we have seen, by the 4th, destroying the railroad and cutting the telegraph; and on the night of that day, General Corse, with Rowett's brigade and 165,000 rounds of ammunition, reached Allatoona just in time to meet the attack made on the morning of the 5th by French's division of Stewart's corps. Sherman reached the top of Kenesaw Mountain at 10 A.M., and from that point—a distance of 18 miles—he could see the smoke of the battle and hear faintly the sound of the artillery. He could not reach the scene of conflict in time, nor was it probable that he could afford any assistance from his main army; but he sent General J. D. Cox, with the Twenty-third Corps, to attack the assailants in the rear, on the Dallas and Allatoona Road. Signals were exchanged between Sherman and General Corse, and as soon as the Federal commander learned that the latter was at the point of danger, all his anxiety vanished. Corse's arrival increased the number of the garrison to 1944 men. By 8 30 A.M. French had turned Allatoona, reaching the railroad north, and cutting off communication with Cartersville and Rome. At this time he sent a flag of truce summoning the garrison to surrender, "to avoid needless effusion of blood." Corse promptly replied that he was prepared for "the needless effusion of blood," whenever it would be agreeable to General French. The enemy then attacked with great fury, the first assault falling upon Colonel Rowett, who held the western spur of the ridge. This onset was successfully resisted, but the assault was repeated over and again, and as often repulsed. On the north side, a brigade of the enemy under General Sears made an attack in flank with better success. "The enemy's line of battle," reports General Corse, "swept us like so much chaff." But Tourtellotte from the eastern spur poured on Sears's advancing troops a fire which caught them in flank and broke their ranks. The battle thus far had been going on outside of the fort, into which, by the volume and impetuosity of the enemy's assaults, the garrison was driven before noon. But, notwithstanding



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HOOD'S ATTACK ON ALLATOONA.

standing the odds against them, they had inflicted sufficient injury upon French's division to make it pause, and consider whether it was worth the while to attack the fort, held by men who, outside of its walls, had fought with such obstinacy. The delay gave Corse time to dispose his force in the trenches and behind the parapet. From noon till almost night the enemy closed around the fort, enfilading its trenches, and making death almost certain to those who ventured to expose themselves. The unyielding temper of the garrison baffled the enemy, who, learning that a hostile force was almost upon his rear, gave up the contest. In this action General Corse was wounded in the face.<sup>1</sup> The loss of the garrison was about 700 men—over one third of the entire command. Corse reports that he buried 231 of the enemy's dead and captured 411 prisoners, one of whom, Brigadier General Young, estimated the Confederate loss at 2000. In no instance during the war was the value of the Signal Corps more fully illustrated than in the affair at Allatoona. The service which it rendered here, General Sherman afterward said, more than paid its entire expense from the time of its organization.

The army with which Hood had crossed the Chattahoochee, if we include Wheeler's command which subsequently joined him, numbered about 36,000, of which one fourth was cavalry. After his failure at Allatoona, Hood moved northwestwardly across the Coosa. Sherman followed by the railroad, marching through Allatoona Pass on the 8th, and reaching Kingston on the 10th. Here he found that, making a feint on Rome, the enemy had crossed the river about 11 miles below that place. The next day, therefore, he advanced to Rome, pushing forward Garrard's cavalry and the Twenty-third Corps, with instructions to cross the Oostenaula and threaten Hood's right flank, if the latter continued his movement northward. But the Confederates, by reason of their superior cavalry force, moved more rapidly, and on the 12th Hood summoned the garrison of Resaca to surrender, threatening to take no prisoners if the surrender was refused. Colonel Weaver, the commander at Resaca, saw no cause for alarm, and bluntly refused. He had been re-enforced by Sherman, and the enemy, deeming it prudent to avoid a battle, pushed on toward Dalton, destroying the railroad in his progress. Capturing the garrison at Dalton, he moved through Tunnel Hill to Villanow.

Sherman reached Resaca on the 15th, and endeavored to force Hood to a battle by moving upon his flank and rear. Howard's army was ordered to Snake Creek Gap, where the enemy was found occupying the former Federal defenses. Here Howard tried to hold Hood until Stanley, with the Fourth Corps, could come up in his rear at Villanow. But the Confederate commander did not intend to fight Sherman's army; he was well content with being chased. Covering his rear with Wheeler's cavalry, he fell back to Gadsden, Alabama. Sherman followed as far as Gaylesville. Here there was a pause on the part of both armies. At Gadsden, General Beauregard, commanding the military division of the West, joined Hood. The latter had anticipated that Sherman would divide his forces, and give him a chance, but he had been disappointed. To venture a general engagement in the open field with an enemy whom he had been unable to oppose behind the

fortifications of Atlanta was a step too reckless for even General Hood to take. To retreat utterly at this stage of affairs would be the ruin of his own not-too-well-established reputation, and would demoralize his army. It was therefore finally determined between him and General Beauregard that Sherman should be drawn north of the Tennessee.

But Sherman had long been growing weary of chasing an army that would not, and could not be made to fight. He had now a splendid position for defense, covering Bridgeport, Rome, Chattanooga, and the railroad thence to Atlanta. It was necessary that he should hold this position for a time, until his plans were matured. The strategy to which Hood was about to tempt him was not the strategy suited to his nature. If Hood would only cross the Tennessee, he would soon gratify him by a division of the Federal army. The railroads were speedily repaired, and Atlanta was being supplied with an abundance of provisions. Sherman was urging upon Grant his project of the march through Georgia to Savannah, and anxiously watching the accumulation of an army under Thomas sufficient to oppose Hood, leaving himself free to use his main army for offensive operations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sherman says in his report: "Hood's movements and strategy had demonstrated that he had an army capable of endangering at all times my communications, but unable to meet me in open fight. To follow him would simply amount to being decoyed away from Georgia, with little prospect of overtaking and overwhelming him. To remain on the defensive would have been bad policy for an army of so great value as I then commanded, and I was forced to adopt a course more fruitful in results than the naked one of following him to the southwest. I had previously submitted to the commander-in-chief a general plan, which amounted substantially to the destruction of Atlanta and the railroad back to Chattanooga, and sallying forth from Atlanta, through the heart of Georgia, to capture one or more of the great Atlantic sea-ports. This I renewed from Gaylesville, modified somewhat by the change of events."

Sherman's dispatches during this period contain a very complete history of the progress of his favorite scheme of the March to the Sea. They are so characteristic that we here give all of them which have a direct bearing upon the subject:

September 29, 1864. To General HALLECK: "I prefer for the future to make the movement on Milledgeville, Millen, and Savannah River."

September 30. To General COX: "I may have to make some quick counter-moves east and southeast. Keep your folks ready to send baggage into Atlanta, and to start on short notice. . . . There are fine corn and potato fields about Covington and the Ocmulgee bottoms. . . . If we make a counter-move I will go out myself with a large force, and take such a route as will supply us, and at the same time make Hood recall the whole or part of his army."

September 30. To General THOMAS: "If he [Hood] moves his whole force to Blue Mountain, you watch him from the direction of Stevenson, and I will do the same from Rome; and as soon as all things are ready, I will take advantage of his opening to me all of Georgia."

October 30. To General GRANT: "Hood is evidently on the west side of Chattanooga, below Sweetwater. If he tries to get on my road this side of the Etowah, I shall attack him; but if he goes on to the Selma and Talladega Road, why would it not do for me to leave Tennessee to the forces which Thomas has, and the reserves soon to come to Nashville, and for me to destroy Atlanta, and then march across Georgia to Savannah or Charleston, breaking roads, and doing irreparable damage? We can not remain on the defensive."

There is no immediate reply to this from Grant.

October 1. To Generals HOWARD and COX: "It is well for you to bear in mind that if Hood swings over to the Alabama Road, and thence tries to get into Tennessee, I may throw back to Chattanooga all of General Thomas's men as far down as Kingston, and draw forward all else, send back all cars and locomotives, destroy Atlanta, and make for Savannah or Charleston via Milledgeville and Millen. If Hood aims at our road this side of Kingston, and in no manner threatens Tennessee, I will have to turn on him. Keep these things to yourselves. The march I propose is less by 200 miles than I made last fall, and less than I accomplished in February, and we could make Georgia a break in the Confederacy by ruining both east and west roads, and not running against a single fort until we get to the sea-shore, and in communication with our ships."

October 1. To General THOMAS: "Use your own discretion as to the matters north of the Tennessee River. If I can induce Hood to swing across to Blue Mountain, I shall feel tempted to start for Milledgeville, Millen, and Savannah or Charleston, absolutely destroying all Georgia, and taking either Savannah or Charleston. In that event, I will order back to Chattanooga every thing the other side of Kingston, and bring forward all else, destroy Atlanta and the bridge, and absolutely scour the Southern Confederacy. In that event, Hood would be puzzled, and would follow me; or, if he entered Tennessee, he could make no permanent stay. But if he attempts the road this side of Kingston or Rome, I will turn against him."

<sup>1</sup> The day after the battle, Corse writes to Sherman: "I am short a cheek-bone and one ear, but am able to whip all hell yet."



