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WHOLE NO. 9201. NEW YORK, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1861.—TRIPLE SHEET. PRICE TWO CENTS.

IMPORTANT OPERATIONS IN MISSOURI.

Official Accounts of the Battle of Belmont.

OUR PLAN OF THE BATTLE FIELD.

Special Accounts from Our Own Correspondents.

Rebel Account from One of Their Journals.

Pursuit of Jeff. Thompson, who Runs Away.

Withdrawal of the Army from the South-western Part of the State, &c., &c., &c.

THE BATTLE OF BELMONT.

OUR CAIRO CORRESPONDENCE.

CAIRO, Ill., Nov. 12, 1861.

General Grant's Victory over the Rebels—Plan of the Battle Ground—The Sick and Wounded Prisoners Returned under a Flag of Truce—Rebels Taken Prisoners by the Union Troops Returned under a White Flag—General McClernand's General Order, &c.

On Wednesday evening the Seventh Iowa regiment, under Colonel Lauman; Twenty-ninth, Colonel Fouke; Thirtieth, Colonel Logan; Twenty-second, Colonel Dougherty; Taylor's battery of six pieces and two companies of cavalry, making in all a force of two thousand eight hundred and fifty men, went on board the steamers Memphis, Aleck Scott, Chancellor, Montgomery and Key Stone, and escorted by the gunboats Tylor and Lexington, dropped down the river to an anchorage about eight miles below Cairo, where they laid to until nearly daylight, when the whole force proceeded to a point some four miles above Belmont, where they disembarked and took up the line of march for the battlefield, the gunboats proceeding down the river and engaging the rebel batteries at Columbus, to distract attention from the flank movement. Colonel Buford, with his command, proceeded by a circuitous route around the rear of the rebel camp, and came upon the enemy from the South, while Colonel Fouke and Colonel Lauman approached from the west, and Colonel Dougherty and Colonel Logan from the east from the north. The enemy was drawn up in line of battle in his camp and in a cornfield, just back of it, and at nine o'clock the fighting commenced, Colonels Lauman and Dougherty leading upon one side, and driving the rebels into the timber toward where Buford's, Logan's and Fouke's commands were advancing. Finding themselves headed off, they returned to their camp, and in sheer desperation fought for two hours, when they broke and fled to the river's bank, and scattered in every direction. At eleven o'clock the day was won. Taylor's battery had possession of the whole of the guns upon the field; the fine Springfield muskets of the enemy lay strewn in plenteous profusion over the ground, and our boys "went in" to breaking their own old English arms over stones and stumps, and supplying themselves from those thrown away by their vanquished foe. They tore down the "stars and bars" of the rebels and hoisted the Stars and Stripes of our glorious Union, greeted it with nine cheers, which must have penetrated the heart of secession, and in their glee of success set about the work of securing the trophies of their victory. And just here was made the mistake of the day, for in their reckless joy the troops became unmanageable. They scattered over the field in confusion, out of the control of their officers. Some strayed off into the woods in the rear, in pursuit of their flying foe. Others were busy in the rebel tents overhauling the baggage of the rebel owners, little dreaming that an overpowering force from Columbus was crossing over and landing between them and their boats to dispute their passage home. But such was the case, and before they were aware of it General Pillow, had formed two fresh regiments upon the Missouri shore, the flower of the rebel army. Thus, even the cowards could not be made to comprehend their position, and it was not until the order was given to fire the camp, in order to drive our boys from their pillaging to a sense of their danger, and the Stars and Stripes, that they discovered how completely they were betrayed in and were in the clutches of an exasperated and deadly foe.

But even then they formed as best they could, the bullets from the rebel rifles and shells from the rebel batteries at Columbus falling among them like hail, and set about cutting their way to the boats. Inch by inch they fought their way through the rebel ranks, now advancing with an impetuous charge, now standing still and receiving the rebel fire; now retreating in the fight to distract attention from a sweep round the left and centre, now yelling like demons as they pitching into their foe here. General Grant, swinging his sword above his head, was shouting almost hoarse as the thickest of the fire; there McClernand was setting his boys an example of heroism by plunging headlong into the rebel ranks and making himself a road to blood. There were Dougherty and Fouke and Logan, and Lauman and Buford, doing execution everywhere, and everywhere our boys bespattering their foes with true "Sucker" ferocity. It was a deadly fight, that march to the boats, but it was successful. Our loss was heavy, but the enemy's was three times as great. We took all our prisoners, two rifled pieces of artillery, and a large supply of most splendid Springfield muskets, about four hundred rebel tents and thousands of small arms *ad infinitum*. The gunboats gave excellent service in assisting the embarkation, and their fire fell into the rebel ranks like meteors, demolishing whole squadrons of artillery, at a broadside, sending horses and footmen, cannons and ammunition into the air in indiscriminate masses, sweeping down whole platoons of infantry at a charge, and throwing their rebel army "confusion worse confounded." As it was, we won the day, but the success would have been a most signal one had our troops returned when the battle of the morning had ended in their victory. But we mourn the loss of a hundred and five brave men killed, of some three scores of twenty wounded and missing. I shall visit the battlefield and shall make a diagram, that you and your readers may the more easily comprehend the details.

I send you to-day a diagram of the battlefield of Belmont, together with General Grant's official report of the engagement. It will be seen that the movement was an impromptu affair, conceived and executed for the purpose of aiding Colonel Oglesby in his expedition to curb the ravages of Jeff Thompson, and was not known even in Cairo as a movement, until after we had left on the 4th instant.

Now that the dust and smoke of the battle begins to clear away, we learn the details which give us a victory as clear as ever warriors gained, and as honorable as veterans could desire, notwithstanding the Southern press and the Northern abolition coadjutors are vociferous in heralding it as a most disastrous defeat. We accomplished all that we attempted, and, according to rebel authority itself, gained a victory of which an army of twice our force might well be proud. Not once in the whole of the six hours of hard fighting was a single regiment of our line turned from its onward march, and once did panic seize upon our raw and inexperienced troops, yet a command was given which was not obeyed, and executed, and when the day was won, we retired to our boats in order.

Last night a boat, with a flag of truce, came up from Columbus with the sick and wounded of our forces, and to-day the Aleck Scott took on board General Grant and others and all of the prisoners (one hundred and four in number) captured by us, and, under a white flag, proceeded down to within six miles of Columbus, where we were met by the rebel steamer Prince, with Generals Polk, Cheatham, McDown and officers on board. After the usual civilities of the officers the rebel prisoners were transferred from ours to the rebel steamer, when we parted company, with a promise from General Polk that, to-morrow he would send up those of ours new in his possession.

The engine bell is ringing, and I will close by appending General McClernand's general order to his men on the day after the battle:—

GENERAL ORDER NO. 15.

BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS, CAIRO, Nov. 8, 1861.

The General commanding the First brigade of Illinois Volunteers takes pleasure in meeting to-day those who conferred honor upon his command by their gallantry and good conduct on yesterday. Few of you had before seen a battle. You were but imperfectly disciplined, and supplied with inferior arms. Yet you marched upon a concealed enemy, or superior numbers, on ground of their own choosing.

You drove them steadily before you for two miles of continued fighting, and forced them to seek shelter in their intrenchments at Belmont, beneath the heavy batteries at Columbus. You drove them from their position and destroyed their camp—bringing with you, on retiring, two hundred prisoners, two field pieces and a large amount of other property.

Reinforced from Columbus, they formed in large numbers in your rear, to cut you off, while the heavy guns were playing upon your ranks. Fighting the same ground over again, you drove them a second time. A portion of the command becoming separated from the rest, made a successful and well ordered movement by another route, and returned to the river. After a day of fatiguing marches, fighting as you marched, for six hours actively engaged, you re-embarked, and returned to your camps.

On looking over your ranks to-day, the commanding General has cause to mourn the absence of many of his gallant men—the victims of inexorable war. Some laid down their lives on the battlefield, offering their blood, freely, and giving their last and noble, glorious moments to their country. Others bear honorable wounds, and suffer more than those who died, yet, it is hoped, to resume their duties and win new honors.

While honoring the dead, and offering sympathy to the suffering, the General commanding gratefully acknowledges his gratitude, and offers the thanks of a grateful country and State to the officers and soldiers of Illinois, under his command, for their gallantry and good conduct.

When again called upon he hopes to find you equally prompt, and better prepared for battle and for victory.

By order of JOHN A. McCLERNAND,
Brigadier General Commanding.

M. BRAYMAN, Assistant Adjutant General.

OFFICIAL REPORTS.

GEN. U. S. GRANT'S OFFICIAL REPORT.

HEADQUARTERS DISTRICT SOUTHERN MISSOURI,
CAIRO, Nov. 10, 1861.

S. WILLIAMS, Assistant Adjutant General, Washington, D. C.:—

SIR—On the evening of the 6th inst. I left this place with 2,850 men, all armed, to make a reconnoissance towards Columbus. The object of the expedition was to prevent the enemy from sending out reinforcements to Price's army in Missouri, and also from cutting off two small columns that I had been directed to send out from this place and Cape Girardeau in pursuit of Jeff. Thompson.

Knowing that Columbus was strongly garrisoned, I asked General Smith, commanding at Paducah, Ky., to make demonstrations in the same directions. He did so, by ordering a small force to Mayfield, and another in the direction of Columbus, not to approach nearer however, than twelve or fifteen miles. I also sent a small force on the Kentucky side, with orders not to approach nearer than Elliott's mills, some twelve miles from Columbus.

The expedition under my immediate command was stopped about nine miles below here, on the Kentucky shore, and remained until morning. All this served to distract the enemy and lead him to think he was to be attacked in his strongly fortified position. At daylight we proceeded down the river to a point just out of range of the rebel guns, and debarked on the Missouri shore. From here the troops were marched by a flank for about one mile towards Belmont, and then drawn up in line, one battalion having been left as a reserve near the transports. Two companies from each regiment, five skeletons in number, were thrown out as skirmishers to ascertain the position of the enemy.

It was but a few moments before they met him, and a general engagement ensued. The balance of my force, with the exception of the reserve, was then thrown forward, all as skirmishers, and the enemy driven, foot by foot, and from tree to tree, back to their encampment on the river's bank, a distance of over two miles. Here they had strengthened their position by felling the timber for several hundred yards around their camp, and making a sort of abattis.

Our men charged through this, driving the enemy over the river banks and into their transports in quick time, leaving us in possession of everything not exceedingly portable.

Belmont is on low ground, and every foot of it commanded by the guns on the opposite shore, and, of course, could not be held for a single hour after the enemy became aware of the withdrawal of their troops. Having no wagons with me I could not move any of the captured property, consequently gave orders for its destruction. Tents, tents, blankets, &c., were set on fire, and we retired, taking their artillery with us, two pieces being drawn by hand, and one by an inefficient team, were spiked and left in the woods, bringing two to this place.

Before getting fairly under way, the enemy made his appearance again and attempted to surround us. Our troops were not in the least discouraged, but charged the enemy and again defeated him.

Our loss was about eighty-five killed, one hundred and fifty wounded—many of them but slightly—and about an equal number missing. Nearly all the missing were from the Seventh Iowa regiment, who behaved with great gallantry, and suffered more severely than any other troops. I have not yet been able to get in the reports from sub-commanders, but will forward them as soon as received.

All the troops behaved with great gallantry, much of which is to be attributed to the coolness and presence of mind of the officers, particularly the colonels.

General McClernand was in the midst of danger throughout the engagement, and displayed both coolness and judgment. His horse was three times shot. My horse was also shot under me.

To my staff—Captains Rawlins, Lagow and Hillyer, and volunteer aids, Captains Hatch and Graham—I am much indebted for the assistance they gave. Colonel Webster, Acting Chief Engineer, also accompanied me, and displayed highly soldierlike qualities.

Colonel Dougherty, Twenty-second Illinois Volunteers, was three times wounded and taken prisoner.

The Seventh Iowa regiment lost their Lieutenant Colonel (killed); Colonel and Major severely wounded. The reports to be forwarded will detail more fully the particulars of our loss. Surgeon Brinton was on the field during the entire engagement, and displayed great ability and efficiency in providing for the wounded and organizing the medical corps.

The gunboats Tyler and Lexington, Captains Walke and Stembell, United States Navy, commanding, convoyed the expedition and rendered most efficient service. Immediately upon our landing they engaged the enemy's batteries and protected our transports throughout. For particulars see accompanying report of Captain Walke. I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

U. S. GRANT,
Brigadier General Commanding.

GENERAL McCLERNAND'S OFFICIAL REPORT.

BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS,
CAMP CAIRO, Nov. 12, 1861.

Brigadier General U. S. GRANT, Commanding District Southeastern Missouri:—

SIR—I have the honor to report the part taken by the forces under my command in the action before Columbus, Ky., on the 7th inst.

These forces consisted of a portion of my own brigade, viz.—the Twenty-seventh regiment, Col. N. B. Buford; the Thirtieth regiment, Col. Philip B. Fouke; the Thirty-first regiment, Col. John A. Logan, including one company of Chicago Light Artillery, Captain J. J. Dollins. The strength of the Twenty-seventh regiment was 720, rank and file; that of the Thirtieth, 800; that of the Thirty-first, 610—each of these regiments being in all 900 men, rank and file. To this force you added, by your order of the 6th, a detachment from Delano's Company of Adams County cavalry, 72 men, under Lieutenant J. R. Cathe, and Captain Taylor's battery of Chicago Light Artillery, of six 6-pounds and two howitzers, 150 men.

The total disposable force under my command was 3,050, rank and file—all Illinois volunteers.

Upon embarking on the steamer Scott with the Thirtieth and Thirty-first regiments, on the evening of the 6th inst., I received from you a note, informing me that a large force from Columbus had crossed over to Belmont, and had been reinforced by a large force from the Missouri shore, and that they had fortified their position, and had their artillery at Belmont, and that they had crossed their cavalry over the river, and that they had taken a strong position on the Kentucky shore, above Columbus, as well as below them, and intended to cut off our retreat, and that we must be prepared to fight our way back to our boats. Upon receipt of this information I ordered the Twenty-seventh regiment, Colonel Buford, to be in readiness to disembark at Cairo, and proceeded down the river to the Missouri shore, about five and a half miles, in a driving rain, from Columbus and Belmont.

By half past eight o'clock the rest of the transports had arrived and the whole force was disembarked, and, marching beyond a cornfield in front of the timber, was formed for an advance movement, and awaited your order. Colonel Dollins and Delano's cavalry to scour the woods along the road to Belmont and report to me from time to time, the remainder of my command followed—the Twenty-seventh in front, the Thirtieth next, supported by a section of Taylor's battery, succeeded by the Thirty-first and the remainder of Taylor's battery, the Seventh Iowa (Col. Lauman) and the Twenty-second Illinois (Col. Dougherty), who had been assigned by you to that portion of the command.

When the rear of the column had reached a road intersecting our line of march, about a mile and a half from the abattis surrounding the enemy's camp, the line of battle was formed on ground which I had previously selected. The Twenty-seventh and Thirtieth regiments formed too far in advance, were recalled to the position first assigned them—the Twenty-seventh on the right and the Thirtieth on the left, by section of battery. The battery was designed to the left of the Thirtieth and two fire fired first in rear of the line, the Thirty-first in the centre, and the Seventh Iowa and Twenty-second Illinois formed the left wing, making two sections of artillery.

By this time Dollins's cavalry were skirmishing sharply with the enemy's pickets to our right and in advance of our line, and the enemy had shifted the heavy fire of their batteries at Columbus from our gunboats to our advancing line, but with no effect.

With your permission I now ordered two companies from each regiment of my command to advance, instructing them to seek out and drive in the pickets of the enemy, the Twenty-second Illinois and Seventh Iowa pushing forward similar parties at the same time.

A sharp firing having immediately commenced between the skirmishing parties of the Twenty-ninth and Thirty-first and the enemy, I ordered forward another party to their support, to be followed, upon their advance, by the Twenty-seventh, and ordered up the balance of my command—the Twenty-seventh—to pass around the head of a pond, the Thirtieth and Thirty-first, with the artillery, crossing the dry bed of the same slough in their front.

On their arrival I reformed the line of battle in the same order as before. It was my expectation that the Twenty-second Illinois and the Seventh Iowa would resume their former positions on the left wing, which would have perfected a line sufficient to enclose the enemy's camp, on all sides accessible to us, thus enabling us to command the river above and below them, and prevent the crossing of reinforcements from Columbus, insuring his capture as well as defeat.

The Thirtieth and Thirty-first and the artillery, moving forward, promptly relieved the skirmishing parties, and soon became engaged with a heavy body of the enemy's infantry and cavalry. The struggle, which was continued for half an hour with great severity, threw our ranks into temporary disorder, but the men promptly rallied under the gallant champs of Colonels Fouke and Logan, assisted by Major Berryman, Acting Assistant Adjutant General to my brigade, also by Capt. Schwartz, Acting Chief of Artillery; Capt. Brasser and the artillery; Lieut. Babcock, of the Second cavalry, and Lieut. Kelly, of the Twenty-ninth Illinois regiment, who had, upon my invitation, kindly joined my staff. Our lines pressed resolutely upon the enemy and drove them back, their cavalry leaving that part of the field and not appearing again until attacked by Capt. Dollins, on the river bank, below their encampment, and chased out of sight, near the close of the contest.

At an engagement a quarter of a mile further, this force again came up with the enemy, who, for the time, had been scattered upon this part of the field as I since learn, by the regiments and a complete rout ensued. This strengthened, he attempted to turn our left flank, but, ordering Colonel Logan to extend the line of battle by a flank movement, and bringing up a section of Taylor's battery, commanded by First Lieutenant B. H. White, under the direction of Captain Schwartz, to cover the space thus made between the Thirtieth and Thirty-first, the attempt was frustrated.

Having completed that disposition, we again opened a deadly fire from both infantry and artillery, and after a desperate resistance drove the enemy back the third time, forcing them to seek cover among thick woods and brush, protected by the heavy guns at Columbus.

In this struggle, while leading the charge, I received a ball in one of my holsters, which failed of harm by striking a pistol. Here Colonels Fouke and Logan urged on their men by the most energetic appeals; here Captain Bresser's horse was shot under him, while Captain Schwartz's horse was twice wounded. Here the passages from the enemy's heavy guns in Columbus, and their artillery at Belmont, crashed through the woods over and among us; here again, all my staff, who were with me, displayed the greatest intrepidity and activity; and here, too, many of our officers were killed or wounded; not so fatally, I hope, that this gallant conduct was stimulated by your presence and inspired by your example. How your horse only killed under you, I cannot comprehend.

While this struggle was going on a tremendous fire from the Twenty-seventh, which had approached to the abatis on the right and rear of the tents, was heard. About the same time the Seventh and Twenty-second, which had passed the rear of the Thirtieth and Thirty-first, hastened up, and, closing the space between them and the Twenty-seventh, poured a deadly fire upon the enemy.

A combined movement was now made upon the right of the enemy's works, and driving him across the abatis, we followed close upon his heels into the clear space around his camp. The Twenty-seventh was the first, soon followed by the Thirtieth, supported by a section of Taylor's battery, succeeded by the Thirty-first and the remainder of Taylor's battery, the Seventh Iowa (Col. Lauman) and the Twenty-second Illinois (Col. Dougherty), who had been assigned by you to that portion of the command.

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