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**The Siege of Savannah
in December, 1864,
and the Confederate Operations in Georgia
and the Third Military
District of South Carolina during General
Sherman's March from Atlanta to the Sea:
Electronic Edition.**

Charles Colcock Jones, 1831-1893

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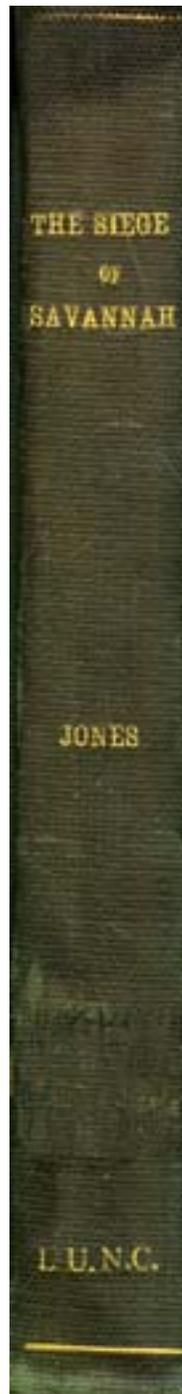
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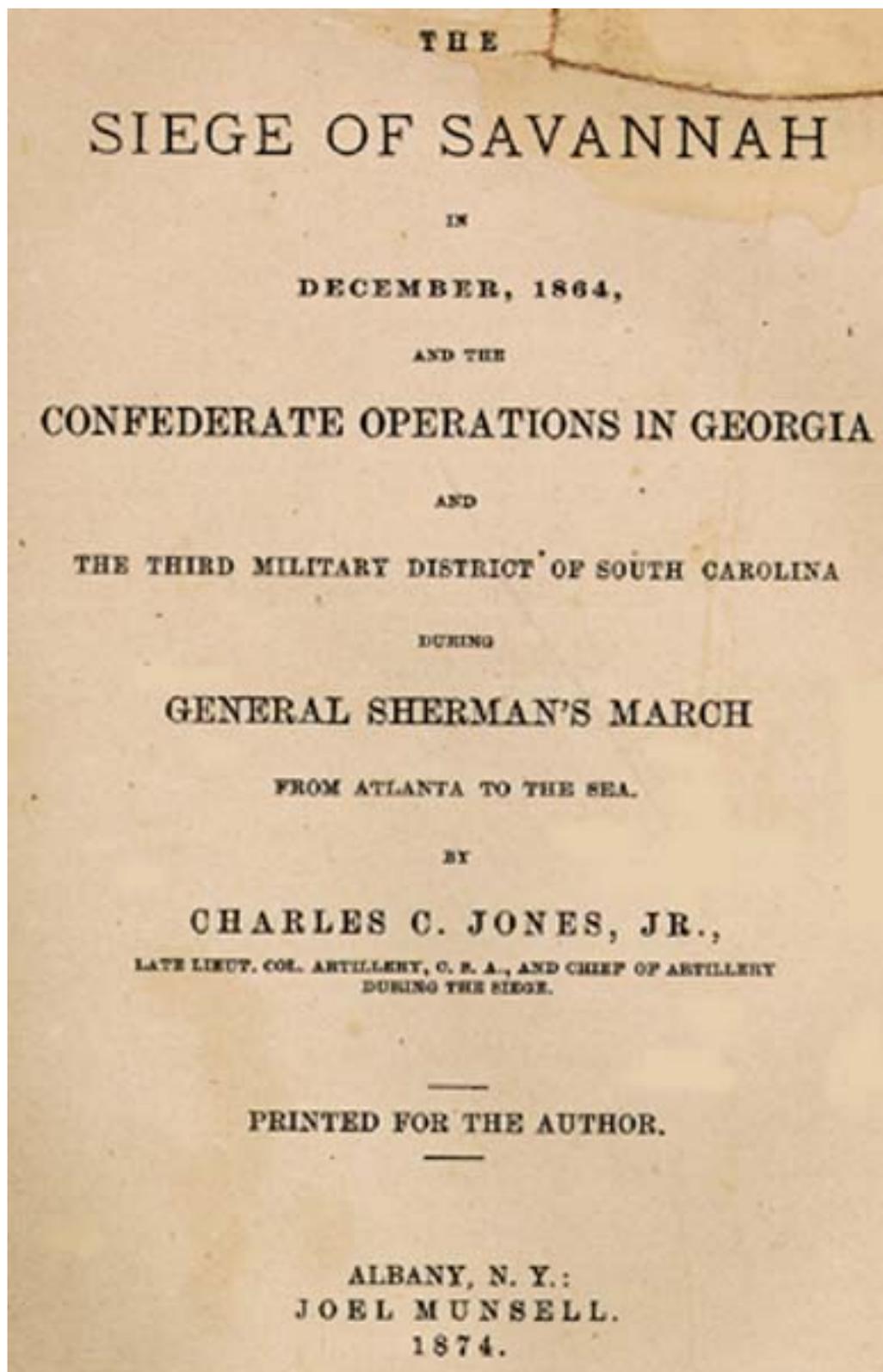
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THE
SIEGE OF SAVANNAH
IN
DECEMBER, 1864,
AND THE

**CONFEDERATE OPERATIONS IN GEORGIA AND
THE THIRD MILITARY DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DURING
GENERAL SHERMAN'S MARCH
FROM ATLANTA TO THE SEA.**

BY

**CHARLES C. JONES, JR.,
LATE LIEUT. COL. ARTILLERY, C. S. A., AND CHIEF OF
ARTILLERY
DURING THE SIEGE.**

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Page iii

TO THE
CITY OF SAVANNAH,
IS DEDICATED
THIS
NARRATIVE OF HER SUFFERINGS
AND
HER FALL.

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PREFACE.

To perpetuate the Confederate memories connected with the march of General Sherman from Atlanta to Savannah is the design of the following pages. To be guided in all that he relates by the genuine circumstances of the action has been the author's care. This sad chapter in the history of

Georgia has been written only by those who made light of her afflictions, laughed at her calamities, gloated over her losses, and lauded her spoilers. A predatory expedition, inaugurated with full knowledge of her weakness, conceived in a spirit of wanton destruction, conducted in violation of the rules of civilized warfare, and compassed in the face of feeble resistance, has been magnified into a grand military achievement worthy of all admiration. The easy march of a well appointed army of seventy thousand men through the heart of a state abounding in every supply

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save men and materials of war, and at the most delightful season of the year, has been so talked of and written about by those who either participated in the enterprise or sympathized with its leaders, that multitudes have come to regard this holiday excursion as a triumph of consummate military skill and valor--as one of the most wonderful exploits in the history of modern warfare. Audi alteram partem.

NEW YORK CITY, *December 20, 1874.*

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ERRATA.

- [p. 49](#) 18th line Hayward's should be *Heywards*.
- [p. 64](#) 13th line succeeded should be *exceeded*.
- [p. 85](#) 9th line mayor should be *major*.
- [p. 91](#) 9th line 1,1291 should be *11,291*.
- [p. 106](#) last line banks should be *ank*.
- [p. 151](#) 14th line points should be *point*.
- [p. 155](#) 7th line mariners should be *marines*.
- [p. 159](#) 27th line 300 should be *500*.
- [p. 163](#) 20th line may orrequested should be *mayor requested*.

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1864. SIEGE OF SAVANNAH.

CHAPTER 1.

General Sherman's Intentions in Projecting his Expedition from Atlanta to the Coast--Composition and Strength of the Federal Army-- Defenceless Condition of Georgia--Inability of the Confederate leaders to Concentrate an Army of Opposition--The Federal Advance--General Beauregard's Dispatches--A Levy en masse ordered by the Legislature--Proclamation of Governor Brown-- Circular from Georgia Representatives in Confederate Congress, to their Constituents--Supplemental Proclamation of General A. R. Wright.

"Until we can repopulate Georgia, it is useless to occupy it: but the *utter destruction of its roads, houses and people* will cripple, their military resources. By attempting to hold the roads we will lose a thousand men monthly, and will gain no result. I can make the march and *make Georgia howl*. * * * *
* Hood may turn into Tennessee and Kentucky, but I believe he will be forced to follow me. Instead of being on the defensive I would be on the offensive. Instead of guessing at what he means, he would have to guess at my plans. The difference in war is full twenty-five per cent. I can make Savannah, Charleston, or the mouth of

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the Chattahoochee. *I prefer to march through Georgia, smashing things to the sea.*"

So wrote Major General Sherman, from Atlanta, to Lieutenant General Grant. That officer having sanctioned the proposed movement, and indicated a preference for Savannah as the objective point of the campaign, General Sherman, about the middle of November, 1864, put his columns in motion for their march of spoliation and devastation through the heart of Georgia. The "smashing" operation of this modern Alaric was fairly inaugurated by the wanton and merciless destruction of the cities of Atlanta and Rome.

For the purposes of the predatory incursion, the Federal army was divided into two wings; the right-- commanded by Major General O. O. Howard-- comprising the Fifteenth Corps under Major General P. I. Osterhaus, and the Seventeenth Corps under Major General Frank P. Blair jr., and the left, under Major General H. W. Slocum, consisting of the Fourteenth Corps, brevet Major General J. C. Davis, and the Twentieth Corps, Brigadier General A. S. Williams. This infantry force of sixty thousand men was accompanied by a cavalry division numbering fifty-five hundred sabres, commanded by Brigadier General Judson Kilpatrick. There was an allowance of about one field piece to every thousand men, aggregating

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between sixty-five and seventy guns, fully manned and thoroughly equipped. A pontoon train was assigned to each wing of the army, and an efficient pioneer battalion organized for each corps. The entire command was amply provided with good wagon trains, loaded with ammunition, and carrying supplies approximating forty days' rations of bread, sugar and coffee, a double allowance of salt for the same period, and grain forage for three days. Beef cattle, sufficient for forty days' subsistence, attended the army. No equipment was lacking which could in any wise enhance the comfort, power, and efficiency of this formidable expedition. Acquainted with the character of the country through which his route lay, and aware of the fact that he would meet with an abundance of provisions and forage everywhere, General Sherman anticipated little difficulty in subsisting his troops. At this season of the year plantation barns were filled with the newly gathered harvest. Corn, peas, fodder, sweet-potatoes, syrup, hogs, cattle, mules and horses were to be expected without stint. The recent movement of General Hood, ill-advised and pregnant with naught save disaster, left the state of Georgia fairly open to a Federal advance. She was destitute of the means of offering any substantial resistance. Few troops remained within her confines to dispute Sherman's passage

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to the coast. Such was the physical conformation of the country, that there existed only occasional and partial obstacles to a rapid and successful march; none which could not be readily overcome by the

pontoon trains and pioneer corps with which the Federal army was supplied. For his rear Sherman entertained no reasonable fears, because the forces of General Thomas were an over-match for General Hood's advancing columns. Under no possible circumstances could Sherman have then been overtaken by Hood, had the latter abandoned his plans and started in pursuit. Nor was there any likelihood of his encountering serious opposition from the Confederates in his front. They were far too weak to do more than skirmish in a desultory manner with this powerful army of invasion. Enveloped by an ample guard of cavalry, and presenting a front, varying from thirty to sixty miles in extent, during their sweeping march toward the Atlantic, the Federal general readily perceived that his columns could speedily overcome any local interruptions and partial hindrances which might be attempted by newly organized and feeble bodies of citizen soldiery hastily assembled for the defense of their immediate homes. At best there were in the interior of the state only old men and boys to shoulder their fowling pieces and dispute the passage of swamps. General Lee, sore-pressed

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in Virginia, could not spare from his depleted ranks a single battle-scarred brigade for the emergency. A reënforcement of seventy-five thousand men would not have placed him in condition to have coped, man for man, with the ever multiplying hosts marshalled under the bloody banners of Grant. Such was the posture of affairs at Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, and elsewhere, that no disposable troops could be found with which to form even a tolerable army of observation. General Hood, as we have already intimated, was now so far removed from the scene of action that no change in his plans would necessitate a postponement of the purposed advance. The once puissant armies of the Confederacy were sadly reduced by sickness, and poverty and wounds and death. Tens of thousands of her bravest sons had been gathered to their patriot graves, and there were none to stand in their places. Her treasures and supplies of every kind were well nigh exhausted, and no helping hand was outstretched in the hour of supreme need. Whole departments did not comprise within their limits troops requisite for the successful defense of a sub-district. Isolated in position and cut off from all avenues of succor, each drop of shed blood flowed from her single arm, every feather which warmed and sheltered her Offspring was plucked from her own breast.

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Lieut. General E. Kirby Smith, commanding the Trans-Mississippi Department, was capable of no demonstrations which would compel the recall of the formidable reënforcements which were hastening to the support of General Thomas. Such was the scarcity of troops in Alabama and Mississippi, that Lieut. General Dick Taylor could detach but a handful in aid of Generals Cobb and Smith, who, with the Georgia state forces, were concentrated in the vicinity of Griffin. Lieut. General Hardee could muster forces barely sufficient to constitute respectable garrisons for the fixed batteries on the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina. General Beauregard looked in vain throughout the length and breadth of his extensive military division of the west for the means of effectual resistance, and was disappointed in the amount of assistance which he hoped to realize from the Militia, Home Guards, and Reserves of the respective states embraced within the geographical limits of his command.

By carefully concealing his objective, and, with the heavy masses at command by well conceived feints cloaking his real design, General Sherman readily conjectured that the small army of observation which the Confederates might bring into the field would be so divided in the effort to defend various and important points, widely removed the one from the other, that unity of action would

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become quite difficult. For the same reason the chances of his encountering anything like formidable resistance, were well nigh dissipated.

At the outset, the cavalry corps of Major General Joseph Wheeler, and the Georgia state forces, under the command of Major Generals Howell Cobb and Gustavus W. Smith, constituted almost the only opposing forces on the Confederate side.

The season of the year selected for the movement was most propitious; just the period of invigorating airs and delightful autumnal suns, of clear skies and bracing frosty mornings, of firm roads, and abounding health. The stock upon the plantations, now in fine condition, could be relied on to supply any lack of transportation.

As, more than three hundred years before, the Spanish Adelantado in his quest of treasure compelled the aid of the Red men of this region to bear the burdens of his command while despoiling the homes and graves of the sons of the forest, in like manner did it enter into the calculation of these modern expeditionists to utilize the negroes found on the plantations adjacent to the lines of march by compelling them to accompany the columns and assist in transporting the booty which was to be ruthlessly collected on every side at the hands of unprotected women, fatherless children, and decrepit old men.

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In all fairness, therefore, this vaunted undertaking of General Sherman might well have been characterized, in advance, as a holiday excursion, on a gigantic military scale, and not as a martial enterprise involving exposures, dangers, and uncertainties.

Having on the 14th of November, 1864, completed his preliminary arrangements, General Sherman put his right wing, accompanied by Kilpatrick's cavalry, in motion in the direction of Jonesboro and McDonough, with orders to make a strong feint on Macon, cross the Ocmulgee about Planter's Mills, and rendezvous in the neighborhood of Gordon in seven days exclusive of the day of march. The same day General Slocum moved with the Twentieth Corps by Decatur and Stone Mountain, with instructions to tear up the rail road from Social Circle to Madison, burn the rail road bridge across the Oconee east of Madison, and, turning south, reach Milledgeville on the seventh day, exclusive of the day of march. General Sherman in person left Atlanta on the 16th in company with the Fourteenth Corps, brevet Major General Jeff C. Davis, moving by way of Lithonia, Covington, and Shady Dale, directly on Milledgeville.

By the 23d General Slocum was occupying Milledgeville and the bridge across the Oconee, and Generals Howard and Kilpatrick had concentrated

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in and around Gordon. The fact of Sherman's advance was, by Major General Wheeler, promptly communicated to General Beauregard then commanding the military division of the west. His action in the emergency is indicated by the following orders and communications.

Tuscumbia, Ala., Nov. 16th, 1864. *Lieut. Genl. R. Taylor,*

Selma, Ala.:

Reports of Genl. Wheeler indicate that Sherman is about to move with three corps from Atlanta to Augusta or Macon. In that event you will repair to points threatened with the available forces you can spare from your department, and assume command of all troops in Georgia operating against Sherman. You will cut and block up all dirt roads in advance of him, and remove or destroy supplies of all kinds in his front. Wheeler's Cavalry will harass his flanks and rear. You will call on Governors Brown and Bonham, and Genl. Hardee for assistance. I will join you should it become necessary. When you leave your department, turn over the command to Genl. Wheeler. ¹

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

1. Copies of this dispatch were sent to Col. G. W. Raines, Augusta, Ga., Gov. Jos. E. Brown, Milledgeville, Ga., Gov. M. L. Bonham, Columbia, S. C., and Lt. Genl. W. J. Hardee, Charleston, S. C.

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Tuscumbia, Ala., Nov. 16, 1864.

3 o'clock P. M. *Genl. S. Cooper*, A. & I. General, Richmond, Va.:

Reports of Genl. Wheeler indicate that Sherman is about to move with three corps from Atlanta to Augusta or Macon; thence probably, to Charleston or Savannah, where a junction may be formed with the enemy's fleet.

The threatened attack on Wilmington, in that event, must be intended for Charleston.

I would advise that all available forces which can be spared from North and South Carolina, be held ready to move to defense of Augusta, or crossing of Savannah river, in conjunction with forces in state of Georgia. Should Sherman take Charleston, or reach Atlantic coast, he then might reinforce Grant.

Genl. Taylor has been ordered to move with his available forces into Georgia, and assume command of all troops operating against Sherman, should he move as reported.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

Cherokee, Ala., Nov. 17, 1864.

3:30 P. M. *Maj. Genl. Howell Cobb*,
Macon or Griffin, Ga.:

Have ordered Genl. Taylor to send at once all troops he can possibly spare, and Genl. Hood to send immediately one brigade of Jackson's Cavalry Division, or the whole division if it can possibly be spared at this juncture. A victory in Tennessee will relieve Georgia.

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Call on every available white man and slave to destroy and block up roads in Sherman's front,

flanks, and rear.

G. T. BEAUREGARD,
General.

[*Confidential.*] Iuka, Miss., Nov. 17th, 1864, 6:30 P. M. *Genl. R. Taylor*, Selma, Ala.
" *H. Cobb*, Macon or Griffin, Ga.
" *G. W. Smith*, Macon or Griffin, Ga.

Adopt Fabian system. Don't run risk of losing your active forces and guns, available for the field, to hold any one place or position, but harass at all points. Hannibal held the heart of Italy for sixteen years, and then was defeated. Be cool and confident, and all will yet be right. I will join you soon as possible.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

H'd. Qrs. Mil. Div. of the West,
Tuscumbia, Nov. 17th, 1864. *Genl. J. B. Hood*,
Commd'g, &c., General:

Genl. Beauregard directs me to say that he desires you will take the offensive at the earliest practicable moment, and deal the enemy rapid and vigorous blows; striking him whilst thus dispersed, and by this means distract Sherman's advance into Georgia. * * * * *

Respectfully
Your Obd't Servt.,

GEORGE W. BRENT,
Col. & A. A. G.

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Corinth, Nov. 18, 1864. Via Selma. To the people of Georgia:

Arise for the defense of your native soil! Rally around your patriotic governor, and gallant soldiers. Obstruct and destroy all roads in Sherman's front, flank and rear, and his army will soon starve in your midst. Be confident and resolute. Trust in our over-ruling Providence, and success will crown your efforts. I hasten to join you in defense of your homes and firesides.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

West Point, Miss., Nov. 20th, 1864.

10 A. M. Lt. Genl. Taylor, &
Maj. Genl. J. Wheeler & Maj. Genl. H. Cobb:

Genl. Hardee will, for the present, give orders for the defense of Georgia, East (South) Chattanooga. My views are that positions should be defended only so long as not to risk safety of troops and material required for active operations in the field. Meanwhile, remove to safe locality all government property on line of enemy's march, and consume or destroy all supplies within his reach.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

The Legislature of Georgia being in session at Milledgeville, then the capital of the state, in prompt acknowledgment of the danger, and in earnest effort to provide to the utmost for the protection

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of the Commonwealth, on the 18th November, passed the following Act.

AN ACT to Authorize a levy en masse of the population of Georgia for the protection of its liberty and independence.

Whereas the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Georgia, in General Assembly convened, have learned from a communication from his Excellency the Governor, that a large hostile force of the foe, whose presence has so long desecrated the soil of Georgia, has left Atlanta under the leadership of a general whose past history is but a recital of every violation of civilized warfare, and a repetition of every outrage which links barbarism with the coarsest instincts of brutal nature, with the apparent intention of penetrating the heart of our noble old Commonwealth; and whereas in such an emergency it becomes a people who are determined to die freemen rather than to live slaves, to rise en masse and offer on the altar of a common country all the resources in men and money which God in His benevolence and wisdom has placed at their disposal for the vindication of their rights, their liberties and their honor; therefore, finding in the history of the past nothing to appall us, but on the contrary every incentive to stimulate and press us forward to the achievement of a glorious independence by sundering the ties which once bound us to a near friendship to our vindictive foe:

Section I. Be it enacted, That the Governor be, and he is hereby authorized, during the emergency now arising out of the present invasion of the interior of

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our State by the armies of our barbaric foes, to summon to arms in the field the entire white male population of the State now residing or domiciled in the State, physically capable of bearing arms, between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five: and to compel their attendance for the protection of our soil and the defense of our liberties.

Section II. Be it further enacted, That the Governor be authorized to accept volunteers in such

numbers, and such organizations, and for such time as in his discretion he may deem wise and prudent, during the present emergency, conforming as closely as circumstances will permit to the existing militia organization of the State.

Section III. * . . . * . . . *

Section IV. * . . . * . . . *

Section V. * . . . * . . . *

Section VI. And be it further enacted, That the powers conferred upon his Excellency the Governor by this Act, shall continue in force for the period of forty days and no longer, from and after the forces are called out under it.

Section VII. Be it further enacted, That whereas the Constitution has defined the coördinate branches of the Government, to wit, the Executive, Judicial, and Legislative, and the powers of each; and whereas one branch of the Government should not be subject to the control of the others; therefore it is provided that the enlistment of those engaged in the Legislative and Judicial Departments of the Government shall not be compulsory, but voluntary.

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In order to call public attention at once to the scope and effect of this extraordinary legislation, the Governor, on the day following the passage of the Act, issued this spirited proclamation.

State of Georgia, Executive Department, Milledgeville, Nov. 19, 1864.

The whole people understand how imminent is the danger that threatens the state. Our cities are being burned, our fields laid waste, and our wives and children mercilessly driven from their homes by a powerful enemy. We must strike like men for freedom, or we must submit to subjugation.

Death is to be preferred to loss of liberty. All must rally to the field for the present emergency, or the state is overrun.

I, therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the statute of this state, hereby order a levy *en masse* of the whole free white male population residing or domiciled in this state between sixteen (16) and fifty-five (55) years of age, except such as are physically unable to bear arms, which physical defect must be plain and indisputable, or they must be sent to camp for examination, and except those engaged in the legislative or judicial departments of the government, which are by the recent act of the legislature declared exempt from compulsory service.

All others are absolutely required, and members of the legislature, and judges are invited to report immediately to Major General G. W. Smith, at Macon, or

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wherever else in Georgia his camp may be, for forty (40) days' service, under arms, unless the emergency is sooner passed.

The statute declares that all persons hereby called out shall be subject, after this call, to all the

rules and articles of war of the Confederate states, and on failure to report shall be subject to the pains and penalties of the crime of desertion.

Volunteer organizations formed into companies, battalions, regiments, brigades or divisions, will be accepted for forty (40) days if they even approximate to the numbers in each organization which is required by the militia laws of this state which were in force prior to the late Act.

All police companies formed in counties for home defense will report, leaving at home for the time only those over fifty-five (55) years of age, and all persons having Confederate details or exemptions who, by the late decision of the Supreme Court of this state, are held to be liable to state militia service and bound to obey the call of the governor.

All such, refusing to report, will be arrested by the police force or by any aid de camp or other officer of this state, and carried immediately to the front. The necessary employées of rail-roads, now actively engaged, and the necessary agents of the express company, and telegraph operators are, from the necessity for their services in their present position, excused.

All ordained ministers of religion in charge of a church or synagogue, are also excused.

All rail-road companies in this state will transport

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all persons applying for transportation to the front, and in case any one refuses, its president, superintendent, agents and employées will be immediately sent to the front.

All aides de camp and other state officers are required to be active and vigilant in the execution of the orders contained in this proclamation, and all Confederate officers are respectfully invited to aid state officers in their vicinity in sending forward all persons hereby ordered to the front.

The enemy has penetrated almost to the center of your state. If every Georgian able to bear arms would rally around him, he could never escape.

JOSEPH E. BROWN,
Governor.

The same day the representatives from Georgia, in Confederate congress assembled at Richmond, addressed this circular to their constituents.

Richmond, Nov. 19, 1864. To the People of Georgia.

We have had a special conference with President Davis and the secretary of war, and are able to assure you that they have done and are still doing all that can be done to meet the emergency that presses upon you. Let every man fly to arms. Remove your negroes, horses, cattle and provisions away from

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Sherman's army, and burn what you cannot carry. Burn all bridges, and block up the roads in his route. Assail the invader in front, flank, and rear. By day and by night let him have no rest.

JULIAN HARTRIDGE,
W. E. SMITH,
MARK BLANDFORD,
JOHN T. SHEWMAKE,
J. H. ECHOLS,
JAMES M. SMITH,
GEO. N. LESTER,
H. P. BELL.

Both Governor Brown and Major General G. W. Smith having, by the rapid intervention of the enemy, been cut off from direct communication with that portion of the state lying east of the Oconee river, obedience to the proclamation of the 19th of November, so far as the eastern and southern portions of the state were concerned, became physically impossible. In order to dispel existing doubt, avoid delay, prevent confusion, and assist in concentrating at the earliest moment the manhood of the state, General A. R. Wright who, by virtue of his office as president of the senate, became, during the temporary territorial disability of the governor, the *de facto* commander in chief

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of that part of Georgia for the time being beyond the influence of the executive, issued the following supplemental proclamation.

Augusta, Georgia, Nov. 21st, 1864.

I. His Excellency Gov. Joseph E. Brown, governor and commander in chief of the militia of the state, being cut off from communication with that portion of the state east of the Oconee river by the interposition of a hostile army, it becomes my duty as president of the senate and *ex officio* governor during the disability of the governor, to assume command of all that part of the state thus left without the jurisdiction of the governor; and, as the prompt and faithful execution of the recent Act of the legislature providing for a levy *en masse* of the arms bearing people of the state is of vital importance, I do therefore issue this order revoking so much of the governor's proclamation as provides for the reporting of *all* the troops raised under it to Major General G. W. Smith, and do order that the men in all the counties east of the Oconee river (except such as may have already reported to Major General Wayne) report immediately to me at this place, where arms and equipments will be issued by the proper officers.

II. The aides de camp in the districts east of the Oconee river will proceed at once to send on to this place all men liable to service under the aforesaid act.

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III. A medical board will be established at this place for the examination of all men whose fitness for service may be considered by the aides de camp as doubtful.

IV. The emergency is such, that a delay even of a single day will in no case be permitted. All must be sent forward at once.

A. R. WRIGHT,
President of the Senate,
and *ex officio* Governor
during the disability of Governor Brown.

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CHAPTER II.

Operations of Maj. Gen. Gustavus W. Smith in the Vicinity of Atlanta--He Retires upon Griffin, and falls back to Macon-- Movements of the Confederate Cavalry under Maj. Gen. Wheeler-- Macon Defenses, their Armament and Garrison--Federal Demonstration against Macon--Battle of Griswoldville--Report of Brig. Gen. Phillips.

In obedience to a telegram from General Hood, received at Macon on the 12th of October, 1864, Major General Gustavus W. Smith concentrated, as rapidly as possible, all the available forces in that vicinity with a view to an early demonstration against Atlanta, then in possession of the Federals. In the execution of these orders he, in a short time, assembled at Lovejoy's station about twenty-eight hundred infantry, three batteries of Confederate light artillery, and between two and three hundred local reserve cavalry. This infantry belonged principally to the First Division of Georgia militia. His force being inadequate for a direct assault upon Atlanta, as it was then garrisoned, General Hood suggested that General Smith should cross the Chattahoochee and destroy the line of railroad between that river and the Etowah. Upon further consideration this movement being deemed impracticable, General Smith located his

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command, as a corps of observation, near Atlanta, preventing the enemy from foraging, confining the Federals within their lines, and acting as a support to Brigadier General Iverson who, with two brigades of cavalry, was in his immediate front. Major General Wheeler reached General Smith's headquarters on the night of the 12th of November, and soon after his cavalry corps began to arrive from Alabama.

On the afternoon of the 15th the Confederate cavalry, skirmishing heavily with the advancing columns of the enemy, fell back from Jonesboro to Lovejoys. The same day at dark General Smith commenced moving his command to Griffin where were field fortifications behind which he hoped to be able to check the Federal advance. Ascertaining the next day that large bodies of the enemy had passed through McDonough and were moving along the direct road from Atlanta to Macon, General Smith, at dark, began retiring his troops upon Forsyth. This march of thirty-five miles was accomplished in twenty-four hours. Information having there reached him that the Federal army was crossing to the east bank of the Ocmulgee river, General Smith retreated upon Macon and there turned over his command, with the exception of the Georgia militia and two regiments of the Georgia state line, to Major General

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Howell Cobb by whom he was assigned to the command of a portion of the lines around Macon on the west bank of the Ocmulgee river.

General Wheeler, commanding the Confederate cavalry, interrupted, to the extent of his ability, the advance of the enemy, and was present at Macon when that city was threatened. The important services rendered by his cavalry command during Sherman's march through Georgia will be subsequently considered when we have the pleasure of presenting his hitherto unpublished Official Report.

Considerable expense had been incurred, and much labor bestowed upon the construction of field-works for the protection of Macon. These fortifications were commenced by Captain M. B. Grant, but were subsequently changed under the directions of Major General M. L. Smith, chief engineer of Hood's army. On the west bank of the river the defensive line was about four miles in length; and, on the east side, about three miles. It consisted of a system of detached works within supporting distance of each other. The intention was to connect them by means of a stockade; but, at the time of Sherman's arrival, these works were incomplete, and the stockade had been scarcely commenced. About thirty guns were in position along the line, and were served by four or five light

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artillery companies from Hood's army who had lost their horses, and by some local artillerists. The Confederate force in Macon, when the Federals appeared before the city, consisted of about four thousand infantry, including the troops brought by General Smith from Lovejoys, the reserves from Columbus and other points in the state, the local troops, conscripts in camp, convalescents from the hospital, and a small battalion of Confederate troops, some two hundred strong, under the command of Lieut. Col. Nisbet. To these should be added the artillerists above mentioned, and General Wheeler's cavalry then numbering between two and three thousand men.

The Federal demonstration against Macon was very partial, and was easily repulsed. Sherman's army crossed the Ocmulgee above Macon, and this demonstration against the city was made by cavalry, and against the Confederate lines on the east bank of the river, where General Cobb had concentrated his forces in anticipation of an attack. In fact, it was merely a feint, while the Federal columns were moving upon Milledgeville and other points to the south. The casualties were inconsiderable. A few Federal prisoners were captured.

Lieut. Genl. Hardee reached Macon while Sherman was crossing the Ocmulgee above the mouth of the Towaliga. Satisfied that the demonstration

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against Macon was a feint, and that no further attack would be made, he left for Savannah to urge forward, as rapidly as possible, the defenses of that city. General Dick Taylor arrived just after the departure of General Hardee and, having remained only a day in Macon, joined General Hardee in Savannah.

The enemy having abandoned any serious designs which may have been entertained against the city of Macon, and it being deemed not improbable that the city of Augusta with its valuable powder mill, work shops, foundry, arsenal, and government stores, would attract the notice of Sherman, on the

morning of the 21st of November, General Hardee ordered the First brigade, Georgia militia, to proceed with all dispatch along the line of the Central rail road and, moving by rail or otherwise as transportation could be secured, to rendezvous at Augusta at the earliest practicable moment. On the afternoon of the same day Major General Smith was directed to follow with the Second, Third, and Fourth brigades of Georgia militia, the two regiments of the Georgia State line, and Anderson's Confederate Light Battery. The Augusta and Athens battalions of local troops, under Major Cook, were ordered to the same point. Genl. Hardee left Macon for Savannah on the evening of the 21st of November. In his absence,

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and upon the arrival of Genl. Dick Taylor, the command devolved upon him, as the ranking officer. In pursuance of the foregoing orders Major General Smith, on the morning of the 22d, put his command in motion in the direction of Griswoldville, with instructions to halt there and await further orders. While detained a few hours in Macon in consummating necessary arrangements for the transportation of supplies and ammunition for his command, information was conveyed to General Smith that large bodies of the enemy were still in the vicinity of Macon and occupying positions along the proposed line of his march. An order for the recall of the troops was imperative, and received the sanction of Lieut. General Taylor. That order did not reach them, however, until they were on the eve of an engagement with what was then supposed to be a small force of the enemy. In the language of General Smith's report, "notwithstanding my order to avoid an engagement at that time and place, a collision occurred, we being the attacking party, and though the officers and men behaved with great gallantry, they failed to carry the works of the enemy, but held a position within one hundred and fifty yards of their line until after dark, when they were withdrawn to Macon by my order." The First brigade was not engaged; having, in execution of orders

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given by General Hardee, passed Griswoldville prior to the appearance of the Federals. The Athens and Augusta battalions participated in the action. The Confederate loss was a little over six hundred killed and wounded, being more than one fourth of the effective muskets in action. Several of the best field officers of the command were killed or wounded. On this occasion the State and Confederate forces were confronted by Wood's Division of the 15th Army Corps,--General Walcott's brigade with two pieces of artillery, and a regiment of cavalry on either flank, being in advance. The Federals were protected by barricades and temporary works. Another corps of Sherman's army was marching from Clinton in rear of the position occupied by the Confederates, so that their situation was perilous in the extreme. This engagement, while it reflects great credit upon the gallantry of the Confederate and State forces engaged, was unnecessary, unexpected, and utterly unproductive of any good. The battle of Griswoldville will be remembered as an unfortunate accident whose occurrence might have been avoided by the exercise of proper caution and circumspection. It in no wise crippled the movements of the enemy, and entailed upon the Confederates a loss which, under the circumstances, could be *illy* sustained.

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The following report of Brig. Genl. Phillips furnishes a detailed account of the engagement.

*Head Quarters 2d Brigade Georgia Militia, December 8th, 1864.
Col. Thos. Hardeman,*

I have the honor to make the following report of the operations of the four brigades under my command on the 22d November last.

The command left East Macon at about 8 A. M. and arrived without accident at 12 or 1, within about one mile of Griswoldville, where I found the Athens and Augusta battalions (under command of Maj. Cook) drawn up in line of battle. I also met a number of cavalry at and near this point, all of whom informed me that the enemy was in Griswoldville, and had been engaged with some of our cavalry. He was represented to be about 8 or 1200 strong. I formed a line of battle with Genl. Anderson's brigade on the right, the Athens and Augusta battalions on his immediate left, and Brig. Genl. McCoy's brigade on the left of the line. The Second brigade, under Col. Mann, was formed in the rear as a reserve. The state line, under Lieut. Col. Evans, was deployed as skirmishers and advanced on Griswoldville, where the enemy had just burnt some buildings and retired before we arrived; of which facts I informed the major general commanding at about 2 o'clock P. M.

Whilst in Griswoldville, Maj. Cook withdrew the Athens and Augusta battalions from the line, informing

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me that he was ordered by Lt. Genl. Hardee to proceed to Augusta, and proceeded down the Central rail road. I soon ordered the command to move down the C. R. R., until it should clear the village, and halt to await further orders from Maj. Genl. Smith. The rear of the column had not cleared the village when firing of small arms was heard some half mile in advance of our column, which was between the advance and rear guards of Maj. Cook and the enemy. I ordered an advance of the command, and on arriving, I met Maj. Cook who pointed out to me the enemy posted on the opposite eminence in line of battle, behind some temporary entrenchments and fortifications. Maj. Cook's skirmishers were then engaged with the enemy on his left. I disposed of the forces represented by the accompanying diagram, viz: The Athens and Augusta battalions on our right (owing to the positions they then held) making rather an obtuse angle with the State line on their left, and Genl. McCoy's brigade on the left of the State line; Genl. M's left resting near and south of the rail road. Genl. Anderson's brigade was formed on the north side of the rail road, his left resting parallel with the rail road, and Capt. Anderson's battery of four guns was posted at an eligible site on the rail road on the north side. The Second brigade, under Col. Mann, was drawn up in rear of the state line, and Genl. McCoy's brigade in a secure place to act as reserves. In this position an advance was ordered. Genl. Anderson with his brigade was to attack the enemy on his right flank. Major Cook with his command was to attack him on his left flank,

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whilst Capt. Anderson with his battery, the State line, and Genl. McCoy's command should attack him in the front. The State line and Genl. McCoy's brigade moved forward in fine style, under a heavy and galling fire, until they reached within some fifty yards of the enemy's works, which position they maintained during the contest, and from which position they delivered a telling fire. Col. Mann, deeming that his brigade could be of more service near the lines, advanced it to near the same position, where it participated in the general action. From some misconception of orders, when the general advance was being made, Genl. Anderson's brigade faced to the right and swept across the rail road

(save a small detachment on his extreme left that was cutoff by a deep cut in the railroad) and participated with the State line and Genl. McCoy's brigade in the direct attack where they, both officers and men, sustained themselves with decision and gallantry. After the action had progressed for some hours, Genl. Anderson took the detachment of his men that had been cut off, and went round to the enemy's right flank, when a most spirited and desperate fight ensued, lasting some hour and a half or more; but the enemy was too firmly established, and the general's force too small to dislodge him.

The order to Major Cook (from some cause of which I am not aware) to turn the enemy's left, was never carried out, yet his command participated fully in the action, deported themselves gallantly, and I regret to say, suffered much from wounds and deaths. Captain Anderson with his battery did good and valuable service,

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soon silencing the enemy's battery, and forced upon him many telling shots. He is a skilful, brave, and meritorious officer. The officers and men deported themselves well during the entire action, which lasted from 3 P. M., until dark, held their positions, and retired in good order to Griswoldville where I had intended to encamp, and bring off those of our wounded and dead that had not been removed from the battle field; but, on my reaching Griswoldville, I received an order from the major general commanding ordering me to fall back to the trenches at Macon, where I arrived about 2 o'clock A. M.

I can but believe if the flank movement had been carried out with all the forces assigned to that duty, that it would have resulted in dislodging and probably routing the enemy, notwithstanding he was, I am satisfied, fully equal if not superior to our forces. Whilst we have to regret the loss of many gallant officers and men, yet we cannot but hope that they died not in vain.

Accompanying please find a diagram of the field and position of the forces, and the reports of all the officers that I have been able to procure.

I am, with high regard,
Your obedient servant,

P. J. PHILLIPS,
Brig. Genl. Commanding Div. Ga. Militia.

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CHAPTER III.

The Federals occupy Milledgeville--Maj. Genl. Smith moves his Command from Macon, by way of Thomasville, to Savannah--Ordered by Lieut. Genl. Hardee at once to Grahamville, S. C.--Admirable Conduct of the Georgia State Forces--Battle of Honey-Hill--Signal Defeat of the Federal Expedition from Boyd's Neck, under the Command of Brig. Genl. Hatch--Complimentary Resolutions adopted by the Georgia Legislature.

The Federal columns having withdrawn from the vicinity of Macon, and the line of the Central rail road being in their possession, the destination of Genl. Smith's command was changed from Augusta to Savannah. On the 25th of November it was ordered to move by rail to Albany, thence to march across the country to Thomasville, and there take the cars of the Atlantic and Gulf rail road to Savannah.

"We arrived," says Genl. Smith, "in Thomasville by noon, Monday [the 28th], having marched from Albany, a distance between fifty-five and sixty miles, in fifty-four hours. At Thomasville, instead of finding five trains, the number I had requested to be sent, there were but two, and these could not be started until after dark, and did not arrive here [Savannah] until two o'clock Wednesday morning, occupying twice the time necessary between

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Thomasville and Savannah, and leaving the 2d, 3d, and 4th brigades at the former place." Upon his arrival in Savannah, and before he had left the cars, General Smith received a peremptory order from General Hardee requiring him immediately to proceed with his command to Grahamville, South Carolina, to repel an advance of the Federals who, moving up from Broad river, were seeking to cut the line of the Charleston and Savannah rail road. It was absolutely necessary that this communication should be preserved. Upon its security depended the further occupation of Savannah. Over this road must the garrison retreat in the event that it became expedient to evacuate the city. By this route also, were reënforcements expected. General Hardee had no troops which could be detailed for this important service, except two regular Confederate regiments from Charleston, and it was feared that they would arrive too late. Not a moment could be lost, and it was urged upon General Smith that if he would move at once and hold the enemy in check until two o'clock P. M. several thousand troops, en route from North and South Carolina for the reënforcement of the garrison at Savannah, would arrive and ensure the effectual repulse of the Federals. Although the statute organizing the State forces confined their service and operations to the limits

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of Georgia; although, strictly speaking, there rested upon these troops no legal obligation to move beyond the confines of their own state whose territory they were instructed to defend; although General Smith had a qualified authority from Governor Brown to withdraw the Georgia State forces under his command from Confederate service in case they were ordered beyond the limits of the state, and although both commander and command were "almost broken down by fatigue and want of rest," realizing that the battle for the salvation of the metropolis of Georgia was on the instant to be fought on Carolina soil, and, after a full conference with the lieutenant general becoming perfectly satisfied that it was right and proper the movement should be made, General Smith issued the requisite orders and, about eight o'clock on Wednesday morning, the 30th of November, arrived at Grahamville, South Carolina, with his leading brigade. The conduct of General Smith and the Georgia State troops in this trying emergency will be always remembered with peculiar pride and in especial honor.

On Tuesday, the 29th of November, a Federal force, under the immediate command of Brigadier General John P. Hatch, consisting of five thousand men of all arms, including a brigade from the navy, proceeded up Broad river to Boyd's Neck,

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where it landed with the intention of taking possession of and occupying the Charleston and Savannah rail road at Grahamville. This involved a march of only some seven miles. This expedition was conceived in aid of General Sherman who was known to be seeking the coast at some convenient point. By thus severing the communication between Savannah and Charleston, the former city would be completely isolated and Sherman enabled at pleasure, and without hazard, to cross the Savannah

river at almost any point below Augusta, and establish communications with Port Royal, then the principal Federal depot on the south Atlantic coast.

When General Hatch effected a landing at Boyd's Neck the only Confederate force on duty at Grahamville was a part of a squadron of the Third South Carolina Cavalry. All available troops in the district had been sent into the interior to oppose General Sherman's advance. Colonel C. J. Colcock, the district commander, was fifty miles away, superintending the erection of field works at the principal crossings of the Savannah river. The Federals having effected a landing at Boyd's Neck at eight o'clock on the morning of the 29th of November, at a remove of only seven miles from the rail road, and there being at the time no Confederate forces in the neighborhood to

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dispute their advance, had they moved promptly upon Grahamville, the Charleston and Savannah rail road would have passed into their possession without a struggle. During the whole of the 29th they were engaged, however, in intrenching themselves at a point distant half a mile from where they landed, and thus the golden opportunity was suffered to pass unimproved. Colonel Colcock arrived at Grahamville about seven o'clock on the morning of the 30th, and an hour afterwards Major General G. W. Smith, with his leading brigade, was on the ground. Advices were received that the Federal column, marching up the Honey-Hill road, had passed Bolan's church and was then only five miles from Grahamville. The line of breastworks, previously constructed for the use of infantry and field-artillery, being equidistant between Grahamville and the church, it became all important that the advance of the enemy should be retarded in order that the Confederates might occupy those works. With this view Colonel Colcock pushed rapidly forward with a 12 pounder Napoleon gun of Kanapaux's Light Battery, under command of Lieutenant Zealy, and company K, of the Third South Carolina Cavalry, Captain Peeples. He encountered the head of the Federal column on a causeway a mile and a half in front of the breastworks. It was a most favorable

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position for impeding the enemy's progress. On the left was an impenetrable swamp, and on the right an extensive old field intersected by numerous canals and ditches. Lieut. Zealy's 12 pounder Napoleon was planted so as to command the causeway, and Captain Peeples's company was dismounted and deployed as skirmishers across the old field. The first shell from the Napoleon gun is said to have killed and wounded nine men of the enemy. Upon its discharge the column halted, and, after considerable delay, left the road, marching across the field with a view to flanking the Confederate position. In order to counteract this movement Colonel Colcock ordered his men to set fire to the broom-sedge which was dry, and covered the entire field. A strong wind at the time prevailing and blowing in the direction of the enemy, carried down upon them, with surprising rapidity, a fierce line of flame and smoke before which they precipitately retreated, in their flight abandoning blankets, haversacks, and knapsacks. Reforming in the road, the Federals advanced, Colonel Colcock retiring with his little command and disputing their progress from time to time as opportunity occurred.

Meanwhile General Smith had fully occupied the breast works, and completed his dispositions. To Colonel Colcock, the district commander, was

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assigned the immediate executive command of the main line.

The engagement commenced about ten o'clock in the morning, and from that time until nearly dark the enemy made continuous but fruitless efforts to carry the Confederate position. The Confederates brought into action five pieces of field artillery and about fourteen hundred effective muskets. There were also three companies and two detachments of the Third South Carolina Regiment of Cavalry, under Major Jenkins. ¹ The Confederate line of battle extended from the Honey-Hill road, on which its right rested, in a semicircular form, through an open pine barren, to the Coosawhatchie road.

At a remove of some hundred and fifty yards, directly in front of the Confederate line, and extending almost its entire length, was a low, swampy ground, about twenty yards wide. Upon its appearance about one hundred and twenty yards in front of the field works occupied by the Confederates, and in a curve in the Honey-Hill road, the infantry and artillery immediately opened a murderous fire upon the head of the Federal column, before which it melted away. Thus commenced

1. The following organizations were present on this memorable occasion, and constituted the little Confederate army charged with driving back a Federal force more than three times as numerous.

INFANTRY.

- The 1st Brigade Georgia Militia: Col. Willis.
- The State Line Brigade. [Georgia] Col. Wilson.
- The 17th Georgia, Confederate Regiment, Lt. Col. Edwards.
- The 32d " " " Lt. Col. Bacon.
- The Athens Battalion Major Cook.
- The Augusta " Major Jackson.

CAVALRY.

- Companies B and E, and detachments from Company C and the Rebel Troop, all belonging to the 3d Regiment South Carolina Cavalry, under command of Major Jenkins.

ARTILLERY.

- A section of the Beaufort Artillery, Capt. Stuart.
- " " " De Pass's Light Battery.
- " " " the Lafayette Artillery.
- One gun from Kanapaux's Light Battery.

the engagement. The Federals were advancing in apparent ignorance of this line of field works, and of the serious opposition which they were destined to encounter. Staggered by this unexpected and destructive fire, the enemy recoiled; and some time elapsed before they deployed in line of battle to the right and left of the Honey-Hill road in front of the Confederate line and just across the swampy ground to which allusion has already been made. This low ground was wooded to an extent sufficient

to conceal the movements

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of the enemy, but not to protect them from the heavy fire of infantry and artillery which crashed through their ranks, causing great destruction and demoralization. So soon as the Federals had formed their line of battle, efforts were made to force the centre of the Confederate line and also to turn its flanks. These attempts were renewed from time to time, but on each occasion resulted in defeat and heavy loss. The Confederate troops in position bravely held their ground, and the gallant Thirty Second Georgia Regiment, which constituted a movable reserve, rendered efficient service in repulsing these attacks, appearing always at the proper point at the most opportune time.

Wearied with and disheartened by these repeated repulses, and perceiving their inability to force our position, the Federals, about four o'clock in the afternoon, slackened their fire, massed their artillery on their left and in the Honey-Hill road to cover their retreat, and commenced retiring. The Confederate left wing was advanced, but his men being greatly exhausted and having been for many hours without food, Genl. Smith did not deem it best to pursue. The retreat of the enemy was effected during the evening and night of the 30th, and the next morning found the remnant of General Hatch's army behind its breastworks near Boyd's

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landing, covered by the protecting batteries of the Federal gun boats.

The Confederate losses amounted only to four killed and forty wounded. Those of the enemy are stated by General Grant, in his official report, as seven hundred and forty-six in killed, wounded and missing. The Confederate artillery was admirably handled and did great execution. In General Hatch's command were several negro regiments. They suffered severely; and it appeared, upon a subsequent inspection of the field, that they were forced to occupy the most exposed positions. Some Confederate officers, who examined many of their dead bodies, noticed wounds in the back which suggested the impression that some of them at least had been forced into action at the point of the bayonet.

"I have never seen or known of a battle field," says General Smith in his official report, "upon which there was so little confusion, and where every order was so cheerfully and promptly obeyed, and where a small number of men for so long a time successfully resisted the determined and oft repeated efforts of largely superior attacking forces."

The enemy having been thoroughly beaten back on the 30th, and Confederate forces having, during the afternoon of that day and the morning of the 1st of December, concentrated at Grahamville

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in numbers sufficient to confirm the fruits of the victory and repel any new attack, General Smith regarded the necessity as no longer existing for detaining the Georgia state troops "beyond their legal jurisdiction." Accordingly, having asked and obtained permission from Lieut. General Hardee to lead his exhausted command back to Georgia, General Smith arrived in Savannah with his troops at ten o'clock on the night of the 1st of December. From this time until the evacuation of the city, this officer and the State forces were posted on the right of the western lines of the city of Savannah, where they rendered efficient service and sustained an honorable part prior to and during the progress of the siege.

This victory at Honey-Hill relieved the city of Savannah from an impending danger which, had it not been thus averted, would have necessitated its immediate evacuation under the most perilous circumstances, maintained the only line of communication by which reënforcements were expected for the relief of the commercial metropolis of Georgia, and finally afforded an avenue of convenient retreat when, three weeks afterwards, the garrison, unable longer to cope with the enveloping legions of Sherman, evacuated the city. In acknowledgment of the gallantry, patriotism, and distinguished services of General Smith and his

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command in this brilliant affair, the Legislature of Georgia on the 9th of March, 1865, passed the following resolutions:

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly met, That the thanks of the State are due and are hereby tendered to Genl. G. W. Smith and to the officers and men composing the First Division of Georgia Militia, and to the officers and men of the Georgia State Line, for their conspicuous gallantry at Griswoldville in this State; and especially for their unselfish patriotism in leaving their State and meeting the enemy in the memorable and well fought battle field at Honey-Hill in South Carolina.

The State with pride records this gallant conduct of her militia, and feels assured that when an emergency again arises, State lines will be forgotten by her militia, and a patriotism exhibited which knows nothing but our whole country.

Resolved, That his Excellency the Governor be requested to transmit a copy of these Resolutions to General G. W. Smith, with a request that they be read to all the troops under his command.

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CHAPTER IV.

Adjutant General Wayne occupies Gordon--Retreats to Oconee Bridge--Major Hartridge's Report of Confederate Operations at that Point--Wayne's Command retires to Millen--Confederate Movements at Number 4 1/2 and Number 2, Central Rail Road-- Col. Fizer disputes Osterhaus's Crossing at the Cannouchee--Maj. Gen. Wheeler's Report of the Operations of the Confederate Cavalry.

No resistance was offered to General Slocum when he occupied Milledgeville on the 23d of November. The Legislature hastily adjourned upon the approach of his column. The supreme court also adjourned, and the Governor left the capital. The capture of military stores at Milledgeville were unimportant. The State Library suffered severely, and the town was largely pillaged. On the 19th of November, Adjutant General Henry C. Wayne with the corps of Cadets, Pruden's Battery of Light Artillery, Talbott's company of Cavalry, Williams's Militia company, the Factory and Penitentiary Guards and the Roberts's Guards (convicts), aggregating about five hundred men, and under the immediate command of Maj. F. W. Capers, superintendent of the Georgia Military Institute, evacuated Milledgeville and fell back upon Gordon. On the afternoon of the next day

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this force retreated along the line of the Central rail road and took post at the Oconee bridge, "as the

most important point on the Central rail road to be defended." Upon arrival, Adjutant General Wayne found at the bridge a guard of 186 men, consisting of Heyward's company of South Carolina Cavalry, a section of Maxwell's Light Battery, Lieutenant Huger, and a detail from the 27th Georgia Battalion, all under the command of Major Alfred L. Hartridge who had been ordered by Major General Lafayette McLaws, commanding the district of Georgia, to defend this crossing to the last extremity. Major Hartridge thus details the services rendered in obedience to these instructions.

Savannah, March 17, '67.

Col. C. C. Jones,
Dear Colonel:

On the night of the 18th November, '64, while at Rosedew Battery, I received orders from Genl. McLaws, then commanding the district of Georgia, to proceed to the Central rail road bridge on the Oconee river, and to hold said bridge against what was then supposed to be a raiding party from Sherman's army. For this purpose I was given a section of artillery (Lt. Huger, two 12 pounder Napoleons), a company of cavalry (the Ashley Dragoons, Capt. Heyward), and 100 infantry selected from the 27th Georgia Battalion.

I arrived at the rail road bridge with my command on the evening of the 19th November, and immediately

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proceeded to make what arrangements I could for its defense. The river, at this point, has a large belt of swamp on both sides; the bridge over the stream being approached by trestle work on the Savannah side of 3/4 of a mile, and on the Macon side of over a mile in length, so that I at once saw that I had a difficult task to perform in defending not only the bridge proper but the long line of trestle, against a superior force, particularly as my artillery would be of little service from the nature of the ground.

On the morning of the 20th, hearing that Gen. Wayne was at Gordon with a force of State troops, I took an engine and paid him a visit.

Arriving at Gordon about 2 o'clock P. M., I found him there with about 450 men, a battery of 6 pieces of artillery, a company of cavalry, several companies of Georgia militia, and the Georgia State Cadets under Major Capers. Soon after my arrival his pickets were driven in by the advance of the enemy who were reported to be approaching in force. Gen. Wayne, thinking Gordon a position of no value, decided to fall back to the Oconee bridge without giving battle. Most of the guns and baggage being already on the train, he moved off at 4 o'clock P. M., bringing off everything safely, and arrived at the bridge the same afternoon.

He, as superior in rank, took command, but requested me to keep command of the post, and, under his direction, to make what disposition of the troops I thought best.

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I knew that the enemy could flank us by crossing at Milledgeville, so I had all the bridges on Buffalo creek destroyed, and placed guards at each. The nearest crossing below was Ball's ferry, 8 miles off. At this point I placed as strong a force as I could spare, using the cavalry to picket the river above and below, and Buffalo creek. I had rifle pits dug on both sides of the bridge, and my two

Napoleons were placed in position at the nearest point of high ground. Scouts were thrown across the river to watch the movements of the enemy.

On Tuesday, the 22d November, the enemy appeared in our front in large force. Gen. Wayne, in consultation with his principal officer, determined to abandon the bridge, deeming the force under his command inadequate for its defense; he having telegraphed to Gen. McLaws for reënforcements and receiving an answer that there were none to send. As my orders from Gen. McLaws were positive to hold the bridge to the last extremity, I refused to move my troops with those of Gen. Wayne, stating to him that I was determined to hold the position as long as possible. I at the same time telegraphed Gen. McLaws the state of affairs; he replying that I must obey his instructions to hold the bridge and not to consider myself under Gen. Wayne's orders. Upon submitting this reply to Gen. Wayne, he decided not to evacuate, but to stay and share my fate.

On the 23d the enemy appeared at Ball's ferry, and driving back my guard, took possession of the flat and boats, and commenced crossing. Taking Heyward's and Talbott's companies of cavalry, Huger's section

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of artillery, and about 80 men of the 27th Battalion of Georgia Volunteers, I proceeded immediately to the ferry with the intention of driving the enemy back if possible. Hastening ahead of my command with Heyward's cavalry, I arrived at the high land (the swamp extending for about one mile from the river at this point) nearest the ferry, at about 3 o'clock P. M., and learned from a countryman living near that the enemy were still crossing, and that from 4 to 500 were already on our side and were bringing their horses over. I ordered Capt. Heyward to advance dismounted, and feel their strength. At the same time I sent back orders to my command to hasten up. After a sharp skirmish Capt. Heyward was driven back, and reported the enemy advancing.

The balance of my force having arrived, I placed my artillery so as to command the road leading out of the swamp, and dismounting the cavalry, I made the best breastwork I could with fence rails, and awaited the approach of the enemy.

But they not making their appearance, and feeling satisfied that if I remained inactive in my present position they would cross a large force, I determined to make the attack. So, throwing out Heyward's company (dismounted) as skirmishers, and forming the infantry and Talbott's cavalry into line of battle (leaving the artillery in my fortified position as a reserve) I advanced on the ferry and, after a fight of about one hour and a half, I forced the enemy to recross the river (except a few on horseback who escaped into the swamp or were captured). Their loss was 36 killed, and an unknown

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number wounded. My loss was 2 killed and 7 wounded.

Leaving Capt. Talbott to hold the ferry, I hastened back to the bridge and arrived there late that night. During that day there had been some active skirmishing between our forces and a brigade of Kilpatrick's mounted infantry. During the night a courier arrived from Genl. Wheeler and stated that he (Wheeler) was crossing at Blackshear's ferry a few miles below Ball's. Later in the night we were joined by a regiment of Wheeler's cavalry.

We learned from our prisoners that the troops I encountered at Ball's ferry were an advance of the

15th Army Corps, and that those in front of us were portions of Kilpatrick's command, the main body of Sherman's army being at Milledgeville.

All of the 24th was occupied in defending the rail road bridge against vigorous attacks. With Hayward's company dismounted and acting as riflemen, the 27th Battalion Ga. Volunteers, and the hearty coöperation of Maj. Capers with the State Cadets, and Capt. Pruden with a piece of artillery mounted on a platform car, we managed to keep them at bay. That night Col. Gaines, with 4 or 500 men, joined us from Wheeler.

On the morning of the 25th Lt. Genl. Hardee arrived and visited me at my position in front of the bridge. At that time the enemy had succeeded in setting fire to the trestle very near the bridge, but they dared not approach it as my sharp shooters commanded it. They had also brought a piece of artillery into play and were doing all they could to drive us from our

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position, but without effect. After ordering me to hold my position, Genl. Hardee returned to No. 13, the enemy having crossed at Milledgeville and moved in that direction. During the afternoon the enemy withdrew from our front and, during the night, we received orders from Genl. Hardee to fall back to No. 13.

We were then ordered to fall back to the Ogeechee rail road bridge; Huger with his two Napoleons, and Heyward with his company, being ordered to report to Genl. Wheeler. We arrived at No. 10 about 3 o'clock on the afternoon of the 26th, and the next day received orders to fall back to Millen and fortify.

On the 29th I received orders from Genl. Hardee to proceed to Savannah with the 27th Battalion, and arriving there on the 30th, was ordered to take command of the line at Monteith, extending from the Charleston and Savannah rail road bridge to Harrison's place.

Three important roads crossed my line, the Augusta road, the Middle-ground, and the road through Harrison's place. The swamp in front of my line had been reported impracticable by the engineer in charge, Capt. Grant, but upon careful examination I found I could ride through it in many places. I reported this fact to Maj. Black of Genl. Hardee's staff next day, and convinced him of the weakness of the position, as the engineer had erected earth works only at the intersections of the three roads mentioned. But, as I received orders to hold the line as long as possible, I made the best of it. I had about 800 troops under my

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command consisting of the 27th Battalion Georgia Volunteers 250 strong, a North Carolina battalion of about 350 men, Howard's local battalion of about 150 men, and Capt. Abel's battery of 2 Napoleons and 2 howitzers. I placed the 27th battalion, with Abel's 2 Napoleons, to defend the Augusta road, thinking it the most important, the North Carolina battalion on the right, 4 miles off at Harrison's place, and Howard's battalion in the center, each with a howitzer.

About this time Capt. Geo. S. Owens, and a Mr. McLeod, rendered me much assistance, with a force of negroes, in obstructing the roads and destroying the bridges in my front.

"On the 5th December, scouts reported the enemy advancing on the Augusta road, and at the

same time I learned that Gen. Baker of North Carolina, commanding on my left, was attacked. The next day my advanced guard on the Augusta road was driven in, the enemy capturing the lieutenant in command and five men.

The next day I was joined by Major Black, and at my suggestion he agreed to take charge of my left, leaving me with the right. About ten o'clock that morning the enemy's skirmishers opened on my line, and soon afterwards they commenced a rapid fire from a small Parrott gun. Capt. Abel with his two Napoleons succeeded in silencing this piece after an exchange of about 14 shots, but they kept up a scattering fire of musketry until about 2 o'clock, when they made a charge along my whole line. On the left, where Major Black had charge, they forced back the North

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Carolina battalion, and also caused Howard to fall back, as he feared being flanked. Maj. Black continued to retreat until he reached the rail road at Montieth Station and there formed another line, the enemy having stopped at Genl. Harrison's house. In the mean time I was pressed hard, but managed to hold my position on the Augusta road.

About 4 o'clock I received orders from Genl. Hardee to fall back to the Charleston and Savannah rail road bridge over the Savannah river, where he would have boats to convey my troops to the city. But as this necessitated the abandonment of the section of artillery with me (which had by the gallant conduct of its commander and men enabled me to hold my position) I telegraphed the general asking permission to hold my present position until after night fall, when I felt that I could withdraw without serious loss. I would here remark that during the time I was in front of the Federals in Georgia, and afterwards in the two Carolinas, I never knew them to make an attack, or inaugurate an offensive movement during the night time.

My request being granted, I held my position until 8 o'clock, when I withdrew to the station, joining Maj. Black with the balance of the command. Here I received orders to hold the rail road until a train which was to convey Genl. Beauregard to Charleston should pass. At 10 o'clock I was instructed to fall back to the inner line of defenses 4 miles from Savannah. The next day I was placed under Genl. Gustavus Smith's command on the right of the line, where I remained for several days.

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The day after the fall of Fort McAllister Genl. Hardee ordered me to take command of the line of the Little Ogeechee, extending from the Rosedew Batteries to the Atlantic and Gulf rail road bridge over the Little Ogeechee. The troops under my command were the garrison at Rosedew (two companies of Cobb Guards), three companies of the 1st Georgia Regulars, under Capt. Twiggs, three sections of Wheeler's horse artillery, and a company of Wheeler's cavalry. The batteries at Rosedew consisted of three 10 inch Columbiads, one rifled 18 pounder, one smooth bore 32 pounder, and one 10 inch mortar.

I placed Capt. Twiggs, with the regulars and a section of horse artillery, at Coffee bluff, so that they could defend the bluff and, in case of necessity, act as a reserve to the batteries at Rosedew, or the points above the bluff. I placed another section of artillery at Johnson's landing, and the third at the rail road bridge, using the cavalry as pickets along the line.

No decided demonstration was made on this line. On the 17th, a faint attack was made on the

bridge. On the morning of the 19th, the enemy attacked Beaulieu battery, just opposite, with one gun boat and a mortar boat. To divert their attention I opened on them with my mortar, they returning shot for shot, but I cannot say much damage was done on either side. That night I received information that Savannah was to be evacuated on the night following, (20th December), and, my orders were to move into the city by 8 o'clock P. M., of the 20th.

On the afternoon of the evacuation I destroyed all

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my powder by throwing it into the river, cut up and damaged, as far as I could, my gun carriages, spiked the guns, and did everything I could to destroy the batteries, etc., without making any noise or resorting to fire. At 5 o'clock P. M., I withdrew from the line as ordered, and arrived in Savannah between 8 and 9 o'clock.

Yours, very truly,

ALFRED L. HARTRIDGE.

On Saturday, the 26th of November, the forces concentrated for the defense of the Oconee bridge were withdrawn, and the same day reached number 13 on the line of the Central rail road, where Huger's section of Maxwell's Light Battery was turned over to Maj. General Wheeler. General Wayne having received orders from General Hardee to occupy the rail road bridge across the Ogeechee, started at once with his command for that point, which was reached at one o'clock P. M. the same day.

The enemy having cut the Waynesboro road on the morning of the 27th, General Wayne was directed to fall back upon Millen and fortify that position. While at Millen, in the execution of these orders, he was notified that Kilpatrick's command, some four thousand strong, was moving upon that point. He therefore fell back with his

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command to number 4 1/2, behind the Little Ogeechee rail road bridge.

On the third of December, at day-break, he was joined by the State line and the First Brigade of Georgia Militia of General Smith's Division, under the command of General Robert Toombs, at the time acting as inspector general of the First Division. At eleven o'clock the same day General Baker arrived with his brigade of North Carolinians. Being advised that the 15th Army Corps, on the other side of the Ogeechee, was moving upon station number 2, Central rail road, and heavy columns of the enemy being in front on the rail road and on the right of the Confederate position, it was deemed best by Genl. Wayne to return at once to number 2. Upon arrival there he was met by Major Black of General Hardee's staff, with instructions to return at once to number 4 1/2 where he would be reënforced. This order was promptly obeyed.

Early in the morning of December 4th, Anderson's and Phillips's brigades of the Georgia militia reported for duty at number 4 1/2. Line of battle was formed behind the Little Ogeechee, with a force of four thousand infantry and three pieces of artillery. General Baker was assigned as executive officer in command of the line. At 1:35 P. M. the advance guard of the 17th Corps appeared

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on the left, and skirmishing began there and in front of the bridge on the rail road. At 4 P. M. Major General McLaws arrived from Savannah with instructions from General Hardee to assume the command. Having reconnoitered the position and being convinced of the utter inutility of offering resistance at this point, at half past five o'clock General McLaws ordered a withdrawal of the forces, which was done during the night, the troops falling back quietly to number 1 1/2. At 7 P. M. the enemy ceased skirmishing and began entrenching. The next day the State forces and Baker's command resumed their positions in the western lines for the defense of Savannah.

The passage of the Cannouchee by General Osterhaus's column had been vigorously but vainly disputed by Colonel John C. Fizer and his command.

In advance of the Federal approach the prisoners at Andersonville and Millen had been safely removed-- much to the chagrin of the invading forces. The Confederate line at Monteith being found impracticable, was evacuated, as has already been indicated in the intelligent communication of Major Hartridge, the officer in command.

As most of the fighting in retardation of Sherman's advance was done by the Confederate cavalry, under Major General Wheeler, we have purposely refrained from alluding to the services

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rendered by this arm of the service in order that we might avail ourselves of the connected narrative contained in the following report.

Head Quarters Cavalry Corps,
near Savannah, Ga., Dec. 24th, 1864. Lt. Coln. T. B. Roy, A. A. Genl.,
Hd. Qs. Dept., etc.

Colonel: I have the honor to submit the following report of the operations of my command from Nov. 19th, 1864, the date Genl. Hardee assumed command.

For several days previous to that date I had been resisting the enemy's advance from Atlanta towards Macon, reporting daily to Genls. Bragg, Hood, Hardee, and Taylor, and also to Gov. Brown almost the exact movements and intentions of the enemy. Anderson's brigade had been ordered to report to Maj. Genl. Howell Cobb at Macon, in order that he might place him in position to observe the enemy approaching Macon on the east side of the Ocmulgee river. This brigade was placed in position by General Cobb on the Clinton road.

On the 19th I sent Crews' Georgia brigade with orders also to report to Genl. Cobb. This brigade Coln. Crews reports was placed in position on the Milledgeville road with instructions (as I afterwards learned), to follow and engage any raiding party of the enemy which might move towards the rail road.

Towards evening on the 19th, I ascertained from my scouts that the main forces of the enemy had crossed

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the Ocmulgee river above the mouth of the Towaliga, which induced me to move to Macon in person, directing all my command, except Ferguson's and Breckinridge's brigades, to follow me. On arriving at Macon about 11 P. M., I found Lt. Genl. Hardee who had assumed command of the department. He

directed me to move at daylight with all my available force, except Crews' brigade, out on the Clinton road and ascertain the enemy's force and location. In obeying this order, and before marching towards Clinton, both my flanks were menaced by small parties of the enemy which I was obliged to drive off, causing some delay. I then moved on rapidly with my advanced guard to Clinton, and found Osterhaus' corps moving through the town. This was not observed until very near the column, owing to a dense fog. Six men dashed into the town and captured Genl. Osterhaus' servant (an enlisted man), within twenty feet of Genl. Osterhaus' Head Quarters. A regiment of the enemy's cavalry charged us, making the retreat of my small escort necessary. A squad of the enemy's cavalry had pressed in upon my line of retreat, between my position and the body of my command. These, however, were soon cleared away by the approach of two of my regiments which came up rapidly to my assistance. I immediately charged the advancing column of the enemy and drove it back upon their infantry. They then rallied and charged me again. We met this charge, checked and returned it with success, driving them back towards Clinton.

I now learned from my scouts that the enemy in

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considerable force were pressing down the road towards Griswoldville. I started promptly with a portion of my command in that direction, and soon met a courier from Col. Crews with a note from him stating that the enemy's cavalry had moved towards the rail road, and that pursuant to Gen. Hardee's orders he was going in pursuit. This left the Milledgeville road open; and, fearing some difficulty, I moved rapidly to that point. On arriving I found our artillery engaging the enemy's advance, and our infantry in the redoubts ready to receive an attack. The enemy had already charged up the road, and four of them had attempted to capture a gun but had been driven back leaving an officer (whose horse was killed) in the hands of our infantry. Finding large unprotected intervals between redoubts, I placed Harrison's and Hagan's brigades in line, making the connection complete. After slight skirmishing the enemy retreated a short distance. Pursuant to orders from Genl. Hardee, I moved out during the night, and the next day drove the enemy from Griswoldville, capturing a few prisoners. The next morning I again attacked and drove the enemy for some distance, capturing sixty prisoners, besides killing and wounding a large number.

It now being evident that the enemy were not intending to make any further demonstration upon Macon, I moved on towards the Oconee, which river I reached on the 24th November, and completed crossing the next day by swimming. A brigade under Lt. Col. Gaines was immediately sent to hold in check a portion of the enemy who were menacing the river

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near Ball's ferry, and with the remainder of my command I moved during the night to station No. 13, on the Central rail road. Scouts and pickets were sent upon all roads by which the enemy could reach the rail road, or march in an easterly direction. The following day, pursuant to Genl. Hardee's orders, I moved to Sandersville. The 14th and 20th corps of the enemy had marched from Milledgeville, crossed Buffalo creek, and were marching upon the town, preceded by cavalry which had dispersed the local troops who had attempted to oppose them. I moved out on the lower road and sent a force out on the upper road. After moving three miles, we were charged by the enemy whom we met and checked, and then in turn charged and drove them back for a mile, capturing, killing, and wounding about thirty of the enemy, besides capturing several horses, mules, and one loaded wagon. I

immediately sent word to the citizens of Sandersville that the enemy would enter the town the next morning; and I advised them to send off all movable property of value. At dark we established our pickets close to the enemy, and next morning were slowly driven back towards, and finally through the town.

At evening I was informed by my pickets near Ogeechee shoals that Genl. Kilpatrick, with a large force of cavalry, had crossed the river on his way to Augusta. Leaving Genl. Iverson to observe the enemy, I started immediately with my command, overtaking him about midnight. I immediately attacked and captured his picket, and pushed on to his camp and drove him back from the main Augusta road and out of his

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camp, capturing one stand of colors, some prisoners, some fifty horses, clothing, blankets, camp equipage, etc., in considerable quantities. The enemy immediately started towards Augusta on the lower Augusta road. On reaching the house where Genl. Kilpatrick had staid, I learned that he and his officers had been overheard talking a great deal in private about Augusta. It was the opinion of citizens that this move was intended as a raid upon that place. Being mindful of the great damage that could be done by the enemy's burning the valuable mills and property which were not protected by fortifications, including the factories in the vicinity, the large portion of the city outside of the fortifications, the arsenal and Sand Hills, I hoped by pressing him hard he might be turned from his purpose. I also learned that the night previous he had sent a party of some five hundred (500) men to Waynesboro to destroy the rail road bridge, which convinced me that Augusta and not Waynesboro was Kilpatrick's destination, as had the latter place been the point he designed striking, he would not have sent a small party there on the preceding day. Notwithstanding the jaded condition of my command, I therefore pushed on rapidly, engaging and defeating his rear guards whom I found fortified at every favorable point, frequently separated by but two or three hundred yards. Horses, arms, and prisoners were captured in nearly every engagement.

On reaching Brier creek swamp we pressed the enemy so warmly that he turned off towards Waynesboro. During the chase the enemy set fire to all corn

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cribs, cotton gins, and large numbers of barns and houses. We **succeeded** in driving him off in nearly half the instances in time to extinguish the flames, and frequently pressed him so rapidly as to prevent his firing a number of houses, thus saving a large amount of property.

I entered the town of Waynesboro' with my staff just after dark, and just as the enemy were leaving it. The town was in flames, but with the assistance of my staff and escort we succeeded in staying the flames and in extinguishing the fire in all but one dwelling which was so far burned that it was impossible to save it. I immediately moved on and attacked the enemy who were engaged in tearing up the rail road. The attack had the effect to stop their work upon the rail road, and to keep them in line of battle all night.

About 3 A. M., I sent Humes's division to gain the enemy's rear by turning his left flank, and sent a regiment to gain his rear by moving around his right. Unfortunately the commands failed to get into position. At daylight the enemy withdrew for a short distance, unobserved, in consequence of a dense fog. As we advanced upon them they charged our line, which charge we met and easily repulsed. I

charged the enemy's flank with Humes and Anderson's commands, and attacked the front with the balance of my command, driving the enemy from his fortified position, capturing a number of prisoners, arms and horses, and killing a great many who refused to surrender, and who were shot in the pursuit which ensued. The rout was complete, and Genl. Kilpatrick was himself very nearly

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captured. We continued the charge until reaching a swamp where the enemy had so constructed barricades as to make a very strong resistance. The enemy was soon driven from this position by a flank movement, after which I again charged and routed their entire force, capturing, killing and wounding nearly two hundred, and completely stampeding the whole force. His destruction was only prevented by an intervening swamp at Buckhead creek, which made it almost impossible to approach, and by the failure of the 4th Tenn. regiment to gain the enemy's rear, for which purpose it had been detached some two hours previous. The bridge over Buckhead creek had been carefully prepared for burning by Kilpatrick's advance guard, and, on our reaching it, the torch had been applied and the bridge was in flames, while a terrific fire from the enemy on the other side prevented me from immediately extinguishing the flames. I dismounted the advance brigade and advanced it through the creek bottom to the bank, and finally drove the enemy sufficiently far from the opposite bank to enable a few brave men to work their way across and drive the enemy beyond range. By great energy and hard labor on the part of my men the fire was soon extinguished, and in little more than an hour the bridge was reconstructed and our troops passing over. The passage, however, was very slow on account of the rude and frail construction of the bridge. After advancing a mile, I discovered the enemy's position, and ordered Genl. Dibrell to turn their right flank by moving through a wood which screened the movement. As night was fast

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approaching it became important to strike the enemy immediately, although only about twelve hundred (1200) of my command had crossed the creek. I moved upon the enemy and drove in his pickets. On discovering his line, I observed that Genl. Dibrell in attempting to turn his flank (although he had moved nearly a mile to our left), had nevertheless encountered the enemy's line of battle which extended still beyond his position. Having parts of Harrison's and Ashby's brigades with me, the former being in advance, I placed the 3d Arkansas Regiment in line, and the 8th and 11th Texas Regiments in column, and charged the enemy's position. Nothing could have succeeded the gallantry with which these troops responded to the bugle's call, and hurled themselves upon the enemy, driving his cavalry in confusion, and finally encountering the breast works. This so terrified the enemy as to cause him to fly in uncontrollable confusion. Unfortunately the open ground did not continue, and we finally encountered a line so positioned that it could not be approached by cavalry. I ordered Ashby's brigade to turn the enemy's left flank and take possession of the Louisville road upon which the enemy was retreating. Owing to approaching dusk Col. Ashby, by accident, got on a road to the left of the one indicated by my order, and notified me that he held possession of the Louisville road. This error enabled the enemy to move off by scattering through fields and wood without order or organization.

During the night Kilpatrick sought the protection of his infantry which he did not venture to forsake

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again during the campaign, no doubt, being too much demoralized to again meet our cavalry.

Fearing the enemy might make another attempt to raid or march upon Augusta, I placed pickets at all the crossings of Brier creek, and located my main force at Rocky Spring church.

On the morning of December 2d, the 14th Army Corps and Kilpatrick's cavalry marched upon Waynesboro, by the Louisville road. I met and checked them at Rocky creek. After a warm engagement they moved off to my left, and crossed a short distance below on a temporarily constructed bridge, and, by moving through the fields, turned off towards Thomas's station. This necessitated my falling back. The following day I moved down and attacked the enemy, driving in their pickets and stopping their destruction of the rail road. Perceiving, after night fall, that they had recommenced their work, I again attacked them about midnight, shelling their camp with good effect. At daylight the enemy in strong force marched upon Waynesboro. Most of my command had necessarily been sent some three miles after forage. We quickly concentrated and hastily threw up barricades, while a single regiment held the entire column in check. This rough screen was hardly completed when a general charge was made upon our lines, which was repulsed with considerable loss to the enemy. A second, third and fourth charge were made by the enemy, each of which was repulsed, or met and driven back by counter charges. Finally their long lines of infantry advanced, and, after warm fighting, their cavalry having turned

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our flanks, we were compelled to fall back, which was done by taking successive positions till we reached the town of Waynesboro. Here we were so warmly pressed that it was with difficulty we succeeded in withdrawing from our position. The moment our lines left our works I directed the 8th Texas, Coln. Cook, and the 9th Tennessee, Capt. Brumley, to charge the enemy, which was gallantly done, meeting and driving back a charge of the enemy and so staggering him that no further demonstration was made upon us until we were prepared to receive the enemy at our new position north of the town. During all the enemy's charges the loss of men and horses must have been severe. According to his own account, his loss in men numbered fifty (50) killed and one hundred and forty-seven (147) wounded. The enemy remained in town about three hours, and then moved down the Savannah road. During all the engagements the enemy's cavalry were at least double my own numbers, and were besides reënforced by one or more divisions of infantry.

Having been notified by the Lieut. Genl. commanding that the roads towards Savannah had been blockaded by his order, and having sent Lewis's brigade (reënforced by the 4th Tennessee Regiment) to fall back before the enemy, I, with the remainder of my command, remained to protect Augusta and to strike his flanks and rear.

On the first day I attacked his rear several times, driving him from his several positions, killing and wounding a great number, and capturing about one hundred (100) prisoners. During his movement towards

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Savannah, so warmly was he pressed, that he blockaded the roads in his rear, frequently building fortifications two or three miles in length, and destroyed all bridges on his line of march. He occasionally attacked us by charging with his cavalry, which was invariably met by counter charges and driven back in confusion, with heavy loss. In every fight we captured horses, arms and prisoners.

On the night of Dec. 8th, we shelled the camp of the 14th Corps with good effect, throwing the

corps into confusion and causing it to leave camp at midnight, abandoning clothing, arms, etc. By breaking up the camp during the extreme darkness, a great many negroes were left in our hands whom we sent back to their owners. We also captured three wagons and teams, and caused the enemy to burn several more wagons. The whole number of negroes captured from the enemy during the movement was nearly two thousand.

On the 8th we captured a dispatch--see appendix A--from Genl. Slocum to Genl. Davis, giving the proposed location of Sherman's army before Savannah; which afterwards proved to be correct. This paper was forwarded to Genl. Hardee. On reaching a point within ten miles of the city, and finding it impossible to do any further harm to the enemy in that position, I moved back and crossed the Savannah river, leaving Genl. Iverson's command to watch the enemy should he move in the direction of Augusta or Western Georgia.

On reaching the South Carolina side I moved down

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and was placed by Lt. Genl. Hardee in command of the defenses of New river and adjacent landings, and charged with the duty of holding the line of communication from Huger's landing to Hardeeville. This we succeeded in doing, although the enemy held the South Carolina side of the river with a division of infantry.

After the evacuation of the city, Dec. 20th, I removed all the guns and ammunition from Tunbridge and Mongin's landings, and New river bridge, also the heavy guns, weighing 9000 pounds each, from Red Bluff, together with the ammunition. I omitted to state that during the entire movement of the enemy through Georgia I kept all my superiors fully informed of the strength and of all the movements of the enemy. At the same time I kept my cavalry in his front, rear, and on both flanks, preventing his cavalry from spreading over the country, retarding the enemy by fighting him on all sides, and felling trees in his advance. This duty was fully done, and I thank my officers and men for their devotion, gallantry, and the self-sacrificing spirit they have ever exhibited. Every engagement was a success, and the utter defeat and discomfiture of the enemy's cavalry was most signal and complete, notwithstanding his force of cavalry was always superior to mine.

My force never exceeded thirty-five hundred (3500) men, and was so distributed in front, rear and on both flanks that I seldom had more than two thousand (2000) under my immediate command, which two thousand frequently charged and routed more than double their numbers. The enemy had been falsely informed by

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their officers that we took no prisoners, which caused him to fight with desperation and to run very dangerous gauntlets to escape capture, which frequently accounts for the large proportion of killed.

In every rout of their cavalry, and in the many fights which ensued, they continued to fly, refusing to surrender notwithstanding the demands of my men in close pursuit. Consequently, no alternative was left but to shoot or sabre them to prevent escape.

During the trip, I had parties to move a day or more in advance of the enemy, informing citizens where to run their negroes and stock in order to ensure the safety of their property, offering them every assistance in so doing. But generally, the citizens were so frightened as to be perfectly helpless. On the

enemy's approach, pursuant to orders, I drove off such horses and mules as were exposed to the enemy's view, and have since taken every pains to restore said stock to its owners, generally with success. My command captured about five hundred horses, many of which had been taken from citizens by the enemy, and have been returned to their owners when it was possible to do so.

I desire to tender my thanks for the devoted gallantry of my division and brigade commanders. Those whose conduct came especially under my notice, were Generals Allen, Humes, Anderson, and Dibrell, and Colonels Ashby, Hagan, Crews, and Lt. Col. Anderson. Genl. Allen was slightly wounded and had two horses shot under him at Waynesboro. Genls. Humes and Dibrell also had their horses shot whilst gallantly engaging the enemy. I also tender my thanks to Genl.

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Robertson who, while acting as my chief of staff in the temporary absence of his command, was severely wounded while gallantly charging the enemy. Captain S. W. Steele and Lieut. M. G. Hudson, A. D. C. of my staff, were highly distinguished for gallantry and zeal. Lieuts. R. B. Ryan, J. M. Stewart, and Henry Chapman, acting upon my staff, were gallant and efficient.

In closing this report I will state that during the last five months my command has been without wagons or cooking utensils, with orders to subsist upon the country. Its food has been limited to bread baked upon boards and stones, and meat broiled upon sticks. It has not been paid in twelve months, and has not had the regular issues of clothing which have been made to the infantry. During this time it has averaged in direct marching sixteen (16) miles a day; and, being without wagons, has been obliged to pack all the forage and rations to camp on horseback, which, together with scouting and other duties, would make the average traveling of each soldier at least twenty (20) miles each day. During these five months my troops have been continuously in the immediate presence of the enemy, fighting nearly every day, and with brilliant success, except in a few instances when small detachments sent off from my command met vastly superior forces. During these five months my command has captured, killed and wounded more than its own effective strength. It has captured from the enemy in action and carried off the field four (4) pieces of artillery, with caissons and battery wagons--twelve

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hundred mules, over two hundred wagons, two thousand head of beef cattle, three thousand cavalry horses with equipments, and over four thousand stand of arms. It has also captured a great number of the enemy's posts, with large amounts of stores, and has destroyed more rail road used by the enemy--stopping his communications for a longer time and with less loss--than any other cavalry command, although expeditions double its strength have been sent out on that duty. It has also captured and destroyed over a dozen trains of cars, generally loaded with supplies. As we were continually fighting the enemy, our camps could not be designated before night-fall. Details had then to be sent out to procure forage and rations, frequently making it midnight before supper could be prepared for my men, and then they were often compelled to be in the saddle before daylight. No men in the Confederate states have marched more, fought more, suffered more, or had so little opportunities for discipline; yet they are to-day as orderly and as well disciplined as any cavalry in the Confederate service.

On our line of march officers and men were met who, in their anxiety to increase their commands, used every exertion to induce my men to desert, frequently offering them promotion and

furloughs as a reward for dishonor. Notwithstanding this, my command is today stronger and more efficient than it was at the beginning of a continuous campaign of eight months' hard, constant, and successful fighting.

I must particularly commend my Tennessee and Kentucky troops, whom, though they saw their homes

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thrown open by the advance of General Hood's army, I brought from the Coosa river to Savannah without a single desertion. Afterwards I had the mortification to see a body desert who had been informed they were to be punished without trial for crimes they had never committed.

Respy. Col.,
Your Obt. Servt.

J. WHEELER,
Maj. Genl.

APPENDIX A.

Army of Georgia, Head Qrs., Left Wing,
Springfield, Dec. 8, 1864, 7 A. M. Genl.,

Genl. Sherman has information that the line of defense around Savannah is about four miles from the city. He desires to take the road extending from Cherokee hill through Silk Hope to Litchfield, as our first position. Your corps should be at or near Cherokee hill. The 20th will be to the left of Pooler, 17th on right of 20th, and 15th near Litchfield. The 20th Corps will be at Monteith to night.

Yours very respectfully,

H. W. SLOCUM, M. G.

Official Copy. H. C.

This dispatch was directed on the envelop to Genl. Jeff. C. Davis.

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CHAPTER V.

The Siege of Savannah--Concentration of Confederate Forces for the Defense of the City--Investment by the United States Forces-- Federal attempts to Communicate with the Fleet--Confederate Line at Monteith--Obstruction of Roads leading into Savannah--Western Line for the Protection of the City, its Location, Principal Batteries, and Armament--Enumeration of Light Artillery Companies Concentrated for its Support--Inundation of the Low Grounds in front of this Western Line--the Western Line, how Subdivided, Commanded, and Garrisoned--Supply of Ordnance, Quarter-Master, and Commissary Stores--Statement of Rations Issued.

Although every effort had been made to concentrate a large force for the defense of Savannah, such was the pressure upon the Confederacy and so great the paucity of troops, that at the inception and during the progress of the siege there were not more than ten thousand men fit for duty within the

Confederate lines around that city. Nearly one half of these consisted of reserves and militia, and considerable details were employed in garrisoning the forts and fixed batteries in the Savannah river and along the line of the water approaches. No lack of patriotism existed on the part of the citizens, who responded freely to the following spirited address of their honored mayor.

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Mayor's Office,
Savannah, November 28th, 1864. Fellow Citizens,

The time has come when every male who can shoulder a musket can make himself useful in defending our hearths and homes. Our city is well fortified, and the old can fight in the trenches as well as the young; and a determined and brave force can, behind entrenchments, successfully repel the assaults of treble their number.

The general commanding this division has issued a call for all men of every age, not absolutely incapacitated from disease, to report at once to Capt. C. W. Howard, at the Oglethorpe barracks, for the purpose of organizing into companies for home defense. I call upon every man not already enrolled in a local corps to come forward *at once* and report to Captain Howard. Organization is everything. Let us emulate the noble examples of our sister cities of Macon and Augusta where the whole male population is in arms. By manning the fortifications we will leave free the younger men to act in the field. By prompt action a large local force can be organized from our citizens above the military age, and from those who have been exempted from field service.

No time is to be lost. The man who will not comprehend and respond to the emergency of the times, is forsworn to his duty and to his country.

R. D. ARNOLD, Mayor.

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By the evening of the 9th of December, all the Confederate forces which could be concentrated were in position along the newly constructed western lines extending from the Savannah river on the right, at Williamson's plantation, to the Atlantic and Gulf railway bridge across the Little Ogeechee, on the left. Care had been taken to remove all serviceable rolling stock belonging to the Central rail road and banking company, the Atlantic and Gulf rail road company, and the Charleston and Savannah rail road company.

On the 10th of December, 1864, Sherman's army closed in upon the Confederate works covering the land approaches to the city of Savannah. With this date the history of the siege properly commences.

In coming into position in front of Savannah the Federal corps were distributed as follows: General Williams's 20th Corps held the left of the Union line resting upon the Savannah river near Williamson's plantation, in advance of Pipe-makers creek, its right extending across the Charleston and Savannah rail road to the Central rail road where it joined the left of Genl. Jeff C. Davis's 14th Army Corps.

This 14th Army Corps, constituting the right of the left wing, extended from the Central rail road on the left to the 17th Army Corps, whose left

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rested beyond the Savannah and Ogeechee canal, near Lawton's plantation.

Shortly after this development of the left wing, the right, under Major General Howard, came into the following position. The 17th Corps, commanded by General Frank P. Blair jr., lay next beyond and to the right of the 14th Army Corps, while General Osterhaus's 15th Corps, with its right resting on the Atlantic and Gulf rail road near station number one, formed the extreme right of the Federal investment.

After crossing Ebenezer creek on the 8th of December, Kilpatrick concentrated his cavalry on the Monteith road, ten miles south of Springfield; and, until the 13th, moved in rear of the 17th Army Corps, with detachments covering the rear of the other army corps.

King's bridge having been burnt by the Confederates, Kilpatrick crossed the Great Ogeechee on a pontoon bridge, on the afternoon of the 13th, and moved in heavy force through the counties of Bryan and Liberty, seeking to communicate with the Federal fleet by way of Kilkenny bluff and Sunbury. Returning on the 16th, he went into camp in the vicinity of King's bridge, picketing and plundering the country south of the Ogeechee.

The attempt of Coln. Atkins, with two thousand cavalry supported by a division of infantry under

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General Mower, to destroy the railway bridge over the Alatomaha river, failed.

Upon the first appearance of the enemy the Confederate cavalry, stationed at detached points along the coast south of the Great Ogeechee, hastily retreated beyond the Alatomaha, leaving the region lately occupied by them an open prey to the daily incursions of small bodies of Federal cavalry who wantonly insulted and robbed defenseless women, children, and old men, and perpetrated repeated acts of violence, lawlessness, and horrid depravity. During the entire march from Atlanta, the conduct of Kilpatrick's cavalry was characterized by constant acts of brutality, theft, and insult.

The Federal artillery was distributed at convenient intervals and at suitable locations all along the line, but was chiefly massed opposite the Confederate redoubts on our right, in front of Daly's farm, the battery on Lawton's plantation, and the work at Salt creek bridge. The work last mentioned, known as Battery Jones, was subjected to an incessant and severe fire during the continuance of the siege.

The advanced line, selected by the engineers for the defense of Savannah, included the protection of the Charleston and Savannah rail road and its bridge across the Savannah river. Extending thence along, and having Monteith swamp in its

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front, its left rested upon the Great Ogeechee river. Detached field works had been hastily prepared at important points, and some light artillery and infantry put in position. The principal roads leading to Savannah and the main avenues of approach had been blocked up by felling timber across them, and it was hoped that these obstructions would induce the Federal general to turn aside and seek some

objective on the coast other than Savannah.

The paucity of the Confederate forces, the overwhelming strength of the enemy, the length and insecurity of the line, later and more careful surveys proving localities to be practicable which were deemed impassable, the Federal ability by means of well appointed pioneer corps in a short time to remove all hindrances to an advance, and the facility with which detached earth works, constituting the principal defenses, could be flanked, induced the evacuation of this line shortly after a serious demonstration was made against it by the enemy.

The second line, and that persistently held by the Confederates during the siege, commenced at Williamson's plantation on the Savannah river, having the rice field in its front; thence, extending along the high ground, and still keeping the swamp in front, it crossed the Central

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rail road, followed the crest of Daly's farm, passed through Lawton's plantation, confronted the rice fields of Silk Hope plantation, and, following the left shore of Salt creek marshes and the Little Ogeechee, rested upon the Atlantic and Gulf rail way bridge across the Little Ogeechee river. This line was well located, and was rendered formidable by the succession of low lands and impracticable swamps in its front. In order to increase these physical obstructions and add to the impracticability of these low lands, the river dam at Williamson's plantation was cut so as to allow the water at high tide to flow freely into and submerge the rice fields. This supply, when fully obtained, was there held. The Savannah and Ogeechee canal in advance of the line being higher than the swamp through which it passed, was cut. Its lock, about eight miles from the city, was opened, and thus the water from Gould's swamp was drawn down and made to contribute to the overflow. The Augusta, the Louisville, the Central rail road, and all other causeways interrupting the ready flow of the water, were cut. From the left bank of the canal at Shaw's to Silk Hope plantation is a continuous line of swamp draining into Salt creek at Silk Hope. Between the Confederate line and Shaw's settlement the canal was cut in one or two places, and the

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swamps were filled from it and from the reserves on Shaw's and Lawton's plantations. The rice fields on Silk Hope plantation were flooded from the Silk Hope back water, and Salt creek was dammed up at the bridge on the old Savannah and Darien road, to keep in the water in case the enemy should cut the banks. Shaw's back-water dam was also cut, and every means resorted to which could contribute to swell the inundation. Thus the entire front of the Confederate line, from the Savannah river to Salt creek bridge, was submerged to a depth varying from three to six feet. Below Salt creek bridge, Salt creek and the marshes of the Little Ogeechee afforded substantial protection. So much for the natural advantages of the line.

The artificial defenses consisted of detached works, located at prominent points, commanding the established avenues of approach to the city, crowning causeways and private crossings over these low-lands, and offering resistance wherever the swamps were practicable. The principal batteries were situated as follows:

In front of the extreme right of the Confederate line, and across the flooded rice field on Williamson's plantation, was an advanced work, the left of which rested upon Williamson's canal just beyond the grave-yard, which was converted into a **redan**,

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and the right upon the Savannah river this side of the negro quarters. This was the most elaborate fortification on the line. Its armament consisted of ten guns, mostly of light calibre, and it was garrisoned by two hundred infantry of the Georgia militia, Pruden's artillery company, and the Georgia cadets, Major Capers, all under the command of Colonel Hill of the Georgia State forces. This work was open in its rear toward the Savannah river upon which it rested. The lunette, which constituted its prominent feature, was approached by a covered way, and in it was located an ample bomb-proof made by cutting a deep ditch from the salient to the bastion line. This ditch was crossed at right angles by another of similar dimensions, commencing and terminating at the flank angles respectively. These ditches were then roofed with timber and covered with the earth removed in making the excavations. Thus was constructed not only a commodious bomb proof, but also an excellent magazine. Semi-lunar in outline, the enclosed lunette constituted its center, with a redan on the left and a semicircular work on the right. The infantry line and curtains connecting these were substantial in character and showed a double front. The interior front commanded the terre-plein in case the enemy should attack from Hutchinson's island. Sand bags were

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used instead of head logs, and they were so arranged as to permit the garrison, while firing, to be entirely under cover. The exterior front was protected by a double frieze of stakes and fence-rails planted firmly in the ground and interlaced with iron wire. Such was Fort Hardeman, planned by and constructed under the supervision of Lieut. Coln. B. W. Frobel of the engineers. The labor was performed by the Georgia militia and a detail of negroes. On the 9th and 10th of December the enemy attempted to carry this work, but the assaults were feeble and easily repulsed.

The right of the Confederate line developed into a well traversed field work, mounting three 32-pounder guns, resting upon the Savannah river and designed to cover Williamson's river dam and its approaches. The preservation of this dam was essential to the retention of the water by means of which the overflow, to which we have alluded, was in a considerable degree accomplished. Between this battery and the Augusta road several pieces of artillery were posted in lunettes.

At the crossing of the Augusta road a substantial earth work was constructed, mounting three heavy guns, with field pieces on the flanks.

Battery McBeth, located at the intersection of the Louisville turnpike and the Central rail road with the Confederate line, was armed with three

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32-pounder guns on barbette carriages, and two 24-pounder Blakely rifle guns on siege carriages.

In supporting distance, and about halfway between the Louisville road and the Savannah and Ogeechee canal, were posted a 12-pounder Napoleon gun and a 6-pounder bronze field piece. Along the right bank of the canal, and in support of the line running through the woods between the canal and the high-ground on Daly's farm, were distributed a 12-pounder field piece, a 12-pounder howitzer, and five 6-pounder guns. The line in front of Daly's farm was armed with one 8-inch siege howitzer, a 20-pounder Parrott gun, two 12-pounder Napoleon guns, one 12-pounder howitzer, and one 3-inch rifle gun.

Following the line in the direction of the left, a 12-pounder Napoleon gun was put in position at the head of Shaw's dam. Three 12-pounder howitzers at Battery Acee commanded Shaw's rice field, and one 12-pounder howitzer and two 6-pounder guns were stationed on the Habersham old road. Between Battery Acee and the Habersham road was a 12-pounder gun.

In rear of Lawton's barn, and at the head of the causeway crossing his rice fields, stood Battery Barnes with two 32-pounder guns, two 12-pounder Napoleons, and one 12-pounder howitzer. Six hundred yards to the right of this battery was a

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6-pounder gun commanding another causeway, and some five hundred yards beyond and in the direction of the Habersham road, was posted a 6-pounder gun covering the approach by still another crossing.

At Pine-Point battery, opposite the rice fields of the Hon. George S. Owens's Silk Hope plantation, six field guns were embrasured; and Battery Jones, on the old Savannah and Darien road where it crosses Salt creek, was armed with two 32-pounder garrison guns, one 32-pounder carronade, one 20-pounder Parrott, and four 12-pounder Napoleons.

On Barclay's plantation, at the extreme left of the line, several field guns were posted for the protection of the Atlantic and Gulf rail road bridge over the Little Ogeechee river.

In addition to the guns enumerated, field pieces were distributed at other advantageous points along the line, and ramps were constructed at irregular intervals for the guns of the light batteries which were acting as a movable support.

The following light batteries had been concentrated for the defense of Savannah.

- 1. Terrell Artillery, 4 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
- 2. Regular Light Battery, 2 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
- [One section absent with the cavalry under General Wheeler.]
- 3. Anderson's Light Battery, 4 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
- 4. Barnwell's " " 4 12-pdr Napoleon guns.

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- 5. German Light Battery, 2 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
- [One section absent with the cavalry south of the Alatamaha.]
- 6. Abell's Light Battery, 2 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
2 12-pdr howitzers.
- 7. Pruden's Light Battery 4 6-pdr guns.
- 8. Daniell's Light Battery 4 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
- 9. Guerard's Light Battery 2 12-pdr Napoleon guns.
2 12-pdr howitzers
- 10. Hanleiter's Light Battery 2 12-pdr Napoleon guns. 2 6-pdr guns.
2 12-pdr howitzers.

- 11. Mayor Hamilton's battalion of light artillery, ... 2 10-pdr Parrotts.
8 3 and 3 1/2-inch rifles.
- Total48 guns.

Wherever the ground was practicable, these batteries and field works were connected by a continuous line of infantry breastworks which the troops in position industriously strengthened from day to day as opportunity was afforded. Most of the guns in position on this western line had been, for this purpose, withdrawn from the eastern lines constructed by Brigadier General Mercer during the years 1862 and 1863.

This western line for the protection of Savannah against the advance of Sherman was subdivided and commanded as follows. The right, extending from the Savannah river at Williamson's plantation to within about one hundred feet of the Central

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rail road crossing, garrisoned by the Georgia militia and the State line troops, was under the command of Major General Gustavus W. Smith. Twenty guns were in position on his front.

The command of Major General Lafayette McLaws embraced the batteries at the Central rail road and Louisville road crossings, and extended from that point to the head of Shaw's dam. On his front twenty-nine pieces of artillery were posted.

Major General A. R. Wright commanded the left, extending from Shaw's dam all the way round to the Atlantic and Gulf railway bridge over the Little Ogeechee river. Thirty-two pieces of artillery were in position on his front.

Lieutenant General William J. Hardee was in general command, with his head-quarters in the city of Savannah. For holding this long line less than ten thousand infantry, dismounted cavalry, and artillerists were assembled; and, for the space of ten days, this little more than a thin skirmish line confronted, at close quarters, Sherman's investing army over sixty thousand strong.

The light artillery companies were distributed as the necessities of the line demanded, and were either actively engaged in handling the guns in position, or were posted at such convenient distances in the rear that they could move immediately to any designated point in their respective

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fronts. Only two of them were held in reserve park.

Four guns, namely, two 18-pounder garrison guns, one 8-inch siege howitzer, and a 42-pounder carronade, were placed in battery near the Central rail road depot.

Lieutenant Colonel Charles C. Jones jr., was chief of artillery.

On Major General Smith's front, Captain R. W. Anderson acted as chief of artillery for that division. Captain J. A. Maxwell was detailed as chief of artillery on Major General McLaws' front, and Captain John W. Brooks acted in a similar capacity in Major General Wright's division.

By assignment of the general commanding, Major Black of his staff was designated as inspector on Major General Smith's front; Colonel George A. Gordon, volunteer aid, inspector on Major General

McLaws' front; and Lieut. Colonel S. B. Paul, of the lieutenant general's staff, inspector on Major General Wright's front.

In anticipation of the siege, every effort had been made by the chief of artillery, and the ordnance officer on duty in Savannah, to accumulate a supply of ordnance stores. Col. Rains, commanding the Augusta arsenal, and the ordnance officer at Charleston extended what aid they could, and the consequence was that, apart from the ammunition

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in the artillery chests and in the temporary magazines along the line, there remained a fair amount in reserve. During the progress of the siege there was no lack of ammunition; the troops and batteries being at all times promptly and sufficiently served. It may be fairly stated, however, that as a precautionary measure, the expenditure of ammunition both by the artillery and infantry was made the subject of a special order from head quarters, enjoining economy and caution.

That no scarcity of provisions was encountered during the siege is evidenced by the fact that, after sending from the supplies in Savannah to Hardeeville, South Carolina, one week's full rations for all the troops engaged in the defense of Savannah, there remained on the morning of the 20th of December unissued and on hand in the commissary department, 30 bags of corn, 800 tierces and 400 bags of beat rice, 2000 pounds of bacon, 70 barrels of lard, 150 barrels of molasses, 700 bags of oats, 900 bags of ground peas, 1300 bags of wheat, 125 bags of grist, 10 boxes of soap, 560 bags of cow peas, 17 bales of hay, 225 bags of wheat flour, 400 tierces of salt, 36 barrels of whiskey, 1200 casks of unbeaten rice at Habersham's mill, and a considerable supply of coffee and sugar. In obedience to the orders of Lieut. Genl. Hardee, sixteen thousand pounds of coffee were, by Major George Robertson

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jr., chief commissary in Savannah, shipped on the 5th of December, to Major H. C. Guerin chief commissary at Charleston, South Carolina.

As an important item showing what may be accepted as an average issue of rations during the siege, after the isolation and capture of Fort McAllister, and recording with considerable accuracy the commands then present in Savannah and its vicinity, we present the following statement prepared by the chief commissary of subsistence.

Military District of Georgia,
Office Issuing Commissary,
Savannah, Decr. 16th, 1864.

STATEMENT OF RATIONS ISSUED AT THIS OFFICE.

Military District of Georgia,
Office Issuing Commissary,
Savannah, Decr. 16th, 1864.

STATEMENT OF RATIONS ISSUED AT THIS OFFICE.

<i>Name of Company.</i>	<i>Commanding Officer.</i>	<i>Ra- tions.</i>
Abell's Light Battery,	Captn. Abell,	56
Wagener's " "	Lieut. Monsees,	54
Cumming's Brigade,	Coln. Cumming,	750
Baker's N. C. " "	Brig. Genl. Baker, L. S.,	2,179
Lewis's " "	" " Lewis,	250
1st Georgia Regulars,	Coln. R. A. Wayne,	228
Cos. D. F. & G., 3rd S. C. Cavalry,	" T. H. Johnson,	150
4th Tennessee Regt.,	Maj. Bledsoe.	175
Barnwell's Light Battery,	Capt. A. S. Barnwell,	76
Independent Scouts,	" Talbot,	57
Rose Dew Post,		350
Co. D, 22 Geo. Battn. Arty.,	" Manning,	70
Daniell's Light Battery,	" Charles Daniell,	129
Maj. Hartridge's Command,	Maj. Alfred L. Hartridge,	350
Jo. Thompson Artillery,	Captn. Hanleiter,	106
Terrell Artillery,	" Jno. W. Brooks,	102
So. Ca. Militia at Red Bluff,	" Evans & McKnight.	75
Detachmt. 27th Battn.,	" Johnson,	21
LaFayette Lt. Arty., Red Bluff,	" McGregor,	30
Savannah River Batteries,	Maj. Bertody,	59

<i>Name of Company.</i>	<i>Commanding Officer.</i>	<i>Ra- tions.</i>
Garrison, Fort Bartow,	Lt. Coln. Pritchard,	79
Co. D, 2nd Regt., Eng. Troops,	Captn. James McAlpin,	72
Guerard's Light Battery,	" Jno. M. Guerard,	125
Red Bluff Garrison,	" McGregor,	112
Oglethorpe Barracks,	Maj. Jno. Cunningham,	309
Recruits, Howard's Battn.,	Captn. Howard,	15
Detachment, " "	" H. J. Strobhart,	152
Troops at Thunderbolt,	Lt. Coln. McLaws,	201
Co. C, 22nd Battn. Geo. Arty.,	Captn. Bealls,	61
Genl. Hardee's Escort,	Lt. Gen. Wm. J. Hardee,	14
7th Regt., Geo. Cavalry,	Coln. Anderson,	220
Detached Troops, Screven's Ferry,	Captn. Quirk,	91
Co. H, Local Battalion,	" Flanders,	41
Brigade Local Troops,	Coln. Browne,	1,139
Co. E, 2 Reg. Eng. Troops,	Lieut. Couper,	70
Howard's Battalion,	Captn. Howard,	300
Transferred from Hospital,	to Charleston, S. C.,	36
Brigade Reserves,	Coln. Von Zinken,	1,154
Savh. Local Battn.,	Maj. Shellman,	90
Detached Men,	Capt. Paine, A. Q. M.,	35
Finegan Rifles,	" McKone,	46
Savh. Relief Committee,	H. Brigham, chairman,	50
Regular Lt. Battery,	Lt. Richardson,	45
Artillery Battalion,	Maj. Hamilton,	270
Detachmt. Anderson's Brigade,	Coln. Prather,	275
Ferguson's " "	Genl. Ferguson,	568
27th Geo. Battalion,	Lt. Cotter,	246
Other Issues,		208
		<hr/> 11,291
Genl. G. W. Smith's Command,	Hospital, &c.,	218
Hd. Qrs., Q. M. & C. S. Deptms.	Brig. Genl. Carswell,	906
1st Brigade, Geo. Militia,	Coln. D. B. Thompson,	492
2d " " "	Genl. C. D. Anderson,	868
3d " " "	Coln. J. D. Wilson,	469
" Geo. State Line,	Lt. R. H. Brown,	128
Anderson's Battery,	Captn. J. H. Tiller,	111
Artillery Company,	" Austin	57
Detachment,		<hr/> 3,249

Rations

- Officers, 129

- Detachments, Couriers and Baggage Guards, 130
- Detailed, 71
- Hospitals and Attendants,821
- Steamers Beauregard and Govr. Troup, 31
- Civilians and Paroled Prisoners Engineer Deptmt., 100
- 1,282

RECAPITULATION.

- Issues to Confederate Troops,1,1291
- Issues to Militia,3,249
- Issues to Officers detailed,
- Issues to Hospitals, etc.,1,28215,822
- Issues to Negroes,923
- Total,16,745

Lt. Coln. T. B. Roy, A. A. G.

Coln. I respectfully present the above statement for the information of Lt. Genl. Hardee. * * *
Very Respectfully,

GEO. ROBERTSON, JR., Maj. & C. S.

While this statement shows an aggregate issue of 16,745 rations, a proper analysis will advise us that after deducting the troops stationed in the Third district of Carolina, the artillerists engaged in garrisoning the forts along the line of the Savannah river and upon the water approaches to the city, the sick in hospitals, the provost guards, men on detached services of various sorts, the naval forces, and the negro laborers, there scarcely remained ten thousand troops for active duty on the western line.

CHAPTER VI.

Confederate Forces in the 3d Military District of South Carolina, under Maj. Genl. Sam Jones, guarding the Line of the Charleston and Savannah Rail Road--Federal Advance from Gregory's Point, and its Repulse near the Tullifinney Trestle--Original Confederate Line Conceived for the Protection of the Sea Coast of Georgia-- Advanced Line Controlling the Water Approaches to Savannah-- Line of Defense for the Immediate Protection of the Eastern and Southern Exposures of the City--Location and Armament of the Savannah River Batteries, and of the Forts and Earth-works Erected to guard the Water Approaches to the City--Relative Bearings and Distances of these Fortifications from Oglethorpe Barracks--Genl. Beauregard's Instructions for the Defense of Savannah.

Although severely repulsed at Honey Hill on the 30th of November, the Federals within a short time set on foot new expeditions with a view to obtaining possession of the Charleston and Savannah rail road. As the protection of this important line of communication was essential to the safety of the garrison at Savannah, General Hardee ordered Major General Samuel Jones, commanding at Charleston, to establish his head quarters at or near Pocotaligo and carefully watch the movements of the enemy. These instructions were given on the 4th of December. The troops in that vicinity, under

of the 5th and 47th Georgia Regiments, a battalion of the 32d Georgia Regiment, a portion of the 3d Regiment South Carolina cavalry, Kirk's squadron of cavalry, some South Carolina reserves and militia, some Georgia reserves, and several batteries of light artillery. These forces were distributed at various points extending from Pocotaligo to the Savannah river, and along the left bank of that river to Sisters ferry, and above. Those concentrated at and near Grahamville were under the immediate command of Brigadier General Chesnut, and those stationed at and near Coosawhatchie were commanded by Brigadier General Gartrell. The reserves were poorly organized and imperfectly drilled. The militia was to a great extent undisciplined, and lacked arms.

On the morning of the 6th of December the enemy effected a landing at Gregory's Point on the Tullifinny river. A battalion of the 5th Georgia Regiment, sent forward by General Gartrell to contest the advance of the enemy, encountered the Federals on the Gregory's point road about a mile from its junction with the State road, and at first drove them back a short distance. Soon perceiving however, that the opposing force "was scarcely a twentieth part of their own numbers," the Federals pressed forward and nearly enveloped the 5th Georgia, forcing it back. The Georgia reserves

and a section of light artillery, ordered by General Gartrell to support the 5th Georgia, fell back in confusion after having partially destroyed the bridge within range of the Confederate works at Coosawhatchie. Having obtained a foothold at the junction of the Gregory's Point road and the State road, the Federals immediately commenced intrenching.

During the night of the 6th, Major General Jones concentrated on the Charleston and Savannah rail road, near the Tullifinny trestle, the 47th Georgia Regiment, a battalion of the 32d Georgia, a company of the 1st South Carolina Artillery, Major White's battalion of cadets, a battalion of North Carolina Reserves which had just arrived, and Bachman's battery of light artillery, and ordered Colonel Edwards, the senior colonel, to attack the enemy with this force at daylight in the morning. Brigadier General Gartrell was directed to make a spirited demonstration from Coosawhatchie so soon as he should hear Colonel Edwards's guns: and, if Colonel Edwards's movement proved successful, to press forward with the attack. Both attacks failed of their object; and General Jones, believing that he had not a sufficient number of reliable troops to justify him in renewing the assault, endeavored by defensive works to hold the rail road. Meanwhile, the enemy was busily occupied in strengthening

their position. On the night of the 8th, Brigadier General B. H. Robertson was assigned to the immediate command of the troops between Pocotaligo and Coosawhatchie. On the morning of the 9th, the Federals, in endeavoring to gain possession of the rail road, vigorously assailed the Confederate left near Tullifinny, and were handsomely repulsed. Later in the day, having massed their forces on their left, they attacked the Confederate line near Coosawhatchie, and were again repulsed. Failing in these attacks they never renewed them, but contented themselves with strengthening their position within less than a mile of the Charleston and Savannah rail road, where they established several batteries with which they endeavored, but unsuccessfully, to prevent the Confederates from using the road. Although these batteries were located within easy range of the road, and although the enemy

used their artillery freely, the Confederate forces held the road continuously, and the passage of trains was never interrupted for an entire day until the road was abandoned after the evacuation of Savannah, and the withdrawal of troops and materials had been fully accomplished. Only one locomotive and a box-car were damaged, and two rails broken by the enemy's continued fire.

While these operations were in progress near Coosawhatchie, Brigadier General Chesnut held

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the rail road from Bee's creek to Hardeeville, and Colonel Colcock guarded the Savannah river to Hudson's ferry, until the arrival of Major General Wheeler and Brigadier General Young with their respective commands.

We make no apology for referring to these movements and alluding to these dispositions of troops, because they had an important bearing upon and constituted no mean part of the plan of the defense of Savannah.

Prior to the inception of Sherman's march through Georgia, the attention of the military commanders at Savannah had been mainly directed to the construction of fortifications for the protection of the city against water attacks and expeditions advancing directly from the coast. The likelihood of any demonstration from the rear had, up to this time, been deemed so remote, and the probability of an attack from the coast so imminent on more than one occasion, that most of the available labor had been expended in the erection and arming of batteries to control the water approaches to the city, and in the construction of substantial earth works covering the eastern and southern exposures of Savannah. A brief allusion to these lines of defense will not, we trust, be deemed irrelevant.

The original line conceived for the protection

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of the sea-coast of Georgia contemplated the erection of earth-works, to be armed with 32-pounder guns, at every ship-channel entrance from Tybee island to Fernandina. Thus, on the north point of Great Tybee island was a small sand battery as an outpost to Fort Pulaski, and an earth-work on Warsaw island as an advanced fortification to the Skidaway island batteries. In the vicinity of Ossabaw sound no defensive work existed exterior to the battery on Green island. Then came Fort McAllister near the mouth of the Great Ogeechee river. On the north point of St. Catharine island was a small battery; and so the purpose was to pursue this system of fortifications as far as the southern extremity of Cumberland island.

Such isolated works, feeble in themselves and far removed from a convenient base of supplies, were essentially inadequate for the purpose for which they were intended, were incapable of resisting anything like a determined attack, and, at the commencement of the Confederate struggle for independence when the art of war was but partially understood and it was deemed an imperative duty to protect every foot of Confederate soil, were mainly designed to quiet the fears of the planters on the coast who, apprehensive of the approach of armed vessels and marauding parties commissioned to annoy exposed localities and disorganize the

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labor upon their estates, were clamorous for some protection of this sort. These outer batteries were held only a short time. Several of them, although planned, and partially completed with the aid of slave labor from neighboring plantations, were never finished.

On the 18th day of February, 1862, the batteries on St. Simons and Jekyll islands, designed for the protection of Brunswick, were abandoned, and their armaments transferred to more important points. From this time onward, during the continuance of the war, the heavy guns on the Georgia coast were charged solely with guarding the water approaches to the city of Savannah and its vicinity. The advanced line for the control of these water approaches was represented by a battery at Red Bluff, Fort Pulaski, detached works on Wilmington, Skidaway, and Green islands, and by Fort McAllister. There was also an interior line of forts and water batteries which, commencing with Fort Jackson and the Savannah river batteries, included Fort Bartow, works at Causton's bluff and on Whitmarsh island, batteries at Greenwich, Thunderbolt, the Isle of Hope, and at Beaulieu, and rested its right on the Rose Dew batteries. Fort Pulaski was isolated on the 22d of February, 1862, and passed into the hands of the Federals on the 11th of April following. In

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March of the same year the battery on Skidaway island was abandoned, and its guns were employed in strengthening Thunderbolt battery. About the same time the fort on Green island was dismantled, and its armament transferred to the battery at Beaulieu.

In addition to these defenses, a line of formidable field works, within easy range of each other, and in many places connected by curtains, armed with siege and field guns, was thrown up for the immediate defense of Savannah. Commencing at Fort Boggs on the Savannah river, and thence extending south and west in a semi-circular form, enveloping the city at distances varying from one to two and a quarter miles, it terminated at the Springfield plantation swamp. The principal works in this line were Fort Boggs, mounting fourteen guns, some of them quite heavy and commanding Savannah river, Fort Brown, near the Catholic cemetery, armed with eleven guns, and Fort Mercer having a battery of nine guns. Between Springfield plantation swamp where the right of the line rested just beyond Laurel Grove cemetery, and Fort Mercer, were eighteen lunettes, mounting in the aggregate twenty guns. Connecting Fort Mercer with Fort Brown was a cremeilliere line with nine salients, mounting in the aggregate eight guns. Between Fort Brown and Fort

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Boggs were seven lunettes, mounting in the aggregate eight guns. These works were well supplied with magazines. It will be noted that the armament of these city lines consisted of seventy pieces of artillery of various calibres, among which 32, 24, 18, 12 and 6-pounder guns predominated. A considerable supply of ammunition was kept on hand in the magazines. Such was the condition of this city line in the month of October, 1864. When, however, it became necessary, the month following, to arm the western line for the defense of the city against Sherman's army, many guns were withdrawn from the city line and placed in battery on the western defenses. In fact, the principal supply of guns and ammunition was hence derived. The first assignment of guns on the western line was made by the writer on the 20th of November. Major General Lafayette McLaws was then in command of the district of Georgia; Major John McCrady was acting as chief engineer, and Captain L. Jacqueline Smith as ordnance officer. When Lieut. General Hardee arrived and assumed command, Colonel J. J. Clarke discharged the duties of chief engineer, and Lieut. Col. J. R. Waddy was announced as chief

ordnance officer.

As Federal vessels of war, in anticipation of the approach of Sherman's army, had been multiplied along the coast, and as a demonstration in aid of

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his movement was deemed entirely probable, it was manifestly necessary that the forts and batteries commanding the water approaches to the city of Savannah should be kept amply garrisoned and properly supplied with ammunition. Consequently, during the continuance of the siege, the cannoners were kept at their posts and a strict watch was maintained. As but slight changes were made during the siege in the armament of these fixed batteries, the following statement of guns in position along the water front of the Savannah defenses may be accepted as substantially correct.

We begin with Red Bluff battery on the Carolina shore, which constituted the left of the line.

This enclosed work was armed with six guns, as follows: two 24-pounder rifle guns, one 8-inch columbiad, one 24 and two 12-pounder howitzers.

At the extremity of the bay, in the city of Savannah, was located a 32-pounder gun.

On Hutchinson's island was an earth work mounting three 32-pounder guns.

The armament of Fort Jackson consisted of two 8-inch columbiads, two 32-pounder rifle guns, and three 32-pounder naval guns.

The other batteries for the defense of the Savannah river proper (aside from Fort Boggs whose location and armament have already been mentioned) were Cheves, Lawton, and Lee.

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Three 32-pounder guns and two 10-inch columbiads constituted the armament of Battery Cheves.

That of Battery Lawton was stronger, consisting of one 32-pounder rifle gun, one 42-pounder smooth bore, two 8-inch and two 10-inch columbiad guns.

The most powerful work in the Savannah river was Battery Lee, which mounted two 10-inch mortars, two 10-inch and three 8-inch columbiads, one 42, and one 32-pounder gun, and two 24-pounder howitzers.

Fort Bartow, commanding St. Augustine creek not far from its **confluence** with Savannah river, was a substantially constructed, enclosed earth work, mounting sixteen guns, to wit: one 10-inch columbiad, two 8-inch naval shell guns, two 8-inch columbiads, two 24-pounder rifle guns, one 12-pounder rifle gun, two 8-pounder and two 6-pounder smooth bore guns, three 3-inch rifle guns, and one boat howitzer. The water battery at Causton's bluff, in advance of Fort Bartow, was armed with two 32-pounder smooth bore guns.

For the protection of the approaches by way of Whitemarsh island, a battery was located at Turner's point mounting three 10-inch columbiads, one 20-pounder Parrott gun, and two 12-pounder howitzers; and another at Gibson's point which was armed with two 8-inch siege howitzers and two 32-pounder guns. Across the island was thrown up

a substantial line of field works mounting seven 32-pounder guns, one 4.62-inch, and one 3-inch rifle gun. Near the head of the causeway leading to Causton's bluff were located some lunettes and angles for field pieces.

At Greenwich was a battery of three 32-pounder guns.

At Thunderbolt was a succession of well traversed earth works, mounting one 10-inch columbiad, two 8-inch columbiads, two 8-inch shell guns, one 42-pounder rifle, one 42-pounder smooth bore, and six 32-pounder guns. The batteries on the Isle of Hope were distributed as follows : at Grimbald's point a small work armed with one 32-pounder; at Grimbald's house another, mounting two guns of like calibre; and at the Church lot a more formidable work mounting two 8-inch columbiads and two 32-pounder guns. Near Skidaway bridge was a *tête du pont*, prepared for the reception of siege pieces or light artillery.

The point at Beaulieu being an important one, was strongly fortified and provided with one 8-inch and two 10-inch columbiads, two 42 and three 32-pounder guns. A light battery was also stationed within supporting distance.

Rose Dew battery was armed with three 10-inch columbiads, one 10-inch mortar, and one 32 and one 18-pounder rifle gun.

Colonel Edward C. Anderson was, during the siege, assigned to the general command of these fixed batteries. The guns in these positions were supplied with an average of rather more than one hundred rounds of ammunition to the piece. As additional obstructions to an ascent of the Savannah river by the enemy, cribs, filled with brick and stone, had been sunk in the channel below the forts and under cover of their guns. Below the Thunderbolt battery the river was impeded by quantities of live-oak logs.

We conclude this allusion to the water defenses of Savannah by an enumeration of the guns in position at Fort McAllister near the mouth of the Great Ogeechee river.

Constituting the right of the exterior line designed and held for the protection of Savannah, and situated at Genesis point on the right bank of the Great Ogeechee river, it effectually commanded the channel of that river, shielded the important rail road bridge across the Ogeechee near Way's station on the Atlantic and Gulf rail road, and preserved the important and numerous rice-plantations in its neighborhood from molestation and demoralization. From the day of its construction, which was coëval with the earliest Confederate defenses on the Georgia coast, to the hour of its capture on the 13th of December, 1864, it

subverted purposes most conducive to the general welfare, and on various occasions gallantly repulsed well sustained naval attacks from the enemy.

Although the mantle of decay is spread above its deserted magazines and rank weeds are choking its vacant gun-chambers, the heroic memories which it has bequeathed and the noble part it sustained

in the Confederate struggle for independence will not be forgotten in the lapse of years or lightly esteemed in the record of truth and valor. No name is more proudly remembered on the Georgia coast than that of this now almost obliterated earth-work near the mouth of the Great Ogeechee. Seven times did it successfully withstand the attacks of Federal gun-boats and iron-clads attempting its demolition. During its bombardment of the 27th of January, 1863, for the first time in the history of naval warfare were 15-inch guns used in the effort to reduce a shore battery; and here was demonstrated the ability of sand-parapets to resist the disintegrating effect of guns of the heaviest calibre. After the attack of the 3d of March, 1863, in which its bermuda covered parapets for seven long hours were rained upon by four monitors, three 13-inch mortar schooners, and five gun boats, the enemy never renewed their efforts for its reduction, and the Confederate flag floated proudly from its parade

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until that hour when it went down amid the smoke and carnage of General Hazen's assault.

The mission of this work was the defense of the Great Ogeechee river, and to that end were its guns disposed. The rear of the fort, however, was protected by a suitable infantry line, strengthened at intervals by ramps for field artillery, not with a view to offering any protracted defense against a serious investment from the land side, but for the purpose of repulsing any attempt to carry the fort by assault by expeditions landed for that purpose. Torpedoes planted in the river, under the guns of this battery, materially aided in its defense, and late in the fall of 1864 sub-terra shells were located in rear of the fort.

The armament of Fort McAllister in the fall of 1864, was as follows: One 10-inch mortar, one 8-inch and two 10-inch columbiads, one 42-pounder gun, one 32-pounder rifle and one 32-pounder smooth bore gun, one 24-pounder howitzer, two 12-pounder mountain howitzers, and six 6-pounder field guns. In the magazines was a supply of rather more than one hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition to the piece. Captain Clinch's light battery was stationed in the neighborhood to act as a support, and to occupy, as the emergency arose, some light field works which had been thrown up at advantageous points along the banks

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of the river between the fort and the rail road crossing.

In anticipation of the early isolation of Fort McAllister, and in recognition of the fact that so soon as General Sherman's army should have fully enveloped the western lines of Savannah no communication could be had with nor relief offered to this post, on the morning of the 8th of December 1000 pounds of bacon, 2250 pounds of hard bread, and other supplies amounting in all to thirty-two days' rations for two hundred men, were issued from Savannah and safely conveyed to the fort. Extra issues of 40 gallons of whiskey, 40 gallons of molasses, 50 pounds of candles, and some soap and salt were issued and received at the same time.

The following day fifteen days' rations were added to the above, so that the fort was amply provisioned.

Major George W. Anderson was in command, and the garrison numbered about one hundred and fifty men.

In consequence of the withdrawal of the small infantry force which, under Coln. Fizer, had been

disputing the advance of Osterhaus's column on the right bank of the Great Ogeechee river, and by the retreat of the Confederate cavalry, under Coln. Hood, in the direction of Liberty county, Fort McAllister was, on the morning of the 11th of

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December, left in an absolutely isolated condition, without any reasonable hope of support or relief from any quarter.

That the garrison was not recalled in time within the lines of Savannah and the post seasonably evacuated, can be explained only on the supposition that the Confederate commander hoped and believed by a bold retention of this outpost and as strong a display of resistance as practicable, Sherman, even at that late day, might be induced to avoid Savannah and seek some other and more facile point on the coast for communicating with the Federal fleet. And yet, in view of the overwhelming strength of the Union army and its manifest determination toward Savannah, such an idea could scarcely have been reasonably entertained. The abandonment of Fort McAllister, with its feeble garrison, to its own resources, can hardly be justified.

The following dispatches from General Beauregard to Lieut. General Hardee indicate the general instructions furnished for the tenure and defense of Savannah.

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*Montgomery, Ala., Dec. 3d, 1864.
7 A. M. To Lieut. Genl. W. J. Hardee,
Savannah, Ga.,
Via Tallahassee, Fla.:*

I leave to-day for Augusta, and Savannah. Construct loop-holes and embrasures on defenses of latter city. Works along overflows around city are essential. Obstruct all roads from Millen to Port Royal, Ossabaw Sound, and Brunswick.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

*Charleston, S. C., December 8th, 1864. Lieut. Genl. Hardee,
Savannah, Ga.:*

Having no army of relief to look to, and your forces being essential to the defense of Georgia and South Carolina, whenever you shall have to select between *their* safety and that of *Savannah*, sacrifice the latter and form a junction with Genl. Jones, holding the left bank of the Savannah river and the rail road to this place as long as possible.

G. T. BEAUREGARD.

*Savannah, Ga., Dec. 9, 1864.
Lt. Genl. W. J. Hardee,
Commdg., etc.*

General:

It is my desire, after the consultation that has taken place, that you should hold this city so long as in your judgment it may be advisable to do so, bearing in mind

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that should you have to decide between a sacrifice of the garrison or city, you will preserve the garrison for operations elsewhere.

Very Respectfully
Yours, etc.,

G. T. BEAUREGARD,
General.

*Charleston, S. C., 13 Dec., 1864.
Lt. Genl. Hardee,
Savannah, Ga.:*

About four hundred and fifty men will be sent you to-day with instructions to Genl. Jones to divert them, if necessary, to defenses of New river and those east Screven's ferry causeway. These reënforcements are the last you and Jones, who is subject to your orders, can hope for. Keep yourself well advised, through staff-officers and otherwise, of his ability to hold your communication; for Savannah must be held only so long as is consistent with the safety of its garrison.

G. T. BEAUREGARD,
General.

*Charleston, S. C., Dec. 15, 1864.
11:30 A. M.
Lt. Genl. Hardee.
Savannah, Ga.:*

Under no circumstances must you be cut off from junction of your forces with those of Genl. Jones. The safety of Georgia and South Carolina depends upon the result.

G. T. BEAUREGARD,
General.

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CHAPTER VII.

Distribution of Confederate Forces along the Western Line--Federal Timidity and Hesitation--Capture of the Dispatch Boat Ida--Affair at Shaw's Dam--Repulse of the Assault upon Fort Hardeman--The Tender Resolute captured by the Enemy--Federal Movement against Fort McAllister--Assault upon and Capture of that Work by Hazen's

Division--Reports of Major Anderson and of Brig. Genl. Hazen--Gallant Conduct of the Garrison.

The western lines, about which the chief interest **concentres**, have already been sufficiently described. They were begun so soon as it was ascertained that Sherman had commenced his movement from Atlanta, and were constructed as rapidly as available labor and means would permit. The credit of their location is due to Major John McCrady, then chief engineer of the district, under the directions of Major General Lafayette McLaws. On the 20th of November the first assignment of guns was made for their armament, and others were hastened into position as rapidly as they could be withdrawn from the city lines and other localities from which they could be spared.

Troops for the occupation of these lines commenced taking their posts on the 7th of December, and at once entered, with much activity, upon the

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task of strengthening them and extending the infantry cover.

Major General Gustavus W. Smith's troops, numbering about 2000 muskets, were disposed on the right, from the Savannah river almost to the crossing of the Central rail road--a front of about two miles and a half. His right was commanded by Brig. Genl. Anderson, and his left by Brig. Genl. Carswell. The two regiments of the State line were posted near the Louisville road, and the First brigade of militia near the Augusta road. The intermediate line was occupied by the battalion of Cadets. The Second and Third brigades of Georgia militia held the line from the Augusta road to the bank of the Savannah river; and Fort Hardeman, the advanced work across Williamson's rice field, was occupied by Colonel Hill with a detachment from the Third Georgia brigade, a detachment of Cadets, and Pruden's militia battery. A portion of Anderson's Confederate light battery, and a part of Major Hamilton's battalion of light artillery were conveniently posted in support.

Major General Lafayette McLaws' front, forming the center of the line, commenced about one hundred feet to the right of the Central rail road crossing, and terminated at the swamp to the left of the Daly farm. Measured along the entrenchments, its length was about three miles and three

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quarters. His right was commanded by Brig Genl. Baker, and his left by Brig. Genl. Lewis. Genl. Baker's forces consisted of North Carolina troops and Georgia and South Carolina artillerists. Those under Genl. Lewis consisted of Worthen's North Carolina battalion, detachments of the 4th Tennessee and the 12th South Carolina Cavalry, the 2d, 4th, and 9th, Kentucky Mounted Infantry, the 3d battalion Georgia Reserves, Major Cook's Athens battalion, the 5th regiment Georgia Reserves, and the 1st regiment Georgia Regulars.

Daniell's light battery, Abell's light battery, and sections of the light batteries of Captains Barnwell and Wagner supported this portion of the line. The troops on General McLaws' front numbered about 3750 men.

Major General A. R. Wright, on the 11th of December, was assigned to the command of the left of the western lines extending from the Daly farm, or Telfair swamp, to the Atlantic and Gulf rail road bridge over the Little Ogeechee river--a distance of some seven miles. He had under him Brig. General Hugh W. Mercer, commanding his right from the Telfair swamp to a point east of Lawton's house, and Brig. Genl. John K. Jackson, commanding his left from Lawton's house to the Atlantic and Gulf rail

road crossing over the Little Ogeechee river. This front of Major Genl. Wright

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was irregular, being interrupted by dense woods and impracticable swamps. It was held by about 2700 men; twelve hundred under Brig. Genl. Mercer, and the rest under Brig. Genl. Jackson. Genl. Mercer's command consisted of Coln. Browne's local brigade (composed of Major Jackson's Augusta battalion, Major Adams's Athens battalion, and a regiment of local troops under Colonel Nisbet), Brooks foreign battalion, a detachment of the 55th Georgia regiment, and Capt. Barnes's company of artillerists from Augusta. This force was disposed as follows: Lt. Coln. R. B. Nisbet, with Adams's Athens battalion, a portion of the 1st Regiment of Augusta local infantry, and Clemon's battalion Augusta local infantry, occupied the line from Battery Richardson to Battery Barnwell. Griffin's detachment of the 55th Georgia regiment supported batteries Wheeler and Simpkins, and Jackson's Augusta battalion of local infantry occupied the line from the last named work to Battery Barnes, which was held by the Augusta artillerists under Captain George Barnes. Brooks's foreign battalion was posted near the left of Battery Barnes.

Brig. Genl. Jackson's command was composed of Coln. Von Zinken's local troops, drawn from the Confederate arsenals and work-shops of Columbus and elsewhere in the state of Georgia,

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detachments from Genl. Ferguson's brigade of cavalry, dismounted, and local reserves from Savannah. Brooks's light battery was stationed at Battery Jones, at the crossing of the old Savannah and Darien stage road over Salt creek, and Capt. Guerard's light battery, sections of Maxwell's and Barnwell's light batteries, and a detachment of Major Hamilton's artillery battalion supported this line of Genl. Wright, being disposed at important points.

Every effort was made, by the erection of batteries and infantry entrenchments, by digging rifle pits and constructing substantial covers, by felling trees in its front and by flooding all approaches, to render this western line as formidable as the labor and materials at command would permit. Its efficiency, in conjunction with the artificial overflow in its front, will be conceded when it is remembered that for ten days it kept Sherman's formidable army at bay. And yet, thirteen miles long as it was, and held by scarcely more than a skirmish line strengthened at intervals, it must be admitted that if the Federals had massed their forces for a determined assault, they could, any day during the continuance of the siege, have carried it. With an army more than six times that of the Confederates, and this Confederate force composed in great majority of detailed men, reserves, militia

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and boys **unusued** to action, it seems marvellous that Genl. Sherman should have contented himself with sitting down before our lines, erecting counter batteries, engaging in artillery duels and sharp-shooting, feeling for weak points day after day, after the capture of Fort McAllister making arrangements for the transportation of heavy guns with which to shell Savannah at great distances and over the heads of her defenders, and finally suffering the garrison to withdraw by pontoon bridges and canal banks to the Carolina shore.

Had he indicated that activity and energy demanded by the situation, the probabilities are that he could have captured the entire Confederate army. That he did not do so, reflects severely upon him as

a soldier and a commander. The evacuation of Savannah and the subsequent seizure of many thousand bales of private cotton afforded the Federal general an opportunity for a festive interchange of dispatches with the President of the United States, in which his famous "Christmas present" figures largely; but he pillaged a nest from which the eagle had flown, and all the balderdash which has been written and spoken about this vaunted "march to the sea" can never, in the clear light of history, cover up or excuse the lack of dash and the want of ordinary military skill and precaution betrayed by General Sherman, with the

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formidable force at his command, in permitting the Confederate garrison to retire unmolested by a route so precarious in its character, and by a flank movement which could have been easily frustrated by a single division.

December 10th. The enemy destroyed two miles of the Charleston and Savannah rail road and appeared at all points along our western line, driving in our pickets. Captain Gildersleeve, of the 150th New York regiment, captured the Confederate dispatch steam boat *Ida*, taking thirteen prisoners, among whom was Coln. J. H. M. Clinch, volunteer aid to Lieut. Genl. Hardee, who was at the time proceeding up the Savannah river with orders from Lieut. Genl. Hardee to the naval officer in command of the Confederate gun boats lying above. The *Ida* was burned.

Our artillery opened freely upon the Federal forces as they showed themselves in coming into position. The Confederate troops were busily engaged in strengthening our works and in throwing up strong infantry defenses. Toward evening an attempt was made to force the dam across Shaw's rice field. This effort was handsomely repulsed. Our line was felt almost along its entire length, and at some points quite vigorously.

December 11th. The enemy renewed the contest for the possession of Shaw's dam, opening fire from

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a battery which had been advantageously posted during the night of the 10th. This struggle was continued at intervals during the day, and was met by the infantry command of Lieut. Coln. Nisbet and the field guns of Lieutenants Elliott and Acee. The Federal battery was silenced, and before dark the enemy withdrew under cover of the woods. In this affair the Confederates sustained a loss of two killed, nine wounded, and two missing.

Heavy artillery firing occurred at the Salt creek ¹ and Pine point batteries, along the line at Daly's farm, and at the crossings of the Louisville, Central, and Augusta roads. In the afternoon an attempt was made to carry Fort Hardeman, the advanced work in front of the right of our line, but the assaulting column was easily driven back. During

1. It is worthy of remark that this Salt creek battery, during the progress of the siege, encountered a continuous and violent artillery and infantry fire from the enemy, who erected counter batteries to the right and left of the old Darien road on the plantations of the Hon. George S. Owens and Coln. Edward C. Anderson, and within easy range. The artillery fire at this point was more constant and heavier than at any other on the Confederate line. The Confederate practice was admirable, the enemy's guns on more than one occasion having been completely silenced. Especial credit is due to Captain John W. Brooks, and his excellent company, the Terrell artillery, for the skill and bravery with which the guns in this battery were handled.

the night two companies of the 3d Wisconsin crossed the Savannah river to Argyle island, and were there reënforced the next morning by six additional companies from the same regiment.

December 12th. Our artillery was engaged along the line, and considerable sharp shooting occurred on both sides. At Daly's farm the muzzle of a 12-pounder gun was shot away by a 3-inch rifle gun, and the carriage of another 12-pounder gun was cut down by a cannon shot. A 32-pounder gun at Battery Jones, on Salt creek, was disabled in a similar way.

Two Confederate gun boats, in attempting to descend the river, were driven back by Winnegar's battery which had been placed in position at Tweedside plantation so as to command the channel between Argyle island and the Georgia shore. The tender *Resolute* ran aground and was taken possession of by Coln. Hawley of the 3d Wisconsin. This boat was unarmed, and at the time of her capture had on board five naval officers and a crew of nineteen men, who were all made prisoners.

During the day the enemy, with a section of De Grase's light battery stationed near Dr. Cheves's rice mill on the left bank of the Great Ogeechee, opened fire at long range upon Fort McAllister. The fort responded, but little if any damage occurred on either side.

December 13th. The country around Savannah being thinly populated and yielding supplies less generous than those which had been encountered during the march through Upper and Middle Georgia, and General Sherman's army having well nigh consumed the provisions transported in the wagons, and being largely restrained from foraging in the rear by Confederate cavalry, the Federal troops when massed before the western lines were forced to rely for subsistence mainly upon the rice found upon the neighboring plantations. It was evident that so many men could not long be maintained in their present situation. Rice--straw and moss were the only provender which could be obtained for the animals. Under this pressure the anxiety of the Federal general to establish early communication with the fleet was greatly increased. He endeavored, through his cavalry sent to prominent points along the shores of Bryan and Liberty counties, and more particularly by means of a signal station at Dr. Cheves's rice mill, to attract the notice of the Federal vessels which he was persuaded were hovering about the coast in anticipation of his arrival. About midday on the 13th of December, the signal officers at Cheves's rice mill succeeded in engaging the attention of a steamer near the mouth of the Great Ogeechee river, which subsequently proved to be a tug sent by Genl.

Foster and Admiral Dahlgren to observe the coast for signals from Sherman's army.

Hemmed in by Confederate cavalry and light artillery guarding the left bank of the Savannah river, General Sherman hesitated to attempt the passage of that stream and to inaugurate a movement to the coast of South Carolina across the rice fields opposite Savannah. The less hazardous method of effecting a convenient lodgment where United States vessels could easily approach and minister to the wants of his army was by taking possession of the Great Ogeechee river. In order to do this, the capture of Fort McAllister, now wholly isolated, became necessary.

King's bridge across the Great Ogeechee river, on the line of the old Savannah and Darien stage

road, had been burnt by the Confederates upon their withdrawal within the lines around Savannah. It was however, reconstructed in a substantial manner by the 58th Indiana, under the supervision of Captain Reese of the engineer corps, and was, by the night of the 12th, ready for the passage of troops.

The second division of the 15th Army Corps, consisting of seventeen regiments under the command of Brig. Genl. Hazen, was, on the morning of the 13th, put in motion for the capture of Fort McAllister. Crossing the Great Ogeechee at Kings

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bridge and, as soon as the high ground had been attained, marching along the main road which runs parallel with the river, this force arrived in the vicinity of the fort about one o'clock in the afternoon. Deploying his division so as to completely invest the work, with both flanks of his command resting upon the Great Ogeechee, and with sharp shooters and skirmishers posted behind the trunks of trees whose branches had been used by the Confederates for the construction of abattis around the land approaches to the fort, for four hours the Federal commander harrassed the garrison and watched his opportunity for making the purposed assault.

About five o'clock P. M. General Sherman who, from Cheves's rice mill had been narrowly observing these operations, signalled Genl. Hazen it was important he should carry the fort that afternoon. Accordingly General Hazen advanced at once to the assault, moving with his whole force against the fort, sweeping over the abattis and rear defenses, and in a short time effecting its capture with a loss to his command of one hundred and thirty-four officers and men killed and wounded.

For the following account of this assault upon and capture of Fort McAllister we are indebted to Major George W. Anderson, the officer in command, whose name and services had been long and

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honorably associated with the defense of this memorable earth work.

Hearing incidentally that the Confederate forces on Cannouchee had evacuated that position and retired across the Great Ogeechee, and learning that a large column of the enemy was approaching in the direction of Fort McAllister, I immediately detached a scouting party under command of Second Lieutenant T. O'Neal, of Clinch's light battery, to watch them and acquaint me with their movements. This was absolutely necessary, as the cavalry previously stationed in Bryan county had been withdrawn, and I was thus thrown upon my own resources for all information relating to the strength and designs of the enemy. On the morning of the 12th of December, 1864, I accompanied Lieutenant O'Neal on a scout, and found the enemy advancing in force from King's bridge. We were hotly pursued by their cavalry, and had barely time to burn the barns of Messrs. Thomas C. Arnold and William Patterson, which were filled with rice. The steam tug Columbus, lying about three miles above the fort, was also burned. Early the next morning one of my pickets, stationed at the head of the causeway west of the fort, was captured by the enemy, to whom he imparted the fact that the causeway was studded with torpedoes in time to prevent their explosion. He also acquainted them with the strength of the garrison, and the armament of the fort, and the best approaches to it.

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About eight o'clock, A. M. desultory firing commenced between the skirmishers of the enemy and my sharpshooters. At ten o'clock the fight became general, the opposing forces extending from the

river entirely around to the marsh on the east. The day before, the enemy had established a battery of Parrott guns on the opposite side of the river, distant from the fort mile and a half, which fired upon us at regular intervals during that day and the ensuing night. ¹ Receiving from head quarters neither orders nor responses to my telegraphic dispatches, I determined under the circumstances, and notwithstanding the great disparity of numbers between the garrison and the attacking forces, to defend the fort to the last extremity. The guns being *en barbette*, the detachments serving them were greatly exposed to the fire of the enemy's sharp shooters. To such an extent was this the case, that in one instance, out of a detachment of eight men three were killed and three more wounded. The Federal skirmish line was very heavy, and the fire so close and rapid that it was at times impossible to work our guns. My sharp shooters did all in their power, but were entirely too few to suppress this galling fire upon the artillerists. In view of the large force of the enemy, consisting of nine regiments whose aggregate strength was estimated between 3,500 and 4,000 muskets, and possessing the ability to increase it at any time should it become necessary, and recollecting

1. The light artillery here alluded to consisted of a section of De Grase's battery, posted near the rice mill on Dr. Cheves's plantation.

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the feebleness of the garrison of the fort, numbering only 150 effective men, it was evident, cut off from all support, and with no possible hope of reënforcements from any quarter, that holding the fort was simply a question of time. There was but one alternative, death or captivity. Captain Thomas S. White, the engineer in charge, had previously felled the trees in the vicinity of the fort and demolished the mortar magazine which commanded the fort to a very considerable extent. For lack of necessary force and time, however, the felled timber and the ruins of the adjacent houses which had been pulled down had not been entirely removed. Protected by this cover, the enemy's sharp shooters were enabled to approach quite near, to the great annoyance and injury of the cannoneers. One line of abattis had been constructed by the engineer, and three lines would have been completed around the fort but for the want of time and material.

Late in the afternoon the full force of the enemy made a rapid and vigorous charge upon the works, and, succeeding in forcing their way through the abattis, rushed over the parapet of the fort, carrying it by storm, and, by virtue of superior numbers, overpowered the garrison fighting gallantly to the last. In many instances the Confederates were disarmed by main force. *The fort was never surrendered. It was captured by overwhelming numbers.* So soon as the enemy opened fire upon the fort from the opposite side of the river, it was evident that two of the magazines were seriously endangered, and it became necessary to protect them from that fire by the erection of suitable traverses.

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The labor expended in their construction, in the mounting of guns on the rear of the work, and in removing the debris above referred to, occupied the garrison constantly night and day for nearly forty-eight hours immediately preceding the attack. Consequently, at the time of the assault, the men were greatly fatigued and in bad plight, physically considered, for the contest. I think it not improper to state here, that a short time before the approach of the enemy a member of the torpedo department had, in obedience to orders, placed in front of the fort and along the direct approaches, a considerable number of sub-terra shells, whose explosions killed quite a number of the enemy while passing over

them.

After the capture of the fort, General Sherman in person ordered my engineer, with a detail of sixteen men from the garrison, then prisoners of war, to remove all the torpedoes which had not exploded. This hazardous duty was performed without injury to any one; but it appearing to me to be an unwarrantable and improper treatment of prisoners of war, I have thought it right to refer to it in this report.

I am pleased to state that in my endeavors to hold the fort I was nobly seconded by the great majority of officers and men under my command. Many of them had never been under fire before, and quite a number were very young, in fact mere boys. Where so many acted gallantly, it would be invidious to discriminate; but I cannot avoid mentioning those who came more particularly under my notice. I would therefore most respectfully call the attention of the

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general commanding to the gallant conduct of Captain Clinch, who, when summoned to surrender by a Federal captain, responded by dealing him a severe blow on the head with his sabre. (Captain Clinch had previously received two gun shot wounds in the arm). Immediately a hand to hand fight ensued. Federal privates came to the assistance of their officer, but the fearless Clinch continued the unequal contest until he fell bleeding from eleven wounds (three sabre wounds, six bayonet wounds, and two gun shot wounds), from which, after severe and protracted suffering, he has barely recovered. His conduct was so conspicuous, and his cool bravery so much admired, as to elicit the praise of the enemy and even of General Sherman himself.

First Lieutenant William Schirm fought his guns until the enemy entered the fort, and, notwithstanding a wound in the head, gallantly remained at his post, discharging his duties with a coolness and efficiency worthy of all commendation.

Lieutenant O'Neal whom I placed in command of the scouting party before mentioned, while in the discharge of that duty and in his subsequent conduct during the attack, merited the honor due to a faithful and gallant officer.

Among those who nobly fell, was the gallant Hazzard, whose zeal and activity were worthy of all praise. He died as a true soldier--at his post facing overwhelming odds.

The garrison consisted of

The Emmett Rifles, Captain George A. Nicoll commanding, numbering for duty, 25 men.

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Clinch's light battery, Captain N. B. Clinch commanding, numbering for duty, 50 men.

Company D, 1st Regiment Georgia Reserves, Captain Henry commanding, numbering for duty, 28 men.

Company E, 1st Regiment Georgia Reserves, Captain Morrison commanding, numbering for duty, 47 men.

Total, 150 men.

Casualties.

- Commissioned--Captain N. B. Clinch. Eleven wounds.
- Captain Morrison. Shot through both legs.
- First Lieut. Schirm. Shot in the head.
- Killed, Second Lieut. Hazzard.
- Privates and non-commissioned--Killed, 16; wounded, 28.
- Total killed and wounded, 48.

General Hazen in his official report thus commemorates the services of his command during the investment and assault.

"At daybreak, the thirteenth, the troops were put in motion, reaching the vicinity of McAllister at about eleven A. M. About one mile from the fort a picket was captured, revealing the whereabouts of a line of torpedoes across the road. Some time was lost in safely removing them, when, leaving eight regiments at that point, nine were carried forward to about six hundred yards from the fort,

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and deployed, with a line of skirmishers thrown sufficiently near the fort to keep the gunners from working their guns with any effect: those firing to the rear being in barbette.

"The grounds to the right of the fort being marshy, cut through by deep streams, rendered the deployment of that part of the line slow and difficult, and was not completely effected till forty-five minutes past 4 P. M., at which time every officer and man of the nine regiments being instructed what to do, the bugle sounded the forward, and at precisely five o'clock the fort was carried.

"The troops were deployed in our line as thin as possible, the result being that no man in the assault was struck till they came to close quarters. Here the fighting became desperate and deadly. Just outside the works a line of torpedoes had been placed, many of which were exploded by the tread of the troops, blowing many men to atoms; but the line moved on without checking, over, under, and through abattis, ditches, palisading, and parapet, fighting the garrison through the fort to their bomb-proofs, from which they still fought, and only succumbed as each man was individually overpowered. Our losses were twenty-four officers and men killed, and one hundred and ten officers and men wounded."

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Among the golden deeds wrought by Confederates in their gigantic struggle for right, property, home, and national independence, the defense of Fort McAllister against seven naval attacks and this final assault will be proudly reckoned. The heroic memories of this earth-work will be cherished long after its parapets and deserted gun-chambers shall have been wasted into nothingness by the winds and rains of the changing seasons. Utterly isolated, cut off from all possible relief-- capture or death the only alternative--the conduct of this little garrison, in the face of such tremendous odds, was gallant in the extreme.

How quickly beats the Confederate pulse, how strong the heart-throb of every true Georgian as he garners these among the brave memories of his land and people, recollections which neither the lapse

of time nor the political fortunes of the hour can impair.

No higher tribute can be paid to the valor with which this fort was defended than that contained in the Federal report to which we have just alluded: "*We fought the garrison through the fort to their bomb-proofs, from which they still fought, and only succumbed as each man was individually over-powered.*"

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CHAPTER VIII.

Federal Communication established with the Fleet--Evacuation of Savannah rendered Imperative--Line of Retreat considered and determined upon--Location and Construction of Pontoon Bridges across Savannah River--Progress of the Siege--Heavy Skirmishing between Confederate Cavalry and the Enemy on the Left Bank of the Savannah--Desertions from Brooks's Foreign Battalion--Sherman's Demand for the Surrender of Savannah, its Garrison, and Dependent Forts--Lieut. Genl. Hardee's Refusal--Maj. Genl. Sherman prepares to Bombard the City.

Upon the fall of Fort Pulaski every hinderance to the full command of the great Ogeechee river was removed, and General Sherman was able to communicate freely with the Federal fleet and establish a convenient base of supplies for his army. Reënforcements could now be had and heavy guns procured with which to prosecute the siege of Savannah. The retention of that city by the Confederate forces became from this moment a matter of impossibility, and its evacuation an early necessity. Neither the number and character of the troops concentrated for its defense, nor the condition of the commissary, quarter-master and ordnance stores warranted the hope that its retention could be successfully maintained beyond a few days. The only line of retreat now open to the Confederates

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was by boats to Screven's ferry landing, and thence into South Carolina. So limited, however, were the means of transportation, that the idea of retiring the garrison by boats was abandoned as soon as it was seriously discussed. The construction of pontoon bridges connecting the city of Savannah with the Carolina shore was recognized as a pressing necessity.

Having communicated with the officer in command of the U. S. tug Dandelion, General Sherman returned to fort McAllister and there passed the night of the 13th. Before day-break he was advised by Major Strong, of General Foster's staff, that General Foster had arrived in Great Ogeechee river and desired to confer with him. The ensuing day was spent by General Sherman in explaining the situation of affairs both to General Foster and to Admiral Dahlgren, and in ascertaining upon what coöperation and assistance he could rely from the navy and from the Federal forces in South Carolina. It was agreed that the Admiral should engage the batteries at Turner's point, Rose-Dew and Beaulieu, and that General Foster should send from Hilton Head siege guns for the reduction of Savannah, and vessels suitable for the navigation of the Great Ogeechee, and also press his advance against the Charleston and Savannah rail road in the neighborhood of Coosawhatchie.

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December 14th. The evacuation of Savannah having been resolved upon, and it being impracticable by means of the few steam boats and river craft at command to cross the garrison,

artillery, and requisite stores with convenience and safety to Screven's ferry, orders were issued for the immediate construction of suitable pontoon bridges. The line of retreat selected by the engineers and adopted upon the evacuation of the city, involved the location of a pontoon bridge extending from the foot of West Broad street to Hutchinson's island, a distance of about a thousand feet, a road way across that island in the direction of Pennyworth island, a second pontoon bridge across the middle river, another road way across Pennyworth island, and a third pontoon bridge across Back river, the further end of which rested upon the rice field on the Carolina shore. The route then followed the most substantial and direct rice dam running north, a canal being on one side and an impracticable rice field on the other. This dam was just wide enough to permit the careful movement of field artillery and army wagons. The plantation bridges along the line of march were strengthened to bear the passage of these heavy conveyances.

Lieut. Coln. Frobel was placed in charge of the work, and executed the difficult trust confided to him with marked energy and ability. All

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available rice-field flats were collected. These--being between seventy-five and eighty feet in length and possessing sufficient width for the purpose--were swung into position with the tide, lashed end to end by means of ropes and stringers running from boat to boat continuously the entire length of the bridge, and were kept in their places by car-wheels--the only anchors which could be procured. ¹ Above the stringers was a flooring of plank obtained from the city wharves. At eight o'clock on the evening of the 17th the first pontoon bridge, spanning the Savannah river from the foot of West Broad street to Hutchinson's island, was completed, and by half past eight o'clock P. M., on Monday the 19th, the remaining bridges were finished and the route in readiness for the retreat of the Confederate garrison. Thirty-one rice flats were used in the construction of these bridges. Heavy fogs, and difficulties encountered in finding and concentrating the requisite number of flats caused some delay in the execution of this important work: but, in view of the peculiar character of the labor and materials at command, it was consummated with unusual rapidity and in a very substantial manner.

1. The scarcity of flats compelled the engineer in charge to lash them end to end, and not side to side as is usual in the construction of pontoon bridges of this description.

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Most of the work upon these bridges was performed by a detail of sailors from the Confederate navy and a detachment of fifty men from the Georgia militia. Steam boats were used in collecting the flats and towing them into proper position. Just after the Confederate army crossed, these bridges were cut loose from their moorings and the flats turned adrift. The enemy was thus prevented from pursuing, had any such idea been entertained.

Major General Wheeler arrived in Savannah today and reported that he had transferred most of his command to the left bank of the Savannah river where he was engaged in holding the enemy in check and keeping open our line of retreat. General Iverson, with some six hundred men and a section of artillery, had been detached to operate on the right and rear of Sherman's army.

Artillery firing and sharp-shooting continued during the day without any marked results.

December 15th. The enemy was busily engaged in strengthening his positions in front of our

works, erecting new and more formidable batteries, developing additional lines of artillery fire, and rendering his communications with his right flank more facile.

To-day Beaulieu battery was shelled by two mortar boats and two gun-boats, and from a rifle gun posted on the point of Greene island. This

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bombardment continued at intervals for several days, but proved entirely innocuous.

Two regiments of Gen. Geary's division occupied the upper end of Hutchinson's island, and Carman's brigade was pushed forward to Argyle island.

Our artillery fire to-day was unusually effective, several batteries of the enemy being either silenced or materially injured.

Several of our guns were disabled; but, during the night, were again put in working order.

Sand-bags were freely distributed at important points along the line, and materially contributed to the protection of our artillerists.

Relief associations had been formed among such of the citizens of Savannah as were incapable of taking their places in the trenches, and they ministered carefully to the wants of the sick and the wounded. Of the latter, thirty-three were now lying in general hospital in Savannah.

December 16th. This day was marked by an increase of artillery and infantry fire, which had now become incessant. On the part of the Confederates, however, as a matter of economy, it was maintained with deliberation.

General Ferguson's brigade of dismounted cavalry arrived and was assigned a position on the line.

Heavy skirmishing occurred between General P. M. B. Young's command and the Federals on

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Argyle island. In the effort to advance in the direction of the Confederate line of communication with the Carolina shore, the enemy was repulsed with considerable loss. The fighting along the rice dams was obstinate and bloody. As the retention of this route was essential to the safety of the troops engaged in the defense of Savannah, all General Wheeler's available forces, assisted by Young's troops and such of the South Carolina light batteries as could be spared from points along the Charleston and Savannah rail road, were concentrated for its protection. By these troops all attempts of the enemy to move upon our line were stubbornly and successfully resisted. ¹

On the night of the 16th a sergeant and fifteen men of Brooks's foreign battalion, constituting a part of Gen. Mercer's command of Major General Wright's division, having forced the pickets on the causeway in front of Battery Simkins, deserted to the enemy with their arms and accoutrements. Two other privates of the same command were

¹ In these skirmishes on the left bank of the Savannah river, Captain F. E. Eve, of Gen. Young's command, displayed conspicuous gallantry, and the brave Captain Smith was mortally wounded while leading a charge. Major Puckett of the

Phillips's Legion, in endeavoring with a force of 250 men to dislodge the Federals on Rose's and Izard's plantations, was severely wounded in the neck.

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captured while endeavoring to make their way through the lines. It having been clearly ascertained the next day that the members of this battalion had concerted a plan to desert in a body, having resolved not only to buck and gag and take their officers with them but also to spike the guns in batteries Wheeler and Simkins, overpower the infantry supports and, forcing the pickets, carry them also to the enemy, their camp was suddenly surrounded by detachments from the 55th Georgia, and by Jackson's Augusta battalion, and two field-guns loaded with canister were brought to bear upon it. The men were deprived of their arms, and the ringleaders, five in number--orderly sergeants of companies--were seized. These, and the two privates apprehended the previous night in the act of deserting to the enemy, were tried by a drum-head court martial, on their own confession convicted of mutiny and intended desertion to the enemy, sentenced, and executed. The battalion was marched under guard to Savannah where it was closely watched during the rest of the siege. The members of the battalion were nearly all, if not entirely, foreigners, and had been enlisted from the ranks of Federal prisoners.

December 17th. General Beauregard arrived in Savannah to-day. After full conference, Lieut.

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Genl. Hardee's dispositions were sanctioned, and the arrangements which were progressing for the evacuation of the city and the preservation of its garrison were approved.

Heavy artillery firing continued all along our western defenses. Against the line at Daly's farm the enemy made a forcible demonstration which was repulsed. After a sharp duel of nearly two hours a Federal battery was silenced by our Salt creek battery.

To-day General Sherman demanded the surrender of Savannah and its dependent forts. This demand was conveyed under flag of truce which approached our line by the Augusta road. General Sherman had returned on the 15th to his command before Savannah, and was, at the time, at the head quarters of General Slocum on the Augusta road.

That demand was couched in the following language.

Head Quarters Military Division of the Mississippi, in the Field near *Savannah, Ga.*,
December 17th, 1864. *General Wm. J. Hardee,*

Commanding Confederate Forces in Savannah. General:

You have doubtless observed from your station at Rosedew that sea going vessels now come through

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Ossabaw sound and up Ogeechee to the rear of my army, giving me abundant supplies of all kinds, and more especially heavy ordnance necessary to the reduction of Savannah. I have already received guns that can cast heavy and destructive shot as far as the heart of your city, also I have for some days held and controlled every avenue by which the people and garrison of Savannah can be supplied, and I am

therefore justified in demanding the surrender of the city of Savannah and its dependent forts, and shall await a reasonable time your answer, before opening with heavy ordnance. Should you entertain the proposition, I am prepared to grant liberal terms to the inhabitants and garrison, but should I be forced to resort to assault, or the slower and surer process of starvation, I shall then feel justified in resorting to the harshest measures, and shall make little effort to restrain my army burning to avenge the great national wrong they attach to Savannah and other large cities which have been so prominent in dragging our country into civil war. I enclose you a copy of General Hood's demand for the surrender of the town of Resacca, to be used by you for what it is worth.

I have the honor to be,
Your obedient servant,

W. T. SHERMAN,
Major General.

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To this demand General Hardee, on the 18th, returned the following response:

Head Quarters Department S. C., Ga. &
Florida, *Savannah, Ga.*, Dec. 17th, 1864. *Major General W. T. Sherman,*
Commanding Federal Forces, near Savannah, Ga.

General:

I have to acknowledge receipt of a communication from you, of this date, in which you demand "the surrender of Savannah and its dependent forts," on the ground that you "have received guns that can cast heavy and destructive shot into the heart of the city;" and for the further reason that you "have for some days held and controlled every avenue by which the people and garrison can be supplied." You add, that should you "be forced to resort to assault or to the slower and surer process of starvation, you will then feel justified in resorting to the harshest measures, and will make little effort to restrain your army, etc., etc."

The position of your forces half a mile beyond the outer line for the land defense of Savannah, is, at the nearest point, at least four miles from the heart of the city. That and the interior line are both intact.

Your statement that you have, for some days, held and controlled every avenue by which the people and garrison can be supplied, is incorrect. I am in free and constant communication with my department.

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Your demand for the surrender of Savannah and its dependent forts is refused.

With respect to the threats conveyed in the closing paragraph of your letter of what may be expected in case your demand is not complied with, I have to say that I have hitherto conducted the military operations entrusted to my direction in strict accordance with the rules of civilized warfare,

and I should deeply regret the adoption of any course by you that may force me to deviate from them in future.

I have the honor to be,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

W. J. HARDEE,
Lieutenant General.

Upon receipt of this refusal to surrender, General Sherman, leaving instructions with General Slocum to place siege guns in position as rapidly as they arrived and to prepare for an assault upon the Confederate lines, passed rapidly to the right of his army and, proceeding to Port Royal, arranged for the reënforcement of General Foster whose lodgment on the peninsula between the Coosawhatchie and Tullifinney rivers has already been noticed. Busied with plans for cutting the only line of retreat open to the Confederates, he was not present with his army when Savannah was evacuated, and in his official report expresses

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much disappointment at the escape of General Hardee and the Savannah garrison.

The truth is, in all these operations there was a want of energy, a lack of prompt action on the part of the United States forces, and a hesitancy in the face of obstacles wholly unjustifiable. Such was the power of the investing army, and such the strength of the expedition demonstrating against the Charleston and Savannah rail road, that with ordinary activity and persistence the Confederate line of retreat could have been cut and Savannah wholly isolated and forced to surrender at discretion. General Hardee appears to have known his antagonist well, and to have anticipated his conduct most fully, else he would not have remained within the lines at Savannah as long as he did.¹

The transfer of heavy guns from Port Royal,

1. At the time this demand was made for the surrender of Savannah, Gen. Sherman had no heavy guns in position with which to bombard the city. His menace, in that respect, was a *brutum fulmen*. His other threat that in case of a refusal to surrender, he would "make little effort to restrain his army, burning to revenge," etc., was nothing new, but was entirely characteristic of the man. His language was usually extravagant. He sat out, to repeat his own words, to "*make Georgia howl*," and it was not to be expected that the garrison defending Savannah, had it fallen into his hands, would have been the recipient of humane, magnanimous treatment.

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from the fleet, and from Fort McAllister, was accomplished by means of the great Ogeechee river and the Savannah and Ogeechee canal. According to the Federal accounts, during the 18th, 19th and 20th of December arrangements were being perfected for a bombardment of the city ¹ and a powerful assault upon the Confederate lines. Strong field works for the heavy guns were constructed at commanding points, and field-guns were masked in some instances within one hundred and fifty yards of our entrenchments. Light bridges and fascines were accumulated with which to span the deepest portions of the inundated fields and fill up the ditches and canals. It is claimed that everything was in readiness on the evening of the 20th, and that the capture of the garrison of Savannah was confidently anticipated. General Sherman had left orders that the assault should not be undertaken until his return,

and he had not yet made his appearance.

1 To counteract this intention, an order was issued for the transfer of some ten-inch mortars from the Confederate fixed batteries, and their location at Williamson's place and at other convenient points along the western line nearest the city of Savannah. The early evacuation of the city, however, and the more pressing duties consequent upon an anticipation of that important movement effectually prevented the execution of this order. The city was never bombarded by the Federals.

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CHAPTER IX.

Progress of the Siege--Maj. Genl. Wheeler's Cavalry Operations on the Left Bank of the Savannah and in Rear of the Federal Army-- Confidential Circulars from Lieut. Genl. Hardee's Head Quarters directing the Evacuation of Savannah--Evacuation of the City-- Order in which the Confederate Forces were Withdrawn--Good Conduct of the Troops--Movement successfully concealed from the Enemy, until fully Accomplished--Line of Retreat--Heavy Guns disabled, Ammunition destroyed, and the Naval Vessels in the River burnt and sunk--Reports of Coln. Anderson commanding the River and Shore Batteries, and of Lieut. Coln. Jones, Chief of Artillery--Genl. Beauregard's Orders for the Disposition of the Confederate Forces after their Retreat from Savannah--Formal Surrender of the City by the Mayor on the Morning of the 21st of December, 1864--The Federals occupy Savannah.

December 19th. Three Federal regiments, after a sharp skirmish with our cavalry, succeeded in securing a position at and beyond Izard's mill. During the day constant firing occurred at this point, and the Confederate cavalry was busily occupied in preventing the advance of the enemy reënforced during the afternoon by two more regiments and at night by two pieces of light artillery. In order the more effectually to check the Federal advance, the rice fields were flooded to the depth of some eighteen inches. Movements therefore, were made by the flanks and along the

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dams, and the Confederates stoutly and effectually resisted all approaches in these directions. We had also burnt the plantation bridges across the canals. The line now held by the Federals on the left bank of the Savannah was about two miles in length, extending from the Savannah river near Izard's mill to an inlet near Clysedale creek. During the 20th Colonel Carman, from the direction of Clysedale creek, made an effort to strike the Savannah and Hardeeville road, but was vigorously repulsed and never renewed the attempt.

In order to confine the enemy to the position occupied by them and preclude any advance in the direction of our contemplated line of retreat, General Wheeler kept a strong force of skirmishers behind barricades and sufficiently near the Federals to maintain a warm and effective infantry fire. His remaining troops in that vicinity were occupied in building several successive lines of works between the skirmish line and the route selected for retiring the garrison. When these works were completed, a strong force both of dismounted cavalry and of light artillery was thrown forward to the positions previously occupied by our skirmishers. So warmly was the enemy menaced by our infantry and artillery fire, that the Federals confined themselves carefully to their fortified

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positions and never again endeavored to advance until after the evacuation of Savannah.

While these operations were in progress on the left bank of the Savannah river, Major General Wheeler, with Humes's and Allen's divisions of cavalry, was maintaining a line extending from Screven's ferry to Hardeeville, including the sources of New river, Tunbridge and Mongin's landings. All points were guarded by which the enemy could threaten the road from Screven's ferry to Hardeeville. Brig. Genl. Iverson was at Springfield, commanding a line of observation extending from the mouth of the Alatomaha river to the great Ogeechee, across that stream, and in rear of the Federal army to the Savannah river near the mouth of Ebenezer creek. Lieut. Coln. Hood with an irregular command, and Brig. Genl. McCoy of the Georgia militia, reported to Genl. Iverson and assisted in establishing this line. After the fall of Savannah this line was perpetuated, its left being withdrawn to Grahamville. It was maintained--our pickets being constantly engaged with the enemy's scouting parties and foragers--until Sherman moved in force from Savannah upon his march through the Carolinas. In the immediate protection of the line of retreat across the Savannah river and along the rice-dams on the Carolina shore, the commands of Generals P. M. B.

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Young and Robert H. Anderson were chiefly engaged.

In holding our position on the left bank of the Savannah, the naval vessels present in the river rendered material assistance.

Anticipating the completion of the pontoon bridges at an earlier hour on the 19th, Lieut. Genl. Hardee published the following

Confidential Circular.
Head Qrs. *Savannah*,
Dec. 19, 1864.

1. The troops in and around Savannah will be transferred to-night to the left bank of the Savannah river, and will proceed thence to Hardeeville.

2. At dark the light batteries will, under the direction of Lt. Coln. Jones, chf. of arty., be withdrawn by hand from their positions in line, with as little noise as possible, and will be sent over the pontoon bridge to Hardeeville.

3. The troops at Whitemarsh, Fort Jackson, and Bartow, will be assembled at Fort Jackson by 9 P. M. and thence will proceed at once, via Screven's ferry, to Hardeeville.

4. The troops at Rosedew, Beaulieu, etc., will leave their positions at dark, and, marching to Savannah, will cross at Screven's ferry.

5. Maj. General Wright's division will be withdrawn from the lines at 8 o'clock P. M. and will pass the river on the pontoons.

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6. Maj. General McLaws's division will be drawn from its position at 11 o'clock P. M. and will cross the river on the pontoons.

7. Maj. General Smith's Division will be withdrawn at 12 o'clock, and will cross on the pontoons.

8. The lines of skirmishers will be left in position as follows: Wright's line until 10 1/2 o'clock, McLaws's line until 11 1/2 o'clock, Smith's line until 2 o'clock.

9. The pontoon bridges are placed in charge of Colonel Clark, chief of engineers, who will destroy the bridges after all the troops shall have crossed; and, to enable him to ascertain this, the skirmishers of each division will be placed in charge of an intelligent staff-officer who will report to Colonel Clark at the pontoon bridge when the skirmishers of their respective commands shall have passed the river.

10. The chief of artillery will take measures to have the heavy guns in position spiked or otherwise rendered useless as follows: on Wright's line at 10 o'clock, on McLaws's line at 11 o'clock, on Smith's line at 12 o'clock.

11. The ammunition will be destroyed by throwing it into the river or otherwise, and *not* by blowing it up.

12. The guns on the inner line will be spiked or destroyed, and all powder in the city magazine will be made useless by having water thrown on it.

13. All wagons will be sent into the city in time to cross the pontoons at dark.

By command of
LT. GENL. HARDEE.

T. B. ROY, A. A. Genl.

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Heavy fogs having materially retarded the work upon the pontoon bridges across the middle and back rivers, and it being apparent that they could not be finished in season to permit the convenient execution of the foregoing orders at the time contemplated, they were countermanded and were on the morning of the 20th revived by this second circular.

Confidential Circular No. 2.
Head Quarters *Savannah*,
20th **Decr.**, 1864.

The movement ordered in Confidential Circular from these Hd. Qrs. dated 19th **Decr.**, 1864, will be executed to-night at the hours as originally arranged, and not as subsequently amended; that is,

Wright's division will move at 8 o'clock, McLaws's division at 10 o'clock, and Smith's division at 11 o'clock, and Wright's skirmishers will be withdrawn at 10 1/2 o'clock, McLaws's skirmishers at 12 1/2 o'clock, and Smith's skirmishers at 1 o'clock.

By command of
LT. GENL. HARDEE.

During the 19th and 20th our artillery and infantry fire was heavier than it had been on any previous days. Aware of the fact that the hour of evacuation was at hand, a more liberal expenditure of ammunition was allowed, and the

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fire of our artillery increased at every available point until the shades of evening on the 20th settled upon the contending lines. In obedience to orders from artillery head quarters, the ammunition chests of the light batteries were thoroughly replenished, and all available animals were engaged for retiring such of the unattached guns as could be transported. All field guns of inferior calibre were exchanged for superior pieces where they could be secured.

On the evening of the 19th an order was issued for the evacuation of Whitemarsh island. After spiking the guns and destroying the carriages and ammunition at Turner's rocks, Gibson's points and on the line of the lunettes across the island without attracting the notice of the enemy, the troops from this locality were dispatched across the pontoon bridges over the Savannah river to coöperate with General Wheeler in holding the enemy in check on the Carolina shore. Upon this retreat all bridges connecting Whitemarsh island with the main were destroyed.

The garrisons from the Savannah river batteries, Fort Bartow, and Thunderbolt, having thoroughly spiked the guns and destroyed the carriages and ammunition at those points, concentrated at Fort Jackson at 8 o'clock on the evening of the 20th, under the command of Colonel Edward C. Anderson,

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were conveyed by steamer to Screven's ferry, and marched the same night to Hardeeville. The crew of the Confederate iron clad battery Georgia, under command of Captain Washington Gwathmey, was also conveyed across the Savannah river with Colonel Anderson's artillerists--the vessel having been first scuttled by her officers.

Having executed the orders for the destruction of the carriages and ammunition and for spiking the guns, the garrisons of the Isle of Hope, Beaulieu, and Rosedew batteries repaired to Savannah and crossed the pontoon bridges on the night of the 20th. The troops from the Isle of Hope being dismounted cavalry, reported for duty to General Wheeler on the Carolina shore, while the artillerists from Beaulieu and Rosedew marched forward to Hardeeville.

That the guns in these fixed batteries were as completely disabled as the nature of the case permitted, and their ammunition and equipments destroyed, appears by the following report of Colonel Anderson.

*"Charleston, Dec. 31, 1864.
Lt. Coln. T. B. Roy, A. A. G. Colonel:*

In reply to your communication of the 30th inst. I have the honor to state, that all the guns at the heavy batteries under my command in the District of Georgia, with the exception of one 32-pounder,

on Hutchinson's

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island (unfit for service) were thoroughly spiked, the carriages cut and otherwise rendered useless, the truck and maneuvering wheels thrown into the river, and the eccentric axles deranged. All the ammunition, averaging one hundred and odd rounds per gun, including friction primers, fuzes and projectiles, as far as practicable, were also thrown into the river or moats. Handspikes, rammers, sponges, and other ordnance stores were broken up and destroyed.

* * * * *

I am Colonel,
Very respectfully,
Your obdt. servt.,

EDWD. C. ANDERSON,
Coln. Comdg.

The troops from the western lines were quietly withdrawn in the order and at the hours indicated in the circulars issued by the lieutenant general for the evacuation of the city. No confusion prevailed, and the movement was executed silently and in good order. Guns were spiked, and ammunition destroyed as far as this could conveniently be done without attracting the notice of the enemy in our immediate front. To conceal the movement, occasional firing was kept up until the latest moment. Forty-nine pieces of artillery, with limbers, caissons, forges, battery wagons, and baggage wagons, were safely transported over the pontoon bridges.

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A single battery wagon was lost. Through some negligence of the driver it got off the bridge. The horses attached to it were saved. No interruption was encountered at the hand of the enemy, and the Confederate army rendezvoused the next day at Hardeeville, South Carolina.

The field return on the morning of the 20th of December, 1864, showed in the trenches, on detail duty, and in the fixed batteries along the water approaches to the city, an aggregate of 9089 men of all arms and of all sorts, present for duty.

The Ladies Gun-boat, or iron-clad Georgia, was sunk at her moorings, abreast of Fort Jackson, on the night of the 20th.

The iron clad Savannah, Captain Brent, being unable to proceed to sea in consequence of the torpedoes in the river and a strong gale setting **form** the north-east, after having on the morning of the 21st remained for some time in the neighborhood of Screven's ferry where a detail was engaged in the removal of some quarter master and commissary stores, and having returned the artillery fire of the enemy from the bay, was set on fire, and sunk nearly opposite Willink's ship yard.

The steamers Isondiga and Fire Fly were burned by the Confederates in Back river.

Several gun-boats, which were in process of construction, were burned on the stocks.

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The gun-boats Macon, Sampson, and Resolute, had been dispatched up the river prior to the siege, and the capture of the *Ida*, has already been noticed.

The gallant Commodore Tattnall, having in person superintended the destruction of most of his vessels, led his sailors and mariners to Hardeeville, marching at their head although suffering severely from rheumatism.

In order to deaden the sound, rice straw was thickly strewn over the pontoon bridges. By three o'clock on the morning of the 21st the rear guard of the Confederate army had crossed over to Hutchinson's island, and the evacuation was complete. Engineer troops shortly afterwards detached the flats, cutting holes in them and setting them adrift. Lieut. Col. Paul of Gen. Hardee's staff was ordered by the general, at midnight on the 20th, to take command of a small force, and, after seeing that the pontoon bridge from the foot of West Broad street to Hutchinson's island was destroyed, to collect such stragglers as he could and cross by way of Screven's ferry. This command was detailed to preserve order in the city to the latest moment.

No disturbances occurred, however, during the night. Just before sunrise he withdrew his pickets, and, having collected all stragglers who were willing to accompany him, embarked on board the

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steamer *Swan* for Screven's ferry. As this little boat got fairly under way, the advance guard of the enemy appeared on the bay.

The work of destroying the ammunition on the western lines was not commenced until after the withdrawal of the infantry, and was performed with great caution by the artillerists. The guns were not spiked until the last moment, and, with several rounds of ammunition, were kept ready for action while the ammunition and equipments were being rendered useless.

The following is the report made by the chief of artillery.

Head Quarters Department of South Carolina,
Georgia and Florida, *Charleston*, S. C.
December 30th, 1864.
Lt. Coln. T. B. Roy, A. A. G., etc., etc. Colonel:

In response to your communication of this date calling for a report of the spiking of guns and the destruction of ammunition on the outer and inner lines of Savannah on the night of the evacuation, I have the honor to state that all the guns left in position were spiked and disabled, and their carriages destroyed as far as practicable. The ammunition on the lines was also destroyed and rendered perfectly useless, the greater portion of it having been thrown into water.

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Forty-nine field pieces were withdrawn and safely transported over the pontoon bridges. Others would have been brought off, but in the removal of the guns mentioned all available transportation was exhausted.

I am confident that every effort which could be employed was used in disabling and rendering

valueless the guns and ammunition left upon the lines of the city of Savannah on the night of the 20th inst.

I have the honor to be, Colonel,
Very respectfully, etc., etc.,
Your obdt. servant,

CHARLES C. JONES, JR.,
Lieut. Coln. & Chief of Artillery
during the siege and evacuation of Savannah.

Upon his arrival at Hardeeville Lieutenant General Hardee received the following orders, which were issued and observed in due course.

Hd. Qrs. Mil. Divn. of the West,
Pocotaligo, S. C., Dec. 20, 1864.
Lieut. Genl. W. J. Hardee, Commdg., etc.,
Hardeeville, S. C. General:

I am directed by the general commanding to forward to you the accompanying memorandum of orders which he wishes you to issue immediately after the evacuation of Savannah. They are designed to carry out his views as to the best disposition of troops under your command, for the defense of Charleston and the

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state of South Carolina generally--Savannah being in the possession of the enemy.

Maj. Genl. G. W. Smith's command (about two thousand (2000 men) being sent to Augusta, will leave of the troops coming from Savannah about six thousand five hundred; which, added to those under the immediate command of Maj. Genl. Sam Jones on the line of the Savannah and Charleston rail road--say about five thousand five hundred (5500) exclusive of those in and around Charleston--make about twelve thousand (12,000) troops. Of these, he thinks there should be about two thousand five hundred (2500) to guard the left bank of the Combahee, with about one thousand in reserve at a central point between the Combahee and Ashepoo.

About three thousand five hundred (3500) in the 4th sub district, with about one thousand of them in reserve at or near Adams's run and Green pond, and about five thousand (5000) in the 2d and 3d sub districts in addition to those already there. The cavalry guarding the left (or coast) flank, and the front and right flanks, may, of course, be used to support the troops to which they are nearest.

The orders indicated in the accompanying memorandum will make a distribution approximating to those numbers as nearly as circumstances will permit. In carrying them out it will be necessary that you should send promptly the troops carried to Hardeeville by Brig. Genl. Taliaferro to rejoin their respective brigades, and the detached companies or battalions of S. C. reserves and militia to report to Brig. Genl.

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Chesnut at Grahamville, and the companies of the 3d S. C. cavalry under Col. Colcock to unite with those now **in** front of Grahamville and near Coosawhatchie and Pocotaligo, and Kirk's squadron, together with the section of horse artillery attached to the 3d S. C. cavalry.

Endeavor to bring and keep together, as far as practicable, the troops of the same organization.

Very respectfully,
Your obdt. servt.,

A. R. CHISOLM, A. D. C.

Hd. Qrs. Mil. Divn., of the West,
Pocotaligo, Dec. 20, 1864.

Memorandum of orders to be issued by Lt. Genl. Hardee immediately after the evacuation of Savannah.

I. Maj. Genl. G. W. Smith will proceed immediately with his command to Charleston, and thence to Augusta, after being relieved by other troops as hereinafter directed.

II. Maj. Genl. McLaws's division (the senior brigadier commdg.), and Coln. Anderson's brigade preceding, will proceed immediately to Charleston and relieve Maj. Genl. G. W. Smith's division.

III. Maj. Genl. Wright's division, and Brig. Genl. Chesnut's command (about 1500 men) consisting of S. C. reserves and 2d, 3d and 4th S. C. militia, to the 4th military sub district; a reserve of about 300 men being stationed at Green pond, and another of like number near Adams's run. Brig. Genl. Robertson

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will report to Maj. Genl. Wright for temporary duty to advise as to disposition of troops, and then to be assigned to duty as circumstances may require.

IV. Coln. Geo. P. Harrison's and Col. A. C. Edwards's brigades to be stationed on the left bank of the Combahee, guarding the several passages (about six) across that river to Barnwell court house. Brig. Genl. Young's command, to be increased by the 7th Ga. cavalry (dismounted) Coln. E. C. Anderson jr., commdg. as reserves at or near Blue house between the Combahee and Ashepoo rivers.

V. The 3d S. C. cavalry and Kirk's squadron will cover the left (or coast) flank of the retiring troops. After crossing the Combahee, Maj. Jno. Jenkins with Captn. Seabrook's and Peeble's companies 3d S. C. cavalry, will take post on John's island; and Captn. Kirk's squadron will proceed via Charleston to Christ Church Parish and take post near and north east of Mount Pleasant.

VI. Maj. Genl. Wheeler's corps (that part of it east of Savannah river, and the remainder, if it should come up) will guard crossings of the Savannah and New rivers and the landings east of Screven's causeway, until forced by the enemy to retire. He will then guard and defend the country between the Savannah river and the defensive line of the Combahee and the right flank of that line, resting at or near Barnwell court house and extending by the shortest defensible line to the Savannah river, covering Augusta.

VII. Col. Gonzales will assign the field artillery now in South Carolina to the most appropriate position for

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the defense of the 4th sub district and the line of the Combahee from Salkehatchie bridge to the coast, taking care to assign the batteries to the positions with which their respective commanders are most familiar. He will assign, subject to Genl. Hardee's approval, the field batteries coming from Savannah as circumstances may indicate, for the best defense of the line of the Combahee, the 4th sub district, and Augusta.

VIII. As soon as the services of Brig. Genl. Taliaferro can be spared from the duty on which he is now engaged, he will proceed to James's island and resume his former command, assigning to their appropriate positions the troops of Maj. Genl. McLaws's division and Col. Anderson's brigade destined for that island.

IX. As soon as Maj. Genl. McLaws's division moves from Hardeeville, he will immediately proceed to Pocotaligo and relieve Maj. Genl. Sam. Jones, and take the immediate command of the troops on the line of the Combahee.

X. On being relieved by Maj. Genl. McLaws, Maj. Genl. Jones will proceed to Charleston and resume his command and enter on the duties designated by S. O. No.--from Deptmt. Hd. Qrs.

XI. As the cavalry retires before the enemy it will drive off all cattle, sheep, and hogs not necessary for its consumption, and impress and send to Charleston, to be turned over to the chief engineer, all negroes capable of bearing arms. It will also destroy all mills, boats, buildings (that may be useful to the enemy for military purposes), and all rice, corn and other provisions not necessary for its own subsistence, beyond

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such as is absolutely necessary for the consumption of the owners and their families and slaves.

XII. All teams and wagons (with their drivers) on plantations about to fall into the hands of the enemy, not required by their owners, shall be impressed for the use of the army.

Having seen to the disposition of his troops in substantial compliance with the foregoing general instructions, the lieutenant general repaired to Charleston where he established his head quarters. By reason of the lack of transportation many of the Confederate sick and wounded were left in hospital when Savannah was evacuated.

Although, during the night of the 20th General Geary reported to General Williams, commanding the 20th army corps, that the Confederate movement across the Savannah river was in progress, the only instructions issued to division commanders were to keep on the alert and press their pickets closer to the Confederate works. Our fire, maintained until the moment when our forces were withdrawn from the western lines, seems at once to have intimidated the enemy and to have confused them with regard to our real intentions.

It was not until half past three o'clock on the morning of the 21st that our evacuation of the western line was discovered. Orders were at once

issued to advance the pickets on the left of the Federal lines and to press forward into the city. By six o'clock A. M., General Geary's division had entered without opposition, and the city of Savannah was in the possession of the Federals. Two regiments were detached to occupy Fort Jackson and the works below the city. General Geary was temporarily assigned to the command of Savannah, and his division encamped within the city limits. Just outside the city limits, near the junction of the Louisville and Augusta roads, and about half past four o'clock in the morning of the 21st, the Hon. Richard D. Arnold, mayor of Savannah, and a delegation from the board of aldermen, bearing a flag of truce, met Brig. Genl. John W. Geary and through him made formal surrender to the commanding general, of the city of Savannah now evacuated by the Confederates. In behalf of the citizens and their property the **may orrequested** suitable protection at the hands of the Federal commander. Although the city of Savannah was for some time held as a military post and in large measure adapted to military uses, he mayor and council were permitted to exercise their functions, and the municipal organization, in its important branches, was preserved.

CHAPTER X.

Extravagant and Unjustifiable Destruction of Property along the Line of March--Comparison between the Conduct of Confederate and Federal Invading Armies--Sherman's Violations of the Accepted Rules of Civilized Warfare--Wanton Insults, Wholesale Plunder, and Barbarous Treatment of Unarmed Citizens and Defenseless Women, Children and Negroes, by Federal Soldiery--The Conduct of the Royalist Prevost in 1779 outheroed in 1864 by that of the Republican Sherman--The Campaign criticised as a Military Movement--Its Success entirely attributable to the Weakness of the Confederacy--Federal and Confederate Losses--Capture of Savannah in 1778--The Evacuation of the City, under the Circumstances, a Severe Reflection upon the Activity and Skill of the Federal Commander, and a marked Achievement on the part of the Confederates.

After alluding to the almost total demolition of the Central rail road from Gordon to Savannah, and the partial destruction of the Macon and Western, the Augusta and Waynesboro, the Charleston and Savannah, and the Atlantic and Gulf railways, General Sherman in his official report says: "We have also consumed the corn and fodder in the region of country thirty miles on either side of a line from Atlanta to Savannah, as also the sweet potatoes, cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry, and have carried away more than ten thousand horses and mules, as well as a countless number of their slaves. I estimate the damage

done to the state of Georgia and its military resources at *one hundred millions of dollars; at least twenty millions of which have inured to our advantage, and the remainder is simple waste and destruction.* ¹ This may seem a hard species of warfare, but it brings the sad realities of war home to those who have been directly or indirectly instrumental in involving us in its attendant calamities."

Contrast this official confession with the address of Major General Early to the citizens of York, when his invading columns were passing over Pennsylvania soil: "I have abstained from burning the rail road buildings and car-shops in your town because, after examination, I am satisfied that the safety of the town would be endangered. Acting in the spirit of humanity which has ever characterized my

government and its military authorities, I do not desire to involve the innocent in the same punishment with the guilty. Had I applied the torch without regard to consequences, I would have pursued a course which would have been fully vindicated as an act of just retaliation for the unparalleled acts of brutality perpetrated by your own army on our own soil. But we do not war upon women and children."

1 The total value, at this time, and upon a specie basis, of the taxable property in Georgia, including lands and slaves, did not exceed \$650,000,000.

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Compare general orders number 72 of the immortal Lee, redolent, even amid the smoke and carnage of the hottest warfare, of exalted civilization and generous humanity, with the atrocious proclamations of General Butler or the vandal acts of Sheridan, and then listen to the words of Polybius, spoken when the world was two thousand years younger than it now is, and uttered not in the tone of passion and hate so rife in his day, but in inculcation of the soundest lessons of political and moral wisdom: "When men proceed to wreak their fury on senseless objects whose destruction will neither be of advantage to themselves nor in the slightest degree disable their opponent from carrying on the war, especially if they burn the temples of the gods, destroy their statues, and waste their ornamental furniture, what else can we say of such proceedings except that they are the acts of men devoid of all feelings of propriety, and infected by frenzy? For it is in no way the object of war, at least among men who have just notions of their duty, to annihilate and utterly subvert those from whom they may have received provocation, but to induce them to amend that in which they have acted amiss, not to involve the innocent and guilty in one common ruin, but rather to save them both. We may also observe that it is the act of a tyrant only, who hates and is hated

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by his subjects, to exact by force and terror a reluctant and unwilling obedience."

While it is admitted that the chief of an army may levy contributions on the enemy's country in order to compass the maintenance of his troops, while he may forage for corn, hay, and provisions when circumstances render it impossible to proceed in the regular way of taxation, it is absolutely obligatory upon a commander who is actuated by sentiments of honor and observes the recognized rules of civilized warfare, that he take from the enemy "only what he strictly wants," and that he adopt all possible means to prevent extortion or personal violence at the hands of his subordinates. "He is guilty of revolting cruelty who permits his soldiers to put inhabitants of a belligerent nation to torture or otherwise subject them to bad treatment to force them to disclose the places where their wealth or provisions are concealed." Nothing may be taken as personal booty. "Excepting the cases of taxation, contribution or absolute necessity, international law commands that all property, personal and real, belonging to individuals, be scrupulously respected. Any infraction of that rule must be punished as pillage or marauding. If the conquered country is condemned to lodging and feeding the invaders, an equitable stipulation must put forth what is to be furnished to each

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officer and private. It is humane not to deprive the poor people of their cottages and scanty means of existence. Whoever exacts more than is stipulated, is an extortioner."

Tested by these accepted rules of civilized warfare, the conduct of General Sherman's army, and particularly of Kilpatrick's cavalry and the numerous detached parties swarming through the country in advance and on the flanks of the main columns during the march from Atlanta to the coast, is reprehensible in the extreme. Not content with the violent and inordinate destruction of everything which might be regarded as even remotely contributing to the military strength and resources of the country, and the appropriation of such animals and provisions as were necessary for the efficiency and maintenance of the army, the Federals on every hand and at all points indulged in wanton pillage, wasting and destroying what could not be used. Defenseless women and children and weak old men were not infrequently driven from their homes, their dwellings fired, and these non-combatants subjected to insult and privation. The inhabitants, white and black, were often robbed of their personal effects, were intimidated by threats and temporary confinement, and occasionally were even hung up to the verge of final strangulation to compel a revelation of the places

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where money, plate and jewelry were buried, or plantation animals concealed. Private residences along the line of march were not exempt from rude search. Articles of value which they contained were carried off at pleasure, and insults continually offered Corn cribs, emptied of so much of their contents as sufficed to fill the commissary wagons, were often either pulled to pieces or committed to the flames. Cotton houses, gins, screws, and cotton were universally consumed. Agricultural implements were broken up or carried away, and horses, mules, cattle and hogs were either driven off, or were shot in the fields, or uselessly butchered in the pens and lots. Such was the wholesale destruction of this animal life that the whole region stunk with putrefying carcasses, and earth and air were filled with innumerable turkey buzzards battenning upon their thickly strewn death feasts. Even churches did not escape the general wreck, their wooden benches, doors and sides being used for camp fires, and their pulpits stripped of their scanty vesture. Grist, flour, and sugar mills shared in the common ruin. Labor was sadly disorganized, and the entire region swept by the Federal columns was left in poverty, ruin, demoralization and ashes. To repress the commission of these enormities and prevent this prodigal and unwarrantable waste, neither effort was used nor

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disposition manifested by subordinate officers. Soldiers often vied with each other in acts of violence, insult, outrage, pillage, desolation, and murder.

These intolerable violations of the rules of civilized warfare, are, by the commanding general when, in the official report to which we have already referred, commenting upon the conduct of the rank and file of his army, cavalierly dismissed with the remark, "a little loose in foraging, they did some things they ought not to have done, yet, on the whole, they have supplied the wants of the army with as little violence as could be expected, and as little loss as I calculated." This general complacently and boastfully announces to his government that eighty million dollars worth of the property destroyed in Georgia by his army while on this march was "*simple waste and destruction,*" in no wise contributing to the wants of the invader, but plunging the unarmed invaded in a sea of sorrow, tribulation and ruin. The picture is not over-drawn, and this march of Sherman through the heart of Georgia forms as memorable and mournful an epoch in the history of this state as in Roman annals does the passage of the victorious Goths, encumbered with weighty spoils, through the southern provinces of Italy, annihilating whatever opposed, and madly plundering an unresisting

country. The key note to the conduct of the whole campaign is sounded in the letter to General Grant from which we quoted at the commencement of this sketch. General Sherman set out to "make Georgia howl," and preferred to "march through that state *smashing things to the sea.*" **Unfortunately** for the prosperity of Georgia, the good order of her plantations, and the peace of her defenseless women and children, he was able, almost unmolested, to carry into merciless execution this intention so ruthlessly formed. That he could thus easily compass the desolation of this Egypt of the south argued most plainly the growing weakness of the Confederacy--sore pressed at every point isolated on every hand, overwhelmed by numbers and despoiled of her defenders--and gave painful token that the aspirations which her sons had cherished in tears, and agony and blood, for right and liberty and national independence were doomed to early disappointment.

The student of history searching among the annals of modern warfare for examples of moderation, humanity, justice, honor, and a chivalrous recognition of the rights of an enemy, will turn with regret and disappointment from the pages containing a true narrative of "Sherman's march to the sea." He will blush at this new exhibition of the workings of that boasted utilitarian civilization

which has done so much to impair the **manhoop** and lower the moral standard of this country, being from the first intolerant, aggressive, and cruel.

It really seems as if the Federal general on this occasion sought to rival the conduct of Prevost when in 1779 he raided through the richest plantations of South Carolina. Behold the picture painted by the historian Bancroft ¹ in his concluding volume. "The British forced their way into almost every house in a wide extent of country; sparing in some measure those who professed loyalty to the king, they rifled all others of their money, rings, personal ornaments and plate, stripped houses of furniture and linen, and even broke open tombs in search of hidden treasure. Objects of value, not transportable by land or water, were destroyed. Porcelain, mirrors, windows, were dashed in pieces; gardens carefully planted with exotics were laid waste. Domestic animals, which could not be used nor carried off, were wantonly shot, and in some places not even a chicken was left alive. * * Fugitive slaves perished of want in the woods, or of fever in the British camp."

The enormities of 1779 committed by British soldiers in their effort to perpetuate English rule

¹ "History of the United States," vol. x, p. 294, Boston, 1874.

over a colony then in open revolt against the crown which had planted and nurtured it, were more than repeated by the United States troops in their attempt in 1864 to subjugate and drive back into the Federal union a sovereign state which had withdrawn from a political compact into which she had at first voluntarily entered, and from which, more than three years before, she had freed herself because, in her judgment, that Confederation no longer promoted the ends of justice, equal rights, general benefit, and mutual protection for which it was originally formed. If we **unhesitatingly** reprobate the merciless rigor, revenge, and cruelty of the royalist Prevost, by what law, human or divine, do the raiding, devastating columns of the republican Sherman stand acquitted of even severer condemnation? ¹

As a military movement this expedition can be justified only upon the hypothesis that it was planned and executed with full knowledge of the weakness of the Confederates. It reached its

1 It has been estimated that not less than 10,000 negro slaves were seduced from their allegiance by the Federals in their march through the Georgia plantations. Hundreds of them died of want, small-pox, and other diseases incident to neglect, privation, and the lack of suitable shelter and clothing. More than 20,000 bales of cotton were consumed in gin houses and sheds, and some 25,000 more were seized in Savannah after that city was evacuated by the Confederates. In their official returns the United States officers account for 13,000 head of cattle, 9,500,000 pounds of corn and 10,500,000 pounds of fodder forcibly taken from the planters without the shadow of acknowledgment and issued to the troops and animals, but make no mention of horses and mules stolen *ad libitum*, or of the stock, cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry killed on every hand and in the most irregular way to satisfy the wasteful appetite of prowling bands of bummers and free booters, and, when that was glutted, uselessly shot in the yards, pens, and fields of the owners and by the road side to gratify wanton sport, barbaric cruelty, and ribald hate. Of the consumption of rice, sweet potatoes, syrup, peas and vegetables, of the merciless destruction of houses, furniture, fences and agricultural implements, of the quantity of personal property stolen and carried away, of the thefts committed, the insults offered, the outrages perpetrated and the crimes indulged in, no inventory has been taken. And yet the record remains, and can be authenticated by thousands upon whose homes the shadows of dire calamity have rested for the past ten years. Sheridan in the valley of Virginia! Butler in New Orleans! ! Sherman in Georgia! ! !

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objective, as we have clearly shown, because General Beauregard was unable to concentrate even a tolerable army of opposition.

Tested by the rules of scientific warfare, this expedition was erratic in conception and violative of the accepted military maxims governing the projection and conduct of a campaign of this character. That it was not interrupted and totally defeated in its execution, must be attributed to

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accident--the inability of the Confederates to concentrate an army sufficiently strong to deliver battle along the line of march.

The Federal losses encountered during the interval **ocupied** by Sherman's march from Atlanta to the coast, including those sustained in the efforts made in South Carolina to obtain possession of the Charleston and Savannah rail road, will probably aggregate 2800 men, killed, wounded and missing. Estimated in the same way, and for a similar period, the Confederate loss will not exceed 1500. During the siege casualties on the Confederate side were comparatively few. This fact is mainly attributable to the admirable protection afforded by the earth works along the western line. Prominent among those who fell in defense of the city was Major Cook of the Athens battalion. He was shot in the forehead while holding a portion of the line on Daly's farm. His gallant conduct had been conspicuous. Few desertions occurred when the city was evacuated; and although the garrison was composed in no small degree of local troops and reserves whose families, homes, and property were there, the men as a rule, tearfully and yet bravely marched in silence through the city, turning their backs upon all the heart holds most dear, in response to the stern necessities of the occasion and in obedience to the

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claims of a country sorely beleaguered but devotedly loved.

Thus a second time in her history of a little more than a century and a quarter was the city of

Oglethorpe compelled to pass under the yoke. Eighty-six years before, approaching from the south and east, the British regulars under the active and able leadership of Lieut. Coln. Campbell quickly overcame the feeble and ill contrived resistance offered by General Howe, driving his troops in confusion through the town and accomplishing an easy capture of the then capital of Georgia. This disaster entailed upon the vanquished not only serious loss but intense mortification. Savannah should then have been successfully defended. Had proper dispositions been made by the American general, the troops under his command were sufficient to have beaten back the advancing column boldly but imprudently led. On this occasion military skill and precaution were lacking. The calamity should have been averted.

In December, 1864, however, it may be fairly claimed that everything was done which energy, precaution, and willing hearts on the part of the Confederates could achieve. Every available resource was expended upon the construction and armament of the western line. All troops which

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could be procured were summoned and put in position for its defense. For ten days did the garrison boldly confront an enemy more than six times stronger than itself, preserving its line intact until the fall of Fort McAllister, the growing scarcity of provisions and ordnance stores, and the almost total isolation of the Confederate army rendered the evacuation of the city absolutely necessary.

The destruction of guns, ammunition, and ordnance stores in the presence of the enemy without attracting their notice, the successful withdrawal of the command across the pontoon bridges over the Savannah river, the absence of all noise and confusion during the movement consummated at night, and above all the safe conduct of such a large body of troops, with artillery and wagons, along the narrow rice dams and causeways of the Carolina shore, in a slender column, in close proximity to a strong Federal force extending from IZARD'S plantation for more than a mile parallel or nearly so with the Confederate line of retreat--and that without loss or interruption--indicate at once with what skill and care the Confederate commander had arranged his plans, and the excellent behavior of his troops in executing them. The salvation of the garrison under such circumstances, while reflecting severely upon the Federals,

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will be recognized as a marked achievement on the part of the Confederates.

The day after the evacuation, Lieut. Genl. Hardee--that accomplished soldier who, as a corps-commander, had rendered such brilliant service in the Confederate struggle for independence--in reviewing the conduct of the siege and commenting upon the successful retreat of the garrison, remarked to the writer that while sadly deploring the loss of the city he was persuaded nothing had been neglected which could have contributed to the honor of our arms; and that, under the circumstances, he regarded the safe withdrawal of his army from the lines around Savannah as one of the most signal and satisfactory exploits in his military career.

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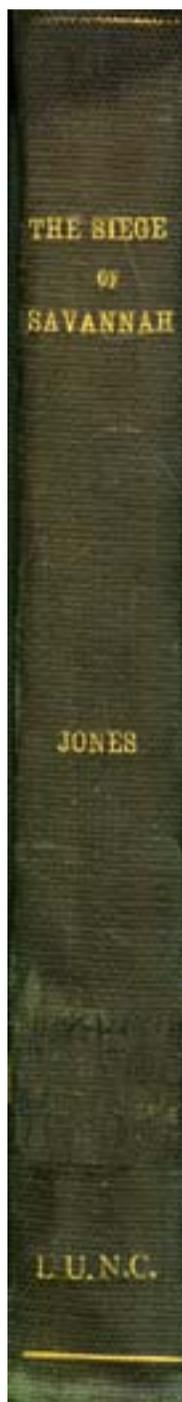
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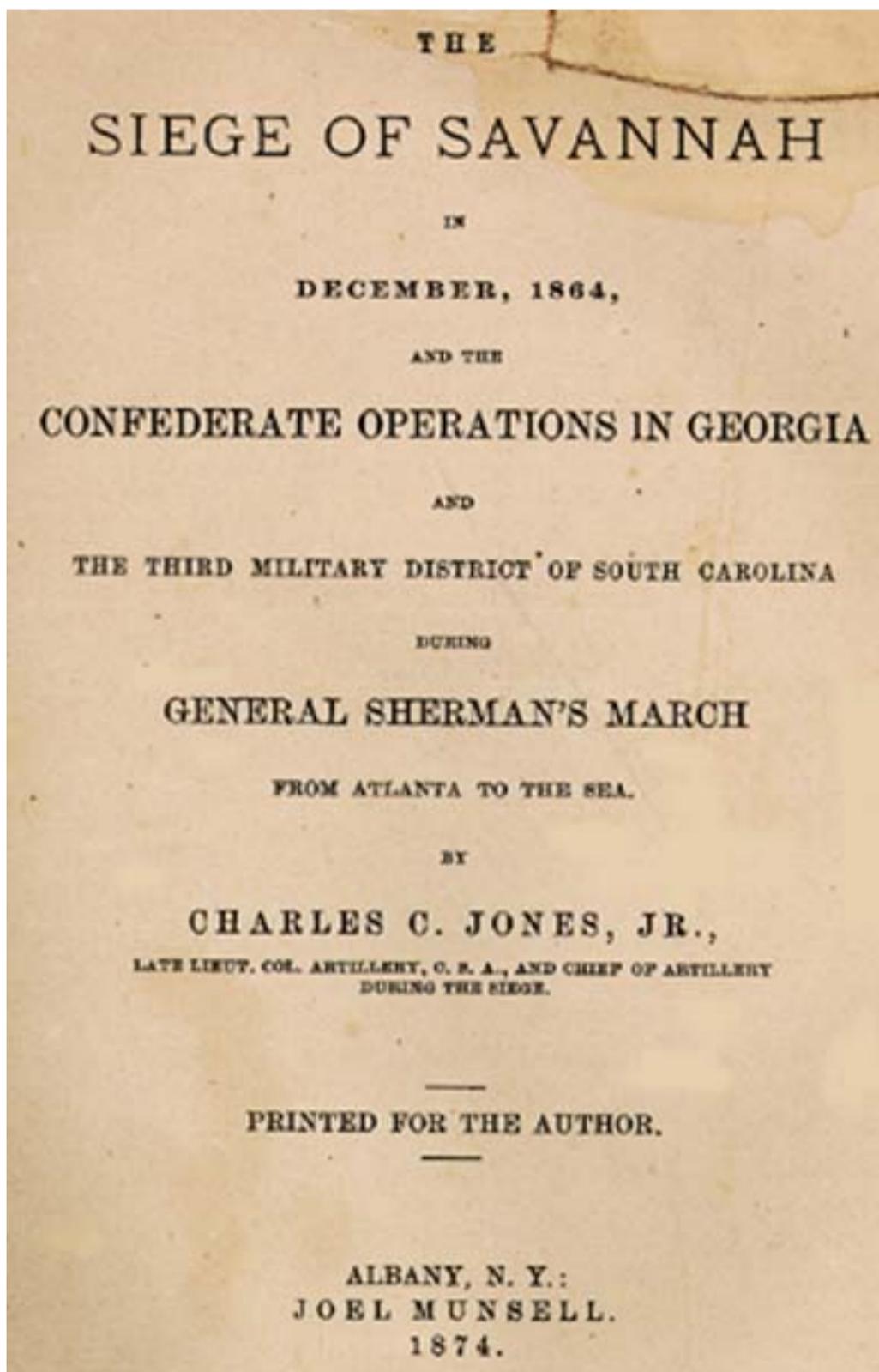
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