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## Memorandum

To: Superintendent, LStones River

From: Acting Assistant Director, Division of Operations

Subject: Research Report, "The History of Fortress Rosecrans,"  
by Edwin C. Bearss

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## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

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- Chapter VII - Forrest Tries to Squeeze the Yankees out of Fortress Rosecrans

(With Appendices and Maps)

by

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Region One

Stones River National Military Park  
December, 1960

(Completion of Research Project #1 - Stones River NMP)

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Chapter I

#### Fortress Rosecrans Takes Shape

Following the battle of Stones River, General Braxton Bragg's Confederate Army of Tennessee evacuated Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Bragg was successful in his efforts to steal a march on the Federals. Covered by his hard-riding cavalry, Bragg retired to Tullahoma, Tennessee. The advance contingents of Major General William S. Rosecrans' Army of the Cumberland entered Murfreesboro on January 5, 1863, the day after Bragg had departed. Except for a half-hearted pursuit by the Union cavalry, Rosecrans' battered army made no attempt to follow the Confederates.

The days immediately following the occupation of Murfreesboro were busy ones for the Federals. Rosecrans put his troops to work converting the area into a great military base. Camps and supply depots for a large army were established. Within a few days, construction crews had back in operation the section of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad which linked Murfreesboro with Nashville. To protect the vital railroad bridge and the nearby span which carried the Nashville pike across Stones River,

Rosecrans ordered the area fortified. Brigadier General James S. Morton, Rosecrans' chief engineer, was put in charge of the project. The officers in charge of the various units of the Army of the Cumberland which were camped in and around Murfreesboro would be called on daily for large fatigue details. These detachments would report to Morton's assistants for work on the fortifications.

As soon as General Morton had laid out the fort, ground was broken. Work progressed rapidly. On February 22, General Rosecrans wrote Chief of Staff Henry W. Halleck that the fortifications were rapidly taking shape. Rosecrans pointed out that the Murfreesboro works would serve a two-fold purpose. When his army pushed on toward Chattanooga, these earthworks would be garrisoned by a brigade and serve as a secondary depot. If the Confederates recovered the initiative, they would provide the Army of the Cumberland with a strong point to fall back upon. <sup>1</sup>

Five days later, Rosecrans again contacted Halleck in reference to the Murfreesboro fortifications. He reported that they were "well advanced". The general expressed the opinion that, when completed, a brigade posted in the fort would "be able to cover the depots and bridges against a division or two". <sup>2</sup> Apparently, the works were not as close to being finished as

Rosecrans had believed. When the general telegraphed Halleck on March 22, he observed, "Our depots and defenses are being pushed forward here with almost 4,000 men daily at work." <sup>3</sup>

Shortly thereafter, the fort was pronounced to be in a defensible condition. On the 28th, Rosecrans requested Halleck to send him several companies of regular artillerists. He wanted to use the regulars to man the heavy guns which were being placed in the "strong" works at Nashville and Murfreesboro. <sup>4</sup> Halleck apparently ignored Rosecrans' request for the artillerists, because no regular units were sent to the Army of the Cumberland at this time.

The line of rifle pits guarding the approaches to the bridges and the magazines was about 14,600 feet in length. Stones River divided the fort into two unequal parts. Both the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad and the Nashville pike passed through the fortress. To facilitate the movement of supplies in and out of the depot area, a spur was built. Two lunettes (Negley and Stanley) and one battery (Cruft) were located on the left bank of the river. Redoubt Schofield was located behind and in support of these three strong points. Seven lunettes (Palmer, Thomas, McCook, Crittenden, Granger, Rousseau, and Reynolds) and one battery (Mitchell) were the strong points located along the fortified line

east of the river. Two of these (Lunettes Palmer and Thomas) were south of Lytle Creek. Within the perimeter were three redoubts (Brannan, T. J. Wood, and Johnson). In addition, there were three outlying works. Demi-Lunette Davis and Demi-Lunette Garfield were located on the high ground south of Lytle Creek, commanding the Franklin road. Redan Van Cleve covered the approaches to the Nashville ford from the east. At various strategic points on the approaches to the fort, trees were felled and an abatis formed. The magazine, ordnance, quartermaster, and engineers' depots were on the east side of the river; the commissary depots on the west side. <sup>5</sup>

When completed, the fortress was an enclosed work containing about 200 acres. This large work was "composed of a series of bastion fronts, with small, irregular bastions and broken curtains". A member of the Corps of Engineers (Brigadier General Zealous B. Tower) described the fortress:

... as consisting of lunettes connected by indented lines, having in the interior four rectangular redoubts, and one lunette as keeps to the position. In large permanent works, with high scarps, the ditches are swept by guns in the flanks, because the depression of the guns prevents the canister-balls from rising above the parapet. In field forts, with ditches only six feet deep and long curtains, opposite flanks cannot fire in the same manner as in permanent works without risk.

to the defenders; but by breaking the curtain line the ditches are swept by close musketry. This is the manner of flanking the ditches of Fortress Rosecrans. Its lines give powerful cross fires, and direct fires, both of artillery and infantry, on all the approaches. Placed on the crests of the elevations, they not only command the distant country, but effectually sweep the gentle slopes within canister-range.

Tower placed himself on record as reporting that if the fortress were "properly garrisoned and well defended", it could not be taken except by siege. The parapets were elevated and revetted with fascines. To protect the defenders against "ricochet fire", a number of traverses were thrown up. The heavy ordnance was fired through embrasures which were protected by gabions. Two of the lunettes (Thomas and McCook) and the four interior redoubts (Brannan, T. J. Wood, Johnson, and Schofield) had large blockhouses, built in the form of a cross. The magazines, except in Brannan Redoubt, were small; that in Battery Mitchell was subject to flooding. Consequently, during the wet season, it was useless. Furthermore, the ditches fronting the four redoubts washed badly during periods of prolonged rain. <sup>6</sup>

Some time between the end of March and the second week in June, these fortifications guarding the Stones River bridges and the Murfreesboro magazines were designated Fortress Rosecrans.

On June 12, Rosecrans reported that the fortress was garrisoned by 2,394 light duty convalescents. 7

By the beginning of the fourth week in June, preparations had been completed and the Army of the Cumberland was ready to take the field. Coaxed on by Halleck, Rosecrans planned to drive the Confederates out of Middle Tennessee and capture Chattanooga. Before leaving Murfreesboro, Rosecrans (on the 23d) issued an order directing Brigadier General Horatio P. Van Cleve to take charge of Fortress Rosecrans on the departure of the army. (At this time, Van Cleve led a division in Major General Thomas J. Crittenden's XXI Army Corps.) Rosecrans wanted Van Cleve to deploy his troops so as to protect Murfreesboro. He would see that all public property was removed to within the fortifications. All the wagons belonging to the supply and baggage trains were to be brought inside the fortress and parked near Stones River. Van Cleve would also be responsible for the Murfreesboro military hospitals and the convalescent camp. 8

THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

Notes -- Chapter I

Fortress Rosecrans Takes Shape

1 The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol. XXIII, pt. II,

81. (Cited hereafter as O. R.)

2 Ibid., 90.

3 Ibid., 154.

4 Ibid., 182.

5 Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. (Washington, 1891-1895), Plate CXII, Fig. 3.

The lunettes, demi-lunettes, redoubts, and redans were named for general officers assigned to the Army of the Cumberland.

6 O. R., Series I, Vol. XLIX, pt. II, 502.

7 O. R., Series I, Vol. XXIII, pt. II, 423.

8 Ibid., 447.

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Chapter II

#### The Defenders of Fortress Rosecrans Change with the Shifting Tides of the War

In the days following its departure from Murfreesboro, the Army of the Cumberland forged rapidly ahead. On June 27, Rosecrans issued instructions for Van Cleve to hold his division ready to move at a moment's notice. As yet, Rosecrans continued, he had not made up his mind whether Van Cleve would rejoin Crittenden's corps which was en route to Manchester, or support Major General Gordon Granger's Reserve Corps which was massed at Christiana.<sup>1</sup>

It was July 5 before Van Cleve's division left Murfreesboro. Prior to their departure, Van Cleve's troops were relieved of the responsibility for the defense of Fortress Rosecrans by Brigadier General William T. Ward's brigade.<sup>2</sup> Within a short time, Ward's brigade was transferred to Levern and Brigadier General James D. Morgan's division moved into Murfreesboro. A detachment from Morgan's command was detailed to garrison Fortress Rosecrans. Like Ward's brigade, Morgan's

division was attached to Granger's Reserve Corps. <sup>3</sup>

Morgan's division did not remain at Fortress Rosecrans very long. At the end of the third week in August, Morgan's division was sent to Columbia, Tennessee. Morgan's troops had been given the task of covering the construction crews which were rebuilding the Nashville and Decatur Railroad. Prior to Morgan's departure from Murfreesboro, Brigadier General James B. Steedman's division of Granger's Reserve Corps took over the defense of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. This railroad served as the supply line for the Army of the Cumberland as it pushed steadily toward Chattanooga. For the time being, Steedman established his headquarters in Murfreesboro. <sup>4</sup>

In making his disposition for the defense of the vital railroad, Steedman posted Colonel Thomas E. Champion's brigade at Estill Springs, Colonel William P. Reid's at Shelbyville, and Colonel John Coburn's at Fortress Rosecrans. The 9th Battery, Ohio Light Artillery and the 5th Iowa Cavalry were also stationed at the fortress. <sup>5</sup> Champion's and Reid's brigades were shifted to Cowan on September 7. <sup>6</sup> Following the occupation of Chattanooga by the Army of the Cumberland on September 9, Steedman was ordered to rush Champion's and Reid's brigades to that point. <sup>7</sup> The transfer of these two brigades to the front forced Colonel Coburn

to spread his brigade very thin. Besides holding Fortress Rosecrans, Coburn's troops now had to guard the railroad between Murfreesboro and Tullahoma. To discharge his mission, Coburn transferred his headquarters to Tullahoma.<sup>8</sup>

At Chickamauga (on September 19 and 20), General Bragg's Confederates attacked and wrested the initiative from the Federals. Rosecrans' army was driven back into Chattanooga. Pressing forward, the Rebels quickly invested the city. In an effort to cut off the Union supplies, General Bragg sent Major General Joseph Wheeler's cavalrymen into Middle Tennessee. On October 3, the Confederate raiders captured McMinnville.<sup>9</sup> After leaving McMinnville, Wheeler's column headed for Murfreesboro.

In the meantime, the Nashville Federals had been warned of the Rebels' approach. General Ward was ordered to hurry to the depot and take charge of the advanced contingents from Major General Henry W. Slocum's XII Corps, which was scheduled to pass through Nashville. (In an effort to relieve Chattanooga, the Union leaders had rushed two corps from the Virginia theatre of operations to the west.) Ward was to take charge of these troops, proceed to Murfreesboro and defend the town. It was nearly 8 a. m. on the 5th before the southbound troop train arrived. Boarding the train, Ward hastened to Murfreesboro. The train reached Murfreesboro a

little after 10 a. m. At this time, Wheeler had also advanced into the area and was marshaling his command south of the town. Without a moment's hesitation, Ward ordered the soldiers off the train. The blueclads quickly manned the defenses of Fortress Rosecrans. Taking cognizance of the strength of Fortress Rosecrans, Wheeler decided not to attack the railroad bridge north of Murfreesboro. Instead, he moved against the bridge spanning the Middle Fork of Stones River, three miles south of Murfreesboro. Pressing forward, the Confederates attacked and forced the surrender of the stockade guarding this bridge. After burning the bridge and tearing up the track, the raiders pushed on toward Shelbyville. 10

As soon as the emergency had passed, General Ward returned to Nashville. On October 24, Major General George H. Thomas, who had assumed command of the Army of the Cumberland four days before, issued orders for Colonel Coburn to concentrate his brigade at Murfreesboro. (By this time, Coburn's brigade had been detached from Steedman's division.) Upon reaching Murfreesboro, Coburn's troops were to relieve the units of the XII Corps that were posted there. One of Slocum's divisions (Brigadier General Alpheus S. Williams') would, in the future, be held responsible for guarding the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad between

Murfreesboro and Bridgeport, Alabama. 11

Evidently, Coburn was in no hurry to carry out Thomas' directive. On November 3, General Williams informed General Slocum that Coburn's brigade was widely dispersed. The 33d Indiana, the general reported, was scattered in seven different posts, the 85th Indiana was at Duck River, the 19th Michigan at McMinnville, and the 22d Wisconsin at Fortress Rosecrans. 12

Within the next several days, Coburn's brigade was reassigned to the newly constituted District of Nashville. Major General Lovell H. Rousseau was placed in charge of the district on November 10. Fortress Rosecrans and the Murfreesboro area were included within the confines of Rousseau's new command. Rousseau was to give his special attention to the protection of the railroads (the Louisville and Nashville, the Nashville and Northwestern, and the Nashville and Chattanooga) which were located within his district. 13

Upon taking charge of his district, Rousseau made certain that Coburn carried out his instructions. Within a short time, Rousseau was able to report that Coburn's brigade was concentrated at Murfreesboro. Three non-brigaded regiments (the 115th Ohio, the 17th U. S. Colored Troops, and the 31st Wisconsin), and one

artillery unit (the 1st Battery, Kentucky Light Artillery) were also based at Fortress Rosecrans. Detachments from one of the three infantry regiments -- the 115th Ohio -- were detailed to man the stockades which were located at strategic points along the railroad between Nashville and Tullahoma. Following the debacle at Chickamauga, General Van Cleve had been relieved of duty with the Army of the Cumberland. Van Cleve was ordered to Murfreesboro, where he assumed command of the post. <sup>14</sup>

At the battle of Chattanooga, which was fought on November 25, the Union "Army Group" commanded by Major General Ulysses S. Grant routed Bragg's Army of Tennessee. The Confederates fell back to Dalton, Georgia, where Bragg asked to be relieved. General Joseph E. Johnston took charge of the Army of Tennessee. The two opposing armies then went into winter quarters.

Thomas, on January 2, 1864, issued an order organizing the 23d Missouri Infantry, the 115th Ohio Infantry, the 4th Tennessee Infantry, and the 31st Wisconsin Infantry into a brigade. General Van Cleve was assigned to the command of this newly constituted unit. At the same time, Colonel Coburn's brigade was assigned to a newly constituted division commanded by General Ward. Ward's division was transferred to the Chattanooga area immediately thereafter. Following the departure of Coburn's

troops, the defense of the Murfreesboro area was entrusted to Van Cleve's brigade. 15

In January, Major John Mendenhall visited Fortress Rosecrans. The major, in accordance with instructions from Brigadier General John M. Brannan, was making an inspection of the artillery emplaced in the forts located in the Department of the Cumberland. In his report which he filed on January 14, Mendenhall made the following comments regarding Fortress Rosecrans:

The fort is manned by the First Kentucky Battery and about 800 convalescent officers and soldiers, all under the command of Major Charles Houghtaling, First Illinois Light Artillery.

The guns are divided into batteries of from three to nine guns each, under the charge of a commissioned officer, and from 60 to 100 enlisted men present.

Battery Mitchell is commanded by Lieutenant John D. Irwin, of the First Kentucky Battery, and is armed with one 12-pounder and one 6-pounder field gun, and two 8-inch siege howitzers.

Battery at Lynette Palmer, by First Lieutenant Dumay Jones, Seventy-Ninth Indiana Volunteers, armed with four 6-pounder Parrott field guns and one 8-inch siege howitzer.

Battery at Lynette McCook, by Capt. J. R. Piscus, Seventeenth Indiana, armed with one 24-pounder, rifled, four 6-pounder Parrott field guns, and two 8-inch siege howitzers.

Battery at Lunette Negley, by Capt. D. M. Roberts, Seventy-fifth Illinois, armed with two 6-pounders, one 3-inch, one 6-pounder James rifle field-guns, and one 8-inch siege howitzer.

Battery at Lunettes Rousseau, Sheridan, [Thomas] and Reynolds, by Capt. W. A. Gregory, Twenty-Second Illinois, armed with three 6-pounder field guns, one 24-pounder, rifled, and one 8-inch siege howitzer.

Battery at Lunettes Granger and Crittenden, by Capt. W. N. Doughty, Thirty-seventh Indiana, armed with one 6-pounder and one 3-inch gun, and one 12-pounder field howitzer.

Battery at Redoubt Johnson, by Lieut. William Pool, Eighty-seventh Indiana, armed with four 24-pounders, rifled.

Battery at Redoubt Schofield, by First Lieut. William H. Leamy, Nineteenth U. S. Infantry, armed with one 30-pounder Parrott, four 24-pounders, siege, and one 6-pounder, field guns.

Battery at Redoubt Wood, armed with four 24-pounders, rifled.

Battery at Redoubt Erannan, by Second Lieut. J. D. Williams, Ninth Michigan, armed with three 30-pounder Parrotts, two 12-pounder field guns, and one 8-inch siege howitzer.

The First Kentucky Battery (Captain [Theodore S.] Thomasson), besides its own guns, two 6-pounders, one 3-inch and two 6-pounder James rifled field guns, has charge of one 24-pounder, rifled, and three 8-inch siege howitzers. Each battery, except the one at Lunettes Granger and Crittenden, has a magazine, all of which are in good condition. A little dampness can be seen in three or four of them

after a long, heavy rain. At Redoubt Schofield the magazine leaked slightly, but will be fixed as soon as the weather will permit. Major Houghtaling told me that this magazine had heretofore been considered the best in the fort.

I could not get into the large magazine, the man who had the key could not be found. General Van Cleve and Major Houghtaling, who were in it a few days before, said that it was in a very good condition, but that there was slight dampness after long rains. The gallery around this magazine has fallen in in two places, but can be easily repaired.

The military appearance, discipline, drill, police, care of guns and implements, very good. The men are in comfortable huts. Mess arrangements good.

The First Kentucky Battery, 54 horses, some of which are convalescent horses, and the others are such as could be bought in the country around Murfreesborough. They are not in good condition, and are generally too light for artillery. The battery is kept in good order and the horses have a very good stable.

The scarps of the redoubts are giving way badly where galleries were to have been made. Some of the traverses are also falling down; one of them has been almost entirely built by the garrison.

The block-houses all leak badly, and are therefore little used even for store-houses.

Garrison, One hundred and fifteenth Ohio and Twenty-second and Thirty-first Wisconsin. 16

In the second week of March 1864, Major General William T. Sherman was placed in command of the vast Military Division of

the Mississippi. At the same time, General Grant was promoted to a lieutenant general and called to Washington to take charge of the armies of the United States. According to the plan of operations worked out by Grant, Sherman's "Army Group" was to launch a drive into northwest Georgia and endeavor to destroy General Johnston's Army of Tennessee. Sherman would also have as his objective the capture of Atlanta.

Preparatory to moving against Johnston, Sherman sought to provide for the security of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. This railroad would be Sherman's life line as his "Army Group" plunged deeper into the Confederate "Heartland". Looking in this direction, General Brannan, on March 23, issued an order assigning three batteries (Battery D, 1st Michigan Light Artillery, the 8th Battery, Wisconsin Light Artillery, and the 12th Battery, Ohio Light Artillery) to Fortress Rosecrans.

The cannoners from these three units would man the guns emplaced in the fortifications. Before leaving Nashville, where they were currently stationed, the three designated batteries were to "turn over their guns, horses, harness, &c., to Colonel James M. Bartlett. The colonel, in turn, would see that this property was transferred to the other organizations belonging to the Artillery Reserve of the Army of the Cumberland. At the same time,

the 1st Battery, Kentucky Light Artillery was assigned to the Artillery Reserve and ordered to Chattanooga. By the end of March, the three batteries had reached Fortress Rosecrans, where they reported to Major Houghtaling. As soon as the Kentuckians had been relieved, they joined the Artillery Reserve. 17

Brigadier General William D. Whipple, Thomas' chief of staff (on April 8) submitted a statement enumerating the number of troops which he estimated would be necessary to hold the blockhouses. These stockades were being erected to protect the bridges on the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. (See Appendix A.) The troops holding these blockhouses would be supported by garrisons posted at Murfreesboro, Tullahoma, Stevenson, and Bridgeport. At present, Whipple commented, the railroad between Fosterville and Murfreesboro was guarded by the 23d Missouri; the regimental headquarters were at Christiana. Murfreesboro was occupied by the 115th Ohio, the 31st Wisconsin, and 384 convalescents, the general noted. In addition to the three batteries of artillery, two companies from the 23d Missouri held Fortress Rosecrans. The 85th Indiana watched the railroad from Fortress Rosecrans to Nashville.

Whipple thought that this was simply too many men. He suggested that the 23d Missouri be relieved of duty on the railroad

and sent to McMinnville. There, the Missourians would relieve the 19th Michigan; the Michiganders would be freed to rejoin Coburn's brigade at the front. The Murfreesboro convalescents were to be armed. Along with the 115th Ohio and the 31st Wisconsin, the convalescents would be charged with guarding Murfreesboro and the blockhouses between that city and Tullahoma. 18

Thomas moved promptly to carry out Whipple's recommendations. On April 12, he issued orders for Rousseau to relieve two of the regiments (the 85th Indiana and the 23d Missouri) which were stationed along the line of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. These troops were to be replaced by soldiers from the Nashville garrison. The 23d Missouri was to relieve the 19th Michigan at McMinnville. Both the Michiganders and the Indianians were to be sent to Chattanooga. Upon reaching Chattanooga on the 14th, these two regiments were assigned to the XX Army Corps. 19

General Sherman began his drive toward Atlanta on May 5. For the next four months, Sherman's "Army Group" was in constant and bloody contact with the Confederate Army of Tennessee. During this period, the Union authorities made several administrative changes in Tennessee. Early in the summer, the District of Nashville was redesignated as the District of Tennessee. 20 A new

command, the "Defenses Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad", was also constituted. Major General Robert H. Milroy was placed in charge of the three brigades (Van Cleve's, Robinson's, and Krzyzanowski's) which were given the task of guarding the vital railroad.

By this time, Van Cleve's brigade had been reduced to one infantry regiment (the 115th Ohio) and three batteries of artillery (Battery D, 1st Michigan, the 12th Ohio, and the 8th Wisconsin). At the end of the first week of June, Van Cleve's other infantry regiment (the 31st Wisconsin) had been detached and ordered to Nashville. Van Cleve used his artilleryists to garrison Fortress Roscrans, while the infantrymen of the 115th Ohio were posted in the blockhouses which guarded the railroad bridges on either side of Murfreesboro. Lieutenant Colonel Walker E. Lawrence had also replaced Major Houghtaling as commandant of Fortress Roscrans. 21

Atlanta, on the night of September 1, was evacuated by the Army of Tennessee, which was led now by General John B. Hood. (General Johnston had been relieved by President Jefferson Davis on July 17.) Sherman's bluecoated legions poured into the strategic city the following morning. Within two weeks, Major General Nathan B. Forrest launched a slashing raid on the Union

communication lines in north Alabama and Middle Tennessee. Even though Forrest's hard-riding troopers failed to reach Fortress Rosecrans, they caused a flurry of activity among the Murfreesboro Federals. To strengthen the garrison at Fortress Rosecrans, General Rousseau rushed the 174th Ohio to Murfreesboro. As soon as the danger had passed, the 174th Ohio, on October 28, was transferred to Decatur, Alabama. 22

In the meantime, Hood had regrouped his army and moved into northern Alabama. Sherman had endeavored to follow the Army of Tennessee. Unable to overtake the hard-marching Rebel legions, Sherman's bluecoats returned to Atlanta. Here, Sherman stripped down his army, preparatory to making his famous "March to the Sea". General Thomas was detached and ordered to Tennessee. The "Rock of Chickamauga" was given the task of coping with Hood's projected invasion of Middle Tennessee.

# THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

## Notes -- Chapter II

### The Defenders of Fortress Rosecrans Change with the Shifting Tides of the War

1 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXIII, pt. II, 458-459.

2 Ibid., 496, 503, 508.

3 Ibid., 573, 606.

4 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXX, pt. III, 38, 141, 156, 290. The 5th Iowa Cavalry was ordered to McMinnville on September 6; the 9th Ohio Battery was transferred to Tullahoma on the previous day.

5 Ibid., 329. Colonels Champion and Reid disposed of their units as follows:

<u>Command</u>	<u>Regiment</u>	<u>Commanding Officer</u>	<u>Where stationed</u>
Colonel Champion	96th Illinois	Lt. Col. I. L. Clarke	Estill Springs
	84th Indiana	Lt. Col. S. Orr	Estill Springs
	115th Illinois	Col. J. H. Moore	Fosterville
	40th Ohio	Col. J. E. Taylor	Tullahoma
Colonel Reid	98th Ohio	Lt. Col. J. S. Pearce	Wartrace
	121st Ohio	Lt. Col. H. B. Banning	Cowan
	113th Ohio	Lt. Col. D. B. Warner	Wartrace
	78th Illinois	Lt. Col. C. Van Vleck	Shelbyville

- 6 Ibid., 397.
- 7 Ibid., 431, 612-613.
- 8 Ibid., 636.
- 9 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXX, pt. IV, 84-85.
- 10 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXX, pt. II, 701, 706-707.
- 11 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXI, pt. I, 716.
- 12 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXI, pt. III, 27.
- 13 Ibid., 109.
- 14 Ibid., 558. In April, the 17th U. S. Colored Infantry was transferred from Murfreesboro to Nashville.
- 15 Q. R., Series I, Vol. LII, pt. I, 510; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXII, pt. II, 282. The 4th Tennessee Infantry was stationed in Knoxville at this time. This regiment never reported to General Van Cleve. On April 10, 1864, the Tennesseans were reassigned to the XXIII Army Corps.
- 16 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXII, pt. II, 93-94. General Brannan held the position of chief of artillery for the Department of the Cumberland. Major Mendenhall was Brannan's assistant.
- 17 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXII, pt. III, 134, 212.
- 18 Ibid., 290-291.
- 19 Ibid., 337-338, 364.
- 20 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXIX, pt. II, 62, 325.

21 Ibid., 327; Frederick H. Dyer, Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, (Des Moines, 1909), 466-463, 686. After a short tour of duty at Nashville, the 31st Wisconsin joined Sherman's "Army Group" before Atlanta. Colonel Edward J. Robinson's brigade was stationed at Tullahoma and Colonel Wladimir Krzyzanowski's at Bridgeport, Alabama.

22 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXIX, pt. II, 495; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXIX, pt. I, 542-549; Dyer, Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, 1553.

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Chapter III

#### Hood Invades Middle Tennessee

When General Hood's Confederate Army of Tennessee launched its invasion of Middle Tennessee at the end of the third week of November 1864, General Rousseau was still in charge of the District of Tennessee. Rousseau maintained his headquarters at Nashville. In addition to protecting Middle Tennessee from raids by the Confederate cavalry, Rousseau's command was charged with the defense of the railroads of the area which had been restored to service by the military.<sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly, the most important railroad in Rousseau's district was the Nashville and Chattanooga. To protect this railroad, a command designated as the Defenses of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad had been constituted by the Union authorities. General Milroy had been placed in charge of this command. By this time, Milroy's command had been reduced to two brigades. Brigadier General Moratio P. Van Cleve was in charge of the 1st Brigade; Colonel Wladimir Krzyzanowski led the 3d Brigade. Colonel Edward J. Robinson's 2d Brigade had been disbanded. Two of Robinson's regiments (the 137th and 138th Indiana)

had been mustered out; his other units now reported directly to Milroy.

Van Cleve's troops were charged with the defense of the the railroad between Nashville and Murfreesboro. On the final day of October, Van Cleve's brigade contained only one infantry regiment (the 115th Ohio) and three batteries. The Ohio infantrymen were used to garrison the seven blockhouses which the Federals had constructed to protect the bridges on the section of the railroad guarded by Van Cleve's troops. Van Cleve's three artillery units were stationed in Fortress Rosecrans, the strong point that the Federals had constructed following the battle of Stones River. Fortress Rosecrans was designed to protect the railroad and Nashville pike bridges across Stones River. In addition, the fortress functioned as a supply depot for Milroy's command. At this stage of the conflict, Major Frederick Schultz was in command at Fortress Rosecrans. Van Cleve maintained his headquarters in Murfreesboro, 3.

Two additional infantry regiments reported to Van Cleve before the first tidings of Hood's advance reached Murfreesboro. On November 7 a train pulled into the Murfreesboro yards, and off scrambled the rugged soldiers belonging to the 8th Minnesota. This regiment had come a long way. During the summer and early

fall, the Minnesotans had been engaged against the Sioux Indians in the western part of Dakota Territory.

A recently organized regiment, the 140th Indiana, reached Murfreesboro by rail on the 23d. The Indianians had left Indianapolis eight days before. <sup>4</sup>

The brigade commanded by Colonel Krzyzanowski guarded the railroad between Decherd, Tennessee, and Bridgeport, Alabama. To carry out this task, Krzyzanowski was given five infantry regiments and two batteries of artillery. The brigade commander had his command post at Stevenson, Alabama. <sup>5</sup>

Since Tullahoma was about halfway between Chattanooga and Nashville, General Milroy maintained his headquarters there. Two infantry regiments (the 177th and 178th Ohio), one dismounted cavalry regiment (the 12th Indiana), and a battery of artillery (the 13th Battery, New York Light Artillery) were stationed at Tullahoma. With this force, Milroy would protect the railroad from Murfreesboro to Decherd. <sup>6</sup>

It was November 24 before the Federal authorities in Tennessee learned anything definite concerning Hood's movements. During the day, Generals Rousseau and Milroy were informed by General Thomas that his field army under Major General John M. Schofield had evacuated Pulaski, Tennessee. <sup>7</sup>

The news that the Rebels had reached Pulaski caused Rousseau and Milroy to swing into action. Milroy immediately contacted the officer in charge of the Union forces stationed at Decherd, Colonel Willard Warner. The colonel was notified that Hood's army was across the Tennessee River and was reportedly pushing toward the east. If this were true, Milroy observed, the Rebels were pushing for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. Warner was to put his command, the 180th Ohio, in condition to defend Decherd and the railroad bridge across Elk River at Allisonia. Already, Milroy continued, Hood's push had compelled the Federals to abandon the Nashville and Decatur Railroad south of Columbia, Tennessee, and the Memphis and Charleston Railroad west of Stevenson. To keep his regiment from being surprised, Colonel Warner was to picket all the roads approaching his position from the west. Any information obtained was to be relayed immediately to Milroy's Tullahoma headquarters. 8

Milroy also notified Major John C. Hamilton, the officer in charge of the detachment of the 178th Ohio which was stationed at Shelbyville, Tennessee, that the Rebels had reached Pulaski. Hamilton was to scout to the west. The major was to be prepared to fall back to the Duck River bridge in case the Confederates came his way. 9

To be ready for any emergency which might suddenly develop, Rousseau directed Milroy to stockpile all the forage and rations he could at Tullahoma. All surplus wagons would be sent to Murfreesboro. <sup>10</sup>

In the meantime, the Federal officers charged with the defense of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad west of Stevenson moved to comply with Thomas' directive that it should be abandoned. At 11 a. m. on the 24th, Thomas telegraphed Brigadier General Robert S. Granger, the commander of the District of Northern Alabama. The general informed Granger that the superintendent of the Military Railroads had notified him that over 120 cars were scheduled to be at Huntsville, Alabama, during the morning. These cars were to be used to shift Granger's command to Stevenson and Murfreesboro. Granger was to wire Thomas as soon as the first trains had started. <sup>11</sup>

When he acknowledged Thomas' message at 1:45, Granger reported that no cars had reached Decatur. <sup>12</sup> Thomas waited until 4:30 before replying. He again informed Granger that the superintendent had assured him that the requisitioned cars were to be at Huntsville at 10 a. m. Since Granger was at Decatur, Thomas wondered if the commander at Huntsville had inadvertently held up the trains. Again, Granger was admonished to entrain his troops

as rapidly as possible. Thomas also telegraphed Colonel William P. Lyon, the officer in charge of the post at Huntsville. Lyon was ordered to advise Thomas whether any trains or cars had reached his post. In addition, he was to let the general know if his troops were entraining; and if they were, when the first train would start. Thomas directed Lyon to contact Granger. 13

Replying to Thomas' communication, Lyon reported that only one train had reached Huntsville. An engine and 12 cars had been sent on to Decatur. So far, Lyon continued, the only infantry that had been evacuated from Huntsville were the sick. The artillery, however, had already left, and the gear belonging to the 13th Indiana Cavalry had been loaded and was ready to go. Lyon informed Thomas that there were an estimated 50 carloads of commissary supplies stored at Huntsville. If these were to be removed, more cars would be needed. 14

By the time that Thomas' 4:30 telegram reached Granger, the 12-car train had chugged into the Decatur yards. When he acknowledged Thomas' communication, Granger relayed this information to his superior. 15

Following the arrival of the cars late on the afternoon of the 24th, Granger pulled his troops out of Decatur and Athens. All the public property (except for some forage stored at Decatur) was removed. A shortage of transportation kept the Federals from

saving the forage, so it was burned. After leaving Decatur, Granger stopped at Huntsville on the 25th. Here, the general found that the evacuation was not going according to schedule. Colonel Lyon told the general that he would have to have additional transportation if the large amount of stores which had been stockpiled at Huntsville were to be saved. In addition, the movement of the colonel's troops and their equipment from Huntsville to Stevenson had been delayed by an accident on the railroad. Near Larkinsville, six cars had jumped the track. It took the railroad workers about four hours to clear the right of way. 16

When Granger notified Thomas of these developments, he also informed his chief that all was quiet in the Huntsville area. His scouts, who were very active, had reported that the Confederates gave no indication of penetrating into the area between Huntsville and the Elk River. 17

In the meantime, Thomas had determined to reassign a number of the units which were being withdrawn from the Tennessee Valley to the defense of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. He informed Rousseau on the 25th that the 3d, 4th, and 29th Michigan, and the 174th and 181st Ohio regiments were under orders to proceed to Murfreesboro. Having made his decision, Thomas

proceeded to see that his orders were carried out. Not knowing that the derailment had delayed the movement of Granger's command, from Huntsville to Stevenson, Thomas wired Colonel Krzyzanowski at Stevenson, "Have any of the Michigan regiments come up from Decatur?" Krzyzanowski informed Thomas that during the day no troops had reached Stevenson from Huntsville. A train had reportedly left Huntsville at 4 a. m., but as yet, it had not arrived. Evidently, the telegraph line had been damaged in the derailment, because Krzyzanowdki informed Thomas that he had received no news from Huntsville since 9 a. m. 18

Rousseau, learning that the three Michigan regiments and the two Ohio regiments had been assigned to his command, contacted General Milroy. As soon as these units reached Murfreesboro, they were to be detrained and camped at Fortress Rosecrans. After the troops and their equipment had been unloaded, the cars were to be sent to Nashville. The regimental commanders would report to General Van Cleve for further orders. Van Cleve was to inspect the newcomers and see that there was enough ammunition in the magazines of Fortress Rosecrans to supply each man with 200 rounds. Furthermore, Rousseau wanted Van Cleve's chief of commissary to keep on hand at all times 200,000 rations.

Following the arrival of these reinforcements, Milroy

was to relieve two of his regiments (the 6th Kentucky and the 180th Ohio) from their duty along the railroad. Since the Kentuckians were approaching the end of their term of service, they were to be furnished rail transportation and sent to Nashville. At Nashville, they would be mustered out of service. If feasible, Milroy was to send the 180th Ohio to Fayetteville, Tennessee. 19

Later in the day, Milroy received another telegram from Rousseau. Rousseau elaborated on the news regarding Schofield's withdrawal from Pulaski. Schofield's troops, upon abandoning Pulaski, had fallen back to Columbia. Already, Rousseau continued, there had been considerable skirmishing on the approaches to Columbia. The wires were down between Nashville and Columbia, but the Union leaders were convinced that Hood was striking for Middle Tennessee with his entire available force. This message caused Milroy to change his mind in regard to sending the 180th Ohio to Fayetteville. 20

The next day, all the reports reaching Nashville from Schofield at Columbia tended to support Thomas and Rousseau in their belief that Nashville was Hood's goal. Therefore, when Rousseau contacted Milroy on the 26th, he informed his junior officer that he was expected to hold the Nashville and Chattanooga

Railroad against Hood's cavalry. Rousseau did not feel that Milroy would have to contend with the Rebel infantry. The bridges over the Duck River at Shelbyville and at Manchester were to be closely guarded. These bridges, Rousseau warned, would not be burned unless the greyclads approached in strength.

Major Hamilton's detachment of the 178th Ohio which was posted at Shelbyville was to be replaced with cavalry. Any surplus supplies currently stockpiled at Tullahoma were to be transferred to Murfreesboro. Milroy was also informed that General Thomas had alerted Major General James B. Steedman to be ready to rush from 5,000 to 7,000 infantry to the defense of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. (Steedman commanded the District of the Etowah.) In closing, Rousseau wanted to know the number and type of guns mounted in the defenses of Tullahoma. 21

Milroy replied almost immediately to Rousseau's telegram. He informed his superior that there were ten guns at Tullahoma, ranging in caliber from rifled 24-pounders to 3-inch ordnance rifles. Since there were only about 100 cavalymen currently attached to his command, Milroy felt that he could not spare them to relieve Hamilton's detachment. At this time, the troopers were patrolling the area west of Shelbyville. In an effort to increase the strength

of his mounted army, Milroy announced that he had asked General Granger to send him three companies of the 13th Indiana Cavalry. Milroy believed that Major Hamilton's troops, in case of an emergency, would be able to fall back to the railroad bridge across the Duck River. In view of these circumstances, Milroy wanted to know if Rousseau still wanted him to withdraw Hamilton's infantry. 22

Acknowledging Milroy's message, Rousseau stated that it was all right if Hamilton's two companies remained at Shelbyville. At least five mounted men, however, were to be stationed at Shelbyville. These troopers were to spread the alarm in case of a raid by the Confederate cavalry. 23

Following the receipt of Rousseau's wire, Milroy dashed off a letter to Major Hamilton. The major was told to post a guard on the Duck River bridge. In case a Rebel mounted column moved on Shelbyville, Hamilton's soldiers were to remove the flooring from the bridge. If the strength of the Southerners proved to be overwhelming, the bridge was to be burned and Hamilton's bluecoats were to fall back to the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. At all times, Milroy warned, Hamilton was to make sure that his scouts kept a strong watch on the countryside

west of Shelbyville. 24

General Granger spent the 26th at Huntsville. The general wanted to insure that his troops carried out an orderly evacuation of their bases along the Memphis and Charleston Railroad. Meanwhile, General Thomas had learned from his subordinates that more cavalry was needed in Middle Tennessee. Thomas accordingly telegraphed Granger to expedite the transfer of the 13th Indiana Cavalry from the Tennessee Valley to Nashville. 25 Apparently, Granger had divined Thomas' intentions. When Thomas' order reached Huntsville, the 13th Indiana had already been relieved; the troopers were at the depot waiting to entrain. 26

Shortly after leaving Huntsville on the evening of the 26th, the train with the 13th Indiana Cavalry aboard jumped the track near Brownsboro. Six cars were tumbled into the ditch; the same number of men were injured. It took the repair crews 24 hours to clear the right of way and replace the 150 yards of track which had been torn up. The Indianians were able to salvage most of their gear, but they were forced to burn the wrecked cars. As soon as the line was declared open for traffic, a train was sent out from Stevenson to pick up the cavalrymen. 27

The wreck forced General Granger to hold the remainder

of his troops at Huntsville until the morning of the 28th. When Granger notified Thomas of this development, he passed along several other pieces of information. Granger reported that the 10th Indiana Cavalry had just returned from Athens and the Elk River. The troopers had failed to encounter any Confederates. Granger observed that in his opinion the only Rebel troops operating in the Tennessee Valley at the moment were guerrillas.

What especially troubled Granger about the Union withdrawal from the area was what would happen to the Negroes. He informed Thomas that Negroes by the thousands were deserting the contraband and Government camps. These unfortunates were following his troops as they pulled back toward Stevenson. To keep the roads open for his soldiers, Granger had been forced to order the Negroes not to pass beyond Huntsville. 28

Four of the five regiments from Granger's command which had been ordered to Murfreesboro reported to General Van Cleve on the 27th. After detraining, the bluecoated infantrymen marched to Fortress Rosecrans and camped. The other regiment, the 4th Michigan, had been delayed by the train wreck at Brownsboro and was held up at Huntsville. 29

During the day, there was an alert along the Nashville

and Chattanooga Railroad. Several excited members of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) who were watching the roads west of Shelbyville came galloping into town. They told Major Hamilton that a mounted Rebel combat patrol was advancing along the Pulaski road. Already, they continued, the Southerners had surprised and captured several of their comrades. In addition, the Rebels were raiding the farms and driving off all the cattle and hogs. Later reports indicated to the major that the greyclads had camped three and one-half miles west of town. Major Hamilton promptly relayed this important information to General Milroy. 30

Replying, Milroy ordered Hamilton to burn the Duck River bridge. If Hamilton were satisfied that the Confederates were advancing in strength, he was to destroy his supplies and fall back to the railroad. In case the Rebel force was just a foraging party, Hamilton was to remain where he was. 31

News of this Confederate thrust toward the railroad was immediately relayed to Generals Rousseau and Steedman by Milroy. About midnight, Milroy sent Steedman a second telegram. Milroy informed Steedman that he believed the cavalry which Hamilton had pinpointed was striking for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. But, he continued, it might presage a drive by Hood's entire army

into East Tennessee. If this were true, Milroy knew that he would have to be reinforced. He therefore wanted to know when Steedman proposed to throw his command upon the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. 32

Steedman replied that he was ready to move on short notice. All that was needed was for Thomas to give the word. 33

In an effort to strengthen his mobile force at Shelbyville, Milroy wired the commanders of the detachments of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry which were stationed at Nol'nnville and Manchester. These officers were to rendezvous at Tullahoma with their commands at their earliest opportunity. 34

The Confederate troopers who were threatening Shelbyville belonged to General Forrest's command. Forrest, who was in charge of all the cavalry serving with Hood's Army of Tennessee, had sent Captain Joseph T. Cobb and his company of Texas Scouts to attack the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. Leaving Columbia early on the 27th, the Texans had headed eastward. Near Shelbyville, the Texans surprised and captured 13 of Major Hamilton's pickets.

At daybreak on the 28th, Cobb's scouts rushed the Union outposts that were guarding the northern approaches to Shelbyville.

Failing to surprise the bluecoats, the Texans quickly broke contact. The Southerners, estimated by Hamilton to number about 80, made for the Fairfield pike. Hamilton's mounted force followed the greyclads. When Hamilton notified Milroy of this action, he advanced the opinion that his attackers were merely a foraging party. 35

After leaving Shelbyville, the butternut raiders were intercepted three miles west of Wartrace by a detachment of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) led by Major John Wortham. After a brisk skirmish, Cobb's Texans headed for Bell Buckle. Wortham's troopers followed the Rebels for a short distance. Before reaching Bell Buckle, the Confederate scouts doubled back and headed for the Duck River. Another combat patrol from the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) came across Cobb's trail. Taking up the chase, the Tennesseans pursued the Texans. A running fight ensued and continued until the Confederates recrossed the Duck River near Berlin. 36

The news of the clash near Wartrace reached Milroy first. Upon receiving this information, Milroy immediately telegraphed Rousseau and Steedman. Besides reporting Wortham's success, Milroy observed that the sound of heavy firing had been coming

from the direction of Shelbyville. In addition, Milroy continued, it was rumored that a strong Confederate force was near Lavergne. Milroy said to Steedman that he was fearful lest the Rebels smash the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. 37

During the day, General Rousseau shifted his headquarters from Nashville to Murfreesboro. The general was accompanied to Murfreesboro by the 61st Illinois. Rousseau kept Thomas abreast of the developments in the Shelbyville sector. He also informed Thomas that a resident of Columbia had reached Tullahoma with a tale that Hood's Army of Tennessee had crossed the Duck River 12 miles below Columbia.

When he acknowledged Rousseau's communications, Thomas warned that Shelbyville should not be evacuated. Thomas informed Rousseau that there was no truth in the report that Hood had crossed the Duck River west of Columbia. According to the latest reports reaching Nashville from the front, Thomas pointed out, Hood's army was still massed on the south side of the Duck River. 38

By the evening of the 28th, almost all of Granger's troops had evacuated Huntsville. The general, along with the 10th Indiana Cavalry, remained behind to bring off the wagons and destroy all the public property which could be removed. A break

in the railroad now occurred; a locomotive and 26 freight cars were stranded in Huntsville. Not wanting to destroy this valuable equipment, Granger, hoping that the railroad might be repaired, determined to remain at Huntsville for several more days.

Following the Union withdrawal from Decatur, Colonel Alfred A. Russell crossed the Tennessee River at the head of his 4th Alabama Cavalry. Russell's greyclads cautiously closed in on Huntsville. After cutting the telegraph, the Confederates paused and waited for Granger's troops to continue their retreat.

Granger remained at Huntsville until the morning of December 2. By this time, the general had decided he could not wait any longer for the repair crews to repair the break. He decided to start for Stevenson. Approximately 250 wagons and a large number of refugees accompanied the Union column. The road was in wretched condition and the streams barely fordable. Before Granger had proceeded very far, a locomotive and two cars chugged into view. The officer in charge of the train hailed Granger. He stated that if Granger would give him an escort, he would return to Huntsville and save the abandoned engine and cars. Granger quickly fell in with this daring proposal. At a word from Granger, 120 men scrambled aboard the train.

As the train entered Huntsville, it was fired on by a detachment of Russell's regiment. The Rebels had occupied the town immediately following the bluecoats' departure. The engineer lost his nerve. In his frightened condition, he ran the locomotive off the track. After destroying the train, the glum Federals retraced their steps.

Following the return of the detachment, Granger's column resumed its retreat. The Unionists reached Stevenson on the 5th. Colonel Russell's Alabamans pursued the Yankees to within 1/4 miles of their base. In a series of harassing attacks on the Federal rear guard, the Rebels succeeded in cutting off and capturing about 450 Negroes and a large number of wagons carrying their personal possessions. 39

The first telegram which Rousseau received from Thomas on November 29 announced that part of Hood's army had forded the Duck River above Columbia. Consequently, Schofield's army would be compelled to fall back on Franklin. Thomas also wanted to know what the latest developments along the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad were. 40

When Rousseau replied, he announced that with one exception all was quiet along the railroad below Murfreesboro.

During the previous night, a small party of irregulars had burned the woodpile at Christiana and had torn up several rails. This damage, however, had been quickly repaired. By the noon hour trains were again running between Murfreesboro and Tullahoma. Confederate mounted patrols were reported to be still operating in the Shelbyville area, but news of their activity was "confused and vague".

Next, Rousseau turned to the movements of his own troops. The train with the 4th Michigan aboard had reached Tullahoma during the night. Instructions had already been issued for the Michiganders to come to Murfreesboro. Milroy's orders recalling the detachments of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) from McMinnville and Manchester had been countermanded.

In the event that communications between Nashville and Murfreesboro were disrupted in the near future, Rousseau thought it might be a good idea if Thomas enlightened him on the proper course of action to be followed. Rousseau wanted to know if he should move out of Murfreesboro "and join in the battle that may be fought in front of Nashville". His troops, Rousseau continued, were "mostly raw", but in case of an emergency, they would undoubtedly prove useful. <sup>41</sup>

Thomas informed Rousseau that if the Rebels were able to sever communications between their two commands, he wanted Rousseau "to hold Murfreesborough secure". The general felt certain that, as soon as Major General Andrew J. Smith's detachment of the Army of the Tennessee reached Nashville, he would have enough troops "to whip Hood if he ventures this far". Thomas was of the opinion that as soon as the commissary stores at Tullahoma were removed, Rousseau had better withdraw Milroy to Murfreesboro. If there were sufficient time, the troops guarding the railroad bridge spanning the Elk River could be brought to Murfreesboro; if not, they could be concentrated at the tunnel. <sup>42</sup>

In a second telegram, Thomas warned Rousseau that a strong force of Confederate cavalry had crossed the Duck River. Rousseau was cautioned to keep a sharp lookout. Thomas felt that Rousseau could expect the Rebel horsemen by the next day or the day after. To facilitate the transfer of the commissary supplies from Tullahoma, Thomas was sending two trains. Thomas reiterated his directive that Milroy should evacuate Tullahoma as soon as the stores were loaded. A copy of the portion of the telegram dealing with the commissary stores was forwarded to General Milroy. <sup>43</sup>

Rousseau spent most of the afternoon inspecting Fortress Rosecrans and its garrison. Impressed by what he saw, Rousseau pronounced everything in "good condition". In addition, the general was cheered by the arrival of a train from Tullahoma with the 4th Michigan aboard. Returning to his headquarters, the general found Thomas' telegrams. One of Thomas' messages puzzled Rousseau. It was not clear to Rousseau whether Milroy was to be withdrawn immediately from Tullahoma, or after communications between Nashville and Murfreesboro had been interrupted. Rousseau therefore wired Thomas for clarification on this point. <sup>44</sup>

Thomas wasted no time in informing Rousseau that Milroy was not to be pulled out of Tullahoma until after all the commissary stores had been removed. As soon as this task had been accomplished, Milroy was to join Rousseau. <sup>45</sup>

Rousseau accordingly proceeded to get in touch with Milroy. The Tullahoma commander was notified that two trains were en route to him from Murfreesboro. All the stores currently stockpiled in the Tullahoma commissary depot (except for three days' rations for the personnel belonging to Milroy's command) were to be loaded aboard these cars and shipped to Chattanooga. After this operation had been completed, Milroy's troops were to march to Murfreesboro by way of Shelbyville. A strong rear guard,

charged with the mission of arresting stragglers and preventing depredation, would be detailed by Milroy to cover his movement to Murfreesboro. <sup>46</sup>

One aspect of Rousseau's telegram deeply disturbed Milroy. He did not have any horses with which to remove the ten guns mounted in the fort at Tullahoma. When he communicated this information to Rousseau, Milroy reported that the roar of distant artillery was distinctly audible. Milroy estimated that the scene of this fighting was between 30 and 50 miles northwest of Tullahoma. (Milroy was correct. On the evening of the 29th, Hood's and Schofield's troops were in contact at Spring Hill, approximately 55 miles away. <sup>47</sup>

Upon receiving Milroy's message, Rousseau telegraphed Thomas. Rousseau advanced to his chief two suggestions for moving the guns. First, since Milroy had no horses to pull the guns, Rousseau could authorize him to use the mounts belonging to the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union). This was predicated on the assumption that Milroy would be able to secure the necessary harness. The second course of action open to the Federals was for Thomas to order to Tullahoma an engine and a number of flat cars. In this way, both the artillery and Milroy's camp equipage could

be transferred to Murfreesboro. Rousseau pointed out, in support of the second alternative, it was doubtful if enough teams could be secured to pull the four heavy siege guns. <sup>48</sup>

While waiting for Thomas' reply, Rousseau kept Milroy abreast of developments. Pending the receipt of news regarding the availability of a train, Milroy was to look into the possibility of using the horses of the 5th Tennessee to draw the six guns of the 13th New York Battery. If so, he was to do it. <sup>49</sup>

In the meantime, Rousseau received another wire from Milroy. The Tallahoma commander inquired as to what disposition should be made of the hospitalized Union soldiers and "the hundreds of poor contrabands". Milroy also wanted to know if, when he moved to Murfreesboro, he should recall the blockhouse and bridge guards. Rousseau asked Milroy for a report on the number of men confined to the hospital and the number of contrabands who would be unable to walk to Murfreesboro. If the sick were not in too bad a condition, Rousseau suggested, they might be sent to Chattanooga along with the commissary stores. A copy of Milroy's communication was forwarded to Thomas by Rousseau. <sup>50</sup>

Milroy was not long in replying to Rousseau's inquiry. He informed his superior that there were 150 patients in the

Tullahoma hospital and about 250 "contrabands" that would be unable to march to Murfreesboro. There were also, he reported, a "considerable" amount of medical and ordnance stores at Tullahoma. Since the road to Murfreesboro by way of Shelbyville was very bad, Milroy advanced the suggestion that his column be allowed to use the road which passed through Wartrace. 51

Two telegrams from Thomas served to answer most of the questions raised by Rousseau. The superintendent of the Military Railroads had been directed to rush a train of flat cars to Tullahoma. All the troops posted along the railroad from Murfreesboro to the Elk River bridge were to be assembled and brought to Murfreesboro. For the present, the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad between these two points would be abandoned. Milroy was to send to Chattanooga the soldiers who needed further hospitalization; the "contrabands" were to go to Cowan. There General Steedman would assume responsibility for their protection. 52

Evidently, Thomas had not made himself clear on one point. After perusing Thomas' telegram, Rousseau was unable to decide whether or not he was supposed to recall the force (the 106th Ohio) stationed at Elk River bridge. He believed that the garrison (which was well supplied with ammunition and food) could

hold out in the face of an attack by Confederate cavalry. When he communicated this information to Thomas, Rousseau commented that he considered the bridge and blockhouse well "worth the risk". 53

Thomas gave his approval to Rousseau's plan to leave the 106th Ohio at Elk River bridge. To help subsist the Ohioans, in case they were besieged, the 500 cattle currently pastured at Tullahoma were to be turned over to them. When Thomas conveyed this information to Rousseau, he announced that a hospital train was being sent to Murfreesboro. The Murfreesboro military hospitals were to be emptied and the patients transferred to Nashville. 54

Rousseau moved promptly to carry out Thomas' orders. Milroy was alerted to the impending arrival of a train of empty flat cars. Fatigue parties were to be organized and held ready to load the artillery and ordnance supplies. If there were any extra space, the sick could be sent to Nashville. Milroy, however, was cautioned to remember that the train would also pick up the troops occupying the blockhouses between Tullahoma and Murfreesboro. Since the Federals anticipated an early return to Tullahoma, Milroy was to see that his troops destroyed nothing except items which might prove useful to the foe. Milroy was also told of the

decision to leave the 106th Ohio at Elk River bridge; a detachment would be detailed from the Tullahoma garrison to see to the delivery of the cattle. 55

Early on the 30th, Rousseau notified Milroy that he would try to send him six cars. These would be in addition to the ones being sent from Nashville, and could be used for the ordnance stores. If there were any additional space available, other supplies might be shipped to Murfreesboro. The priority Milroy was to follow in allocating the remaining shipping space was: garrison and camp equipage, sutler's merchandise, and other goods. Rousseau thought that it would be a good idea if Milroy advised the "loyal citizens" to go to Cowan. 56

Thomas likewise sent an early morning telegram to Milroy. While Thomas refused to give Milroy a deadline for evacuating Tullahoma, he wanted him to have his men on the road as soon as all the patients had been placed on board a north-bound train. Thomas demanded of the badgered Milroy the answer to several questions. He wanted to know if the artillery had been shipped, and whether the commissary stores had been sent to Chattanooga. Thomas cautioned, "Don't permit your men to be stampeded, but have things done quietly, and no useless destruction of property of any kind. 57

By 3 a. m., Milroy's fatigue parties had loaded the six field pieces and the ordnance stores aboard the waiting flat cars. In direct violation of Thomas' and Rousseau's orders, the four heavy siege guns were left in the fort. Thomas' sudden decision to send the hospitalized soldiers to Nashville instead of Chattanooga had taken Milroy by surprise. The patients had already been entrained on a south-bound train. It was therefore necessary to turn the engine around. 58

After all the cars had been loaded, Milroy was disturbed to observe that a considerable amount of the regimental baggage and ordnance stores were still piled up at the depot. The general was relieved to learn that an empty north-bound train had just left Cowan. He determined to use this train to expedite the transfer of his command to Murfreesboro. Milroy, in accordance with the decision to abandon the railroad from Murfreesboro to Elk River bridge, had issued orders recalling the garrisons from McMinnville and Manchester. As yet, these detachments had not reached Tullahoma. Correctly believing that these troops would be badly used up by their forced march, Milroy decided to allow them to move to Murfreesboro by rail. After loading the equipment and stores aboard the north-bound train, the soldiers would ride to

Murfreesboro. Stops were to be made along the way to pick up the troops manning the blockhouses. 59

In the meantime, Milroy's unit commanders were forming their men. Preparatory to starting for Murfreesboro, Milroy organized his command into a provisional brigade. Colonel Edward Anderson of the 12th Indiana Cavalry was placed in charge of the newly organized unit. Having secured permission to march by way of Wartrace instead of Shelbyville, Milroy's column marched out of Tullahoma.

A company of cavalry was left to guard the supplies, pending the arrival of the McMinnville and Manchester garrisons. Major Hamilton's Shelbyville detachment was to rendezvous with Milroy's column at Wartrace. Messengers were sent to contact Major John F. Armstrong's detachment of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union), which was patrolling the area west of the railroad. Armstrong's troopers were to be directed to report to Milroy at Murfreesboro. Having started late, Milroy's command made only a 15-mile march and halted for the night of the 30th near Wartrace. 60

The train with General Milroy's artillery aboard reached Murfreesboro about noon. Rousseau soon had a fatigue party hard at work unloading the guns and ammunition. When he informed

Thomas of this, Rousseau pointed out that Fortress Rosecrans was "very extensive". At first, Rousseau had been of the opinion that it would be best not to try to hold everything. But on mature consideration, the general wrote Thomas, he had "concluded to do ... [his] best to hold all". He was making his dispositions accordingly. If Thomas would let him, Rousseau wanted to retain the 21st Indiana Battery. (This five-gun battery had just reached Murfreesboro from Columbia.) In addition, Rousseau wanted Thomas to send him another train. 61

Replying to Rousseau's communication, Thomas announced that, for the time being, he did not intend to send another train to Murfreesboro. He was confident that Rousseau would be able to hold Murfreesboro "against any force Hood will be likely to send against you until we can get our cavalry ready". Thomas thought the Union cavalry would be ready to take the field within five days. 62

Preparatory to the evacuation of Tullahoma, General Milroy issued orders for Colonel Krzyzanowski to report to General Steedman. Krzyzanowski's brigade would continue to hold the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad from Elk River bridge to Bridgeport. 63

On December 1, Rousseau learned that on the previous evening there had been a fierce battle at Franklin. Hood's Army of Tennessee had sought to drive Scofield's army into the Big Harpeth River. The Rebels had been repulsed but, under the cover of darkness, the Yankees had evacuated Franklin and were falling back upon Nashville. During the day, most of General Steedman's command was transferred by rail from Cowan to Nashville.

The day before the battle of Franklin, General Thomas had sent an important telegram to General Steedman. Thomas wanted Steedman to load the mobile portion of his command aboard trains and rush it to Cowan. At Cowan, Steedman would detrain his men. Steedman would see that his soldiers took position so as to threaten an attack on the rear of Hood's army, in case the Confederates struck for the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. <sup>64</sup>

Since Steedman had been expecting orders to take the field for several days, he had placed his troops on a standby basis. His officers were therefore able to get their men ready to take the field on short notice. The officers and men of Steedman's command had previously drawn the required ammunition and rations. As soon as Steedman passed the word, the unit commanders formed and mustered their commands. <sup>65</sup>

In the meantime, Steedman's chief quartermaster had called on the officials of the military railroad to make available rolling stock sufficient to transport 5,200 officers and men, and two batteries. By 2 p. m., all the soldiers slated to accompany Steedman had been marched from their camps to the Chattanooga marshaling yards. As rapidly as each train was loaded, the officer in charge would cry, "All aboard". The engineer would pull on the throttle and the train would start up the track. <sup>66</sup>

It took the hard-working railroaders approximately 17 hours to shift Steedman's command from Chattanooga to Cowan. After detraining at Cowan on the morning of the 30th, Steedman's bluecoats took position covering the approaches to the town. At 6 p. m., Steedman received another important telegram from Thomas. It had now become apparent to Thomas that Hood's Rebel army was striking directly for Nashville. Thomas accordingly ordered Steedman to rush his command to Nashville. <sup>67</sup>

Steedman's bluecoats spent the night of December 1 reboarding the waiting cars. Beginning at daybreak, the trains, one after another, pulled out of the Cowan yards.

When the trains with Steedman's soldiers aboard failed to reach Murfreesboro at the scheduled hour, Rousseau began to fret. Worse, the telegraph suddenly went out of order; Rousseau

was unable to contact the stations south of Murfreesboro. Fearful lest there had been a wreck, Rousseau ordered out a construction train. In case there was a bad break in the track, Rousseau planned to use the two trains currently at Murfreesboro to shuttle Steedman's troops on to Nashville. <sup>68</sup>

Rousseau's fears, however, proved unfounded. General Steedman reached Murfreesboro aboard the lead train at 12:25 p. m. Detrained, Steedman hastened to the dispatcher's office. He wanted to see if the track were clear before proceeding to Nashville. The dispatcher had gone home to eat lunch, so Steedman was compelled to wire Thomas for further instructions. Within a few minutes, Steedman had his reply. The road was open. He was to continue to Nashville. By nightfall, all but two of the trains with Steedman's command aboard had passed through Murfreesboro. A break in the track delayed these two until the following morning. <sup>69</sup>

In the meantime, Union plans regarding the abandonment of the railroad between Murfreesboro and the Duck River had changed. Following Steedman's arrival in Murfreesboro, Rousseau notified Thomas that he was ready to reoccupy the blockhouses along that section of the railroad. If he failed to hear anything from Thomas, Rousseau was prepared to go ahead with this project. Rousseau was afraid that if he delayed too long, Confederates

irregulars would burn the bridges. <sup>70</sup> Thomas acknowledged Rousseau's communication almost immediately. Rousseau received the green light to go ahead with his proposal. By nightfall, the designated blockhouses had been reoccupied by detachments from the 115th Ohio. <sup>71</sup>

It took General Milroy's command, 3,000 strong, the better part of three days to cover the 40 miles from Tullahoma to Murfreesboro. By the time Milroy's troops reached Murfreesboro on the afternoon of the 2d, the Confederates had succeeded in severing direct communications between Murfreesboro and Nashville. Reporting to Rousseau, Milroy received instructions to have his troops camp within the confines of Fortress Rosecrans. <sup>72</sup>

During the early part of the night, the sleep of the Murfreesboro Federals was disturbed by the sound of heavy artillery fire from the northwest. Rousseau believed that this noise indicated one of two things. Either the Rebels were attacking the blockhouses on the railroad between Murfreesboro and Nashville, or fighting had broken out on the Nashville perimeter. Furthermore, since communications between Murfreesboro and Nashville had been interrupted, Rousseau was afraid that the grayclads might have captured the two trainloads of Steedman's troops which had left Murfreesboro that morning. (One of the trains reached Nashville safely, while the other was attacked.) <sup>73</sup>

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Notes -- Chapter III

#### Hood Invades Middle Tennessee

1 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXIX, pt. III, 560.

2 Ibid.; Dyer, A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, 467-468.

Following his surrender of Winchester, Virginia, to Lieutenant General Richard S. Ewell's II Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia on June 15, 1863, Milroy had been placed in arrest. Upon his release from arrest, Milroy had been assigned to Rousseau's district.

3 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXIX, pt. III, 560; Official Roster of the Soldiers of the State of Ohio in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865, (Cincinnati, 1883), 146. The batteries assigned to Van Cleve's brigade were: Battery B, 1st Michigan Light Artillery, the 12th Battery, Ohio Light Artillery, and the 8th Battery, Wisconsin Light Artillery. Major Schultz had been placed in command of Fortress Rosecrans on November 16, 1864. He had relieved Lieutenant Colonel Walker E. Lawrence.

4 Dyer, Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, 1157, 1299.

5 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXIX, pt. III, 560. Krzyzanowski's

infantry regiments were: the 6th Kentucky, the 53th and 68th New York, and the 106th and 180th Ohio. Battery K, 1st Ohio Light Artillery and the 9th Battery, Ohio Light Artillery, were also assigned to Krzyzanowski's brigade.

6 Ibid., 560; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 1202. A detachment from the 59th Ohio which had not been mustered out of service with the rest of the regiment was also stationed at Tullahoma.

7 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 1029.

8 Ibid., 1029-1030.

9 Ibid., 1029.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid., 1027-1028. The portion of the Memphis and Charleston Railroad connecting Stevenson with Decatur, Alabama, had been reopened for traffic by the Federals in March 1864. Thomas' headquarters were in Nashville.

12 Ibid., 1028.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., 1029. The 13th Indiana Cavalry and Battery D, 1st Missouri Light Artillery were stationed at Huntsville.

15 Ibid., 1028.

16 Ibid., 1046-1047. A small force of cavalry remained at Athens until the night of the 25th.

- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid., 1047-1048.
- 19 Ibid., 1048.
- 20 Ibid., 1047.
- 21 Ibid., 1070-1071. Steedman's headquarters were in Chattanooga.
- 22 Ibid., 1071. Milroy reported that the two rifled 24-pounders, one 24-pounder smoothbore, one 12-pounder James rifle, and six 3-inch ordnance rifles were emplaced in the fort at Tullahoma. In addition, there was one 12-pounder howitzer at the Duck River bridge and two field pieces at the Elk River bridge.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 Ibid., 1071-1072.
- 25 Ibid., 1070.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid., 1099-1100.
- 28 Ibid., 1099.
- 29 Ibid., 1102.
- 30 Ibid., 1101.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Ibid. Milroy informed Steedman that he had two infantry regiments (the 177th and 178th Ohio), one dismounted cavalry

regiment (the 12th Indiana), and one cavalry regiment (the 5th Tennessee) with which to contest the Confederates' advance.

33 Ibid., 1027.

34 Ibid., 1101, 1102. The 5th Tennessee Cavalry was attached to Major General James H. Wilson's recently constituted Cavalry Corps, Military Division of the Mississippi.

35 Ibid., 776, 1128. In the attack on Shelbyville, the Confederates lost one man -- Captain J. C. Jackson. The captain was shot in the mouth; the ball lodged in the jaw, breaking the jawbone.

36 Ibid., 776, 1127. After crossing the river, the Confederates moved to Berlin. Since many of his men's horses had thrown their shoes, Cobb halted his command. Two blacksmith shops were impressed and the smiths put to work reshoeing the mounts. In the day's fighting, Cobb reported that, in addition to Captain Jackson, he lost three men -- all wounded.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 1027-1028; Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois, IV (Springfield, 1901), 242. Rousseau, however, was authorized to pull Hamilton's detachment out of Shelbyville in case of the approach of a major Confederate striking force. The 61st Illinois had just reached Nashville by boat from Paducah, Kentucky.

- 39 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 774-776, 1153; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 67. In addition, Colonel Russell reported the capture of two engines, 28 cars, and a large amount of iron, medical, commissary, quartermaster, and ordnance stores.
- 40 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 1152.
- 41 Ibid., 1152-1153.
- 42 Ibid., 1153. General A. J. Smith's detachment (three divisions) of the Army of the Tennessee had been ordered to report to General Thomas on October 29. At that time, Smith's troops were operating in western Missouri, near the Kansas border. It took over a month to transfer Smith's command from western Missouri to the Middle Tennessee theatre of operations. Smith's bluecoats reached Nashville on November 30 and December 1. The tunnel was about two miles east of Cowan.
- 43 Ibid. The two trains, after being loaded, were to proceed to Chattanooga.
- 44 Ibid., 1153-1154. General Van Cleva and Major James R. Willett of the engineers had accompanied Rousseau on his tour of inspection.
- 45 Ibid., 1154.
- 46 Ibid., 1157.
- 47 Ibid. Four of the ten guns mounted in the Tullahoma fort were

heavy siege pieces.

48 Ibid., 1154.

49 Ibid., 1157.

50 Ibid., 1155.

51 Ibid., 1158.

52 Ibid., 1155.

53 Ibid. In case Thomas wanted the Elk River bridge abandoned, the 106th Ohio would proceed to Tullahoma and report to General Milroy.

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid., 1156-1158.

56 Ibid., 1187. Milroy had first broached the question of what should be done with the sutlers' stores. He had wired Thomas, "I am desired to inquire whether any transportation can be obtained for the goods of sutlers and trade stores; if not, it will occasion numerous losses to many loyal men." Ibid., 1186.

57 Ibid., 1187.

58 Ibid., 1187-1188.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid., 1186, 1188. Anderson's brigade consisted of: the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted), the 177th and 178th Ohio Infantry

Regiments, and a detachment of the 59th Ohio Infantry.

61 Ibid., 1186.

62 Ibid. Evidently, Thomas denied Rosecrans' request regarding the 21st Indiana Battery. Instead of remaining at Fortress Rosecrans, the Indianians proceeded to Nashville.

63 Ibid., 1192-1193. Krzyzanowski's command was posted as follows: 368 men of the 106th Ohio, and a 100-man detachment of the 1st Michigan Engineers, were at Elk River bridge; the 180th Ohio, and 45 troopers of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry, were at Decherd; a 37-man detachment of the 106th Ohio was stationed at Cowan; the bridge across Gerrard Creek and the tunnel were watched by 46 men from the 106th Ohio; detachments totaling 237 officers and men from the 106th Ohio garrisoned Blockhouses 21-35; 94 bluecoats from the 6th Kentucky occupied Anderson and Bass; Stevenson was held by the 58th New York, a detachment of the 106th Ohio, and Battery K, 1st Ohio Light Artillery; the Widow's Creek bridge was guarded by 29 men from the 58th New York. The 68th New York and the 9th Ohio Battery were stationed at Bridgeport.

64 Ibid., 1159.

65 Ibid., 1050.

66 Ibid., 502-503, 509. Steedman's command consisted of the 18th Ohio Infantry, the 68th Indiana Infantry, the 6th Indiana Cavalry

(dismounted), the 14th, 16th, and 44th U. S. Colored Infantry, casual detachments from the XIV, XVII, and XX Army Corps, and the 18th Ohio and 20th Indiana Batteries.

67 Ibid., 503, 510; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 12-13.

68 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 12.

69 Ibid., 12-13, 50.

70 Ibid., 12.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., 13, 50; Dyer, Compendium of the War of the Rebellion, 1554.

73 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 50.

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Chapter IV

#### The Confederates Move Against Fortress Rosecrans

The combat-ready division of the Army of Tennessee led by Major General William B. Bate remained at Franklin for 36 hours following the desperate battle fought there on the last day of November. On the morning of December 2, Bate's soldiers broke camp and started for Nashville. Before the column had proceeded very far, a courier overtook General Bate. He handed Bate a copy of a message which General Hood had sent to Major General S. Franklin Cheatham. (This latter officer commanded the corps to which Bate's division was assigned.) Cheatham, after having endorsed the communication, had forwarded it to Bate.<sup>1</sup>

Glancing at the dispatch, Bate found that he was to take his division and one battery of artillery and move upon Murfreesboro. His troops were to destroy the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad from Murfreesboro to Nashville. The blockhouses which the Federals had erected for the protection of the vital railroad were to be reduced and the bridges burned. Shortly thereafter, a staff officer rode up and told General Bate

at Colonel Benjamin J. Hill and 150 cavalymen had been directed to co-operate with his column. <sup>2</sup>

The capable Bate immediately moved to carry out Hood's instructions. After halting his troops, Bate had them retrace their steps. Re-entering Franklin, the head of the column turned onto the Triune road. Before the infantrymen had gone very far, they were overtaken by the crack 5th Company, Washington Light Artillery. The Louisiana artillerists with their three guns had been detailed by Colonel Melancthon Smith, Cheatham's chief of Artillery, to accompany the expedition. By dusk Bate's soldiers were at Triune, where they spent the night. At this stage of the conflict, the Confederacy was in its twilight. Bate's once formidable command had been reduced to about 1,600 officers and men. This figure included Hill's troopers and the Louisiana Artillerists. <sup>3</sup>

On the 3d, Bate turned his command out at an early hour. As soon as the greyclads had eaten their breakfast, they were ordered to fall in. When the march was resumed, the column swung to the left and headed up the Nolensville pike. Several miles north of Triune, Bate turned his soldiers into Dole Jack road. Unlike the pike, the Dole Jack road was not macadamized and the advance was slowed. Nightfall found the Confederates camped at

Wilkinson's Cross-Roads. Bate had succeeded in penetrating to within six miles of Murfreesboro without encountering any opposition. Furthermore, an improved road (the Wilkinson pike) afforded the Confederates an excellent line of advance in case they chose to attack Fortress Rosecrans.<sup>4</sup>

It was after dark before Bate heard anything from Hood. When he did, the message was dated the 2d. Twenty-four hours had elapsed between the time the courier had left Hood's headquarters and the time he had ridden up to Bate's command post. Hood informed Bate that he had learned from several civilians that there were "some 5,000 Yankees at Murfreesborough". In view of this development (Hood had expected the Federals to pull out of Murfreesboro in the face of his advance on Nashville.), the army commander notified Bate that General Forrest was under orders to send cavalry to his assistance. Bate, however, was cautioned to act according to his own judgment, in view of the continued occupation of Murfreesboro by the Federals. At all times, Hood admonished, Bate must remember his objective, which was to destroy the railroad.<sup>5</sup>

In the meantime, scouting parties from Colonel Hill's mounted command had been reconnoitering the approaches to Murfreesboro. From several of the more talkative inhabitants, the

scouts learned that a strong Union force, estimated at from 6,000 to 10,000 strong, held Murfreesboro. General Rousseau was identified as the commander of the Union garrison. Since Bate had been led to believe that Murfreesboro had been evacuated, he was understandably disturbed by this news. Wishing to get Hood's reaction to this intelligence, Bate forwarded the news to his superior on the morning of the 4th. <sup>6</sup>

General Forrest had crossed the Big Harpeth River at daybreak on December 1, twenty-four hours ahead of Bate's command. Accompanied by Brigadier Generals Abraham Buford's and William H. Jackson's hard-riding divisions, Forrest advanced up the Wilson pike. At Owen's Cross-Roads, Forrest's column found part of Colonel Robert R. Stewart's Union cavalry brigade. Stewart's bluecoats had been detailed by Major General James H. Wilson to cover the withdrawal of General Schofield's army into the Nashville defenses. Since the Yankees seemed disposed to dispute his advance, General Forrest ordered Captain John W. Morton to have his cannoners unlimber their four guns. As soon as the artillerists had softened up the Northerners' position, Forrest directed Buford to charge. Surging to the attack, Buford's troopers scattered the 11th Indiana Cavalry. Colonel Stewart had given the Indianians the task of holding the crossroads. In the

mopping up operations which ensued, Buford's greyclads captured several of the Federals. 7

After breaking contact with the Rebels, Stewart's cavalrymen fell back on Brentwood. Here, they rejoined Wilson's corps. From Brentwood, Wilson's command proceeded to Thompson's Chapel on the Nolensville pike. After placing his men in defensive positions, Wilson permitted them to camp for the night.

Reveille sounded in the camps of the Union cavalry at an early hour on the 2d. After the men had eaten, they were formed and mustered. It was not yet daylight when the troopers moved out and turned into the Nolensville pike. After passing through the earthworks which guarded the approaches to Nashville, Wilson halted his command and reported to General Thomas. Late in the afternoon, Wilson, in accordance with Thomas' instructions, crossed his corps to the north side of the Cumberland River. Reaching the right bank of the river, Wilson's troopers halted and bivouacked in and around Edgefield. 8

General Forrest's other cavalry division (Brigadier General James R. Chalmers') had forded the Big Harpeth River below Franklin on the 1st. Gaining the Hillsboro pike, Chalmers' troopers forged rapidly ahead. Forrest's plan of operations called for the two Confederate mounted columns (his own and

Chalmers') to converge on Brentwood. The Confederate leader felt that, if this maneuver were successful, he might be able to cut off and destroy a portion of Schofield's army. At this time, the Rebel cavalryman knew that the Union infantry was in full retreat up the Franklin pike. When the head of his column reached a point on the Hillsboro pike opposite Brentwood, Chalmers called a brief halt. Leaving the Hillsboro pike, Chalmers' troopers headed eastward, moving cross-country toward Brentwood. <sup>9</sup>

After having forced Stewart's bluecoats to abandon Owen's Cross-Roads, Forrest continued his advance up the Wilson pike. At Brentwood, Forrest's and Chalmers' columns rendezvoused. The Confederates, however, were disappointed to learn on questioning the inhabitants that the last of Schofield's infantry had passed up the Franklin pike several hours before.

Apparently undaunted, Forrest determined to make one final effort to overtake the Yankees. Chalmers would pursue the bluecoats directly up the Franklin pike; Forrest, with Buford's and Jackson's divisions, would again swing to the east. By utilizing the Nolensville pike, Forrest hoped to reach the Nashville defenses ahead of Schofield's rear guard. If he were successful in his race with the Federals, Forrest could turn his command to the west and block the Franklin pike. <sup>10</sup>

Forrest's master plan, however, was doomed to fail. The Federals had too long a head start. Even before Forrest's column reached the Nolensville pike, the general's scouts informed him that the last of Schofield's infantry had entered the Nashville perimeter. Following the receipt of this news, Forrest permitted Buford's and Jackson's troopers to bivouac for the night. In the meantime, Chalmers' greyclads had penetrated to within four miles of the fortifications guarding the approach to Nashville. Realizing that the Yankees had won the race for Nashville, Chalmers' cavalrymen halted and camped on either side of the Franklin pike. <sup>11</sup>

The next morning (the 2d), Forrest issued instructions for Chalmers to shift his division to the left and blockade the Hillsboro and Hardin pikes. At the same time, Forrest planned to swing to the east with Buford's and Jackson's divisions. Forrest would use the troopers of these two combat-wise commands to cut communications between Nashville and Murfreesboro. <sup>12</sup>

Early on the 2d, Forrest had his column on the road. Advancing rapidly up the Nolensville pike, Forrest's troopers arrived in front of the Nashville defense. The Rebel horsemen had reached this point shortly after the last of Wilson's Union troopers had entered the fortifications. From their position on the hills southeast of the city, the greyclads could distinctly

see the state capitol. Pending the arrival of Hood's infantry and artillery, Forrest prepared to drive in the Federal outposts. General Buford was directed to proceed to Mill Creek. Buford's troopers were to take position near the Insane Asylum and guard the Nashville-Marreesboro pike. Jackson's division would remain where it was and watch the Nolensville pike. 13

While en route to the Insane Asylum, Buford's butternuts crossed the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. After cutting the telegraph, Buford organized and detached a combat team. This group was given the task of capturing and burning the Union blockhouses which guarded the three railroad bridges across Mill Creek. Following the departure of the combat team, Buford used the remainder of his division to establish a roadblock on the Nashville-Marreesboro pike. 14

Pending the arrival of Hood's soldiers, General Chalmers determined to use one of his brigades, Colonel Edsund W. Rucker's, to hold the Franklin pike. Chalmers' other brigade, led by Colonel Jacob B. Biffle, was sent to blockade the Hillsboro and Hardin pikes. Biffle's and Rucker's troopers encountered no opposition in carrying out their assignments. 15

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One of the two trains with units from Steedman's command which had been delayed reached Nashville before Buford's troopers cut the railroad. The second train, carrying the 44th U. S. Colored Infantry and Companies A and D, 14th U. S. Colored Infantry, was not so fortunate. Both trains had been held up at Murfreesboro as a result of a derailment. Colonel Lewis Johnson of the 44th U. S. Colored Infantry was in charge of the second train. By the morning of the 2d, the railroad repair crews, assisted by fatigue parties detailed by Colonel Johnson, had the engine and cars back on the tracks. As soon as the locomotive had built up a head of steam, the train pulled away from Murfreesboro and headed for Nashville. 16

The blockhouse scheduled to be attacked first by Buford's combat team was held by a detachment from the 115th Ohio commanded by hard-bitten Lieutenant George D. Harter. This stockade, the second one south of Nashville, was known as Blockhouse No. 2. It was designed to command the middle one of the three railroad bridges which spanned wandering Mill Creek within a mile. 17

About 11 a. m. on the 2d, the lookouts at Blockhouse No. 2 reported to Lieutenant Harter that a large number of unidentified horsemen were approaching. Training his field glasses on the

newcomers, the lieutenant observed that a large number of them were clad in Federal garb. As the anxious Yankees watched, the horsemen deployed and slowly began to surround the blockhouse. Before the cavalrymen could complete their investment of the stockade, the shrill whistle of an engine was heard. When the train puffed into view, the Ohioans were cheered to discover that it was loaded with Negro soldiers. 18

When Colonel Johnson saw that a large number of horsemen were deployed near the blockhouse, he shouted for the engineer to proceed with caution. The train accordingly approached the blockhouse very slowly. Just as the engine pulled on to the bridge, a masked battery roared into action. Hits were scored on the locomotive and the first car. Several men were wounded and the engine disabled. Colonel Johnson realized that it would be suicidal for his troops to remain aboard the crowded cars. He bellowed instructions for his men to detrain and take cover in the stockade. Since he had not seen any signs of Lieutenant Harter or his soldiers, the colonel believed that the blockhouse had been abandoned. Leaping off the cars, the Negroes and their white officers raced toward the little fort. 19

Upon reaching the stockade, the colonel and his men were dismayed to find it occupied by Lieutenant Harter's detachment.

One look convinced Colonel Johnson that there was insufficient room in the blockhouse to shelter both the Ohicans and his 350 men. To make matters worse, the Confederate artillerists now turned their guns on the fort. The colonel was compelled to form his troops around the blockhouse.

While his officers were rallying their men, Colonel Johnson made a hasty reconnaissance. He observed that a high hill 500 yards east of the railroad dominated the stockade. A number of Euford's dismounted troopers had already taken possession of the hill. From this commanding position, they sniped away at the Federals. Johnson was convinced that if his men were to escape annihilation, they would have to seize the strategic hill. He ordered a strong detachment to rush the Rebel sharpshooters. The bluecoats were repulsed in their effort to carry the crest. Undaunted, Johnson had his soldiers take cover on the lower slope. Here the Negroes dug in. Logs and stumps were used as breastworks by the desperate Federals. Protected by their improvised fortifications, the Yankees returned the Confederates' fire. 20

After several hours' heavy fighting some of Johnson's subordinates approached the colonel. They told him that their soldiers had almost exhausted the 40 rounds which they carried in their cartridge-boxes. Johnson promptly relayed this information

Lieutenant Harter. The lieutenant ordered his ordnance sergeant to give Johnson's command 2,000 rounds. After this ammunition had been distributed, it enabled the Negroes to hold out in the face of the heavy pressure being constantly exerted by the Confederates. During the afternoon, Buford's dismounted troopers launched several sharp attacks on the bluecoats. These thrusts were easily beaten off. 21

All the while, the Rebel cannoneers continued to shell the blockhouse. In an effort to knock out the defenders, the artillerists sought to wheel their pieces closer to the stockade. The well-directed fire of the blueclads, however, forced the Southerners to shift their pieces frequently. Finally, about 5 p. m., the butternut cannoneers succeeded in manhandling one of their guns into position on the hill east of the railroad. After loading the cannon, they pushed it to the crest. It was sighted and fired. The recoil threw the gun back out of sight. After reloading, the artillerists pushed the gun back into battery and the operation was repeated. The entire procedure was carried out so rapidly that the Federals were unable to concentrate a sufficient volume of small-arms fire on the crew to disconcert their aims. Within a few minutes, the Confederate gunners had knocked the lookout tower to pieces. Next, they focused their attention on

the blockhouse. Shell after shell struck the building; a number penetrated the heavy timbers. One shell exploded inside the blockhouse, killing the railroad conductor and wounding several of Lieutenant Harter's Ohioans. <sup>22</sup>

Fortunately for the bluecoats, darkness soon blanketed the area. Although the Confederate artillerists ceased firing, the dismounted troopers continued to bang away. Under the cover of night, Colonel Johnson regrouped his command. Except for the soldiers detailed to man a line of outposts, the bluecoats fell back to the blockhouse. Inspecting his troops, Johnson was shocked to learn that there was very little ammunition left. He therefore warned his men to hold their fire. They were to reserve the few rounds remaining in their cartridge-boxes for use during the assault which Johnson anticipated. <sup>23</sup>

In the meantime, Lieutenant Harter had made an inspection of the damage to the stockade. He found that the Confederate bombardment had reduced the blockhouse to a "ruinous condition". Furthermore, the lieutenant's command was also confronted by an ammunition shortage. Harter immediately communicated this distressing information to Colonel Johnson. <sup>24</sup>

Upon evaluating the available information, Johnson

decided that his position was hopeless. Already, the defense of the stockade had cost the Federals one-third of their strength. (Of the 332 officers and men engaged, 12 had been killed, 96 wounded, and 57 were missing.) Johnson determined to evacuate the blockhouse and try to fight his way through to Nashville. Remembering Fort Pillow, Johnson felt that, should the stockade be taken by assault or surrender, "a butchery would follow". In addition, the colonel believed that, if it were possible for the Nashville Federals to send reinforcements, they would have already arrived. Orders were issued to abandon the fort. 25

At 3:30 a. m., the Federals left the blockhouse. Contrary to Colonel Johnson's fears, the bluecoats caught the Confederates napping. Observing the strictest silence, they passed through the Rebel lines without being challenged. The rest of the march was uneventful. Colonel Johnson's and Lieutenant Harter's troops entered the Nashville perimeter about daybreak. 26

\* \* \* \* \*

It was late on the afternoon of the 2d when Hood's infantry and artillery reached the Nashville area. Moving into their designated positions in front of the Nashville defenses, the Confederates began to entrench. Lieutenant General Stephen D. Lee's

Corps was posted in the center, its center resting astride the Franklin pike. Lieutenant General Alexander P. Stewart's Corps was stationed on the left; Major General B. Franklin Cheathan's held the right. <sup>27</sup>

With the arrival of Hood's infantry, Forrest's troopers could be relieved of the necessity of having to watch the Nashville perimeter. Hood accordingly informed his cavalry leader that he was to attack the Union communication lines. A strong mounted force would be sent to operate "upon the railroad, block-houses, and telegraph lines" connecting Nashville with Murfreesboro. In addition, Forrest's troopers were to see if they could interfere with Union shipping on the Cumberland River below Nashville.

Apparently, Hood did not know that a strong combat team from Buford's division had already attacked Blockhouse No. 2. <sup>28</sup>

At daybreak on the 3d, Buford's cavalymen prepared to renew their attack on the stockade. When the bluecoats failed to return their fire, Confederate skirmishers advanced to investigate. To their chagrin, the Southerners discovered that the Yankees had escaped during the night. After putting the torch to the battered blockhouse, the railroad bridge across Mill Creek, and the abandoned train, the Southerners prepared to move against Blockhouse No. 1. <sup>29</sup>

A 110-man detachment from the 115th Ohio commanded by Lieutenant Jacob N. Shaffer garrisoned Blockhouse No. 1. This stockade was located on the railroad four miles from Nashville. Since Blockhouse No. 1 was only a mile from Blockhouse No. 2, it appears that Colonel Johnson did not warn Lieutenant Shaffer when he retired into the Nashville defenses. Furthermore, Johnson's troopers must have bypassed Blockhouse No. 1 when they retreated, because Shaffer's soldiers made no effort to escape until it was too late. 30

Visiting Buford's command post near the Insane Asylum on the morning of the 3d, Forrest directed the division commander to send one of his brigades against Blockhouse No. 1, while the other attacked Blockhouse No. 3. Buford moved promptly to carry out Forrest's instructions. Striking swiftly, the Rebels surrounded the two blockhouses.

After investing Blockhouse No. 1 the Southerners sent forward a truce party to demand its surrender. Lieutenant Shaffer refused. To soften up the defenders, Captain Morton ordered his artillery into position. Unlimbering their pieces, the Tennessee cannoners began to hammer away at the stockade with shot and shell. The Yankees replied with their small-arms. Whenever the Federals' fire seemed to slacken, a Southern officer

would ride forward with a white flag to see if they were ready to lay down their arms. On three different occasions, the rugged lieutenant rejected the Rebels' terms. By late afternoon, the Ohioans' morale faltered. Despite their prolonged resistance, it appeared to them that they had been abandoned by their friends. The blockhouse had been pounded to pieces, and ten of their comrades were dead and another 20 wounded. When the butternuts sent in their fifth flag of the day, Lieutenant Shaffer surrendered his command. After burning the blockhouse and the railroad bridge, the Confederates returned to their camp at the Insane Asylum. <sup>31</sup>

Captain Denning N. Lowrey was in charge of the 32 men from the 115th Ohio charged with the defense of Blockhouse No. 3. This stockade was located near Antioch. Surrounding the blockhouse, Buford's men sought to parley with the Yankees. Captain Lowrey refused to listen to the Confederates' proposals. Rebuffed in their efforts to talk the bluecoats into giving up, the Rebels brought up their artillery. The cannoneers quickly placed their pieces in battery and opened fire. In a successful effort to protect themselves from the Union sharpshooters, the Southerners threw up breastworks in front of their field pieces. Evidently, the artillerists were getting short of ammunition, because they seemed reluctant to smother the defenders under a storm of shot

and shell. After holding out for 36 hours, Captain Lowrey surrendered to General Buford. During the siege, the blockhouse had been struck by 90 projectiles. 32

One of General Jackson's two brigades, Brigadier General Lawrence S. Ross', was engaged on the 3d. Ross' troopers had taken position on the 2d astride the Nolensville pike; outposts were pushed to within three miles of Nashville. To Ross' front was a line of rifle pits. Ross, on the morning of the 3d, determined to make a forced reconnaissance to see if the Unionists held these works in strength. Two squadrons of the 6th Texas Cavalry were dismounted and deployed as skirmishers. When they advanced, the Texans discovered that the entrenchments were held by a line of outposts. The Union pickets fell back, however, before the Texans were able to close with them. Shortly thereafter, Ross' troopers were relieved by one of Stewart's infantry units. Retiring to their camp, Ross' Texans rejoined Jackson's division. 33

On the morning of the 4th, Forrest received a fresh set of instructions from General Hood. He was to move on Murfreesboro with Buford's and Jackson's divisions. Two hundred and fifty troopers were to be left behind to picket the countryside between the Nashville pike and the Cumberland River when Forrest marched toward Murfreesboro. After relaying this information to Buford

and Jackson, Forrest issued orders detaching Colonel George A. Nixon's Tennessee Cavalry Regiment. Nixon's troopers had drawn the assignment of guarding the right flank of Hood's army. Since the advance on Murfreesboro was scheduled for the morning of the 5th, Jackson's division and the remainder of Buford's spent a quiet day resting and allowing their mounts to recoup their strength. Ammunition was issued, and the men prepared the customary three days' rations. <sup>34</sup>

Before daybreak on the 5th, reveille sounded in the cavalry encampments. After the troopers had eaten a hasty breakfast, the units were formed and mustered. "Boots and Saddles" sounded, and the greyclads quickly swung into their saddles. Moving quietly out of their camps, the two divisions headed for Lavergne. Forrest's line of advance was the Nashville-Murfreesboro pike. After crossing Hurricane Creek, Forrest called a brief halt. Calling for General Jackson, Forrest told him to take his division to the west of Lavergne and attack the redoubt which the Federals had thrown up on a commanding hill. At the same time, Forrest would move against the Lavergne blockhouse with Buford's division. This blockhouse had been designed to afford protection for the railroad bridge spanning Hurricane Creek. <sup>35</sup>

A detachment from the 115th Ohio was based at Lavergne. Captain Lewis F. Hake was in command of the garrison. Late on the

evening of the 4th, a scout reached Lavergne with a message addressed to the commandant. This dispatch was from General Thomas. Glancing at the communication, Captain Hake learned that the Federals were to abandon all the blockhouses between Murfreesboro and Nashville. The garrisons were to be withdrawn to Murfreesboro. What especially troubled the captain was the knowledge that Thomas' order had been drafted on the 1st. It had taken three days to reach him. At daybreak, Captain Hake started couriers down the railroad in both directions to relay the contents of Thomas' communication to the commanders of the various blockhouses. If Hake had known it, there was no need to send a man toward Nashville. By the morning of the 5th, Forrest's grim troopers had already put the torch to the three blockhouses along the right of way in that direction. 36

Before the detachment of the 115th Ohio commanded by Sergeant William McKinney could evacuate Blockhouse No. 4, Buford's division had swept into view. After surrounding the fort, Buford sent a staff officer with a white flag to demand the Yankees' surrender. Convinced that resistance was impossible, the sergeant told his men to ground their arms. After turning his prisoners over to the provost marshal, Buford had his troopers burn the blockhouse and the railroad bridge across Hurricane Creek. 37

In the meantime, Jackson's cavalymen had encircled the redoubt on the hill overlooking Lavergne. At this hour, Captain Blake's Ohioans were busy loading their gear on wagons, preparatory to starting for Murfreesboro. Jackson sent forward one of his aides and several men to demand that the Federals give up. In response to a shout from Captain Hake not to come any closer, the Confederate truce party halted. Lieutenant John Eadie was sent to find out the Southerners' demands.

While the Union officer was conferring with the Rebels, the greyclad artillerists took advantage of the temporary cessation of hostilities to unlimber four of their guns close to the earthwork. From this position, the cannoneers would be able to command the redoubt, in case the Yankees rejected Jackson's demands. This left Captain Hake with only two alternatives -- capitulation or annihilation. The captain chose the former. In addition to his 72 officers and men, Hake surrendered two field pieces (one 6- and one 12-pounder), 25 horses, several wagons, and a considerable supply of commissary and quartermaster stores. Before pressing on toward Smyrna, Forrest's troopers burned a number of barracks. These buildings had been raised by the Federals to quarter the soldiers stationed in the Lavergne area. 38

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Notes -- Chapter IV

#### The Confederates Move Against Fortress Rosecrans

- 1 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 744.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid. General Hood, on the afternoon of the 2d, had established his headquarters at Overton's, six miles south of Nashville.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid., 560, 755; John A. Myeth, Life of Lieutenant-General Nathan Bedford Forrest, (New York, 1899), 547; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 10.
- 8 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 560.
- 9 Ibid., 760.
- 10 Ibid., 754-764.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid., 754; Myeth, Life of General Forrest, 547.
- 13 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 754.
- 14 Ibid., 540, 631, 754.
- 15 Ibid., 764.

- 16 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 540.
- 17 Ibid., 631; Q. R., Series III, Vol. V, 935.
- 18 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 540, 631.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid., 540-541, 631.
- 21 Ibid., 541, 631.
- 22 Ibid., 541, 631-632.
- 23 Ibid., 541. Johnson found that, on the average, his men had only four rounds left in their cartridge-boxes.
- 24 Ibid., 541, 632. The north wing of the blockhouse had been destroyed; the outside casing of the west wing was badly damaged; the lockout was gone. Two large breaches had been pounded in the roof; one of the posts -- the main support of the roof -- was knocked out, while the other had been badly splintered. Ibid., 632.
- 25 Ibid., 541. Colonel Johnson listed the Union losses as:

<u>Command</u>	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Missing</u>	<u>Total</u>
44th U. S. Colored Infantry	8	35	39	82
Companies A and D, 14th U. S. Colored Infantry	2	5	18	25
Detachment, 115th Ohio Infantry	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>8</u>
Total:	12	46	57	115

26 Ibid., 541, 632.

27 Ibid., 671.

28 Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 547; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 754.

29 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 754.

30 Ibid., 632; Roster of Ohio Soldiers, War of the Rebellion, Vol. VIII, (Cincinnati, 1888), 146. Blockhouse No. 1 sheltered the garrison charged with the protection of the northernmost railroad bridge across Mill Creek.

31 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 632, 754.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid., 771.

34 Ibid., 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 548.

35 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 755.

36 Ibid., 632.

37 Ibid., 632, 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 548.

Neither Forrest nor the Federals made a report of the number of men in Sergeant McKinney's command.

38 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 632, 755.

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Chapter V

#### The Attack on Blockhouse No. 7

At 7 a. m. on the 4th, General Bate's division broke camp. Leaving Wilkinson's Cross-Roads, Bate's greyclads tramped swiftly up the Florence road. The head of Bate's column struck the Nashville pike a short distance west of Overall Creek, five and one-half miles from Murfreesboro.

Bate's object in making this move was fourfold. First, he wanted to place his small division between the Murfreesboro Yankees and Nashville. Bate was afraid that if he had remained at Wilkinson's Cross-Roads, Rousseau's troops might have advanced out of Fortress Rosecrans and separated his command from General Hood's army. Now, if he were attacked by a superior force, Bate reasoned, he could retire on the Army of Tennessee. Second, his new position on the Nashville pike would enable Bate to cover the right wing of Hood's army. Third, his division was now astride the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. In accordance with Hood's orders, fatigue parties would soon be hard at work tearing up rails and burning bridges. Finally, Bate's position on the Nashville pike would facilitate a junction with the mounted force which Hood

had directed Forrest to send to his assistance. <sup>1</sup>

When Bate transferred his infantry and artillery from Wilkinson's Cross-Roads to the Nashville pike, he called in Colonel Hill's cavalry. Hill's troopers were assigned a dual mission. Besides keeping Bate informed of the Federals' activities, they were to demonstrate against the Union outposts on the Salem and Wilkinson pikes. <sup>2</sup>

After reaching the Nashville pike, Bate proceeded to deploy his division. Three regiments of Colonel Robert Bullock's Florida brigade were formed into line of battle athwart the railroad and the pike. Bullock's fourth regiment (the 6th Florida) was detached and given the task of guarding the division train. Covered by a strong skirmish line, the Florida infantrymen swept toward Overall Creek. A few Union pickets belonging to the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) were flushed and driven in by the Floridians' advance. Bullock's greyclads encountered little difficulty in reaching Overall Creek.

Since Bate did not want to risk a general engagement with the big Union garrison reportedly stationed in Fortress Rosecrans, he ordered Bullock not to try to force a crossing. Instead, the three 12-pounder Napoleons of the Washington Artillery were brought forward and placed in battery on the brow of a commanding hill

between the pike and the railroad. As soon as his cannoneers had unlimbered their pieces, Lieutenant J. Adolph Chalaron directed them to shell the blockhouse on the east side of the creek. This stockade, known as Blockhouse No. 7, had been erected by the Federals to guard the railroad bridge which spanned Overall Creek at this point. Bullock's soldiers were to protect the guns in case of a Yankee sortie. <sup>3</sup>

One of his two remaining brigades, Brigadier General Thomas B. Smith's, Bate placed in reserve. If it became necessary, Smith's troops would be rushed to Bullock's assistance. Brigadier General Henry R. Jackson's Georgia brigade was organized into demolition teams and put to work wrecking the railroad. <sup>4</sup>

At this time, Blockhouse No. 7 was occupied by a detachment of the 115th Ohio commanded by hard-bitten Lieutenant Henry A. Glosser. It was about 11 a. m. when the three Rebel field pieces roared into action. The Confederate artillerists soon found the range and numerous direct hits were scored on the blockhouse. <sup>5</sup>

Fortunately for the garrison, relief was not long in coming. On the previous evening, General Rousseau had summoned Colonel Gilbert M. L. Johnson of the 13th Indiana Cavalry to his headquarters. Since the morning of the 2d, when communications

had been cut, Rousseau had heard nothing from Nashville. He therefore wanted Johnson to take four companies of his regiment and march to Lavergne. After thoroughly reconnoitering the Lavergne area, the Indianians were to return to Fortress Rosecrans on the 6th.

The morning of the 4th was well along before the Indianians had completed their preparations and were ready to take the field. When notified by his subordinates that their troopers were ready to march, Johnson had his bugler sound "Boots and Saddles". Swinging into their saddles, the bluecoated cavalymen rode out of the fortress and turned into the Nashville pike. About three miles northwest of Fortress Rosecrans, Colonel Johnson's vanguard spotted several horsemen riding rapidly toward them. Hailing Johnson's column, the newcomers, who proved to be members of the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union), told the Indianians that a strong force of Rebel infantry had driven them across Overall Creek.

Johnson decided to test the strength of the Confederate advance. He ordered the leader of the Tennesseans to deploy his men as skirmishers on the left of the pike. At the same time, Johnson threw out one of his companies on the right. Covered by this skirmish line, the Federal cavalymen pressed forward. <sup>6</sup>

Before reaching Overall Creek, which was about a mile

away. Johnson's command encountered a number of greyclad scouts. The Southerners retired across the creek in the face of Johnson's advance. Approaching Overall Creek, the Federals spotted Bullock's battle line drawn up on the far side. A brisk clash quickly developed between the Rebel infantry and the Union cavalry. To take advantage of the protection afforded by the cedars and undergrowth which flanked the stream, Johnson dismounted his command. Shortly thereafter, the Louisiana artillerists ceased snelling the blockhouse. Shifting targets, they opened fire on Johnson's troopers. 7

Having determined that the Confederates were present in considerable strength, Colonel Johnson determined to relay this important information to General Rousseau. Calling for a messenger, Johnson addressed a dispatch to his superior. Rousseau was notified that Johnson's men were holding the Southerners along Overall Creek. Johnson wrote, "The enemy expose a line double to mine; reported moving columns on my right flank; have used three pieces of artillery on me; also reported the same to be used on the block-house". So far, Johnson commented, his losses had been slight. Pending the receipt of additional instructions, Johnson planned to force his way across Overall Creek. 8

As soon as Johnson's dispatch was in his hands, Rousseau proceeded to organize a "flying column". General Milroy was placed in charge of this command which consisted of three infantry regiments (the 61st Illinois, the 8th Minnesota, and the 174th Ohio), and a section of guns manned by the cannoneers of the 13th Battery, New York Light Artillery. While the units were being formed and mustered, Rousseau gave Milroy his final instructions. The "flying column" was to march to the relief of Blockhouse No. 7, "which was besieged by a considerable rebel force with artillery".<sup>9</sup>

Moving out of Fortress Rosecrans, Milroy's "flying column" started up the Nashville pike at a rapid pace. It was about 2 p. m. when Milroy's parting soldiers approached Overall Creek. At the time of Milroy's arrival, Johnson's dismounted cavalymen and the Confederate sharpshooters were still sniping away at each other from opposite sides of the stream. Riding forward, Milroy made a hurried reconnaissance. The information obtained enabled Milroy to deploy his command.<sup>10</sup>

Lieutenant John McCurrin of the 13th New York Battery was to unlimber his two guns on a bluff overlooking the creek. Thundering forward, the New Yorkers threw their pieces into battery. Almost as soon as the trails had struck the ground, the cannoneers had their guns in action. The bluecoats were soon

engaged in a bitter duel with the three guns of the Washington Artillery, which were emplaced on a hill about 900 yards to their front. 11

Milroy had Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Grass of the 61st Illinois deploy his soldiers as skirmishers. After they had completed their dispositions, the Illinoisans advanced and relieved Johnson's dismounted troopers. Upon being relieved, Colonel Johnson proceeded to reassemble his regiment. Johnson massed his men on the pike in column of fours, about 400 yards southeast of the bridge. The 8th Minnesota was posted on the right of the pike, its left flank resting near the Hord house. Colonel John S. Jones' 174th Ohio was formed on the Minnesotans' left. Jones' initial mission was to support the New York artillerists. 12

At first, General Bate was well satisfied with the way things were developing. General Jackson reported that his demolition teams were wreaking havoc on the railroad; Lieutenant Chalaron's cannoneers were scoring hit after hit on the blockhouse. It seemed that, unless the Murfreesboro Federals intervened, it would be only a matter of time before the bluecoats who were holed up in the blockhouse either surrendered or saw their fort pounded to pieces.

About noon, the scouts from Bate's command who had

crossed Overall Creek fell back in the face of Johnson's advance. The Federals, however, made no effort to cross the creek. Each time the bluecoats appeared to be massing for a thrust, a few well-aimed shots from the Washington Artillery discouraged them. Following the arrival of Milroy's "flying column", the situation changed. Two guns were quickly wheeled into position by the Federals; a hot fire was opened on the Washington Artillery. A strong force of bluecoated skirmishers (the 61st Illinois) soon pressed forward and took cover in the cedars near the stream. Bate believed that these moves on the Yankees' part were designed to prevent his division from fording Overall Creek. He accordingly made no changes in his dispositions. 13

In the meantime, Milroy had sensed that the Confederates' fire seemed to be slackening. He determined to seize the initiative. Colonel Minor T. Thomas of the 8th Minnesota was directed to shift his regiment to the right. The Minnesotans were to take position at the blockhouse. In case Colonel Thomas found it to be practicable, he was to send his regiment across Overall Creek at the railroad bridge. After reaching the west bank, Thomas' rugged infantrymen were to try to turn Bate's left flank.

To protect the advance of the Minnesotans, Milroy's

skirmishers (the 61st Illinois) pressed closer to the stream. Covered by the fire of the Illinoisans, Colonel Thomas led his men forward on the double. Approaching to within 50 yards of the blockhouse, the colonel halted and formed his regiment into line of battle. A number of Confederate snipers, who were posted behind a rail fence and in the woods on the far side of the creek, banged away at the bluecoats. Undaunted, Thomas' soldiers grimly held their ground. Fortunately for the Yankees, the greyclads' marksmanship was deplorable. In the entire regiment, only two men were cut down, both wounded.

After remaining where he was for a few minutes, Thomas advanced two of his companies. These two units took position on the right of the blockhouse, and the bluecoats began to blaze away at the Rebel sharpshooters. Within a few minutes, the Southerners ceased firing. Next, the Minnesotans prepared to focus their attention on the Confederate artillerists. <sup>14</sup>

On the left of Milroy's line, a number of the skirmishers from the 61st Illinois succeeded in crossing the pike bridge. Reaching the west side of Overall Creek, the Federals drove in Bate's outposts and established a bridgehead. Milroy quickly moved to exploit this success. Orders were issued for the 174th Ohio to support the attack.

Responding to the situation with his customary alacrity, Colonel Jones led his cheering battle line forward. Upon gaining the right bank of the stream, Jones halted his command. The right and left wings remained in line, while the color company dashed across the bridge. Since the bridge had been partially dismantled; the Ohioans' progress was somewhat impeded. In addition, Colonel Jones' soldiers were exposed to a galling fire, from artillery and infantry. As soon as the color company reached the left bank, the remainder of the regiment crossed the bridge. 15

Milroy had been closely watching the situation as it developed. When the 174th Ohio stormed across Overall Creek, the general decided to commit his strategic reserve, the 13th Indiana Cavalry. Up to this hour, Milroy had mistakenly believed that the Confederate force opposed to him consisted in part of Forrest's cavalry, fighting dismounted. He felt that a sudden sortie by the 13th Indiana might result in the capture of the three-gun Confederate battery. The ground on the far side of Overall Creek, the general observed, was suited to a cavalry charge. In addition, the smoke of battle, taken in conjunction with the approach of darkness, would screen the Federals' movement until it was too late for the Confederates to take counter measures. Having made his decision, Milroy sent a member of his staff to relay it to

Colonel Johnson.

Colonel Johnson, when told of the general's plan, remarked that his men were eager "to try the experiment". At a word from the colonel, the Indiana cavalrymen started up the pike toward the bridge. <sup>16</sup>

Colonel Jones had just redeployed his regiment into line of battle when the 13th Indiana thundered across the bridge. The Ohioans made an opening in their ranks to permit the passage of the cavalry. As soon as his company commanders reported that their men were ready, Colonel Johnson ordered his bugler to sound the charge. Putting the spurs to their horses, the cavalrymen surged forward. To reach the guns, Johnson turned the head of his column off the pike. Swinging to the right, the troopers swept around the base of the hill on top of which the Louisianians' three guns were emplaced. As they pressed ahead, the Union horsemen threatened to turn the Confederate left. <sup>17</sup>

The heavy pressure that, since the arrival of Milroy's "flying column", had been building up along his entire front caused General Bates to call up General Smith's reserve brigade. It was starting to get dark when Smith's troops filed into position on Fullock's left. Smith's combat-ready infantry had reached the point of danger none too soon. Hardly were they on the ground

before Colonel Johnson's troopers came thundering down on them out of the gathering darkness.

At the same time, the Confederate cannoneers spotted the Union horsemen. Lieutenant Chalaron shouted for his gunners to shift targets. Wheeling their pieces to the left, the artillerists ripped the Federal troopers with double charges of canister. Within a matter of moments, Johnson's Indianians discovered that they had stirred up a hornet's nest. To make matters worse, the troopers had a difficult time reloading their Enfield carbines while mounted. Unable to breast this fire, the cavalrymen recoiled. About a score of the Yankees were unhorsed and their mounts stampeded into the Confederates' lines.

Repulsed, the Yankees veered off to the right and fell back to the creek. By this time, it was dark. In the confusion which accompanied the retreat, the cavalrymen were fired on by their comrades on the east side of the stream, who mistook them for the foe. After the Indianians were able to establish their identity, the shooting ceased. Next, Colonel Johnson rallied and re-formed his regiment. The men were dismounted and skirmishers pushed out. Johnson prepared to renew the attack on the Confederate artillery. 18

Milroy had anxiously watched the start of Johnson's charge. As soon as he was satisfied that Johnson's troopers had

failed to overrun the guns, the general decided to send the 174th Ohio to the attack. Since the Ohio regiment was only recently organized and was receiving its baptism under fire, Milroy would have preferred to have employed another unit. At this time, however, his other two infantry regiments were not available. The 61st Illinois was deployed as skirmishers, while the 8th Minnesota had been unable to cross the creek.

When he received his instructions to attack, Colonel Jones shifted his battle line to the left a short distance. The colonel wanted his right flank to guide on the Nashville pike. Having completed his dispositions, Jones led his cheering Ohioans forward. In the gloom, the bluecoats quickly established contact with Colonel Bullock's Floridians. Halting, the bluecoats sent several deadly volleys crashing into the greyclads' ranks. When they renewed the advance, Colonel Jones' troops rocked Bullock's three Florida regiments back on their heels. In this fighting, Colonel Bullock was badly wounded. Having smashed Bullock's main line of resistance, the Ohioans swept on. <sup>19</sup>

By this time, General Jackson had recalled his demolition teams which had been wreaking havoc on the railroad. Following the collapse of Bullock's command, Bate directed Jackson to mass his brigade astride the Nashville pike. Jackson quickly formed

his Georgians about one-half mile west of the bridge. At first, Jackson's greyclads were troubled by the retreating Floridians breaking through their ranks. When Colonel Jones' Ohioans emerged from out of the shadows, the Georgians brought their rifled-muskets to the ready and fired one crashing volley. One of Milroy's aides now rode up and told Colonel Jones to withdraw his regiment. 20

General Milroy's decision to recall the 174th Ohio was based on several factors. First, it was now dark and the general did not want to hazard a night engagement. Second, the 8th Minnesota had been unable to find a way to get across Overall Creek. Finally, the Federals had captured about 20 prisoners in the fighting up to this point. Upon being questioned, these men told Milroy that he was confronted by General Bate's crack infantry division. The general knew it would not be wise to fight a pitched battle with Bate's combat-tested veterans. 21

When Colonel Johnson's troopers had charged the Washington Artillery, they had cut across in front of the Minnesotans. Colonel Thomas accordingly had shouted for his men to cease firing. Not wanting to lose the advantage heretofore gained, Thomas advanced the remainder of his regiment. These eight companies joined their comrades near the railroad bridge. Following Johnson's repulse, Lieutenant Chalaron's artilleryists

again directed their attention toward Thomas' regiment. For the next several minutes, the Rebel gunners hammered away at the Minnesotans with shot and shell. Pinned down by this well-directed bombardment, Colonel Thomas' bluecoats abandoned their efforts to find a way across the stream. 22

In the meantime, Colonel Johnson's Indianians had again forged ahead. Advancing on the double, the dismounted troopers worked their way around the left flank of General Smith's battle line. Before the bluecoats were able to reach the foot of the ridge behind Chalaron's guns, the Confederates retired. Undoubtedly, the collapse of Bullock's command had rendered Smith's position untenable. Having failed to take the Rebel gunners by surprise, Johnson recalled his horse holders. Like Colonel Jones, Johnson now received orders from Milroy to recross Overall Creek. 23

Since his Ohioans were in close contact with Jackson's Georgians, Colonel Jones was confronted by what could become a ticklish situation. If the Rebels were alert, they might convert Jones' efforts to disengage his regiment into a disaster. Jones therefore marched his troops back to the bridge in line "faced to the rear". In falling back, the bluecoats brought off their wounded and most of their dead. The skirmishers from the 61st Illinois, who had crossed to the west side of the stream,

accompanied the Ohioans. After recrossing Overall Creek, Jones redeployed his regiment into line of battle near the artillery. Three companies were left to hold the bridge pending the return of Johnson's cavalry. Like Colonel Jones, Johnson encountered no difficulty in withdrawing his troopers. 24

After Johnson's cavalrymen had recrossed Overall Creek, Milroy formed his entire command into line of battle on the east side of the stream. Fires were kindled, and the Federals waited for the Confederates to attack. When 9 o'clock rolled around and the Rebels had failed to launch any hostile demonstration, Milroy had his unit commanders form and muster their men. The "flying column" then returned to Fortress Rosecrans. It arrived about 1 a. m. on the 5th. 25

Since the blockhouse had not been seriously damaged by the fire of the Confederate artillery, Lieutenant Glosser decided to stay put. His detachment remained at the blockhouse following Milroy's departure. 26

General Jackson's skirmishers shadowed the Federals as they retired. No effort, however, was made by the Confederates to force their way across Overall Creek. Just as the battle was ending, a squadron of cavalry led by Colonel Edward Dillon rode up. Forrest had ordered the colonel to march to Bate's assistance, but the troopers did not reach the field in time to be of any help.

in the engagement. 27

Evidently, the Confederate outposts were not keeping a very close watch. They failed to discover that the Federals had evacuated their position on the east side of the creek. In the meantime, General Bate had been devoting considerable thought to the strategic situation. He knew that his small division was dangerously exposed. Bate was afraid that the Yankees might make a night march, turn his flank, and get into his rear. The general determined to move his command. Colonel Dillon was told to have his troopers relieve Bate's pickets. By 10 p. m., Dillon's horsemen had occupied the line of outposts covering Overall Creek. As soon as his brigade commanders had assembled their units, Bate started his troops up the Nashville pike. After crossing Stewarts Creek, Bate called a halt and the division bivouacked for the night. 28

General Bate reported that his command lost 15 killed, 59 wounded, and 13 missing in the fighting along Overall Creek on the 4th. The Union officers, in their "After Action Reports", listed their casualties (excluding those suffered by the 13th Indiana Cavalry) as 4 killed and 61 wounded. In the period from December 4-9, Colonel Johnson of the 13th Indiana announced that his regiment had 8 killed and 34 wounded. Almost all of these were cut down in the fighting along Overall Creek on the 4th. In

addition, General Milroy turned over to the Fortress Rosecrans provost marshal 20 Confederate prisoners. 29

Reveille sounded in the camps occupied by General Bate's division early on the 5th. In accordance with Bate's instructions, the brigade commanders prepared to move against and reduce the blockhouses at Stewarts Creek and Smyrna. Demolition teams were organized and given the task of destroying the railroad between these two points. 30

In the meantime, the messenger sent by Captain Hake to tell the officers in charge of Blockhouses Nos. 5 and 6 of General Thomas' decision to abandon all the stockades between Nashville and Murfreesboro had carried out his assignment. It was shortly after daybreak when the garrisons evacuated the two blockhouses. Since Bate's division was known to be operating along the Nashville pike, the bluecoats were compelled to make a long detour. Marching by way of Jefferson, the Federals succeeded in avoiding Bate's column. The Yankees, however, encountered several roving mounted patrols. Brushing these groups to one side, the Yankees reached Murfreesboro about 2 p. m. 31

When Bate's troops reached the blockhouses, they found that the occupants had fled. After they had removed and distributed the stores which the Federals had abandoned, the

Rebels burned the stockades. At the same time, Bate's demolition teams put the torch to the railroad bridges at Smyrna and across Stewarts Creek. Several miles of track were also torn up. While Bate's soldiers were engaged in these undertakings, a powerful cavalry column was sighted approaching from the direction of Lavergne. The newcomers proved to be Forrest's command. 32

Since Forrest was his superior, Bate reported to the cavalry leader, Forrest, by virtue of his rank, immediately assumed command of all the Confederate forces operating in the Murfreesboro sector. Upon conversing with Forrest, Bate was distressed to learn that the cavalryman wanted to undertake offensive operations against Fortress Rosecrans. For the time being, Bate would just have to forget his assignment "to destroy the railroad". Bate was disturbed by Forrest's ambitious plans. In justification of his position, Bate explained to Forrest that all the reports reaching him indicated that there were from 8,000 to 10,000 Federals in Murfreesboro. Besides being very strong, Fortress Rosecrans was said to be well supplied with artillery. Bate thought it would be unwise for the Confederates to attack Fortress Rosecrans. When Forrest insisted, Bate agreed to co-operate. 33

Having made his decision, Forrest ordered the advance

resumed. General Jackson was directed to send Ross' Texas brigade cross-country to the Wilkinson pike. As soon as sufficient time had elapsed to allow Ross' Texans to reach Wilkinson's Cross-Roads, Forrest led the remainder of his command down the Nashville-Murfreesboro pike. General Buford's division spearheaded the march.

By 2 p. m., Buford's vanguard had reached Overall Creek. A battery was unlimbered on a hill about one-half mile northwest of Blockhouse No. 7. Five or six shots were fired at the stockade, only one of which struck the building. At the first alarm, Lieutenant Glosser had turned out his command. Manning their battle stations, the bluecoats returned the Confederates' fire. After the Federals had killed one horse and wounded several of the artillerists, the Rebels limbered up their pieces and fell back. The cavalry would leave the reduction of the blockhouse to Eate's infantry. <sup>34</sup>

Over on the Wilkinson pike, Ross' Texans likewise encountered opposition as they drove toward Murfreesboro. Ross' vanguard was checked when it encountered a Union roadblock. To keep his advance moving, Ross dismounted and threw forward the 3d and 6th Texas. After a sharp contest, the Texans smashed this pocket of resistance. By late afternoon, Ross' troopers had

secured the bridge which carried the Wilkinson pike across Overall Creek. 35

Forrest, upon learning that Ross' brigade had reached Overall Creek, halted his main column. By this time, Buford's troopers had likewise established a bridgehead on the east bank of the stream. Forrest would not press any closer to Fortress Rosecrans, pending the arrival of Bate's infantry. For the time being, Buford's troopers were to pickst the countryside from the Nashville pike on the right to the Lebanon pike on the left; Jackson's would watch the area between the Nashville and Salem pikes. As soon as the cavalry leaders had carried out these instructions, they permitted their troopers to camp. 36

In the meantime, General Bate had reassembled his division. The infantry proceeded to retrace their steps. Bate's soldiers spent the night of the 5th bivouacked on either side of the Nashville pike near where they had been engaged on the previous day.

During the night, Bate tried to induce the defenders of Blockhouse No. 7 to surrender. About midnight, a Union soldier, who had been captured by the Rebels, appeared at the blockhouse. He told Lieutenant Glosser that if the Federals would lay down their arms, General Bate would parole the entire garrison, while

respecting the soldiers' private property. Continuing, the soldier remarked that one of Bate's officers would formally present these terms "by 6 a. m. or sunrise".

It was noon, however, before a Confederate officer bearing a white flag approached the blockhouse. The Rebel stated that he had been sent by Colonel Hill to demand the surrender of the stockade on the terms previously proposed by General Bate. Lieutenant Glosser refused, informing the Confederate that "We would hold the block-house". 37

On the 5th, General Hood determined to send two more infantry brigades, with a battery each, to the Murfreesboro area. The two brigades designated for this detached service were Brigadier General Claudius W. Sears' and Colonel Joseph B. Palmer's. Palmer's and Sears' troops would be accompanied by Fenner's Louisiana Battery and the Brookhaven Mississippi Light Artillery. General Sears, as ranking officer, would be in charge of these units until they reached Murfreesboro, where he would report to Forrest. Preparations were completed, and Sears' column started for Murfreesboro on the afternoon of the 5th. 38

At the same time, Hood forwarded a message to General Bate, informing him that "Two good brigades, with a battery each, have been sent to the vicinity of Murfreesborough." Bate was also formally notified that he was to be responsible to General Forrest.

The defeat of the Union troops stationed at Murfreesboro, Hood wrote, "is of the first importance". This dispatch demonstrated to Bate that the plan to move against Fortress Rosecrans was not a special project thought up by the aggressive Forrest, as the general had originally suspected. 39

The news that Bate's greyclads had disappeared from the approaches to Murfreesboro was eagerly received by General Rousseau. Hoping to restore rail connections with Nashville, Rousseau ordered a construction train readied. The 181st Ohio would guard the repair crew. A telegrapher and an instrument was to accompany the train. Any information of the Confederates' whereabouts gleaned by the Ohioans would be promptly wired to Rousseau's headquarters. Major James T. Hickey, the officer in charge of the guard detail, was directed to exercise "the utmost vigilance" in protecting the construction train. Before the train was able to leave Murfreesboro, Rousseau learned that the Rebels had returned in force to Overall Creek. He accordingly canceled the orders sending out the construction train. 40

A wild rumor concerning the fighting along Overall Creek on the 4th reached General Thomas' ears on the following evening. According to this tale, Milroy's "flying column" had captured six guns from the Confederates. If this report were true, Thomas wanted these guns added to the armament of Fortress Rosecrans.

Furthermore, Thomas wanted Rousseau to submit a detailed report on what had transpired at Murfreesboro since the telegraph had been cut. Rousseau was to be informed that everything was developing satisfactorily on the Nashville perimeter. As soon as Wilson's cavalry was ready to take the field, Thomas promised to seize the initiative. A courier was detailed to make the roundabout ride to Murfreesboro and relay this information to Rousseau. <sup>41</sup>

THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

Notes -- Chapter V

The Attack on Blockhouse No. 7

- 1 O. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 744.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid., 615, 633, 744-745. The three regiments deployed by Colonel Bullock were: the 1st and 3d Florida Consolidated Infantry, the 7th Florida Infantry, and the 1st Florida Cavalry (dismounted) and the 4th Florida Consolidated Infantry.
- 4 Ibid., 745.
- 5 Ibid., 635.
- 6 Ibid., 630. Colonel Johnson, along with four companies of his regiment, had been cut off when Schofield's army had retired into the Nashville perimeter. The Indianians had made their way to Murfreesboro, where Johnson reported to General Rousseau.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid., 613, 615.
- 10 Ibid., 615, 630, 635.
- 11 Ibid., 615.
- 12 Ibid., 615, 622, 624, 630.

- 13 Ibid., 745.
- 14 Ibid., 622.
- 15 Ibid., 615, 624.
- 16 Ibid., 615-616.
- 17 Ibid., 616, 630.
- 18 Ibid., 630, 745.
- 19 Ibid., 616, 624, 745.
- 20 Ibid., 624, 745.
- 21 Ibid., 616.
- 22 Ibid., 622.
- 23 Ibid., 630.
- 24 Ibid., 616, 624, 630.
- 25 Ibid., 616, 630.
- 26 Ibid., 633, 635. During the bombardment, the blockhouse was struck by 31 projectiles, five scoring hits on the lookout and 26 on the main building and its entrance.
- 27 Ibid., 745.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Ibid., 616, 631, 745.
- 30 Ibid., 745.
- 31 Ibid., 633. Captain William M. McClure was in charge of Blockhouse No. 5; Lieutenant John S. Orr commanded at Blockhouse No. 6. Detachments from the 115th Ohio garrisoned the two blockhouses.

- 32 Ibid., 745.
- 33 Ibid., 745, 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 548.
- 34 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 635, 755.
- 35 Ibid., 771.
- 36 Ibid., 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 548.
- 37 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 635. Under the cover of darkness, the Federals had ventured from the blockhouse to get wood, water, and timber. The timbers were used to floor the tower, which had been converted into a bomb-proof.
- 38 Ibid., 671, 755; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 652.
- 39 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 652.
- 40 Ibid., 64-65.
- 41 Ibid., 64. It took the messenger about 60 hours to make the circuitous ride from Nashville to Murfreesboro. Thomas' dispatch was delivered to Rousseau late on the forenoon of the 8th. Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 614.



# THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

## Chapter VI

### The Battle of the Cedars

General Forrest, on the morning of the 6th, determined to make a forced reconnaissance of the defenses of Fortress Rosecrans. He accordingly ordered General Bate's division to cross Overall Creek. As soon as all of his soldiers had crossed the bridge, Bate formed them into line of battle athwart the Nashville pike. The 4th Georgia Sharpshooter Battalion, led by Major Theodore D. Caswell, was deployed and thrown forward as skirmishers. At a word from Bate, the division swept forward. The Nashville pike served as the axis of Bate's advance. <sup>1</sup>

Before the Southerners had proceeded very far, Caswell's Georgians were fired on by the bluecoated vedettes. These Union troopers were manning the line of outposts which General Rousseau had established to cover the approaches to Fortress Rosecrans. For most of the next two hours, the Georgians and the Yankees banged away at one another. Once again the limestone outcroppings and the cedars which bounded the pike echoed to the sounds of battle. Having delayed the Confederate drive long enough to permit the defenders of Fortress Rosecrans to man their battle stations,

the Federal outposts retired.

Bate's butternuts cautiously resumed their advance. The general permitted his soldiers to push to within three-quarters of a mile of Lunette Stanley, the northwestern bastion of Fortress Rosecrans. Realizing that a farther advance would expose his soldiers to the fire of the Union artillery, Bate ordered his brigade commanders to place their men under cover. After halting, the Rebel infantrymen began digging rifle pits and erecting stone and log breastworks. The position occupied by Bate's division extended from Stones River on the left to a point a short distance north of the Wilkinson pike on the right. No attempt was made by the Federals to keep the Southerners from digging in. <sup>2</sup>

While Bate's soldiers were fortifying their positions, Forrest decided to examine the approaches to Fortress Rosecrans. For this purpose, Forrest called upon one of Brigadier General Frank C. Armstrong's Mississippi cavalry regiments. Accompanied by the Mississippians, Forrest made a careful inspection of the Federals' position and works. This bold reconnaissance convinced the general that Fortress Rosecrans was too strong to justify an attempt to carry it by coup de main. He decided to use his command to keep Rousseau's Yankees pinned down in the Murfreesboro area. If at all possible, Forrest wanted to prevent Rousseau from joining

forces with Thomas at Nashville. (Forrest did not know that  
Rousseau was under orders to remain at Murfreesboro.) 3

General Sears' column reported to Forrest on the evening  
of the 6th. It had taken the reinforcements about 36 hours to move  
from the Nashville area to Murfreesboro. Sears' brigade was placed  
in reserve, while Palmer's brigade was ordered to fortify the  
commanding hill south of the Wilkinson pike and west of Fortress  
Rosecrans. Palmer's troops spent the night of the 6th throwing up  
breastworks. 4

To tighten his grasp on the approaches to Murfreesboro,  
Forrest decided to expand the scope of the activities of his  
mounted arm. Ross' Texas brigade was given the all but impossible  
task of patrolling the 12 miles of countryside between the Salem  
and Woodbury pikes. General Ross found this to be a very severe  
assignment for his under strength command. 5

During the night, Forrest decided that the effectiveness  
of his blockade of Fortress Rosecrans might be increased if he  
shifted Bate's division farther to the right. Forrest addressed a  
set of instructions to Bate, calculated to implement this decision.

At daybreak on the 7th, Bate assembled his three brigades.  
After starting his wagon train for the Salem pike, Bate ordered  
his men to take up the march. In accordance with Forrest's orders,

Bate planned to place his division on the right of Palmer's brigade.

Moving southward along a country lane, Bate's greyclads soon reached the Wilkinson pike. Following the departure of Bate's division, General Sears' Mississippians were called up from the reserve and occupied the rifle pits flanking the Nashville pike. <sup>6</sup>

Before Bate's troops were able to take position on Palmer's right, the tactical situation had changed drastically. Forrest had established his command post with Palmer's brigade. The general soon observed that there was a flurry of activity behind the Union lines. A strong Union column composed of infantry, cavalry, and artillery was seen to emerge from Fortress Rosecrans. Forrest watched closely as the bluecoats moved into Murfreesboro. There they veered into the Salem pike. Satisfied that the Yankees were intent on turning his right, Forrest at first toyed with a daring plan. He alerted Bate and Palmer to hold their troops ready to drive against Fortress Rosecrans. But upon mature consideration, Forrest decided that this was too risky. He therefore decided to see if he could entice the Union column (which was now crossing Stones River) to its destruction. Forrest planned to see if he could draw the Federals far enough away from their stronghold to allow him to throw Buford's and Armstrong's cavalrymen between them and their base. Caught between his infantry and cavalry, Forrest reasoned, the Union column would

face certain destruction. 7

Forrest placed General Bate in charge of all his infantry. Quickly assembling his command, Bate marched westward along the Wilkinson pike. Forrest accompanied the infantry column. As the vanguard approached Overall Creek, Forrest told Bate to deploy his troops. Working under Forrest's personal supervision, Bate established his main line of resistance, south of and parallel with the pike. Three brigades (Sears', Palmer's, and Lash's) held the line. The right flank of Sears' unit rested near the creek. Jackson's and Smith's brigades were held in reserve and posted north of the pike. To strengthen their position, the Confederate foot-soldiers commenced to throw up logs and rail field fortifications. The artillery was emplaced along the line at various strategic points. 8

At daybreak on the morning of the 7th, the Union sentinels observed that the Confederate infantry (Palmer's brigade) had occupied and fortified the commanding knoll south of the Wilkinson pike. This important news was immediately communicated to Rousseau. Training his glasses on the hill, Rousseau quickly verified the scouts' reports. Rousseau was very familiar with the area; it was a little south of the point where Brigadier General James S. Negley had formed his division on the morning of December 31, 1862, prior to the Confederate onslaught which opened the

battle of Stones River. 9

When the general focused his glasses on the rifle pits flanking the Nashville pike, he noticed that they were not as strongly held as on the previous day. Rousseau was troubled by this discovery. He wondered what had happened to the rest of the Confederate infantry. To find out where Forrest's main force was, Rousseau decided to undertake a reconnaissance in force. The general decided to give the dependable General Milroy the task of finding the Rebels. Milroy was placed in charge of a strong task force and directed to feel for the foe. 10

Milroy, following the receipt of his marching orders, quickly and efficiently organized his striking force into two brigades. The 8th Minnesota, the 61st Illinois, and the 174th and 181st Ohio would constitute the 1st brigade; the 177th and 178th Ohio, and the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted), were assigned to the 2d brigade. Colonel Minor T. Thomas of the 8th Minnesota led the 1st brigade; Colonel Edward Anderson of the 12th Indiana headed the 2d brigade. A six-gun battery (four pieces manned by the 13th New York Battery and a section by the 12th Battery, Ohio Light Artillery) was attached to Thomas' command. The artillerists were commanded by Captain Henry Bundy of the 13th New York Battery. A detachment from the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) was also slated

to accompany Milroy. The Tennesseans, who would be used for scouting purposes, would report directly to the general. All told, Milroy's task force mustered 3,325 strong when it took the field. <sup>11</sup>

After the men had drawn their stipulated ammunition and rations, they were formed and mustered. At a word from Milroy, the units moved out -- Thomas' brigade in front, Anderson's bringing up the rear. As the head of the column tramped out of Fortress Rosecrans, Milroy glanced at his watch; the time was 10 a. m. To screen his advance, Milroy had the troopers from the 5th Tennessee Cavalry (Union) take the lead. When the vanguard reached Murfreesboro, Milroy turned his task force into the Salem pike. The Federals soon passed through Rousseau's advance picket line. A short distance beyond, the Tennesseans were fired on by several of Ross' vedettes. Patrols from Ross' Texas brigade were watching the Salem pike to within one-half mile of the Union outposts. After a brief clash, the Southerners broke contact and fell back toward Stones River. <sup>12</sup>

Not wishing to take any chances with a Confederate ambush, Milroy reinforced his advance guard with a detachment from the 61st Illinois. Deploying as skirmishers, the Illinoisans moved to the Tennesseans' assistance. Pressing rapidly ahead, hard on the retreating Rebels' heels, the head of Milroy's column soon reached the bridge across Stones River.

By this time, the Texans had assembled a force, which Milroy estimated to number about 300, to dispute the bluecoats' advance. Without a moment's hesitation, Milroy called for artillery support. Captain Eundy responded immediately. Amid a clatter of hoofs, a section of guns manned by the cannoners of the 13th New York Battery came bouncing up the pike. Wheeling their guns into battery, the artillerists began to hammer the Texans with shot and shell. This bombardment quickly scattered the Rebel horsemen. Milroy then led his troops across the bridge. Advancing toward Salem, the Yankees reached Mr. Spence's "fine residence", which was four miles from Murfreesboro. 13

Milroy halted his column while he questioned the Spences. Mrs. Spence proved to be very talkative. She told the general that General Jackson was at Salem with Armstrong's Mississippi Cavalry Brigade. (Salem was about two miles west of the Spences' house.) Mrs. Spence reported that "Generals Forrest and Eate, with a large force of infantry, artillery, and cavalry", were posted along the Wilkinson pike about three miles west of Fortress Rosecrans. Instead of Armstrong, the aggressive Milroy determined to attack Forrest and Eate. 14

Before moving against Forrest, Milroy had one more item he would like to attend to. He had learned that Mr. Spence owned

"a drove of sixty fine, fat hogs". The general knew that if he did not secure the porkers, they would surely fall into the Rebels' hands. A company was detached and given the mission of driving the hogs to Fortress Rosecrans. This company successfully carried out its assignment, and the pigs were turned over to the commissary department. 15

Leaving Spence's, Milroy led his task force northward along a country lane. Gaining the Franklin road, the Federal column moved westward a short distance. At the junction of the Franklin road and Grisham lane, the Yankees turned to the right. Since the Wilkinson pike was only a mile and one-half to his front, Milroy bolstered his advance guard with the remainder of the 61st Illinois. For the first mile, the Union advance up Grisham lane was uneventful. When the skirmishers from the 61st Illinois topped the rise near the Grisham house, they were fired on by the Confederate pickets. General Bate had covered his main line of resistance with a strong line of outposts.

Milroy made a hasty reconnaissance. He was unable, however, to learn very much regarding the Confederates' dispositions. There was a large cotton field extending from his position northward as far as the Wilkinson pike. This field was bounded on the east

by Grisham lane. The Rebels, Milroy reasoned, had probably established their main line of resistance in the timber flanking the Wilkinson pike. Inside of a few minutes, a six-gun battery emplaced in the edge of the wood to the Federals' front opened fire. Milroy's suspicions concerning the Confederates' deployment were confirmed. <sup>16</sup>

Having found the Rebels, Milroy hastened to form his task force. He issued instructions for Thomas and Anderson to deploy their brigades. Thomas' troops took position along the crest of the ridge. The 61st Illinois, supported by detachments from the other regiments of Thomas' command, was thrown out as skirmishers and advanced into the cotton field. Colonel Anderson's brigade was posted behind Thomas'. Anderson's three regiments were massed in columns by battalions. Four of Captain Bundy's guns (one section from the 13th New York, the other from the 12th Ohio) were brought to the front and placed in battery. Almost as soon as the trails struck the ground, the Union artillerists started to return the Confederates' fire. <sup>17</sup>

Milroy's bluecoats had arrived on the Grisham house ridge, while the Confederates were busy throwing up rail and log breastworks. A shout from the pickets sent the greyclad infantry

scrambling into their field fortifications. Racing to their pieces, the Confederate artillerists loaded their pieces. At a word from the battery commanders, the gun captain pulled the lanyards. <sup>18</sup>

A fierce artillery duel ensued. A number of projectiles from the Confederate guns landed in the sector where the 177th Ohio was massed. This regiment had never before been under fire. Both the regimental officers and the members of Colonel Anderson's staff tried to keep the men in column. Anderson realized that the combat efficiency of the regiment might be permanently jeopardized if the soldiers broke for the rear. He therefore directed Colonel Arthur T. Wilcox to have his men lie down. Throwing themselves on the ground, the Ohioans hugged the earth while the shells burst about them. Colonel Anderson recalled, "I was glad, in occupying a position where I could watch the regiment, to notice that none appeared to flinch under this heavy fire ...." <sup>19</sup>

In an effort to pick off the Confederate cannoneers, the Union skirmishers worked their way closer to the Wilkinson pike. Before the Union sharpshooters could make their presence felt, the Union cannoneers were confronted by an ammunition shortage. When they had marched out of Fortress Rosecrans, the artillerists left their caissons behind. The limbers contained only 50 rounds to the piece. After about 30 minutes of rapid firing, the section

leaders informed Captain Bundy that they had almost exhausted their supply of ammunition. Bundy quickly relayed these evil tidings to the general. <sup>20</sup>

Milroy ordered the two sections which were engaged to conserve their few remaining rounds. This decision was made with great regret on the general's part. So far, the Confederates had been content to hold their ground. The shelling had failed to goad them into making a rash attack on Milroy's task force. Furthermore, Milroy had been unsuccessful in his efforts to ascertain the Rebels' strength. If he were to carry out his forced reconnaissance, he would have to engage the Confederates with his infantry. But the general observed the left flank of Bate's battle line was as near Fortress Rosecrans as his right. Milroy decided it would not be "prudent" to send his infantry to the attack, unless Fortress Rosecrans was in his rear. Then, in case of a repulse, the bluecoats would fall back upon that stronghold. <sup>21</sup>

The general withdrew his soldiers a short distance down Crisham lane. As soon as they had passed out of the Confederates' sight, Milroy had them move by the right flank in a northeasterly direction. Screened by the configuration of the terrain (an intervening ridge) and the cedars, the bluecoats struck the Wilkinson pike, a considerable distance beyond the Rebels' left flank.

Moving swiftly, Milroy formed his two brigades astride the pike. Colonel Thomas' brigade constituted the first line, Colonel Anderson's the second. The 61st Illinois was deployed as skirmishers and thrown forward to cover Thomas' battle line. Since the artillerists had exhausted their ammunition, Milroy ordered them to return to Fortress Rosecrans to refill their limbers. 22

When the Yankees fell back, Forrest felt that they were regrouping their forces preparatory to resuming the attack. Forrest therefore directed Bate to call up his reserves. Bringing Jackson's and Smith's brigades to the front, Bate used them to prolong his main line of resistance to the east. The Rebel scouts soon sent in word that the Unionists were retiring upon Fortress Rosecrans. Bate shifted Sears' brigade from his right to the left. Sears' Mississippians took position on Smith's left. To protect his exposed flank, Sears refused it slightly.

Almost before Sears had completed his dispositions, the Rebels were dismayed to learn that Milroy had re-formed his command astride the Wilkinson pike. To make matters worse, most of the Confederates had decided that the Yankees had had enough and were retiring into Fortress Rosecrans. The new Union battle line was at right angles to Bate's main line of resistance. To escape

being taken in the flank and rolled up like a carpet, the Rebels would have to abandon the protection afforded by their field fortifications.

Reacting to this dangerous situation with his customary alacrity, Forrest ordered Bate to withdraw his troops from the breastworks and throw them across the pike. Here, the greyclad infantry would be massed to oppose the Federals' advance. At this time, most of the oncoming Union line was hidden by cedars. Bate, for one, misjudged its extent. Acting on Bate's orders, Sears' and Jackson's troops moved too far to the left. Lash's and Palmer's brigades shifted to the left and occupied the breastworks vacated by Sears' Mississippians and Jackson's Georgians. Smith's brigade took position astride the Wilkinson pike. There was a gap of between 75 and 100 yards between Smith's right and Lash's left.

By the time that Smith had completed his hurried dispositions, the bluecoats had closed to within 200 yards. Already, the skirmishers from the 61st Illinois had driven in the greyclad outposts. Bate now realized that Jackson and Sears had moved too far to the left. He sent Major Arthur Shaaff of his staff to overtake these two units. Shaaff was to recall these two brigades and conduct them into position on the left of Smith's brigade. Before Shaaff could carry out his mission, the bluecoats had launched an all-out assault on Bate's three other brigades. <sup>23</sup>

While the soldiers were taking position, Forrest rode along the line. To calm the men, he addressed them in encouraging words. Captain P. H. Coleman of the 1st Florida Infantry recalled:

General Forrest rode to where my company was in position and said by way of encouragement to us: "Men, all I ask of you is to hold the enemy back for fifteen minutes, which will give me sufficient time to gain their rear with my cavalry, and I will capture the last one of them." <sup>24</sup>

As soon as Thomas had completed his dispositions, Wilroy waved him to the attack. Screened by the skirmishers from the 61st Illinois, Thomas' battle line swept forward. Pressing ahead, the bluecoats worked their way through the underbrush, cedars, and limestone outcroppings which bounded the pike. Wilroy's skirmishers soon established contact with the mounted patrols which guarded the approaches to Bate's exposed left flank. The Illinoisans opened fire. After getting off a few ineffectual rounds, the horsemen beat a hurried retreat.

Shortly thereafter, the advancing Yankees encountered Bate's outposts. These pickets, however, were unable to check, much less stop, the powerful Union drive. Consequently, the Federals continued to forge rapidly ahead, sweeping the greyclads before them. By the time his command had advanced several hundred yards, Colonel Thomas observed that a possibly dangerous interval had

opened in his skirmish line. He therefore halted his brigade for a few minutes. In accordance with Thomas' instructions, the colonel of the 181st Ohio deployed and threw forward two of his companies.

As soon as the Ohicans had plugged the gap, the bluecoats resumed the advance on the double. General Milroy proudly recalled, "my skirmish line advanced rapidly, bravely, and in splendid order, considering the nature of the ground, driving the rebels before them". After having pushed forward about a mile, Thomas' troops emerged into a cotton field. In the edge of the timber on the other side of the field, they could clearly distinguish Eate's battle line.

The Southerners were partially covered by the cedars and the dense underbrush. At the moment, the buttermats were busy throwing up field fortifications. First, the Rebel artillery and then the infantry opened on the bluecoats. Since Milroy had sent his artillerists to Fortress Rosecrans to refill their limbers, he had no guns with which to soften up the Southerners' position. Several crashing volleys from Eate's infantry caused the Union skirmishers to falter. Falling back, they fell in on the flanks of Thomas' battle line. Undaunted, Thomas' brigade continued to

press ahead in "good order". Reaching the center of the field, Thomas halted his soldiers. Coming to the ready, the bluecoats sent a well-aimed volley crashing into the Confederates' ranks. For the next ten to fifteen minutes, the opposing battle lines blazed away at each other. 25

Colonel Anderson's brigade experienced considerable difficulty in keeping pace with Thomas' battle line. Between them, the limestone outcroppings and underbrush gave Anderson's troops a difficult time. To expedite his march, Anderson was compelled to alter his formation. From line of battle, Anderson redeployed his regiments into columns by companies. In addition, Anderson's soldiers received some attention from the Confederate artillerists. Approaching the cotton field where Thomas' troops were engaged in their deadly contest with Bate's infantry, Anderson re-formed his brigade into line of battle. The 177th Ohio was on the right, the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted) in the center, and the 178th Ohio on the left. 26

Once he saw that Anderson's brigade was within easy supporting distance, General Milroy ordered Thomas to charge the Confederates. Thomas led his men forward. Thomas' battle line fought its way out of the cotton field and into the edge of the woods. Milroy now observed that a strong force of Confederates

(Sears' Mississippians and Jackson's Georgians) were advancing to turn his right flank. To counter this threat, Milroy had Colonel Anderson rush the 177th Ohio to the front. Colonel Wilcox deployed his regiment at right angles to Thomas' battle line; the left flank of the 177th Ohio rested on the right of the 8th Minnesota. Skirmishers were advanced and Wilcox's troops grimly waited for Sears' and Jackson's butternuts to attack.

Immediately thereafter, Milroy committed another one of Anderson's regiments. The general personally conducted the 178th Ohio to the front. He used this regiment to prolong Thomas' battle line to the left. Anderson's remaining regiment, the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted), was used to bolster Thomas' right. <sup>27</sup>

In the meantime, the fighting in the edge of the woods had continued to rage. During the short time that it lasted, Milroy reported, "the roar and fire of musketry was like the thunder of a volcano, and the line wavered as if moving against a hurricane". Milroy was afraid that his soldiers were about to give way. Since the 178th Ohio on the left of the line was not heavily engaged, Milroy sent an aide to order Colonel Joab A. Stafford to shift his unit to the right. At the same time, the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted) was directed to advance to

Thomas' assistance. Milroy planned to use these two comparatively fresh regiments to relieve Thomas' bluecoats, who had heretofore borne the brunt of the fighting. 28

When they saw the reinforcements moving to their support, Thomas' soldiers made a final surge. Letting loose with a terrible battle cry, they "darted over the enemy's works". On the right, the soldiers of Companies C and K, 8th Minnesota blazed away at the 5th Company, Washington Artillery. A number of the Louisianians' horses had been killed or wounded. When the cannoneers sought to lead up additional horses to withdraw their guns, they were likewise cut down. In the end, the cannoneers succeeded in saving one of their three guns, the others had to be abandoned. But as the fortunes of war would have it, soldiers from the 174th Ohio reached the two 12-pounder Napoleons first and claimed their captive. Unable to stop this Union sweep, Palmer's and Lash's infantry took to their heels. The right flank and center of Bate's main line of resistance had been hopelessly shattered. 29

Seizing a stand of colors, Forrest tried to rally the two broken brigades. The frightened soldiers, however, refused to listen to either Forrest's entreaties or his appeals to their patriotism. Wild with fury, at the infantrymen's behavior, the general "took it upon himself to resent personally their shameful

conduct". 30

An artillerist in the Columbus Georgia Artillery, W. A. Calloway, wrote of Forrest's efforts to halt the spreading panic. The cannoner recalled:

I was an eye-witness to an interesting incident of this fight at Murfreesborough. During the stampede or retreat, which almost amounted to a panic, Forrest rode in among the infantry, ordering the men to rally, and doing all in his power to stop the retreat. He rode up and down the lines, shouting, "Rally, men -- for God's sake, rally!" The panic stricken soldiers, however, paid no heed to the general. Rushing towards a color-bearer who was running for dear life, he ordered him to halt. Failing to have his command obeyed, he drew his pistol and shot the retreating soldier down. Dismounting, Forrest took the colors, remounted his horse, and, riding in front of the soldiers, waved the colors at them and finally succeeded in rallying them to their duty. 31

By this time, however, Palmer's and Lash's brigades had fled across Overall Creek. Here, they were joined by Sears' Mississippians. 32

Placing himself at the head of Smith's and Jackson's brigades, General Bate prepared to counterattack. Bate was hopeful that a sudden onslaught delivered against the right flank of Milroy's battle line might check the Union breakthrough. By the time that Major Shaaff had placed Jackson's Georgians on

Smith's left, it was too late for a counterthrust to save the day. One look told Bate that Lash's and Palmer's troops, for the time being at least, had lost their will to fight. To make matters worse, Sears' Mississippians disappeared. (The Mississippians, instead of taking position on Jackson's left, had retired to the west side of Overall Creek.) Canceling his orders for an advance, Bate prepared to fight a delaying action to cover the retreat of his comrades. As soon as the bluecoats had occupied the breastworks abandoned by Lash's and Palmer's butternuts, Bate proceeded to redeploy Jackson's and Smith's brigades. The troops were posted in line of battle in the cedars north of and parallel to the Wilkinson pike. In case the Federals tried to exploit their success by sweeping down the pike, Bate would be able to take them in the flank. 33

In the meantime, Forrest had sent one of his staff officers, Major John P. Strange, to contact General Jackson. Strange, in accordance with Forrest's orders, told Jackson that "everything depended" on the cavalry. Reacting with his customary vigor, Jackson rushed Armstrong's Mississippi brigade to the infantry's assistance. 34

By the time Armstrong's troopers approached the Wilkinson pike, Milroy's bluecoats were feeling their way toward Overall

Creek. In the mopping up operations which followed the collapse of Lash's and Palmer's brigades, the Federals captured 197 prisoners and a stand of colors. Except for the harassing fire of a battery emplaced north of the pike, the bluecoats encountered little difficulty as they drove ahead. Within a short time, Milroy's vanguard reached the Widow Smith's house.

Colonel Thomas now approached Milroy and told the general that several of his regiments had exhausted their ammunition. Milroy accordingly halted his command. The troops were to replenish their cartridge-boxes from an ordnance wagon which had just overtaken the command. In addition, the Federals were cheered by the return of the battery. The gunners had refilled their limbers. 35

Pending the resumption of the advance, Milroy learned that a strong force of Confederate Cavalry (Armstrong's) was moving against his left. Colonel Jones, whose 174th Ohio was posted on the left, quickly formed his troops in the edge of a cedar thicket with an open field to their front. Here, Jones was joined by two other regiments. Before the Rebel troopers could close with Jones' bluecoats, Captain Bundy shouted for his cannoneers to unlimber their pieces. Placing their six pieces in

battery, the artillerists raked Armstrong's oncoming horsemen with shot and shell. Unable to breast this fire, the Mississippi cavalymen fell back. <sup>36</sup>

Just as Milroy was getting ready to exploit this success, a staff officer galloped up and handed him an urgent communication from General Rousseau. Glancing at the message, Milroy learned that a "large rebel infantry force" was approaching from the north. Rousseau accordingly wanted Milroy to return to Fortress Rosecrans at his earliest opportunity. Quickly re-forming his column on the pike, Milroy started for the fortress. Covered by the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted), Milroy withdrew his troops "in as good order as if [they were] coming from an afternoon drill". By 6 p. m., the troops were back at Fortress Rosecrans. After the general had thanked them, the troops were dismissed and permitted to return to their quarters. <sup>37</sup>

General Buford's cavalry division had been responsible for the recall of Milroy's victorious legions. During the afternoon, Buford's troopers had swept down the Lebanon pike. Driving in the Union outposts, Buford's dismounted greyclads fought their way into Murfreesboro from the north. Unable to contain Buford's advance, the garrison took cover in the brick buildings

surrounding the square. To drive the Yankees from their strong points, Buford brought up Captain Morton's artillery. Unlimbering their six guns, the Tennessee cannoneers began to hammer these improvised forts to pieces.

As soon as General Rousseau learned of Buford's attack, he sent a member of his staff to recall Milroy's column. Next, the general prepared to march to the relief of the Murfreesboro garrison. Accompanied by a regiment of infantry and a section of artillery, Rousseau rode out of Fortress Rosecrans. Proceeding to Murfreesboro, Rousseau's column launched a vigorous counterattack. Within a few minutes, Rousseau's Yankees had bested the dismounted Confederates. Leaving a number of dead and prisoners behind, Buford's greyclads withdrew up the Lebanon pike. The Federals, satisfied with their success, failed to make an effective pursuit. 38

At the time of Rousseau's thrust, four of Morton's guns were unlimbered below the old academy and two above. The sharpshooting Federals quickly cut down the teams which were used to pull the two upper guns and their caissons. Galloping to this position, Captain Morton shouted for the artillerists to strip the harness from the dead animals and throw it onto the caissons and limbers. Assisted by several of the dismounted cavalymen, the gunners manhandled the pieces down the Woodbury pike. About one-half mile east of Murfreesboro at Major Sparks' residence, the

Confederate cannoneers were able to secure horses from the cavalry.

These, they eagerly hitched to the guns and caissons. 39

Shortly after Milroy's column had fallen back, General Bate received an order from Forrest to join him. Accompanied by Jackson's and Smith's brigades, Bate recrossed Overall Creek about sundown. On the west side of the stream, Bate found Lash's, Palmer's, and Sears' brigades. He had not seen these units since the Union breakthrough. As soon as the last of the infantry had crossed the creek, Forrest directed Bate to proceed to Stewartsboro, with Smith's brigade bringing up the rear, the infantry returned to the Nashville pike. It was almost midnight when the infantry crossed Stewarts Creek and went into camp. Armstrong's brigade, with which Forrest spent the night, picketed the Overall Creek crossings. 40

In the battle of the Cedars, as the engagement of the 7th was designated, the Federals reported their losses as 22 killed and 190 wounded. Of these, Thomas' brigade lost a great majority, 21 dead and 167 injured. General Bate listed his casualties as 19 killed, 73 wounded, and 122 missing. The Confederate cavalry leaders failed to make a report of their losses in the battle. 41

On the 7th, Colonel B. H. Hill's mounted infantry made

another attempt to talk the defenders of Blockhouse No. 7 into surrendering. A truce party again approached the stockade. The Confederate spokesman gave Lieutenant Glosser "ten minutes to surrender or be burned with Greek fire, etc." Despite Glosser's rejection of their demands, the Rebels made no effort to carry out their threat. Instead, they closely blockaded the approaches to the blockhouse, hoping to wear down the bluecoats' will to resist. <sup>42</sup>

## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Notes -- Chapter VI

#### The Battle of the Cedars

- 1 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 745, 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 550. During the battle of Stones River, which had occurred almost two years before, there had been heavy fighting in this sector.
- 2 Ibid.; Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Plate CXII, Fig. 3. In the skirmishing which accompanied the advance on Fortress Rosecrans, the 4th Georgia Sharpshooter Battalion suffered 16 casualties. The breastworks thrown up by Bate's greyclads were about three-quarters of a mile northwest of Fortress Rosecrans.
- 3 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 550.
- 4 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 755.
- 5 Ibid., 771.
- 6 Ibid., 746. This lane is now known as Van Cleve's Lane.
- 7 Ibid., 746, 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 550.
- 8 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 746. Since Colonel Bullock's

wounds had rendered him unfit for duty, Major Jacob A. Lash had assumed command of the Florida brigade. Lash's brigade held the left of Bate's main line of resistance.

9 Ibid., 613.

10 Ibid., 613, 617. Milroy was pleased by this assignment. In his "After Action Report", he pointed out, "I avail myself of this opportunity to tender to ... General Rousseau my most grateful acknowledgments for his kindness in affording me the two late opportunities of wiping out to some extent the foul and mortifying stigma of a most infamously unjust arrest, by which I have for near eighteen months been thrown out of the ring of active, honorable, and desirable service."

11 Ibid., 617, 627, 629. The guns manned by the cannoneers from the 12th Ohio Battery were a 12-pounder howitzer and a 6-pounder smoothbore.

12 Ibid., 610, 617.

13 Ibid., 617. .

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid., 610, 617, 619. From left to right, Thomas' brigade was

formed: the 174th Ohio, the 181st Ohio, and the 8th Minnesota. Colonel Anderson had the 178th Ohio on the left, the 177th Ohio in the middle, and the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted) on the right.

18 Ibid., 746.

19 Ibid., 610.

20 Ibid., 617, 619.

21 Ibid., 617.

22 Ibid., 617-618, 625. Thomas deployed his brigade from right to left, the 8th Minnesota, the 181st Ohio, and the 174th Ohio.

The Wilkinson pike separated the left flank of the 8th Minnesota from the right flank of the 181st Ohio. Colonel Anderson placed the 177th Ohio on the right, the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted) in the center, and the 178th Ohio on the left.

23 Ibid., 746.

24 Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 551.

25 O. R., Series I, Vol. XIV, pt. I, 618-619, 623, 626-627.

26 Ibid., 611, 628-629.

27 Ibid., 611, 618-620, 628-629.

28 Ibid., 618.

29 Ibid., 746.

- 30 Ibid., 755; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 552.
- 31 Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 552.
- 32 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 746.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid., 755.
- 35 Ibid., 618, 620, 625. The captured stand of colors belonged to the 1st and 3d Florida (Consolidated) Infantry.
- 36 Ibid., 618, 620, 625, 755.
- 37 Ibid., 611, 613, 620.
- 38 Ibid., 613-615; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 553.
- Rousseau reported that his men captured 25 Confederates, at a cost to themselves of one man wounded.
- 39 John W. Morton, The Artillery of Nathan Bedford Forrest's Cavalry, (Nashville, 1909), 281-282.
- 40 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 747, 755.
- 41 Ibid., 611, 620, 747. General Rousseau claimed that Milroy's task force captured 207 prisoners, including 18 commissioned officers, in the battle.
- 42 Ibid., 635. The threat to burn out the Federals with Greek fire was made in General Forrest's name.



# THE BATTLE OF THE CEDARS

DECEMBER 7, 1864

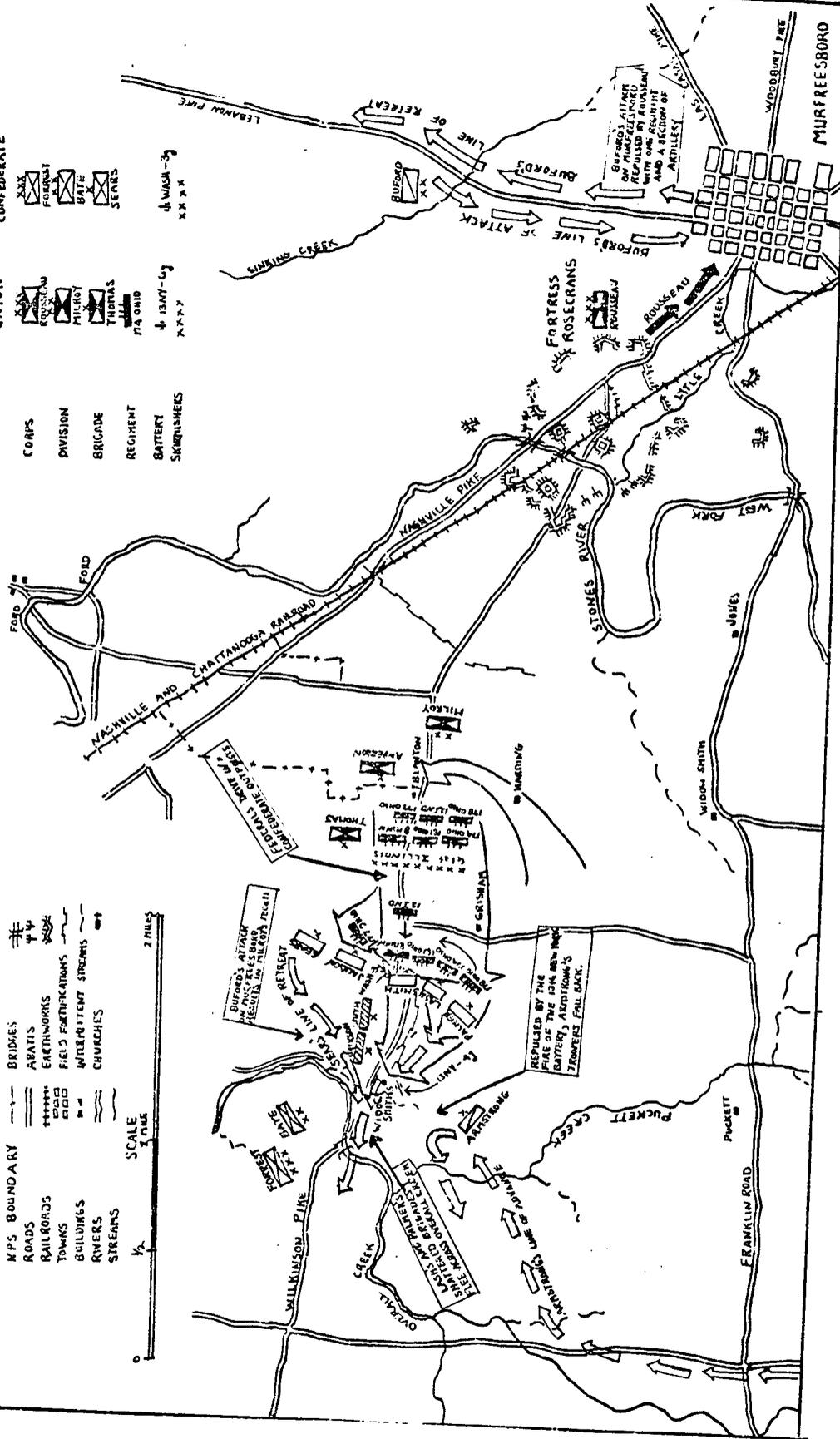
3d PHASE

L E G E N D

- KPS BOUNDARY
- ROADS
- RAILROADS
- TOWNS
- BUILDINGS
- RIVERS
- STREAMS
- BRIDGES
- ABATIS
- EARTHWORKS
- FIELD FORTIFICATIONS
- INTERSECTION
- STREAMS
- CHURCHES

SCALE  
1/2 MILE  
1 MILE  
2 MILES

- |                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| MILITARY SYMBOLS |             |
| UNION            | CONFEDERATE |
| COORPS           | FORBES      |
| DIVISION         | BATE        |
| BRIGADE          | THOMAS      |
| REGIMENT         | MA OMD      |
| BATTERY          | WASH-3      |
| SQUADRONS        | XXX         |
|                  | 1347-5      |
|                  | XXX         |



## THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

### Chapter VII

#### Forrest Tries to Squeeze the Yankees Out of Fortress Rosecrans

General Bate's soldiers were put back to work tearing up the railroad on the 8th. The unseasonably warm weather which had prevailed since the Confederates had re-entered Tennessee now changed. It started to snow and the ground froze. Consequently, the shivering demolition teams did not make much progress. To make matters worse, many of the men had worn out their shoes and were barefooted. In an effort to solve this problem, Bate had his chief quartermaster impress every pair of shoes he could find in the local stores. Furthermore, many of the civilians willingly donated their extra shoes to the suffering soldiers. In spite of these stringent measures, Bate was only partially able to supply his men's demands for footwear. The barns and storehouses in this portion of Rutherford County, however, were overflowing. From these, the Confederates were able to draw a "superabundance of rations".<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, General Hood had learned of Forrest's defeat in the battle of the Cedars. Hood now decided to adopt a

new course of action. Instead of attacking the Union fortifications, Forrest was to try to squeeze Rousseau out of Fortress Rosecrans. On the afternoon of the 8th, Hood sent his cavalry leader a message directing him to drive in the Union outposts. At the same time, Forrest was to leave the way open for the Federals to retire "toward Lebanon or any other direction they may choose". 2

Earlier in the day, Hood had ordered Colonel Charles H. Olmstead's brigade to report to Forrest. Olmstead's Georgians had been employed in throwing up a second line of breastworks in front of the Nashville perimeter, a short distance east of the Nolensville pike. Following the receipt of this order, Olmstead promptly put his Georgians on the road. Marching via the Nashville-Murfreesboro pike, Olmstead's troops reached Stewartsboro at nightfall and camped. 3

Late on the afternoon of the 8th, Hood had some second thoughts on the Murfreesboro situation. In view of the bad showing made by the infantry on the previous afternoon, the general determined to recall Bate's division and Sears' brigade. When he notified Forrest of this decision, the general announced that the cavalry leader would retain Olmstead's and Palmer's infantry and whatever artillery he deemed necessary. As soon as Bate's column had rejoined the army before Nashville, Hood

promised to send Forrest "another division of infantry, one of the best in the army".<sup>4</sup>

During the night, Hood changed his mind. The orders pertaining to Bate's and Sears' commands would stand. Hood, however, now decided to reduce his commitments in the Murfreesboro sector. He would not send a division to replace Bate's unit. In a letter informing the cavalry leader of this, Hood pointed out that Forrest would have the two infantry brigades (Olmstead's and Palmer's) which he retained, entrench themselves at either Stewarts Creek or Lavergne. Henceforth, Forrest's command would function as a corps of observation. A brigade of cavalry would be ordered to the Lebanon area. This unit was to picket the area between Lebanon and the "Hermitage".<sup>5</sup>

Hood had issued a directive detaching Colonel Hill's mounted infantry, 48 hours before. Hill's command was sent to Bedford, Giles and Marshall counties. In addition to breaking up the Home Guard, Hill's troopers were to requisition animals for the use of the army. Any men encountered who were liable for military duty were to be conscripted. Hill would see that the principal mills in these three counties were put back into operation.<sup>6</sup>

Forrest moved quickly to carry out Hood's instructions.

Bate's and Sears' troops left Stewartsboro on the morning of the 10th. The recent sleet storms and severe freezes had covered the Nashville pike with a sheet of ice. Worse, nearly one-fourth of the infantrymen were without shoes. "Yet", General Bate recalled, they "plodded 'their weary way' under these adverse circumstances (many with bleeding feet)". The foot-soldiers spent the night at Antioch and rejoined their parent units before Nashville early the next day. <sup>7</sup>

When Colonel Hill's troopers advanced into Bedford County, they prepared to attack Blockhouse No. 9, near Bell Buckle. A detachment from the 115th Ohio commanded by Lieutenant Merchant S. Hurd garrisoned this stockade. Hill sent forward an officer with a flag of truce to demand the Yankees' surrender. Hurd refused. Replying, he told the Confederates that "if they wanted the blockhouse, they must come and take it". Not having any artillery, Hill sent his dismounted troopers to the attack. After firing a few ineffectual volleys, the Confederates fell back and made no further attempt to reduce the blockhouse. <sup>8</sup>

On December 11, General Forrest, in accordance with Hood's directive, ordered one of Buford's brigades (Colonel Edward Crossland's) to "the Hermitage". Upon reaching "the Hermitage", Crossland's troopers picketed the crossing of the Cumberland River,

from Stones River on the left to Cedar Lick Creek on the right.

The next day (the 12th), Forrest had Olmstead's and Palmer's infantry hard at work tearing up the railroad between Lavergne and Overall Creek. Several additional attempts were made by the Confederates to induce the garrison holding out in Blockhouse No. 7 to lay down their arms. Lieutenant Glosser, however, resolutely refused to listen to the Rebel demands.<sup>9</sup>

Since the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad had been cut on the 2d, Rousseau's troops had been living off the rations stockpiled in the Fortress Rosecrans magazines. In addition, these rations were supplemented by foodstuff requisitioned by foraging from the neighboring farms. By the 12th, however, certain items were nearly exhausted. Rousseau decided to send a train to Stevenson to pick up supplies. At dark, a 15-car train pulled out of the Murfreesboro yards and started for Stevenson. The train was guarded by a 150-man detachment from the 61st Illinois. About 40 men from the 1st Michigan Engineer Regiment also rode the cars. The engineers were taken along to repair any breaks in the track which might be encountered. Colonel Grass of the 61st Illinois was in charge of the guard. The trip down to Stevenson, where the train arrived on the 13th, was uneventful. It took the employees of the commissary department most of the day

to load the box cars. At an early hour on the 14th, the train started on its return trip. Thirty members of the 12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted) who had been stranded at Stevenson, hoping to rejoin their outfit, hitched a ride on the train. <sup>10</sup>

The engine was unable to build up a good head of steam. Therefore, considerable difficulty was experienced in getting over the Cumberland Mountains. It was almost dark when the locomotive chugged into Bell Buckle. Lieutenant Hurd told Colonel Grass that he had heard reports of Confederate activity between Bell Buckle and Murfreesboro. The colonel, having been delayed enough already, decided to proceed. <sup>11</sup>

General Ross' scouts had spotted the train when it passed through Christiana on the evening of the 12th. In hopes of capturing the train on its return, Ross had his troopers remove several rails. The 3d and 6th Texas Cavalry were posted nearby. <sup>12</sup>

Rousseau was understandably elated by his success in sending a train through to Stevenson. The general, however, realized that the Confederates would undoubtedly try to intercept the train on its return. On the 13th, he placed Colonel Thomas Saylor of the 4th Michigan in charge of a second train. After entraining his regiment, Saylor was to head southward. In addition

to gathering wood, the Michiganders were to see if the Rebels had ripped up any track since the passage of the first train.

Three miles south of Murfreesboro, the Federals discovered a culvert on fire. A few greyclad horsemen were spotted loitering about the area. After the train had stopped, a number of the Michiganders detrained and quickly extinguished the blaze. Before continuing, Saylor detached a small patrol which was left to guard the culvert. At a point about nine miles from Murfreesboro, the conductor stopped the train. He then told the colonel that here was the best place in the area to collect fuel.

By 4 p. m., the working parties had loaded the cars with wood. At a word from Colonel Saylor, the troops scrambled back aboard and the train started for Fortress Rosecrans. Before the train had proceeded very far, dense clouds of smoke were seen rising from the track a short distance ahead. By the time the engineer had stopped the train, a strong force of Ross' Texans, who were posted behind a ridge on the west side of the track, had opened fire. Without a moment's hesitation, Colonel Saylor ordered two of his companies to detrain. Leaping off the cars, the Michiganders deployed on the run. After a brisk clash, the bluecoats forced the Rebels to fall back.

In the meantime, a fatigue party had put out the fire which the Southerners had kindled on the right of way. To make matters worse, the Texans had also torn up about 50 feet of track. Nevertheless, the grim Michiganders went to work with a will. The rails, which had been thrown to one side, were soon re-laid. By this time, the buttermuts had succeeded in bringing up their artillery -- Morton's battery. Saylor shouted for his troops to get back aboard the train. When the train did not start, the colonel learned to his horror that the engineer and the brakeman had disappeared. After about ten minutes, during which time the soldiers were exposed to a galling fire, the engineer reappeared. Scrambling onto the locomotive, the engineer started the train. To hold off the Confederates, Colonel Saylor deployed a line of skirmishers. These bluecoats followed along behind the slow-moving train. Ross' Texans launched several sharp attacks on the rear guard, but were beaten off.

During the fighting, a projectile pierced the boiler of the locomotive. By the time the train had reached a point about four miles from Murfreesboro, all the steam had escaped. The Federals were forced to push the train the rest of the way into the Murfreesboro yards. In the fight for the train, Colonel Saylor

reported that he lost 17 men: 1 killed, 10 wounded, and 6 missing. General Ross made no report of his losses. <sup>13</sup>

Stung by their failure to capture the 4th Michigan, Ross' Texans were determined to see that the next train did not get through. It was about 2 a. m. on the 15th when the supply train from Stevenson approached Christiana. Seeing the torn up track, the engineer slammed on the brakes. A shot was fired by a Confederate vedette to alert his comrades. Dashing forward, a Rebel patrol ripped up several rails behind the train. When Colonel Grass gave orders for the engineer to start backing, the conductor told him it was now impossible. Grass shouted for his men to get off the train. Upon debarking, the soldiers were deployed on either side of the road bed; the Michigan engineers were put to work repairing the break. A messenger was sent racing ahead to notify General Rousseau of the train's predicament and to ask for reinforcements. <sup>14</sup>

Since the rails had been torn up in a number of places, progress was agonizingly slow. Daybreak found the bluecoats six miles south of Murfreesboro. To make matters worse, the 3d and 6th Texas Cavalry had them hemmed in. Taking cover in a railroad cut, the Federals grimly prepared to try to hold out pending the arrival of a relief column. As soon as Ross had dismounted the 3d and 6th Texas, he sent them to the attack. The Federals beat off

this initial thrust on the part of the Texans.

Next, Ross brought up Morton's artillery. A few shells from the Confederate guns convinced Colonel Grass that he had better abandon the train and try to save his command. Sallying forth, the bluecoats sought to cut their way through to Fortress Rosecrans. Before they had proceeded very far, the Federals were charged by the 6th Texas, supported by the 3d Texas. Colonel Grass and over one-half of his regiment, along with the detachment from the 1st Michigan Engineers and most of the dismounted Indiana cavalymen, were either killed or taken prisoner. The left wing of the 61st Illinois led by Major Jerome E. Multon succeeded in forcing its way through the charging Rebels and reached Blockhouse No. 8. Here, the soldiers found a haven of refuge. 15

Ross' Texans were delighted with their success. Besides about 200 prisoners, they had captured a very valuable supply train. Breaking into the box cars, the Southerners found that they contained sugar, coffee, hardtack, and bacon. Ross estimated that the train carried a "full 200,000 rations". Before the Southerners were able to make off with all the commissary stores, their work was interrupted. Learning of the attack on the

train, General Rousseau ordered General Milroy to take several regiments and march to its relief. Placing himself at the head of a "flying column", Milroy started down the Shelbyville pike. At Blockhouse No. 8, Milroy rendezvoused with the survivors from the attack.

Ross' scouts had kept the general constantly apprised of Milroy's progress. Not wanting to fight a pitched battle with Milroy's column, Ross had his men set fire to the boxcars and all the rations which they were unable to carry with them. As soon as the demolition teams had completed their work, the Confederates retired from the area. The Federals reached the train shortly afterwards. After salvaging what they could, Milroy's troops returned to Fortress Rosecrans. 16

Forrest, to tighten the squeeze on the defenders of Fortress Rosecrans, moved against the Union foraging parties which were operating in the eastern part of Rutherford County. Leaving Stewartsboro on the morning of the 15th at the head of two infantry brigades (Olmstead's and Palmer's) and one cavalry brigade (Bell's), Forrest crossed Stones River at Jefferson. By nightfall, Forrest's command was east of Murfreesboro. Any plans which the general might have had for forcing the Yankees out of

Fortress Rosecrans were now abruptly terminated. A staff officer galloped up to Forrest's command post. He excitedly told Forrest that during the morning the Federals had seized the initiative on the approaches to Nashville. A major battle was in progress. Hood wanted Forrest to mass his command and hold it ready to march to the assistance of the Army of Tennessee. 17

Before retiring for the night, Forrest drafted the orders which would govern the movements of his command in the morning. Jackson was to recall his troopers, who were watching the roads south of Murfreesboro. He was to concentrate them on the Wilkinson pike, near the Widow Smith's. Olmstead's and Palmer's infantry, and Bell's cavalry brigades were to recross Stones River at Jefferson. The cavalry was to take position near the mouth of Overall Creek, while the infantry bivouacked near Blockhouse No. 7. 18

To comply with Forrest's instructions, each of the unit commanders had his men on the road early on the 16th. Before the various commands were able to reach their designated destinations, Forrest changed his plans. Supplemental instructions were drawn up and distributed, directing the organizations to march to Wilkinson's Cross-Roads. Nightfall found all of Forrest's troops,

except for Crossland's brigade, at the stipulated rendezvous. (Crossland's troopers were watching the crossings of the Cumberland near "the Hermitage".) Here, Forrest received the stunning news that Hood's army had suffered a smashing defeat in the battle of Nashville.

The staff officer who carried these evil tidings also brought urgent orders from Hood. Forrest was to retire into north Alabama by way of Shelbyville and Pulaski. After concentrating his cavalry, Forrest would use it to protect the rear of Hood's badly beaten army. 19

Immediately, orders were drafted and forwarded to Buford, directing him to recall Crossland's brigade from "the Hermitage". At Laverne, Crossland's troopers would rendezvous with Bell's. His division reunited, Buford would hold the Nashville pike long enough to permit Forrest's artillery and trains to steal a march on the Federals.

Since his trains and sick (along with about 400 Union prisoners) were at Triune, Forrest decided not to retreat via Shelbyville. Instead, he turned his column toward Lillard's Mill on the Duck River. The infantry and Ross' brigade accompanied the trains. As soon as the trains and artillery were well on their

way to the Duck River, Buford's division abandoned its roadblock and moved to Franklin. This was on the afternoon of the 17th.

At Franklin, Buford reported to Chalmers. Hood placed Chalmers in temporary command of the two divisions and charged him with the task of covering the army's retreat. The next day, Armstrong's Mississippians, having been detached by Forrest, also reported to Chalmers. By nightfall on the 18th, the Confederate rear guard had passed beyond Spring Hill. In an effort to hold off their pursuers, the grim troopers took position behind Rutherford's Creek. 20

The road along which Forrest's column moved was in terrible condition. To make matters worse, the weather was intensely cold and many of Olmstead's and Palmer's infantrymen were barefooted. Both the foot-soldiers and Ross' cavalrymen were inadequately clad. In addition, Forrest was forced to hold down the pace of the march, so that the several hundred beef-cattle and hogs which had been collected for the use of the commissary department would not have to be left behind. The head of the column reached Lillard's Mill about noon on the 18th. One glance showed Forrest that recent rains had had their effect, the Duck River was rising rapidly. Even before all the train had reached

the south bank, the river became unfordable. The general was compelled to turn the remainder of his column toward Columbia. After a hard march, Forrest's exhausted command reached Columbia late in the evening. 21

At daybreak on the 19th, Forrest received a report that the Federals had reached Rutherford's Creek. Hastening to the point of danger, Forrest took charge of the Confederate rear guard.

Hood had originally planned to hold the line of the Duck River and thus retain a foothold in Middle Tennessee. But, on mature reflection, Hood decided it would be best to get out of Tennessee. He would place the unfordable Tennessee River between his army and the oncoming Federal Legions. Forrest seconded this course of action. Furthermore, he volunteered to protect the rear of the retreating army if he were reinforced by a reliable infantry contingent. Hood accordingly assigned Major General Edward C. Walthall's 1,900-man division to Forrest's command. At the same time, Olmstead's and Palmer's brigades were reassigned to their parent units. With these rugged foot-soldiers and his own cavalry, Forrest shouldered the heart-breaking task of holding off the pursuers, while the Army of Tennessee pulled back into the Tennessee Valley. Forrest successfully discharged this trying

assignment; the battered army recrossed the Tennessee River on the 25th and 26th of December -- a dismal way to celebrate Christmas. 22

A state of normalcy quickly returned to the Murfreesboro area in the wake of Hood's rout at the battle of Nashville. On the morning of the 17th, the Union pickets reported that all the Rebels (with the exception of a few stragglers) had disappeared from the approaches to Fortress Rosecrans. Before the day was over, Rousseau received a message from General Thomas announcing that his "Army Group" had scored a sweeping success. Thomas wanted Rousseau to have all "the new regiments recently sent to Murfreesborough, and not a portion of the permanent garrison" alerted to report to either the IV or XXIII Army Corps.

Furthermore, Rousseau was to send out construction parties and see that the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad was restored to service "in the shortest possible time". 23

By the morning of the 20th, the superintendent of the construction crews that were working on the railroad south of Murfreesboro reported that the right of way was reopened for traffic. Before nightfall, ten trains had reached Murfreesboro from Chattanooga. These trains were to be used to shift Steedman's command to Bridgeport. Steedman's blueclads, after participating

in the pursuit of Hood's army as far as Franklin, had been sent to Murfreesboro. Thomas planned to use Steedman's troops to intercept Hood's army as it was recrossing the Tennessee River. Quickly entraining his command, Steedman left for Bridgeport on the afternoon of the 22d. (Steedman, however, was too late; the Army of Tennessee was able to withdraw across the Tennessee River before Steedman's soldiers could intervene.)

Rousseau, on the 21st, transferred his headquarters back to Nashville. At this time, he asked Thomas if it would be all right to order Milroy's command to return to Tullahoma. At the rate the reconstruction was proceeding on the Nashville-Murfreesboro section of the railroad, Rousseau predicted that it would be back in operation within several days. Guard detachments were accompanying the bridge-building and track-laying details, to ward off the attacks of Confederate irregulars. <sup>24</sup>

The superintendent of the construction crews was as good as his word. By Christmas Eve, the railroad between Nashville and Murfreesboro had been reopened. To protect the bridges, detachments from the sadly reduced 115th Ohio moved out on Christmas Day and, assisted by details from the 1st Michigan Engineers, began to rebuild the blockhouses which Forrest's

troopers had destroyed. 25

Thomas having raised no objection, Rousseau authorized Milroy to re-establish his headquarters at Tullahoma. Following Milroy's departure for Tullahoma, Van Cleve on Christmas Day resumed command of all the Union troops based in and around Fortress Rosecrans. 26

THE HISTORY OF FORTRESS ROSECRANS

Notes -- Chapter VII

Forrest Tries to Squeeze the Yankees Out of Fortress Rosecrans

- 1 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 747. Major ~~Robert~~ P. Tyree was Bate's quartermaster.
- 2 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 666.
- 3 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 740. Olmstead's brigade was assigned to James A. Smith's division of Cheatham's ~~Army~~.
- 4 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 666.
- 5 Ibid. Forrest would also retain one or two battalions, whichever he deemed proper, to support his infantry.
- 6 Ibid., 660.
- 7 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 731, 747.
- 8 Ibid., 633.
- 9 Ibid., 635, 787; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 553.
- 10 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 615, 620-621.
- 11 Ibid., 621; Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois, IV, (Springfield, 1901), 242.
- 12 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 771.

- 13 Ibid., 634. The brakeman had permanently decamped.
- 14 Ibid., 621, 771; Report of the Adjutant General of the State of Illinois, IV, 242.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 740, 756; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 553.
- 18 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 693.
- 19 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 740, 756, 771; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 553.
- 20 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 756, 766, 771.
- 21 Ibid., 740, 756, 771; Wyeth, Life of General N. B. Forrest, 561.
- 22 Stanley Horn, The Army of Tennessee: A Military History (Indianapolis, 1941), 420.
- 23 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. I, 635; Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 243. Accordingly, on December 23, the 174th, 178th, and 181st Ohio, the 8th Minnesota, and the 140th Indiana were ordered to Columbia. The repair crews working on the Nashville and Chattanooga would have to relay seven and three-fourths miles of track and rebuild 530 feet of bridges which had been destroyed by the Rebels during their invasion of Middle Tennessee.

24 Q. R., Series I, Vol. XLV, pt. II, 304.

25 Ibid., 338.

26 Ibid., 354. By this time, the Fortress Rosecrans garrison had been reduced to five infantry regiments (the 12th Indiana Cavalry [dismounted], the 61st Illinois, and the 3d, 4th, and 29th Michigan), and three batteries (Battery D, 1st Michigan Light Artillery, the 12th Ohio Battery, and the 8th Wisconsin Battery).

APPENDIX A

LIST OF BLOCKHOUSES AND THE RECOMMENDED GARRISONS TO PROTECT THE  
NASHVILLE AND CHATTANOOGA RAILROAD BETWEEN NASHVILLE AND CHATTANOOGA \*

No.	Locality	Troops
1	Mill Creek No. 1.....	30
2	Mill Creek No. 2.....	30
3	Mill Creek No. 3.....	30
4	Hurricane Creek (one-half mile north of La Vergne)....	30
5	Bridge near Smyrna.....	30
6	Stewart's Creek.....	30
7	Overall's Creek.....	30
8	Stone's River (Fortress Rosecrans).....	150
9	Stone's River (3 miles south of Murfreesborough).....	40
10	Bell Buckle Creek.....	20
11	Creek one-half mile north of Wartrace.....	10
12	Wartrace Creek.....	30
13	Garrison's Fork.....	50
14	Duck River.....	40
15	Norman's Creek (Normandy).....	30
16	[Block-house should be erected, I think, between Normandy and Poor Man's Creek, though none is projected by the engineers.]	(30)

17	Poor Man's Creek (one-half mile south of Tullahoma)..	30
	[Should be block-house between Poor Man's Creek and Taylor's Creek. The road through a forest. All trains stop for wood, and is the worst place for guerrillas on the whole road, and the distance is too great from Poor Man's Creek to Elk River to admit of patrolling the road with safety.]	
18	[Taylor's Creek (Water Tank) only water between Dechard and Tullahoma. Not projected by engineers.]	(30)
19	Elk River.....	60
20	Boiling Fork of Elk River (Cowan).....	30
21	Trestle (1 mile north of Tantalón).....	10
22	Trestle (one-quarter mile north of Tantalón).....	10
23	Bridge and station (Tantalón).....	20
24	Crow Creek (south of Tantalón).....	20
25	.....do.....	20
26	.....do.....	20
27	.....do.....	20
28	Crow Creek (south of Anderson).....	20
29	Dry trestle (south of Anderson).....	10
30	Crow Creek (south of Anderson).....	30
31	.....do.....	30

32	Swamp trestle.....	20
33	Crow Creek.....	30
34	Crow Creek (three-quarters of a mile from Stevenson)	20
35	Creek (1 mile east from Stevenson).....	20
36	Widow's Creek.....	20
37	Tennessee River, main bridge, Bridgeport.....	
38	Tennessee River, east bridge, Bridgeport.....	100
39	Dry Trestle.....	20
40	Nickajack Creek (one-quarter of a mile west of Shellmound).....	30
41	Creek (one-eighth mile east of Shellmound).....	30
42	Dry trestle (Narrows).....	30
43	Running Water (one-half mile west of Whiteside's)....	80
44	Lookout Creek.....	30
45	Chattanooga Creek.....	30

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\* Q. R., Series I, Vol. XXXII, pt. III, 290.

APPENDIX B

ORDER OF BATTLE

CONFEDERATE OPERATIONS AGAINST FORTRESS ROSECRANS  
December 2-16, 1864

Confederate Forces

Forrest's Command -- Major General Nathan B. Forrest.

Buford's Division - Brigadier General Abraham Buford.

Bell's Brigade - Colonel Tyree N. Bell.  
2d Tennessee Cavalry - Col. C. R. Barteau.  
19th Tennessee Cavalry - Col. A. N. Wilson.  
20th Tennessee Cavalry - Col. R. M. Russell.  
21st Tennessee Cavalry - Col. J. Newsom.  
Nixon's Tennessee Cavalry - Col. G. H. Nixon.

Crossland's Brigade - Colonel Edward Crossland.  
5d Kentucky Mounted Infantry - Col. G. A. C. Holt.  
7th Kentucky Mounted Infantry -  
8th Kentucky Mounted Infantry - Lt. Col. A. R. Shacklett.  
12th Kentucky Cavalry - Col. W. W. Faulkner.  
Huey's Kentucky Cavalry Battalion -

Jackson's Division - Brigadier General William H. Jackson.

Armstrong's Brigade - Brigadier General Frank C. Armstrong.  
1st Mississippi Cavalry - Col. R. A. Pinson.  
2d Mississippi Cavalry - Maj. J. J. Perry.  
23rd Mississippi Cavalry - Col. P. B. Starke.  
Ballentine's Mississippi Cavalry Regiment - Lt. Col. W. L.  
Maxwell.

Ross' Brigade - Brigadier General Lawrence S. Ross.  
3d Texas Cavalry - Lt. Col. J. S. Eogness.  
6th Texas Cavalry - Col. J. Wharton.  
9th Texas Cavalry - Col. D. W. Jones.  
27th Texas Cavalry - Col. E. R. Hawkins.

Artillery

Morton's Tennessee Battery (6 guns) - Capt. J. W. Morton.

**Bate's Division - Major General William B. Bate.**

**Smith's Brigade - Brigadier General Thomas B. Smith.**

37th Georgia Infantry - Captain J. A. Sanders.

4th Georgia Sharpshooter Battalion - Maj. T. D. Caswell.

2d, 10th, 20th, and 37th Tennessee Consolidated Infantry -  
Lt. Col. W. M. Shy.

**Finley's Brigade - Colonel Robert Bullock (w); Major Jacob  
A. Lash.**

1st and 3d Florida Consolidated Infantry - Capt. M. H.  
Strain.

6th Florida Infantry - Capt. A. McMillan.

7th Florida Infantry - Capt. R. B. Smith.

1st Florida Cavalry (dismounted) and the 4th Florida  
Infantry Consolidated - Capt. G. R. Langford.

**Jackson's Brigade - Brigadier General Henry R. Jackson.**

1st Georgia Confederate and the 66th Georgia Consolidated  
Infantry - Lt. Col. J. C. Gordon.

25th Georgia Infantry - Capt. J. E. Felton.

29th and 30th Georgia Consolidated Infantry - Col. W. D.  
Mitchell.

1st Georgia Sharpshooter Battalion - Lt. R. C. King.

**5th Company, Washington Artillery (3 guns) - Lt. J. A.  
Chalaron.**

**Palmer's Brigade - Colonel Joseph B. Palmer.**

60th North Carolina Infantry - Maj. J. T. Huff.

3d and 18th Tennessee Consolidated Infantry - Lt. Col. W. R.  
Butler.

23d, 26th, and 45th Tennessee Consolidated Infantry - Col.  
A. Searcy.

32d Tennessee Infantry - Col. J. P. McGuire.

54th Virginia Infantry - Capt. W. G. Anderson.

63d Virginia Infantry - Lt. Col. C. H. Lynch.

**Fenner's Louisiana Battery (4 guns) - Capt. C. E. Fenner.**

**Sears' Brigade - Brigadier General Claudius W. Sears.**

4th Mississippi Infantry - Maj. T. P. Nelson.

35th Mississippi Infantry - Col. W. S. Barry.

36th Mississippi Infantry - Lt. Col. E. Brown.

39th Mississippi Infantry - Capt. E. G. Liles.

46th Mississippi Infantry - Capt. J. A. Barwick.

7th Mississippi Infantry Battalion - Capt. S. D. Harris.

Brookhaven Mississippi Light Artillery (4 guns) - Capt. J. A.  
Hoskins.

Olmstead's Brigade - Colonel Charles H. Olmstead.  
1st Volunteer Georgia - Maj. M. J. Ford.  
54th Georgia Infantry - Col. C. H. Way.  
57th Georgia Infantry - Lt. Col. C. S. Guyton.  
63d Georgia Infantry - Capt. E. J. Craven.

Union Forces

Department of the Cumberland -- Major General George H. Thomas.

District of Tennessee - Major General Lovell H. Rousseau.

Defense of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad - Major General Robert H. Milroy.

1st Brigade - Brigadier General Horatio P. Van Cleve.	<u>K</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>M</u>
61st Illinois Infantry - Lt. Col. D. Grass (c); Maj. J. B. Multon.	2	23	-
140th Indiana Infantry - Col. T. J. Brady.			
3d Michigan Infantry - Col. M. B. Houghton.			
4th Michigan Infantry - Col. J. W. Hall.			
29th Michigan Infantry - Col. T. Saylor.			
8th Minnesota Infantry - Col. M. T. Thomas.	13	79	-
115th Ohio Infantry - Col. T. C. Boone.	1	4	174
174th Ohio Infantry - Col. J. S. Jones.	9	88	-
181st Ohio Infantry - Col. J. C'Dowd.	1	34	-

Fortress Rosecrans - Major Frederick Schultz.

\*Battery D, 1st Michigan Light Artillery -  
Capt. H. B. Corbin.

\*12th Battery, Ohio Light Artillery - Capt.  
F. Jackson.

\*8th Battery, Wisconsin Light Artillery -  
Capt. H. E. Stiles.

Unattached -

177th Ohio Infantry - Col. A. T. Wilcox.	-	4	-
176th Ohio Infantry - Col. J. A. Stafford.	-	2	-
12th Indiana Cavalry (dismounted) - Col. E. Anderson.	1	11	-
13th Indiana Cavalry - Col. G. M. L. Johnson.	8	34	-
13th Battery, New York Light Artillery (4 guns) - Capt. H. Sundy.			
	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>55</u>

Property of  
 Adjutant General's Office  
 2010 10/10/10

\*Manned guns in Fortress Rosecrans.

180



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Tennessee
COUNTY:	Rutherford
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1 NAME

COMMON: **Fortress Rosecrans**

AND/OR HISTORIC: **-same-**

2 LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Murfreesboro** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

STATE: **Tennessee** CODE: **47** COUNTY: **Rutherford** CODE:

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Vacant</u>

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: **City of Murfreesboro**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Murfreesboro** STATE: **Tennessee** CODE: **47**

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **Rutherford County Register's Office**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Courthouse**

CITY OR TOWN: **Murfreesboro** STATE: **Tennessee** CODE: **47**

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: **Topographical Sketch of the Environs of Fortress Rosecrans**

DATE OF SURVEY: **June, 1863**  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **National Archives (Record group 77, Dr. 147, Sheet 22)**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D. C.** CODE:

STATE: Tennessee

COUNTY: Rutherford

ENTRY NUMBER: FOR NPS USE ONLY

DATE: 182

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fortress Rosecrans, located immediately west of Murfreesboro, Tennessee, was constructed by units of the Army of the Cumberland (USA) under the direction of Brigadier General James St. C. Morton in early 1863. The Fortress, reportedly the largest earthenwork fortress constructed by Union forces in the Civil War, originally covered an area of approximately 225 acres. The site was chosen because it was near the geographic center of Tennessee and astride the main tracks of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad.

The Fortress originally included eight lunettes, four redoubts, a steam saw mill, a magazine, and several warehouses.

Most of the original fortress has been lost due to urban development. Part of the original fortress site (formerly Redoubt Brannan) is owned by the National Park Service. The only extant portion is the several hundred feet of wall spanning from Lunette Thomas to Lunette Palmer). These remaining walls average approximately fifteen feet in height and twenty-five feet in thickness at the base. All are covered with large trees and heavy underbrush.

Present plans call for recreational facilities to be built west of the walls, while an effort will be made to restore the walls to their original appearance.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | osophy                                  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Science        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | Architecture                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | itarian                                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For 2 years, from early 1863 to 1865, Fortress Rosecrans played a significant role in the success enjoyed by General William T. Sherman's forces as they moved from Nashville to Chattanooga to Atlanta to Savannah.

From the massive supply depot protected by the walls of Fortress Rosecrans came logistical support that undergirded Sherman's good fortune.

Reportedly the largest earthenwork fortification built by the Union army during the Civil War, Fortress Rosecrans served as a central point of Union Army strength in Tennessee and secured the rear of that army from any serious challenge.

In late 1864, elements of the Confederate Army struck at Murfreesboro and Fortress Rosecrans in a desperate effort to halt the flow of supplies southeastward to Sherman. Under the immediate command of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the Confederates succeeded in disrupting rail communications briefly before being repulsed. Four months later the war ended. At some undetermined date following the conclusion of hostilities in 1865 Fortress Rosecrans was abandoned.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

J. St. Clair Morton, Memoir Explaining the Situation and Defense of Fortress Rosecrans, (privately printed, 1863). Copy located in National Archives, Record Group 77, Item # M-4345-1863

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	86° 24' 48"	35° 51' 12"				
NE	86° 24' 42"	35° 51' 25"				
SE	86° 24' 18"	35° 51' 5"				
SW	86° 24' 24"	35° 51' 1"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 48 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: James K. Huhta

ORGANIZATION: Murfreesboro Architectural and Zoning Society DATE: Sept. 1, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: 507 E. Northfield Blvd.

CITY OR TOWN: Murfreesboro STATE: Tennessee CODE: 47

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

185

Engineer Department  
Army of the Cumberland  
June 24<sup>th</sup> 1863

Trig sent Joseph P. Cotton  
Chief Engineer  
Washington D.C.  
Genl

Enclose the honor to  
send with transcripts to you, a plan of Fort  
Pocahontas, and a memoir explaining its  
situation and defence also two phys-  
iographic views of a part of one the limits.

Trig sent  
Very respectfully  
Your obedt Servt

J. P. Cotton  
Brig  
Engineer

13713

McC June 30

of McC Cumberland  
June 24 1863

Mr. J. M. Jackson

transmits plan  
of Forts Receivers,  
masonry explanations

its situation &  
defense & two

photographs  
views of park

of one of the  
Lincolns

(see enclosure)  
plan to pass

of McC  
McC

Engineer Dept  
July 2 1863

Respectfully transmits  
matted with the masonic

plan of photographs within  
enclosure, for the use

of the Army for the  
information of the

General in Chief

W. P. Miller  
A. B. Ford &  
Chief Eng.

Transmits enclosure  
Respectfully, etc. etc.

MT 43445 (Encls)

MEMOIR

Explaining the Situation and Defence

OF

FORTRESS ROSECRANS.

ILLUSTRATED BY

PLAN OF WORKS AND MAP OF VICINITY.

PREPARED FOR THE USE OF THE COMMANDANT ACCORDING TO ART. 52, REG. REG., BY ORDER OF MAJ. GEN. W. S. ROSECRANS, U. S. ARMY. COMD'G ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND

BY J. ST. CLAIR MORTON, BREV. GEN., AND CHIEF ENGINEER, ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND.

FORTRESS ROSECRANS

PRINTED AT THE FLOYER PRESS

1862.

(M43445)

5th. Each Lunette and Redoubt should be considered a fort in itself, and its commander be held responsible that it offers a vigorous resistance to the enemy; which means, that the garrison hold their ground, under all circumstances, except being overpowered in hand to hand conflict with the bayonet.

6th. It is presumed that any one of the main Lunettes will not be surrendered, or evacuated, until its artillery fire and that of the collateral Lunettes has been completely overpowered and silenced by that of the enemy, and their parapets so ruined by the enemy's bombardment as to cease to afford shelter except for sharpshooters. Even then new parapets, traverses and merlons should be constructed by the garrison, which ought to labor at night, assiduously, to that end. When, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the garrison to keep one or more pieces of artillery in the Lunette of attack and the collateral Lunette, (so as to be enabled to fire grape and canister at the enemy's columns of attack,) they are reduced to a musketry defence, it must be understood that an obstinate resistance can yet be made, and much loss inflicted upon the enemy before he can enter the Lunettes of attack. A vigilant watch is to be kept upon his movements when affairs have come to this pass. When his column of assault appears his cannonade must shortly cease—the disposable reserves of the fortress are supposed to be massed under shelter, as near as circumstances will permit to the Lunette of attacks—the moment the cannonade ceases on the part of the enemy, they are to be marched out with the utmost dispatch, so as to arrive at the contested point in time to reinforce its garrison. The troops thus accumulated are expected to resist the enemy with the bayonet, and, even if driven out, should return to the charge once or oftener, and attempt to regain possession.

7th. By disposable reserves, in the preceding article, is meant all the troops designated as reserve of the garrison of the fortress; the commandant may, if he sees fit, increase these reserves by such troops as can safely be spared, for the time being, from such of the works as are not likely to be assaulted simultaneously with the Lunette of attack.

8th. It may happen that the commandant can dispose of a larger force as reserves than can advantageously be assembled at the contested point to meet the enemy's assault; in that case, the troops in excess will be held in readiness, in some sheltered place close at hand, to charge the enemy with the bayonet on his flank, at an opportune moment during the assault, sallying without the works for that purpose; or otherwise to charge him within the contested work, should he succeed in driving out its defenders.

9th. It is probable that at this period of the siege the artillery of the Lunette of attack will be in a ruined condition, and the ammunition mostly expended; of course, should any pieces remain serviceable, they should not be permitted to fall into the enemy's hands, but must be spiked if they cannot be removed; and such powder as remains should be removed or blown up. It may happen there is enough powder to spare to form a mine in the salient of the work, or under the breach; in which case the Chief Engineer should see that one is prepared, and a Commissioned Officer or detail to explode it when it may do most damage to the enemy.

10th. If, notwithstanding every exertion on the part of the defenders, the enemy gain and retain possession of the Lunette of attack, its defenders, and in some cases, the reserves, according to the judgment of the Commandant, should retreat to the collateral lunettes. The rear of the Lunette of attack having thus been unmasked by our troops, the Redoubts and Lunettes of the inner line will, without loss of time, open fire upon it from all the guns they can bring to bear, and endeavor to dislodge the enemy before he can construct his lodgement, and shelter himself from their view. [It is probable that the enemy would have directed his artillery against the said Redoubts and retired Lunettes for some days before making the assault, but it is supposed that the Commandant of each has kept one piece in reserve, having removed it from its platform to the most sheltered part of the parade, and that at the moment of assault he has caused it to be run into position.] Supposing that a Lunette is taken by regular approaches, some five weeks must have

elapsed since the commandant ascertain it would be selected as the point of attack; this interval should be employed by him, not only in its vigorous defence of the Lunette attacked, and in the construction of intrenchments within it, but also in constructing batteries and rifle-pits in its rear, or in strengthening the collateral Lunettes and the inner line of works, so as to oblige the enemy to take two Lunettes at least by siege, and compel him to silence the artillery fire of at least two more before he can attack the inner line, and reduce him to the necessity of planting his batteries in the captured Lunettes and approaching the inner line by the double sap.

11th. The enemy cannot well make an open assault, much less an attack by regular approaches, without first making himself master of the exterior detached works. These will therefore be regarded as obstacles in his path, and should be held, with more or less obstinacy, according to the judgment of the commandant; who will not maintain them at too great a loss of life, or send out too many troops to resist the enemy's attack on them: he should however require their garrisons to sustain the assault once at least, seeing that they have a strong profile, and are flanked from the Lunettes of the outer line by artillery; for which reasons the enemy will sustain a considerable loss in the assault, and the garrisons will be enabled to retreat without being pursued. As the interior of these works is exposed to the view of the said Lunettes, the enemy will find it very difficult to hold them; it may therefore happen that the garrison may re occupy them once or oftener, and the enemy be obliged to make repeated sacrifices before they fall permanently in his hands.

12th. The Commandant should carefully instruct all the commissioned and non-commissioned officers in the elementary principles relating to the defence of the works from assault, as follows; that whichever Lunette is attacked by the enemy, should be immediately reinforced from the reserve; the collateral Lunettes, namely those on the right and left of it, together with such others as have a view of the ground over which the enemy must approach, must likewise be rein-

forced; the curtains connecting Lunettes Thomas and McCook, Lunettes Thomas and Palmer, Stanley and Negley, will be manned also from the reserve, with a line of skirmishers, or with one or more ranks of infantry, according to the judgment of the commandant, and according to their bearings on the point threatened to be attacked.

13th. The Lunette attacked repulses the enemy by its direct fire of musketry and artillery; the collateral Lunettes and curtains cross their fire in front of it. In case the enemy attack one of the curtains, such curtain is to be strongly reinforced, as well as the collateral Lunettes, and the enemy is met by the direct fire of the curtain, and cross fire from the said Lunettes; should a Lunette or curtain be taken by surprise, or by night attack, (owing to want of vigilance or proper precautions,) the troops belonging to it should retreat to the right and left, unmaking the captured work, so as to permit the works of the inner line to open fire into it and to clear the way for the reserve. Both the gunners and the infantry troops should be carefully instructed to fire low, and to reserve their fire, in resisting an assault, till the enemy arrives in force within 600 yards of the point of attack. To this end, marks will be established in front of each Lunette on a circumference 600 yards distant from it, and the enemy should not be fired upon except by sharpshooters, until the chief part of the assaulting column has approached within these marks.

The Block-houses cannot be taken by surprise, and will prevent the surprise of the Redoubts and Lunettes in which they are seated; they will also be a security for the heavy artillery, which is not posted habitually in any work not provided with a Block-house.

14th. The Commandant must chiefly apprehend, and guard against, surprises and night attacks, by a proper system of pickets, scouts and patrols. He must give the garrison confidence that the works cannot be carried by assault, even by an army, if the attack is properly anticipated, and if it should ever happen that the Fortress is cut off from its communications and invested by a powerful army, he should cause it to

be understood that the place can hold out a month or so, and that reinforcements can reasonably be expected within that time.

15th. It is estimated that the Fortress, garrisoned and provided with an armament as above specified, is capable of holding out eight weeks at least, against a force of thirty thousand men, equipped with a heavy siege train, and double that period against an army of sixty thousand men, unprovided with a siege train. This estimate will serve as a basis upon which to calculate, approximately, the resistance that should be expected of garrisons exceeding one division.

16th. The squadron of cavalry supposed in the estimate to belong to the garrison, of one division, is designed to furnish patrols and videttes. By its means the Commandant can keep himself informed of the positions and movements of the enemy. When the Commandant can do so with perfect security, he may send out small foraging expeditions, guarded by the squadron only, and with not more than two companies of infantry (with their arms) to load the wagons.

17th. The horses and mules belonging to the garrison, if of one division, will consist of the cavalry horses, horses of officers entitled to be mounted, and sufficient animals for fifty teams, viz, three to each regiment; these will suffice for the ordinary requirements of the garrison. The Post Quarter Master's teams are, of course, in addition to the garrison teams. The Post Quarter-Master will be expected to reduce them to the minimum capable of doing the work. The Post Quarter-Master teams, and such teams as may have arrived from the rear or front, for the purpose of bringing up or carrying forward supplies, will be parked between the pike bridge and Murfrees' house, near the river; the regimental teams, viz., three teams to each regiment, and a proportionate allowance to the artillery, will park according to regulation.

17th. It may happen that the Commanding General, upon marching forward with the army, will station a light division at the Fortress, with instructions to prevent cavalry raids upon the communications of the army with Nashville, and

the Fortress itself. It is recommended that a division habitually encamp on the west side of Stone River, and near by it, on the high grounds between the Wilkinson and Franklin roads.

18th. The Commandant should cause his officers to study the Revised Regulations of the Art., Articles 793 to 850, relating to sieges and the defence of fortified places; also the following

**Extracts from "Regulations for the Care of Field Works and the Government of their Garrisons."**

1st. It will be the duty of the Commanding Officer of each work to provide for the care of the armament, and the safety and serviceable condition of the magazines, ammunition, implements, and equipments; and, by frequent personal inspections, to secure the observance of the rules prescribed for this purpose.

2d. The Commanding Officer will make himself acquainted with the approaches to his work, the distance to each prominent point commanded by his guns, the nature of the ground between them and his post, and the most probable points of attack upon it.

TABLES OF RANGES OR DISTANCES for each point, and the corresponding elevations in each case, according to the nature of the projectile, with the proper length or time of the fuse when shell or case-shot are used, will be made out for EACH GUN, and furnished to the officer and non-commissioned officers serving it. As these tables differ for different kinds of guns, the same men should be permanently assigned to the same piece.

3d. The projectiles should be used in their proper order. At a distance SOLID SHOT; then shells or case-shot, especially if firing at troops IN LINE. CANISTER OR GRAPE IS ONLY FOR USE AT SHORT RANGES. When columns are approaching, so that they can be taken in direction of their length, or VERY obliquely, SOLID SHOT is generally the best projectile, because of its greater accuracy and penetrating power. If the COLUMN consists of cavalry, some shells or case-shot will be useful, from the disorder their bursting produces among the horses. As to the ABSOLUTE distances at which the projectiles must be used, they vary with the description and calibre of the gun, and can only be ascertained by consulting the TABLES OF RANGES. The prominent parts on

# GARRISON AND ARMAMENT OF FORTRESS ROSECANS.

		LUNETTES OF THE OUTER LINE								LUNETTES AND REDOUBTS OF THE INNER LINE								BATTERIES						
																		WORKS						
		Lunette Thomas	Lunette De Cade	Lunette Rousseau	Lunette Garfield	Lunette Davis	Lunette De S. S. S.	Lunette De S. S. S.	Redoubt De S. S. S.	Demi-Lunette Davis	Demi-Lunette De S. S. S.	Redan Van Cleve	Battery Turchin	Battery Mitchell	Battery Grant	In Reserve.	AGGREGATE							
GARRISON:	Regiments,	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	15
	Companies, Squadrons,																							
ARMAMENT:	Heavy Pieces,	2	2					1	1		1	4	4	4	4						8		1	26
	Light Pieces,	5	5	4	4	2	2	4	4	2											4	4	6	46

- a. The garrisons of Demi-Lunettes Davis, Garfield and Battery Turchin furnished from that of Lunette Thomas.
- b. These detached companies to belong to one regiment and that regiment be the best disciplined soldiers of the Post.
- c. The garrison of Redan Van Cleve is furnished from Lunette Rousseau.
- d. One of these to be a mountain howitzer for ditch defence.

- e. These to be mountain howitzers.
- NOTE.—For the light pieces above specified, 12 pdr. brass howitzers are preferred, as they are chiefly for the flanks. Should any more field artillery be available for the armament, they had better be iron rifle pieces and be posted in the salients of the Lunettes of the outer line.

the approaches to the works should be designated, their distances noted, and directions drawn up for the different kinds of ammunition to be used at each gun when the enemy reaches them. During the drills the attention of the chiefs of pieces and gunners should frequently be drawn to this subject.

4th. Commanding Officers will pay special attention to the police and preservation of the works. All filth will be promptly removed, and the drainage be particularly attended to. No one should be allowed to walk on the parapets, nor move or sit upon the gabions, barrels or sand bags that may be placed upon them. When injuries occur to the earth works, they should be repaired as quickly as possible by the garrison of the work. If of a serious nature, they should at once be reported to the Engineer Officer in charge of the work. ALL INJURIES TO THE MAGAZINES OR PLATFORMS OF THE GUNS WILL BE PROMPTLY REPORTED AS SOON AS OBSERVED.

5th. No persons not connected with the garrisons of the field works will be allowed to enter them except such as visit them on duty, or who have passes signed by competent authority; nor will any person, except commissioned officers, or those whose duty requires them to do so, be allowed to enter the magazine, or touch the guns, their implements or equipments.

6th. The garrison can greatly improve the work by sowing the superior (upper) slope of the parapet, and also the exterior or outer slope, or by sowing grass seed on the superior slope, first covering it with surface soil. The grass covered or sodded portions of the parapets, traverses, magazines, &c., should be occasionally watered in dry weather, and the grass kept closely cut.

7th. The armament of a fort, having been once established will not be changed except by authority of the Commander of the District, geographical department or army corps.

Yesterday

After the Battle of Murfreesboro, December 31, 1862--January 2, 1863, the Army of the Cumberland, under the command of Major-General William Starke Rosecrans, occupied Murfreesboro for a period of six months. The Confederate forces, the Army of Tennessee, retreated to Tullahoma and Shelbyville. During the six months, the Union Army, both Blue and Grey, reorganized, and constructed massive fortifications near the western base of the town. This latter task was completed during the early stages of the construction of that great storehouses of supplies might be collected and placed in readiness for the works. Several writers have commented on the fortifications of the Army of the Cumberland (1864) had this to say:

"The Pioneer Brigade, under the command of Col. James St. Clair Moxley, planned and built the fortifications of Murfreesboro, which had been done with hardly a dollar of cost to the government beyond the usual army expense. The town is defended, as a base, and the work has given confidence to our army and assured the secessionists of that region that we have come to stay."

Continuing, he presents a more detailed account of the actual construction:

"It's last work (The Pioneer Brigade) has been, with the assistance of details of troops on the line, the construction of the fortification at Murfreesboro, said to be the largest and finest upon the continent. The several massive forts, the thousands of mounds of earth and embankments upon every hand, the long lines of warehouses and storehouses of army supplies, alongside of which railroad tracks have been laid down, and the comfortable houses (frames) which have been torn down and reconstructed within these works, all speak volumes in praise of the industry of the pioneers. It must not, however, be inferred that the work upon the fortifications was performed by them alone. The heavy earth-work, the digging, the wheeling and ramming is done by details of soldiers, and the work was thus at work upon the fortifications, the Pioneer's plan, and the construction, and executing the wood-work, etc., of the magazines."

Col. James St. Clair, one of these combat engineers, also supervised the construction of the walls around Nashville.

Cleaver in Rock of Gibraltar (1870), refers to Murfreesboro as "an elaborately fortified town." An early writer, Mrs. L. O. Whitson, author of Gilbert's (1870) in bitter retrospect recounts many of the deprivations suffered by the Murfreesboro citizens. One of these concerned the elderly men of the town who were forced to sign the Oath of Allegiance. Summarially, they were required to wear a military cap and march to the fortress. Mrs. Whitson describes the scene in these words:

"Well, they, the officials, were ordered to be arrested and placed in the fort in the morning. These grey-haired gentlemen, who were so cheerful and unrepentant when their wives were away from home, and dying everywhere.

It was a pitiable sight to see them marching to the fortifications in spite of capotable weather. They were never laughed at for their pains, and placed in line of battle with the regular soldiers."

Johnson's Battles and Leaders of the Civil War (1884) recognizes the fortress by two small sketches from photographs taken nineteen years after the war.

### Today

Some traces of the fortress are still visible. The push of the town westwardly has eliminated all but the fact of its existence. In order to comprehend the large area originally encompassed, start at the Jennings Tire Company on North-west Broad, within the city limits, and walk to Lytle Creek. Along this line are approximately twenty years ago in excellent preservation. Continuing beyond the south bank of the creek one hundred yards and then veering to the west for three hundred yards to the Old Franklin Road and on the F. D. Billo farm, follow a track northward to the Manson Pike near the Bon Hall McFarlin farm. From there, go north, cross the Louisville and

Nashville Railroad, the old Nashville Highway, and Stones' River again north-  
west of the National Armory. Starting back toward Murfreesboro in a northeasterly  
route and continue in this general direction until the line connects near the Murf-  
reesboro Motel. It is estimated about of three miles with an approximate one  
mile diameter. An examination of the map will possibly clarify this as strategic  
points are designated by names, and in symbols and constructions are indicated.

Tomorrow

Two well-preserved segments of the Great Depression remain. They are as  
follows:

1. Thirty or thirty-five yards of the line designated as "Lamette  
look". The land was owned by Mr. John D. who resided in a small frame house  
at the west edge of the segment. This is in excellent condition and it is  
just east of Murfreesboro Motel <sup>and Battleground</sup> and Drive and is readily accessible to

Highway 41. Developmental possibilities are very good.

2. Fifteen or twenty acres of the of the F. D. Bills farm on the old  
Franklin Road. Extraordinary possibilities are found at this point but accessibility  
is poor at the present time.

11

Historian's File  
Gen. Info.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
CHICKAMAUGA AND CHATTANOOGA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK  
CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE  
Port Oglethorpe, Georgia

January 6, 1941

MEMORANDUM RE: Artillery Needs, Stones River National Military Park

I. Artillery in the Battle:

A. Union:

The Union Army's chief of Artillery reported that a total of 137 guns were engaged on the Union side.<sup>1</sup> The types and numbers were as follows:

10-pdr. Parrots	36
6-pdr. Smooth Bore	36
12-pdr. Howitzers	24
James Rifles	23
Napoleons (light field)	10
3-inch rifles	4
12-pdr. Wiards	2
6-pdr. Wiards	2

These guns were distributed among 25 batteries. Most effective use of the artillery occurred on January 2, 1863, when the Confederates came under a heavy fire of 56 Union guns assembled by Captain John Mendenhall, Chief of Artillery, Left Wing. Between 1700 and 2000 Confederate casualties occurred in less than an hour's firing.<sup>2</sup> These guns belonged to the 3 divisions of the left wing and the 2nd division of the center. All of the above mentioned types were probably engaged with the exception of the napoleons. The left wing had a greater proportion of 10-pdr. smooth bores and 12-pdr. howitzers. On the day after this unsuccessful attack, the Confederates retreated from Murfreesboro.

<sup>1</sup> A summation of the numbers mentioned in the report of Col. James Barnett, in War of the Rebellion, Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series I, Vol. XX, Part I, pages 235 - 242.

<sup>2</sup> O. R., Vol. XX, Part I., (report of General Rosecrans) P. 195 (report of General Breckenridge) P. 787

## B. Confederates:

A complete report of the Confederate artillery engaged was not made, but it is evident that the following types were used: A. napoleons, 12-pdr. howitzers, 6-pdr. smooth bores, 24-pdr. howitzers, 3-inch rifles.<sup>3</sup> About 20-22 batteries were engaged.<sup>4</sup>

## II. Artillery in Redoubt Brannan.

A. After the occupation of Murfreesboro by Union forces, an elaborate fortification was constructed to guard the town.<sup>5</sup> This fortification was called Fortress Rosecrans. Today, one of the redoubts, called Redoubt Brannan, is included in the park.

During the Union occupation of Murfreesboro, the armament of Redoubt Brannan consisted of the following:

- 3 - 30-pdr. Parrotts
- 2 - 12-pdr. field guns (napoleons)
- 1 - 8" Howitzer 12-pdr.

Asst. Historical Technician

## III. Recommendations.

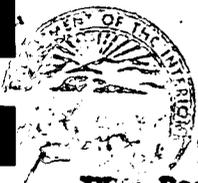
- A. Restoration of the battery positions occupied by the troops on Dec. 31, 1862, does not seem advisable, since such restoration would be restricted to only a few Union batteries. (Other positions are outside the Park). Consideration should be given, however, to the replacement of some of the artillery engaged on Jan. 2, 1863. (Hendenhall's 55 guns).
- B. An artillery exhibit located at a central point in the Park and designed to acquaint visitors with the types of guns used in the battle, how they were fired, etc., would enhance the value of the area. For this purpose at least one gun of the various types used in the battle should be made available.
- C. The complete armament of Redoubt Brannan should be restored.

<sup>3</sup>For example see reports of such artillery officers as Robertson, in O.R., Vol. XI, Part I, p. 758-761; Humphreys, P. 956; Barrett, P. 788

<sup>4</sup>Summation of batteries included in returns of General Bragg, op. cit. p. 658-661.

<sup>5</sup>O. R. Series I, Vol. 49, Part II, p. 502-503 (Report of Z. B. Tower)

<sup>6</sup>O. R., Series, I, Vol. XXXII, p.93



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SOUTHEAST REGION

3401 Whipple Avenue

STONES RIVER N. B.

MEMPHIS, TENN. 37133

## IV. Recapitulations:

APPLY REFER TO:

A. To fulfill the minimum needs of Stones River National Military Park in line with the above recommendations, the following are needed:

- |   |                   |   |                       |
|---|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 3 | 30-pdr. Parrotts  | 1 | James Rifle           |
| 3 | Hapoleons         | 1 | 3" rifle              |
| 2 | Howitzers         | 1 | 12-pdr Wiard          |
| 1 | 10-pdr Parrott    | 1 | 6-pdr Wiard           |
| 1 | 6-pdr Smooth bore | 1 | 24-pdr Howitzer ? Reg |

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Stones River

From: Acting Assistant Director, Division of Operations

Subject: Research Report, "The History of *George F. Emery*," by Edwin C. Bearss

*George F. Emery*  
George P. Emery,  
Asst. Historical Technician

Enclosed we are sending you the requested copy of the above mentioned research report, which we have copied from the available document in our Regional Office Library.

Enclosure