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SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS.

Though men deserve, they may not win, success;
The brave will honor the brave, vanquished none the less.

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COMMANDER MISSISSIPPI DIVISION, U. C. V.

The death of Gen. T. L. McGehee, Commander of the Mississippi Division, U. C. V., has been reported as the result of a bad fall some weeks ago.

THE LEGIONS OF LEE.

Bring out the gray jacket, all faded and worn,
Unfurl that old banner, all tattered and torn
By the deluge of bullets, the cannon's wild blast,
That swept our fair Southland in days that are past,
For this is the glorious day of the birth
Of one who outrivaled the chosen of earth.
Proud chief of the noble, the brave, and the free,
The peerless and fearless, immaculate Lee.
Great Jackson, look down from that realm of delight,
On the few aging veterans who lived through the fight.
Bold Stuart, come back from yon Stygian marge,
Again let thy conquering cavalry charge.
Wake, Ashby and Pelham, and all that brave band
Whose blood flowed so freely for Dixie's fair land.
With glad acclamations, from mountain to sea,
Add luster undimmed to the laurels of Lee.
Those bosoms are warm where his memory dwells,
And thrilling each pæan of triumph that swells
In lively and loving remembrance to-day
From the war-riven ranks of the glorified gray.
One country, one chieftain, one glory our choice,
Let the nations look on while the vanquished rejoice.
Perennial green may their memory be
Who struggled and triumphed and suffered with Lee.
Assemble, battalions, in serried array,
Ye heroes so rapidly passing away.
Remember that cause for which palladins drew
Their swords is as sacred to us as to you.
How nobly they strove, till in battle laid low,
Each gave up his life with his face to the foe.
Stand firm that the men of all nations may see
How loyal and true are the legions of Lee.

[Contributed by Maj. J. E. Gaskell, Fort Worth, Tex.]

afternoon of the first Thursday in June, and consisted only of the orations by the four seniors, who, enveloped in the black silk gowns then always worn by the grauating orators, felt as important as any of the graduating classes of today. There was no band of musicians to inspire and stimulate their oratory, nor was the audience altogether calculated to arouse the most pleasant or most pacific feelings, for a large part of that audience consisted of uninvited visitors from the North—soldiers of Sherman's army.

Though the names of her Confederate dead are carved in marble on the walls of the university's memorial hall, yet they have left a record of imperishable glory on the pages of North Carolina's history.

Eternal honor to those sons of the university whose deeds should forever stimulate every impulse of honor and patriotism in the students at Chapel Hill. In the words of a distinguished alumnus: "The story of their heroism and devotion to the call of duty will be cherished by the University of North Carolina as the brightest jewel in her crown, and their names will be remembered in this institution as long as patriotism is honored there."

* * *

"Their heroic deeds shall ever stand upon the roll of Fame,
And Time's *immortal* scroll shall keep a record of each name."

(Continued in March.)

THE SINGULAR BATTLE OF MURFREESBORO.

BY ROBERT W. BARNWELL, SR., FLORENCE, S. C.

I have been reading some books and "Official Records" about the battle of Murfreesboro which have increased my almost lifelong interest in that great contest for the control of Middle Tennessee.

Twice did Bragg and Rosecrans match their generalship against each other. Twice did the hunter seek the lion, only to have the latter spring upon him and "maul" him. Murfreesboro and Chickamauga have many remarkable resemblances, which it may be well to recall as an introduction to our consideration of the fight on the banks of Stone's River. In each case, Rosecrans went out from Nashville with the express purpose of attacking Bragg, and in each case it was Bragg that struck first, last, and all the time. The west fork of Stone's River and the west fork of Chickamauga Creek are the same size, flow with equal crookedness, through very much the same kind of wooded, bushy, rolling, stony, sticky yellow and red-clay country, and make with the road for which the armies contended just about exactly the same angle, and in the same direction.

In each case, Rosecrans sought safety on the second day from Bragg's attack by entrenchments that bulged forward in a curve like that of a bent finger. At Chickamauga there was a stem below the bulge—a straight line that Bragg bent back until its right extremity was driven against the back opening of that bulging part above. At Murfreesboro, after one day's fighting, the same fortified crescent-shaped line was found, but there was no stem below it. There had been a straight line the morning of the fight, but that had been driven back at its right extremity until the end brigade had described an arc three miles long when it found security behind the cuts and embankments of a railroad. Then, in the right, it was curved into a crescent by its officers, and entrenched by its men, so as to resemble the curve of the letter D, with only a mile and a half for the chord of the arc. Three corps, or eight divisions, or twenty-six brigades, the enemy had in the limits of that line. The twenty-seven brigades sounds most impressive. The count is accurate—three to each of eight divisions and, Walker, and the Pioneer Brigade in addition. The situation recalls the defensive lines of Rosecrans at Chattanooga after his defeat on the field of Chickamauga.

Bragg was at Murfreesboro to feed his army and lay claim to Tennessee, but his presence was in a way an insult as well as a challenge to Rosecrans. Bragg's cavalry, under Wheeler, Forrest, and Morgan, were extremely insulting. Even though it was winter, Rosecrans and the North thought of it in that light. Bragg had that very autumn marched in an elipse from Chattanooga to a point near Nashville, to Glasgow, Ky., to a point near Louisville, to one just south of Frankfort, to Perryville, to Cumberland Gap, to Knoxville, back to Chattanooga—and now once more he was only thirty miles from Nashville. Then, when Bragg sent Forrest off to West Tennessee and Morgan to Kentucky, Rosecrans felt that it was time to attack the intruder, who came to spend the winter in a "conquered" territory of which he was guardian. He says in his report: "In the absence of these forces (Forrest and Morgan), and with adequate supplies in Nashville, the moment was judged opportune for an advance on the rebels." But in his report, he still estimates the cavalry left at Murfreesboro at more than thirteen thousand,

Rosecrans dared to go on this winter campaign because of the then wonderful turnpikes of the "Nashville Basin." From the capital itself, from

Murfreesboro, Lebanon Shelbyville, and other centers pikes radiated like star points. They were a necessity to the people because of the fertility as well as the muddiness of the soil. Bragg would not have been at Murfreesboro had it not been a pike center, but he would have been absolutely unreachable had they not offered to Rosecrans the way of resenting the insult. Still, "Rosy" was running a great risk. For an army the size of his, more than one road was requisite, especially if it came to a retreat. That is why he chose to approach Murfreesboro by way of Triune, instead of Jefferson and the Lebanon Pike he would have, in addition to the regular straight Murfreesboro pike, several usable roads. Bragg drew up his army around his town in a way that showed he expected the enemy from the Lebanon, or north, side, but was prepared to move quickly to cover the Wilkinson and Triune approach from the southwest. Rosecrans, of course, was tied to the direct pike (and adjacent railroad) as one of his roads, so as to block it against an advance by Bragg to Nashville, and, needing another, found those south of his main road convenient for marching, even if there were radical objections when he should reach his objective and choose position for battle. His route threw the bulk of his army to the south of the main pike in order to hold two roads for retreat. Then he found his position weak for attack and very open to flank assaults on the part of Bragg. In fact, taking position on December 30, he woke up next morning to find a lion crunching his right leg and rushing him off to the jungle. In the fighting that day, he had to take his guns off the pike across hilly country, and when a few horses were killed, there was no getting them back, Bragg got them.

It was Rosecrans who ran the line of battle so far south. Bragg followed suit only in self-defense—and then, after all, it was not done in order to capture the town, but as a feint. As a matter of fact, Rosecrans, as he reveals in his report, planned to go into Murfreesboro by way of his *left* corps, north of the main pike and railroad. He gave orders to that effect, and the movement began at the very time Bragg struck his other flank. He tells how he asked General McCook, his *right* corps commander south of the pike, if he "could hold his position for three hours" next morning, while Crittenden, commanding the *left*, was moving across the river and on into the town. He reveals his whole plan in full and plain manner. However, at the end of that day's fighting, he had only one road left him for retreat—the main pike.

There is a wonderful map of the battle—a topographical map, giving the contours (10 ft. intervals) and elevations, as well as troop positions, etc., found in the Tennessee Volume of the twelve volume publication, "The Confederate Military History," and also in other books. One can judge of many things with such a map in hand. With this in hand, let us turn to Bragg's side of the matter of position.

Bragg came to the town November 26. In October Walter Morris, of Polk's Corps, had made the topographical map and, presumably, Bragg had it. Later, the position of the troops was added—three positions of both armies. Having come so near Nashville, Bragg felt sure of being attacked sooner or later. He was given a solid month to study his manner of defense. Certain things were plain enough. The enemy must hold to the main pike never mind how he came, and certain roads as well as this had to be covered by the defender. There was the Lebanon Pike, running due north, and the Salem Pike, almost due southwest—these were the limits, and in between came the main pike, the Wilkenson Pike, and the Triune Pike (Old Franklin Road). The limiting pikes made with each other an angle of about 110°. A curving ridge (gapped and depressed in places, and broken through entirely by the river) suggested the line of proper position, for it extended from the Lebanon to the Salem Pikes, at a distance of about a mile and a half from the town. The trouble was that the ridge crossed the river, and, therefore, so must the army placed on its crest. Now, the west fork of Stone is only a creek, but capable of becoming a river in a few hours. Fordable almost anywhere near the town, its real fords are only ankle deep in dry weather. Bragg, having little choice, risked putting his right wing, the one north of the main pike and railroad, *east* of the river, and the left wing *west* of the river. This last lay for its full length parallel with the shallow stream, but the other sheered east, while the stream, deeper here and with rocky, steep banks 70 feet and more above the water in most places, the Nashville side higher than the Murfreesboro, sheered to the west. Insignificant as the stream was (and it never rose till the fighting was over), nevertheless, it made such difficulties for the wings of both armies, which it separated, that after the other wings had fought to a standstill, neither the Federal left nor the Confederate right could well get at the other for a fight. Rosecrans had planned to get to Murfreesboro by crossing at this point, but on January 2, he came and looked at it and gave the plan up. There was fighting here, as we shall see, but that was due to a blunder and proved a lesson to both commanders. At the end of the battle of Murfreesboro, the strange sight was seen of the Federal army lying *end on* toward its enemy and stretching away toward Nashville, while that enemy was unable to strike it

in front, flank, or rear. It was not a straight line just touching the river; it was a crescent (part of which even lay across the stream) that sheered away and then turned more and more, in the same way that an arc sheers and turns from a tangent. Both generals had placed a wing where it could not fight. Bragg had left to the enemy a much stronger position for his wing than the one he had chosen for himself, while the enemy had the problem of how to hold to his only line of retreat and at the same time attack with effect. Bragg's wing was only one division, while Rosecrans had a corps of three divisions, so that Bragg, who had five divisions only, used four-fifths of his army elsewhere; but Rosecrans, who had thirteen corps, could only feel free to use two-thirds. Both, however, at times sneaked brigades away to other near-by points, so surely did they deem the risk but slight.

Rosecrans started from Nashville on December 26, and took four days to march the thirty miles and place his army. He encountered rain and "rebels." The cavalry of Bragg, under Wheeler and Wharton, one on each side of his routes, did superb work. Each had about two thousand men, Buford with the rest of Bragg's five thousand being held at Murfreesboro. Finding Bragg in position on his ridgelike row of oblong hills, he extended his own lines southward, and so Bragg had to do the same . He felt out Bragg's line somewhat on the 30th, and gave his orders for next day. His troops that lay south of the main pike were to strike "warmly, but not vigorously," and hold for at least "three hours." Those on the north side were to cross the river, drive Bragg south of the main pike and railroad, and thus open his way to the town. This crossing was begun, but stopped by events on the wing that extended southward. The flank of this latter was in the air, the brigades specially chosen to guard it took things easily, and Hardee, the fighter, was hurling Bragg's fine troops, brigade after brigade, in echelon tactics with a vigor irresistable. Soon Polk was having it out with Thomas in the center. Helped by Crittenden the "Rock of Chickamauga" proved himself a good-sized pebble even at Stone River. He held till night at one point—the vital one. Right where the main pike and railroad approach the river before crossing it, just where "the Cowan House" stood near "the Round Forest," Thomas and Crittenden held by a brigade front, and saved the wreck of Rosecrans from ruin. It was a great day for Bragg and all the Confederate soldiers, for Breckinridge had come from his north wing with four brigades to help Polk win the Round Forest, but alas! the day closed leaving to Rosecrans the main pike and Crittenden's position north of it. With only one road for retreat, he felt very anxious. He went back to look at a position for a stand at Overall's Creek. Those "rebels" had driven the extremity of his right wing three miles, and all intermediate troops proportionately down as far as the junction of his center with his left, which still stood where it was placed the night before. During the night he gave up the Round Forest, and drew Crittenden back some six hundred yards to the woods. He placed *his whole line in the woods* (or perhaps cedar thickets), fortified it, gave it a great bay window shape, and concentrated all his troops and artillery where they would be *safe*, and able to rush to each other's help *in no time*. Truly, the lion had mauled the hunter and the hunter had climbed a tree.

All next day the two generals looked at each other and did nothing, except that Rosecrans sent a division into the *woods* across the river—woods that covered the crest of a hill, however, and gave position for artillery that could eufilade Polk's troops at the main pike and railroad near the river, the Round Forest in fact, it was a safe spot for Van Cleve's Division, for it was completely covered by the infantry and artillery of Critenden just over on the west side of the *creek*, finally called Stone's River. Moreover the western hills were higher than this eastern one. Even that was not all; the front and both sides of this oblong hill were exposed to Crittenden's guns. Thus Rosecrans could hold it forever and Bragg could not do so for a minute It seems that Rosecrans wanted it more as a protection against Polk's possible attacks than as a starting point for a movement against the town. As only skirmishers could go near that hill in the woods (but near the river), Bragg did not learn of the enemy's aggression for some time, and it was then he committed his blunder.

Bragg could blunder as well as Rosecrans. Both were in the main good strategists, but Bragg seemed to lose his head in a crisis, and Rosecrans his heart. And now, while Rosecrans was busy making things safe for his larger army, Bragg was bent on action of some sort. Just what he contemplated is not revealed, but as a start toward that, whatever it was, he wanted Breckinridge to take and *hold* that unholdable hilltop. He says in his report that he had moved Polk forward after discovering the withdrawal of Thomas and Crittenden, and now from this hill Polk was enfiladed. He continues; "The dislodgment of this force, or the withdrawal of Polk's line, was an evident necessity. The latter involved consequences not to be entertained. "What were those consequences? Polk had stood in his former position a long time safely. Why then was this new position of such moment? Probably he was planning an attack on Crittenden and wanted Polk well up to the

front at the start. But Bragg should have considered the consequences of taking that hill that could not be held. He had been for a month on the ground; he had chosen a site for the position of his right wing; he must have gone as far as the river in front, at least; he had with Hardee and Breckinridge decided on what ridge to place his line, and this hill must have come into discussion; he probably had Morris's topographical map, made in October; Breckinridge protested against the movement; in fact, only failure in close observation when he inspected the possibilities of defense during the month he was at Murfreesboro can excuse the awful mistake. He ordered Beckinridge to take the hill, and that able general did so, only to find himself right under the fire of fifty-eight guns and another division of infantry in almost pointblank range. Four brigades held the hill. These and their battery were routed by the four of Breckinridge. His soldiers eagerly rushed in pursuit down the slope to the very water and the enemy opened on them from across the stream in front and the woods on the right. It was nearly a mile from the river back to safety. Both coming and going, gallant Confederates strewed the ground. Nearly one-third of the four brigades were lost. No charge could have been made more steadily and beautifully. Success followed very quickly. Then the opposing forces from across the water and the woods on the right, having now their own troops on the top *out of the way*, poured in their volleys. Breckinridge had about five thousand men and three batteries, and the enemy the same number of infantry and one battery. Across the narrow river were the fifty-eight guns and Negley's division, while troops streamed out of the woods to the right coming up from fords below. These pursued Breckinridge back to his starting point and night prevented further struggle.

In the night, heavy rains began and continued next day. The generals had time to think up plans and chances Neither could attack with the slightest chance of success. Rosecrans did not want to attack, and retreat by one road meant even worse things. He stood and waited for reënforcements now on the way. Bragg could expect no additions, but could retreat easily and could not be followed. He took the counsel of his generals and retreated. That gave Rosecrans the credit of the campaign, for he had driven Bragg back to Tullahoma. But in the fighting, the lion all but killed the hunter, who took refuge and stayed close within. This was mortifying, and "Stone River" is not a name to conjure with in some portions of our glory-loving country.

Rosecrans had eight divisions to Bragg's five. Walker, and the "Pioneer Brigade" should be added to the eight. Bragg had more cavalry and fewer guns.

In conclusion, let it be said that if that little stream had flowed square across the main pike and railroad, it would not have figured in the situation as it did. The stream and pike met in a very acute angle. Crittenden was placed in that angle. The pike then continued *behind* Polk's lines, so that both Brickinridge and Polk would have fought him had he crossed and tried to reach the town. Unless Thomas came out of his entrenchments and held Polk, Crittenden could do nothing. Thomas' chances of holding Polk was tried and lost on the first day. On the other hand, Crittenden's position on top of the high, steep river bluffs forbade an assault by Brickinridge even if strongly reënforced. As was said before, both generals had condemned these troops to absolute idleness unless some one blundered, or they were sneaked out for temporary use elsewhere. Truly, it was a singular battle, and a bloody one—nearly eighteen thousand Americans were killed or wounded! None were more lamented than Generals Rains, of Tennessee, and Harrison, of Kentucky.

ROBERT E. LEE

[For this paper, Mrs. R. J. Domatti, of Port Arthur, Tex., was awarded the Texas Division Medal for the best essay on any subject submitted in 1929.]

The month of January is memorialized by all Southern people as the natal anniversary of two of the world's greatest military commanders, Generals Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson. Since Lee was born on January 19 and Jackson January 21, the double event is celebrated on the 19th.

The entire world knows the story of these two great men as citizens, patriots, Christians, and military commanders, and the brilliant victory at Chancellorsville, so, departing from the qeaten path of history, this story will deal with the character of Lee.

Lee had served thirty-two years in the army of the United States prior to the breaking out of the War between the States. Then he was offered the command of the Union army. This brought Lee face to face with the greatest struggle of his life, that of deciding which side he should defend in the coming great conflict. One of his soldiers, Randolph McKim, in speaking of the struggle, said: "Never, in any of his great battles—Chancellorsville, Sharpsburg, Gettysburg, The Wilderness, or Petersburg—was his great soul so shaken as on that night in his chamber at Arlington when this momentous decision was