

DESTRUCTION OF THE DEPOTS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, AND MANUFACTORIES AT ATLANTA.

sequences of such a march must be important and decisive. The cities of the Atlantic sea-board were doomed the moment Sherman's army should reach their rear. At Savannah or Charleston this army could be transported by sea, or could march by land through the Carolinas, and, re-enforcing Grant, terminate the long-protracted conflict with Lee's army.

But what if Thomas should be conquered by Hood? Then, indeed, Sherman's march would have demonstrated only his own folly. He would have ascended like a rocket and come down a stick. But to have anticipated such an event would have been an insult to General Thomas, and to the armies of Schofield, Stanley, and Smith. Sherman had no apprehensions on that score. Not until Thomas had himself expressed his faith in his own power to ruin Hood, if the latter advanced, or to assume the offensive against him if he retreated, did Sherman move from Atlanta.

By the 14th of November, the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth, and Twentieth Corps were grouped about Atlanta, constituting an army 60,000 strong, with an additional force of cavalry under Brigadier General Judson Kilpatrick, numbering 5500 men. The artillery consisted of about 60 guns, or one piece to every thousand men. Every thing had been sent to the rear which could not be used in the campaign. The railroad north had been destroyed as far as Dalton. Rome and Atlanta had been burned, only the dwelling-houses and churches escaping destruction. On the 16th of November Sherman commenced his grand March to the Sea. While he is advancing eastward through the fruitful fields of Georgia, let us follow the counter-movement of Hood against Nashville.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### BATTLE OF NASHVILLE.

Hood attacks Decatur and is repulsed.—Forrest's Demonstration against Johnsonville.—Hood north of the Tennessee.—Estimate of the opposing Forces.—Schofield abandons Pulaski.—Retreat from Columbia to Franklin.—Narrow Escape at Spring Hill.—Battle of Franklin.—Its Results.—Hood in front of Nashville.—Demonstration against Murfreesborough.—Preparations for Battle on both sides.—Inclement Weather.—General Thomas assumes the Defensive.—Battles of December 15th and 16th.—Defeat of Hood's Army.—The Pursuit.—Results of the Nashville Campaign.—Gillen defeated by Breckinridge.—Stoneman drives Breckinridge into North Carolina.—Destruction of the Works at Saltville.

FORREST had intended to cross the Tennessee in the vicinity of Gunter's Landing and threaten Bridgeport, thus compelling Sherman to abandon Georgia in order to protect Tennessee. Beauregard had ordered Forrest to move with his cavalry into Tennessee, Hood not having a sufficient cavalry force to protect his trains north of the river.<sup>1</sup> These orders did not reach Forrest in time, and Hood was therefore compelled to move down the Tennessee and await Forrest's arrival. On the 26th of October a portion of Hood's infantry appeared before Decatur, on the south side of the river, at the southern terminus of the Nashville and Decatur Railroad, and on the afternoon of that day made a feeble attack on the garrison, which was commanded by R. S. Granger. Granger was re-enforced by two regiments from Chattanooga, and instructed to hold his post at all hazards. The next day the enemy established a line of rifle-pits within 500 yards of the town. On the 28th a sortie was made by a part of the garrison, which, advancing under cover of the guns of the fort, down the river bank and around to the rear of the enemy's rifle-pits, dislodged the Confederates, capturing 120 prisoners. Forrest in the mean while had reached Corinth, and advanced from that point upon Fort Heiman, on the west bank of the Tennessee, about 75 miles from Paducah. Here he captured the gun-boat No. 55 and two transports on the 31st, having previously burned the steamer Empress. He had about 17 regiments of cavalry, probably numbering altogether 5000 men, and 9 pieces of artillery. On the 2d of November he planted batteries above and below Johnsonville, one of General Thomas's bases of supplies on the river, isolating, at that place, three gun-boats and eight transports. The gun-boats made an unsuccessful attack upon the lower batteries, but, though repulsed, they recaptured from the enemy one of the transports which he had taken, and forced him to destroy the gun-boat No. 55. On the 4th Forrest made an attack on the gun-boats and the garrison, consisting of 1000 men. The gun-boats, being disabled, were burned to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands, and the fire, spreading to the buildings of the commissary and quartermaster's departments, and to the stores on the levee, caused the government a loss estimated at \$1,500,000. The next morning Forrest repeated his attack upon the garrison, and, after a furious cannonade of over an hour's duration, withdrew from Johnsonville.

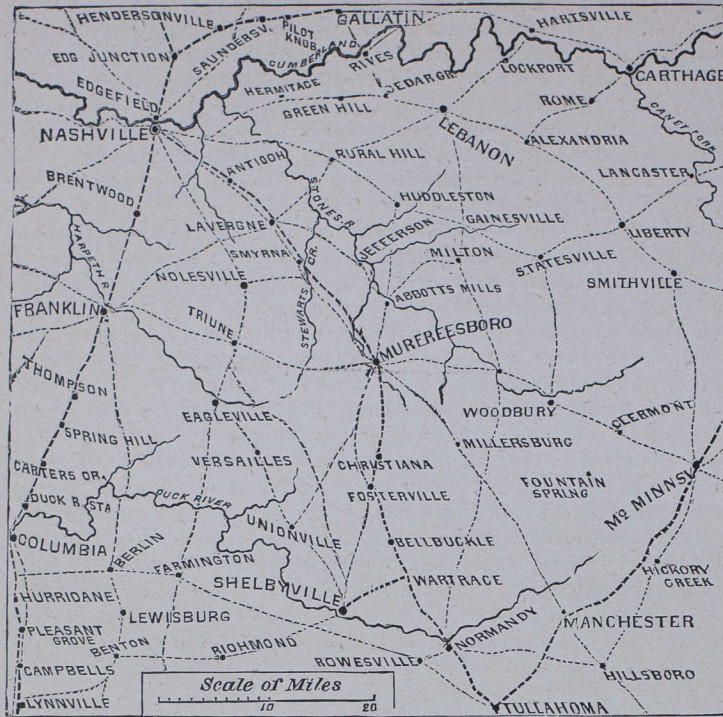
Hood's army arrived at Florence on the 31st of October, one month after it had been transferred from Sherman's front. This long delay, caused partly by the difficulties attending the transportation of supplies, had thwarted the sole object of Hood's campaign. It had given Sherman and Thomas time for completing their preparations, the former for his march eastward, and the latter for the accumulation of an army large enough to protect Tennessee.

Hood's force, including all arms, on the 1st of November did not number over 40,000 effective men. Thomas had in his command a considerably larger force. After deducting the garrisons of Nashville, Decatur, and Chattanooga, however, his army available for battle numbered about 30,000 men.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hood's Report.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas says in his report: "At this time (November 5th) I found myself confronted by the army which, under General J. E. Johnston, had so skillfully resisted the advance of the whole active army of the military division of the Mississippi from Dalton to the Chattahoochee, re-enforced by a well-equipped and enthusiastic cavalry command of over 12,000, led by one of the boldest and most successful commanders in the rebel army. My information from all sources confirmed the reported strength of Hood's army to be from 40,000 to 45,000 infantry, and from 12,000 to 15,000





MAP ILLUSTRATING HOOD'S INVASION.

Hood persisted in his scheme of invading Tennessee. General Beauregard does not seem to have exercised a very potent influence in this matter. The problem now presented puzzled him, and he could not solve it. He therefore left it to Hood's option to do as he pleased—either to divide his forces, sending a part against Sherman and advance with the other, or to move against Thomas with his whole force. Hood had delayed on the banks of the Tennessee till past the middle of November, and until Sherman was on his march. He had laid a pontoon bridge across the river, mooring it to the piers of the old railroad bridge at Florence, and had crossed Lee's corps and two divisions of cavalry. Stewart and Cheatham still remained on the south side until November 17th. On the 21st Forrest's cavalry joined the main army, and the movement northward was commenced.

If the Confederate army of Tennessee had been under the disposition of General Grant to move where it would best suit him, he would not, he declares in his official report, have made any other disposition of it than that made by General Hood. Hood's reasoning upon the proper course for him to take is exceedingly shallow. He says: "The enemy having for the first time divided his forces, I had to determine which of the two parts to direct my operations against. To follow the forces about to move through Georgia under Sherman would be to again abandon the regained territory to the forces under Thomas, with little hope of being able to reach the enemy in time to defeat his movement, and also to cause desertion and greatly impair the morale, or fighting spirit of the army, by what would be considered a compulsory retreat." It was, indeed, of no use to follow Sherman except with cavalry. But the reason which Hood gives for advancing against Thomas is simply ludicrous. For what had he gained thus far in his campaign that he should hesitate to abandon? He had advanced from Jonesborough to Dalton, capturing some unimportant stations which he had hastily released, destroying a few miles of railroad which it had taken less than a fortnight to repair, then had fallen back to Gadsden, and had moved thence to Corinth and Florence. He held no post of any military value to himself or to his foe. Indeed, he had nothing to abandon except his design of invasion. But the chief motive of the invasion—namely, to compel Sherman to leave Georgia for the protection of Tennessee—no longer existed,

cavalry. My effective force at this time consisted of the Fourth Corps, about 12,000, under Major General D. S. Stanley; the Twenty-third Corps, about 10,000, under Major General John M. Schofield; Hatch's division of cavalry, about 4,000; Croxton's brigade, 2,500, and Capron's brigade of about 1,200. The balance of my force was distributed along the railroad, and posted at Murfreesborough, Stevenson, Bridgeport, Huntsville, Decatur, and Chattanooga, to keep open our communications and hold the posts above named, if attacked, until they could be re-enforced, as up to this time it was impossible to determine which course Hood would take—advance on Nashville or turn toward Huntsville."

According to this report, Hood had from 52,000 to 57,000 men, and Thomas about 30,000, exclusive of his detachments on the railroad and at the posts mentioned.

As to the numbers of Hood's army, the best authority is the official return of the Confederate Army of Tennessee for November 6th, 1864, which gives a force of 30,600 men. This is exclusive of Forrest's cavalry, which probably did not reach 10,000.

As to Thomas's command, Sherman represents the Fourth Corps as 15,000 strong; but, taking Thomas's estimate, we have his available force (November 5th):

Stanley's Corps .....	12,000	Croxton's Cavalry .....	2,500
Schofield's Corps .....	10,000	Capron's Cavalry .....	1,200
Hatch's Cavalry .....	4,000		29,700

But to this must be added Washburne's command, 4,500, which makes 34,200. It must also be remembered that, in case of an important battle, at least 6,000 veteran troops, in addition to those above enumerated, could be brought into action. And in this estimate no notice whatever is taken of four elements which would soon give Thomas a very great preponderance of force as compared with Hood's, namely: 1st, new regiments of recruits constantly arriving at Nashville; 2d, A. J. Smith's two divisions on the way from Missouri; 3d, Wilson's cavalry, which in a few days would amount to about 12,000 men; and, 4th, about 7,000 men suitable for garrison duty which would soon be sent back to Thomas from Sherman's army, on account of their unfitness for the great march.

In connection with the official return of Hood's army for November 6th, one thing is worthy of notice. On the 20th of September, before Hood moved from the Macon Road, his army numbered 40,406. It is plain, therefore, that in the course of the advance to Dalton, the retreat to Gadsden, and the movement to Florence, Hood had lost about 10,000 men; and a large proportion of this loss must be attributed to desertion. Hood, it is clear, had not by his invasion very much improved the morale of his army.

for Sherman had defied his projected invasion in the boldest and bluntest terms. The railroad from which Hood had been driven Sherman had destroyed with his own hands. Atlanta, which Hood had hoped to recover, Sherman had made a useless possession to the enemy as well as to himself. And Georgia, which Hood was pledged to redeem, was already being trampled down under the heels of 60,000 men, whom, with his own army, he could not reach if he would, and whom, if he could have reached, he dared not encounter. As to the morale of his army, Hood's invasion thus far had certainly not improved that; for since he had started from Jonesborough he had lost 10,000 men, or one fourth of his army, though in that time he had only fought a single serious battle—that of Allatoona. Hood could have lost nothing by a judicious retreat which could be compared with what he risked by an advance against Thomas. To allow the Federal forces to assume the defensive was to give them such advantages as must be decisive. The advance was the result of the infatuation of both Hood and Davis. The threat had been uttered, the pledge given, and it was too late now to hesitate or falter.

The wager which Hood had offered Thomas was ready to accept. The latter would have preferred an encounter with the enemy south of Duck River: this would have been possible if the Confederate army had delayed its movements for a week or ten days. The Federal cavalry guarding the Tennessee about Florence had already been driven back, so that Croxton was on the east side of Shoal Creek, and Hatch occupied Lawrenceburg. Schofield, with the Twenty-third Corps, had arrived at Nashville November 5th, and was directed to join the Fourth Corps at Pulaski, take the command of the troops at that point, and, as far as possible, retard Hood's advance into Tennessee. It was obviously Thomas's policy to impede Hood's movements, gradually withdrawing Schofield and Stanley, until he could receive the re-enforcements under A. J. Smith, and organize Wilson's cavalry and the new regiments. Hood's army moved by parallel roads to Waynesborough and eastward of that place, with Forrest on the right flank. On the 22d of November Hatch's cavalry was driven from Lawrenceburg. Hood desired to push his army up between Nashville and Schofield's command; but on the 23d the Federal forces evacuated Pulaski, and fell back to Columbia, on the Duck River. The retreat was ably conducted, all the public property being removed beforehand from Pulaski, and the trains carefully guarded. Thomas had meanwhile received some 7,000 men which had been sent back from Atlanta by General Sherman; his command had also been re-enforced by 20 new one-year regiments, very many of which were absorbed in the veteran corps, replacing old regiments whose term of service had expired. R. S. Granger had withdrawn the garrisons at Athens, Decatur, and Huntsville, Alabama, taking a part of the force thus collected to Stevenson, and sending back five regiments to Murfreesborough. The garrison at Johnsonville was withdrawn to Clarksville.

Hood's movement on Columbia was slow; not until the evening of November 27th had his advance reached Schofield's front. During that night Schofield crossed Duck River, taking a position on the north bank, where he was not disturbed during the 28th. General Wilson's cavalry, 4,300 strong, guarded the crossings of the river above and below. On the afternoon of the 29th Wilson was pressed back and cut off from Schofield, while Hood's infantry crossed the river, and threatened to turn Schofield's flank by an advance on Spring Hill, about 15 miles north of Columbia. Schofield, therefore, sending Stanley with Wagner's division to Spring Hill to head off the enemy at that point and cover the retreat, prepared to fall back toward Franklin. Stanley reached Spring Hill just in time to check Forrest's advance and save the trains. The Confederate infantry coming up to Forrest's assistance, a doubtful battle was maintained till dark, in which the enemy nearly succeeded in dislodging Stanley from his position. Schofield, having sent back his trains, was at the same time occupied in resisting the enemy's attempts to cross Duck River in his front, and, after having several times repulsed the Confederate force opposed to him, retreated at night, his command making 25 miles under cover of the darkness, and, passing Spring Hill in safety, got into position at Franklin, 18 miles south of Nashville, on the morning of the 30th.

With Cheatham's corps supported by Stewart's, it seems that the enemy ought to have defeated Stanley at Spring Hill and cut off Schofield's retreat. But Stanley maintained his position and saved the army.<sup>1</sup> He was re-enforced toward night by Ruger's division of the Twenty-third Corps. But, even after this re-enforcement, the enemy had the advantage. With two

<sup>1</sup> General Hood, in his report, gives the following account of the affair at Spring Hill:

"When I had gotten well on my flank, the enemy discovered my intention, and began to retreat on the pike toward Spring Hill. The cavalry became engaged near that place about midday, but his trains were so strongly guarded that they were unable to break through them. About 4 P.M. our infantry forces, Major General Cheatham in the advance, commenced to come in contact with the enemy, about two miles from Spring Hill, through which place the Columbia and Franklin Pike passes. The enemy was at this time moving rapidly along the pike, with some of his troops formed on the flank of his column to protect it. Major General Cheatham was ordered to attack the enemy at once, vigorously, and get possession of this pike, and, although these orders were frequently and earnestly repeated, he made but a feeble and partial attack, failing to reach the point indicated. Had my instructions been carried out there is no doubt that we could have possessed ourselves of this road. Stewart's corps and Johnson's division were arriving upon the field to support the attack. Though the golden opportunity had passed with daylight, I did not at dark abandon the hope of dealing the enemy a heavy blow. Accordingly, Lieutenant General Stewart was furnished a guide, and ordered to move his corps beyond Cheatham's, and place it across the road beyond Spring Hill. Shortly after this General Cheatham came to my headquarters, and when I informed him of Stewart's movement, he said that Stewart ought to form on his right. I asked if that would throw Stewart across the pike. He replied that it would, and a mile beyond. Accordingly, one of Cheatham's staff officers was sent to show Stewart where his (Cheatham's) right rested. In the dark and confusion, Stewart did not succeed in getting the position desired, but about 11 P.M. went into bivouac. About 12 P.M., ascertaining that the enemy was moving in great confusion—artillery, wagons, and troops intermixed—I sent instructions to General Cheatham to advance a heavy line of skirmishers against him, and still farther impede and confuse his march. This was not accomplished. The enemy continued to move along the road in hurry and confusion, within hearing, nearly all the night. Thus was lost a great opportunity of striking the enemy, for which we had labored so long, the greatest this campaign had offered, and one of the greatest during the war."





G. D. WAGNER.

full corps of Forrest's cavalry in the vicinity of Spring Hill, Schofield ought to have been cut off at least from the direct road to Franklin. His main army did not leave Duck River, where it had been fighting Lee, until after dark, and passed Spring Hill about midnight. It certainly had a narrow escape. General Wagner's division of Stanley's corps held on to its position at Spring Hill until near daylight. Notwithstanding the superior numbers of the enemy, the only disturbances suffered in the retreat was from a slight attack made north of Thompson's by Forrest's cavalry, causing the loss of a few wagons. General Cooper, who had been left to guard the crossing at Duck River, was cut off from the direct road to Franklin, and proceeded to Nashville.

When Schofield reached Franklin he found no wagon bridge across the Harpeth River, and the fords in a bad condition. The railroad bridge was rapidly repaired and a foot-bridge was constructed, which was also available for the use of wagons. He sent his train across, and intended to cross with his army. But the enemy was in too close proximity. As the Federal troops arrived they were placed in position on the south side of the river, the Twenty-third Corps, under General Cox, on the left and centre, covering the approaches from Columbia and Lewisburg, and Kimball's division of Stanley's corps on the right; both flanks of the army resting on the river. Wood's division of Stanley's corps was sent to the north side of the river to cover the flanks, in the event of Hood's crossing above or below. Two brigades of Wagner's division—the last to reach Franklin—were left in front, to retard the advance of the enemy.

At daylight Hood had commenced the pursuit, which was pushed with great vigor. Stewart was in the advance, Cheatham following, while Lee, with the trains, brought up the rear from Columbia. Hood determined to make a direct attack with Stewart's and Cheatham's corps without waiting for Lee. No flank movement which he could now make would prevent Schofield from reaching Nashville.<sup>1</sup> Stewart advanced on the right, Cheatham on the left, with the cavalry on either flank, the main body of the latter, under Forrest, moving to the right. Johnson's division of Lee's corps arrived during the engagement, and went in on the left.

Fortunately for Schofield, Hood's attack was delayed until 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the 30th. In the mean time the Federal troops were constructing breastworks and protecting them by a slight abatis on the left. To them, with the river in their rear, and with the roads, by which alone retreat was possible, crowded with the wagon trains, defeat would have been a terrible disaster, affecting the safety of Nashville. On both sides the decisive nature of the contest was fully appreciated. It was a brief battle, for at this season of the year 4 P.M. was the verge of twilight.<sup>2</sup> Wagner's men, holding the outposts, "imprudently brave," reports Schofield, maintained the conflict outside of the intrenchments longer than was necessary, suffering heavy loss. When they fell back it was at a full run, and this movement swept back a portion of the first line in the works, allowing the enemy to

enter in large numbers. In this attempt to fight a battle with outposts Wagner lost over a thousand men. The enemy had gained an advantage, which, if pressed, might have resulted in success. Victory seemed almost within his grasp. The Federal line had been broken in the centre; two batteries of four guns each had been captured. But at this moment Opdyke, commanding the remaining brigade of Wagner's division, which had been held in reserve inside the works, leading his men on, shouting "Forward to the lines!" rushed forward, recovered the lost batteries, and captured 400 prisoners. The gap had been closed; but the enemy, though disappointed, was not disheartened. He charged the works, making four distinct attacks, and was each time hurled back with heavy loss. "So vigorous and fierce were these assaults that the enemy reached the exterior slope of the rude intrenchments, and hand-to-hand encounters occurred between the enraged combatants across the works."<sup>3</sup> Between the assaults, the enemy, covered by the undulations of the ground, pressed his sharpshooters close to the works, and kept up a galling fire.

The Confederates persistently assailed Schofield's line until after dark, continuing the attack at intervals until near midnight, but were repulsed in every attempt to carry the works. The Confederate loss was between 4500 and 6000 men. Schofield lost 2326, of which number of casualties 1241 occurred in Wagner's division.<sup>2</sup> On the Federal side, General Stanley was severely wounded in the neck. The Confederate loss in general officers was very great, including among them Major General Pat. Cleburne, and Brigadier Generals Gist, John Adams, Strahl, and Granbury; Brigadier Generals Carter, Manigault, Quarles, Cockrell, and Scott were wounded, and Brigadier General Gordon was captured.<sup>3</sup> At midnight Schofield withdrew from the trenches which he had held against the repeated assaults of far superior numbers, and fell back to Nashville.

Hood's orders to his corps commanders to drive Schofield into the river, and for Forrest to advance and capture the trains, had failed of execution. General Thomas's position was now secure. On the 1st of December he had behind the fortifications of Nashville and covering its southern approaches an investing force superior to General Hood's, and a cavalry force in process of organization at Edgefield, north of the river, which in a few days would in numbers be at least equal to Forrest's command. A. J. Smith's command of three divisions had also reached Nashville. Smith was placed on the right of the line, Wood, now commanding the Fourth Corps, in the centre, and Schofield on the left.

The next day, December 2d, the enemy advanced to within two miles of Nashville, and invested the town on the south side, General Lee holding the centre of the line, Cheatham the right, and Stewart the left; the cavalry on either flank extended to the river. The whole line was intrenched, and strong detached works were constructed to guard the flanks against attack. On Hood's right, Murfreesborough was held by a Federal force 8000 strong under General Rousseau, which cut off all communication with Georgia and Virginia. Bates's division of Cheatham's corps attacked the block-house at Overall's Creek, four miles north of Murfreesborough, on the 4th of December. The garrison maintained its position, and being soon re-enforced from Murfreesborough with three infantry regiments, four companies of cavalry, and a section of artillery, the enemy was driven off. During the 5th, 6th, and 7th, Bates, re-enforced by the greater portion of Forrest's cavalry, demonstrated against Fortress Rosecrans at Murfreesborough. As the enemy hesitated to make a direct assault, Rousseau determined to assume the offensive himself. Accordingly, on the 8th, General Milroy, with seven infantry regiments (3325 men), proceeded to the Wilkinson Pike, there encountered Bates and Forrest, and drove them from their temporary breastworks, capturing 207 prisoners.<sup>4</sup> The Federal loss in killed and wounded was 205. Buford's division of Forrest's cavalry entered the town of Murfreesborough the same day, but was speedily driven out by a single infantry regiment and a section of artillery. Forrest's cavalry, retiring from before Murfreesborough, proceeded northward to Lebanon, and threatened to cross the Cumberland above Nashville and cut off Thomas's communications by the Louisville Road. This movement was thwarted by a division of gun-boats and a detachment of Wilson's cavalry.

From the 3d to the 15th of December was spent by both armies in preparation for the conflict which was to decide the fate of Nashville. Hood was furnishing his army with supplies and with shoes. From the 7th to the 14th both armies were ice-bound. Thomas thus had time to remount Wilson's cavalry, increase the strength of his works, bring up re-enforcements of new recruits and temporary volunteers, and to mature his plan of operations. Nashville was well fortified when Thomas entered it with his army. The southern approaches were covered by Forts Negley, Morton, Confiscation, Houston, and Gillem. Some of these had been constructed in the latter part of 1862, when the city was threatened by a portion of Bragg's army. These forts were situated on commanding hills near the city, and some distance beyond ran the line now held by Thomas's army. From Fort Morton westward an interior line of defense was also constructed, along the range of hills nearer Nashville.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> General T. J. Wood's Report.

<sup>2</sup> Hood reports his own loss as 4500. Schofield, from information obtained afterward, makes the enemy's loss "1750 buried upon the field, 3800 disabled, and 702 prisoners." Hood claims that he captured 1000 prisoners. This tallies well with Schofield's report, in which he admits 1104 missing, 670 of whom were from Wagner's division.

<sup>3</sup> Hood reports that Bates's division behaved badly.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas's army at Nashville consisted of the following forces:

Schofield's Twenty-third Corps	9,000 men.
Wood's Fourth Corps	11,000 "
A. J. Smith's Corps, say	11,000 "
Steadman's Command, which arrived at Nashville from December 1	5,200 "
Wilson's Cavalry	12,000 "
Quartermaster's Troops under Brigadier General Donaldson, and other forces under General Miller used in the immediate defense of Nashville, say	8,000 "
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,200 "</b>

<sup>5</sup> "I learned from dispatches captured at Spring Hill, from Thomas to Schofield, that the latter was instructed to hold that place till the position at Franklin could be made secure, indicating the intention of Thomas to hold Franklin and his strong works at Murfreesborough. Thus I knew that it was all-important to attack Schofield before he could make himself strong, and, if he should escape at Franklin, he would gain his works about Nashville. The nature of the position was such as to render it inexpedient to attempt any farther flank movement, and I therefore determined to attack him in front, and without delay."—Hood's Report.

<sup>6</sup> On the 30th of November, 1864, the sun set at 4 39. Schofield's report makes the battle to have commenced at 3 30 P.M.



The severity of the weather began to relax on the 14th, and on the afternoon of that day Thomas issued orders to his corps commanders for an advance against the enemy. His army was now 50,000 strong, and fully prepared for battle. A large portion of Forrest's cavalry was still absent from the Confederate army. Hood seems in his infatuation to have been absolutely confident of victory in the event of Thomas's assuming the offensive.<sup>1</sup> He even dreamed of besieging Nashville. But the swollen river, patrolled by gun-boats, hindered an advance against the Louisville Road, and, even if this road had been reached and broken by Confederate cavalry, Thomas was well supplied at Nashville with all that was necessary for either a defensive or offensive campaign. The term siege would be scarcely applicable to General Hood's operations.

Upon his first approach to the city on the 2d of December, Hood had seized Montgomery Hill, within 600 yards of the Federal centre, and thrown up strong lines of earth-works on the hills south and parallel with those occupied by Thomas. His infantry stretched from the Nolensville Pike, on the right, along the high ground south and east of Brown's Creek, and across the Franklin and Granny White Pikes to the hills bordering the Hillsborough Pike. A wide interval, therefore, separated his left from the river. This—as also the corresponding interval between the Nolensville Pike and the river—was held by the cavalry, who had established batteries about eight miles below Nashville, blockading the river. The weak point of the Confederate position was its left flank, which, though strongly intrenched, was easily turned.

Thomas's long silence appeared to have increased Hood's confidence. It also led to considerable apprehension on the part of Lieutenant General Grant, who, at so great a distance from the field, was not aware of the rigorous cold which hindered Thomas's advance, and was also a serious inconvenience to the poorly-clad soldiers of Hood's army. He thought that Thomas ought to have moved upon Hood as soon as the latter had made his appearance in front of Nashville, and before he was fortified, and that by waiting to remount Wilson's cavalry he had made a great mistake. Perhaps, also, the narrow escape of Schofield's army in the retreat from Columbia to Franklin—an escape which could only be attributed to either the stupidity of the Confederate generals or to their want of confidence in their commander—led him to suspect that the campaign was not being properly conducted. At any rate, so great was his impatience that he started West with the idea of superintending matters there in person. He had only reached Washington when he received a dispatch from Thomas announcing the successful commencement of the battle of Nashville.<sup>2</sup>

General Thomas's plan of the battle was very simple, involving the turning of the enemy's left flank by a sudden and irresistible blow to be struck with the bulk of his army, and to be followed up until Hood's army was destroyed or dispersed in utter rout. Success was as certain as the event of a battle ever could be. The execution of this plan was so perfect in all its details that it justly conferred upon General Thomas the first rank among the Union generals as a tactician.<sup>3</sup> He had delayed for the purpose of organizing an efficient cavalry corps, in order that, in the event of victory, he might reap its full fruits by a relentless pursuit of the defeated army. He was prepared to attack a week before he did, but the weather, as we have said, was unfavorable. On the 12th Wilson's cavalry had crossed the Cumberland from Edgefield to the left of the Hillsborough Pike.

The morning of the 15th of December was every way favorable to the immediate execution of Genetal Thomas's plans. The sheet of ice which had covered the earth for nearly a week was broken up; and, in addition to the undulations of the ground, a heavy mist, lasting until noon, completely

<sup>1</sup> "Should he attack me in position, I felt that I would defeat him, and thus gain possession of Nashville, with abundant supplies for the army. This would give me possession of Tennessee."—Hood's Report.

<sup>2</sup> In his official report, Grant says:

"Before the battle of Nashville I grew very impatient over, as it appeared to me, the unnecessary delay. This impatience was increased upon learning that the enemy had sent a force of cavalry across the Cumberland into Kentucky. I feared Hood would cross his whole army and give us great trouble there. After urging upon General Thomas the necessity of immediately assuming the offensive, I started West to superintend matters there in person. Reaching Washington City, I received General Thomas's dispatch announcing his attack upon the enemy, and the result as far as the battle had progressed. I was delighted. All fears and apprehensions were dispelled. I am not yet satisfied but that General Thomas, immediately upon the appearance of Hood before Nashville, and before he had time to fortify, should have moved out with his whole force and given him battle, instead of waiting to remount his cavalry, which delayed him until the inclemency of the weather made it impracticable to attack earlier than he did. But his final defeat of Hood was so complete that it will be accepted as a vindication of that distinguished officer's judgment."

<sup>3</sup> The following is a copy of Thomas's order issued to his corps commanders on the 14th:

"As soon as the state of the weather will admit of offensive operations, the troops will move against the enemy's position in the following order: Major General A. J. Smith, commanding detachment of the Army of the Tennessee, after forming his troops on and near the Hardin Pike, in front of his present position, will make a vigorous assault on the enemy's left. Major General Wilson, commanding the cavalry corps, Military Division of the Mississippi, with three divisions, will move on and support General Smith's right, assisting, as far as possible, in carrying the left of the enemy's position, and be in readiness to throw his force upon the enemy the moment a favorable opportunity occurs. Major General Wilson will also send one division on the Charlotte Pike to clear that road of the enemy, and observe in the direction of Bell's Landing, to protect our right rear until the enemy's position is fairly turned, when it will rejoin the main force. Brigadier General T. J. Wood, commanding Fourth Army Corps, after leaving a strong skirmish line in his works from Laurens's Hill to his extreme right, will form the remainder of the Fourth Corps on the Hillsborough Pike to support General Smith's left, and operate on the left and rear of the enemy's advanced position on Montgomery Hill. Major General Schofield, commanding the Twenty-third Army Corps, will replace Brigadier General Kimball's division of the Fourth Corps with his troops, and occupy the trenches from Fort Negley to Laurens's Hill with a strong skirmish line. He will move with the remainder of his force in front of the works, and co-operate with General Wood, protecting the latter's left flank against an attack of the enemy. Major General Steedman, commanding the District of Etowah, will occupy the interior line in front of his present position, stretching from the reservoir on the Cumberland River to Fort Negley with a strong skirmish line, and mass the remainder of his force in its present position, to act according to the exigencies which may arise during these operations. Brigadier General Miller, with the troops forming the garrison of Nashville, will occupy the interior line from the battery on hill 210 to the extreme right, including the inclosed work on the Hyde's Ferry Road. The quartermaster's troops, under command of Brigadier General Donaldson, will, if necessary, be posted on the interior line from Fort Morton to the battery on hill 210. The troops occupying the interior line will be under the direction of Major General Steedman, who is charged with the immediate defense of Nashville during the operations around the city. Should the weather permit, the troops will be formed to commence operations at 6 A.M. on the 15th, or as soon thereafter as practicable."



JAMES H. STEEDMAN.

masked the preparations for battle. Under these auspicious circumstances, Smith advanced immediately in front of his works, with Wilson's cavalry on his right. Wood and Schofield, leaving strong skirmish lines in their trenches, marched to the right, Wood forming in line on Smith's left, and Schofield supporting Wood, guarding the left flank against attack. Steedman, who had charge of the defenses of Nashville, leaving Donaldson's and Miller's troops to hold the interior line of defense, advanced with his main force against the enemy's right. Steedman's operations were demonstrative, and preceded the main attack. His force consisted of three brigades—Thompson's, Morgan's, and Grosvenor's, the two former being composed of disciplined negro soldiers. Though unsuccessful in his attack on the Confederate right, he succeeded in diverting the enemy's attention from the centre and left, leaving the way open for Wilson, Smith, Wood, and Schofield, 40,000 strong, to sweep around against the enemy's works on the Hillsborough Pike.

The advance of Smith and Wilson commenced as soon as Steedman's movement was completely developed on either side of the Hardin Pike. Over difficult and broken ground, their movement proceeded from the Cumberland and the hills adjoining it across and along the Hardin Pike, and then swept eastward, enveloping the Confederate left on the Hillsborough Pike, threatening to strike Brentwood, in Hood's rear, on the road to Franklin. Hood was completely surprised, and his cavalry, a great portion of which was in the vicinity of Murfreesborough and along the Cumberland, was too weak to meet the sudden blow. Hatch's cavalry division moved on Smith's right, with Croxton's brigade on his own right, and Knipe's division in support. McArthur's infantry division held the right, and therefore the advance of Smith's corps, and, with Hatch's cavalry, encountered the enemy a little after noon. On the right of the Hillsborough Pike the enemy had some advanced works protecting his left. The Confederates were driven from this position by Hatch and McArthur, who, swinging to the left, came upon a redoubt containing four guns, which was carried by a portion of Hatch's division, and the captured artillery turned upon the enemy. A second redoubt was then carried, with four guns and about 300 prisoners. McArthur justly shared the glory of these captures.

While the enemy's left was being driven back on the Granny White Pike, the Fourth Corps, under Wood, was assaulting the centre at Montgomery Hill. This position was carried by Post's brigade of Wagner's division, and several prisoners were captured. Wood now connected with Smith's left, and Schofield's corps was moved from the reserve to Smith's right, the cavalry, at the same time, being thrown still farther around against the enemy's rear. But, while Wilson, Schofield, and Smith pressed forward during the afternoon, sweeping every thing before them, Wood had still another line of works to assault on his front. This was at length carried, and 700 prisoners, 8 guns, and 5 caissons were captured. By night, Hood's army had been driven out of its original line of works, and back from the Hillsborough Road, but still held possession of two lines of retreat to Franklin by the main road through Brentwood and the Granny White Pike. Thomas had won substantial trophies of victory, his captures consisting of 1200 prisoners, 16 guns, 40 wagons, and a large number of small-arms. Owing to the unexpectedness of the attack, and the brilliant tactics of the Federal commander, these results had been gained with slight Union loss, while the Confederate loss was heavy. During the afternoon, Johnson's division of Wilson's cavalry had, with the co-operation of the gun-boats, captured the Confederate batteries blockading the river below Nashville at Bell's Landing. At 9 P.M. Thomas telegraphed to Washington: "I shall attack the enemy again to-morrow if he stands to fight, and if he retreats during the night I will pursue him, throwing a heavy cavalry force in his rear to destroy his trains, if possible."

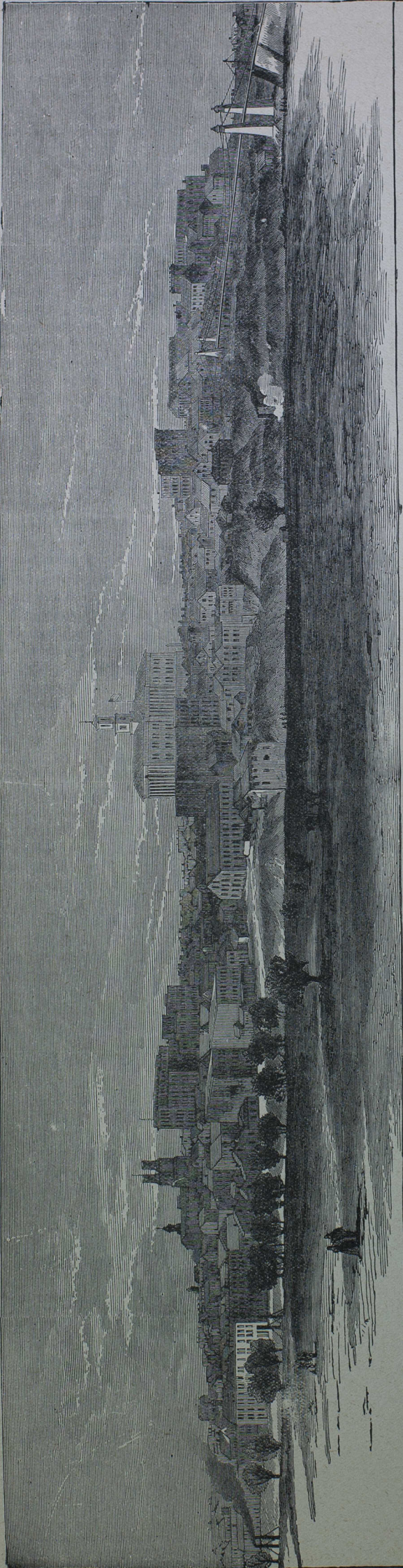
But Hood did not yet give up the contest. During the night he withdrew



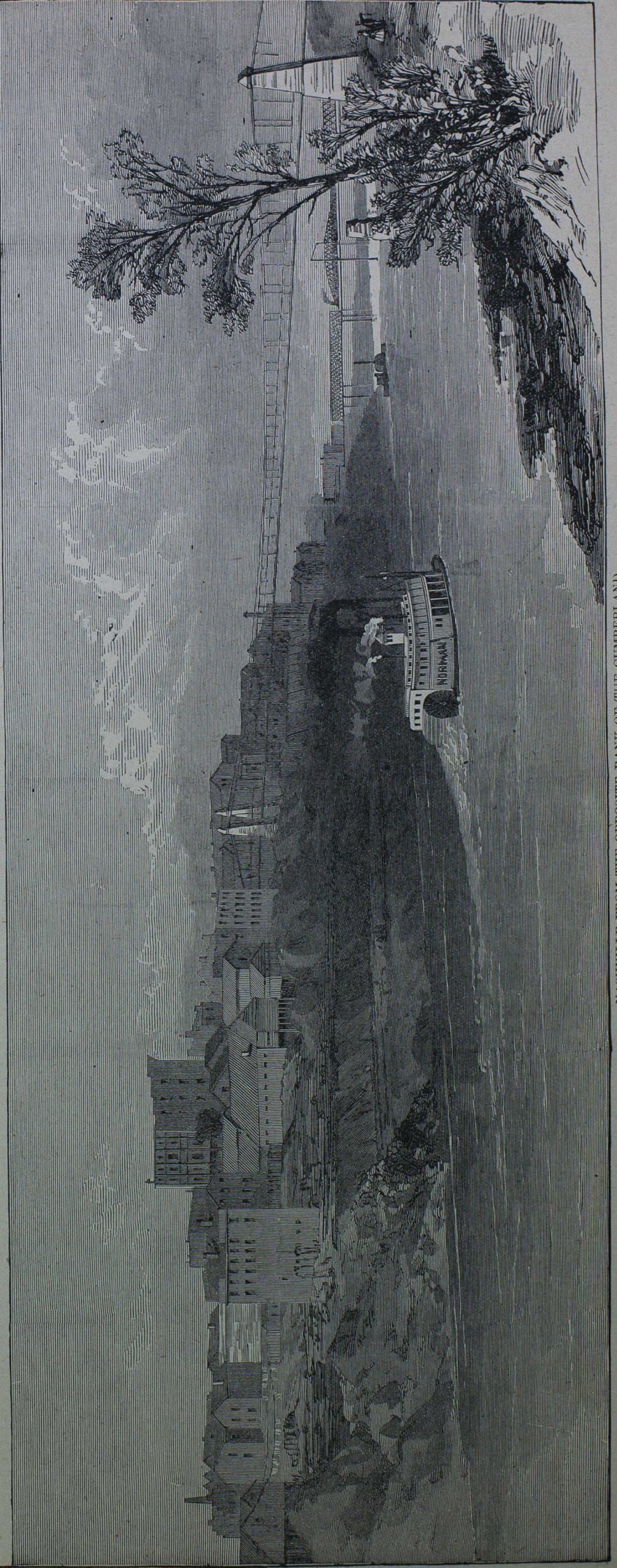


MAP OF THE BATTLE OF NASHVILLE.





NASHVILLE, FROM EDGEFIELD.



NASHVILLE FROM THE OPPOSITE BANK OF THE CUMBERLAND.





NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.

his right and centre to conform to the left. Cheatham's corps was transferred from right to left, leaving Stewart in the centre and Lee on the right. Thus, when Wood advanced at 6 A.M. on the morning of the 16th, he found only skirmishers in his front. He advanced, therefore, directly south from Nashville on the Franklin Pike until he developed the enemy's main line. Then Steedman came up by the Nolensville Pike on Wood's left, and Smith on his right. These troops faced southward, while Schofield, facing to the east, held the position which he had gained the evening before. Wilson extended away off to the enemy's rear, still threatening Brentwood, at the same time that he guarded the Federal right, and was ready, in case of Hood's retreat, to fall upon his flank. Hood's right rested upon Overton's Hill, four miles north of Brentwood, and his left upon the hills bordering the Granny White Pike. His centre was weaker than either flank. The whole line, about three miles long, had been hastily but strongly intrenched, with abatis thrown up in front.

Not until mid-afternoon were Thomas's preparations for attack completed. About 600 yards separated the opposing armies. On the right, Wilson had extended well to Hood's rear and across the Granny White Pike. The tactics of the day before were repeated in the attack of the 16th. Wood and Steedman proceeded to assault Overton Hill. The movement, commencing at 3 P.M., was open to the enemy's observation, and troops were hurried from the Confederate left and centre to meet the attack at this point. Post's brigade, which the day before had stormed Montgomery Hill, again formed the main column of assault, Steedman's colored troops co-operating on the left. The result is thus briefly reported by General Thomas: "The assault was made, and received by the enemy with tremendous fire of grape and canister, and musketry. Our men moved steadily onward up the hill until near the crest, when the reserve of the enemy rose and poured into the assaulting column a most destructive fire, causing the men first to waver and then to fall back, leaving their dead and wounded, black and white indiscriminately mingled, lying amid the abatis, the gallant Colonel Post among the wounded."

Wood again reformed his command in its first position, and prepared to renew the attack. Hood, in the momentary enthusiasm following his partial success, began to hope that the day was already won. But his anticipations were doomed to disappointment; for Smith and Schofield had heard of Hood's weakening his lines in their front to support Lee's corps, and rushed forward upon the enemy's right and centre, "carrying all before them, irreparably breaking his lines in a dozen places, and capturing all his artillery and thousands of prisoners."<sup>1</sup> Among the latter were four general officers, including Major General Edward S. Johnson, and Brigadier Generals Jackson and Smith. Wilson made a simultaneous advance in the rear, falling upon the flank of the routed enemy and cutting him off from the Granny White Pike. This was a fitting prelude to Wood's second assault on Overton Hill. Once again the slopes of that eminence were ascended in the face of the enemy's fire. The summit was gained, the enemy was swept like chaff from his works, so many, at least, as were not taken prisoners, and all the artillery was captured. Hood's army, routed as no army had been in the history of the war, with but a remnant of artillery, abandoning its wagons and flinging aside its muskets, blankets, and every thing which might impede its own flight, or, clogging the road behind, might delay the pursuit of its victorious enemy, scattered in irrecoverable confusion down the Franklin Pike through Brentwood Pass.

If the battle could have been fought in the forenoon instead of in the afternoon, nothing could now have saved Hood's army from annihilation. The Fourth Corps pursued rapidly for several miles, capturing more prisoners, until darkness kindly enveloped the enemy's retreat. As soon as Hatch's dismounted men received their horses they also pursued on the Granny White Pike, Croxton and Knipe closely following. After proceeding about a mile, Hatch encountered Chalmers's Confederate cavalry, posted across the road behind barricades. The Twelfth Tennessee, Colonel Spaulding, charged and broke the enemy's lines, scattering the Confederates, and capturing, among other prisoners, Brigadier General G. W. Rucker.

Thus ended the two days' battle of Nashville. Hood's dead and wounded were left upon the field; besides these, he had lost 4462 prisoners, including 287 officers of all grades, from major general down, 53 guns, and thousands of small-arms.

The next morning the pursuit was continued. The Fourth Corps was followed by Steedman, and Wilson's cavalry by Schofield and Smith. Johnson's cavalry division was dispatched directly across the Harpeth to menace Franklin. Upon reaching the point where the Granny White runs into the Franklin Pike, Wilson took the advance, and encountered the Confederate rear-guard, under Stevenson, four miles north of Franklin, and charging in front and flank, dispersed the enemy and captured 413 prisoners. The presence of Johnson's cavalry division near Franklin compelled Hood to abandon that town, leaving in the hospitals over 2000 Confederate wounded. Wilson's cavalry still pursued. Now, more than ever, did Hood feel his need of Forrest, whom, in an evil moment, he had sent off on a bootless errand, just as formerly he had sent off Wheeler's cavalry at the very crisis of the Atlanta campaign. Forrest had been ordered back, but, owing to the swollen streams which barred his progress, he did not join Hood until the latter had reached Duck River. About five miles south of Franklin, the rear-guard, toward nightfall, made a temporary stand in the road, posting a battery of artillery on some rising ground. But Wilson, sending Hatch to the left and Knipe to the right of the road, with their batteries, charged Stevenson with his own body-guard, the Fourth Regular Cavalry, 180 strong. Freely using their sabres, the Union horsemen broke the Confederate centre,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas's Report.



Knipe and Hatch at the same time falling upon the flanks. Stevenson was thus swept from his chosen position for the second time, leaving his artillery in the road.

The 18th, like the day before, was rainy and dismal. The pursuit was continued to Duck River, where Hood had entrenched to make a stand, but wisely repented of his rash design and continued his flight to the Tennessee, leaving some of his guns at the bottom of Duck River. On reaching Rutherford's Creek, three miles north of Columbia, that stream was found impassable by the national troops. Sherman had taken the best pontoon train along with his army, and another, which had been hurriedly constructed at Nashville, was incomplete, and did not arrive in time. The delay thus occasioned relieved Hood from instant danger. But his army was reduced—so far as organization was concerned—to a simple rear-guard. Hood was retreating from Tennessee in precisely the same condition in which Davis had three months before predicted that Sherman would retreat from Georgia. Still, Thomas, as soon as possible, continued the pursuit to the Tennessee River. The route of the flying enemy—if toilsome dragging along the miry roads could be called flight—was easily traced by ruins of baggage wagons, by small-arms and blankets, and other *débris* of a demoralized army. At Pulaski, four guns were abandoned and thrown into Richland Creek; and a mile beyond, twenty wagons loaded with ammunition, and belonging to Cheatham's corps, were destroyed. All along the road Hood's stragglers lined the wayside, where they had fallen out, tired and discouraged.<sup>1</sup> The Confederate army, or rather its disorganized remnant, crossed the Tennessee on the 27th of December, and fell back to Tupelo, Mississippi. Here Hood, overwhelmed by the denunciations which beat upon him heavily from all sides, resigned his command of the wreck of an army which he had brought back, and was succeeded by General Dick Taylor, who had managed to get across from the west of the Mississippi.<sup>2</sup> But the Confederate Army of Tennessee, as an organized force, had fought its last campaign.

Thomas, on December 30th, announced to his army the successful completion of the campaign. It was an army which had been hastily gathered together from all quarters to meet Hood's invasion. Its numbers and efficiency were indications at the same time of the prompt and unyielding patriotism of the West, and of the generalship of Thomas. He it was who had moulded its segregate parts into a mobile army. And in all military history probably no army was ever more skillfully wielded. Thomas had quietly manifested his military capacity in the early battles of 1862; he had greatly distinguished himself, in a situation more adapted to a larger display of tactical skill, on the battle-field of Chickamauga, in 1863; but the battles of Nashville were the seal and impress of his military genius. In these latter battles he saw the end from the beginning; the victorious event was as clear to him on the morning of the 15th as on the night of the next day, when Hood had been routed; with him no mistake was possible, and thus upon victory followed its full fruits. For the first time in the history of the war, a Confederate army 40,000 strong had been destroyed on the field of battle and in its flight. The numbers *directly* brought to bear upon Hood's army had not been far superior; the result is therefore to be attributed to the admirable tactics of General Thomas. The battles of Nashville deserve to rank with those of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. A very memorable feature of these battles is the slight loss of the Federals in killed and wounded.<sup>3</sup> The grand result had been accomplished rather by skillful manœuvre than by an enormous sacrifice of life. The Confederate loss had been heavier in killed and wounded, and, in addition, over 8000 prisoners had been captured. During the Tennessee campaign Hood lost 13,189 prisoners, and by desertion over 2000, besides 72 guns.

At the close of 1864 Thomas disposed of his army as follows: Smith's corps was stationed at Eastport, Mississippi; Wood's was concentrated at

<sup>1</sup> "With the exception of his rear-guard, his army had become a disheartened and disorganized rabble of half-armed and barefooted men, who sought every opportunity to fall out by the wayside and desert their cause, to put an end to their sufferings. The rear-guard, however, was undaunted and firm, and did its work bravely to the last."—*Thomas's Report*.

<sup>2</sup> "Here, finding so much dissatisfaction throughout the country as in my judgment to greatly impair, if not destroy, my usefulness and counteract my exertions, and with no desire but to serve my country, I asked to be relieved, with the hope that another might be assigned to the command who might do more than I could hope to accomplish. Accordingly, I was so relieved on the 23d of January by authority of the President."—*Hood's Report*.

<sup>3</sup> General Thomas reports his loss in killed, wounded, and missing during the entire campaign as 10,000.

Huntsville and Athens, Alabama; Schofield's at Dalton, Georgia; and Wilson's cavalry at Eastport and Huntsville.

In the mean time the cavalry force, 800 strong, which, under General Lyon, had been sent by Hood across the Cumberland to operate against Thomas's communications in Kentucky, had been defeated and driven back into Alabama, after some 600 of its number had been scattered or captured. The small remnant was about the middle of January surprised in camp between Warrenton and Tuscaloosa, where General Lyon, with about 100 of his men, was captured. Lyon was taken in bed, and, having been permitted to dress himself, he watched his opportunity and treacherously shot his sentinel, escaping in the darkness.

To finish this chapter, it remains only for us to glance at the operations which, toward the close of the year, had been going on east of Knoxville, on the yet contested border of East Tennessee and West Virginia.

General Morgan had been captured and killed on the 4th of September, 1864, at Greenville, in East Tennessee, and his command had passed into the hands of his confederate and recent biographer, General Basil Duke. In November General Breckinridge proceeded to East Tennessee, and took command of the operations in that quarter. On the 13th of November, with about 3000 men, he attacked Brigadier General A. C. Gillem, near Morris-town, routing him and capturing his artillery (6 guns), with about 500 prisoners. The remainder of Gillem's command escaped to Strawberry Plains, and thence to Knoxville. Gillem's command, 1500 strong, had formerly belonged to the Army of the Cumberland, but at the instance of Governor Andrew Johnson had been made an independent command. It was this separation, and the consequent lack of co-operation between Gillem and the officers of Thomas's army, which doubtless led to this disaster.

Breckinridge followed up his success, moving through Strawberry Plains to the immediate vicinity of Knoxville, but on the 18th of November began hastily to retrace his line of advance. For General Thomas, in all his preparations against Hood, had not weakened his rear, and the force under Breckinridge was not competent to meet that suddenly brought to his front. On the 18th—the day of Breckinridge's retreat—General Ammen's troops, re-enforced by 1500 men from Chattanooga, reoccupied Strawberry Plains.

General Schofield had left Stoneman at Louisville to take charge of the Department of the Ohio during his absence with Thomas's army. Stoneman started for Knoxville, having previously ordered Brevet Major General Burbridge to march with all his available force in Kentucky, by way of Cumberland Gap, to Gillem's relief. On his way to Knoxville, Stoneman received instructions from Thomas to concentrate as large a force as possible in East Tennessee against Breckinridge, and either destroy his force or drive it into Virginia, and destroy the salt-works at Saltville, in West Virginia, and the railroad from the Tennessee line as far into Virginia as practicable.

Having rapidly concentrated the commands of Burbridge and Gillem at Bean's Station, on the 12th of December General Stoneman advanced against the enemy. Gillem struck Duke at Kingsport, on the north fork of the Holston River, killing, capturing, or dispersing the whole command. Burbridge, at Bristol, came upon the enemy under Vaughn, and skirmished with him until Gillem's troops came up. Vaughn then retreated. Burbridge pushed on to Abingdon, to cut the railroad between Wytheville and Saltville, to prevent re-enforcements from Lynchburg. Gillem also reached Abingdon on the 15th, and the next day struck the enemy at Marion, routed him, and captured all his artillery and trains, and 198 prisoners. Wytheville, with its stores and supplies, was destroyed, as also the extensive lead-works near the town, and the railroad bridge over Reedy Creek. Stoneman, having made a demonstration on Saltville, proceeded to join Burbridge at Marion, where Breckinridge had collected the scattered remnants of his command. But the Confederates avoided battle, retreating into North Carolina. Stoneman then moved on Saltville with his entire command, capturing at that place eight guns, a large amount of ammunition, and two locomotives. The salt-works were destroyed by breaking the kettles, filling the wells with rubbish and burning the buildings. Stoneman then returned to Knoxville, accompanied by Gillem's command, while General Burbridge, by way of Cumberland Gap, fell back into Kentucky. The country marched over by Stoneman's troops during these operations was laid waste, and all mills, factories and bridges were destroyed.



SALTVILLE, VIRGINIA.



SALT VALLEY.