On the 23 April 1861 being in command of the 154 Senior Regiment of Tennessee Volunteers as lieutenant-colonel, 1 Colonel Preston Smith being absent on official business at Montgomery, Ala. I received an order by telegraph from Governor Isham G. Harris to proceed with a portion of my command and the Steuben Artillery to some point above Memphis on the Miss. River. I laid this order before the Military Board at Memphis and being furnished by them with means of transportation, subsistence stores, etc. I left Memphis at 12 o'clock at night with two companies of Infantry, Light Guards, Capt. Genette and Southern Guards, Capt. ----- (illegible) and the Steuben Artillery and landed at Randolph 60 miles above Memphis about 10 o'clock next morning. The troops were at once encamped and a temporary organization made for the Battalion 2 July 28, 1861. The Army under Brig. Gen. Pillow left Randolph by Steam Boat and arrived at New Madrid, Mo. the 29. 3

* Marcus Joseph Wright was born in Purdy, McNair county, Tenn., in 1831. He was the son of Capt. Benjamin Wright of the 39 Regular Infantry who served in the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, and grandson of Capt. John Wright of the Georgia Line, Continental Army. He practiced law and entered the Confederate Army in May, 1861, as lieutenant-colonel of the 154 Senior Regiment of Tennessee Infantry; Promoted brigadier-general Dec. 20th, 1862. He was present at many battles of the Army of Tennessee and was wounded at Shiloh. He was a member of the Southern Historical Assn. Southern Historical Society, Washington, D. C., Historical Society, and Alabama Historical Society. He was author of Life of General Winfield Scott in the Great Commander Series, Life of Governor William Blount; co-author with Gen. A. L. Long of Life of Robert E. Lee. He wrote many other works of an historical character and contributed extensively to various encyclopedias and magazines. On July 1, 1878 he was appointed Agent for the Collection of Confederate Records for the War Department and served in this capacity until the Civil War Records were published by the Government. In the General Index volume of these records Secretary of War. Elihu Root, says:

"In view of the distrust with which the Southern people for a while naturally regarded the movements made by the government with a view to the procurement of the records of the Confederacy, it is not surprising that the efforts of the Department to complete its Confederate files met at first with slight success or assistance. However, Marcus J. Wright. formerly a brigadier-general in the Confederate army, was appointed July 1, 1878, Agent for the Collection of Confederate Records and in this capacity he continued employed until the completion of the work. Through his efforts and tact the attitude of the Southern people towards the compilation became more cordial and as their confidence increased records were brought out from their places of concealment and forwarded to the Department as gifts or deposited as loans." Mr. Root quotes Secretary of War Proctor: "Gen. Marcus J. Wright, formerly of the Confederate army, has been continued as Agent for the Collection of Confederate
Records and his position in the work is next in importance to a position upon the Board itself." In The American Civil War, James K. Hosmer, N. Y., 1913, II. 315, the author says: "The collection (referring to Civil War records) thus preserved was greatly increased by the efforts of Gen. Marcus J. Wright, C. S. A., who, now in the service of the United States, spent years in an indefatigable search among the survivors of the "lost cause" for papers that might be of value."

Gen. Wright died in Washington, D. C., on Dec, 27, 1922.

1. The 154 Regiment of Tenn. Volunteers is always referred to in the various reports found in the Records of the Civil War as Senior Regiment. It was the senior regiment of Tenn. infantry which distinction always appears as a part of its designation. When it entered the Confederate service it retained its old militia number.

2. These troops were simply a detachment and so it was necessary to organize them into a battalion for command and administration.

3. While Colonel Wright was encamped at Randolph his command built a large bastioned fort on the east bank of the Miss. river about 10 miles north of Randolph on a high bluff about opposite Osceola, Kas. This fort was named Fort Wright. (See Atlas of the Civil War Records, plate CLXXI.)

Page 4

transferred to the Provisional Army of the Confederate States on 13, Aug.), 4 until the 15, Aug. Then we marched (the 154 Tenn. 4 Tenn. 13 Tenn. regiments under Col. McCown 16 miles to Sikestown 5 16 August. Moved to Watkins farm 18 miles. Remained here until 2 Sept., when we marched to New Madrid and took Steam Boat which landed us at Island No. 10 on the 3rd. Remained at Island No. 10 until the 8th when we landed at Columbus, Ky. Remained in camp here until 15 September when we marched to Mayfield, Ky. and returned to Columbus on the 22d of Sept. Camped and in a few days commenced erecting Winter Quarters.
November 7, 1861. This day was fought the Battle of Belmont opposite Columbus. My regiment lost one man killed and 13 wounded. My Brother John V. Wright Comdg. 13 Tenn. Regt. had his horse shot under him and received a severe injury of the hip. I commanded the 154 in this. Col. Smith commanded the brigade. We pursued the enemy to their gunboats. I had a sharp fight. We captured some wagons, guns and clothing and some of Gen. Grant's Hdq. papers. Col. Smith being assigned to the command of a Brigade, I assumed command of the Regiment. 6

January. I was appointed Military Governor of Columbus by Gen. Polk and continued in this position until March 1, 1862. 7 When Columbus was evacuated we moved by way of Clinton to camp 13 miles from Columbus.

Sunday March 2d. Marched by way of Casey's Station to Union City.

Tuesday March 4th. Went by railroad to Humboldt. Was appointed Military Governor of Humboldt by Gen. Polk. Heard of the death of Capt. W. J. Whitsitt of Co. A who was Provost Marshall under me at Columbus. 8

Friday March 14. My wife and children came up from Memphis. Received orders and went by rail to Jackson where I left my family with Mr. Welch. Arrived at Bethel Station on the night of the 14 and ordered to Purdy my old home and Birthplace where the remains of my Father and Mother and many dear relatives lie buried. 9

On constant heavy Picket duty here, the enemy in large force being 8 miles in our front near Crump's Landing, Tenn. River. The enemy's

4. Previously these troops were a part of the Provisional Army of Tennessee.

6. John V. Wright, brother of Marcus J., was a lawyer and had served in the lower house of the U. S. Congress. While suffering from the effect of his wound received at Belmont he was elected to the Confederate Congress where he remained until the close of the war. An interesting incident occurred at Belmont. As the regiment of Col. M. J. Wright advanced against the Federals it came in sight of a Federal log hospital in front of which were two mounted Federal officers. At this moment two other Federal officers ran from the hospital to a corn field, jumped the fence and disappeared in the woods. They were well within range of Wright's men, a number of whom cocked their muskets and prepared to fire; but Col. Wright stopped them as at this early stage of the war individuals were not as a rule fired upon by troops in formation. On the day after the battle Gen. Cheatham met Col. Hatch of Gen. Grant's staff under a flag of truce and Col. Hatch said that the fleeing officers were Gen. Grant and himself. A few days later Gen. Cheatham met Gen. Grant on a flag-of-truce boat and Grant confirmed the statement made by Hatch; (A. L. Conger, The Rise of U. S. Grant, N. Y., 1931, 109: cf. Southern Historical Society Papers No. 16, 82). While the Federals were driven aboard their gun-boats at Belmont, the Confederate attack was led by Lt. Col. Marcus J. Wright (cf. report of Col. Preston Smith in Civil War Records, Series 1. vol. III. 346).


8. The order appointing Col. Wright Military Governor of Columbus, Ky., also designated Capt. Whitsitt as Provost Marshal.

9. Gen. Wright's mother, Martha Ann Wright (Hicks) was born in Dinwiddie county, Va. She first married Herbert Harwell, by whom she had five children. By her marriage with Capt. Wright she had three children, John V. and Marcus J. Wright and Mrs. Elizabeth Crump. Gen. Wright married first Martha Spencer Elcan of Memphis, Tenn. His second wife was Pauline Womack, daughter of Judge John W. Womack of Eutaw, Ala. Some interesting notes on the Wright-Harwell-Elcan-Crump families may be found in Marcus J. Wright, Reminiscence of the Early Settlement and Early Settlers of McNairy County, Tenn., Washington, 1882.
cavalry dashed in on our picket beyond Perdy which was under command of Lieut. Creighton. They captured one man and lost a horse. They were led by Fielding Hurst.

April 5th. Left Purdy at daylight, marched 23 miles and bivouaced in line of battle.

April 6th and 7th. The Battle of Shiloh was fought. I was in command of my regiment from 12 o'clock the 6th during the remainder of the two days engagement. I received a slight wound on my right knee. A ball passed through my saddle and into my horse. Killed, wounded and missing in my regiment 198: Killed, 26, wounded 163, missing 9.

Late in the evening of the 7th the army withdrew from the field and marched to Michie's Cross Road and on the 9th marched to Corinth.

Retreat from Corinth. Corinth Thursday 29, May, 1862. The army under Gen. Beauregard moved out from its position at Corinth at night, the rear of the army getting out at daylight. March 12 miles and bivouaced about 3 pm. the 30th. Moved forward at 5 o'clock a.m. the 31st and marched 20 miles to Baldwin. Left Baldwin the 7th June and marched 8 miles to Guntown and from there to Tupelo.

The army left Tupelo 22d July, the artillery and wagon train going through the country, the Infantry via Mobile, Montgomery, to Chattanooga. Gen. Bragg commands the army.

The March from Chattanooga into Kentucky
Aug. 21. The army left Chattanooga and crossed the Tennessee River at Harrison 14 miles on the 22. Camped on the 22d at the Union Baptist Church 10 miles from Harrison. Remained at this Camp (for the balance of the Army to cross the River) until 28 Aug, when we moved forward at 4 o'clock a.m. Marched 9 miles to Sale Creek Camp Ground where we remained until the morning of the 30, 41/2 o'clock when we ascended Walden's Ridge, marching 8 miles.

Aug. 31. Descended Walden's Ridge distance 8 miles to Sequatchie Valley and encamped on Sequatchie River (the word Sequatchie in English is "hog.")

Sept. 1st. Moved up the Valley today to Pikesville, distance 8 miles, and within two miles of the Cumberland Mountains.

Sept. 2. Made the ascent of the Cumberland Mountains, travelling all day and night and encamped at Caney Fork, having travelled 21 miles.

Sept. 3. Moved forward 13 miles arriving at Sparta and encamped on the River Calf-Killer one and one quarter miles from Town.

Sept. 4. Remained in camp at Sparta. Sent out Battle Flags for the 1st Division Right Wing Army of the Mississippi.

Sept. 6. Marched 17 miles and encamped on Gainsboro road.

Sept. 8. Moved forward across the river wading it up to the crotch. Camped at a fine spring 7 miles distance from starting point.

10. Fielding Hurst was born in McNairy Co., Tenn., and was here operating against his own people. After Shiloh he was commissioned by Andrew Johnson, Governor of Tennessee, to raise the 6th (Federal) Tennessee Cavalry. In Oct., 1862, he commanded the 1st West Tennessee Cavalry. In Nov., 1862, his regiment served under Gen. Grant in the Columbus, Ky., district.

11. In the report on this battle made by Major-General B. F. Cheatham, commanding Col. Wright's division, he refers to Col. Wright as "an efficient and gallant officer" and says "... Lt. Col. Marcus J. Wright are all highly commended for gallantry and efficiency." (Civil War Records, Series I, vol. X, 437, 443.) Col. Preston Smith Col. Wright's brigade commander said in his report: "I beg leave to speak particularly of the gallant bearing of ... and Lieut. Col. Marcus J. Wright (Ibid., 448). He also said: "I cannot close this report without expressing my profound thanks to Lieut. Col. Wright who, though struck on the leg Sunday by a ball which gave him much pain, continued with the command giving me most valuable aid." (Ibid., 449.)

Sept. 9. Moved forward passing through Centerville and encamped on the ground where Col. Morgan fought and drove the enemy, capturing the commanding officer. At Tompkinsville, Ky. distance 21 miles.

Sept. 10. Remained in camp.

Sept. 11. Moved forward nine miles and encamped on Peter's Creek on the Glasgow road.

Sept. 12. Moved 18 miles to Glasgow and encamped. Some demonstrations of enthusiasm shown by citizens.

Sept. 15. Two day's rations having been prepared, moved this morning at 3 o'clock and marched until 11 o'clock at night towards Munfordsville - distance 12 miles. Encamped near Bear Wallow.

Sept. 16. Moved forward this morning at 5 o'clock; crossed Green River 4 miles above the Garrison and town of Munfordsville and bivouaced in line of battle in rear of the enemy's works; Gen. Cheatham's Head Quarters being in a grave yard. At 12 o'clock learned that the enemy 4500 strong had surrendered to Gen, Bragg who was in their front with the Left Wing of the Army of the Miss.

Sept. 17. The enemy 4300 strong drawn up in line laid down their arms. We got here 10 pieces of artillery and a large quantity of Ordnance and other stores. Moved forward 8 miles to Beaver Creek and encamped.

Sept. 18. Ordered back in a violent rain storm to Munfordsville. Moved three miles and the order was countermanded. Bivouaced on the road in a pelting rain all night.


Sept. 20. Moved forward 21 miles and camped near Nolin.
Sept. 21. Marched 10 miles and camped at Hodgensville.

Sept. 22. Passed Muldranghs Ridge and New Haven; distance to camp 22 miles.

Sept. 23. Passed through Bardstown and encamped 4 miles from Town on the Danville toad [road].

Sept. 24, 25, 26. Remained in camp. Called to see Miss Hardin ----- (illegible) of Mrs. Judge Dixon of Memphis.


Marched forward 3d Oct. and encamped near Fredrick on Beech Fork of Salt River - distance 9 miles.

Oct. 4. Marched 15 miles and camped on Beech Creek passing through Springfield.

Oct. 5. Passed through Perryville and March to Camp 18 miles at Mrs. Reeds.

Oct. 6. Passed through Danville and marched 14 miles to camp at Harrodsburg.
Oct. 7. Moved out from Harrodsburg at sundown and arrived at Perryville at midnight. Gen. Hardee with the Left Wing being in line of battle, the 1st Division of the Right Wing being under Gen. Cheatham - bivouced on the left in line of battle on a ridge below the town of Perryville. 12

Oct. 8. Battle of Perryville. The two armies were formed in line of battle the town of Perryville between them. The action with the left wing (Gen. Hardee) opened between 12 and 1 o'clock. At 2 o'clock three brigades of the right wing, to wit, Donelson's Stewarts and Maney's (Smith being held in reserve) under command of Maj. Gen. Cheatham, were moved from their position on the left to the right and moved into action engaging the enemy about 3 o'clock. The engagement here on our right soon became one of the fiercest on record and was continued until dark. We captured 15 pieces of artillery, killed one and wounded two brigadier generals. The

12. Those desiring to follow this long march of the army from Chattanooga into Kentucky are referred to Plate 150, Atlas of the Civil War Records.

Page 7

loss of the right wing in killed and wounded was 1440, the whole loss of our army amounted to ----- (blank).

The Line of Retreat from Kentucky

Oct. 9. The army slept last night on the field of battle and moved out at daylight this morning to Harrodsburg.

Oct. 10. Arrived at camp one mile from Bryantsville - distance from Harrodsburg 16 miles.


Oct. 15. March 8 miles to Big Rock Castle River and encamped, the enemy skirmishing with our rear. Passed "Camp Wild Cat." 14

Oct. 16. Marched 5 miles to Little Rock Castle River and encamped. Skirmishing still kept up with the enemy steadily following us up.

Oct. 17. Passed London and camped at Laurel Creek - 16 miles. Prisoners brought in report that Crittenden's army corps of 4 divisions is in our rear.

Oct. 18. Marched 18 miles, passing through Barboursville and camped on the Cumberland.

Oct. 19. Left Barboursville and moved through Flat Lick along the margin of the Cumberland River to Cumberland Ford - distance 16 miles. I here discharged the most unpleasant duty of my military career. Sixteen Bushwhackers (unauthorized and unenlisted men) including the notorious Capt. King and two of his sons were hung here last night by Chalmer's brigade, having been taken by our cavalry firing on our troops.
Under orders from Gen. Cheatham, I took a detachment of 20 mounted men and with Lieut. Mann had them decently buried under the cherry tree on which they were hung near the river.

Oct. 20. Moved forward passing various fortifications and crossing Cumberland Gap to camp - 14 miles. Here we again passed into the State of Tennessee, having left Chattanooga for the campaign on the 22 of August.

Oct. 21. Marched 5 miles and encamped on Powells River a most beautiful stream of water.

Oct. 22. Passed through Tazewell (the scene of Col. Vaughn's fight with the enemy) crossing Clinch river, and camped - distance 18 miles. Clinch River a beautiful stream, very wide at the ford.

Oct. 23. Marched 12 miles passing through Maynardsville, Union Co.


Oct. 26. Snow falling all day it being 4 inches deep at night. The leaves on the trees are still green.

Oct. 27. In camp. Heavy frost.
Oct. 28. In camp sharp frost, clear and cold.

Oct. 29. Left camp and moved to Knoxville. While getting our horses ready for transportation on the Rail Road, Maj. F. H. McNairy was shot through the right knee, the ball passing upward under the knee-cap. The

13. Camp Dick Robertson is an historical place. While the state of Kentucky was yet undecided as to what action it would take, the War Department on July 1, 1861, ordered Lieut. Nelson of the U. S. Navy to establish a camp and open recruiting for the Union army. He established Camp Dick Robertson which became an important recruiting center for the North. (See Civil War Records, Series I, vol. IV, 251, 257.

14. Camp Wild Cat (known also as Rock Castle) was a naturally strong elevated position. A contemporary report describes it as "a natural fortification." It had been strongly fortified by the Federals and unsuccessfully attacked on Oct. 21, 1861, by Gen. Zollicoffer. A cavalry engagement took place here on Oct. 19 and 20, 1862. During the Battle of Perryville, Col. Wright was Assistant Adjutant General for Major-General Cheatham.

shooting was accidental, occasioned by the falling of one of his pistols out of the holster. Capt. Brooks, volunteer Aid to Gen. Cheatham joined us here. Left Knoxville and arrived at Chattanooga - 110 miles.

Oct. 30. Left Chattanooga and arrived at Bridgeport or at the bridge this side - 38 miles. The two bridges across the Tennessee River at this point were burned by Gen. Ledbetter last spring. We are delayed here in getting troops and baggage across.
Oct. 31. Engaged all day in crossing troops. Received telegraphic orders from Gen. Polk to proceed to McMinville and take charge of Conscript Camp. Took the train for Chattanooga.

Nov. 1. Left Chattanooga for Bridgeport.

Nov. 2. Arrived at Tullahoma.

Nov. 3. Arrived at Manchester.

Nov. 4. Arrived at McMinville and assumed command of the Post and Camp of Instruction. Dr. J. M. Towler (?) is appointed Post Surgeon. Major Hunter Nicholson (?) and Capt. Laurence L. Butler assigned to duty as Asst. Inspsds. Conscription. Capt. R. W. Pitman appointed Provost Marshal and Lieut. Martin, Post Adjutant. Sidney Womack of Ala. reports to me and is assigned to duty. 15


Dec. 3. Went to Murfreesboro.

Dec. 6. Returned, W. A. Thompson assigned to duty with me as Post Commissary. Henry L. Elcan assigned to duty as Post Quarter Master. Marcus Crump joins me. 16
Dec. 14. Received telegraphic dispatch from Governor Harris announcing my appointment by the President (who is at Murfreesboro) as Brigadier-General with orders to report there for duty. Will be ready to go Sunday next.


Tuesday 31 Dec. The ever-memorable battle of Murfreesboro or Stone River fought Jan. 1, 2, 3, Heavy skirmishing and cannonading all day. Jan. 4; Breckenridge's assault on the enemy's strong point on our right made a terrible fight. Heavy loss on each side.

Jan. 15. I am assigned to the command of Hanson's Brigade consisting of the 2d, 4th, 6th and 19 Ky. regiments and 41 Ala regiment and Cobbs Battery in Breckinridge's division, Hardee's corps.

Jan. 31. I am relieved from command of Hanson's Brigade and ordered to report to Lieut. Genl. Polk at Shelbyville for assignment to Donelson's Brigade, Cheatham's Division.

Feby. 7. Assumed command of Donelson's Brigade consisting of the 8th, 16th, 15th 38th 51st, and 84th, Tennessee regiments and Carnes Battery.

Feby. 9. Army reviewed by General Joseph E. Johnston.

15. Sidney Womack had been a student at Chapel Hill, N. C., but left to join the army. He was a brother of Pauline Womack whom Col. Wright married afterwards.

16. Marcus Crump was a son of Dr. Chas. C. Crump of Purdy, Tenn., who had married Elizabeth Wright, the deceased sister of Col. Wright.

